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PHOTOGRAPH BY POWELL PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.



ABOUT US

THE CHICAGO MINORITY SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (ChicagoMSDC) IS THE FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL MINORITY SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (NMSDC) NETWORK, A NON-PROFIT CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION THAT ADVANCES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CERTIFIED ASIAN, BLACK, HISPANIC AND NATIVE AMERICAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISES AND CONNECTS THEM TO ITS CORPORATE MEMBERS.

ChicagoMSDC HAS BEEN A THOUGHT LEADER IN MINORITY BUSINESS SINCE 1968 WHEN IT BEGAN COLLABORATING WITH CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY LEADERS TO PRODUCE THE ANNUAL EVENT THAT WOULD BECOME THE CHICAGO BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY FAIR (CBOF). OUT OF THIS EVENT SPANG THE GROUP THAT WOULD COME TO BE KNOWN AS NMSDC, ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S LEADING CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS.

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MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFIED

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

SHELIA MORGAN

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We've come a long way in 50 years!
We are so excited to be celebrating a half century of thought leadership in minority business. In 1967, a group of corporate and community leaders gathered to channel the energy from the civil rights movement into enlightened business practices benefiting the minority community and the American economy. The landscape for minorities has changed substantially since our first CBOF in 1967. Out of our core group sprang the entire NMSDC network and our model for bringing certified minority business enterprises together with large buying organizations for mutually beneficial partnerships.

Thanks in large part to the tireless work of the ChicagoMSDC network, government agencies and progressive corporations now understand the importance of doing their part to help level the playing field for minority businesses competing for contracts in an environment which has historically excluded them. But the disparities between the opportunities available to minorities and non-minorities remain stark.

Minority entrepreneurs create jobs and generate tax revenue, particularly in the communities which need them the most. Their diversity of experience breeds a diversity of goods and services available in the marketplace. Supporting minority businesses is critical to the social and economic future of the country.

Well aware of this, our MBEs and corporate members have been championing supplier diversity for over fifty years but the conversation has remained amongst ourselves for too long. Now is the time to enlist the public to help us advance the cause. We voted for president of the United States on November 8, but we vote every day with our dollars. By spending with minority owned businesses and the corporations who support them, you are voting for equal opportunity and equal access. By encouraging others to #BUYDIVERSE, you are demonstrating your solidarity with minority entrepreneurs and the corporations that utilize them.

So follow @ChicagoMSDC on Facebook and Twitter and use #BUYDIVERSE on social media and be part of the consumer revolution.

We look forward to celebrating our milestone anniversary with you at CBOF50 and to 50 more years of minority business success!

Shelia Morgan
President & CEO
ChicagoMSDC



#BUYDIVERSE™

**CHOOSE MINORITY OWNED BUSINESSES
& THE CORPORATIONS THAT SUPPORT THEM.**

MINORITY OWNED BUSINESSES ENRICH THE COMMUNITIES FROM WHICH THEY COME AND THE ONES INTO WHICH THEY ARE WELCOMED. MINORITY OWNED BUSINESSES CREATE JOBS AND GENERATE TAX REVENUE, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREAS WHICH NEED THEM THE MOST. WITH UNIQUE PERSPECTIVES, MINORITY ENTREPRENEURS BRING INNOVATIVE GOODS AND SERVICES TO THE MARKETPLACE. WHEN YOU CHOOSE MINORITY OWNED FIRMS AND THE CORPORATIONS WHO DO BUSINESS WITH THEM, YOU ARE INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF YOUR COMMUNITY.



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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

RUBY McCLEARY

PHOTOGRAPH BY DOT WARD



Greetings and Salutations,
The leaves have fallen and the change in weather signals winter letting us know that the holiday season will soon be upon us. The holidays are a time not only to create priceless memories but reflect on the year's events. I would encourage the ChicagoMSDC Board of Directors, Minority Business Enterprises and our Corporate members to take the opportunity to be still and look back at all that has transpired over the year. As you think about what went right and lessons you've learned from what didn't go so well, also take the time to think about how we can help create an even more productive and powerful 2017 for Minority businesses.

2016 was the beginning of what we described as a trifecta. Two thirds of this influential season is behind us. We had a fantastic CBOF 49 and NMSDC conference, and the best is yet to come!

2017 will be an important year for a multitude of reasons. First, the board is working on several new initiatives to help ChicagoMSDC be an even stronger organization and crucial part of talks of minority participation at the private and governmental levels. Second, we will be celebrating a landmark event April 20 through April 21, 2017: the 50th birthday of ChicagoMSDC. CBOF50 is especially dear to my heart because United Airlines has been involved with ChicagoMSDC since 1967. United Airlines recognized early on that for an economy to flourish, minority business need to be an important part of that. As a board

we recognize the importance of this organization and will continue to work hard to help ChicagoMSDC be a part of this community for another 50 years.

If you have not registered for CBOF 50 yet, don't wait. This will be the biggest celebration of 2017. Anyone and everyone who has been touched by ChicagoMSDC will be in attendance to celebrate this monumental milestone. In addition, the networking opportunities will be in abundance.

Thank you to each of the companies that have supported ChicagoMSDC this year and continue to strive for excellence in each respective industry. I look forward to seeing you at CBOF50! In parting I leave you with this thought "Nothing is impossible for the word itself says 'I'm possible'." Happy Holidays and here's to a fantastic 2017 where all things are possible!

Ruby McCleary
Director Supplier Diversity, United Airlines
Chairman, ChicagoMSDC Board of Directors

LETTER FROM THE MBEIC CHAIR

JOYCE JOHNSON



PHOTOGRAPH BY POWELL PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

Happy holidays! 2016 has been an exciting year filled with amazing participation from the MBE community. The MBEIC was busy planning CBOF 49, NMSDC in October and a number of events throughout the year.

The MBEIC committee held several successful supply integration events hosted by ChicagoMSDC corporate members such as United Airlines, Navistar and Health Care Service Corporation (Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois). These corporations hosted select MBEs that met specific category needs at their corporate offices introducing them to business opportunities within their organizations. Another tremendous showing of support was at the MBE 2 MBE networking event hosted by the Federal Reserve Bank as part of their Business Smart Week.

We are expecting to continue delivering quality programs and events in 2017. The MBEIC committee is asking MBEs to be active and join one of the following committees: MBE 2 MBE, Business Opportunities, Communications, Golf, CBOF 50, Advocacy and Education. Your involvement will be crucial in helping MBEs advance in the Chicago business community.

Next year we are planning to increase the number of procurement lunches which allow MBEs to hear firsthand from corporations how to position themselves and build partnerships with the sponsoring organization.

Each year the MBEIC committee awards several scholarships to deserving students from across the Chicagoland area. These students have shown academic excellence, civil involvement and extraordinary accomplishments. The goal is to increase the number of scholarships awarded in 2017. The Chicago Council hosts the enjoyable Scholarship Classic event on the links to raise money for the scholarship fund every year.

We are continually looking for members of the MBE community to join or assist the committees that make up this outstanding organization and welcome those who would like to further the cause of MBEs striving to build stronger and lasting relationships with our corporate member organizations.

Thank you for a great 2016 and I look forward to seeing you at future ChicagoMSDC events and don't forget to mark your calendars for CBOF 50!

Joyce Johnson
President & CEO, Anchor Staffing
Chairman, Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee

37th ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP CLASSIC

BY JULIA GUAN

Nearly 200 golfers attended Chicago MSDC's 37th Annual Scholarship classic hosted by the Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee (MBEIC). Held at the White Eagle Country Club, an Arnold Palmer signature golf course in Naperville, Illinois on Monday, August 15, 2016, the event raised funds to provide scholarships to deserving minority college bound students in celebration of their academic achievement and commitment to entrepreneurship.

For over thirteen years, Jim Osborne, Chicago Bears legend and National Material's Director of Minority Business Development, has chaired the Scholarship Classic Committee, which includes Donna Bridgeforth of Bridgeforth, Wolf & Associates; Thomas McLeary of Endow, Inc.; Michael Gaines of The CRS Group; and Sandeep Nain of SNTial

Technologies. The event would not be possible without their hard work and dedication to a very worthy cause.

Thousands of dollars in scholarships have been awarded over the past four decades. The MBEIC Committee, made up of Chairperson Joyce Johnson of Anchor Staffing, Gaines, McLeary, Nain, Jackie Dyess of Inter-City Supply Co., Inc., Brian Powers and Rhea Steele of Blue Ocean Logic Group, Inc., and Dr. Karen Eng—CSMI, review numerous applications every year to grant funds to deserving minority, college-bound, entrepreneurially driven students.

