



WISCONSIN ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



# MARKETPLACE

W I S C O N S I N

40<sup>th</sup>

*anniversary*  
1981 — 2021

**GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON  
DIVERSE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**  
**DECEMBER 7-9, 2021**

KEYSTONE SPONSOR



# Thank you SPONSORS

## KEYSTONE



## GOVERNOR'S AWARDS BREAKFAST

MILWAUKEE  
BUSINESS JOURNAL

## DIAMOND



## GOLD



## SILVER

## BRONZE



## BRONZE NONPROFIT





# Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

Dear MARKETPLACE 2021 attendees:

On behalf of the State of Wisconsin, I'd like to welcome you to MARKETPLACE 2021: The Governor's Conference on Diverse Business Development.

As many of you know, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic has underscored—and, in some cases, exacerbated—the disparities experienced by underserved communities in Wisconsin. That's why we're working every day to ensure that our economy not only recovers from this pandemic but to make sure every family, every business, and every community bounces back with us. Wisconsin's future lies in our ability to ensure that some of our hardest-hit communities have a fighting chance to rebound and recover while ensuring our state can move forward and build a more prosperous, equitable future. MARKETPLACE is one of the important ways our state can do just that by assisting diverse businesses and celebrating their successes.

It is my pleasure to join you in recognizing the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MARKETPLACE and the opportunities it has created for diverse businesses and business owners throughout Wisconsin. MARKETPLACE has continued to flourish for four decades as many businesses return year after year—this is a testament to the conference's ongoing success in helping businesses owned by people of color, women, veterans, and members of the LGBTQ community find new opportunities for growth with the resources, tools, and contacts they need to maximize their success.

The many seminars on key business topics and resource information featured at MARKETPLACE will provide the kind of practical how-to insights for business owners seeking new opportunities to grow. I am also excited to see this year that MARKETPLACE is offering participants a mix of virtual and live events, making the conference more accessible and enabling businesses to participate in conference programs no matter where they are in our state.

At the same time, MARKETPLACE's in-person events will resume this year. Businesses will be able to have critical, one-on-one conversations that allow them to meet potential buyers, identify funding sources, connect with business assistance resources, and network with their peers. Those meetings are invaluable and have opened new markets for hundreds of companies over the years, and we are thrilled to welcome those in-person opportunities back safely.

While much of MARKETPLACE focuses on ways to help businesses become more successful, the event also provides us with the opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of Wisconsin's diverse businesses with the MARKETPLACE Governor's Awards. The outstanding companies receiving these awards exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit that exists in companies in every corner of Wisconsin, and I want to offer my sincere congratulations to all this year's honorees.

I hope you will take advantage of the many resources and networking opportunities available at MARKETPLACE this year.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers  
Governor

# WELCOME TO MARKETPLACE 2021

On behalf of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), I am delighted to welcome you to the 40th annual MARKETPLACE conference. The Governor's Conference on Diverse Business Development provides an opportunity to celebrate Wisconsin's minority-, women-, veteran- and LGBTQ-owned small businesses, as well as connecting these businesses with new opportunities through networking, buyer meetings and workshops. WEDC is excited to offer both virtual and in-person components of this year's conference so more businesses can participate.

Embracing diversity, equity and inclusion is vital for Wisconsin's economic future, a fact that has been underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic. As WEDC noted in its recent report, Wisconsin Tomorrow – Building An Economy For All, our state faced many challenges during the pandemic, many of which disproportionately affected communities of color. As Wisconsin recovers, we must address these longstanding racial and economic inequities to build an economy that is stronger, more sustainable and more inclusive.

WEDC is committed to ensuring that every individual in Wisconsin thrives and that our neighbors, friends, and families have access to the resources needed to build not only strong businesses, but strong communities. In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), WEDC awarded \$1.6 million to organizations that support diverse businesses around the state. WEDC's Key Strategic Partners and affiliates include the African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin, the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin, Latino organizations, and the Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce. In addition, WEDC supported the Ethnic & Diverse Business Coalition, Wisconsin LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce and Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce. During FY21, these WEDC-supported organizations provided services to more than 3,000 diverse Wisconsin businesses.

As in past years, MARKETPLACE remains an occasion to celebrate past successes and lay the foundation for new ones. We'll recognize community leaders and businesses for their outstanding accomplishments and their contributions to the people of Wisconsin. Hundreds of buyer meetings will be held, with connections that will continue to bear fruit in the coming months and years.

We remain extremely grateful to the event sponsors and our network of statewide partners. Neither this event nor the broader task of serving these business communities are tasks we could accomplish on our own. I would like to take this chance to thank our partners, sponsors, attendees, resource partners and volunteers; without you, we could not have the successful event we have enjoyed so much for the past four decades.

Most of all, thank you to the businesses for the enthusiasm and entrepreneurial spirit you bring to this event and for helping move Wisconsin's economy forward.

Sincerely,



Melissa L. Hughes  
Secretary and CEO



**WISCONSIN ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**



# IMPORTANT MARKETPLACE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Visit [www.marketplacewisconsin.com/event-details/supplemental-program-information](http://www.marketplacewisconsin.com/event-details/supplemental-program-information) for more information.

- 2021 Buyers Listings
- 2021 Exhibitor Listings
- Updated Program Book





# AGENDA

**TUESDAY,  
DECEMBER 7**

**VIRTUAL**



**The  
Contracting  
Academy**

*Developing and Growing  
Government Contractors*

**8:30 - 9:30 A.M.**

Expanding Wisconsin's Diverse Supply Chain Panel

**9:30 - 12:00 P.M.**

Current Conversation Topics

- » Supply Chain Security
- » Small Business Risk Management

**1:00 - 5:00 P.M.**

**THE CONTRACTING ACADEMY (TCA) – MULTIPLE TRACKS**

**1:00 P.M.**

- » **TRACK 1** – Subcontracting Best Practices for Diverse Small Businesses and Federal Contractors – a Legal Perspective
- » **TRACK 2** – Exporting / International Sales – Readiness and First Steps

**2:00 P.M.**

- » **TRACK 1** – Update from Wisconsin's Military Organizations
- » **TRACK 2** – Working with Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)

**3:00 P.M.**

- » **TRACK 1** – Selling to Federal Prime Contractors – a Panel Discussion
- » **TRACK 2** – Selling to Local Government Agencies – a Panel Discussion

**4:00 P.M.**

- » **TRACK 1** – Selling to the Federal Government – a Discussion with Federal Agency Representatives
- » **TRACK 2** – Successful Proposals = Winning Contracts

# WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8

IN-PERSON

**1:00 P.M.**

Onsite Registration and Networking

**2:00 P.M.**

Economic Opportunity Session

**5:30-8:00 P.M.**

Networking Reception

# THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9

IN-PERSON

**7:00 A.M.**

Registration

**7:30 A.M.**

MARKETPLACE Governor's Awards Breakfast

- \* Governor Tony Evers (invited)
- \* Remarks by sponsors
- \* Business Excellence Awards
- \* Minority-Owned Business Awards
- \* Woman-Owned Business Awards
- \* Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Awards

**9:00 A.M.**

Expo Hall Opens for Exhibitors and Buyer Meetings

- » **BUYER MEETINGS** – one-on-one matchmaking meetings with federal, state, local and corporate buyers
- » **EXHIBITORS** – including corporate, small businesses, lenders, business resources, professional services and government agencies
- » **BUSINESS NETWORKING LOUNGE** – centrally located within the expo hall

**12:00 P.M.**

40th Anniversary Luncheon

- \* Tribute to Daryl Hodnett, AAH; Ed Bryant, Town Bank; Cheryl Michelle
- \* Fireside Chat

**1:30 - 4:00 P.M.**

Expo Hall Reopens for Exhibitors and Buyers Meetings

**4:00 P.M.**

End of Program



# MARKETPLACE PLANNING COMMITTEE

MARKETPLACE 2021 is hosted by WEDC's Mary Gage, Vice President Business and Community Development, Seyoum Mengesha, Director of Diverse and Business Development, and Sara Beuthien, MARKETPLACE Conference Coordinator.

