

Verizon  
Up To Speed  
Friday, July 17, 2020

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[Music].

>> So, what do you think?

>> It's really nice, I love the colors, lots of cool features, love the check mark, of course.

>> So would you say you're satisfied, mostly satisfied, or completely satisfied?

>> Uh, completely.

>> Great. Great. Now on a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate your camper shopping experience?

>> I didn't know you cared so much about shopping for recreational vehicles.

>> No, no. I actually don't. I'm just making sure all of us are ready for the new VZPulse+ survey coming out soon.

>> Oh, VZPulse+. Yeah.

[Music].

>> KATIE REGNER: Hey, everyone, welcome to Up to Speed. You heard Jess and Andy getting excited about it, coming up July 27th it's the next employee survey and we're calling it VZPulse+. It's powered by Gallup a leading in analytics to dig deeper into how we can serve you our V Teamers and keep our sights on the future.

The VZPulse+ is a super charged survey. Not only is it an expanded version of our current employee survey, but we'll also work with Gallup to evaluate our results compared to other industry leaders. Through a data first approach we can continue to win for our customers and each other. More to come on VZPulse+. But it goes without saying that we want to reach 100% participation to make sure every V Team voice is heard. This is how we build our future together. And what's Andy doing with that camper? You may remember he wanted to hit the road this summer but hit a roadblock so he's got a new plan stay tuned to Monday's Up to Speed to find out what that is today we're talking about some of the conversations that are continuing to

happen around the business and how they are inspiring action. Earlier this week Robert Fisher who leads Federal Government relations sat down with Mark Cuban owner of the Dallas Mavericks and Mr. Shark Tank the long-time friends discussed Shark Tank, basketball, golf, 5G and technology leadership as well as social and racial justice. I think one of the things that really came through in this conversation was Mark's straight-forward approach and candor on speaking on things like white privilege.

>> MARK CUBAN: I think I went through the same process a lot of white people go through. When we hear the term racist when we hear the term white privilege we immediately get defensive and we immediately start to manufacture equivalency to show we can't possibly be part of the problem we can't possibly be racist. We talk about our Black friends. We talk about growing up in this community or that community. We talk about what we did for this minority community. So because of all of these things we do, all of this manufactured equivalency we can't possibly be racist. And then we stop. You know. Because we kind of just stepped away from being part of the problem. So it can't ever deal with us. When in reality when you looked at oppressed minorities, communities, Black people in particular, they are not causing the problem they are not choosing to be oppressed. The systemic racism that does exist and it does exist they are not saying, please, can I have more, they are fighting to get rid of it but the reality is it's white people that have to be the solution.

Because we're the problem.

>> KATIE REGNER: You can check out the full conversation with Robert and Mark on inside Verizon or the Inside Verizon app. Next20 is our new series of conversations about the top issues that will define the next 20 years. Each episode will feature emerging and established changemakers to explore the inspiration behind their activism and ideas for their future we hope to accelerate their calls for change and move it forward for good our second episode will be released on Tuesday July 21st it explores voter education and how advocates are working on the front lines to ensure every vote counts. Diana had a conversation with LaTosha Brown co-founder of Black Lives Matter. Kyle Lierman of When We All Vote. Chloe Mason, Senior Teen President greater Essex County Jack and Jill of America. And Dylan Wilkes, Jack and Jill of America. We've got a quick preview for you today. Take a look.

>> DIANA ALVEAR: 2020 has been this seismic year for change we knew 2020 was going to be a big year for voting and then COVID-19 hit, which upended everything and then all of this change began to happen and these protests and this movement when we saw the videos of what happened at Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and now going into these elections we're faced with a motivated electorate tell me how the confluence of these things coming together weeks before the elections are beginning during the primaries how is it affecting your activism.

>> LaTOSHA BROWN: Well the first thing I did right was the day I started to fight keep your eyes on the prize and hold on. Hold on. I am a native of Selma, Alabama

and this is -- my life is like a confluence of all of this. This is the 55th anniversary of the Voting Rights Movement in this country. And in August it will be the 55th year of the passage of the Voting Rights Act yet we're still dealing with issues around voter suppression and making sure people have free and fair access to the ballot what we see right now is this really unique opportunity to really not bury our heads in the sand but actually move this country forward.