This year's Dolores Saxton-Walker Scholarship winners will be honored during the 2017 MBEIC Sharing Success Awards at CBOF50. Our scholarships are open to high school seniors aspiring to entrepreneurship or



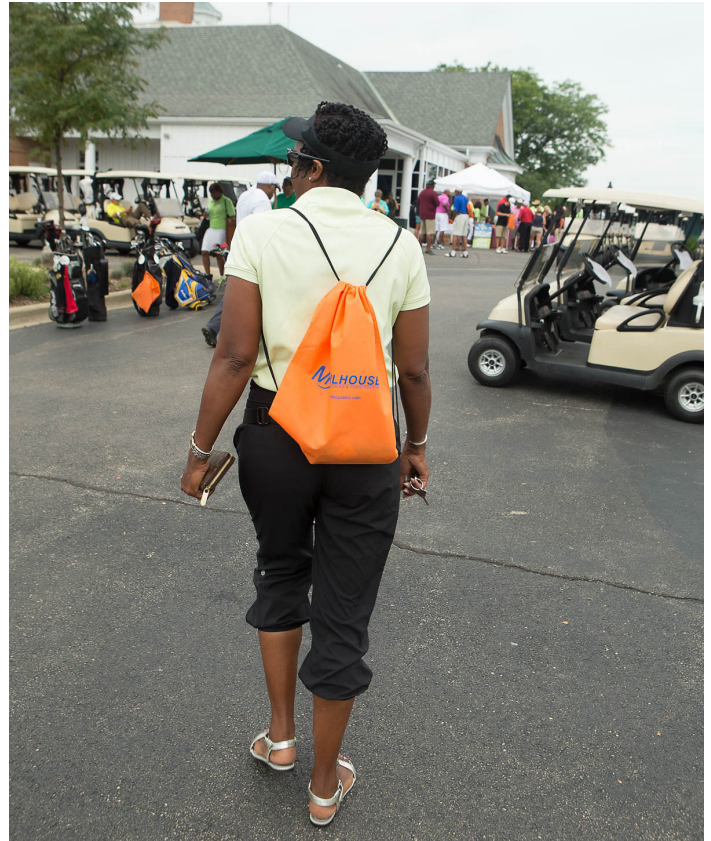
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GOLFERS EAGERLY AWAIT THE SHOTGUN START OF THE 37th ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP CLASSIC. ALEX MALOTT (IN ORANGE) FROM MILHOUSE DONATED BACK HIS NUMBERS GAME WINNINGS TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND. THANK YOU, ALEX!

intending to pursue a major in business. Applicants must be enrolled in the Chicago Public School system, maintain a weighted cumulative GPA of at least 3.5, and plan to enroll in a regionally accredited college or university the following fall. Eligible students are encouraged to apply at <https://cps.academicworks.com/opportunities/1602>. For more information about applying for a scholarship or donating to the scholarship fund, contact Gwen Jones at 312.755.2556 or gjones@chicagomscd.org.

Congratulations to Thomas McLeary who won the United Airlines ticket raffle, and to Jay Jara of Euler Hermes who won the flat-screen television raffle. The lucky winners of the time-honored Numbers Game were Roland Harper, Henry Conforti, Clifton Berry, and Alex Malott, who split a \$1,000 pot. We want to especially thank Alex Malott, Associate Civil Engineer for Milhouse Engineering and Construction, who donated back his \$250 prize money to the ChicagoMSDC scholarship fund.

Special thanks to our title sponsor, Milhouse Engineering and Construction—a newly certified MBE, the Scholarship Classic Committee, and to all of the volunteers and supporters who made the event a success.



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WANDA OSBORNE SPORTS GIFT BAG COMPLIMENTS OF SPONSOR, MILHOUSE ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION, INC.



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THE 2016 DOLORES SAXTON-WALKER SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS RECEIVING THEIR AWARDS AT THE MBEIC SHARING SUCCESS AWARD RECEPTION. ROMAN MAGALLANES, BRENDA PACHECO, BENIN G. LESTER, DAISY PINEDA, TYME ANDERSON, AND KELVIN S. WANG.

SUPPLY CHAIN INTEGRATION

FEATURING HCSC/BLEU CROSS & BLEU SHIELD OF ILLINOIS

BY MICHAEL GAINES & MEGAN NAKANO

The Supply Chain Integration Program was designed to grow MBEs by providing exposure and business opportunities while enhancing corporate members' supplier diversity programs. The program presents solutions via diverse suppliers hand-picked to meet current business needs. This series was developed by ChicagoMSDC with an ad hoc sub-committee of the Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee led by Michael Gaines, President of The CRS Group.

Through participation in the Supply Chain Integration Program, MBEs develop business relationships with ChicagoMSDC corporate members. Although an introduction in a single event may not lead to an engagement, the goal is to ultimately facilitate long-term,

mutually beneficial relationships between MBEs and ChicagoMSDC corporate members.

Our most recent event was hosted by Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC), a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, and the largest customer-owned health insurance company in the United States. HCSC provides these services through its operating divisions and subsidiaries including Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL).

HCSC's beginnings include a thorough history that extends back to The Great Depression. In 1936, a group of Chicago civic leaders, hospital officials and physicians met in the midst of the Great Depression to find a solution to the critical problem of affordable health care. The group pooled their resources and launched what was initially called the Chicago Plan for Hospital Care. The company's

PARTICIPANTS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN INTEGRATION EVENT RECEIVE INFORMATION ON HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH HCSC/BLUE CROSS & BLUE SHIELD OF ILLINOIS DURING THE SPEAKER FORUM.





DIVERSE SUPPLIERS MEET WITH HCSC/BCBSIL PROCUREMENT PERSONNEL AND BUYERS DURING THE MATCHMAKING SESSIONS.

first health insurance policy became effective on January 21, 1937. The Blue Cross Plan for hospital services and the Blue Shield Plan for physician services operated separately until 1975 when they were merged as Health Care Service Corporation. By 1982, all the smaller Blue Cross plans in Illinois were also merged with the Chicago-based plan, and the company operated as Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois. Today, HCSC is the largest customer-owned health insurer in the United States and the fourth largest overall, operating through BCBS Plans in Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. HCSC is part of the BCBS System that consists of 36 independently operated member companies managed by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Serving the people of Illinois since 1936, BCBSIL is the largest and most experienced health insurance company in the state, providing more than 8.1 million members with comprehensive and affordable health plans.

HCSC and BCBSA recognize that their reputation relies on building and maintaining trust and are committed to managing these businesses with values that represent the highest standards of quality, integrity, excellence and respect. Both organizations seek to develop relationships with suppliers that share similar values

and conduct business in the same ethical manner. The commitment is to enhance business prospects for all entities by providing equal opportunities for the inclusion of diverse businesses to participate on HCSC contracts. The HCSC mission extends even further, to maximize procurement opportunities for minority, women and other diverse-owned companies by proactively seeking qualified and competitive suppliers, and to partner in creating cost effective and efficient business solutions.

BCBSIL hosted the event at the corporate headquarters, located at 300 E Randolph on September 21, 2016. LaTonya Fourte'-Lyles, Supplier Diversity Manager of HCSC coordinated these efforts with the ChicagoMSDC Supply Chain Integration Team. The focus of the event was to connect diverse businesses (M/WBEs, VBEs & LGBTBEs) with immediate and upcoming opportunities as well as facilitate introductions to procurement and buying departments of HCSC/BCBSIL. The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), who owns and manages the Blue Cross Blue Shield trademarks, also participated in the event.

The ceremony began with an address from Chief Procurement Officer, Kevin Nash. Kevin delivered the procurement mission and vision and presented the

organization's commitment to engage diverse suppliers and ensure that opportunities are available and inclusive. Rebecca Wassman, Strategic Services Senior Consultant for the BCBSA Purchasing Organization, delivered an overview of the relationship between the Association and the 36 independently operated BCBS Plans. LaTonya Fourte'-Lyles, a ChicagoMSDC board member, hosted the event and provided insights into HCSC's program, processes and approach.

Each affinity represented at the event was supported by the councils for that group. Sheila Morgan shared information on the role of Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council (ChicagoMSDC) and the programs and support vehicles that the Council provides for corporate members and minority suppliers. Other speakers included Emilia DiMenco, President of Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) and Gerardo Rodriguez, Executive Director of the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois (LGBTCC).

The matchmaker portion of the ceremony began immediately following the speaker forum. The matchmaker consisted of thirty firms who were strategically selected to meet with procurement personnel and buyers for a total of 64 one-on-one meetings at this half day event. Firms represented a range of industries including: legal, event planning, information technology, infrastructure, medical supplies, medical services, finance, marketing, network security, promotions, workforce solutions, and video production.

