



‘Lead with love’

Prudential PRIDE member Angela Cafarelli on being nonbinary and how to be an LGBTQ+ ally.

The BRG Real Talk series features insights from members of Prudential’s employee-led business resource groups that support the company’s cultural aspiration to be fully inclusive. This latest installment highlights a member of the PRIDE business resource group for LGBTQ+ employees and their allies.

Angela Cafarelli, vice president, Diversity and Inclusion, Inclusive Solutions, is nonbinary and uses *she/they* pronouns. Nonbinary is a term for a gender identity that falls outside of the gender binary, meaning an individual does not identify as strictly a woman or a man.

To anyone confused by the concept, Cafarelli says: “I completely understand and empathize with people who might not understand this. My ask of anyone who doesn’t is to lead with love. I’m not asking you to change your beliefs, or even to understand me. I’m asking you to treat me like a human being.”

Cafarelli, a member of the PRIDE business resource group, has only verbalized being nonbinary for the past two years, but has felt it for much longer.

“I always knew I was different. I didn’t know what that difference was until I was older and had the tools to express myself properly. But this is something I’ve struggled with since I was a child — and still do,” Cafarelli says. “I’m very proud of who I am and how far I’ve come, but growing up, I would never have said, ‘Hey, I’d love to question my gender identity for the next 30-something years.’ I wouldn’t make my life more complicated.”

In the video above, Cafarelli shares the details of this journey. She went from a “tomboy” stage when she was young, to high school where she “swung the pendulum so far the other way” and was even crowned Homecoming Queen, and eventually came out as a lesbian. Adding *they* as a pronoun has been a source of stress.

“I didn’t want the scrutiny. I wanted to fit in. It’s probably why I prefer ‘she’ and ‘they’ together and not ‘they’ alone. That might change. But right now, in this moment, ‘she’ is a little bit of a protector until I get more comfortable,” says Cafarelli.

In the meantime, Cafarelli hopes being candid will pay off. “It’s tough to sit here now and share my story. It’s scary — the fear of comments, the fear of backlash. But it’s also euphoric.”

Cafarelli’s story is the latest in the BRG Real Talks series. Created by Prudential’s business resource groups, the videos feature employees sharing their perspectives on inclusion and diversity.

Watch Cafarelli’s video above.

Prudential’s LGBTQ+ resources

Prudential has long been clear about its commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive culture that’s built on respect. It has also been consistently recognized as a supportive workplace for the LGBTQ+ community. The company scored 100 on the Human Rights Campaign’s most recent Corporate Equality Index, the nation’s foremost benchmarking survey and report measuring company policies and practices related to LGBTQ+ workplace equality. Prudential has also been recognized as one of the Best Places to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality by the Human Rights Campaign for 20 consecutive years.

This support becomes even more important when thinking about the workforce of the future.

According to a 2022 Gallup poll, while approximately 7% of all U.S. adults identify as LGBTQ+, that number jumps to nearly 20% among adult members of Generation Z — those born between 1997 and 2004. “As we think about the next generation, research suggests they are approaching life very differently. It will be important to provide meaningful support and foster a sense of belonging for us to attract and retain them as talent,” says Rob Barea, vice president, Culture, Diversity and Engagement, Inclusive Solutions.

Here are resources Prudential makes available both to support LGBTQ+ employees and help employees better reach and serve LGBTQ+ customers.

Inclusive Benefits Guide

This booklet was recently developed by Total Rewards in partnership with Inclusive Solutions and PRIDE to provide a comprehensive overview for the LGBTQ+ community of Prudential’s inclusive suite of benefits, including resources for family building and support as well as transgender inclusive benefits.

Pronouns on Teams

The ability to include pronouns on your Microsoft Teams profile is now an option for all Prudential employees. When people use Cafarelli’s correct pronouns, or ask which pronouns to use, it’s deeply meaningful. “It’s a small gesture to be a true ally of the LGBTQ+ community. It makes people feel seen, and it’s a sign of respect,” says Cafarelli.

Count Me In!

This is an ongoing effort to encourage all U.S.-based employees to indicate any disability, military Veteran and LGBTQ+ status. It helps Prudential cultivate an inclusive workplace through programming, practices and policies. Participation is voluntary but all employees are strongly encouraged to maintain updated profiles, even if they do not fall into any of the categories noted above.

LGBTQ+ Playbook

This guide to enhance LGBTQ+ inclusion was created by the PRIDE business resource group to ensure consistency in Prudential’s use of terminology and processes.