

New Mexico

8(a) & Minority Business Association



"The Washington Whirlwind"

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LANL Small Business Procurement Task Force

In January 2002, Dr. John C. Browne, Director of Los Alamos National Laboratory, established a task force to review, assess, and report recommendations on the small business procurement procedures at LANL. The Committee comprised experts in small business and minority-owned business procurement, business and community leaders, educators, and consultants.

The Committee was Chaired by Anna Muller, President of NEDA Business Consultants, Inc., and Co-Chaired by Toney Anaya, former Governor of New Mexico and President of The Anaya Law Firm, P.A.

The Committee was chartered with making recommendations regarding the quality and effectiveness of LANL's small business procurement program, specifically regarding its ability to meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Energy and the expectations of New Mexico and Northern New Mexico small businesses.

The task force conducted its review from February to September 2002. To fulfill its charter, the Committee reviewed documents regarding LANL's procurement policies, procedures, and performance reporting, as well as considered the requirements of the contract between the University of California and DOE.

In addition to reviewing LANL's contractual performance, the Committee also conducted formal hearings by interviewing representatives from LANL, government entities, local organizations, and members of the New Mexico and Northern New Mexico small business community. The Committee reviewed LANL's Small Business Program Initiatives, its procurement policies and procedures, as well as its reporting practices, supplier capabilities, and community relations activities.

According to Teresa Trujillo, Director of the LANL Small Business Office, the Committee's report is "thorough, professional, and exceptionally well done." LANL has already begun to implement many of the recommendations outlined in the report and is fully committed to working with the small business community.

Committee members included Anna Muller, Chair; Toney Anaya, Co-Chair; Kevin Holsapple, Executive Director, Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation; Perry Martinez, Former Governor, San Ildefonso Pueblo; Leo Miranda, Owner, Miranda & Associates; Lillian Montoya-Rael, Executive Director, Regional Development Corporation; Priscilla C. Trujillo, Executive Vice President, Northern New Mexico Community College; and J. R. Trujillo, President, Quickfix Improvement Center, President, Northern New Mexico Supplier Alliance, and Councilman, City of Espanola. ♦

Association Creates Matchmaking Briefings

The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association has been busy working to create “matchmaking” opportunities for New Mexico small minority businesses and to sponsor procurement briefings designed to help small, 8(a), small disadvantaged, HUBZone, and woman-owned businesses.

White Sands Missile Range Matchmaking Event

In February, NEDA Business Consultants, Inc., the NM 8(a) & Minority Business Association, the U.S. Small Business Administration, MV Industries, Inc., and SamCon, Inc., met with minority business construction contractors and subcontractors interested in opportunities with MV Industries, Inc., and SamCon, Inc., at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR).

The meeting was a great marketing opportunity not only to create subcontracting opportunities, but also for small businesses to meet each other and discuss potential joint-venture opportunities.

The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association commends Michael Vigil, President of MV Industries, Inc., and Roberta Padilla, CEO of SamCon, Inc., for practicing what we all preach, which is to provide subcontracting opportunities to minority businesses.

LANL Matchmaking Event

In June, the New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association, NEDA Business Consultants, Inc., LANL Procurement BUS-5, the LANL Small Business Office, the Northern New Mexico Supplier Alliance, and the City of Española, in conjunction with Mercado Construction, Inc., MV Industries, Inc., JB Henderson Construction, Jaynes Corporation, B&D Electric Company, Swinerton Builders, Inc., and Hensel Phelps Construction Company, met with small and minority business construction contractors interested in working as subcontractors at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Modeled after the successful February matchmaking event at White Sands Missile Range, the event showcased subcontracting opportunities in the areas of general construction (including site work, concrete work, road construction, mechanical, roofing, electrical) and telecommunications, security, fire protection systems, and other construction trades.

According to J. R. Trujillo, President of the Northern New Mexico Supplier Alliance, many of the Alliance members have successfully negotiated subcontracts.