Previous ChicagoMSDC Supply Chain Integration Events were conducted for several firms in the past year which included: United Airlines, Navistar, Federal Reserve Bank, Capital One, Johnson Controls and National Material. Similar events are in the plans for 2017, so stay tuned!



BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois
Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

INVESTMENT IN A STRONG SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM INCREASES CORPORATE REVENUES

A NEW ChicagoMSDC WHITE PAPER
BY PHILLIP BARREDA, JOSHUA GUTSTEIN
& STEFANIE GARCIA



THOUGHT LEADER IN MINORITY BUSINESS SINCE 1968.

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CHI VS. MKE

MBE DAY DOUBLE PLAY



BY MEGAN NAKANO



TEAM ChicagoMSDC



TEAM NORTH CENTRAL MSDC

The Milwaukee Brewers’ Emerging Markets (EM) Department hosted its second annual MBE Day Tailgate Event on July 22, 2016. ChicagoMSDC and North Central MSDC met in Milwaukee to face off in a “Battle of the Councils” softball game before watching the Cubs take on the Brewers at Miller Park. The Cubs won 5-2 that evening, but ChicagoMSDC didn’t fare as well, losing to North Central MSDC 7-1.

Tailgaters were treated to an all-you-can-eat buffet, live entertainment and a commemorative t-shirt, as part of the ticket package. These specially created promotional game packages were designed to foster a more inclusive game experience as part of the Milwaukee Brewers’ continuing efforts to improve diversity in baseball on and off the field. ChicagoMSDC MBEs and corporate members enjoyed the friendly rivalry while connecting with the North Central MSDC network.



FANS WATCH AS THE CHICAGO CUBS BEAT THE MILWAUKEE BREWERS AT MILLER PARK FOLLOWING THE MBE DAY TAILGATE EVENT.



NMSDC UPDATE

NMSDC CONFERENCE + BUSINESS EXCHANGE AND MBDA MED WEEK HELD IN CHICAGO

The 2016 National Minority Supplier Development Council Conference and Business Opportunity Exchange was held at McCormick Place in Chicago, Illinois, October 23-26. This annual event was attended by more than 6,000 corporate CEOs, procurement executives and supplier diversity professionals from the top multinational companies, as well as leading MBEs and international organizations.

The theme of this year's event was "Minority Supplier Development: Investing in the Future." More than 20 educational seminar sessions and interactive workshops engaged attendees with details of the latest commercial advances, and strategies and techniques to prepare for economic developments in the coming years. For the second year in a row, The Commerce Department's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) in partnership with NMSDC, provided special MED Week programming during the conference.

On Monday, October 24, there was a one-day trade fair with more than 700 exhibit booths and opportunities for establishing business-to-business ties. The day began with a "Power Breakfast" session, highlighted by the keynote speaker, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker. "Under President Obama's leadership, America

has moved from recession to recovery to expansion, and through it all, minority-owned firms have been integral to our nation's success," said Secretary Pritzker. "MED Week gives us a chance to celebrate that success and to strategize with industry leaders about the future. At the Commerce Department, we remain committed to building on our recent gains and helping more entrepreneurs from minority communities compete in today's global economy."

MED Week is an annual week-long observance led by MBDA that honors the achievements and leadership of minority-owned firms, organizations and individuals from across the nation. Since 1983, every president has issued a Presidential Proclamation designating a National Minority Enterprise Development Week to recognize the contributions of the minority business community to the U.S. economy. NMSDC partnered with MBDA to present Powered by MBDA, a cluster of learning sessions featuring the latest information and trends in federal procurement, international trade and technological innovation.

"This partnership allows us to innovate our efforts to support minority entrepreneurs and firms and provide them with an even greater number of resources and opportunities," said MBDA National Director Alejandra Y. Castillo.

The conference concluded on Wednesday, October 26, with a black-tie Awards Banquet and Reception, honoring IBM as NMSDC Corporation of the Year, along with other notable awards. NMSDC also named its Minority Supplier Development Leader of the Year as IBM's Michael Robinson, Program Director, Global Supplier Division and Supplier Connection.

According to Joset Wright-Lacy, president of NMSDC, "The 2016 Conference and Business Opportunity Exchange will give forward-thinking corporate executives and minority business owners the tools to cope with shifting economic winds, and to take advantage of as-yet unimagined opportunities for commerce presented in the near - and more distant - future. As the U.S. nears the point where minorities comprise greater than 50% of the population, the need for strong minority-owned businesses in national and global supply chains will be vital to the health of our economy." For Chicago, it is estimated that the economic impact generated by the Conference itself is considerable: \$7.5 million total, including an estimate of more than \$1 million in state and local taxes and 1,400+ jobs supported. A survey of last year's Conference attendees show that 73% of the over 6,000 attendees spent more than \$1,000 each in the Conference city.

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SPACE CONTINUUM'S WINNING PARTNERSHIP

BY JOSHUA GUTSTEIN

When you meet John Johnson, you will remember his smile. It is a smile of a businessman who has found serenity in his pursuit of opportunity. And his pursuit led to a new company best positioned to succeed. In founding Space Continuum, John partnered with a majority owned firm, embraced corporate and MBDA Business Center support, and is managing resulting returns.

Space Continuum is a specialty consultant planning firm founded in June 2016 after months of discussions with partner, Interior Investments. The company provides consultative interior design, space planning, procurement and related project services. As John says, "Our success is a direct result of our ability to provide exemplary service with strong strategic partners and alliances in the marketplace." Space Continuum represents more than 300 manufacturers and brands, among them Herman Miller.

Before Space Continuum, John established a wealth of experience so he could find and be found for his next great opportunity. His introduction to office design and furniture occurred in 1980 when he was facility manager for the University of Chicago National Opinion Research Center.

He was responsible for the entire building operation which included office build out, engineering, telecommunication and product procurement. For the next eight years he joined C N A Insurance to oversee office construction build out, lease action plans, commercial furniture standards, design and procurement for 2 million square feet of office buildings throughout the nation. He built on this experience working as Vice President of Operations for Cynthia Johnson and Johnson & Associates. For 10 years starting in 1996, he was responsible for all the dealer and Steelcase operations, getting numerous Steelcase certifications including Project Management and Design, Distribution Logistics Design and Operations, Sales Strategies, and Strategic Planning and Business Operations. John summarizes his experience saying, "I was exposed to all the manufacturers' concepts and operations as we competed in the market place."

It was while at Johnson & Associates that John met his future partner, Michael "Mike" Greenberg. Donald Shannon and Mike co-founded Interior Investments in 1994, an office furniture dealership recognized by *Inc. Magazine* as one of the fastest-growing companies in America. In 2007, John started his own firm, the GCI Group. He continued to work with Interior Investments, acting as their service



JOHN JOHNSON, OWNER,
SPACE CONTINUUM.



KITCHEN LAYOUT FEATURING HERMAN MILLER FURNITURE AT COMPANY SHOWROOM IN LINCOLNSHIRE, ILLINOIS.



LIVING OFFICE CONCEPT FEATURING HERMAN MILLER FURNITURE AT COMPANY SHOWROOM IN LINCOLNSHIRE, ILLINOIS.

installation MBE partner on many major projects.

At the end of 2014, Mike and John started talking about filling the need for a minority owned furniture dealership in the Chicago market. They sought to build a legacy firm in an industry where there are few MBEs. As discussions became more serious, John came to MBDA Business Center - Chicago to review the proposed operating agreement. Both partners were committed to making sure the new company stays minority owned and controlled and that profit distribution follows ownership. Space Continuum was subsequently certified as a ChicagoMSDC MBE.

In addition to his experience and contacts, Mike brought his own experience and contacts to the new company. Interior Investments has been certified by Herman Miller since 2001. Most dealers for Herman Miller have been around 20-30 years. Herman Miller values these long standing relationships to ensure their branding aligns with their ability to deliver. Space Continuum was approved in August 2016 to be a Herman Miller authorized dealer.

In becoming a Herman Miller dealer, Space Continuum gained a corporate partner. Herman Miller's Inclusiveness and Diversity program reaches the workplace and the supply chain through strategic sourcing, a Tier 2 program, mentoring, and economic empowerment. As Herman Miller

commits itself to economic empowerment for MBEs, it helps build economic advantage for itself and all its suppliers. Herman Miller and Space Continuum work collaboratively on market opportunities to help align market knowledge.

Abe Carrillo, Director, Inclusiveness & Diversity says, "Herman Miller has long been committed to increasing the diversity across our business and encouraging our partners to embrace more diverse perspectives. We're proud to work with enterprises like Space Continuum who share this commitment to inclusiveness and diversity, and who recognize that a diverse perspective will enable us all to better serve our customers."

