

[Leadership & Talent](#)

## Wieden+Kennedy Portland Brings Back Azsa West as Chief Creative Officer

The filmmaker and artist replaces agency leaders Ana and Hermeti Balarin

By [Natalie Venegas](#) | November 7, 2022



By rejoining W+K, West will continue to bring her international knowledge to the agency.

Credit: Wieden+Kennedy

Creative, filmmaker and artist Azsa West is returning to [Wieden+Kennedy](#) as chief creative officer for its Portland headquarters.

First coming to the creative agency in 2006, West will rejoin Wieden+Kennedy in Spring 2023 from [Anomaly Berlin](#), where she's held the role of executive creative director since 2021. The Wieden+Kennedy alum will also replace Portland's creative leaders Ana and Hermeti Balarin, as they move to Wieden+Kennedy's London office in early 2023.

"As we sought out the next creative leader for Portland, we knew we wanted someone specific: someone from and of this place, someone proud of and committed to the city of Portland and someone committed to the work who's able to keep it simple and focused on ideas over everything. Azsa West is that person," Karl Lieberman, global chief creative officer at Wieden+Kennedy, said in a statement. "She loves this place and has helped build it. We're excited to have her back."

West is no stranger to the agency's sense of culture as she was part of its inaugural W+K 12 program—an experimental creative school within W+K, founded by Wieden creative Jelly Helm and licensed through the Oregon Department of Education.



### [Wieden+Kennedy London Appoint Ana and Hermeti Balarin as Creative Leaders](#)

Holding several leadership roles throughout Wieden+Kennedy's global network, including its Portland, New York, Shanghai and Tokyo offices, West's 15-plus-year career in advertising has included work that spans the globe on brands such as Instagram, Nike, Air Jordan, Rimowa, Heineken, Sony, Google, Disney, Target and P&G. Throughout her career, she's also contributed to iconic and award-winning brand campaigns such as P&G's "Thank You, Mom," Secret's "I'd Rather Get Paid," Rimowa's "Ingenieurskunst," Nike's "Run It" and "Don't Love Me, Hate Me" and Levi's "Go Forth."

By rejoining the agency, West will not only continue to bring her international knowledge to the agency, but as a queer-identified, indigenous person of color, she aims to create culturally impactful work and an environment that promotes authenticity, experimentation and inclusion.

## Growth in leadership

As the Balarins move to London, Wieden+Kennedy continues to solidify its office leadership across the globe with permanent creative leader Susan Hoffman returning to the agency's Portland headquarters as its interim chief creative officer, working alongside Karl Lieberman and Global CEO Neal Arthur to lead the office through the transition and onboard the full management team.

In addition, John "JP" Petty, III will take on a new role as global executive creative director for the agency's social-first creative studio, Bodega. This move signals the agency's further expansion of creative social offering, which has seen significant growth expanding to multiple Wieden+Kennedy offices.

With a global expansion of accounts like AB InBev, Samsung, [Ford](#) and McDonald's, the growth of Bodega and the addition of new clients, Wieden+Kennedy aims to continue its growth with its client relationships and tap into more shared talent across the network to bring more international perspective.

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[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

## PepsiCo Puts a Neon Spotlight on Latina-Owned Businesses With ‘Jefa-Owned’ Campaign

Small business owners are encouraged to access resources through the beverage giant's Juntos Crecemos program

By [Natalie Venegas](#) | March 30, 2022



Select business owners will receive a "Jefa-Owned" neon sign.

Credit: PepsiCo

While small businesses have endured major economic setbacks since the start of [the pandemic](#), survival has become especially difficult for [Latina-owned businesses](#), which have been tasked with overcoming both Covid-specific obstacles and longstanding systemic barriers.

Aimed at helping these owners gain access to supportive resources, [PepsiCo](#) has launched “Jefa-Owned”—that is, run by a Latina boss. The national campaign was created by PepsiCo’s Juntos Crecemos (Together We Grow), a multi-faceted platform launched last fall to drive awareness and support for Hispanic small businesses, specifically restaurants, bodegas and carnicerías (meat markets).

To mark the launch, PepsiCo leaders joined Latina business owners to ring the opening bell at Nasdaq, where they unveiled the Jefa-Owned neon sign that affiliated storefronts can display.

The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness about resources available to Latina-owned businesses, specifically the Juntos Crecemos Hispanic Digital & Delivery Program, an eight-week course in delivery logistics, technology, marketing and search engine optimization to create a digital presence and access more customers. The first 40 Latina small business owners to complete the program will receive the Jefa-Owned neon signs.

