

## Making connections at Power of Relationships: Reverse Trade Fair & Business Networking



For Tom Nguyen, senior partner of WinCorp Solutions, it was an opportunity to interact with decision makers. Rita Fabra, owner of We Care Company, was hoping to "breakthrough" larger corporations, while Teruko Weinberg, president of Teruko Weinberg Inc., wanted to get the word out about her human resource consulting firm.

These minority entrepreneurs were among the 70 exhibitors and more than 300 attendees at SCMBDC's annual event, "The Power of Relationships: Reverse Trade Fair & Business Networking," held September 8 at Southern California Edison's headquarters in Rosemead, Calif.

The networking event was organized by the council's Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee (MBEIC), which is comprised of minority business owners who provide the council with feedback on its programs and services, and sponsored by Edison and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

The business-to-business event featured its second consecutive 'reverse trade fair,' where minority business enterprises (MBEs) served as exhibitors, and procurement professionals, corporate buyers, supplier diversity representatives, minority businesses and others visited the table-top displays. It also provided networking opportunities for non-exhibitors and others during the reception.

Among those in attendance were representatives from Metropolitan Water District; Edison; Amgen; AT&T; Fluor Corporation; General Services Administration; Jones Lang LaSalle; MBDA Business Center, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County; Los Angeles World Airports; Los

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**SCMBDC Toastmasters International**

**Sept. 22, Oct. 6, 20, 9 - 11 a.m. SCMBDC Headquarters**

This learn-by-doing workshop helps participants (both seasoned and novices) hone speaking and leadership skills in a friendly and non-threatening atmosphere. Participants will learn how to pitch their product/service and think on their feet, have the opportunity to listen to guest speakers and network with other MBEs and guests. Meetings are held bi-weekly on Thursdays.

**California Cable: Connecting Communities We Serve with Business Opportunities**

**Sept. 23, 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Marina del Rey Marriott**

This one-on-one matchmaking event connects diverse businesses with potential procurement opportunities with Time Warner Cable, Comcast, Charter Communications, Inc. and Cox Communications.

**Leadership Award Gala**

**Oct. 12, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Beverly Hills Hotel**

Our 27th annual award event honors Ken McNeely, president of AT&T California. The event spotlights an outstanding individual and/or a

Angeles Department of Water & Power; Metro; Northrop Grumman Corporation; Southern California Gas Co.; Verizon; The Walt Disney Company; Southern California Contractors Association; Brutoco Engineering & Construction, Inc.; Doty Bros; Maxim Crane; PAR Electrical Contractors, and Kiewit Pacific.



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"The reverse trade fair concept was initially difficult to grasp, but it's finally catching on," according to Rita Vigil-Ferguson, who has served as event chair for the past three years. She is also an MBEIC member and president of G&F Concrete Cutting, Inc. "Last year, we needed to educate people about what to expect. The interest was far greater this year," she adds.

MBE exhibitors, who had to pay \$50 to confirm their participation, represented a wide range of industries, including construction, information technology, staffing, marketing and more.

Pat Watts, MBEIC chair and president and CEO of FCI Management Consultants, added the event "was a resounding success. We've heard from several MBEs who said they received solid business leads and possible contract opportunities."

"The reverse trade fair was an excellent opportunity to connect Southern California Contractors Association's (SCCA) contracting community with SCMBDC's membership to provide a nexus to contracting opportunities and future business relationships," says Larry Russell, executive vice president of SCCA, which represents contractors in the construction industry, including operating engineers, laborers, cement masons, ironworkers, and carpenters. "We were glad to participate and look forward to working with SCMBDC moving forward."

Armen Nalbandian, sales engineer for Ronan Engineering Co., added, "This is beyond what we expected -- we see potential business leads as a result of our participation."

corporation whose achievements and leadership in the business community have resulted in positive results for diverse businesses. For more information or sponsorship opportunities and in-kind services, contact Lauren Knight at [lknight@scmbdc.org](mailto:lknight@scmbdc.org), or 213-689-6940.

For more information about these and other events, visit [www.scmbdc.org](http://www.scmbdc.org)

## AT&T California president to receive 2011 Leadership Award



Ken McNeely  
President,  
AT&T California

Ken McNeely, president of AT&T California, will receive SCMBDC's 2011 Leadership Award at its 27th Annual Leadership Award gala on Wednesday, October 12. The event will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Beverly Hills Hotel, located at 9641 Sunset Blvd.

The gala spotlights an outstanding individual and/or a corporation whose achievements and leadership in the business community have resulted in positive results for diverse businesses.

"We are so pleased to present our 2011 Leadership Award to Ken McNeely and AT&T California," according to SCMBDC President John W. Murray, Jr. "The company and its senior leadership are among the best when it comes to finding and doing business with diverse suppliers through initiatives that include mentoring and matchmaking programs.

"Last year, these efforts resulted in corporate-wide spending of \$9.2 billion with minority, women and disabled veterans business enterprises, representing 18.8 percent of its total procurement," Murray said. He noted this year, AT&T's goal is to procure 21.5 percent of its total procurement from diverse suppliers, 15 percent of which is with minority business enterprises.

