

## Honoring outstanding minority entrepreneurs



*Nominees and corporate nominators stand together at the 27th Annual Supplier of the Year Awards luncheon.*

They are a formidable group. Together, they have gross annual sales exceeding \$482 million, employ more than 20,000 and represent a variety of industries, ranging from IT and construction and staffing services to advertising, promotions and food service and facilities management.

These minority business entrepreneurs (MBEs) were gathered at SCMBDC's 27th Annual Supplier of the Year Awards luncheon on July 7 at the Omni Los Angeles Hotel, where they were being honored for their outstanding work with corporate members.

This year, top-performing, SCMBDC-certified MBEs nominated by 15 corporations competed for the award in four categories, based on gross annual sales of less than \$1 million (Class I), between \$1 million and \$10 million (Class II), between \$10 million and \$50 million (Class III), and \$50 million or greater (Class IV).

"These nominees are entrepreneurs who lead rather than follow; they don't shy away from challenges but rather embrace and overcome them. They get things done on time and on budget and they enrich and inspire all of us to work to our full potential in order to bring value to customers," according to John W. Murray, Jr., president of the council.

Through the program, established by the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC), corporate members nominate certified MBEs in good standing with the council for an award. MBEs are judged by a selection committee, comprised of SCMBDC corporate members, on their demonstrated growth and development; employment and job creation; consistent high quality operations, products/services and business performance; procurement/purchasing spend with MBEs; mentoring and other forms of assistance to MBEs; and more.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**SCMBDC Toastmasters International**  
**July 28, August 11,**  
**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.

**Communication Skills Live**  
**August 16, 9 - 11 a.m.**

**SCMBDC Headquarters**

Receive personal coaching from an accomplished entrepreneur, award-winning speech evaluator/member of Toastmasters International and USC professor. This is for entrepreneurs who want to optimize quality presentation skills and fatten profit margins. Both seasoned speakers and novices are welcome. Cost is \$35. **Contact:** Fernando Velasquez, fvelasquez@scmbdc.org or 213-689-6968.

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



*Class I winner Dana Hali of Gifts Cetera/Cetera Marketing (2nd from left) with Tony Piazza, American Honda; Sherri Macko, American Airlines; and SCMBDC Chair Joe Alderete, who is also manager, supplier diversity at Southern California Edison.*



*Glenn Torrez of Prava Construction Services (2nd from left) accepts the Class II award from Joe Alderete, Mitzi Murakami of Kaiser Permanente, and Tony Piazza.*

Among the nominees, four winners received the Supplier of the Year Award: (Class I) Gifts Cetera/Cetera Marketing, a North Hollywood, Calif.-based gift/greeting card and marketing services company; (Class II) Prava Construction Services, which provides construction management and general contracting services from its headquarters in Carlsbad, Calif.; (Class III) Walton Isaacson, LLC, a Los Angeles-based agency that creates consumer brand-building experiences through advertising, events, entertainment and experiential marketing; and (Class IV) SodexoMAGIC, LLC, a subsidiary of Magic Johnson Enterprises, which provides comprehensive foodservice and facilities management services from its Beverly Hills, Calif. base.

American Airlines presented the Class I winner with a free, roundtrip airline ticket within the U.S., the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico. Kaiser Permanente presented the Class II winner with a \$2,500 stipend to attend NMSDC's conference and business opportunity fair in Atlanta on Oct. 30 through Nov. 2. The Class III winner received a scholarship to UCLA Anderson School of Business Management Development for Entrepreneurs Program, courtesy of

Southern California Gas Co. In addition, American Honda Motor Co. announced that the Class IV recipient will be featured in a segment of "Making It," the KTLA-TV program focusing on minority entrepreneurs.



*Ayiko Broyard from Walton Isaacson (2nd from left) accepts the Class III award from Joe Alderete, Michelle Chieks of Southern California Gas, and Tony Piazza.*



*Joe Alderete and Tony Piazza present the Class IV award to Eric Holoman of SodexoMAGIC.*

Runners-up in each category received Winners' Circle Awards and include (Class I) Kambrian Corp., an IT services company based in West Covina, Calif.; (Class II) People's Choice Staffing, a staffing services company headquartered in Corona, Calif.; (Class III) Web-Metro, a San Dimas, Calif.-based online marketing, training and consulting company; and (Class IV) Alorica, which provides outsourcing services and support from its headquarters in Chino, Calif.

