Twitter Thread by Ana Clara Blesso



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As a woman of color & immigrant in higher education & career services - I have some pressing thoughts. Here goes:

A daughter of immigrants as Vice President. The first woman Vice President. The first Black woman Vice President. The first South Asian woman Vice President. 1/X

Of course, we must acknowledge that no candidate is perfect – President-Elect Biden is not perfect. Vice President-Elect Harris is not perfect. There is much work to be done to continue to move forward towards a more progressive and truly inclusive America. 2/X

We cannot back to a version of “normal” that actively excludes certain individuals based on their race, country of origin, immigration status, size, ability, experience with addiction, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, and more. 3/X

However, it is critical that we, as members of the workforce, take note of a specific aspect of this election that cannot be ignored: the power of sponsorship. 4/X

I long for the day when women of color need not wait for a door of opportunity to open. However, our reality is that sponsorship is currently a critical element of workplace success – and I say this as a woman of color myself. 5/X

According to McKinsey’s Women in the Workplace 2020 report, “For every 100 men promoted to manager, only 85 women were promoted—and this gap was even larger for some women: only 58 Black women and 71 Latinas were promoted.” 6/X

As a White-presenting Latina, I exist with deep privilege in this space. I claim my existence as a Latina and an immigrant, and have become more vocal in naming the systems of oppression that exist within my field: career development in higher education. 7/X

I have been told, by professionals in my field, that I am “too loud,” “interested in causing problems and not affecting change,” and if I keep speaking up, I will sacrifice leadership in the field. 8/X

We could certainly unpack that, as a Latina and an immigrant, being quiet is safer and often necessary – both professionally and otherwise. 9/X

Vice President-Elect Harris was called a “rival” of President-Elect Biden’s throughout the primary season. She challenged him – including his record on progress racial issues and healthcare, and after the 2019 debates, was seen as one of his fiercest opponents. 10/X

To my fellow career services professionals: If we are to truly celebrate Kamala Harris’ remarkable Vice Presidential victory, we cannot do so without understanding our own role in sponsorship – including sponsoring the women of color who challenge and speak up. 11/X

If I serve on your board, join your committee, or become your ally, I will be speaking up. My hope is that you will still amplify my voice - and the voices of so many women of color who speak up as well. 12/12