



Carolyn Hayden-Garner, CPP, PLP, originally from the small town of West Helena, Arkansas, became the Payroll Director at Tesla in 2018 when Tesla executives contacted her to gauge her interest in the position. In her current role at Tesla, she is responsible for all facets of payroll that span the Americas, 29 countries in Europe, and India. She is responsible for payroll operations, compliance, strategy, analytics, and vendor relations. Carolyn is currently the most senior female African American serving in a leadership role at Tesla. She is the Executive Sponsor of **Black at Tesla**, an employee resource group that advocates for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Thirty years ago, Carolyn started her payroll career at Dallas Independent School District, where she held her first leadership role as the Executive Director of Payroll. During her tenure there, she was the leader who accepted the challenge of implementing the first major ERP system in a school district environment (including Payroll, HR, Budget, Accounting, and time and Labor). She was the key partner in the development and implementation of a biometric timekeeping system, which is still operative today. Her work at the Dallas Independent School District was recognized when the district received Oracle's Innovator of the Year Award.

Carolyn has worked at several global companies, such as CBRE, as its Director of Payroll, where she was responsible for payroll and operations for North America, including Canada. While at CBRE, she received the Management Excellence Award. Carolyn also led the payroll team at Northrup Grumman, where she assumed Global Payroll responsibilities for the UK, Australia, South Korea, UAE, KSA, Japan, Belgium, and North America. During her tenure at Northrop Grumman, she received the Northrop's Quality Award.

Carolyn served nine years as president of Oracle Human Capital Management Users Group (OHUG) and was appointed spokesperson for the International Oracle Users Group Community by Oracle. In these roles, the organization grew immensely, and she was instrumental in driving product direction for system enhancements and development.

She is most proud of her involvement in her community, which includes her non-profit organization, Mothers Shut In, founded several years ago, with the mission of empowering women of diverse backgrounds and enabling them to leave a legacy for their families for future generations. She is also a member of the Junior League of Salt Lake City, where she currently serves as the first Director appointed to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion role. She remains active on the OHUG board as its treasurer and has served as a board advisor to several non-profit organizations. As of January 2024, she has been named National Board Trustee for the Boys & Girls Club America.

In 2021, Carolyn was awarded Impact Magazine's Women of Impact Award. In 2022, she was recognized as a top 4 finalist in Nextstar's Media Campaign for Remarkable Women in the Utah region, and she was named to Utah's 40 over 40. In 2023, she was honored by the All-Star Gospel Celebration with the "Slam Dunk Game Changer" Award during the 2023 All-Star weekend in Salt Lake City, UT.

Carolyn believes in giving back in numerous ways and was recently featured on the cover of PayTech magazine as a phenomenal mentor and coach, paying it forward to those who desire to advance their career and climb the corporate ladder. Throughout her career, she has successfully mentored hundreds of individuals, a key factor in their advancement.

Carolyn is a dynamic keynote speaker; her transparency and desire to share her unique and impactful journey are valuable to everyone who hears her story. She has spoken at Women In Technology events, American Payroll Association (PayrollOrg), diversity panels, and major corporate events, and hosted non-profit panels and discussions. Others in the industry often describe her as energetic, driven, and high performing, and she offers advice to all willing to listen. She is also known by most as attentive, helpful, supportive, and generous. Her mantra is "It is not where you come from, but what you do with what you have."

She received her bachelor's degree in accounting from Grambling State University and her MBA from Dallas Baptist University. She holds both US (CPP) and Canada (CPM) Payroll certifications. Carolyn has shared 37 years of marriage with her husband, Thomas. She has been blessed with three exceptional children: Thomas (Taylor), Cassie, and Lauryn. Her village has grown with three adorable grandchildren: Paxton, Caysen, Preslyn, and another granddaughter en route! Her greatest assets are her faith, family, and friends.