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The MBE Monitor

Integrity. Accountably. Opportunity.

A Publication of the Maryland Department of Transportation's Office of Minority Business Enterprise
The Official Certification Agency for the State of Maryland

Governor's Message



Welcome to the first issue of "The MBE Monitor," the official newsletter of the Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Office of Minority Business Enterprise (MBE). MDOT's MBE Office serves as the arm of Maryland government that certifies all Minority Business Enterprises and Federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE). The first step to become eligible for State contracts as a

minority-owned or women-owned business is to become certified by MDOT's MBE Office. In addition to the State of Maryland, municipal, county, and national firms and groups depend on MDOT's MBE certification.

The O'Malley/Brown Administration is committed to protecting the priorities of the people of Maryland, including strengthening and growing our middle class and our family-owned businesses, as well as expanding opportunity for more people rather than fewer. We are working towards that goal by supporting minority and disadvantaged businesses throughout Maryland.

As part of our effort to protect those priorities, I have tasked Transportation Secretary John D. Porcari with the job of revamping the MBE Program to ensure that it is fair to all involved and that the certification process is thorough, accountable and transparent.

The first step was to

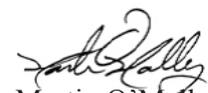
hire a leadership team to direct the MBE Program including:

-- Karen Williams Gooden as Assistant Secretary overseeing the Maryland Department of Transportation's Offices of Minority Business Enterprise, Fair Practices, Environmental Compliance and Engineering and Procurement; and -- Zenita Wickham Hurley as the new Director of MDOT's Office of Minority Business Enterprise.

Karen and Zenita's leadership will be vital to the future success of this program. They have hired additional staff to oversee certification and compliance, which are core to maintaining the transparency and integrity of the State's MBE Program. With these improvements in place, we will be better positioned to deliver on

the original intent and spirit of the MBE Program – the creation of more opportunities for small, minority and disadvantaged businesses in Maryland.

We can achieve great things by working together to help women-owned and minority-owned businesses in our One Maryland, where diversity is our greatest strength. We look forward to working with you!


Martin O'Malley
Governor



Above: Karen Williams Gooden, Governor Martin O'Malley and Zenita Wickham Hurley.



Meet the Assistant Secretary

As Assistant Secretary, Karen Williams Gooden oversees the Maryland Department of Transportation's Offices of Minority Business Enterprise, Fair Practices, Environmental Compliance, and Engineering and Procurement. She has dedicated most of her legal and administrative career to work in the public sector.

Karen Williams Gooden

She has served as an attorney for the Prince George's County Board of Appeals and as a hearing examiner for state government appellate cases arising from the Office of Administrative Hearings.

Ms. Gooden also served as an Associate County Attorney for Prince George's County, handling procurement matters. She was deputy director and legal counsel to the Prince George's County Minority Business Opportunities Commission.

She also is the author of two books on the history of African Americans: "A Cross Borne: A Biography of Judge James Franklyn Bourne, Jr." and "Like a Phoenix I'll Rise: An Illustrated History of African Americans in Prince George's County, Maryland, 1696-1996."

Ms. Gooden received her law degree from the Howard University School of Law, and her undergraduate degree *cum laude* in English from Howard University.



... and MBE Director

The Maryland Department of Transportation's Office of Minority Business Enterprise is under new and outstanding leadership. Transportation Secretary John Porcari appointed Zenita Wickham Hurley in May of 2007 to serve as the Director of MDOT's MBE certification program.

Zenita Wickham Hurley

A graduate of the New York University School of Law, Ms. Hurley graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Maryland at College Park with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Government and Politics and Afro-American Studies. While an undergraduate, Ms. Hurley wrote her

thesis entitled "In Defense of Maryland's Affirmative Action Program: Examining How a Small Elite Dominated Contracts Awarded by the State Roads Commission in the Baltimore Metropolitan District, 1955-1970." Ms. Hurley brings a tremendous amount of competence, expertise and passion to the position.

Most recently, Ms. Hurley served as an Assistant Attorney General assigned to MDOT where she provided legal advice for two years to the Office of MBE on issues concerning the MBE and DBE Programs, contract monitoring, and compliance with federal and constitutional standards for affirmative action in public contracting.

Prior to serving in the Office of the Attorney General, Ms. Hurley was an attorney in the Child Advocacy Unit of the Legal Aid Bureau in Baltimore. She was also an Associate with the law firm of Steptoe and Johnson LLP in Washington, D.C.

Under Ms. Hurley's direction, the Office of MBE has made many strides toward improving service to the MBE community. With a strong commitment to excellence and passion for enhancing opportunities for minority businesses, Ms. Hurley has implemented a host of innovative changes designed to improve services extended to MBEs and DBEs. Ms. Hurley has restructured certification operations, introduced new training opportunities for staff, and developed meaningful relations with sister agencies in the hopes of establishing reciprocity between MDOT and other local certification programs.

Ms. Hurley is only one of MDOT's recent additions to a growing team of professionals, dedicating their professional lives to public service with a specific emphasis on improving and advancing the cause of minority business development.

