

FOCUS *on* DBE



Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) encourages doing business with Delaware Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs)

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Smaller Firm Wins Big Through Joint Venture

Imagine being a little fish in a sea of big fishes and winning not only a major contract with the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) but also being named the prime contractor for the recently awarded \$1.28 million Centerville Streetscape Improvement project.

The project is one of more than 20 DelDOT designated American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funded infrastructure roadway improvements with a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal of 14 percent. The federally funded project includes redoing the sidewalks, pavers and streets along Route 52 in Centerville.

CNS Construction, Inc., a nearly 10-year-old Delaware DBE general contracting firm specializing in concrete and carpentry, is the small fish that had the foresight to approach a much larger and established DelDOT general contractor for the unique teaming opportunity.

Today, government contracts include a variety of services under a single bid or request for proposal (RFP) that encourage teaming opportunities for DBEs. For the Centerville improvement project, CNS Construction's bonding and service capabilities were limited. However, teaming in a joint venture agreement became a viable option to not only win the award but also be selected as the prime.



Through a joint venture agreement, CNS Construction, a DelDOT DBE, was named the prime contractor in the recently awarded \$1.28 million Centerville Streetscape Improvement project. Shown signing the agreement are Michelle Lamborn of Talley Brothers, Inc. and Charles Showell, Jr., CNS owner.

CNS teamed with Delaware-based Talley Brothers, Inc. (TBI), concrete specialists since 1958 with a portfolio that includes the Riverwalk in Wilmington, the Dover Downs Hotel, and the Brandywine Town Center. Through the joint venture arrangement, the two firms have generated a dramatic increase in the DBE project goal — from 14 to 54 percent.

While the joint venture arrangement is a first for both firms, CNS Construction had previously worked with Talley Brothers as a subcontractor for the rebar portion of the Parcel #2 building located in Wilmington, Delaware.

“CNS has done subcontractor work for TBI in the past; therefore, when we were asked us to do a joint venture for the streetscape job, we felt confident that CNS and Talley would make a great team,” noted Michelle Lamborn, Talley Brothers Human Resources Manager.

Aside from the smaller DBE winning a sizable contract, CNS Construction owner Charles Showell, Jr. said that the benefits of teaming with a larger firm are huge, “in particular, meeting the bonding requirements.”

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Joint Venture

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Showell explained that both CNS and Talley Brothers had to be bonded together as a joint venture; however, Talley Brothers had more bonding capacity than CNS. "If CNS was to get this job on their own," Lamborn added, "it would not have been able to be bonded for this project." Talley Brothers was very instrumental in helping CNS acquire the bond. "We had a lawyer prepare a legal document stating which company is in charge of what and that satisfied the bonding company," Lamborn said.

Work is currently underway on the Centerville joint venture project with CNS responsible for the management and oversight of all field office operations, concrete, retaining walls, curbs, mobilization of traffic, safety precautions, and landscaping needs. Talley Brothers is overseeing the excavation, fill, trenches, drainage, manholes, pipe inlet, milling and paving.

Today, there are many opportunities for DBEs to team as a way to improve their chances of winning government contracts. "If your service offering is limited and your firm is not able to cover the whole bid or RFP request, be proactive and contact prime contractors and other companies who have the reputation and experience you'd like to have associated with your company," said DelDOT Civil Rights Administrator Carla Elliott.

Elliott noted that most teaming relationships form before responding to an RFP. She advised, "Stay current on what opportunities exist and who is winning the contracts by visiting DelDOT's DBE Web site.

Chances are you too can win big when you pursue contract teaming with a larger, more experienced firm. For more information on contract teaming, refer to page 3.

New Supplier Diversity Executive Order

Governor Jack Markell recently signed an executive order that will make it easier for small and mid-sized companies to bid on state contracts.

The order will create a centralized, online publication listing all advertised and awarded state contracts. In addition to helping the economy by increasing opportunities and competition, this new order will also further increase government transparency.

"I applaud this administration for taking this crucial first step," said Cathy Imburgia, president of Creative Communications, a local DBE firm that has worked with the private sector, state and federal government.

Markell directed the Office of Minority and Women Business Enterprise to offer training to small

businesses on how to apply for state contracts and provide information on how to learn about available bidding opportunities. "Empowering our home-grown businesses to compete here will also help them as they look to do business in other states," he said.

The Governor told agencies to designate a Minority and Women Business Enterprise Liaison to advise the agency's cabinet secretary on ways to increase supplier diversity and established the Governor's Supplier Diversity Council, which is charged with monitoring the state's efforts in increasing the number of minority- and women-owned businesses winning state contracts. The order also clarified the planning process for supplier diversity efforts in order to improve the performance and accountability of government operations.

