

PepsiCo VP receives Peacemaker award

By Amy Faith Lionheart

Just as other food and beverage company leaders muscle their way to the top of today's fierce marketplace, Ronald E. Harrison, PepsiCo senior vice president for global diversity and community affairs, finds a unique way to put his company on top. It's called inclusion.

Harrison was presented last Thursday with the Coalition for Mutual Respect's Yitzhak Rabin Peacemaker Award for his excellence and leadership in working with the community to provide an area of diversity and inclusion.

Founded in 1970, the mission of the CFMR is to improve human relations and further the quality of life in New Rochelle and Westchester County. The organization has handed out four awards since the organization developed the award in 1996.

According to Rabbi Amiel Wohl, co-chair of the CFMR, Harrison is a man who stands out from the rest. "Harrison is a tremendously engaging personality. He has done so much for minorities within the PepsiCo organization."

With more than 37 years of experience working for PepsiCo, Harrison's goal is to transform PepsiCo's diversity initiatives into a solid and focused business imperative. In doing this, he is helping to transform corporate America and establishing PepsiCo as a leader in diversity and inclusion initiatives.

"Ronald E. Harrison is a bridge-builder, a man who is determined, yet listens to all points of view," said Elaine Palmer, manager of corporate information at PepsiCo. "He is a consensus-builder who is not afraid to break barriers." Harrison's work spans all employees, all ethnic groups and into the community. He has served as a mentor for many employees.

Eighteen-year PepsiCo veteran Michelle Jordan said that having Harrison as a role model was key in helping her advance within the company. "Mr. Harrison embraces all. He is probably the most inclusive man I have met in my experience."

According to Rev. Michael J. Rouse, pastor of St. Catherine's AME Zion Church, Harrison was



Andrew McKay/Standard Star

Ronald E. Harrison, senior vice president of Global Diversity and Community Affairs at PepsiCo, speaks during his acceptance of the Yitzhak Rabin Peacemaker Award at New Rochelle City Hall.

chosen for the award because he is a human rights advocate, a civil rights advocate and someone who reaches out to improve the lives of people around him. "Some people do things because it's a job," said Rouse. "Other people do things because it's something they believe in. I believe that Harrison helps minorities rise in the corporate world because it is something that he truly believes in."

"My fondest memory of Ron is being able to work with him and learn from him. He has been able

"I believe that Harrison helps minorities rise in the corporate world because it is something that he truly believes in."

Rev. Michael J. Rouse,
pastor, St. Catherine's
AME Zion Church

less you have a mentor such as Ron Harrison."

Harrison is also cited for his activities on behalf of many organizations and in the community. He is the immediate past chairperson of the International Franchise Association (IFA) and past chairperson of IFA's Educational Foundation. He is a member of IFA's executive committee as well as the minorities in franchising committee; past chairperson of the Business Policy Review Council and immediate past chairperson of the Business Consortium Fund, a \$20 million fund for minority suppliers.

He is an active leader on the corporate advisory boards of the Congressional Black Caucus, the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the National Council of La Raza, the National Urban League and the National Puerto Rican Coalition. He is the co-chair of the corporate advisory board of the Cuban American National Council and is the incoming chairperson of the National Puerto Rican Coalition's corporate advisory board. He has served as a board member and trustee of the National Hispanic Corporate Council, the Executive Leadership Council and Foundation, the IFA, the Cuban American National Council and the College of New Rochelle.

According to Rouse, Harrison's heart is in helping other people. "You have to meet Ron Harrison to understand why."

to give me the opportunity to grow within this company," said Jordan, PepsiCo's senior manager for national community relations. "Moving from an administrative assistant position into a management position is very difficult to achieve un-