John and Mike quickly realized the promise of their arrangement. The firm was awarded its first major commercial furnishings and services contract in July and have other hot leads in the pipeline. According to John, "The MBE credentials were a major factor in the decision as well as our capability/capacity to offer the best products and value solutions." By putting care into the partnership arrangement at the outset, where all parties are clear with their roles, Space Continuum is positioned for long term growth and market place recognition. This is sure to keep John smiling.

MIL



HOUSESM

CHICAGO'S OWN, IN THE HOUSE

BY PORTIA KING



WILBUR C. MILHOUSE III,
PRESIDENT & CEO
MILHOUSE ENGINEERING
& CONSTRUCTION, INC.
AT ITS CORPORATE
HEADQUARTERS IN
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

"As a graduate of the class of 1995 from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, I set out to begin my career as a junior engineer at a local firm in Chicago. While working at that firm I would hear other engineers and employees talking down to sub-contracted 'DBE' and 'MBE' firms. At the time, I didn't know what a 'DBE' or 'MBE' (Minority Business Enterprise) was, but once I familiarized myself with the terms, I knew that if I ever started a firm, no one would ever be able to talk negatively towards it," said Mr. Wilbur C. Milhouse III, President/ CEO of Milhouse Engineering & Construction, Inc. (Milhouse).

Founded in 2001, Milhouse is a professional, full service engineering and architecture firm, with offices in Chicago, IL; Gaithersburg, MD; Irving, TX; Atlanta, GA; Merrillville, IN; and Ann Arbor, MI. Celebrating fifteen years of service and innovative engineering, Milhouse continues to gain recognition by advancing in industries such as aviation, facilities, gas, power, transportation, and water/wastewater. The level of success Milhouse has attained over the last fifteen years is just a fraction of the heights Mr. Milhouse



MILHOUSE SIGNS AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOURCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA IN NSUKKA.



MILHOUSE (FRONT ROW - FOURTH FROM LEFT) WITH ADMINISTRATORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA IN NSUKKA.



WILBUR C. MILHOUSE AT THE BRONZEVILLE MARIANO'S CONSTRUCTION SITE. MILHOUSE ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION SERVED AS GENERAL CONTRACTOR ON THE PROJECT. THE 74,000 SQUARE-FOOT STORE OPENED IN OCTOBER 2016.

intends to conquer, including, being the largest engineering firm in the Chicagoland area.

In addition to goals for growth, Milhouse's vision is to "Be a positive impact- improving communities around the world through innovative engineering." Milhouse recently began planning a project in partnership with the University of Nigeria in Nsukka, Nigeria. The University, as well as multiple areas of the country, experiences frequent power outages throughout the day. "We are proud and honored to be able to assist the University in helping them utilize and sustain a reliable energy source to depend on," said Mr. Milhouse.

Back in Chicago, as a general contracting partner on the Bronzeville Mariano's project, Milhouse executed a task that uplifted an entire community. Not only did this project bring relief to a food desert, it created jobs in the neighborhood as well. Standing where the Ida B. Wells housing projects once reigned, the Bronzeville Mariano's breathes new life and opportunity into one of Chicago's most historic

and prominent communities. "My mother was born there [Ida B. Wells] in '51...When I heard of this project, I definitely wanted to be a part of it because of my personal connection," stated Mr. Milhouse.

Mr. Milhouse advanced his commitment to the community in 2012, by co-founding Milhouse Charities. This initiative is to advance academic achievement and opportunities for minorities and other underrepresented youth by supporting scientific and educational organizations engaged in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

In building a better world, Mr. Milhouse also strives to create an enjoyable work environment for all Milhouse employees. Winner of the "101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work For" 11 years in a row, Milhouse is regarded as an exciting, challenging, and productive company to work for. Milhouse's mission is "to stimulate a diverse culture of exceptional talent and be recognized globally for providing superior solutions to complex engineering challenges."



FINISHED RUNWAY 10C AT O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

With a staff of more than 160, and counting, the company comprises individuals from various age groups, experiences, and backgrounds. Mr. Milhouse said, "I felt that I could build a firm where people enjoyed coming to work," and so he did. Milhouse staff is treated to monthly socials to connect in-house staff and field workers, free Lunch & Learn sessions every other week, and fun perks for wearing Milhouse colors on Fridays.

Looking back on his first job out of school, where he was introduced to the terms "DBE" and "MBE," Mr. Milhouse expects to be recognized as a prime firm, beyond his MBE credentials alone. "I take offense to companies and firms that look down on MBE firms. We are qualified, prepared, and equipped with some of the industry's best talent to take on any project," said Mr. Milhouse.

Indeed, there are advantages as well as disadvantages to being a MBE certified firm. One of the advantages is that MBE firms are needed as sub-contractors to fulfill most contracts; however, MBEs are not awarded primary opportunities for major large scale projects. One of the



MILHOUSE ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION WAS A PARTNER IN THE O'HARE AIRFIELD ENGINEERS (OAE) JOINT VENTURE DESIGN OF RUNWAY 10C-28C AND ASSOCIATED TAXIWAYS AT O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. THE PROJECT ALSO INCLUDED A NEW AIRPORT SERVICE ROAD, TWO NEW CARGO APRONS, AND THE EXTENSION OF THE SOUTH CARGO TUNNEL UNDER THE NEW RUNWAY.

main challenges exists with the City of Chicago. According to the City of Chicago website, over the past two years, the City procured over \$800 million in government contracts. MBE firms received just \$10 million worth of projects within those two years.

Having been involved in a joint venture to design Runway 10 C-28C and associated parallel taxiways at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and water main replacement projects for the City of Chicago, Milhouse is certainly capable of conducting large scale operations.

The National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) encompasses such a rich and vast network of individuals and corporations throughout key markets within Milhouse's scope. "We are happy to become a member of the ChicagoMSDC organization, to expand our portfolio and build our recognition as a prime firm within the industry," said Mr. Milhouse.

"I was actually introduced to ChicagoMSDC through recommendations from multiple clients that we held previous

relationships with," explained Mr. Milhouse. "And after further insight, we immediately recognized the value of this organization and decided to get on board." Milhouse was the proud, primary sponsor of the ChicagoMSDC 2016 Scholarship Classic, where Mr. Milhouse was paired with Nicor Gas Director of Engineering, Dan Fox. Milhouse has conducted projects with quite a few ChicagoMSDC corporate members, including Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas and ComEd.

Milhouse has already begun to utilize the National MSDC network of councils to support the strategic growth of the firm. "We have worked closely with the Chicago MSDC to facilitate the establishment of rapport with the SCMSDC in Los Angeles, California," stated Mr. Milhouse. "The Chicago Council did an excellent job of providing the Milhouse development team with a thorough understanding of our home Council, available resources, and the business related benefits of certification and membership. We will continue to work with the ChicagoMSDC as part of our strategic plan to grow our organization across the U.S."



FRANK MARTIN, VICE PRESIDENT OF POWER DEVELOPMENT; JEFFREY CARROLL, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER; JAMES FIFER, DIRECTOR OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT, MILHOUSE ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION; AND GENO KNOX, WITH SHELIA MORGAN, PRESIDENT & CEO, ChicagoMSDC (CENTER).

THE CORE COMPETENCY

IS WHAT A COMPANY KNOWS AND DOES BEST. IT REPRESENTS THE STRENGTHS THAT GIVE THE BUSINESS AN ADVANTAGE OVER THE COMPETITOR AND HELPS A BUSINESS TO ENTER INTO A NEW MARKET. CORE COMPETENCY WAS A CONCEPT FIRST INTRODUCED BY C.K. PRAHALAD AND GARY HAMEL. FOR A BUSINESS IT MUST FULFILL THREE CRITERIA:

1. IS APPLICABLE TO A WIDE VARIETY OF MARKETS
2. CUSTOMERS RECOGNIZE ITS BENEFITS
3. COMPETITORS CANNOT IMITATE EASILY

FIND YOUR CORE COMPETENCY HACHA PRODUCTS GIVES THE HUMBLE ZIP TIE A MAKEOVER

BY STEFANIE GARCIA

Staying innovative is a challenge for all businesses seeking to maintain and gain customers. The difficult task for any owner is how to keep business offerings from going stale. What does an owner do to sustain a business through changing market demand or economic downturns and how do they reinvent to stay relevant?

Diversifying revenue streams is one key way for a company to continue growing and establish long-term stability. While one stream of revenue can possibly be a financial anchor, another revenue stream can be in a slump. Yet, a company should be careful on how it diversifies. Hacha Products Corporation is a ChicagoMSDC certified MBE seeing success through diversifying its product offerings because they worked within their own core competency. (See box above.)

