Influential Women Recognizes Vanessa Serrano-Bernal: Bold Purpose-Driven Leadership In People, Growth, And Technology

CERRITOS, CA, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Empowering High-Performing Teams, Advancing Enterprise Growth, and Creating Opportunities for the Next Generation



Cerritos, California – Vanessa Serrano-Bernal, Vice President of Global Renewals at Optro, has built a career at the intersection of revenue, customer strategy, and people leadership. With more than 14 years of progressive experience in enterprise software and SaaS, Vanessa has earned a reputation for building high-performing teams, strengthening customer relationships, and developing scalable strategies that drive sustainable growth. Her leadership is grounded in the belief that strong business outcomes are built through accountability, meaningful relationships, and a commitment to developing people.

Her professional journey began at a five-person startup in the Bay Area, where she started as a customer support agent. From that early position, Vanessa steadily advanced through increasingly influential leadership roles, developing an understanding of the customer journey while gaining firsthand experience with the challenges and opportunities that accompany rapidly growing companies. Her ability to build, scale, and lead high-performing teams eventually positioned her to take on increasingly strategic responsibilities across the technology sector.

A pivotal chapter in Vanessa's career came during her time at Mavenlink, where she was tasked with launching an entirely new Customer Success department. Rather than stepping into an established structure, she helped create the function from the ground up, developing the

playbooks, key performance indicators, and team structures necessary to support the company's continued expansion. The experience strengthened her ability to connect people strategy with business objectives and gave her valuable insight into what organizations need to sustain growth.

Vanessa later joined AuditBoard, now rebranded as Optro, during another period of extraordinary expansion. During her tenure, she played an instrumental role in helping the company scale from $1 million to $250 million in revenue while its workforce grew from approximately 20 employees to 600. Today, she leads a team of 15 renewal managers serving customers globally. More than 50% of the Fortune 500 are represented within the customer base her team serves in the governance, risk, and compliance space.

Her accomplishments at AuditBoard also included back-to-back President's Club recognition in 2021 and 2022. For Vanessa, achievements of this nature represent more than individual performance. They reflect the importance of creating an environment where people can develop, contribute, and succeed together.

Education has remained another defining element of Vanessa's professional philosophy. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from San José State University before completing a Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology at the University of Southern California. Her academic path reflects her longstanding interest in understanding people, organizations, and the relationship between individual development and business performance.

That commitment to learning continues today. Vanessa is currently pursuing a Doctor of Education in Organizational Change and Leadership at the University of Southern California, with her program underway from January 2026 through May 2028. Her decision to pursue doctoral studies was influenced in part by leadership gaps she witnessed throughout her career, particularly within rapidly scaling organizations. She recognized an opportunity to deepen her understanding of leadership and become even better equipped to develop people and organizations.

Her formal education is complemented by professional training in Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers, Human Resources Fundamentals, Strategic Human Resources, and New Manager Fundamentals. Together, these experiences have reinforced an approach to leadership that emphasizes both performance and the people responsible for achieving it.

For Vanessa, that philosophy has also been shaped by exceptional mentors. She credits much of her success to consistency, stability, and the guidance of two influential leaders: Chief Customer Officer Chris D. and her direct VP, Eugene K. Both played meaningful roles in her development, offering lessons that extended beyond business strategy and professional advancement.

One of the most enduring lessons came from Eugene, who regularly reminded his team that

there are three essential priorities in life: health, family, and work — in that order. The philosophy became especially meaningful through the example of their Chief Customer Officer, who battled and overcame cancer three times, including twice while continuing to lead the organization.

For Vanessa, the experience reinforced a perspective that continues to influence both her leadership and personal life. Professional success matters, but it exists within the broader context of health, family, relationships, and purpose. Keeping those priorities in perspective has helped her approach leadership with greater empathy and consistency.

That perspective is particularly relevant to Vanessa's advocacy for women in technology and sales. She encourages young women entering the industry to pursue opportunities wholeheartedly, even when traditionally male-dominated environments may initially feel intimidating.

She believes women bring qualities such as emotional intelligence, intuition, empathy, and a nurturing leadership style that can have a meaningful impact on organizations. In her experience, these qualities are not separate from business performance. They can influence forecasting, people leadership, customer relationships, team development, and the creation of healthy organizational cultures.

Vanessa also recognizes the broader opportunities that a career in technology can provide. For her, the industry has offered professional flexibility, including the ability to work remotely while raising two children. It has also created opportunities to invest in education, family, and long-term generational impact.

Outside of her corporate career, Vanessa channels that same sense of purpose into community service. In 2024, she founded the Lovee Foundation, an organization dedicated to empowering underserved youth through practical educational and career resources. Its initiatives include resume coaching, interview preparation, scholarships, and essential academic resources designed to help students access opportunities that may otherwise feel out of reach.

The mission is deeply personal. Vanessa grew up with immigrant parents and was the first of five children in her family to pursue higher education. Reaching that milestone required sacrifice and determination, giving her an appreciation for the significance of educational opportunity.

Now, she is committed to helping others navigate some of the same barriers. Through the Lovee Foundation, Vanessa seeks to provide young people with tools that can help them enter professional environments with greater confidence and preparation. Her goal is not simply to encourage students but to provide practical resources that can help open doors.

Her community involvement also extends through her membership in Latinas in Tech and her support of the American Heart Association. These commitments reflect her broader belief that

professional achievement carries a responsibility to contribute beyond the workplace.

At the center of Vanessa's philosophy are people, family, and community. Professionally, she believes in protecting and investing in the people and customers who contribute to organizational success. She also believes leaders should maintain a clear vision of what meaningful success looks like — one that recognizes not only financial outcomes but also career development, new opportunities, and the doors opened for others along the way.

As a mother of two, executive leader, educator, mentor, and founder, Vanessa continues to connect her professional ambitions with a larger sense of purpose. Her career demonstrates how operational expertise, education, mentorship, and empathy can work together in leadership.

For Vanessa, influence is ultimately measured not only by what an individual accomplishes, but also by the opportunities created for others. Whether leading a global renewals organization, pursuing her doctorate, mentoring emerging professionals, or supporting students through the Lovee Foundation, she remains focused on creating meaningful and lasting impact — one person, team, and opportunity at a time.

Learn More about Vanessa Serrano-Bernal:

Through her Influential Women profile, https://influentialwomen.com/connect/vanessa-serrano-bernal

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