Murray added that AT&T is a member of the Billion Dollar Roundtable, a supplier diversity think tank of corporations that spends more than \$1 billion annually with diverse companies; only 17 companies qualify at this level.

"Last year AT&T in California achieved its highest ever diverse supplier spending - nearly \$1 billion went to minority, woman-owned and disabled veteran-owned businesses right here in our state," said McNeely. "We're all feeling the impacts of the recession and joblessness and so I'm especially pleased that AT&T is able to reinvest in California - right here, right now."

McNeely is responsible for all external affairs, public policy, and philanthropic activities for AT&T in California. In this capacity, he leads AT&T's workforce in the state of more than 40,000 employees.

Previous award winners include: Michael Allman, president and CEO of Southern California Gas Co.; Tetsuo Iwamura, president and CEO, American Honda Motor Co., Inc.; Earvin "Magic" Johnson, chairman and CEO, Magic Johnson Enterprises and founder and chairman, Magic Johnson Foundation; Alfred E. Osborne, Jr., senior associate dean, UCLA Anderson School of Management, associate professor of Global Economics & Management, founder and faculty director, Harold Price Center for Entrepreneurial Studies; Stephen F. Bollenbach, co-chairman and CEO, Hilton Worldwide, and Robert A. Iger, CEO, The Walt Disney Company.

This year's award celebration chair is Andy Lee, CEO and chairman of Alorica, a global leader in delivering business process outsourcing customer contact management solutions.

For more information or sponsorship opportunities and in-kind services, contact Lauren Knight at [lknight@scmbdc.org](mailto:lknight@scmbdc.org), or 213-689-6940.

## MBE smart tips

### Make the most of SCMBDC's programs and services



Whether you're a minority business enterprise (MBE) whose relationship with SCMBDC spans a few months or a few years, it's quite possible you're not taking full advantage of the council's programs and services. But here's why you should.

"MBEs who engage in our programs, attend our events and let us know who they are and what they do remain top-of-mind when corporate members are seeking business opportunities with diverse suppliers," according to SCMBDC President John

W. Murray, Jr. "We know of plenty of MBEs who develop solid business leads and ultimately contracts as a result of our programs and services."

Here's how you can make the most from your affiliation with the council:

- **MBE certification** - As a certified MBE, you have access to SCMBDC's corporate member directory, which can get you in touch with hundreds of procurement officers, buyers, and key staff at more than 200 major corporations. Use this directory and contact decision makers who can lead you to potential business. You're also be included in a database that is accessed by local corporate members as well as 3,500 national corporate members. Inclusion in the database means corporate members can find suppliers that fit their needs.
- **Matchmaking/networking events** - Attend the council's matchmaking events designed to match suppliers with corporate buyers. Matches are based on products and services that corporate representatives are interested in and/or procure regularly. You should also attend other networking events, such as the recent 'reverse trade fair.' These can make the difference in getting you in the door with major corporations.
- **Professional/educational programs** - Take advantage of workshops and seminars to help you effectively manage, promote and sell your business. Most of these programs are free of charge. Through partnerships with Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management, USC Marshall School of Business and other organizations, you can also gain valuable insight on how to improve business operations.
- **Health Insurance Program** - The council provides MBEs access to top quality, affordable insurance. Learn about the customized benefits including medical (HMO & PPO) and dental benefits (DHMO & PPO); vision; short- and long-term disability; long-term care, employee assistance programs and life insurance. Call for an estimate - you could save thousands of dollars, which otherwise could go toward your bottom line.
- **Let SCMBDC know who you are** - Oftentimes, corporate

members will call and ask if SCMBDC can recommend a supplier in a particular industry. The council can't recommend you if they don't know who you are, so be sure to attend an SCMBDC event, introduce yourself, and stay in touch.

"Don't expect the phone to ring after you pay your certification or re-certification fee," adds Murray. "You need to network, meet the right people, and develop new skills in order to grow your business. The council is here to help you do that."

For more information about the council's programs and services, go to [www.scmbdc.org](http://www.scmbdc.org).

### **News briefs**

#### **State sees drop in new businesses**

For years, California ranked either first or second in the nation in creating business. But a new study shows the state plummeted to 50th as it lost 4,600 businesses last year.

The study by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI), reported in the *Los Angeles Times* last month, found that California was among 29 states that saw a drop in net new businesses. The study calculated net new business creation by using the quarterly employment and wage information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Three years ago, California ranked first, with 32,829 net new businesses established. Though the number sank to 12,529 during the worst of the recession two years ago, the state still ranked first.

But last year, amid continuing high unemployment, the state lost 4,632 business from the prior year. Only Michigan and the District of Columbia ranked worse. Washington state took over the top spot last year by creating 8,315 net new business establishments.

Tim Nadreau, research economist at EMSI, said in the *Times* article that high unemployment rates often can help business creation because the cost of labor is so low. But in California's case, high unemployment (about 12.4% last year) didn't seem to motivate entrepreneurs to create businesses.