

MBC PROGRESS



Special thanks to City Council Liaisons:
 The Honorable Glenn R. Davis
 The Honorable Bob Dyer

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Message from the Mayor:

Companies that deliver superior performance and quality workmanship are in high demand — especially during challenging economic times. This year's Minority Business Awards recipients are shining examples of the types of business partners the City of Virginia Beach regards highly (see page 6 for the complete list of honorees).

City contracts are awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, and the City expects its contractors to make good-faith efforts to support the City's policy of encouraging the participation of minority and woman-owned businesses in city procurement activities. Since April 2006, the City Council has required bidders to submit a "Woman and Minority Participation Plan."

While completing the Witchduck Road Improvements Project, this year's Diversity Champion Award recipient, E.V. Williams, Inc., *exceeded* the company's own Disadvantaged Business Enterprise subcontracting goal to partner with minority-owned and woman-owned companies. Congratulations to E.V. Williams, Inc. on a job well done!

I also commend the members of the Minority Business Council, which has been a powerful ally in the City's Council's efforts to reverse diminishing numbers for minority and woman-owned companies in construction. They commission informational and training events to focus on construction opportunities with the City, and they consistently offer "straight talk" about how to position your company to be more competitive when it comes to City contracting.

The beginning of a new year gives us all an opportunity to reflect upon our progress, to set new goals, and to approach them with a renewed sense of purpose. May each of you have a prosperous 2011.

— Will Sessoms, Mayor

Minority Business Council Vision

To be the leading influence in connecting contractor resources with city opportunities.

The Chairman's Corner



Wanda Cooper, Chair
Minority Business Council

Taking the reins as chair of the Minority Business Council (MBC) causes me to reflect upon the awesome responsibility and challenges that are set before me. When I consider the path of those who have come before me, I cannot help but marvel at how far the Council has come. Past Council chairs have worked diligently to lead the MBC through the evolution of identifying challenges and barriers, greater understanding of procurement processes and procedures to institutionalizing frameworks that will ultimately result in greater access to business opportunities for minority-, woman- and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses. As important, the MBC continues to build bridges of understanding among city leaders which demonstrates the MBC's commitment to (volunteer) service to support the City's "economic vitality" and its "vision of a "...community for a lifetime."

To further support this effort, some noteworthy MBC activities include:

- ◆ Monthly, quarterly, bi-annual and annual reports from Finance Department staff
- ◆ Continued support from the City Attorney's office related to legal/legislative efforts
- ◆ Monthly staff reports from Economic Department
- ◆ Direct access to City Council liaisons
- ◆ On-going support from the volunteer MBC Associates Program
- ◆ Dedicated support from the Minority Business Coordinator
- ◆ Annual reports to City Council

With a mission to "advance and facilitate an environment of business opportunities, focusing on increasing expenditures to woman-owned and minority-owned businesses...as a means to further the City's economic development and vitality", I see my primary responsibility as MBC Chair, to effectively seek out and recognize opportunities to facilitate a business environment of access to opportunities. With that in mind, I intend to direct my energies to identifying barriers which inhibit access to business opportunities. This includes continued efforts toward achieving the goal cited in City Council's Ten Percent Resolution. Once the ten percent level is achieved in all three areas respectively, construction, architecture and engineering and goods and services, the subsequent goal is to ensure that 10% expenditure level becomes the base, not the ceiling. While we are starting to realize definite signs of support from some departments, and are sincerely grateful for their commitment, more diligence is needed to reach every department, if we are to succeed in reaching and/or exceeding the 10% goal.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the City and business community. Long term, my desire is that the MBC will continue to strengthen the environment of access to opportunities for woman-owned and minority-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses.

Please feel free to attend our monthly public meetings to share your ideas and thoughts. I look forward to meeting you at our next monthly meeting on February 11, 2011, 2 pm-4 pm.

Wishing each of you a happy and prosperous New Year,

Wanda Cooper, Chair

The purpose of the newsletter is to educate, enhance awareness and share information.