This year's nominees include: (Class I) Federal and Commercial Contracts, Inc., Inglewood, Calif.; Netserve Systems, Inc., Irvine, Calif.; (Class II) Cal Micro Recycling, Ontario, Calif.; Dorado Design and Construction, Burbank, Calif.; Glow Electric, Hawthorne, Calif.; Icon Blue, Los Angeles; JAG Professional Services, Inc., El Segundo, Calif.; KMA Promotions, Torrance, Calif.; Max Out, Inc., Industry, Calif.; Zeesman Communications, Inc., Los Angeles; (Class III) A10 Clinical Solutions, Cary, N.C.; ChemicoMays, LLC, Southfield, Mich.; Intertrend Communications, Long Beach, Calif.; Neal Electric Corp.,

Poway, Calif.; Pacific Rim Capital, Aliso Viejo, Calif.; Philatron Wire & Cable, Santa Fe Springs, Calif.; (Class IV) Rose International, Chesterfield, Mo.; Technology Integration Group, San Diego; and VXi Global Solutions, Inc., Los Angeles.

SCMBDC also recognized American Honda for its 21st consecutive year as title sponsor of the Supplier of the Year Awards luncheon. Anthony Piazza, vice president of procurement, said, "For more than two decades, it has been our pleasure and honor to sponsor the Supplier of the Year Awards luncheon. We feel strongly about the council and recognizing outstanding minority businesses."



*Nelson Davis, president of The Making It! Institute for the Advancement of Business, was the emcee.*

Murray also thanked Nelson Davis, president of The Making It! Institute for the Advancement of Business, who served as emcee, and William C. "Bill" Allen, president and CEO of Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), who was the keynote speaker. Murray also thanked American Airlines for holding a raffle and donating two roundtrip airline tickets to two suppliers.

NMSDC introduced the Supplier of the Year program in 1981 as a way of measuring the success of circulating corporate dollars into the minority business community. As an affiliate of the national council, SCMBDC has participated in the program since 1985.

Local winners compete in the regional competition, and if selected at that level, move on to national competition, which takes place at NMSDC's headquarters in New York. Regional and national winners will be recognized at NMSDC's annual conference and awards dinner this fall.

### **What the winners said**

*'Two years ago, I came to this event and thought, 'Maybe one day...'  
-- Dana Hali, Gifts Cetera/Cetera Marketing (Class I)*

*'We have to thank The Gas Company, who supported us since our inception. They helped us in our growth, from \$500,000 more than six years ago to \$8 million this year.' -- Glenn Torrez, Prava Construction (Class II)*

*'Toyota and Lexus have been our partners and gave us an incredible opportunity...'  
-- Ayiko Broyard, Walton Isaacson (Class III)*

*'We created this company to be a job creation engine, working with diverse suppliers and partners.'  
-- Eric Holoman, SodexoMAGIC (Class IV)*

### **Corporate members providing 2011 award nominations**

American Airlines  
American Honda Motor Co.  
Amgen, Inc.  
AT&T  
Kaiser Permanente  
Los Angeles World Airports  
Nestlé USA, Inc.  
Northrop Grumman  
Owens & Minor

Southern California Edison  
Southern California Gas Co.  
The Walt Disney Company  
Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.  
Turner Construction  
WellPoint, Inc.



*The luncheon attracted a sell-out crowd.*

### **Special thanks to our sponsors**

#### **Title**

American Honda Motor Co.

#### **Platinum**

BP

Northrop Grumman

Southern California Edison

Southern California Gas Co.

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

#### **Gold**

AEG

American Airlines

AT&T

Kaiser Permanente

Philatron Wire & Cable

#### **Silver**

Amgen, Inc.

Chevron Corp.

Dorado Design and Construction

Los Angeles Department of Water & Power

Los Angeles World Airports

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Nestlé, USA

Southwest Gas Corp.

The Walt Disney Company

Turner Construction

U.S. Bank

Walton Isaacson, LLC

WellPoint, Inc.



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## Small business capital of America



*Bill Allen, president and CEO of LAEDC, gave the keynote address at the Supplier of the Year Awards luncheon*

Los Angeles County is the small business capital of America with 408,823 small businesses. The county also leads the nation in women- and minority-owned firms and is the manufacturing capital of America with 665,000 jobs.

These facts were shared by William C. "Bill" Allen, president and CEO of Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), who was the keynote speaker at the Supplier of the Year Awards luncheon. LAEDC is the region's premiere business leadership organization whose mission is to attract, retain, and grow business and jobs for the regions of Los Angeles County.

While he discussed the county's leadership, he also noted the county and its 88 cities have underperformed in job creation in recent decades, due in part to the lack of a strategic plan for economic development to guide decision making. This led to his discussion of the L.A. County Strategic Plan for Economic Development, which was created in 2009 with input from more than 1,000 stakeholders.