## **MARKETPLACE was coordinated by WEDC:**

Alex Ysquierdo, Diverse Business Development Manager; Jake Mieske, Digital Marketing Manager, Betsy Wood, Division Coordinator Business and Community Development; Joel Velez, Marketplace Event Intern, and Aina Vilumsons, President/CEO Wisconsin Procurement Institute

Wisconsin Procurement Institute - The Contract Academy and Buyer Meetings

Wisconsin Expo - Conference Decoration/Production

Tri-Marq Communications, Inc. - Audio Video Production

African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin  
American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin  
City of Milwaukee – Office of Small Business Development  
Department of Administration – Supplier Diversity Program  
Latino Chamber of Commerce of Southeastern Wisconsin  
Latino Entrepreneurial Network  
Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce  
Latino Chamber of Commerce of Dane County  
Madison Black Chamber of Commerce  
Milwaukee County – Community Business Development Partners  
Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation  
Milwaukee Urban League  
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District  
New North  
North Central Minority Supplier Development Council  
Phoenix Advisors  
SCORE  
Small Business Development Center  
The Business Council  
Town Bank  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
US Bank  
Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council  
Wisconsin Black Chamber of Commerce  
Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation  
Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority  
Wisconsin Indian Business Alliance  
Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce  
Wisconsin Procurement Institute  
Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce  
Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation – OBOEC  
Women's Business Development Center



# PRIMARY SPONSORS & EMCEE

## KEYSTONE SPONSOR



**Steven SaLoutos**  
Executive Vice President and  
Midwest Regional Executive  
Consumer and Business Banking  
U.S. Bank



**Nina Johnson**  
Senior Vice President,  
Consumer and Business Banking  
U.S. Bank



**Suzanne Zwaska**  
Vice President,  
Community Affairs Manager  
U.S. Bank

## AWARDS SPONSOR



**Kira Lafond**  
Market President  
Publisher  
Milwaukee Business Journal

## EMCEES



**Godwin Amegashie**  
CEO  
SEED Consulting, LLC  
Former Director, Wisconsin  
Supplier Diversity, Department  
of Administration



**Dawn Yang**  
General Manager  
Nyob Zoo TV, LLC



# SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PANEL

## PANELISTS

## MODERATOR



**Jenny Alexander**

Director, Purchasing Department  
Marquette University



**Danielle Bly**

Vice President Supplier Diversity  
WEC Energy Group



**Heather Olson**

President and Chief Executive Officer  
North Central Minority Supplier  
Development Council

## PANELISTS



**Chris Bilton**

Manager, Supplier Diversity  
Kohler Co.



**Anisha Jackson**

Supplier Diversity Manager  
American Family Insurance



# FIRESIDE CHAT

## MODERATOR



**Mino Seifoddini**  
President  
Custom Service Plastics, Inc.



**Robert Wynn**  
President, CLIMB USA Inc. and  
was former State Director of Minority  
Business Development, Commerce

## PANELISTS



**Bill Beckett**  
CEO, CHRYSPAC and former State  
Director of Minority Business  
Development, Commerce



**Nelson Soler**  
President of Multicultural  
Entrepreneurial Institute and  
President/CEO of Latino Chamber  
of Commerce - SEW



**Jean Marie Thiel**  
President and CEO,  
Belonger Corporation, Inc.



# AWARD FINALISTS

## RISING STAR BUSINESS AWARD

### MINORITY BUSINESS AWARD

#### **CREAM CITY PRINT LOUNGE, LLC** MILWAUKEE

Cream City Print Lounge, founded in 2019, is a retail and apparel printing shop where customers can hang out and socialize while their items are being printed. In addition to providing custom, bulk-order printing services to companies across Wisconsin, Cream City Print Lounge offers patrons “print-and-sip” classes, where groups can gather to design their own shirts while they enjoy drinks from the company’s bar. Cream City Print Lounge employs youths and college students as interns and printers and provides entrepreneurship and mentoring sessions to local nonprofit youth organizations. The company recently added a mobile print bus to expand its reach. Corporate clients include the Milwaukee Bucks, Kohl’s and the Milwaukee Public Museum. Cream City Print Lounge owner Rachaad Howard won a Milwaukee Business Journal 40 Under 40 award and the Biz Times Notable Minority Executive award in 2021.

**Rachaad Howard, Owner**

#### **EDWARDS EDUCATIONAL SOLUTIONS, LLC** MILWAUKEE

Launched in May 2020, Edwards Educational Solutions provides professional tutoring services to students, from kindergarten through 12th grade, both online and in person. Tutoring sessions can be one-on-one or in small groups, and most tutors are either current or retired teachers. As a young company struggling through the pandemic, Edwards Educational Solutions received mentoring and a loan from the Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation. Its education method, “The Edwards Way,” employs techniques that include movement, music and interpersonal communication in addition to reading and writing. The company has partnered with organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee.

**Cary Edwards and Bonnie J. Edwards, Co-owners and Area Directors**

#### **THE ELLEVATE COLLECTIVE, LLC (FORMERLY CALLED THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIST, LLC)** GLENDALE

The Ellevate Collective is a leadership development firm whose goal is to increase the number of women in executive positions—the C-suite—by 2% in five years. Founded in 2017, The Ellevate Collective conducts customized workshops and coaching designed to build leaders at all levels of a company through transformative interventions, with a special focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Clients have included corporations, small businesses and nonprofits, such as the City of Milwaukee, Northwestern Mutual and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee.

**Dorothy Enriquez, CEO and Principal Consultant**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## RISING STAR BUSINESS AWARD

### WOMAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

#### **ALLIERE CPA, LLC** SUN PRAIRIE

Alliere CPA is a public accounting firm that serves small- to mid-sized companies and nonprofit organizations. Its clients include manufacturing, retail and business services companies. Alliere's services range from bookkeeping to tax planning and preparation to training employees on accounting and billing software. Alliere's personalized service involves helping clients to understand their financial statements so they can make informed decisions on future business planning. As artificial intelligence grows within the accounting field, Alliere plans to focus more on serving as a consultant and outsourced executive to client companies. The firm was established in 2018.

**Bonnie Watson, Founder and Principal**

#### **M&J KRUEGER TRUCKING LLC** KANSASVILLE

M&J Krueger Trucking provides transportation services to construction contractors—hauling asphalt, dirt and other materials to construction sites and clearing out concrete chunks and construction debris. Founded in 2017, the company now owns five quad-axle dump trucks, contracts with more than 80 independent truckers and operates a heavy-duty diesel mechanic shop. The company expects its biggest opportunities for growth will be in federal and state Department of Transportation projects to update and improve highways and roads.

**Karen Krueger, Co-owner and CEO**

**Nicholas Krueger, Co-owner and President**

#### **WHITSON WONDER PRODUCTIONS, LLC** MENOMONEE FALLS

Whitson Wonder Productions is a full-service event production company that specializes in custom design and décor, with the goal of turning an event into a memorable experience. In addition to planning celebrations such as weddings and birthdays, the company handles corporate events, including company picnics and holiday parties. Handmade customization is a hallmark of Whitson Wonder Productions, providing a high level of personalized detail with a cost-effective approach. Whitson Wonder Productions began operating in 2018 and now has its own showroom, workshop and storage space. The company also sells gift boxes and custom holiday decorations.

**Ebony Whitson, Owner and Creative Designer**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## RISING STAR BUSINESS AWARD

### DISABLED-VETERAN OWNED BUSINESS

#### **ABOUT YOU SOLUTIONS, LLC**

LODI

About You Solutions helps manufacturers win government contracts and locates hard-to-find electrical and hardware components needed for military production contracts. Launched in 2017 by a retired U.S. Marine, About You Solutions is creating a network of manufacturers and offers assistance with government registration, contract management and logistical support. In some cases, About You Solutions will handle the entire process for a manufacturer, from bidding to packaging and shipping to payment processing. About You Solutions also has received VIP certification as a subcontractor for major government suppliers. Grants from Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation, Milwaukee Brewers Foundation and Associated Bank have helped the company move forward, as the pandemic dramatically changed the marketplace.