>> KATIE REGNER: I can't wait to hear the rest of that conversation and what the other guests have to say or maybe sing. We kicked off Next20 last week with a conversation around criminal justice reform with three guests, Adrian Burrell, Xavier McElrath-Bey and Christina Swarns who shared their personal experiences and thoughts on actions to bring about change today as a follow-up to that conversation we're providing a V Team perspective Jeremy sat down with Mike Mason head of corporate security and Kathy Grillo and Donna Epps two leaders on our Public Policy Team to get their reaction to our Next20 segment and talk about what can be done. We'll leave you today with that conversation.

>> ADRIAN BURRELL: There's something that's taken away from you in that moment that you can't get back. It makes you a part of a family nobody wants to be a part of. You know what I'm saying. Like there's a lot of families impacted families in Vallejo whose loved ones weren't as lucky to survive. And I did. So as I like -- I came across these mothers at these protests, I didn't even know who they were. They would run up on me and grab me and say baby I saw your video I'm so happy you're alive I'm so happy you're here I love you take down my phone number if you need anything call me. It does something and I think I couldn't -- once you're a part of a family, you rise for that family. That's pretty much what I've been doing, going to the protests, documenting as much as I can. I made a short film called "Favor and Grace" that's in post-production right now that kind of brings in a little bit of attention and shines a light on what's going on in Vallejo and continually find different ways to be a catalyst for and help get those voices out there.

>> XAVIER McELRATH-BEY: It hurts not to be free. It hurts not to be with my family. It hurts to see my family still struggling it hurts to wake up every day and seeing myself changed as a person, knowing in my heart that I'm a caring, compassionate person, that I'm not a monster like they said I was I felt there was something deeply extensionally wrong with what I was going through and I couldn't quite put words to it but I just knew this was not the reality that I should be living because I was never truly a monster. And I just felt as much as I had changed if only the world had conformed to that if only the world had seen me for who I was and responded to that in so many words if only there was another chance fortunately for me I had a light at the end of the tunnel I knew I would be able to get out in a matter of years.

>> CHRISTINA SWARNS: For me, I find the people I represent and their families and the resilience and the extraordinariness of what they have endured inspiring and it

makes me, you know -- so it shuts up whatever in my head whatever concerns or complaints I may have about it's late and it's work because people have endured so much more than I have. And the resilience and the humor. The grace. Like the people I represent are unfailingly really remarkable people. And interesting and fascinating. They are just whole human beings.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Hey what's up everybody we are continuing our conversation of our Next20 series. This series is meant to bring in some thought leaders to talk about where we're going as Verizon but also put some action around it. Today three important guests with us today, I've got Donna Epps and Kathy Grillo, both from the Public Policy Team as well as Mike Mason who is our Chief Security Officer we're going to be getting some of their officers to our first Next20 episode and talking to them and getting their thoughts on where we can take it from here. So I want to start out with everybody. And just get your general reaction to what you saw in this.

Mike, I want to start with you, I heard the words broken in that first episode. How do you fix something that's so broken. And where does it start?

>> MIKE MASON: Well, I think you have to start with very tangible measures. First of all, everybody has to believe that they can be involved in some way. So let's say that that's about voting. About attending Town Hall Meetings. About understanding who your representatives are and where they stand. And it's also about when you have even a minor complaint, taking it to the police department. Now, on the police department side, the judicial side, maybe we need to consider more citizen panels. Citizen review boards. Things of that nature. But give them citizen review boards that have actual teeth. So I don't think that doing something is overly complicated. But I absolutely believe that there are little things that all of us can do. If nothing more than engaging in sometimes difficult conversations. Because we all want a fair and transparent world. So it's not enough just to be not negative. You also need to be -- you need to be positive. You need to be actively engaged. Because we all want the same community. So that's what I think about it when I think about a broken system.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Kathy, what about for you.