LANL Mentor-Protégé Program

In addition to reviewing subcontracting opportunities at the LANL matchmaking event, participating small, 8(a), SDB, HUBZone, and minority businesses were considered for Mentor-Protégé relationships with the prime contractors. The Mentor-Protégé program is designed to promote best practices among construction firms and to prepare and train small and minority businesses to perform successfully at LANL.

For more information regarding the LANL Mentor-Protégé program, contact Anna Muller at (505) 843-7114, or e-mail her at info@nedainc.net.

DOE Procurement Briefing

In February, the New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association, NEDA Business Consultants, Inc., the U.S. Department of Energy, Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and several federal agencies sponsored a procurement briefing in Albuquerque for New Mexico small businesses. Theresa Alvillar-Speake, Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact, U.S. Department of Energy, was the keynote speaker.

The DOE, SNL, and LANL presented procurement initiatives designed to help small, 8(a), SDB, HUBZone, and woman-owned businesses. Participants met with buyers and learned about upcoming prime contracts and subcontracting opportunities. ♦

Association Negotiates Private Meeting with Vice President Cheney

When Vice President Dick Cheney visited New Mexico in August, members of the New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association were privileged to attend a private business roundtable hosted by the Vice President.

Of the dozen or so New Mexico business owners invited to discuss how outsourcing and the security build-up would impact our nation's businesses, seven of the attendees were members or board members of our association. Among the attendees were board members Alice Quintanilla, Evaristo "Tito" Bonano, Jesus "Rudy" Gonzalez, Richard "Dick" Martinez, and I. Martin Mercado. Also attending were association members Anna Muller and George Cook.

Contract bundling, large prime contractor subcontracting plans, the decline of 8(a) contracts, and the effects of the new Department of Homeland Security were the main topics discussed. Vice President Cheney welcomed the opportunity to meet face to face with small and minority business owners and to explain the effects that the war on terrorism will have on all Americans. ♦

Our Heroine Velázquez to the Rescue Once Again

The Homeland Security reorganization had many business owners and leaders worried that small and minority businesses would be left behind if the Department of Homeland Security did not open its contracts to full competition under regular procurement rules.

The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association Board of Directors was very apprehensive about the proposal to exempt the newly formed department from procurement regulations. Senators Kit Bond (R-MO) and John F. Kerry (D-MA) of the Senate Small Business Committee concurred with the small business community's skepticism of proposals to exempt the Department from federal government procurement rules.

However, when the House of Representatives approved the Homeland Security Act (HR 5005, H Rept 107-609), Ranking Democratic Member of the House Small Business Committee, Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY), succeeded in adding an amendment to set department procurement goals no lower than prevailing government-wide goals. The current statutory goals are 23 percent for small business, 5 percent each for small-disadvantaged and women owned businesses, and 3 percent for HUBZone and service-disabled veteran owned firms. Not only does the amendment make adherence to small business goals mandatory, it also ties employee performance standards to the achievement of these goals.

Thank you, Representative Velázquez! ♦

Hats Off to Senator Domenici

The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association recently brought to Senator Pete Domenici's attention that there are several key positions still vacant at the U.S. Small Business Administration District Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Senator Domenici responded by sending a letter to Hector Barreto, Administrator of the Small Business Administration, outlining his concern regarding the lack of personnel assigned to several key positions in Albuquerque.

"I believe small businesses are the driving force of New Mexico's economy," the Senator wrote, adding that he attributes much of the success of small businesses throughout our state to the hard work of the employees in the various SBA programs.

Senator Domenici stated that the filling of the positions was a priority and requested a meeting with Administrator Barretto to discuss the issue.