Hacha Products, owned by Kimberly Meek, is an industrial products distributor specializing in products and services used in facilities maintenance/repair/operations (MRO). The company developed organizational flexibility in finding new ways to market standard products as it specialized in selling wire management devices such as cable ties, wire nuts, clamps, and other items. Their unique approach to reaching out to market needs led them, with partner Mineral Masters, to sell Hacha Graffiti Guard, a product

that dramatically reduces the cost of graffiti management. Hacha Products then looked to diversify further.

Kimberly and Mike Nipke, Hacha Products' head of Channel Management and Product Development, knew that their organization succeeds at finding new ways to market existing products. With this perspective they looked at their own industrial products for other commercial uses. Weeks later, out of curiosity, Mike took some zip ties over to his "concept development team," composed of his granddaughters aged three, five and seven, and tossed them on the kitchen table. They immediately started making jewelry. Well, except the three-year-old who just tried to link them together. But even the three-year-old did like wearing her sister's zip tie creations.

A light bulb went off in Mike's head, and TinyTys were born. TinyTys are a children's jewelry craft, made in the USA. Think of the most successful women's jewelry concept for the past fifteen years: Pandora charm bracelets. TinyTys transfers that concept to kids, targeted at four- to six-year olds. These children can now design, create, assemble and wear an infinite array of fun, reusable jewelry all by themselves. The toy is designed for assembly without help required from Mom or Dad, no tools or looms to frustrate kids while they develop their fine motor skills. And Hacha



TinyTys
Jewelry Kit

will point out that every bangle, necklace, bracelet, ring or shoelace the kids create reinforces the patterning and sequencing crucial to learning to read.

Hacha Products' knowledge of and comfort with their core competency of finding new marketing solutions led them to confidently explore a new revenue stream. They simply applied and adapted the humble industrial zip tie to a discovery learning tool for a new children's toy market. And the early market interest meets Hacha Products' projections. TinyTys has already received pre-orders, will begin production in early 2017, and will be launched directly to consumers in the summer - just in time for the holidays.

To identify core business competencies, you must first brainstorm. What is at the core of what you do best? What makes your product or service offering unique? How

can you expand on that unique quality? Once this process has been exhausted, a second wave of questions and calculating must be included. What would be the cost of the new product/service? Does the company have enough resources?

The process can be lengthy and at times tiresome but it can be a profitable investment for a company looking to grow business organically. A company's own core competency is a key building block for long term growth through increased cash flow from diverse revenue sources. If you would like to learn more about diversification strategy or about core competencies, please feel free to contact Stefanie Garcia, MBDA Business Center - Chicago Procurement Consultant at sgarcia@chicagombdacenter.com or 312.755.2554.

BEFORE



AFTER



MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY PROGRAMS & SERVICES UPDATE

BY JOSHUA GUTSTEIN & JAMAYCA SMITH

ChicagoMSDC has been selected to operate a Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) Export Center. The Export Center will help MBEs break into global markets. This new addition complements ChicagoMSDC's robust suite of technical assistance resources for minority businesses which include MBDA Business Centers in Chicago and St. Louis; a Capital Access Center in partnership with the Association for Corporate Growth Chicago (ACG); and an Advanced Manufacturing Center in partnership with the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech). ChicagoMSDC is delighted to grow with MBDA and deepen our relationships with our partner organizations.

MBDA EXPORT CENTER

Bringing the support of MBDA contacts in the Department of Commerce and other federal agencies involved in export, the Export Center is your resource for expanding internationally. There are four MBDA Export Assistance centers around the country, with our local center focusing on Africa and China.

The Chicago MBDA Export Center's "Doing Business in Africa" campaign and our focused efforts in China will harness federal trade promotion and financing capabilities to help MBEs identify and seize trade and investment opportunities. The MBDA Export Business Center will work with other federal agencies and private industry to encourage U.S. companies – with a focus on small- and medium-sized businesses – to trade with and invest in Africa and China. The export center will use various ways to promote trade with Africa and China, including:

SHARING INFORMATION on the Africa Global Business Summit Series in November 2016 in Dubai, where U.S. companies heard directly from our U.S. Ambassadors and Senior Commercial Officers about opportunities in the region. In addition, the Center will focus on other events such as the Africa Global Business Investment Forum, the annual China International Business Summit and the Global Business Summit.

EXPANDED TRADE PROMOTION PROGRAMS tailored toward Africa and China, including targeted



PHOTOGRAPH BY POWELL PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

PATRICIA HANES THE NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THE MBDA EXPORT CENTER - CHICAGO.

trade missions and enhanced International Buyer Program (IBP) events to bring more Africa and China buyer delegations to the U.S. and reverse missions where U.S. MBEs will have an opportunity to meet with African and Chinese CEOs to discuss opportunities and get an understanding of the culture of doing business in these countries.

ENHANCED AFRICA AND CHINA FOCUSED EXPORT COUNSELING AND TRAINING by federal trade specialists who work with businesses across the U.S. every day on the specific challenges and opportunities in Africa and China will be part of the services offered through the Export Center.

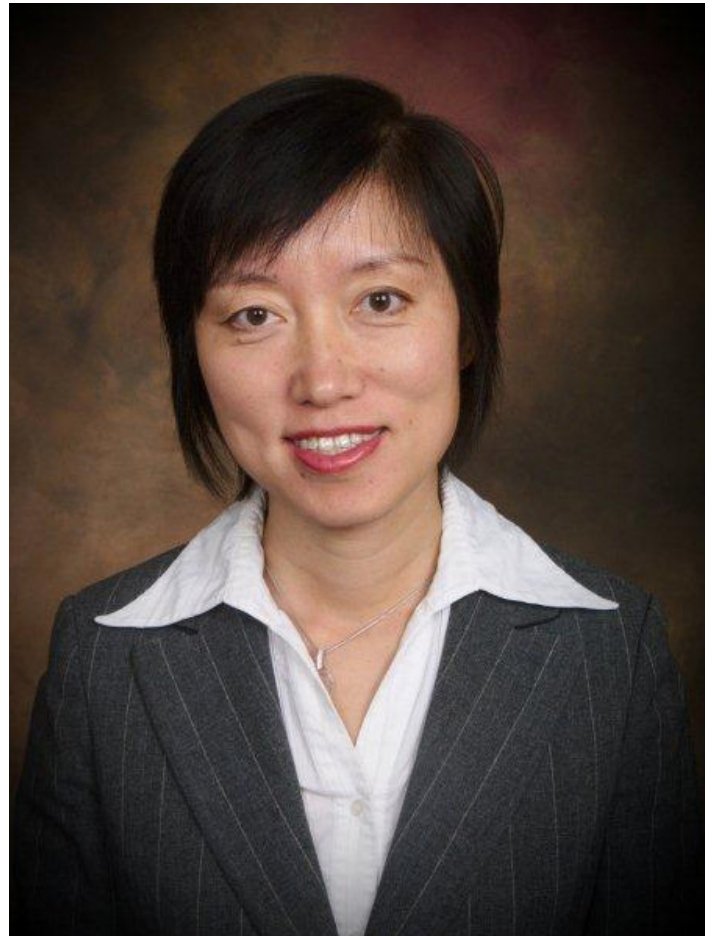
We are honored that **PATRICIA HANES**, a past

ChicagoMSDC Board Chair will step down from her long service on the ChicagoMSDC board to serve as the Project Director of the new MBDA Export Center. In addition to her deep commitment to ChicagoMSDC, Ms. Hanes has over thirty years of experience in supply chain management and minority business development. Ms. Hanes served as the Director of Global Business Development for the Minority Business Development Agency in Washington, D.C. Ms. Hanes joined MBDA as Regional Director of the South East in 2008 and under her direction, minority business owners were awarded over \$2 billion in contracts and/or financial assistance. Prior to joining MBDA, Ms. Hanes served as Director of International Truck and Engine Corporation's Global Supplier Diversity Initiative. Ms. Hanes' career includes twenty-five years in Supply Chain Management and Supplier Diversity with the Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America, a division of Occidental Petroleum. Most recently, Ms. Hanes was Vice President of Diversity for Veteran Toners Services, LLC.

Ms. Hanes says, "I am very excited to continue my service for the growth and development of Minority Owned Business. I truly believe MBEs must continue to grow their business on a global basis, taking advantage of their ancestral relationships in the various diaspora's around the world. ChicagoMSDC will focus on Africa and China but our partnerships will help us take our clients around the globe."

MARY MA joins the MBDA Export Center – Chicago as Export Program Manager. Ms. Ma is responsible for providing targeted, high-impact services to minority owned businesses, including consulting and training, market research, technical assistance in trading, logistics, and export financing.