>> KATHY GRILLO: Yeah, I think part of what -- I thought the series was so powerful. And I was a little bit touched in particular by Xavier McElrath-Bey because I happen to know him I know we'll talk about this later but a big part of our work on criminal justice has been with the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth. And while the system is maybe irretrievably broken from what we heard yesterday, just the amazing transformation of someone like him who at 13 was sentenced to 25 years of prison and has made this beautiful life where he is focusing on change and transformation and grace. And so to me, I love hearing those stories.

I think hearing the stories about people who have just been through this process and then come out the other side and want to make change and want to create, you

know, that spark in all of us to also participate in that change. That's one of the reasons why we've gotten interested in the issue.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: More on that in a minute with you Kathy. Donna what about for you? Where does it start? How do we help this system?

>> DONNA EPPS: Well, you know, Jeremy, the thing that really struck me, both about the session as well as in the work that we've been doing over the last couple of years is how important to raise awareness about what's really happening in our criminal justice system. I think so many of us who have not been directly impacted really have no idea that the -- how the system works or the various areas that really just aren't working frankly. So it's really hard to fix something unless you first acknowledge that, you know, parts of the system just aren't working. And overall, it's not producing the results that I think any of us would want, which is ultimately to rehabilitate people. Most people who are incarcerated are going to end up back in society. And we want to make sure we have a fair, justice process. But also one that's effective in rehabilitating people. Because that's ultimately going to increase public safety.

So I think, I mean, first of all, just kudos to the team for elevating the stories. Because until we're honest about the problems and own them, just like all of the other sort of inequities and disparities in society, we can't have honest conversations and drill down to real solutions to tackle them.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Yeah, one of the moments that stuck out for me and I think you all would agree was Adrian said he feels hopeful but exhausted, Donna. How can we help? Let's start there.

>> DONNA EPPS: Well, you know, first of all, I think one of the things we've really got to do and maybe I'm saying this from a public policy perspective because that's what I spend my time doing is really lean into the underlying policies that have resulted in this problem. I mean, in the 1980s, you had a much smaller fraction of people who were incarcerated. And what changed is not an increase in crime rates but really a change in underlying laws and public policy. So one of the things that I think we can do and that we are doing is using our voice and our influence with policymakers. To lean in and really call for reform and change in various aspects of the system. Because when you look at the system, it's not one coherent system that's working well, it's a series of very in many ways independent systems. That have you know various problems. And so one is weighing in and trying to help change the underlying policies. And then, two, I think another thing that we can do is really create proximity and shine a light on these issues, which is back to my earlier point about raising awareness about it. Really creating an environment for those of us who have not been in close proximity with folks who have been impacted and impacted negatively by this system to give them a platform so that we can actually see their humanity. See them as people. And understanding what's their story. How did they get here? And what have they done since they may have made a tragic mistake in their lives? So I think creating proximity

means hosting convenings. Having events where you give them a platform and -- but more importantly you give people who haven't had the exposure, you know, have them in the audience to be able to really listen and learn and I think oftentimes feel inspired to act.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Kathy some employee comments after the first episode of Next20 asking why would Verizon get involved in this? Where does it lead to a road in business for us? And why have we taken a position on criminal justice reform?

>> KATHY GRILLO: Thanks, Jeremy, for that question, a big part of what we do in public policy, a big part of what our organization does, is take positions on policy issues that are essential to Verizon's core values and that are important to our customers and our employees. So as a company committed to racial equality and equity, it's important for us to use our voice to speak out and speak up on these issues.

I mean, this issue affects millions of people. As Donna mentioned before, we have 2.2 million people incarcerated in the U.S. right now. We have the highest per capita rate of any country in the world. And it's not just the people who are incarcerated. It's the people that are on parole and their families. So these are millions and millions of people. Many of whom are our customers. Many of whom are employees. And it's important that we use our voice just to try to bring attention to the issue before reform.

You heard Hans the other day speak about his role with the Business Roundtable. And that just shows how the business community itself is coming together just to try to bring policymakers' attention to the fact that it's important to be resolved, that these are important issues and important questions that everyone, every citizen in the U.S., needs to pay attention to. And as Verizon, that's part of what we do. We focus on what's important to our four stakeholders, one of which is society. And so I see our role in speaking out on these issues as a way of facilitating that mission, as well.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Donna, give me the breakdown exactly what is Verizon doing and what are the areas of work that we're taking part in?