The eNewsletter will be published twice a year. In the meantime, please visit our Web site at: www.vbgov.com/mbc

Meet the MBC Board Members and MBC Associates at: [Members](#)

It's So Hard To Say Goodbye...City's First Minority Business Coordinator



Barbara Booker-Williams has dedicated 36 years of her professional life to public service and helping others to succeed. She retired from the federal government at the senior executive level and has been with the City of Virginia Beach as its Minority Business Coordinator for the past 5 years. She was a pioneer of sorts.

In an effort to have a more robust minority business program, City Council approved the position and the city hired Ms. Booker-Williams to help shape and implement an outreach strategy for those businesses that historically have had limited success with city contracts. It was a start of something great. This was the first time the city has invested in such an endeavor and showed real commitment to leveling the procurement playing field.

Through the hard work and dedication of Ms. Booker-Williams along with support from the Finance Department, there has been increases in community involvement, outreach to targeted markets, awareness of the Minority Business Council, internal structure and systems for the program, Administrative Directive 6.09, vendor training and so much more. Ms. Booker-Williams is credited with many of these successes but she's the first to say "it's a team effort." Teaming with Economic Development, Public Works, Public Utilities, the Virginia Department of Minority Enterprise, Virginia Department of Business Assistance and our sister cities has provided a strong model for others to emulate. Despite these achievements, there is much left to be done. She would like to see a mentor-protégé program implemented along with education for construction and architecture and engineering firms. She also noted that the minority business effort needs to be organizationally established at a level commensurate with the desired outcomes in order to command the level of participation and support as other meaningful programs such as the Strategic Growth Office and similar programs. It's a program not a project. The City of Richmond, as an example, has an entire office dedicated to this area. As contracting and development opportunities in Richmond increase, the Office of Minority Business Development (OMBD) remains committed to providing maximum opportunities for minority, disadvantaged and emerging businesses. It is their mission to help these businesses participate in the full array of contracting opportunities the city has to offer.

Sadly, Ms. Booker-Williams will retire this month. She will be sorely missed. She leaves a huge void. She advises her yet to be named successor to be a change agent, risk-taker and understand how to build relationships. "Do the best you can but don't give up if it doesn't work the first time." Wise words from a wise lady who pioneered a program to great heights in five short years. She reflects that, "it's been a tremendous journey and I've enjoyed every minute of it. I'm very humbled by the experience. I'm grateful and relish and cherish the relationships with members of the MBC and Associates, city staff and those involved in helping to create a more inclusive business environment." It is the MBC that is grateful Barbara. We wish you well in the next chapter of your life.

Highlighting Tammy Owens, SWaM Business Development Manager



Tammy Owens is the personification of dedication and passion. She has been with the Virginia Beach Economic Development Office for nearly four years. Before that she was with Hampton University and was a business owner herself for thirteen years. With that experience, she understands what businesses need to be successful. She notes that to date some of her business achievements include establishing a new Small, Woman- and Minority-Owned Business development and outreach program for the Virginia Beach Economic Development Department. With a focus on attracting and assisting SWaM companies of all types, from start-ups to established firms, Ms. Owens has helped grow the City's partnerships with this vibrant part of its business

community. Additionally, with Ms. Owens' leadership, approximately 400 businesses have been reached through its popular training workshops over the past four years.

Ms. Owens notes that despite the successes, there will always be more that can be done to serve the City's minority business community. She advises that she fully supports the MBC's mission -- to help facilitate more contracts identified with SWaM businesses and provide the type of environment for them to expand. Additionally, she suggests that her support provides value-added benefits through an expanded focus on attracting and assisting SWaM businesses in all areas of their operations which helps strengthen the City's overall economic position while helping those companies position themselves for long-term success. She notes that having someone dedicated to helping the SWaM business community is a tremendous asset, and is greatly complementary to the mission of the Minority Business Council. Ms. Owens emphasizes that all businesses must work together with a regional perspective – collaborating and keeping the big picture in mind. If one succeeds, we all succeed. It's all about job creation and enhanced quality of life.

Ms. Owens says that when distinguishing Virginia Beach and/or the region from others, she reminds clients that we are the 42nd largest city in the U.S. Our location, workforce development, skill level, defense industry and city leadership set us apart. "We have a united leadership in Virginia Beach with professionals who care about the city and its citizens" she says.