**Savage Clark, Founder and CEO**

#### **KIZOREK PHOTOGRAPHY, LLC**

THREE LAKES

Kizorek Photography is an independent photography studio established in 2020 to provide high-quality photographic and video content for real estate firms across the Northwoods of Wisconsin. Its products and services include videography, photography and content management for web and social media. An FAA- licensed drone aerial film company, Kizorek Photography also provides drone video and photos. Owned by a disabled veteran, Kizorek Photography employs other disabled veterans around the U.S. to provide remote photo editing. The company's market includes realty companies, hotel chains and property management companies with a focus on advocating for disabled-veteran-owned businesses and organizations.

**John Kizorek, owner**

#### **VALOR TECHNOLOGIES, LLC (VALORTECH)**

MILWAUKEE

Located in the Wells Building, a data center and technology hub in downtown Milwaukee, Valor Technologies provides a complete set of information technology services, ranging from consulting, staffing and software development to business process optimization and disaster recovery planning. A veteran-owned company, Valortech was founded in 2018 with the goal of providing military-grade IT support and security. Its specialties are cybersecurity and Smart Cities that incorporate IoT, the Internet of Things – a network of objects embedded with sensors that share data in an effort to improve health, safety and efficiency. Valortech has 14 full-time and two part-time employees.

**Bryan Sevener, Founder and CEO**

**Don Cotey, President**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## OUTSTANDING SMALL BUSINESS

### MINORITY ENTERPRISE AWARD

#### **FAITHFUL CONSULTING LLC**

WESTON

Faithful Consulting provides coaching, training and organizational consulting services for businesses, government agencies and nonprofits. Founded in 2015, its goal is to be “the premier social change company in leadership and organizational solutions,” delivering cultural transformation as it helps organizations become more efficient and profitable. Faithful Consulting serves clients primarily in Wisconsin and Minnesota but also has expanded to California and Washington state, and it is developing a leadership curriculum aimed specifically at Hmong employees, with plans to make that a national and international program. Founder Yengyee Lor received the Margaret Ashida Leadership Award in 2021 for her leadership in the Asian American/Pacific Islander community, and she is president of the International Coach Foundation of Wisconsin.

**Yengyee Lor, Founder and President**

#### **MULTICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURIAL INSTITUTE, INC. (MEI)**

MILWAUKEE

Founded in 2006, minority-led Multicultural Entrepreneurial Institute targets low- to moderate-income minority entrepreneurs, providing culturally and linguistically relevant business consulting, digital marketing and tax and payroll services. Of more than 4,000 entrepreneurs that MEI has assisted over the past 15 years, 85% are Latinx. Among MEI’s clients are the cities of Milwaukee and Racine, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Prudential Financial Services and the Wisconsin State Fair. MEI was named a Regional Supplier of the Year in 2011 by the National Minority Supplier Development Council. In 2020, MEI President and Chief Solutions Officer Nelson Soler was named one of the 39 Most Influential Latinos in Wisconsin by Madison365.

**Nelson Soler, President and Chief Solutions Officer**

#### **QUINTEC INTEGRATION, INC. (QUINTEC)**

WAUKESHA

Quintec knows its way around conveyor belts. Founded in 1999, the company serves clients nationwide, primarily in the parcel industry, by engineering, installing and supporting material handling automation systems. It provides high-capacity material handling systems that use low-risk, high-quality technologies to create responsive, cost-effective solutions for its clients. Quintec has completed more than 750 projects in 37 states, with clients that include small businesses, Fortune 500 companies and the U.S. government. The company received an Outstanding Business award in the 2018 MARKETPLACE Governor’s Awards.

**James Deppoleto, Jr., President**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## OUTSTANDING SMALL BUSINESS

### WOMAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

#### **BON VOYAGE CRUISES & VACATIONS (DBA BON VOYAGE WORLD TRAVEL EXPERTS) WATERFORD**

Bon Voyage World Travel Experts offers a range of travel advice and services, from booking flights to planning a year of bucket-list vacations for its clients. Established in 1997, the company features a pocket travel mobile app that provides itinerary details on a client's phone, along with the ability to contact a travel advisor with questions or concerns. COVID-19 travel restrictions gave the company time to rebrand its website, offer clients new categories of service and to focus on training its employees. Company President Kari Mullikin was named 2016 Entrepreneur of the Year by the Waterford Chamber of Commerce.

**Kari Mullikin, President and Travel Expert**

#### **GERBER LEISURE PRODUCTS, INC. MOUNT HOREB**

For more than 40 years, Gerber Leisure Products has been helping children and adults have fun outdoors. Working with its suppliers, Gerber helps design and install play areas and offers a full range of park and playground equipment, from shelters and gazebos to stadium seating, and from playground surfacing to swings and slides. Gerber has worked on projects throughout Wisconsin, including those focusing on inclusivity such as the Shaw Family Playground in Sheboygan, JoJo's Jungle in Wausau and the new Northwestern Mutual Community Park at Summerfest grounds in Milwaukee. The company also offers a website design service to help organizations raise funds for their projects. Founded in 1978, Gerber Leisure Products has eight full-time employees.

**Hollie Rickey, President**

#### **JTD ENTERPRISES, INC. CHILTON**

JTD Enterprises is a CNC machine shop that manufactures customized metal parts for industries such as automotive, aerospace, farm implement, lawn and garden and food processing. JTD monitors and controls the entire production process, from prototyping to packing and shipping. The U.S. government recently issued a patent for a product manufactured by JTD for a client—the first patent for JTD—and the company achieved ISO 9001:2015 quality certification in 2021. Founded in 2003, the company has about 20 employees.

**Julie Hoban, CEO**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## OUTSTANDING LARGE BUSINESS

### MINORITY ENTERPRISE AWARD

#### **CAREX CONSULTING GROUP, INC.** MIDDLETON

Carex Consulting Group is a career matchmaking agency that places top-quality personnel in positions around the country, using a proprietary combination of tools and technology. Founded in 2016, Carex's initial goal was to find opportunities in Wisconsin as a way to keep top talent in the state. The company, whose specialty is healthcare technology staffing, now has 132 full-time and 14 part-time employees and its reach extends throughout the country. Carex employees are not paid by commission; instead, every employee receives profit-sharing benefits and is eligible to take a sabbatical after three years on the job. Minority- and women-owned, Carex's motto is: "Care, be real, have fun." Rapidly expanding Carex is No. 21 on the Inc. 5000 list of the Fastest Growing Private Companies in the Midwest 2021. Carex President Casey Liakos was named Small Company Executive of the Year by InBusiness Magazine in 2020.

**Rachel Neill, CEO**

#### **K. SINGH & ASSOCIATES, INC. (K. SINGH)** WAUWATOSA

For nearly 35 years, K. Singh has been providing environmental, geotechnical, civil, structural and transportation engineering services to companies and governmental bodies in Wisconsin and throughout the upper Midwest. Its projects range from brownfield redevelopment to utility design, from building expansion to road reconstruction. The award-winning firm received 13 awards in 2020-21 alone, including City of Milwaukee Mayor's Design Awards for Villard Commons, Wheel & Sprocket headquarters and Longfellow Community School Playfield, and Milwaukee Business Journal awards for Five Fifty Ultra Lofts and Good Hope Library. K. Singh has worked on some of the largest bridges in Wisconsin, including the Bong bridge and the Hoan bridge, and it received accolades for designing the Milwaukee County Zoo otter exhibit. Established in 1987, K. Singh employs about 30 engineers and has branch offices in Janesville and in Lombard, Ill.

**Pratap Singh, Co-owner and CEO**  
**Kamala Singh, Co-owner and Chief Financial Officer**  
**Ajay Singh, Co-owner and Vice President**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## OUTSTANDING LARGE BUSINESS

### MINORITY ENTERPRISE AWARD

#### **RINKA, INC.** MILWAUKEE

RINKA is a full-service architecture and interior design collective that expanded in recent years to include branding, marketing and website development. Founded in 2006, RINKA's 45 full-time employees serve clients in the Midwest and around the U.S., with projects that include F3 Marina in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; The Pier in Tempe, Ariz.; and Towne Mall redevelopment in Middletown, Ohio. RINKA has won more than 80 industry awards, including the 2020 Wisconsin AIA (American Institute of Architects) award for designing the Milwaukee Bucks Deer District entertainment area, and it was named one of the Milwaukee Business Journal's Best Places to Work in 2017, 2020 and 2021. RINKA Green is a new consulting service that highlights the firm's commitment to incorporate sustainability and climate-conscious initiatives into its projects.