>> DONNA EPPS: Jeremy, we have focused on three areas and let me start by saying we have a lot of humility on this work we are by no means experts but we have been doing this work for about two years now and the first area has really been as I mentioned focusing on changing policy. So we have spoken out and publicly supported Federal and state criminal justice reform laws. Craig has written prolifically about them. Probably the most prominent was the First Step Act where we -- which is really landmark criminal justice reform Federal act. But we have also supported things like allowing PELL Grants to go to folks who are incarcerated. Ensuring that the Federal Government bans the box, just like Verizon does. So we have been weighing in to really frankly send our lobbyists to the Hill and publicly support bills. The second thing we have done is used our legal skills in the pro bono field. So we have focused -- we have expanded our very robust pro bono program to include this area of work. And we have done two things there. One, we have represented folks who were

incarcerated as children who are now eligible for early release and when I say early it's really after 20 to 25 years and a lot of the state reform laws but we have partnered with the organization that Xavier represents to do that. The Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth. And we have two cases currently. And the last area has really been we posted a series of convenings where we brought together impacted people, criminal justice reform experts, policymakers, our stakeholders. To really elevate and examine the various aspects of the system that need reform.

And so we have really increased the exposure and frankly we've learned a lot. And we think that our community and network even in the corporate sector has learned a lot. And a lot of people have gotten engaged as a result of that. And you know that's been a really positive aspect of our work that we will continue.

>> KATHY GRILLO: And Jeremy I just also want to mention and thank Craig Silliman for his leadership and his assistance to us on this work. There are very few senior executives of corporations honestly in the country who have used their own personal voice to speak out on these issues and again like Donna said with humility just to bring attention to the problem and to try to bring policymakers together to find a solution. And he's been incredibly supportive of me and of Donna and of our whole team. And I want to make sure that we give him a big thanks for all his support.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Mike, prior to your time at Verizon, you served in the FBI. Before that you were a member of the United States Marine Corps, thank you for your service, as always. Employees have asked about your point of view on the recent injustices of what we have seen over the past couple of months now. What's your reaction?

>> MIKE MASON: Well, for the most part, all of them have sickened me. I mean, the George Floyd homicide was absolutely inexplicable. I'm happy to say that every police officer I've talked to both Active Duty and retired all thought the same thing, that that was absolutely repugnant. So I think that everybody also should understand that 98% of police that get up each day get up just like Verizon employees do, to come and do an honest day's work and to not inflict pain or harm or even death on someone. So we're really talking about bad people.

I agree the system has to change, training has to change, and we have to take ego out of the equation, which often gets in the way. So it's also about the right people that we hire.

And one of the things I think we can do, I want to encourage more people of color. Color period. To join law enforcement. To become prosecutors. To become public defenders. You may say why prosecutors well because prosecutors make sure that the system is engaged fairly. So I think we need to be part of the system in order to change the system. So I don't want to see people of color fall away from careers in the judicial system. I want to see more people come into the judicial system. Because I think that's where you'll start to see real effective change. After all when an 18-year-old

white male comes before the average judge in this country that judge sees his son, his grandson, his nephew. When he sees an African American, he sees a predator. He sees something much more -- you use much more pejorative adjectives for what he sees standing in front of him so we can legislate a lot of this but this is also a war of hearts and minds and that's what I want to see us win.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Does criminal justice reform or defunding the police, do those terms scare you?

>> MIKE MASON: No, not at all. And police training changes all the time. It's a constant system of iteration. But reform doesn't scare me at all. It's what we need. When we say defund, we need to describe what that means. If you mean putting the police department out of business, that's the dumbest idea I've ever heard. If you mean demilitarizing police departments to some extent and defunding that capability, maybe I can be more convinced that defunding has a role. But as a general objective, you know, we need the police departments. We need good policeman, good policewomen in this country, we need good police officers in this country we need good judges good prosecutors good defense attorneys. So I don't want to defund police when that may preclude them from engaging in training that is critical to tamping down these instances of brutality.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: What about the experiences that Adrian and Xavier shared; do any of those ring true for you or any stories you would like to share?