Prior to this position, she was the Director of Illinois SBDC International Trade Center at Governors State University. Mary gained extensive experience in international trade and global logistics management as an executive with a large Chinese ocean shipping company, and has worked in China and New Zealand as well as managed overseas companies in Singapore, Japan, Korea and Greece. With her



MARY MA, THE NEWLY APPOINTED EXPORT PROGRAM MANAGER, MBDA EXPORT CENTER - CHICAGO.

achievement, she was honored to participate in the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum at the White House in 2013 and 2014, invited by the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI). She is committed to supporting Asian American business growth and the expansion of U.S. exports to the Asia-Pacific region.

Mary has a master's degree in international trade and supply chain management from the University of International Business and Economics in China and an MBA and CPA from Northern Illinois University. She holds a NASBITE Certified Global Business Professional (CGBP) credential and Certified Business Development Advisor designated by the Illinois

Entrepreneurship and Small Business Growth Association.

CAPITAL ACCESS CENTER

The Association for Corporate Growth Chicago (“ACG”), in partnership with ChicagoMSDC, has been awarded a 5-year grant to launch the MBDA Capital Access Center. The center will expand access to capital and expertise for MBEs. ACG, is a membership organization representing a local and global network of senior corporate executives, M&A professionals & advisors. The new MBDA Capital Access Center will bring the networks of ACG together with those of ChicagoMSDC, to offer a wide range of financial resources for MBEs.

On Monday, October 17, 2016, ChicagoMSDC board members, MBEIC committee members, and MBEs gathered to launch the MBDA Capital Access Center. Since 2014, ACG partnered with the MBDA Business Center – Chicago and ChicagoMSDC to host the Minority Finance Forum at its Midwest ACG Capital Connection. This year, the Forum was held at the Chicago Cultural Center’s beautiful Cassidy Theatre, featuring networking and speakers. Shelia Morgan introduced keynote speaker, Dr. Fred McKinney, Managing Director of the Minority Business Program at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. Then, Phillip Barreda moderated a discussion on business growth experiences with Ernest Edwards, President of Glass Management Service, and Lemuel Amen, President of Altius

Manufacturing Group. After hearing from John Weber, the new Capital Access Center Executive Director, it was a time to network and learn more about the new MBDA Capital Access Center. If you are looking to acquire or sell your business, or have questions about valuations, investments, and succession planning, talk to us about the new MBDA Capital Access Center.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CENTER

Georgia Tech, in partnership with ChicagoMSDC, has been awarded a 5-year grant to launch the Advanced Manufacturing Center. The Advanced Manufacturing Center will promote specialized advanced manufacturing programs such as the NIST Manufacturing Extension Program by identifying and screening appropriate minority business enterprises, providing the necessary technical and business development services to prepare them for success, and referring them to the appropriate resources. The technical assistance and business development services will generate increased financing and contract opportunities for MBEs and will assist MBEs in creating and retaining jobs. The Advanced Manufacturing Center will also assess regulatory changes pertaining to manufacturing in domestic and global markets, economic impact and need for minority manufacturers. The Advanced Manufacturing Center team will educate federal, state, local government and private sector entities on ways to expand resources and to use minority manufacturers.



PHILLIP BARREDA, ChicagoMSDC EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, MODERATES PANEL DISCUSSION WITH ERNEST EDWARDS, PRESIDENT OF GLASS MANAGEMENT SERVICES, AND LEMUEL AMEN, PRESIDENT OF ALTIUS MANUFACTURING GROUP.

MBDA BUSINESS CENTERS

MBDA Business Center staff from Chicago and St. Louis participated in the annual MBDA National Training Conference in Denver, Colorado from September 19 to 23, 2016. The training was organized by the US Department of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) and offered a wide range of lessons, networking, and recognitions. The MBDA Business Center - Chicago was recognized for exceeding its goals in helping clients to obtain contracts and financial support. The MBDA Business Center – St. Louis was recognized for helping its client MBEs report the most jobs retained of any of the business centers across the country.

The training included news to use. MBDA has a new advocacy push to engage federal representatives, senators, and executives. The staff also participated in the MBDA Leadership Training Program presented by the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. The program was led by Dr. Fred McKinney and Professor Leonard “Len” Greenhalgh, Professor of Management, and Director of Programs for Minority and Women Owned Businesses. Len took the attendees through an exercise identifying the various links along the “Value Chain” for a given business. When an MBE identifies its core competency, and is looking to diversity its revenues, it can look to expansion along its value chain. A business can also take its core competency and reapply it to another space entirely. (See article on page 20 about Hacha Products for example.)

The program also encouraged identifying an operational strategy based on customer needs. A company can show operational excellence in quality, cost, delivery, or flexibility. An MBE should strive to be the very best at only one of the four, with the others in order behind it. By focusing on the true leading operational need, an MBE can improve its customer relations and revenues.

MBDA Business Center – Chicago welcomes a new member, STEFANIE GARCIA. You may have met her while she served as an intern in the Center and read about her in the Spring 2016 issue of this magazine. Stefanie excelled in her internship, focusing on the CBOF one-on-one program. As she discovered her passion for procurement, ChicagoMSDC brought her on full time.

Ms. Garcia says, “When I helped coordinate the one-on-ones I saw a need. It was more than just pairing up a corporation with an MBE. It was going beyond that and trying to understand the unsaid needs. When I was on the sales side for an MBE, I wished someone would have guided me and



PHOTOGRAPH BY POWELL PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

STEFANIE GARCIA, THE NEWLY APPOINTED PROCUREMENT CONSULTANT, MBDA BUSINESS CENTER - CHICAGO.

introduced me to the right people who eventually would become my customers. It is very difficult at times and discouraging when you are trying to navigate the procurement space without guidance or the feeling of having a team to back you up.

“As the new procurement consultant I want to be that sounding board and resource for the MBE who has reached a certain point of growth and now says, ‘How do I grow from here.’ It’s important for our MBEs to understand they do have a team behind them and we are no longer the best kept secret at ChicagoMSDC.”

Ms. Garcia brings a unique energy and perspective to her position. Prior to joining the Center, Stefanie was a full-time bilingual (Spanish and English) flight attendant for United Airlines, a position she started in 2008. Stefanie also worked as Director of Business Development for an M/WBE, Multi-Products Distribution, Inc. As a company representative, she was an active participant in H.A.C.I.A (Hispanic American Construction Industry Association).

ImBlackInTech, ChicagoMSDC & MBDA EXPERTS REVEAL THEIR POWER MOVES AT 1871

BY DAVE THOMAS

"Where are all the new technology companies?" This is becoming an increasingly common refrain from the national business community. An even more poignant question might be, "Where are all the new technology minority entrepreneurs?" The Chicago MBDA Business Center may have the answer. PowerMoves and ImBlackInTech,

presented IGNITE: A B2B "Micro-Conference" at 1871, Chicago's digital startup community. 1871 is the hub for the city's thriving technology and entrepreneurial ecosystem. It is a 120,000-square-foot facility, located in the Merchandise Mart, that is home to more than 400 early-stage, high-growth digital startups. 1871 is a nationally recognized, industry-specific incubator, devoted to growing Chicago's emerging tech talent.

ImBlackInTech is a Chicago-based network of 1200+ members supporting black and Latino/a founders and professionals nationwide. PowerMoves and ImBlackInTech are working together to increase diversity in the technology sector through a series of workshops and microconferences. It was a natural fit when PowerMoves President & CEO Phiderika Foust reached out to MBDA to ask its assistance in identifying representatives



PAT PERKINS, CERTIFIED LEADERSHIP COACH, FACILITATOR AND PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER, MODERATES "PowerUP PANEL: GETTING TO YES" FEATURING BRIAN BRACKEEN, FOUNDER & CEO, KAIROS; DAVE THOMAS, DIRECTOR, MBDA BUSINESS CENTER - CHICAGO; AND LaTONYA FOURTE'-LYLES, MANAGER CORPORATE SUPPLIER DIVERSITY, HEALTH CARE SERVICE CORPORATION (HCSC).



BJORN SIMMONS, CO-FOUNDER & CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER AND NATASIA MALAIHOLLO, CO-FOUNDER & CEO OF WYZERR ACCEPTING PowerUP CONTRACTS PITCH PRIZE MONEY FROM PHIDERIKA FOUST, PRESIDENT & CEO OF POWERMOVES USA AND THOMAS K. R. STOVALL, FOUNDER OF CANDID CUP MICROFEEDBACK AND GOOGLE ENTREPRENEUR IN RESIDENCE.

from the corporate business diversity industry to come out and meet some of its emerging tech entrepreneurs. Dave Thomas, Project Director of the Chicago MBDA Business Center, recruited a few fellow members of ChicagoMSDC's board of directors.

