

SMALL BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

January-March 2024

5th Annual Diversity Business Expo

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Business Expo

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On March 7th, the City of Knoxville, alongside its agency partners of the East Tennessee Purchasing Association (ETPA), will gather for the 5th annual Diversity Business Expo. As in previous years, this event will serve the diversity business enterprise (DBE) community and subcontractors. This includes small businesses, and businesses primarily owned and operated by minorities, women, veterans, service-disabled veterans, and persons with disabilities. ETPA's Diversity Business Alliance Committee is comprised of procurement representatives and supplier diversity advocates from twelve different public agencies who share the objective of purchasing from DBEs in an equitable and inclusive manner. The twelve agencies represented include Blount County, City of Chattanooga, City of Knoxville, Hamilton County, Hamilton County Schools, Knox County, Knoxville Utilities Board, Knoxville's Community Development Corporation, Public Building Authority, Tennessee Board of Regents, Tennessee Valley Authority and the University of Tennessee system.

The Diversity Business Expo offers DBEs invaluable one-on-one time with key decision makers in the public sector, fellow competitors, and resource partners. At its core, this event will aim to connect buyers with suppliers of goods and services, including construction and professional services, in a dynamic setting. Businesses can expect to connect with public agency representatives in need of the products and services they provide. They will have the opportunity to have conversations with procurement staff and other agency representatives, and other company representatives they may deal with directly. During the Expo vendors will be able to build relationships, and by doing so, better position

themselves for success.

This year, the Diversity Business Alliance is thrilled to offer the **Credit for Small Business** Workshop, facilitated by John Nolan, Manager of Community and Business Development for Y-12 Federal Credit Union. He is a seasoned financial professional with over 10 years of banking and retail management experience. In his current role, John leads the Financial Wellness initiatives for the Credit Union, emphasizing financial literacy. He specializes in financial principles with keen proficiency in consumer spending and stewardship, budgeting, financial planning, and credit worthiness and repair. John's team has contributed to community education through classroom education, interactive simulations, and strategic partnerships with organizations like the Knoxville Area Urban League and Boys and Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley.

John applies a charismatic expository style to unpackage complex concepts and customize them to audiences of all ages. Personable and skilled at reading people, John understands the psychology of financial education and can advise DBEs on how to achieve optimal financial success.

This year's Diversity Business Expo will provide diversity businesses with a tremendous opportunity for networking, cultivating relationships, upping their financial savviness, and associating one-on-one with other like-minded professionals in East Tennessee. The City of Knoxville and its partners at the ETPA Diversity Business Alliance are delighted to offer this event at Bridgewater Place, 205 Bridgewater Rd. Knoxville, TN 37923, from 8:00 am to 11:30 am (Eastern). Registration is free



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5th Annual Diversity Business Expo

Scan to register:



and can be found at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/diversity-business-expo-2024-tickets-757854452067>. For more information or questions about this year's Expo, please contact the City's Diversity Business Specialist, Luis Garcia, by phone at 865-215-2293 or emailing lgarcia@knoxvilletn.gov.

DBE Celebrations

In 2024, we want to celebrate our city-wide procurement success stories by recognizing the many ways City staff promote the use of diverse businesses. To that end, we are adding a new feature to the quarterly newsletter and will be spotlighting examples of inclusive procurement in p-card and/or purchases below the competitive threshold.

The Small Business & Diversity Outreach Office (SBDOO) assisted Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC) with outreach efforts for their Meals for the Manor procurement. The SBDOO personally contacted Chef Maurice Ragland, owner of Chef Mo's Café, about the opportunity. Chef Maurice responded to the bid and was ultimately awarded the contract. Pamela Cotham received an email from Chef Mo to express his thanks: "JUST wanted to let you know that I got the bid for KCDC. THANK YOU for always putting information out to whoever needs it. If more people in positions like you would give out the information to the small guys like myself, our business would grow so much faster, just like the others. Thank You very much for what you do". The award is for one year with four options to extend. KCDC Procurement Director Terry McKee says he's looking forward to working with Chef Mo to provide meals for elderly residents at the Manor.

Chef Mo's Café is located at 131 E. Moody Ave., Knoxville, TN 37920 (865) 256-2700.

Recently Luis Garcia assisted Ernest Garner, President & Founder of The Grid Infrastructure Network Services, LLC (TGINS). TGINS is a Black-owned small business headquartered in Georgia. Luis helped Mr. Garner navigate the BidNet vendor registration process. In response, Mr. Garner reached out to express his thanks: "Mr. Garcia, I made the last suggested modification to our City of Knoxville vendor profile. Thanks again for all your support."

The key advantage to registering as a vendor with the City is being connected with City staff and the receipt of automated notifications about future business opportunities. Si McMurray, Director of Procurement at Knoxville Area Transit, said the SBDOO "has enabled KAT to expand their contracting opportunities and awards to diverse businesses. One award that stands out was to TGINS, a Black-owned small business that does a first-rate job servicing and maintaining the charging infrastructure for our battery-electric transit buses. The assistance Luis provided TGINS not only established them as a registered diverse business with the City but also enabled them to correctly qualify and obtain certification through TDOT's Unified Certification program as a Black-owned minority business enterprise."