>> MIKE MASON: Those stories do ring true for me. Now I grew up in Chicago on the south side every place Xavier talked about I'm familiar with. But I feel the need contextually to share a different kind of story so that people understand a little bit of that other world, as well.

When I was in the FBI, I was doing an undercover case. And the subject when I first met him as an undercover he said, I need to tell you something, if I ever found out one of my associates was working with the police, he said, if it was going down, that would be the first person I would kill, I would put a bullet right in their head. Zoom up eight weeks. We're doing the final deal that I'm going to do with him before we take him down. He comes up in a car parked right next to me. He says let's do the deal right here, we were supposed to go to another location. I called the team in, he looks up, he sees the team coming in. I'm reaching for my gun at the same time but my gun had slid to the back of the car. He looks at me, looks at the FBI agents coming at him, reaches in between his seat and I scream at him to freeze. I don't have a gun I scream at him to freeze my partner she had her gun on her which made him freeze. When that whole episode was over, I was shaking on the way back to the office. I was literally shaking. You might think because I was afraid. Well, I was afraid. But the reason I was shaking was that if I had had my gun, would I have shot him? And what's important to note is that he didn't have a gun. He was trying to loosen his brake to get away. But I was thinking about what he had told me eight weeks ago. And he's



reaching in between his seat. I thought he was reaching for a gun. And to this day, I am grateful to God that I -- maybe that I didn't have my gun because I might have shot him.

I would have had two seconds to decide whether to use deadly force or not.

So every time there's a police shooting, I don't want people to think -- people who are listening to this, that that cop got up that morning wanting to harm somebody. I never wanted to shoot anybody.

And I was really, really glad I didn't have to in that instance. But I often wonder if I had had my gun would I have shot him. And I would have shot an unarmed man all he was trying to do was undo his brake but I couldn't see what his hand was on at that time.

And I think that's important for context around this whole issue. These are a lot of people who get up every day trying to do the right thing. I get it that the system is broken. The system needs some systemic repairs. But at the same time, you have people just like in our company trying to get up and do the right thing.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Mike, obviously you had to exercise split second decision there. And the case that you were following through an investigation that had been taking months.

Let's talk about the situation with Adrian and the video he shared. How do you react to that and the decisions that were made there?

>> MIKE MASON: I think that's a completely different situation. And it's a story -- it's a situation that infuriates me. The reason being the cop put his gun on a subject, a subject that he thought was dangerous enough to hold his gun on him.

Then he sees Adrian engage in a perfectly legal activity. And he not only holsters his gun, he turns his back on what we're all to presume was a dangerous suspect.

Then he goes and he braces Adrian and pushes him against a wall. Simply because he didn't follow his instructions. Instructions that he's not legally -- that he's not legally obligated to follow. He's on his own porch. He's filming. He's not interrupting the conduct of official police business. So at the end of the day, Adrian was not doing anything illegal. That was not a split second decision. That was a decision based on a cop's ego because he had told somebody to do something and that person didn't immediately respond. And that is wrong. That's the kind of -- that episode should be used as a training film that that is not what police work is about.

We really need to emphasize that we're here to serve and protect. The serve needs to be in bigger letters, in my opinion.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: What type of training do you think would be useful there, Mike?

>> MIKE MASON: Well, there's a study going on in New Orleans. It's about teaching police how to intervene. One thing you notice about the average brutality situation that we have seen in this country, multiple officers are standing around. And

the thing is, how do you get officers to break in and to intervene. Not to tell on other cops. But to prevent prosecutions, terminations, liability and most importantly of all, to forget -- to eliminate innocent people from being harmed or even killed. All somebody had to say in the George Floyd situation is, get your knee off his neck. We got this. He's ours. We own him. Stop. So that kind of intervention training I think is really going to go a long way and they are doing it in New Orleans, a city that's had its challenges with its police department and if it can be effective there I think it can be effective anywhere but that's one of many different programs but this problem is something that we can address and I think we can solve this problem. But it's going to take the efforts of many to do that.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Donna, next question for you, reflecting on the stories that Xavier shared and just remarkable to talk about his journey. Through your work, what has surprised you most about people who are incarcerated.