As a result of the Senator's efforts, the Procurement Center Representative position has been filled. Other key positions are currently posted, and applicants are being reviewed. The Association wishes to thank Senator Domenici for his support and concern for small business, and for his understanding of how important our SBA District Office is for our community. ♦



*MED Week Celebration
(left to right): Debbie Valenzuela Baxter, Actor George Takei, Anna Muller, Carlo Lucero, Theresa Carson, and Betty Chao.*

Association Takes ACA Issue to Capitol Hill

The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association is very concerned about the U.S. Army Contracting Agency's (ACA's) centralization of contracts over \$500,000 and its potentially detrimental effect on local small and minority businesses.

Through self marketing, 8(a) companies have been successful in acquiring \$3 million in direct sole source contracts at White Sands Missile Range. Under ACA, acquiring such contracts will be more complex and much more costly since those companies will also be required to spend resources to market the ACA in Washington. We believe the complexity and the costs may be prohibitive to small firms, resulting in fewer opportunities.

The Association drafted a position paper outlining its concerns and presented the paper while in Washington during MED Week to Senator John Kerry's staff on the U.S. Senate Small Business Committee, to Senators Jeff Bingaman and Pete Domenici, and to Congressmen Donald Manzullo and Tom Udall, and Congresswoman Nydia Valázquez.

Senator Bingaman responded promptly, and the others will follow suit. On September 27, 2002, Senator Bingaman sent a letter to the Honorable Thomas E. White, Secretary of the Army, inquiring of the Army's plans for the ACA in its efforts to work with small and minority businesses local to the installations they serve. In his letter he noted that, unlike large DOD contractors, small businesses do not have the large workforce or capacity to afford travel to and meeting time in Washington.

The Association wishes to extend its thanks to our Congressional leaders in Washington for their continued support of small and minority businesses. We will continue to investigate the effects of ACA centralization and will notify our members of any changes to or clarifications of the initiative. ♦

Whirlwind Week in Washington, D.C.

Members of the New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association attended Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week in Washington, D.C., September 25 - 27.

MED Week is the annual gathering of the minority business community - a community whose annual sales are growing at almost 35 percent per year, nearly twice that of other firms.



Anna Muller and Congressman Manzullo

Association members were invited to attend two roundtable discussions on the current state of minority business and ways to strengthen this rapidly emerging sector.

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY), Ranking Democratic Member of the House Small Business Committee, invited 10 New Mexico 8(a) members to participate in the 30-person roundtable discussions. Congressman Tom Udall (D-NM) is a member of the Committee and was present during the hearings.

Congresswoman Velázquez noted that, while minority businesses play a critical role in our nation's economic expansion and stability, there is still much work left to be done. "Minority businesses are truly the new engine of our economy," she said, "but even with the enormous strides and contributions they have made, minority enterprises still face significant barriers to success."

Association members also met with Congressman Donald A. Manzullo (R-IL), Chairman of the House Small Business Committee, and discussed the same litany of issues. The staff of Senator John F. Kerry (D-MA), Chairman of the U.S. Senate Small Business Committee, also met with the Association members, as did the Entrepreneurial Committee staff, to discuss the Army Contracting Agency (ACA) issue.

Association members also met with Senator Jeff Bingaman's (D-NM) staff and Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) to discuss the Association's legislative agenda.

At the end of the intense Congressional two days, members attended the MED Week Awards ceremony to honor the New Mexico MED Week Awardees (see Awardee profiles, below). 🌀

New Mexico Dominates National Awards

Five New Mexico firms were selected to receive Regional and National Minority Business Awards for 2002. All five are members of the 8(a) & Minority Business Association.

Regional Awards

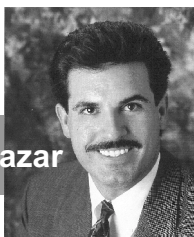
Three New Mexico companies received awards in September as Dallas Regional Minority Businesses of the Year.

United Drilling, Inc., headquartered in Roswell, New Mexico, was awarded Regional Minority Service Firm of 2002. Founded by JESUS SALAZAR in 1984, United Drilling is minority business and HUBZone enterprise certified by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The company had sales of over \$12 million in 2001 and employs 80 people.

