WASHINGTON — Today, Secretary of the Treasury Janet L. Yellen announced the appointment of Janis Bowdler to serve as the Department’s first Counselor for Racial Equity. Ms. Bowdler will be charged with coordinating Treasury’s efforts to advance racial equity including engaging with diverse communities throughout the country and to identify and mitigate barriers to accessing benefits and opportunities with the Department.

“The American economy has historically not worked fairly for communities of color. The pandemic threw a spotlight on this inequity; people of color were often the first to lose their jobs and businesses. Treasury must play a central role in ensuring that as our economy recovers from the pandemic, it recovers in a way that addresses the inequalities that existed long before anyone was infected with COVID-19,” said Secretary Janet L. Yellen. “I’m excited that Janis will join us and devote her efforts to that mission.”

“I could not be more humbled by the historic opportunity to serve as the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s first Counselor for Racial Equity,” said Janis Bowdler. “I have spent my entire career working in solidarity with Black, Latinx, AAPI, Native communities, and other communities of color to dismantle the structural and institutional racism that perpetuates the racial wealth divide. Addressing racial and gender disparities and giving underserved communities greater access to opportunities creates more broadly shared prosperity for all. Thank you to Secretary Yellen for entrusting me with this position to help contribute to the Biden Administration’s commitment to centering racial equity in its work.”

Earlier today, Treasury published a blog post by Deputy Secretary Wally Adeyemo titled, “A Coordinated Strategy to Advance Racial Equity at Treasury,” where he highlighted this historic appointment alongside the creation of a Racial Equity Advisory Committee and other ongoing efforts to promote diversity among the Treasury workforce.

ABOUT COUNSELOR JANIS BOWDLER:
Janis Bowdler has spent the last two decades advancing economic equity solutions for communities of color and breaking down the barriers that underpin the disparities in wealth and financial security by race and gender.

Janis’ career has spanned local service, national advocacy, and international philanthropy. She launched her career in her native Northeast Ohio with Famicos Foundation, a community development corporation working in the Hough and Glenville neighborhoods of Cleveland, Ohio. As a Project Manager she developed and preserved affordable homeownership and rental opportunities for the residents of these historically African American neighborhoods.

She then spent 10 years at UnidosUS, then National Council of La Raza, advocating for economic mobility opportunities for Latino families. As the Director of Economic Policy, she led research, advocacy, and policy development in the areas of job creation and job quality, retirement security, housing, banking, community development and consumer protection.

Most recently, Janis served the President of the JPMorgan Chase & Co. Foundation. Under her leadership, the firm launched several critical initiatives that have expanded capital for entrepreneurs of color, improved access to banking products and services, expanded access to new job skills, and built more inclusive neighborhoods. Janis played a critical role in developing the firm’s incremental $30 billion racial equity commitment.

Janis has authored a number of publications on financial opportunity and economic mobility. Most recently, she co-authored “Building Equitable Cities: How to Drive Economic Mobility and Regional Growth” with Henry Cisneros and Jeff Lubell.

Janis received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Malone College in Canton, Ohio and a Master of Science degree from Cleveland State University. She is a proud Latina, a yoga instructor, mom to one daughter, two dogs, and a bunny. She lives with her husband and her family in Takoma Park, Maryland.

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