**Matt Rinka, Chad Griswold and Steve Morales, Co-owners and Partners**

#### **SOUTHERN WISCONSIN INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION SERVICES, LTD. (SWITS)** DELAN

SWITS was established in 2002 with the goal of providing equal language access to all. SWITS offers interpreting and translation services in all spoken and signed languages—on-site, over the phone, via video and in writing. The company is accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to both the private sector and governmental bodies in Wisconsin and Illinois, making its large roster of linguists available in cases such as 911 calls, police investigations and child protective services. Its interpreter training program, Equal Footing for Limited English Proficient Persons, has been accredited by the Commission for Medical Interpreter Education. With its services in high demand at COVID-19 testing sites across the state in 2020, SWITS received a letter of commendation from Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers.

**Saul Arteaga, Founder and Director**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## OUTSTANDING LARGE BUSINESS

### WOMAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

#### **ILLUME ADVISING, LLC** MADISON

ILLUME Advising is a research and consultant firm whose services help guide the U.S. energy industry toward clean energy solutions. ILLUME has worked with more than 50 utility clients to enact programs that include smart thermostats, solar technologies and electric vehicle charging stations. Its research and strategies are designed to help utility companies reduce their carbon footprint in ways that will engage customers and provide benefits that align with social justice. COVID-19 prompted ILLUME to conduct research for its utility clients on how consumers were changing their energy habits as a result of the pandemic's restrictions. The company also organized panels of experts from around the U.S. to discuss issues such as environmental racism, the digital divide and healthcare disparities in tribal communities. Established in 2013, ILLUME has 38 full-time employees, with headquarters in Madison and offices in Tucson, Ariz. and Portland, Ore.

**Sara Conzemius and Anne Dougherty, Founders and Co-owners**

#### **RHD PLUMBING, INC.** STOUGHTON

Founded in 2006, RHD Plumbing is a woman-owned and -operated business that serves residential and commercial clients by engineering, installing and repairing pipes, fixtures and sewer and septic facilities. RHD – which stands for “reliable, honest and dedicated” – prides itself on keeping up with the latest plumbing innovations and technology. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic proved to be an opportunity for the company to convince customers to install new products that will reduce the spread of germs. RHD also says its employee perks are unique to the industry, with incentives – based partly on customer feedback – such as travel packages and tickets to sporting events. RHD Plumbing received a 2021 Best of Madison bronze award for plumbing from Madison magazine. The company has 165 employees.

**Dina Opsahl, Co-owner and CEO**  
**Mark Opsahl, Co-owner and Chief Operating Officer**

#### **THE DIERINGER RESEARCH GROUP, INC. (THE DRG)** BROOKFIELD

The DRG is a market research and consulting group focused primarily on banking and finance, healthcare, health insurance and agencies. With about 50 full-time and 30 part-time employees, The DRG serves clients across the U.S., gathering data and insights to help its clients decide how to grow their businesses most effectively. Founded in 1974, The DRG's most recent accomplishments include achieving ISO/IEC 27001 certification by strengthening its technology systems and cybersecurity and launching Experience Fusion, a value-added service analyzing large quantities of data for clients. The DRG also has an affiliate agreement to serve health care clients of Klein & Partners, of Orland Park, Illinois. The DRG has been named one of the 2020 and 2021 Best Places to Work in Southeast Wisconsin by the Milwaukee Business Journal, and its chief information officer, Ron Rawski, was named a CIO of the Year by the Milwaukee Business Journal in 2021. In 2019, the Business Journal named The DRG one of the Fastest Growing Firms in Wisconsin.

**DeLanie Johnson, President and CEO**  
**Robert Dieringer, Sr., Chairman of the Board**



# AWARD FINALISTS

## OUTSTANDING LARGE BUSINESS

### DISABLED-VETERAN OWNED BUSINESS

#### **PURPLE MOUNTAIN SOLUTIONS, INC. (PMSI)** PLOVER

Purple Mountain Solutions, Inc. is a trucking, logistics, supply chain management and warehousing company that serves the medical supply and consumer goods industries, with six warehouses and vehicles ranging from compact cars to semi-trailer trucks. PMSI is a prime contractor for the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene for newborn screenings and a prime contractor for the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services for transporting COVID-19 test samples and vaccines around the state. Founded in 2010, PMSI has 150 full- and part-time employees, and about one-third of them are military veterans. The company has additional hubs in Madison, De Pere, Waukesha and Weston, Wis. and in Rochester, Minn.

**Blake D. Mathies, Co-owner and CEO**

**Raymond J. Maier, Co-owner and Chief Operating Officer**



# AWARD NOMINATED DIVERSE BUSINESSES

ABAXENT, LLC  
ABERNATHY CONSULTING LTD  
ADVANCED MAINTENANCE SOLUTIONS, LLC  
AFF RESEARCH, LLC  
ALLCON, LLC  
ALLITTECH  
AMC LANDSCAPING  
AMERICAN LIVING, LLC  
AMIGO CONSTRUCTION, LLC.  
AMRI COUNSELING SERVICES  
ANACORP, LLC  
ANOINTED CLEANERS, LLC  
ANTIGUA LATIN RESTAURANT, LLC  
ARROW-CRETE CONSTRUCTION, LLC  
BARRIENTOS DESIGN & CONSULTING, INC.  
BELONGER CORPORATION  
BEST ED, LLC  
BLOOM COMPANIES, LLC  
BOWMAN PERFORMANCE CONSULTING  
CARTRIDGE SAVERS, INC.  
CARVD N STONE  
CHAMNESS GROUP  
COMCENTIA, LLC  
COMPANY B BRAND MARKETING LLC DBA B&CO  
CREAM CITY MARKETING  
CUSTOM SERVICE PLASTICS, INC.  
DIAMOND DISCS INTERNATIONAL, LLC.  
DOUBLE K, INC.  
DUWE METAL PRODUCTS, INC.  
EAGLE GRAPHICS / EAGLE SIGN AND DESIGN  
ER ABERNATHY INDUSTRIAL, INC.  
EXCEL GLOBAL SOLUTIONS INC.  
GREAT LAKES POWER VAC LLC  
GREEN BAY DOULAS  
HANDS AT HOME LLC  
HARD ROCK SAWING & DRILLING SPECIALIST CO.  
HAWK HEALTH & SAFETY, LLC  
HETZEL-SANFILIPPO INC.  
HIMALAYAN CONSULTANTS LLC  
HOME SWEET HOME ASSISTED LIVING LLC  
IBC ENGINEERING SERVICES INC  
INNOVATIVE DYNAMIC NETWORKS, INC.