Dave Thomas participated on a panel discussion on best practices for new technology entrepreneurs navigating the corporate procurement process. Also on the panel was LaTonya Fourte-Lyles, Supplier Diversity Manager at Health Care Service Corporation and ChicagoMSDC board member, and Brian Brackeen, CEO of Kairos, Inc., a facial recognition software development company. There was also a sales pitch competition and one of the volunteer judges was Pat Hanes, former VP of Diversity at Veteran Toner Services and ChicagoMSDC board member. "I was highly impressed with the presentations from these young business owners," said Hanes. "Their creativity was amazing. I think there is a place for each of them at ChicagoMSDC and the

MBDA Business Center."

Eager to develop a relationship with these exciting new entrepreneurs, the Business Center initiated collaboration with ImBlackInTech's creator, Thomas K.R. Stovall. Stovall is the Founder of CANDID Cup Microfeedback, a technology firm that has developed a brilliant microfeedback tool that crowd-sources instant feedback directly from the mouths of customers. Stovall is also one of seven "Entrepreneurs in Residence," in the country for Google/Code2040. This diversity initiative focuses on increasing the number of Black and Latino/a founders and professionals in seven cities across the United States.

"We have uncovered an opportunity to partner on an ongoing initiative to expose B2B focused founders of color running emerging technology start-ups to enterprise companies who are looking for bleeding edge technology," said Stovall. "They've consistently reached out to me to forward the conversation around a

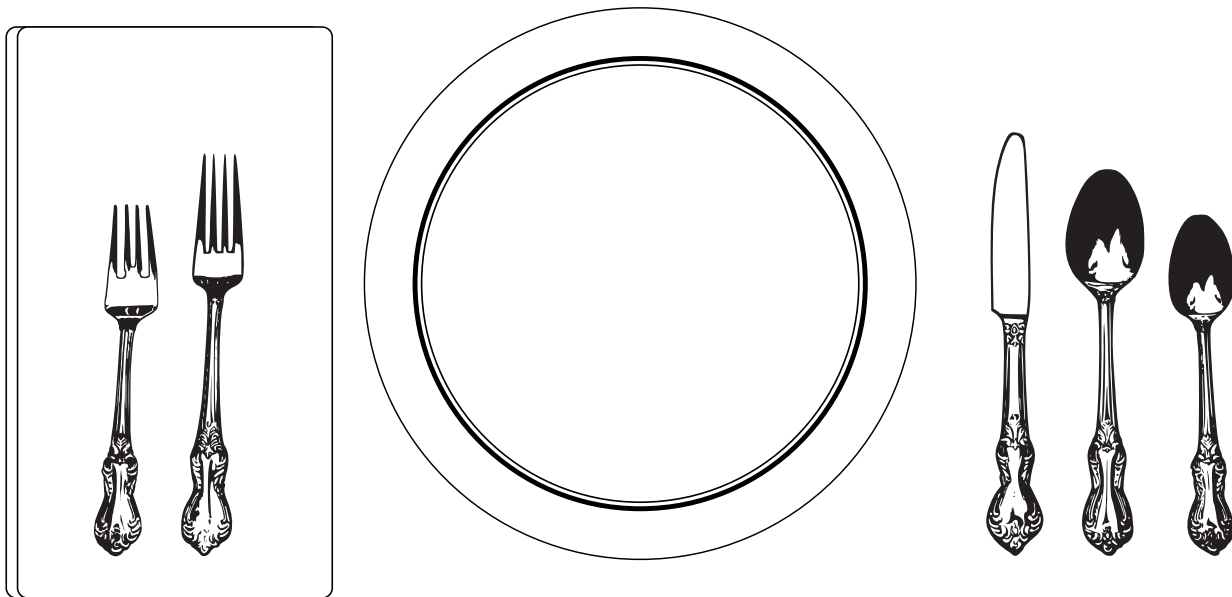
collaboration with ImBlackInTech, as well as the possibility of integrating my company's microfeedback platform into their own operations. ChicagoMSDC practices what they preach."

The Business Center plans to continue to work with ImBlackInTech to demonstrate the value that supplier diversity programs can bring to emerging tech business owners and also to expose corporate diversity professionals to wonderful new technologies that can be made available to their organizations. "I would guess that many supplier diversity folks don't know that such amazing technologies as those developed by folks like Brackeen and Stovall even exist," said Thomas. "They often ask where the new technologies are coming from and I believe we can provide them with a very exciting answer."

Visit www.powermovesusa.org and www.imblackintech.com for more information and stay in touch with the MBDA Business Center as our relationship with these organizations and entrepreneurs grows.

CPO BREAKFAST

BY JARED KELLY



ChicagoMSDC joined chief procurement officers and senior leadership for breakfast on September 21 to discuss the competitive advantages and the value proposition of supplier diversity. The event was held at the Union League Club. As a central pillar of the Council's mission, the CPO Breakfast was designed to introduce major buying organizations to a wide spectrum of thought leaders and corporate advocates of diverse supply chains.

ChicagoMSDC President and CEO, Shelia Morgan, welcomed the attendees, acknowledged United Airlines and the founding corporate members, thanked the board members in attendance and introduced a well-selected collection of speakers: Chuck Hatsis, President and CEO, Surge Consulting; Jamie Rhee, CPO, City of Chicago; Kenny Loyd, President, South Coast Paper; Martha Holmes, Manager of Supplier Diversity, Cardinal Health; and Ruby McCleary, Director, Supplier Diversity, United Airlines.

Chuck Hatsis addressed colleagues, peers and attendees with a keynote presentation entitled, "The Competitive Advantage and a Diverse Supply Chain." Hatsis is the President and Founder of Surge Consulting, a strategic cost management firm specialized in Marketing investment efficiency. Prior to Surge, he was Chief Procurement Officer at Groupon.

The breakfast was clear reassurance that interested corporations greatly benefit from strong minority business suppliers that add value, save time, reduce inefficiencies, increase ROI and ultimately save money for the buying organization. Corporations that are new adopters have access to the ChicagoMSDC and to other industry leaders who continue to benefit from supplier diversity after decades of commitment and development.

This program is a distinctive part of the ChicagoMSDC celebration of "50 influential leaders for 50 influential years of service." For more information about this event, please contact Sherrell Fuller, 312-755-2552.



COMING SOON...

"DIVERSIFICATION CONVERSATION"

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PROFESSIONALS BY SUPPLIER DIVERSITY
PROFESSIONALS ON BEST PRACTICES. TEN
LESSONS ON HOW TO BUILD, SUPPORT, ESTABLISH
VALUE, GROW OUTREACH EFFORTS AND MORE.

WATCH FOR THE LAUNCH AND SUBSCRIBE!

SEPTEMBER MBE PROCUREMENT LUNCHEON FEATURES UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT DIVERSITY

BY MEGAN NAKANO

The University of Illinois' Diversity Manager, Dale Morrison, Esq. was the featured presenter at the MBE Procurement Luncheon on September 22, 2016, at the Chicago South Loop Hotel. The University of Illinois Supplier Diversity program is conducted under the direction of the Office of Procurement Diversity. Its mission is to expand procurement opportunities to businesses that have been historically underrepresented in the procurement process by increasing utilization of businesses owned by minorities, females and persons with disabilities to twenty percent of allowable University expenditures. This goal is set forth in the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females and Persons with Disabilities Act (BEP ACT).

Through the Veterans Business Program, state agencies and universities are encouraged to spend not less than 3% of the total dollar amount of State contracts with Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses. The State Use Law encourages all State of Illinois Agencies to purchase products and services produced and provided by persons with significant disabilities. Supplies and services may be procured without advertising or calling for bids from any qualified not-for-profit agency, or "sheltered workshop", for persons with severe disabilities.

Only Business Enterprise Program (BEP) certified vendors are recognized by the University's Supplier Diversity Program. BEP certification is offered through the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS). Businesses must be must be 51% owned and controlled by minorities, women or persons with disabilities to qualify for Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Female Business Enterprises (FBE) and Disabled-Person Business Enterprises (PBE) respectively. Annual gross sales must be below \$75M. You may apply for BEP certification at www.sell2.illinois.gov. The application is free.

Illinois State Universities abide by the Illinois Procurement

Code. They generally use bid processes including: RFP, RFI, RFQ, QBS, and Sealed Bid. Bidding is not required for Small Purchases such as: construction under \$100,000; supplies or services under \$80,000; and professional and artistic contracts under \$20,000. Diversity goals are established on a contract-to-contract basis based on the scope of work and availability.

