The Advocate:
The first line of advocacy for minority, women & emerging small businesses.

Advocate’s Message
Happy Holidays!

As we wind down the year, it is hard to believe that eight months have passed since my appointment. I am very proud of what the Advocate’s Office has accomplished in that short time, and I look forward to representing the interests of minority, women and emerging small businesses in the coming year.

November 1st marked the day for the second annual Governor’s Marketplace. With nearly a 50% increase in attendance, 180 small business owners congregated to learn about doing business with public agencies and meet with over 70 public agency representatives who came to help small businesses learn how to compete for government contracts.

Over the last several months, my participation on the Governor’s Small Business Council has afforded me the opportunity to bring up issues that affect small business owners. One of the recurring themes voiced by council members who are small business owners.

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House Work Group on Public Contract Law
Rewriting Oregon’s Purchasing Law

Beginning in December members of the House Work Group on Public Contract Law began meeting to discuss rewriting portions of the current purchasing statute.

State and Local Government representatives gave testimony regarding a variety of topics. Lydia Muñiz, Governor’s Advocate for Minority, Women, and Emerging Small Businesses stepped forward to encourage committee support for small businesses statewide. Lydia pointed out to the

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committee and attendees that small businesses make an important contribution to the health of the state’s economy, and reminded Legislators, Purchasing Managers and Business Representatives that an open, fair competitive process is best for all Oregonians.

Members of the committee will continue to meet over the next year to establish new proposed legislation for the 2003 Legislative Session.

Some of the topics of concern are; streamlining the bid and request for proposal process, simplifying language in contract and bid documents for easier use, keeping the process open and competitive, and making the cost of doing business with the state more reasonable for small businesses.

We would like to hear from you about your experiences bidding on state or local government projects. Please send letters addressed to:

Attn: Lydia Muñiz, Governor’s Advocate for MWESB
155 Cottage Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-4047
OR — e-mail to: lydia.muniz@state.or.us

Be sure to include your business name and a daytime phone where you can be reached. We will take your concerns and issues forward to future committee hearings.

Training to Begin Soon!

Beginning in February the Advocate’s Office will offer training to state and local government purchasers and buyers on doing business with Minority, Women and Emerging Small Businesses. The content of the training will include a review of the ORS 200 and Oregon Administrative Rules that support contracting with MWESB certified firms.

In addition, participants in the training will learn how to select a business from the certified firms list on-line. The first training is scheduled to be held on February 7th at the Training & Economic Development Center on Ferry Street. Additional sessions will be scheduled as needed throughout the next year. For additional information please call: Sandra Kalin at 503-373-1224 X27.

“The business of America is Business.” Calvin Coolidge

Job Well Done!

The Governor’s Advocate’s Office for Minority, Women & Emerging Small Businesses offers a matching service called the Clearinghouse Project to assist small businesses locate and bid on public projects, service contracts, and personal service contracts. Each month hundreds of announcements come into the office and are rerouted to certified firms across the state.

Many public agencies are doing an excellent job of contacting the Governor’s Advocate and Clearinghouse Project Manager with business opportunities. We would like to commend Oregon Fish & Wildlife, the Department of Forestry, the University of Oregon, the Department of Environmental Quality and the City of Eugene for their outstanding effort to insure that Minority, Women and Emerging Small businesses receive an opportunity to compete for government contracts. To access the certified firms listing on-line go to:

http://imd10.cbs.state.or.us/ex/dir/omwesb/

By using this list to find a vendor, you are helping to support small businesses in Oregon, and keeping our local communities strong. If you would like to learn more about the Clearinghouse Project please contact Sandra Kalin at:

503-373-1224 X27, or e-mail sandra.l.kalin@state.or.us
Department of Consumer & Business Services:
- Office of Minority, Women and Emerging Small Business -

The Office of the Advocate for Minority, Women and Emerging Small Businesses works to assist businesses in gaining state and local government contracts. In turn, the Department of Consumer and Business Services, MWESB plays an indispensable role in developing and maintaining a list of certified firms used by the Advocate and Clearinghouse Project Manager.

The DCBS Office of Minority, Women and Emerging Small Business (OMWESB) administers the Disadvantaged, Minority, Women and Emerging Small Business Enterprise. The office is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Conduct certification reviews
- Maintain directory of certified businesses
- Act as an information resource for certified firms
- Participate in public awareness activities

OMWESB is the sole certification authority in Oregon for targeted government and private sector contracts. The office receives approximately 500-600 new applications each year.

All new applications are assigned to a certification specialist upon receipt. New DBE/MBE/WBE application determination turn-around time is currently 30-90 days and ESB applications are processed in as little as one day in some cases, and in no longer than 60 days after receipt of all required documentation. Occasionally a certification will take longer, this occurs most often when making federal certification determinations. DBE certification allows firms to bid on contracting opportunities with recipients of federally funded transportation-related monies. Some of the recipients in this category include the Oregon Department of Transportation, Tri-Met and the Port of Portland.

The certification office honors rush requests for certification reviews and determinations in an effort to assist applicant business in meeting a bid deadline for a targeted contracting opportunity. Rush requests could come from an applicant or a contracting jurisdiction.

OMWESB's web page ([www.cbs.state.or.us/omwesb](http://www.cbs.state.or.us/omwesb)) has the office brochure, applications, links to other small business resources and an on-line directory of certified firms. The directory is used by public jurisdictions, prime contractors, and private industries when soliciting firms for participation in targeted projects with contracting goals.

Call: Dianne Janowski at 503-947-7922 for additional information

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owners themselves, is the lack of coordinated information that exists for small businesses. The Advocate's Office will be looking at ways to facilitate information gathering and sharing in the coming year.

As part of Governor Kitzhaber’s and my commitment to ensure that small businesses will have increased business opportunities in the future, next we will focus on:

- Providing hands-on training seminars for small businesses and agency representatives to help increase the number of certified firms holding government contracts.

- Development of a more useful and informative web page.

- Continued improvement in the Clearinghouse Project to notify vendors regarding bid opportunities.

- Work with agencies to develop opportunities for smaller, more manageable sized contracts.

- Working with banks and other financial institutions to create programs and policies that assist minority, women and emerging small business.

- Participate in the contract law rewrite to protect the interests of certified businesses.

- Increase participation at events and meetings to build awareness of programs and issues facing small businesses in Oregon today.
Governor's Marketplace 2001

Highlights from this year's evaluations:

- Attendance increased from 120 to 180 participants in just one year.
- The number of resource tables increased from 16 to 36.
- Ninety two percent of attendees plan to attend again next year.

Attendee comments:

- "Great! Great! Great! Great!"
- "The Marketing Your Business Session was wonderful."
- "Great workshops! Looking forward to next year!"
- "Good opportunity for networking."
- "Want more time with buyers at one-on-one tables."

Governor Kitzhaber honored speakers and committee members who assisted with the Governor's Marketplace 2001 event. The Governor cut and served cake to reception guests after thanking them for their help with the program. Guests were also invited to have pictures taken with the Governor.