INPOWER  
INTERSTATE SEALANT & CONCRETE, INC.  
JCP CONSTRUCTION  
JETA CORPORATION  
KMI CONSTRUCTION, LLC  
K-WOOD TRUSS RAFTERS  
M SQUARED ENGINEERING, LLC  
MAID IN LAKE GENEVA INC.  
MKE IRON ERECTORS, INC.  
MKL TRUCKING  
MOBILE GLASS  
MRS. MYERS' READING ROOM  
NAGEL SERVICES LLC DBA NAGEL ARCHITECTS +  
ENGINEERS  
ON-SITE, INC.  
OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, LLC  
PREMIER MEDICAL STAFFING SERVICES  
RED SHOES, INC.  
SECURITY OFFICER SERVICES (SOS)  
SEED CONSULTING, LLC  
SPANN & ASSOCIATES, LLC  
SPE INC.  
STEP UP EQUITY MATTERS LLC  
STORMWATER SOLUTIONS ENGINEERING, LLC.  
SUPER EXPEDITE  
SUPERIOR EQUIPMENT  
THE CREATIVE COMPANY  
THE REESE GROUP, LLC  
TRUE NORTH RESOURCES, LLC  
UPI, LLC  
US VET GENERAL CONTRACTING, LLC  
VANGUARD COMPUTERS INC.  
VENDI ADVERTISING  
WATER365, LLC  
WHITE BUFFALO TRUCKING, LLC  
WHITE GLOVE GROUP, LLC  
YOUR PERSONAL GARDENER & ARBORIST



# 40th ANNIVERSARY

## DISTINGUISHED AWARDS

### DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS LEADER AWARD



**Dr. Valerie Daniels-Carter**  
V&J Foods, Holding Companies, Inc

Dr. Valerie Daniels-Carter is President and CEO of V&J Holding Companies, Inc. V&J Holding's multi-brand/multi-state operation is the largest female owned franchise organization in the country. Dr. Daniels-Carter's quick-service restaurant empire comprised real estate and operations of Auntie Anne's Soft Pretzels, CinnaBon, Captain D's Seafood, MyYoMy Frozen Yogurt, Burger King, Pizza Hut and much more. Dr. Daniels-Carter is one of the most preeminent business owners in the United States. As such, she is befittingly appointed to an array of community and corporate boards. Dr. Daniels-Carter is currently a board member of the NFL Green Bay Packers and is a minority owner of the NBA 2021 Champions the Milwaukee Bucks Basketball Team. In the spring of 2017, Automobile Association of America (AAA) appointed her as the First African American Female Chair. Believing in her abilities to drive the association to improved platforms. Dr. Daniels-Carter is devoted to local and international philanthropic projects. On the campus of her church, Holy Redeemer, she along with the rest of her family opened a 160,000 square-foot center that houses a Boys & Girls Club, Family service center, two schools (K-12), loan center, medical facility, and a community meeting facility developed in memory of her mother and husband. She has been the catalyst to the opening of three orphanages in Kenya and Ghana for children whose parents have died of AIDS. Her entrepreneurial aptitude inspired her to author 3 books the latest being, "From Pandemic to Promise. Dr. Daniels-Carter graduated from Lincoln University with a bachelor's degree in business administration. In 1984, Dr. Valerie Daniels-Carter earned a master's degree in Business Management from Cardinal Stritch University. Dr. Daniels-Carter received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letter from Cardinal Stritch University in 2008 and Lincoln University in 2016.



# 40th ANNIVERSARY

## DISTINGUISHED AWARDS

### DISTINGUISHED SUPPLIER DIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Floyd Rose, Ph.D**  
100 Black Men of Madison, Inc.

Floyd Rose, Ph.D., was for decades blazing the trail as a supplier diversity advocate in Wisconsin and the nation. He started in 1984 and led for over two decades the Wisconsin Supplier Development Council (WSDC), a nonprofit affiliated to a national organization which supports and develops minority-owned businesses by facilitating important connections between corporations and minority suppliers of goods and services. During his tenure, Wisconsin Council's membership involved 200 major corporations and 500 minority owned businesses. Furthermore, in 1987, Dr. Rose was involved in the creation of the Business Management Seminar (BMS), an executive management symposium that has been exclusively tailored for the owners and executives of minority-owned firms. Entrepreneurs from across the United States were brought to the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison for a five-day educational experience. During this period, business theory and practical application were integrated into a core curriculum taught by some of the country's most distinguished business faculty and practitioners. His educational programs and value proposition of fairness have served both sides of the coin. On the one hand, he has influenced many corporations to welcome and implement supplier diversity programs, and in doing so benefit themselves from greater market competition and innovation in goods and services. On the other hand, he has tirelessly trained and mentored diverse businesses to be ready to do business in the corporate supply chain and pursue their dreams of becoming successful business owners. His contributions have resulted in growing businesses and creating jobs and have made a difference in our communities and across the nation. He is currently president of 100 Black Men of Madison, Inc.



# 40th ANNIVERSARY

## DISTINGUISHED AWARDS

### DISTINGUISHED DIVERSE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Joaquin Altoro**  
Rural Housing Service at USDA

Joaquin Altoro made it his mission to increase the ability of many organizations to give technical and financial assistance to business owners and entrepreneurs. He is a true visionary in finding ways to support minority business development programs. Through his work, he sought and created ways of making resources available to build the capacity of ethnic-based development organizations. In turn, they have been able to empower the community of minority businesses. Over and over again, this has proven to be a multi-layered victory in overcoming the challenges minority businesses face, accessing capital and growing their businesses. As Vice President of Town Bank, he created a working relationship with the ethnic Chambers of Commerce and developed a game-changing value proposition for Town Bank to leverage WEDC's seed fund, by investing \$1,000,000 in the Chambers' Revolving Loan Fund Programs. In 2019, he was appointed by Governor Evers as the first Latino-person to be the Chief Executive Officer of WHEDA (Wisconsin Housing Economic Development Authority) where he challenged his team to meet and exceed the state's goals for Minority Spend. He continued to be a champion supporter of Marketplace by generously sponsoring the event and dedicating his time to being part of the Planning Committee. In his two- and half-year tenure at WHEDA, the organization invested more than \$2.8 billion in Wisconsin through its single-family mortgages, multifamily loans, housing tax credits, housing grant program, small business guarantees and participation lending. This investment has advanced 16,886 housing units throughout the state and helped 39 businesses and farms expand their operations. As of November 2021, Altoro has been appointed to join the Biden-Harris Administration as the Administrator of Rural Housing Service at USDA.



# HERB MILER SUPPLIER DIVERSITY LEGACY AWARDS



**K. Singh**  
K. Singh & Associates, Inc.

K Singh has been providing engineering services since 1987 to a diverse range of public and private clients. KSingh is headquartered in Wauwatosa, WI and has two branch offices located in Madison, WI and in Lombard, Illinois. KSingh is a registered Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Small Business Enterprise (SBE). Since its start as an environmental and geotechnical firm, KSingh has added several key services including transportation engineering, structural engineering, trail design, water resources, construction management, and land surveying.

K. Singh & Associates, Inc. was established and incorporated in 1987 to provide environmental engineering and management services to meet the needs of industrial and governmental clients. Since then, the firm has expanded to include transportation, structural, environmental, and civil engineering, as well as land surveying and construction management. KSingh is headquartered in Wauwatosa and has two branch offices located in Janesville, Wisconsin and Lombard, IL. These locations allow K. Singh to provide design and construction engineering services throughout Wisconsin and Illinois. By combining KSingh's practices, our firm is ideally structured to manage a project of any size from preliminary studies to final construction oversight. KSingh's staff brings a wealth of experience to each project and can provide direct design services, quality assurance review, and/or owner's representation services. It is our goal to work as a team with all of our clients in an atmosphere that provides our customers the opportunity to understand every phase of their project. Our clients are always encouraged to ask questions and to be actively involved during the project. K. Singh endeavors to provide quality, cost effective, and timely completion of each project that meets or exceeds our clients' expectations.



# HERB MILER SUPPLIER DIVERSITY LEGACY AWARDS



**Glorious Malone**  
Glorious Malone's Fine Sausage

Glorious Malone's Fine Sausage was established in 1961. The founders and owner, George and Glorious Malone purchased their first grocery store, along with her father, Sterling, at 6th and Hadley in Milwaukee in 1961 and took a family recipe for Southern-style headcheese and developed it into a successful business, Malone's Fine Sausage, Inc., that recently celebrated its 30th anniversary and sells its product throughout the upper Midwest. After George's death in 1971, Glorious became the sole management of the store. She improved the headcheese recipe and the product continued to grow in popularity and was more in demand than ever and gained wider distribution appearing on tavern menus in Milwaukee and Chicago. This signature specialty meat called head cheese (a true Southern delicacy) operates offices in the Historic King Drive BID. Her daughter, Daphne Jones, assumed management of the company in 2006 and became sole owner after Glorious' death. In honor of Glorious and as a tribute to her tenacity, Daphne decided to begin doing business as Glorious Malone's Fine Sausage. Under Daphne's leadership the business has grown even more over the years with sales to almost every state in the US, an online store and is selling product to large grocery chains such as Pick N' Save, Piggly Wiggly, Albertson's, Woomdman's and Dominick's.



# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Jean Marie Thiel**  
Belonger Corporation, Inc.

Jean Marie Thiel is President and CEO of Belonger Corporation, Inc., a Native owned business, that she founded in March 2000. The firm operates a specialty trades Mechanical Contracting Company including all HVAC/R aptitudes, waste-water, plumbing, and medical gas, and providing services in Construction Management, Facility Management, and Energy Based Performance Contracting. Experience in construction and services industry going on 33 years, specializing in federal agency procurement emphasis on contract compliance with joint venturing and mentoring opportunities. She always found time to give back to the community by sharing her wide range of experience in the supplier diversity arena. She has been an active participant of Marketplace Conference for over two decades and graciously volunteered to serve as speaker an, panelist covering many topics in how to access contract opportunities with the public and private sectors. She advises minority businesses to be aggressive and willing to look at new opportunities, but making sure one stays on top of what is best for the firm. One crucial accomplishment during her firm's infancy was applying for the SBA's 8(a) business development program that includes certification as a minority-owned business that helped her access government contracts. She takes it as her community responsibilities in insuring minority businesses have access to resource information. She is currently, Board President of American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin and Board Director of Wisconsin Procurement Institute.



# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Ossie Kendrix Jr.**  
African American Chamber  
of Commerce of Wisconsin

Ossie Kendrix Jr. is a native of Milwaukee who grew up in the inner city and is a graduate of Riverside University High School. Kendrix believes that through education comes opportunity... thus he holds several degrees and graduate certificates. As an entrepreneur, he has been a Real Estate Broker for just over 10 years. At the present time, he serves as President & CEO of the African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin leading the chamber's critical to continue to promote greater unity and ensure the sustainability of local diverse businesses. Under his leadership, the AACCW is achieving the most impactful and successful year in its history, reaching its \$1 million fundraising goal to build and open the Legacy Co-Working and Innovation Space, which serves as its new headquarters at 1920 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Milwaukee's Bronzeville Neighborhood. He is recipient of many awards for his contribution to the betterment of the African Business community in Wisconsin. Ossie's advocacy to find economic support for the African American business community has been vital during the COVID-19 pandemic.



# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Ugo Nwagbaraocha**  
Diamond Discs  
International

In addition to his success as president-owner of Diamond Discs International, Ugo Nwagbaraocha has been a true champion of minority businesses in advocating for their interests, developing opportunities, and elevating Wisconsin's minority business community. He assumed leadership of the National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC) Wisconsin chapter at a critical moment. He has focused on the NAMC's mandate of "Building Bridges—Crossing Barriers," addressing concerns crossing the African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and Native American communities. Strategic collaborations with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the North Central Minority Supplier Development Council, WHEDA, DOA, counties and cities have elevated opportunities for minority businesses. He also launched the statewide Foxconn Strategic Information sessions and Wisconsin Valley pre-bid meetings in collaboration with WHEDA, WisDot, DOA, Racine and Milwaukee counties, and other involved municipalities. Nwagbaraocha also serves as the chair of the Business Council, which has led the Annual Healthcare Diversity Sourcing Summit. He is a founding member of the Green Bay Packers Mentor Protégé Milwaukee expansion program and is on the steering council and executive committee of Scale Up Milwaukee. Ugo has been recognized for his leadership by the Wisconsin Law Journal, The Daily Reporter and the Black Power list, and was an MMAC Future 50 Award winner twice, among many other awards and honors.



# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Randy Crump**  
Prism Technical  
Management & Marketing  
Services, LLC

After graduating in electrical engineering, Randy Crump went to work for the Eaton Corporation as a Sales and Application engineer traveling eastern Wisconsin, where he was often recognized as a top sales engineer. He began his entrepreneurial journey with the financial help of his employer. Over the next eleven years, he would complete a leveraged buy out of another small electrical firm specializing in motor repair; designed and fabricated the refrigeration controls at the Pettit National Ice Center and built process controls for use at MMSD and various Miller Brewing facilities across America. After being appointed to the Board to build a new Milwaukee Convention Center, Randy found his passion for helping others and started Prism Technical (Prism) to serve as a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator / Monitor on major construction projects. Prism began with the Brewers Stadium, currently American Family Field and has worked continually for 26 years with more than a 98% success rate in steering major public and private projects to exceed all government diversity requirements on several billion dollars in construction in four states. Prism is now assisting the Wisconsin Center to achieve its diverse workforce goals, coming full circle to where its seeds were first planted. Continuing to invest his time expertise, Randy was instrumental in changing the direction of the African American Chamber by joining the board, recruiting like-minded professionals. He served as Chair and President to refocus the organization, help establish its micro loan program and a functioning board before passing to a in new leadership.



# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Michael Phillips**  
PNC Bank

Michael Phillips works for PNC Bank as a Small Business Banking Sales and Strategy Advisor, serves as the Treasurer and Board of Education Member for the Wauwatosa School District, and lives in Wauwatosa with his wife Sonja and youngest daughter while his eldest attends DePaul University in Chicago. Since moving to Milwaukee in late 2002, Michael Phillips has enjoyed both a banking career and volunteer engagement focused on the success of our Small Businesses in Wisconsin. Mike's passion for Minority Business Development, particularly within the Hmong Community, led him to invest in our Hmong and Minority Business owners to be successful entrepreneurs who create jobs and wealth for their families and communities. He served the Hmong Chamber first as Secretary and Treasurer for one year and lead the Chamber as Board Chair from 2004 – 2016. He also believes that education is the great equalizer, proudly supporting equity in education through past and current volunteer engagements. He was member of the Planning Committee for Marketplace - Governor's Conference on Minority Business Development from 2005 to 2007. As a committee member he started the "Keystone Sponsorship" level by recruiting his own PNC Bank to support the conference for 3 years.



# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Fern Orié**  
Oweesta Corporation

Fern Orié has invested her entire professional life to community and economic development work, beginning through ascending positions of responsibility at her Wisconsin Onedia Nation (2001-2007), then for all Wisconsin Tribal Nations and Tribal members and other underrepresented populations through her founding and leading the growth of the Wisconsin Native Loan Fund, Inc. – a certified Native Community Development Financial Institution (2007-2021); including being the founder and Chair of WI Indian Business Alliance, WIBA, a collaboration four Native CDFIs. In addition, she has continuously volunteered or received appointments to local, state and national level community economic development organizations' boards of directors, advisory groups, councils, networks and committees, including but not limited to: Council Member, Wisconsin Governor's Council for Financial Literacy; Treasurer/Board of Directors, Red Letter Grant – whose mission is to support and empower female entrepreneurs; Board of Director, Wisconsin Economic Development Association; Entrepreneurship & Innovation Committee, WEDC; Board of Directors/Loan Committee, Oneida Bay Bank Corporation, Inc.; New Markets Tax Credits Advisory Board, Forward Community Investments, Inc.; Vice Chairperson, Board of Directors, Native CDFI Network among others. Throughout, she has distinguished herself as a tireless contributor to the advancement and inclusion of diverse, underserved, and disenfranchised populations in Wisconsin through contributions to policy development, and direct access to capital and empowering financial capacity building services. As of November 2021, she has accepted a new position as the Chief Programs Officer, and Executive Vice President of Advocacy & Strategic Partners at Oweesta Corporation.



# BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION AWARDS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARD



**Brian A. Mitchell, P.E.**  
Michels Corporation

Brian A. Mitchell, P.E. started his career in construction as an estimator with Edward Kraemer and Sons, writing computer code for bidding support on DOT projects. Then he spent the next 30 plus years owning two union steel erection firms in Wisconsin. He is no stranger to hard work, he has placed rebar, pulled PT and erected structural members on over 500 bridges and buildings in six states, including landmarks like Northwestern Mutual, Monona Terrace, the Bucks Arena, Miller Park and the Hoan bridge. Along the way he served on the Ironworker's apprenticeship, Pension and Health & Welfare committees, the Associated General Contractors board, and with the Big Step organization. He is the former President of the Wisconsin chapter of the National association of Minority Contractors and sat on the national NAMC board. As a recovering contractor, he served as a Business Relationship Manager for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. In his current role, he is the Supplier Diversity Manager for the Michels Corporation, Supporting Michels' efforts to utilize and develop opportunities for diverse, minority-owned businesses throughout North America. He is a Licensed Professional Engineer living in the Madison area with his wife of 20 years, Mari.