Contract Associates, Inc., headquartered in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was named Regional Minority Supplier/Distributor of 2002. President and General Manager, MARIA GRIEGO-RABY, is a majority owner in the company that was founded in 1988. Contract Associates is the sole provider of Haworth office furnishings in New Mexico and surrounding areas. The company has grown to 71 employees in four locations with sales topping \$15 million in 2001.

The Region VI Minority Small Business Person of the Year award was presented to BETTY CHAO, President of **WESTECH International, Inc.** Headquartered in Albuquerque, New Mexico, WESTECH International is a premier high-technology company providing engineering and technical services in the areas of information management, test and evaluation,

Salazar



Baxter



Griego-
Raby



Chao



nuclear materials, and training. A certified participant of the 8(a) program, WESTECH is now one of the fastest growing small, minority, woman-owned companies with a staff of 45 employees in four states.

National Awards

Sparkle Maintenance, Inc., was named the 2002 8(a) Graduate Firm of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration in Washington, D.C. CARLO LUCERO, President of Sparkle, and his brother, PAUL LUCERO, Vice President of Sparkle, accepted the award on behalf of the family-owned business. Lucero's father, Ben, founded the company in 1964 as a local janitorial services company. With the growth of Albuquerque's high-tech industry, the Luceros grew their services to include not only office buildings, medical facilities, retail establishments, schools, and government facilities, but also the clean rooms of semiconductor fabs and other high-tech laboratories. In April 2002, Sparkle was awarded a one-year contract with a four-year option to clean and maintain the clean rooms of Sandia National Laboratories.

DEBORAH VALENZUELA BAXTER, Director, President, and General Manager of **Integrity Networking Systems, Inc.**, was named National Minority Female Entrepreneur of 2002 by the U.S. Department of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency. Baxter accepted her award at the MED Week 20th Anniversary Awards Gala in Washington, D.C., on September 27, 2002. With offices in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Nevada, Integrity was also named Regional Minority Technology Firm of 2002. The company has grown into a leading full-service network provider and supplier of computers and peripheral solutions for clients in government, commercial, and academic sectors. Integrity has annual revenues in excess of \$20 million.

The U.S. Department of Commerce MBDA also recognized the LANL Small Business Procurement Task Force, awarding its members with the agency's Director Awards for their hard work and dedication toward improving procurement opportunities for New Mexico and Northern New Mexico small businesses. ♦

Subcontracting Plans Finally Strengthened

The Federal OSDBU Directors Interagency Council has drafted a plan that would dramatically increase subcontracting opportunities for small businesses, including minority and women-owned firms.

The plan, *Best Principles for Improving Agency Subcontracting Programs*, specifies how to solve the chronic problems of setting and meeting subcontracting goals, oversight over whether those goals are being met, and consequences for primes if they are not.

Best Principles is part of a best-practices handbook which will be available at the October 17 semiannual open meeting of the Directors Council. A practice promoted in the handbook includes the establishment of "maximum practicable" goals for small business subcontracting during the pre-solicitation phase of the contract. These goals are expressed as a percentage of total contract value for each solicitation.

The solicitation should make clear the prime's success or failure to reach small-business subcontracting goals is evaluated as part of the contractor's past performance record. The source-evaluation plan should give 10 to 25 percent of the evaluation weight to the subcontracting plan.

Alice Quintanilla, President of the New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association, notes that U.S. Army White Sands Missile Range has already successfully adopted many of the best practices recommended by the Interagency Council. "White Sands evaluates subcontractor performance in reaching WSMR small business subcontracting goals. Subcontractors who do not meet their goals are assigned a 10 percent award fee penalty. Scoring is on a pass/no pass basis." Quintanilla commends WSMR for its efforts to increase subcontracting opportunities for small businesses. ♦

Call To Members

Join or renew your membership in the largest and strongest 8(a) & Minority Business Association in the nation! Call Maria at (505) 843-7114 and ask for your 2003 Membership Application.