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Recently Awarded Solicitations

The City of Knoxville solicits sealed submissions for purchases of \$50,000 or more and requests for quotes for purchases between \$12,500 and \$49,999.99. Purchases below \$12,500 are managed at the discretion of the City's departments. Awards issued within the past 90 days include the following:

Title	Supplier-Diversity Type	Amount
Various Filters for Fleet Services	Ken Smith Auto Parts – Small Business	Unit Price
Single Axle Dump Trailers	Stringfellow, Inc	\$467,574.00
5000lb LPG Forklift	Southeast Handling Systems – Small Business	\$33,900.00
8000lb LPG Forklift	The Lilly Company	\$57,017.00
Climate Pollution Reduction Consultant	ICF Consulting, Inc.	\$597,321.00
Pursuit Tires	National Auto Parts	Unit Price
Clinch Ave Viaduct Planters	Taylor's Lawn Service – Small Business	\$8,250.00
Ambulance Cot	Stryker Medical	\$63,035.11
Fire Station #6 Repairs	Knoxville Urban Renaissance Builders (KURB) - Black Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business	\$44,450.00
Electric Scissor Lift	The Lilly Company	\$34,576.00
Firearms Training Target System	Mike Gibson Manufacturing – Small Business	\$249,120.00
Ride-on Floor Scrubbers	Downeast Logistics LLC – Service-Disabled Veteran Woman-Owned Small Business	\$126,928.00
Passenger Buses	The Bus Center – Small Business	\$226,430.00

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Upcoming Procurements

Description	Projected Bid Date
Cured-In-Place Pipe IV Phase II	Winter 2023-24
Mailing Services for Tax Notices	
Gay Street Traffic Signal Pole Replacement	
Liberty Street Multimodal	
Middlebrook Pike Advanced Traffic Management System	
Pleasant Ridge Road Phase II	
Sevier Avenue Streetscapes	
Sevier Avenue Utilities	
Washington Pike Drainage Improvements	
Northwest Greenway Connector Extension	
Burlington Streetscapes	
Cal Johnson Recreation Center ADA Connection	
Knoxville Urban Wilderness – James White Parkway Pavilion	
2024 Sidewalk Replacement	
Cherry Street Sinkhole Water Quality Improvements Phase II	Spring 2024
Cecil Webb Recreation Center Renovations	Spring 2024
2024 Facilities Paving	Spring 2024
Old City (Willow Avenue) Streetscapes	Spring 2024
Outdoor Knoxville Roof Replacement	Spring 2024

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Outreach and Networking Events



GovCon Lunch & Learn by Premier Consulting & Integration. Tuesday, February 27, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. EST at Lakeside Tavern, 10911 Concord Park Drive Knoxville, TN 37922. Government contractors in Knoxville can join for a time of networking and discover the secrets of pricing for government contracts. Registration and agenda information are available at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/govcon-lunch-learn-knoxville-tickets-769700905127?aff=ebdssbcategorybrowse>.



2024 Diversity Business Expo by the East Tennessee Purchasing Association's Diversity Business Alliance (ETPA/DBA). Thursday, March 7, 8-11:30 a.m. EST at Bridgewater Place, 205 Bridgewater Road, Knoxville, TN 37923. Representatives from government agencies, including purchasing departments and small purchase decision makers will be available to network with diverse businesses and engage in intentional dialogue about their procurement opportunities. There will also be the opportunity to attend an educational workshop on "*Credit for Small Business*." Registration is at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/diversity-business-expo-2024-tickets-757854452067>.



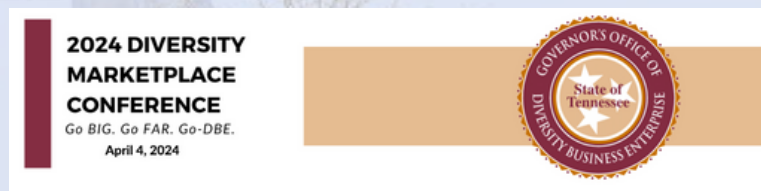
Virtual Business Connection Matchmaker by the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC), Wednesday, March 27 and Thursday, March 28. Connect virtually with buyers and other minority-owned businesses (MBEs) with business opportunities for you. Registration information will be announced closer to the event at <https://nmsdc.org/event/q1-nmsdcs-business-connection-matchmaker/>.

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2024 Diversity Marketplace Conference by The Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise (Go-DBE) and the Department of General Services' Central Procurement Office (DGS/CPO). Thursday, April 4, 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. CST at Nashville Music City Center, 201 Rep. John Lewis Way S., Nashville, TN 37203. In alignment with DGS' commitment to a customer focused government, public agencies and private sector businesses are invited to embrace certified minority-owned, woman-owned, persons with disabilities-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned, and small businesses in their procurement opportunities. Registration opening soon. For questions, please call 615-253-4654, text 615-970-2170, or email Kimberly.Henry@tn.gov or Richard.VanNorman@tn.gov.



Capability Statements & Elevator Pitches - On Demand Presentation by the Tennessee APEX Accelerator. January 3-March 31. This online, prerecorded course will provide valuable tips and tools to craft successful capability statements and elevator pitches. More information and registration are available at <https://tnapex.ecenterdirect.com/events/4156>.

The City of Knoxville/Knoxville Area Transit (KAT) has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program in accordance with regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), 49 CFR Part 26. The City of Knoxville/KAT has received Federal financial assistance from the Department of Transportation, and as a condition of receiving this assistance, the City of Knoxville has signed an assurance that it will comply with 49 CFR Part 26. To view the policy, visit: <https://katbus.com/about-kat/transparency-accountability/>.



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