# DIVERSE BUSINESS CONTRACTORS AWARD

## STATE CONTRACT AWARDS

### **DI & ASSOCIATES, DBA SPHERION STAFFING SERVICES** MADISON

The company has been selected as the award winner for the Highest Certified Spend for Goods and Services with the State of Wisconsin in fiscal year 2021. DI & Associates (doing business as Spherion Staffing Services) is a state-certified Minority and Woman-Owned Business Enterprise contractor.

Spherion Staffing has been providing recruiting and staffing services to businesses and job seekers throughout the Dane County area for almost 30 years, with an average of 350 permanent positions placed every year. Spherion is a recognized workforce leader dedicated to helping companies find the high-performing, flexible temp-to-hire and direct-hire talent they need to meet business demands. The company sources, screens and places candidates. DI & Associates collaborates with numerous community partners. The company's staff volunteers with organizations including United Way, the River Food Pantry, the Madison Metropolitan School District, the Urban League, Operation Fresh Start, Common Wealth, Centro Hispano and Madison Urban Ministries. Spherion attributes its success to a guiding philosophy that embraces a larger purpose: improving lives, strengthening the organizations the company serves and making positive contributions to the local community. DI & Associates President Diana Schafer was named the 2017 Spherion Franchise Owner of the Year.

**Diana Schafer, President**

### **GREENFIRE MANAGEMENT SERVICES LLC** MILWAUKEE

The company has been selected as the Award winner for the Highest Certified Spend for Construction/Architecture and Engineering with the State of Wisconsin in fiscal year 2021. Greenfire is a state-certified, Native American-owned company with minority contractor status.

Greenfire Management Services, founded in 2010, is a construction management firm headquartered in Milwaukee with additional operations in Wausau. As a construction manager, Greenfire acts as an extension of the owner's team from early conceptual planning through project completion. Greenfire focuses on attracting and keeping employees and developing an engaging workplace atmosphere. The Greenfire team brings decades of experience in preconstruction and construction management from a variety of development categories, including multi-family residential, historic renovation, health care, education, senior living, adaptive reuse and commercial construction. Initial challenges included obtaining contracts; the company met this challenge by partnering with industry leaders to develop projects internally for their owners, the Forest County Potawatomi Tribe. Greenfire's first projects included managing the construction of Potawatomi's new casino hotel and the Potawatomi Business Development Corporation's cutting-edge Commercial Data Center. Greenfire sponsors community and industry events and proactively engages with associations, chambers and other important groups.

**Jeb Meier, President**



# HALL OF FAME

The MARKETPLACE Sponsor Hall of Fame was established to honor companies that have exhibited their commitment to minority, woman and veteran-owned business development through perennial MARKETPLACE sponsorship contributions.

## PREVIOUS INDUCTEES

Associated Bank

AT&T

Forest County Potawatomi Community

Green Bay Packers Inc.

Harley-Davidson Motor Company

Hartland Information Research

Milwaukee Business Journal

Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

Northwestern Mutual

PNC Bank

Roundy's Inc.

Town Bank

U.S. Bank

Vanguard Computers

WE Energies

WHEDA



# RESOURCE DIRECTORY

## TECHNICAL RESOURCES

- African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin: [www.aaccwi.org](http://www.aaccwi.org)
- American Indian Chamber of Commerce/First American Capital Corporation: [www.aiccw-facc.org](http://www.aiccw-facc.org)
- Ethnic & Diverse Business Coalition: [www.edbcwisconsin.org](http://www.edbcwisconsin.org)
- First Nations Community Financial: [www.firstnationsfinancial.org](http://www.firstnationsfinancial.org)
- Greater Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce: [www.gmcofc.org](http://www.gmcofc.org)
- Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce: [www.hmongchamber.org](http://www.hmongchamber.org)
- Latino Chamber of Commerce of Dane County: [www.lccwi.org](http://www.lccwi.org)
- Latino Chamber of Commerce of SE Wisconsin: [www.latinochambersew.org](http://www.latinochambersew.org)
- Madison Black Chamber of Commerce: [www.madisonblackchamber.com](http://www.madisonblackchamber.com)
- Milwaukee Urban League: [www.tmul.org](http://www.tmul.org)
- National Association of Minority Contractors: [www.namcwi.org](http://www.namcwi.org)
- NiiJii Capital Partners, Inc: [www.niicap.org](http://www.niicap.org)
- The Business Council: [www.mketbc.wordpress.com](http://www.mketbc.wordpress.com)
- The Wisconsin Black Chamber of Commerce: [www.twbcc.com](http://www.twbcc.com)
- Urban League of Greater Madison: [www.ulgm.org](http://www.ulgm.org)
- Western Dairyland EOC Inc: [www.westerndairyland.org](http://www.westerndairyland.org)
- Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce: [www.wislgbtchamber.com](http://www.wislgbtchamber.com)
- Wisconsin Center for Manufacturing and Productivity: [www.wicmp.org](http://www.wicmp.org)
- Wisconsin Chinese Chamber of Commerce: [www.wisccc.org](http://www.wisccc.org)
- Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce: [www.wiveteranschamber.org](http://www.wiveteranschamber.org)
- Wisconsin Indian Business Alliance: [www.wibanative.org](http://www.wibanative.org)
- Wisconsin Native Loan Fund: [www.winlf.org](http://www.winlf.org)
- Wisconsin Procurement Institute: [www.wispro.org](http://www.wispro.org)
- Wisconsin Small Business Development Center: [www.sbdc.wisc.edu](http://www.sbdc.wisc.edu)
- Wisconsin United Coalition of Mutual Assistance Association (Hmong): [www.wucmaa.org](http://www.wucmaa.org)
- Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative: [www.wwbic.com](http://www.wwbic.com)

## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin: [www.aaccwi.org](http://www.aaccwi.org)

American Indian Chamber of Commerce/First American Capital Corporation: [www.aiccw-facc.org](http://www.aiccw-facc.org)

Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce: [www.hmongchamber.org](http://www.hmongchamber.org)

Wisconsin Native Loan Fund: [www.winlf.org](http://www.winlf.org)

NiiJii Capital Partners, Inc: [www.niicap.org](http://www.niicap.org)

First Nations Community Financial: [www.firstnationsfinancial.org](http://www.firstnationsfinancial.org)

Latino Chamber of Commerce of Dane County: [www.madisonblackchamber.com](http://www.madisonblackchamber.com)

Latino Chamber of Commerce of SE Wisconsin: [www.latinochambersew.org](http://www.latinochambersew.org)

Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative: [www.wwbic.com](http://www.wwbic.com)

Kiva: [www.kiva.org/team/wisconsin](http://www.kiva.org/team/wisconsin)

Regional Business Fund, Inc.: [www.rbfinc.org](http://www.rbfinc.org)

Founders First Capital Partners, LLC: [foundersfirstcdc.org](http://foundersfirstcdc.org)

Community Development Financial Institutions: [www.cdfifund.gov](http://www.cdfifund.gov)

Small Business Administration Wisconsin: [www.sba.gov/offices/district/wi/milwaukee](http://www.sba.gov/offices/district/wi/milwaukee)

Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation: [www.medconline.com](http://www.medconline.com)

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation: [www.wedc.org](http://www.wedc.org)

## MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

Score offices in Wisconsin: [www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/wi\\_score\\_offices\\_0.pdf](http://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/wi_score_offices_0.pdf)

Green Bay Packers Mentor-Protégé Program: [www.packers.com/community/mentor-protege](http://www.packers.com/community/mentor-protege)

## CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Department Of Administration - Supplier Diversity Program (minority, woman, service disabled veteran):