PepsiCo is also reminding consumers of the role they play in supporting their community-based small businesses with limited-edition merchandise. The line includes T-shirts, tote bags and notepads, and was designed in collaboration with Hija de tu Madre, a lifestyle brand founded by Latina entrepreneur Patty Delgado, who also established March 31 as National Jefa Day.

“To have PepsiCo support us, as small businesses, it feels like we are not invisible,” Elizabeth Espinoza, owner of Miranda’s Grocery, said in a statement. “PepsiCo is providing much-needed business tools, resources and training that we would otherwise not be able to access. I am truly proud to be a part of ‘Jefa-Owned,’ and I look forward to being a beacon of light to other Latina business owners in our Hispanic community.”



### Investing in jefas

According to the [2020 State of Latinos Entrepreneurship Report](#), Latinas own 40% of all Latino businesses, with 41% of Latina business owners reporting “large negative impacts” as a result of the pandemic.

For Esperanza Teasdale, vp and general manager of the Hispanic business unit at PepsiCo Beverages North America, the need for more focused resources are crucial for Latina-owned business to not only rebound, but thrive.

“Latinas are a powerful economic force in the U.S., creating businesses at a rate six times the national average,” Teasdale told Adweek. “Despite this accelerated growth rate, Latinas are confronting foundational challenges which must be addressed. We are proud to grow the impact of the Juntos Crecemos platform with a focus on helping to raise visibility for Latina business owners while simultaneously strengthening their businesses.”

The limited edition Jefa-Owned merchandise will be available for purchase on the Hija de tu Madre’s [online store](#), beginning on National Jefa Day, March 31. Latina business owners looking to apply for the Hispanic Digital & Delivery Program can visit the initiative’s dedicated [website](#).

[8 Ways the Advertising Industry Can Eliminate the Latina Pay Gap](#)

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## R/GA Promotes Shannon Washington to US Chief Creative Officer

She's the first Black woman to be elevated to this position at a holding company agency

By [Natalie Venegas](#) | December 9, 2022



Shannon Washington is the first Black woman U.S. chief creative officer in the history of all holding company agencies.

Credit: R/GA

After a series of significant changes to IPG agency [R/GA](#) as it restructures and moves away from its city model in the U.S. and instead implements a country model with five disciplines powering the business, the agency is making another noteworthy change by promoting Shannon Washington to chief creative officer, making her the first Black woman U.S. chief creative officer in the history of all holding company agencies.

"My job is to create the best possible environment at R/GA to make the best work. This represents a really pivotal time, not just with me, but for R/GA as a whole," Washington told Adweek.

In her previous role as svp, group executive creative director at R/GA, Washington led creative work for clients such as Ad Council, Google, Sephora, Samsung and Uber and will now continue her creative efforts on a much larger scale. In this new position, Washington continues to show the impact she can make in the creative world.

Some of her notable works include Ad Council's "[Love Has No Labels](#)" campaign which powerfully tells the story between siblings and Sephora's "[Black Beauty Is Beauty](#)" campaign which sheds light on the significance of Black beauty and culture campaigns. As a testament to her talent, Washington was featured in [Adweek's Creative 100 in 2020](#).



[R/GA Is Closing Its Current New York and San Francisco Office Spaces as It Continues Restructuring](#)

Despite R/GA's restructuring—it [laid off about 5%](#) of its New York office in June and closed its physical office spaces in New York and San Francisco in November—the agency and Washington remain dedicated to evolving and bringing diverse people together to create meaningful work, especially through a pandemic.

"The value of intersectionality is something that ironically came to light in the pandemic because of the way we had to work," Washington said. "In person I wanted to make sure I recognized the value that everyone brought to the process and [help everyone feel] seen and heard, but working in a hybrid culture, it became clear to me that I had to think of new ways to do that."

### Helping creatives be seen and heard

Now three years into her time at the agency, Washington hopes to continue her personal goal of putting work at the forefront as she finds a way to take the best of what the agency does and inject a sense of place and culture into the work.

Washington is continuously aiming to create a space where everyone can feel seen and heard. And as a creative woman of color, she emphasizes the importance of creating spaces where other creatives of color can have opportunities.

"You have to hold the door that you open; you don't walk through that door by yourself," Washington said. "There has been a generational shift in our industry [and] we are starting to see way more women of color in medium and junior positions. My goal is to keep them here. Recruitment is one thing, but for me it's all about retention. For creatives of color it's really about supporting and seeing [others] and acknowledging that [they] are going to have a different experience."

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