The 2010 to 2014 plan includes five aspirational goals, 12 broad objectives, and 52 specific strategies to ensure a more vibrant, diverse, and sustainable economy for Los Angeles County in the years ahead. The five goals include: prepare an educated workforce, create a business friendly environment, enhance our quality of life, implement smart land use, and build 21st century infrastructure.

Allen encouraged the audience to go to <http://www.lacountystrategicplan.com/> to learn more about the plan.

## Getting in the door with the federal government



*Beverly Kuykendall, president of Federal and Commercial Contracts*

Twenty-three percent of the federal budget is designated for small business, yet this goal is seldom if ever reached. Perhaps it's because many business owners don't know where to start or whom to contact and give up at the mere prospect of trying to get in the federal government's door.

"In order to effectively compete, small businesses need to work hard to understand the federal market. Quite frankly, it takes time and determination," according to Beverly Kuykendall, president of Federal and Commercial Contracts, Inc., who spoke to 40-plus minority business owners at the "How to do Business with the Federal Government" workshop at SCMBDC's office on June 22.

Kuykendall, whose firm provides consulting and support for firms seeking to do business with the federal government, offered an

overview and practical steps for earning a contract with the federal government.

These include focusing communications in three areas: the small business office, which helps small businesses locate agency procurement opportunities; technical buyer (end user), who administers programs for product use; and contracting office, which signs the contracts. She says the key is for MBEs to customize their sales approach to meet each area's needs by answering the question, 'What problems are they trying to solve and how does your product/service help to solve the problem?'



*Beverly Kuykendall shares her expertise on how minority business owners can win contracts with the federal government.*

"Federal Small Business Preference Programs (HubZone, SDVOSB, 8(a), WOSB, Vet-Owned, and Small Business) offer tremendous opportunities for those firms strategically and tactically prepared to put their particular preference or certification to good use to secure relationships and obtain contracts. It takes hard work and a well-executed plan," says Kuykendall.

She adds that for small businesses seeking teaming and other relationships with large businesses, they must be prepared to discuss with the large firm the strategic market advantage offered by the small business relationship, the incremental increase in market share offered by teaming with or mentoring a small business and the return on investment realized by the large business who provides strategic resources to small businesses in the federal arena. To set themselves apart, the small businesses must be able to engage in this specific business dialogue.

#### **Useful websites for MBEs**

[www.va.gov/osdbu](http://www.va.gov/osdbu)

<https://fpds.gov>

[www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)

[fedspending.org](http://fedspending.org)

## Smart tips for MBEs

### Common business pitfalls to avoid



When a business fails, it's usually due to a number of clearly identifiable mistakes, which if small business owners are aware of, can increase their chances of survival.

Here are some common mistakes to avoid:

- **Insufficient capital.** Many businesses fail because they have insufficient cash to meet immediate expenses. Experts recommend having about three times what business owners think they'll need starting out, largely to protect them from any downturns.
- **Thinking small.** You may be small compared to your competitors with more resources, but why show it? Aim to appear bigger than you are and focus on personalized and timely service.
- **Being cheap with technology.** Having the latest technology, including smart phones and laptops, will help you and your employees respond promptly to customers.
- **Lack of sales/marketing focus.** All companies need a sales and marketing expert to make sure business keeps coming in. If you're handling sales for your company, hone your skills or hire someone who has sales skills them.
- **Lack of vision.** Every business should have a vision of where they want to be, and the more focused the vision, the greater the chances that the business will realize its goal.
- **Ignoring changes in the market place.** Many business owners are so focused on their business that they don't see what the competition is doing. Keep track of industry trends and customer's changing needs.
- **Depending on a small number of customers.** Having one or a limited number of customers is risky. Make sure you constantly seek new customers.
- **Trying to do it all.** Most small business owners try to do everything to save money. While it makes sense to do this when your business is starting out, there may be a time where you can't do all tasks. Hiring someone to do the work will increase your costs but you'll save time, allowing you to do focus on growing your business.

## **News briefs**

### **Business owners need midyear checkup**

We're more than halfway through 2011 - has your business undergone a midyear checkup? A midyear look at finances and operations can help a small business determine how well it's managing costs and making use of sales opportunities, according to a June 13 article in the *Los Angeles Times*.

The article states that setting aside time to work on the business, rather than within it, can pay off in creating a more efficient, profitable operation, and possibly fewer hats to wear for the owner.

"Some companies find as a result of stepping back to examine their operations, that their once tried-and-true ways of doing things are no longer serving them well. But for some small businesses, the best single step they can take to improve operations is to implement basic accounting and financial procedures," the article says.

It continues by saying, "Using software and other systems to track daily, rather than relying on an owner's guess, will make it easier to keep tabs on the lifeblood of any business: cash flow...But the first step is to simply take stock in how the company is functioning."