[doa.wi.gov/Pages/DoingBusiness/SupplierDiversity.aspx](http://doa.wi.gov/Pages/DoingBusiness/SupplierDiversity.aspx)

Federal Certification Small Business Administration Wisconsin (disadvantaged, women, service disabled veteran, HUBZone and small business):

[www.sba.gov/offices/district/wi/milwaukee](http://www.sba.gov/offices/district/wi/milwaukee)

### **Wisconsin Unified Certification Program Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE)**

- Wisconsin Department of Transportation: [wisconsindot.gov/Pages/home.aspx](http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/home.aspx)
- Dane County: [oei-exec.countyofdane.com](http://oei-exec.countyofdane.com)
- Milwaukee County: [county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Administrative-Services](http://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Administrative-Services)
- City of Madison: [www.cityofmadison.com/dcr](http://www.cityofmadison.com/dcr)

City of Milwaukee Office of Small Business Development: [city.milwaukee.gov/OSBD/Certifications](http://city.milwaukee.gov/OSBD/Certifications)

Wisconsin Women's Business Development Center: [www.wbdc.org](http://www.wbdc.org)

North Central Minority Supplier Development Council: [northcentralmsdc.net](http://northcentralmsdc.net)

Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (Supplier Diversity Program):

[www.mmsd.com/procurement/supplier-diversity](http://www.mmsd.com/procurement/supplier-diversity)



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**U.S. Bank is proud to support Marketplace Wisconsin.**



**Robert Lamb - Vice President**  
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& Inclusion

**38%**

Corporate Board diversity  
(women + racial/ethnic diversity)

**90** OUT OF **100**

Human Rights Campaign  
Corporate Equality Index

**100%**

Score on the Disability Equality  
Index Best Places to Work

Military Friendly Employer

50 Out Front – Best Companies for  
Women & Diverse Managers to Work

Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion

LGBT Chamber of Wisconsin

U.S. Veterans Chamber of Commerce



## Proud to partner with MARKETPLACE WISCONSIN to support diversity, inclusion

Old National understands the importance of each individual's unique perspective, in our company and in our community. That's why we've developed inclusion initiatives designed to educate, engage and collaborate—from our Associate Resource Groups, a certified Supplier Diversity commitment and a C-suite role dedicated to creating partnerships and business opportunities from underrepresented populations.

**Supplier Diversity** is a critical part of our approach to community. In 2020 this was demonstrated by our strategy with suppliers from Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana and 24 other states, where we sourced over \$11.3 million goods & services from small businesses. More than one-third of the spend with diverse suppliers.

 **131** | Number of  
diverse suppliers

 **\$4,482,879** | Total spend with  
diverse suppliers

Stop by Booth 11 to meet the Old National Team to learn how we might partner together.

[oldnational.com](http://oldnational.com) | Member FDIC

# Building Economic Inclusion through Partnerships



**CONNECT. BUILD. IMPACT.**

Gilbane supports small and diverse Wisconsin businesses through meaningful contracting opportunities, knowledge transfer and economic inclusion.

**Exciting Career Opportunities**

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**Interested in our Rising Contractor Program? Learn more here:**

<https://info.gilbaneco.com/gilbane-rising-contractors>

**Gilbane 150**

[www.gilbaneco.com](http://www.gilbaneco.com)



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We support economic development with financing that puts more capital directly into businesses.

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---

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# Building meaningful business partnerships

At We Energies, we believe that using diverse suppliers makes good business sense. Supplier diversity fosters competition, enhances job creation and generates additional purchasing power in the communities in which we do business. We are committed to building meaningful business partnerships with certified minority-, women-, service-disabled- and veteran-owned (M/W/SD/V) business enterprises.

Learn more about our Supplier Diversity Initiative and how to become a certified M/W/SD/V at [www.wecenergygroup.com/sdi](http://www.wecenergygroup.com/sdi).





# The power of diversity.

Diversity brings strength. Diversity creates solutions.

Because we know that a diversity of perspectives, experiences and backgrounds is an incredibly powerful way to unlock new ideas and better understand the needs of others.

AT&T is honored to support MARKETPLACE 2021 - the Governor's Conference on Diverse Business Development.



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**Anniversary**

*of the*

*Governor's Annual Conference  
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# EMPOWERING EQUITABLE FUTURES WITH DIVERSE-OWNED BUSINESSES

## AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE GROUP SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM

Diversity and inclusion are imperative to our mission of inspiring, protecting and restoring dreams.

It's why we're committed to empowering diverse business owners and entrepreneurs with tools and resources for success through our **Supplier Diversity Program**. This commitment extends nationwide across American Family Insurance Group operating companies as we aim to inspire diverse suppliers to pursue their dreams with confidence.

We believe that forging strong partnerships with diverse-owned businesses like yours helps fuel innovation, create allies and drive change that allows our communities to equitably serve **everyone**.

American Family Insurance Group is a proud sponsor of the  
2021 Marketplace Wisconsin Event.

Our Supplier Diversity Program is growing! We'd love to learn more about  
your diverse-owned business. [Visit AmFam.com/SupplierDiversity](https://www.AmFam.com/SupplierDiversity)





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We are proud to support The Governor's Conference on Minority Business Development through everyday support of Wisconsin's minority, women and veteran-owned businesses. At Town Bank, we partner with national organizations, such as SCORE and the National Organization for Women Business Owners, to offer resources for local entrepreneurs. We take pride in offering the same technology and financial solutions as big bank competitors with a level of customer service and community focus that can only be found at a local community bank. We're proud to be Wisconsin's Bank for Business and we're proud to be here.

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SCAN HERE

Michels Supplier Diversity Program broadens our supplier and subcontractor base, stimulates competition and supports our customers' priorities by identifying and offering equitable opportunities for diverse suppliers and subcontractors.

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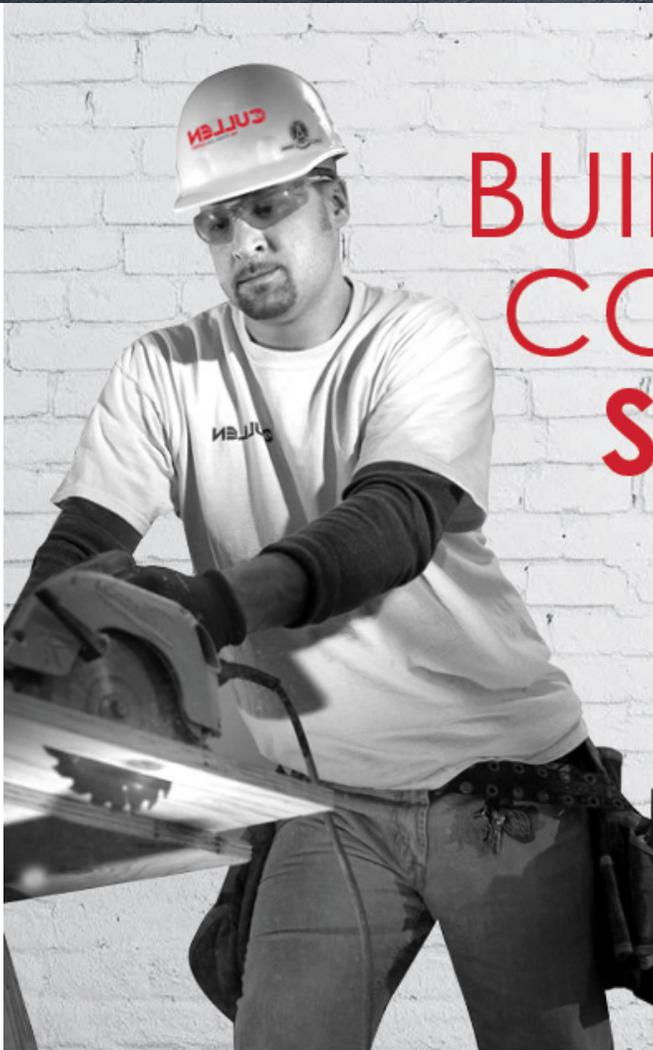
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on MMSD's  
Supplier Diversity,  
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- 505ENT-M18-PRINTDSK-07

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