"Under Warren Harris, Director of Economic Development and the city council and management, we are strategically moving the city forward. Our team is innovative and united in order to accomplish the goal of creating an ideal community for a lifetime," says Owens. Some of the key services to achieve business attraction, retention and expansion include site selection, business advocacy, business marketing, financial guidance, business counseling and overall entrepreneurial support. "We also support and work with city contract and procurement process assistance," notes Owens.

Ms. Owens is indeed a valuable resource to those firms considering Virginia Beach as part of their relocation or expansion plans. The MBC is proud to have Tammy on our team.

The 2010 Fall Construction Workshop Series I

The Virginia Beach Minority Business Council (MBC) celebrated its 15th year by presenting The Fall Construction Workshop Series I on November 4th at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. Specially developed for those in the construction industry and associated trades, the community construction forum was designed to build upon existing contracting opportunities and provide a blueprint for success through an informative series of workshops that offered expert knowledge on partnership expansion and financial literacy. Those that attended were able to network with fellow business owners and professionals, exchange thoughts and ideas, and review coming projects.

The afternoon began with a general session that featured guest speaker **Ms. Sylvia Estes**, President of Pipeline & Industrial Group, Inc. (P.I.G.), a multi-million dollar, 8(a) certified, small, disadvantaged American-Indian owned firm that specializes in general construction, design build, renovations, demolition, and disaster emergency repairs. Its long list of clients includes the City of Norfolk, US Corps of Army Engineers, Department of Defense, colleges and universities, and the City of Virginia Beach. Her candid conversation with the audience focused on the tools of success, hurdles one may encounter, and beating the odds. She challenged those present to remain committed to their established goals and to continue to engage their elected officials.

The general session was also an opportunity to recognize those businesses and persons that continue to do exceptional works within the city. **City Councilman Glenn R. Davis** was on hand to deliver remarks and assist Minority Business Council Chair, **Attorney Wanda Cooper**, in presenting the Woman-Owned Business of the Year Award to **Medical Temporaries, Inc.**; Minority-Owned Business of the Year Award to **Suburban Plumbing**; Minority-Owned Business of the Year Award to **Seven City Sabretts**; Diversity Champion Award to **E.V. Williams, Inc.**; the City of Virginia Beach Exceptional Achievement Award for a Department to the **Department of Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**; the City of Virginia Beach Exceptional Achievement Award for an Individuals to **Rich Nettleton** (Design and Construction Manager, Department of Public Utilities), and **Cynthia Whitbred-Spanoulis** (Department of Economic Development).

Workshop presentations offered the most current, relevant information available. Entitled respectively the “ABC’s of Teaming” and the “Ins and Outs of Bonding” industry professionals included **Attorney Brian C. Purcell**, a partner with the law firm of Willcox & Savage, P.C. whose practice is focused on lower middle market and closely held companies and includes general business matters, mergers, acquisitions and divestitures, the structuring of joint ventures, pass-through entity transactions and commercial contracts, and **Ms. Charlene Reynolds**, CEO of Creative Insurance Concepts Inc. (CIC), an insurance and risk management firm, and Creative Bonding and Insurance Solutions (CBIS), the surety bonds division that provides contract bonds, bond workshops, and bond assistance consulting in multiple states around the country.

The event closed with an expo and reception where participants were able to obtain first-hand knowledge about current and future contracting opportunities, mingle with various City departments and local municipalities, visit with large prime contractors, and communicate directly with state and federal organizations. On-site registration for the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) Small, Woman and Minority (SWaM) Program were also present.

The Virginia Beach City Council established the Minority Business Council in 1995. The 11-member panel advises the city manager and City Council on procurement policies and procedural issues.

Recap of Award Winners The 2010 Fall Construction Workshop Series I



Woman-Owned Business of the Year
Medical Temporaries, Inc.



Minority-Owned Business of the Year
Suburban Plumbing



Minority-Owned Business of the Year
Seven City Sabretts



Diversity Champion of the Year
E.V. Williams Company, Inc.



Exceptional Achievement Award
Rich Nettleton, Department of Public Utilities



Exceptional Achievement Award
Tammy Owens accepted the award on behalf of
Cynthia Whitbred-Spanoulis, Economic Development