>> DONNA EPPS: You know, when we first started this work, I had one of the most impactful meetings I ever had working with Verizon and it was a meeting with Craig Silliman and Kathy Grillo and several members from the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth that Xavier was a part of it was with Xavier and another man Alexander both sentenced to extreme sentences as children. And as I listened to their stories, the trauma of their childhoods, just horrific childhoods, Xavier shared a little bit of his. But that's not uncommon as we have met more and more folks associated with the campaign. When you think about not only the trauma that they were sort of born into but also the trauma of growing up and being a kid in prison who for 20 years of course many of these folks when we meet them now they are in their 30s and 40s but what has struck me most about that partner and those individuals is just how extraordinarily talented they are. And to think that, you know, we as a society said, you know, you're worth no more than to spend the rest of your days in prison. Incredible loss of talent. I mean, compassionate, smart, humility. And extreme self-reflection and remorse and growth.

So as you can imagine, to be able to qualify even to early release after -- and I say early but it may be after 20 or 25 years under reform laws focused at juveniles, they had to be extraordinary individuals to be able to get past a judge and a Review Board to have this real second chance at life. And I'm just so pleased I've had this experience to know that someone who goes in at 13 and you know such tremendous talent is now not only free but a lot of these folks, I mean almost every one of them, are so dedicated to giving back. To making sure that other young people who grew up the way they did don't have that experience. And also helping folks once they leave prison to really reintegrate into society.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Kathy, going to you on this one. For those of us on the sidelines who might feel hopeless, how can we get in the game? You mentioned the things we're involved in. What are some things we can do right now to be involved for

change here?

>> KATHY GRILLO: I think there's a few things. First, connect. So Donna made the point about proximity and just how important it is to actually know people who have had this experience, who have been incarcerated, who have come out and tried to make their life better and tried to change. That's really important. And there are ways that you can do that. Donna was talking about that meeting that we had with Craig and the campaign. And there are ways to do that I think. So connect. Also donate. I mean, there's plenty of ways that you can use your resources and your position to try to help. I know Next20 we went through a bunch of organizations where you can give your money. And then just get involved. Mike mentioned local elections. Really important. Who are the prosecutors? Who are your local officials? It matters what your representatives are at the Federal level. But it really matters if you care about these issues who your representatives are at the local level.

So all of those ways, just the interest. Go on the internet or send me an email. Send Donna an email. And we can make sure we integrate you into what we're doing, Verizon's work. Or we can just give you some ideas about places where you can learn more.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Mike, what about for you; how can folks get involved?

>> MIKE MASON: Well, I think we have to hold ourselves accountable I was in a barbershop once and guys were talking about -- a Black barbershop guys were talking about how unfair the judicial system was and then five minutes later they said something about calling to jury duty and that same group was saying the easy things you can do to the magistrate about jury duty I finally slapped the chair and I said are you listening to yourself so we have to hold ourselves accountable. Both jury duty -- Town Hall Meetings if you hear the chief is meeting with people go to that meeting you have to make them understand what your experiences are. As Donna mentioned, you know, we didn't all have the same experiences. I grew up on the south side of Chicago the same area as Xavier and my experiences with the police is completely different. Completely different. All of them were positive. Which is why I went into law enforcement. So the Black community's experience with law enforcement I would argue is not monolithic but we have to get engaged we have to have our voice heard. If you have an episode, forget about brutality but just unprofessional treatment. Make sure somebody knows about that. We can't be silent. When you're silent, the thing didn't happen. So we have to be advocates for ourselves and we have to be advocates for our community. And we have to volunteer with youth groups. Things like that. I did prison outreach and the thing that struck me the most is most of the people were in there simply because they didn't have a strong male role model I grew up in a single parent family. My father. People talk about peer pressure I grew up with peer pressure I didn't want to make my father upset.

So just things like that are ways that we can get engaged and we can touch the youth of today who are going to be these prosecutors, these public defenders, these police officers, these judges of the future.

I want them to know they can do that.

>> JEREMY GODWIN: Mike, thank you so much. Donna, Kathy, same to you. Thanks for talking about this. Continuing the Next20 conversation. And the things that we can all do to make a change in a positive way. In the days to come. I appreciate it. Thank you, all.