The Office of Procurement Diversity identifies contracting opportunities for diverse businesses, sets specific participation goals on solicitations where diverse firms are available and assists user departments identify diverse firms that can meet their specific needs on Small Purchases.

The University of Illinois has identified the following areas of focus for diverse firms: architectural and engineering services; facility foods and services; financial services; hospital services and supplies; food services and supplies; photography services; audio visual services and supplies; call center services; real estate services; delivery services, promotional items, printing services, security services, information technology services; marketing and communications; offices supplies; and janitorial supplies and services.

You can view opportunities at the Illinois Procurement Bulletin's website: www.procure.stateuniv.state.il.us. Mr. Morrison recommends registering for an account on this site to download solicitation documents, receive e-mail notifications of opportunities and to take advantage of other vendor services. He also suggests attending outreach events and vendor conferences, learning the system and having a capability statement. In other words, "be prepared!"

The University of Illinois Office of Procurement Diversity is located at OBDS Room 406 M/C079, 809 South Marshfield Ave., Chicago, IL 60612. They can be reached by telephone at 312.996.2971 or by fax at 312.413.8369. For more information, please visit: www.obfs.uillinois.edu/supplier-diversity.

**IF YOUR LARGE BUYING INSTITUTION IS INTERESTED IN HOSTING
AN MBE PROCUREMENT LUNCHEON, PLEASE CONTACT
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MEET THE CERTIFICATION INTERN

JEREMY JIANG

BY JEREMY JIANG



Before I started my journey to Chicago, I knew it would be a life-changing experience, but I just didn't know how much of an impact it would have on me.

I'm Jeremy Jiang, a sophomore engineering student studying at University of Science and Technology Beijing. I also want to pursue a business degree in the U.S. after my undergraduate studies. I'm a traveler. This is my third time being in the U.S. I also went to Europe alone, as well as other countries with my family. Whenever I go to a new place, I find it interesting to explore the cultural differences. Living among the locals, talking to people during the trip, and walking through the streets and alleys, have allowed me to experience so many fascinating aspects of different societies, which drives me to be an international trade businessman, learning about various cultures and sharing my knowledge with other people.

So I really appreciate the opportunity to be an intern with ChicagoMSDC. The 4-week internship program through Cultural Homestay International gave me a great opportunity to live like an ordinary Chicagoan. My host family was a typical 2-children middle class household in the Ashburn neighborhood. I rode the CTA every day and as I write this article on the beach at the Loyola University campus, I have a much better understanding of American society and the cultural differences.

As a certification intern, I worked with Julia Guan, Certification Manager, for the majority of the program. I won't say it was easy dealing with the hundreds of company files for the first few days. I felt very overwhelmed, and I missed a few folders here and there. However, my supervisor Julia Guan was very supportive and helpful. After a little time, I became more familiar with the process, and I learned about how the council certifies its MBEs. As time went on, I became a regular fixture around the office, and I was assigned to varying types of work in other departments.

I was also fortunate to attend and help out at the annual golf event. We were out on the course all day collecting donations from golfers to support educational programs run by the Council. Since I've never been to a golf club before, I had no idea what my attire should be, but the trusty Internet came to the rescue as always. Overall, it was great experience and something I will remember for a long time.

During my internship, the concept of supplier diversity impressed me the most. Unlike America, China is a non-immigrant country. We do have lots of policies and agencies that assist with emerging small businesses, but only a few are particularly geared towards minority businesses. Here in the U.S., there are lots of minority business entrepreneurs that need help during their growth stages, and there are organizations like ChicagoMSDC that facilitate deals with large corporations and create more jobs within the minority community.

I acquired a lot of first-time experiences during my internship: the first time going to work in an office, the first time being at a fundraising golf event, the first time attending a staff meeting. What I have learned during my stay at ChicagoMSDC will definitely help me in my future career. I will also get the chance to visit UIC; I found out that they have an exchange program with my university back in China, which provides me with another choice for my future studies. If I do sign up to go to UIC, I will be back in Chicago next year and be able to write another article telling the story about how my ChicagoMSDC experience provided me with a platform for advancement.

IN MEMORIAM

DEBORAH M. SAWYER

BY MEGAN NAKANO

Deborah M. Sawyer, founder and CEO of Environmental Design International, Inc. (EDI) passed away on August 7 of ovarian cancer at the age of 60. As an African American woman in the white male dominated field of engineering, Ms. Sawyer was a pioneer and champion for women and minorities in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) long before it became the international campaign it is today.

Born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, Sawyer attended the Columbus School for Girls day-time college preparatory school and Emory University in Atlanta where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science with a minor in biology. She went on to receive her master's in petroleum microbiology from Eastern New Mexico University.

Ms. Sawyer began her career as an environmental scientist for the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency writing hazardous waste legislation for the state. She later joined the private sector working her way up to senior vice president for a large national engineering consulting firm, where she created its profitable solid, toxic, and hazardous waste (STHW) Management Division.

In 1991, Sawyer founded EDI in Chicago's western suburbs and later moved the company's headquarters to the Loop. Today, EDI employs 70 people and is on track to generate \$9 million in revenues this year. She was the first woman to oversee major construction projects on the Dan Ryan and I-294, earning her the respect of Diane O'Keefe, an IDOT deputy director who oversaw the Dan Ryan. Ms.

Sawyer began working on IDOT projects as a subcontractor, developing her expertise and staff before winning the two \$10 million inspection services contracts. O'Keefe told *Crain's Chicago Business*, "She made sure she took it step by step. This was the right way to do it."

Being a major part of the largest expressway reconstruction in Chicago history brought EDI the spotlight and also the scrutiny that comes with it, "My field is very white, male-dominated, so I'm used to being under a microscope," Sawyer told *Crain's*, "but when your fee is \$10 million, the microscope is altogether different."

EDI has served as the engineering firm of record for Exelon City Solar, worked on the O'Hare Modernization Program, the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation and the Dirksen Federal Courthouse Building renovation.

Her sister, Leslie Sawyer, told the Chicago Tribune, "As she grew and had established her business, she became increasingly interested in encouraging and helping women become entrepreneurs, so she was interested in helping wom-

en not only pursue their career dreams in math and science and engineering but also as business entrepreneurs." She served as president of the board of directors of the Young Women's Leadership Charter School on the South Side and counseled students about their careers and served on the boards of the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce and the Innovations Conference on Asphalt and Transportation, and she was a member of Mayor Rahm Emanuel's Supplier Diversity Task Force.



"DEBORAH WAS A BUSINESS PERSON'S BUSINESS PERSON AND A CRUSADER FOR WOMEN - ESPECIALLY MINORITY WOMEN. SHE WAS COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE. SHE WILL BE MISSED." -SHELIA MORGAN

ChicagoMSDC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 2017		
19	MBE PROCUREMENT LUNCHEON	TBD
FEBRUARY 2017		
23	MBE PROCUREMENT LUNCHEON	TBD
MARCH 2017		
2	HOW TO WORK A TRADE SHOW	Chicago MSDC Chicago, IL
11	ASIAN AMERICAN COALITION OF CHICAGO	Hilton Chicago Chicago, IL
APRIL 2017		
20-21	CBOF 50	Hyatt Regency Chicago Chicago, IL
MAY 2017		
TBD	NMSDC DINNER DANCE	New York, NY
JUNE 2017		
15	PROCUREMENT LUNCHEON	TBD
JULY 2017		
TBD	ChicagoMSDC 50th GALA	TBD
9-11	NMSDC PROGRAM MANAGER'S SEMINAR	Chicago, IL
17	NMSDC NETWORK LEADERSHIP MEETING	Chicago, IL
18	MBE 2 MBE EXCHANGE	Federal Reserve Bank Chicago, IL
19	PROCUREMENT LUNCHEON	Federal Reserve Bank Chicago, IL
AUGUST 2017		
14	ChicagoMSDC SCHOLARSHIP CLASSIC	White Eagle Golf Club Naperville, IL
SEPTEMBER 2017		
16	ASIAN AMERICAN BUSINESS EXPO	UIC Forum Chicago, IL
21	MBE PROCUREMENT LUNCHEON	TBD
OCTOBER 2017		
22-25	NMSDC CONF. + BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY EXCHANGE	Detroit, MI
NOVEMBER 2017		
15	MBEIC GENERAL MEETING	Chicago South Loop Hotel Chicago, IL
DECEMBER 2017		
1	ANNUAL MEETING & HOLIDAY BRUNCH	Hyatt Regency Chicago Chicago, IL

CONTACT CYNTHIA JORDAN, DIRECTOR OF EVENTS
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