MBE TRIVIA

- In what year did Maryland first establish its Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program?
 - 1980
 - 1978
 - 1981
- What groups are presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged under the State's MBE Program?
 - African Americans
 - Hispanic Americans
 - Native Americans
 - Asian Americans
 - Women
 - All of the above
- In 2001, the State increased the MBE goal to 25%. What was it before then?
 - 12%
 - 15%
 - 14%

Answers:
1. b 2. f 3. c



Certification Experts Available For Outreach Presentations

Can you benefit from MBE certification? Please notify the Office of MBE at 410-865-1253, and we will gladly send our certification experts to your upcoming outreach events with local businesses.

Certification: What's In It For Me?

The State of Maryland is committed to maximizing Minority Business Enterprise and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise participation in its contracting activities. The Maryland Department of Transportation is the agency responsible for certifying MBEs and DBEs for participation in State contracts. What you might not know is that many local jurisdictions and public/private partnerships also rely on MDOT MBE certification to support their minority business inclusion efforts. They include: Prince George's County, Baltimore County, Montgomery County, Howard County, Prince George's County Public Schools, Anne Arundel County, Maryland University System, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, National Harbor Project, and the East Baltimore Development Project.

While certification does not guarantee work to your firm, certification as an MBE/DBE does provide your firm greater exposure to a vast amount of work opportunities.

The names of all certified firms appear in the MBE/DBE Directory, a public database available online. Contractors, State and local governments, and others use the MBE/DBE Directory as a resource for soliciting minority participation in their projects. Typically, if a firm is not certified at the time of bid/proposal opening, a prime contractor cannot receive credit toward achievement of the MBE/DBE participation goal by using the minority firm. *Please contact each jurisdiction to find out their MBE participation rules.*

Already MBE/DBE certified?

Need help navigating the State's procurement process?

Looking for resources to help grow and develop your business?

Contact:
Governor's Office of Minority Affairs
Suite 1502
6 Saint Paul Street
Baltimore MD 21202
410.767.8232
1.877.558.0998

We have highlighted several upcoming contracting opportunities for your convenience:

MPA 29004-S – Janitorial Services at Dundalk & Seagirt Marine Terminal, MBE Goal 26% w/7% Women-owned and 7% African American Owned sub-goals.

MAA MAA-MC-09-008 – Roof Repairs & Maintenance Services for buildings at BWI-TM and Martin State Airports, MBE Goal 15%

MdTA MA-2195-000-002 – Construction Services related to the removal and replacement of bituminous concrete at various locations, MBE Goal 25% w/7% Women-owned and 12% African American owned sub-goals

SHA AL8795184 – Street Improvements to include resurfacing roadways, curb improvements, ADA ramp improvements and more (Community Enhancement project) for Cresaptown in Allegany County, MBE Goal 23%

SHA MO2805174 – Restoration of degraded stream channel in the Long Draught Storm water Management facility in Montgomery County, MBE goal 26% with 10% Women-owned and 2@ African American sub-goals

You can locate additional opportunities online at:

EMaryland Marketplace: <https://ebidmarketplace.com/>

MDOT's Website: http://www.mdot.state.md.us/Contract_Opportunities/index.html

MBE Fraud Hotline 1-800-544-6056

Any suspected abuse of the Maryland MBE Program is taken very seriously and should be reported immediately to the MDOT Office of MBE. The toll-free number is staffed during normal business hours to receive your concerns. With your help, the integrity and fairness of the program will be maintained for all qualified participants.



Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor



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Tell Us What You Think!

Recently, certified firms talk to us about their experiences during the certification process:

"The certification staff was very patient and understanding of my personal situation (relative's illness). They immediately followed-up when my issues were resolved."

"This is a great opportunity for a woman in this business world today."

"Ms. Cooper was very efficient with the handling of the application. Her knowledge of the program was vast and any help she could provide to facilitate our certification was offered. Thank you for providing us with competent employees. The process was smooth."

"Keep making the process simpler for lay people. Sometimes understanding government jargon can be a challenge. However, thanks for the certification."

We welcome your thoughts and comments regarding the MDOT MBE/DBE certification process. Please write or email us at:

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Question of the Month

In order for a firm to be eligible for the MBE Program, State law requires that it must be at least 51% owned and controlled by a socially and economically disadvantaged individual. Since 2001, the Program's primary measure of an individual's economic disadvantage is his or her personal net worth (PNW). Initially set at \$750,000, the legislature doubled the State's PNW cap for MBE Program eligibility to \$1.5 million in the 2004 session.

Do you agree with this figure? Should the cap be raised again? Should it be lowered? Why or why not? What number do you think is appropriate?

Please email your thoughts to mbe@mdot.state.md.us.

MDOT Hosts USDOT Office of Civil Rights for DBE Training Seminar

In keeping with the O'Malley/Brown administration's commitment to increasing accountability and integrity within the Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program, MDOT's Office of MBE recently partnered with the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Office of Civil Rights to train MDOT staff on key elements of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. The DBE Program, which has eligibility requirements similar to those of the State's MBE Program, is designed to increase minority business inclusion on those MDOT contracts funded in part or in whole by USDOT.

On February 11-12, USDOT Civil Rights Specialist Mark Pentino conducted a two-day training workshop focused on DBE certification and DBE fraud prevention and detection. The training was provided for more than 200 MDOT employees, including all Office of MBE staff, modal MBE/DBE liaisons, modal MBE/DBE Directors and their staff, and senior procurement officers.

MDOT recently submitted its overall DBE goals for FFY 2009 to USDOT. Please see the notice in the June 6 edition of the Maryland Register, available online at <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/>.