Newly Certified DBEs

The following businesses have successfully completed DelDOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certification. For more information about the services these businesses and all DelDOT certified DBEs offer, visit the online Unified Directory of Certified DBE Firms at www.deldot.gov/information/business/dbe/bulletin_board.shtml and click on DBE Resources.

Chesapeake Environmental Management, Inc.

Environmental consulting and compliance services.

Glass Depot, Inc.

Windows, doors acrylic, mirrors, hardware, glass and glazing.

Lotus Environmental Consulting, LLC

Environmental consulting including science and planning, permitting, and public and agency involvement.

Maddrey Trucking Company

Interstate trucking (dump truck service).

Madison Supply, LLC

Supply water & wastewater products to contractors and municipalities (valves, fittings, pipe, etc.).

Margaret Sams Consulting

Soils/geomorphology assessments to support cultural resource archaeological investigations; general environmental consulting.

Maynes Associates Architects, LLC

Architectural services.

PC Links, LLC

Computer hardware, software, and peripherals.

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Bid Opportunities

For hundreds of contracting opportunities, visit DeIDOT's online DBE Web site at www.deldot.gov/information/business/dbe/index.shtml and click on Upcoming Projects.

Upcoming Events

The Center for Women's Entrepreneurship, a YWCA Delaware program funded through the Small Business Administration, offers many programs throughout the state all year long.

Following are upcoming programs scheduled for mid-January through March. For more information, visit <http://www.ywcade.org> and choose Economic Advancement from the Programs drop down menu and click the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship or contact Darnyelle Jervey at djervey@ywcade.org or 302-224-4060, ext. 212

The Business Plan Development Series Runs for 8 Weeks

January 19 – March 2 • 6 pm – 8:30 pm

Tues. in NCC • Wed. in KC • Thurs. in SC

Locations: Reference the web

Cost: \$200 (Includes 8-week classroom instruction and 4 one-on-one sessions with a business consultant to produce bank ready business plan.)

Market BIG, Money Small Workshop

February 4 • 10 am – Noon

153 E Chestnut Hill Rd, Ste 102 • Newark, DE

Cost: \$10

Who Moved My Cheese: The Dynamics of Effective Change Management

February 11

9 – 11 am • Newark, DE

10 – 12 pm • Smyrna, DE

12 – 2 pm • Georgetown, DE

Cost: \$10

Market BIG, Money Small Workshop

March 4 • 10 am – Noon

153 E Chestnut Hill Rd, Ste 102 Newark, DE

Cost: \$10

NAWBO Power Roundtable: Meet me in the Boardroom

March 11

9 – 11 am • Newark, DE

10 – 12 pm • Smyrna, DE

12 – 2 pm • Georgetown, DE

Cost: \$10

Making Business Cents

Winning Contracts Through Teaming

Our cover article noted the benefits that can be realized through contract teaming. If your company specializes in a particular product or service that will not cover the whole bid or RFP request, you don't have to give up on the government contract in question. Instead, you may want to consider partnering or teaming to increase your number of awarded government contracts.

In particular, if you are a small disadvantaged business or need to gain the experience to hold your own in the government market, teaming can be a strategic move to gain the credibility you need to be awarded more government subcontracts with a prime contractor or to enter into a joint venture agreement.

What you need to know

If you are considering teaming in a joint venture or as a subcontractor as a way to improve your chances of being awarded government contracts, know the benefits and what is required.

Contractor team arrangement means an arrangement in which:

1. Two or more companies form a partnership or joint venture to act as a potential prime contractor; or
2. A potential prime contractor agrees with one or more other companies to have them act as its subcontractors under a specified government contract or acquisition program.

Contractor team arrangements may be desirable from both a government and industry standpoint in order to enable the companies involved to complement

each other's unique capabilities. Together, you offer the government the best combination of performance, cost, and delivery for the system or product being acquired.

Contractor team arrangements may be particularly appropriate in complex research and development acquisitions but may be used in other appropriate acquisitions, including production.

The companies involved normally form a contractor team arrangement before submitting an offer. However, they may enter into an arrangement later in the acquisition process, including after contract award.

What to consider when forming a teaming arrangement

- Is the subcontractor exclusively working as a part of your team, or are they working with the competition as well?
- How will you resolve performance issues after you have been awarded a government subcontract?
- Will you set a contract for the subcontractor, guaranteeing the scope of business?
- What will be the subcontractor's level of involvement?
- What are the subcontractor's payment arrangements?
- What are the clear deadlines for project completion? What is the role of the subcontractor in contract extensions?
- What are the intellectual property rights of the subcontractor?

For more information on contract teaming at DelDOT, contact Carla Elliott at carla.elliott@state.de.us or call 302-760-2555.