The President's Message

October 10, 2002

Dear Members:

I have accepted the role of President of the New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association with the enthusiasm and dedication that is required to maintain the position as the premier minority business organization both nationally and state-wide.

The Association has matured from a formidable, small business advocacy group in New Mexico to a powerful, nationally-recognized leader addressing congressional legislative issues that affect minority business. The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association is recognized as the largest 8(a) association in the nation and the only 8(a) association invited to participate in congressional hearings.

Our organization has been built by the tireless leadership of former presidents Phil Archuletta, former ambassador Ed Romero, Dr. Miguel Rios, Antonio Montoya, Elizabeth Pohl, and Dr. Evaristo "Tito" Bonano.

As President, I am committed to supporting the Association's goals and to continuing to build on our successes by positioning our members to be full economic participants and thriving business concerns.

During my tenure, I intend to continue forging strong and effective alliances with business organizations that contribute to our Association. We will continue to target all major procurement centers in New Mexico and nationally to increase procurement opportunities with minority businesses. We will continue to strengthen our alliances with national organizations such as the Latin American Management Association (LAMA) and the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC). And as an association, we will strengthen our relationship with the U.S. House and Senate Small Business Committees. Rest assured, however, that the Association will stay focused on our mission to increase procurement and business opportunities for our membership.

And on behalf of all our members, I wish to personally thank Dr. Tito Bonano who served for three years as our president. He led our Board of Directors with very specific goals that were meticulously executed. The Association is very fortunate to have a Board of Directors of highly skilled and talented business owners who are dedicated to assisting the membership. We owe much of our current growth and success to the Board and to our active membership.

I am excited about the opportunities before us and look forward to serving you.
Sincerely,



Alice Quintanilla

President

NM 8(a) & Minority Business Association

Proposal Announced to Modernize 8(a) Program

Fred Armendariz, Associate Deputy Administrator of the SBA Office of Government Contracting & Business Development, met with the Board of Directors of the New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association in August to discuss the proposed changes to modernize the 8(a) program.

The changes will include a streamlined application process, increased access to federal procurement dollars, and more technical assistance so that program participants can successfully graduate after nine years.

The members of the 8(a) Board of Directors expressed their concern regarding the precipitous drop in 8(a) contracts due to contract bundling, GSA schedules, GWAC contracts, and the addition of other socioeconomic categories such as HUBZone and service-disabled veteran-owned firms. ♦

Congratulations To Luz Hopewell

LUZ HOPEWELL took over as the head of the U.S. Small Business Administration's Business Development (BD) Program. BD encompasses the 8(a) program, the 7(j) technical assistance program, SDB Certification, and several other related components.

According to Anna Muller, President of NEDA Business Consulting, Inc., "The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association is pleased with this appointment because of our long-term relationship with Hopewell and her exceptional 30-year track record in the area of minority business." ♦

Mark Your Calendars

The DOE 4th Annual Small Business Conference will be held May 13th - 15th in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, the Office of Economic Impact & Diversity, and the Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization.

Landing this national conference, an event that will draw 1,600 participants, was the result of the highly successful DOE briefing held in February 2002. Theresa Alvillar-Speake, Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact, U.S. Department of Energy, said of the conference, "The close working relationships of all the organizations, and the presence of the DOE and national laboratories make the city of Albuquerque a perfect host for this event."

Albuquerque is pleased to host this national conference. For more information, contact Anna Muller at (505) 843-7114 or e-mail her at info@nedainc.net. ♦

The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association's mission is to promote the development of minority businesses by increasing procurement and business opportunities with the Federal government, public sector entities, National Laboratories, prime contractors, and corporations. Membership is open to all minority businesses (small businesses, large businesses, 8(a), SDBs, and HUBZone) that sell their products and services to large institutional buyers. Membership is also open to business associates and organizations interested and involved in fostering minority businesses to further the goals of the Association.

The New Mexico 8(a) & Minority Business Association Board of Directors

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