As we continue to navigate through unfamiliar territory during these unprecedented times caused by COVID-19, I would like to take this opportunity to restate our commitment to you as business owners, Corporate supporters and partners.

We want to hear from you.
You should have received a survey from us asking what information and services you need and/or could use for your business at this time. Please remember to complete the survey by April 20th. If you did not receive the survey, you can find it here.

MBE Certification
Staff continues to work diligently to ensure that new MBE certification and Recertification applications are processed in a timely manner with a turnaround of 30 days and 15 days, respectively. In addition, we will continue to waive late fees for Recertifications incurred from March through June and encourage you to contact us should you have circumstances which may cause you to consider not renewing your certification.

Programs and Events
Our monthly Pre-Certification workshops and Orientations continue virtually and we continue holding weekly Wednesday webinars as part of our MBE BizTalk Wednesday webinar series. We are currently in the process of finalizing what our Events will look like for the rest of the year, please stay tuned.

Resources for your business
If you haven’t already, check out our COVID-19 Resource Guide for Business Owners which is updated regularly to ensure you have the most relevant and updated information.

We wish you all health and happiness and remember our council is here to assist in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Virginia Gomez
President & CEO

---

**CORPORATE PARTNERS: WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR!**

Nominate deserving MBE suppliers with whom you have contracted and are consistently rising above and beyond to fulfill their services.  

DEADLINE APRIL 27th  SUBMIT TO YMCNALLY@SCMSDC.ORG

---

**UPCOMING VIRTUAL PROGRAMS**

**WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS**
1 PM - 2 PM PST

**April 22, 2020**  
For Business Owners, By Business Owners: Applying for SBA Relief Funds  

**April 29, 2020**  
Taking Your Business Digital: Planning & Execution of Web-based Events  

**Register**

**MBE ORIENTATION**
2 PM - 4 PM PST

**Thursday, April 30, 2020**  
Join our certification team every last Thursday of the month to flesh out the value of certification and how to leverage it to reach your business goals.  

**Register**

**PRE-CERTIFICATION WORKSHOP**
2 PM - 4 PM PST

**Tuesday, May 12, 2020**  
Join our certification team every second Tuesday of the month to provide a comprehensive overview of the application process, including required documents and eligibility.  

**Register**
The state of California’s Office of Small Business and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Services (OSDS) helps connect suppliers to state agencies and departments throughout California that need to procure your business’s goods and services.

As the 5th largest economy in the world, the state of California spends billions of dollars on all types of products and services. And with every department required to spend at least 25% of those billions with certified Small Businesses and 3% with Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises, OSDS staff are ready to help businesses learn how to get certified, research opportunities, and get in touch with relevant departments.

Contact OSDS with your questions or requests at custserv@dgs.ca.gov.

Join the state of California’s Office of Small Business and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Services online and in person to learn more about opportunities to connect your business to state contracting opportunities! Upcoming webinars and other events with OSDS can be found at https://ca-purchase.ca.gov/page/events.aspx

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

The state of California’s Office of Small Business and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Services (OSDS) helps connect suppliers to state agencies and departments throughout California that need to procure your business’s goods and services.

As the 5th largest economy in the world, the state of California spends billions of dollars on all types of products and services. And with every department required to spend at least 25% of those billions with certified Small Businesses and 3% with Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises, OSDS staff are ready to help businesses learn how to get certified, research opportunities, and get in touch with relevant departments.

Contact OSDS with your questions or requests at custserv@dgs.ca.gov.

Join the state of California’s Office of Small Business and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Services online and in person to learn more about opportunities to connect your business to state contracting opportunities! Upcoming webinars and other events with OSDS can be found at https://ca-purchase.ca.gov/page/events.aspx

HONORING EARL G. GRAVES, SR.

Earl G. Graves, Sr., the founder and publisher of Black Enterprise Magazine and a nationally recognized authority on black business development, has sadly passed away after a long battle with Alzheimer’s.

Graves was widely considered to be the ultimate champion of black business, launching Black Enterprise in 1970 not only chronicle the rise of African American entrepreneurs, but also provide the tools for African Americans to succeed in the business mainstream and “achieve their measure of the American dream.” For 50 years, Black Enterprise has provided essential business information and advice to professionals, corporate executives, entrepreneurs, and decision makers.

In 2002, he was named by Fortune Magazine as one of the 50 most powerful and influential African Americans in corporate America.

Graves leaves behind a rich legacy of teaching Africans Americans the importance of financial literacy and entrepreneurship.

SCMSDC celebrates the life and legacy of businessman, entrepreneur, publisher, and philanthropist Earl Graves, Sr. and his contributions to diverse business networks.

PARTNER EVENTS

Learn how to work with CA utilities

Southern California Gas Co. (SoCalGas) and Frontier Communications will collaborate to lead a series of webinars throughout April with tips for diverse business enterprises seeking to earn utility contracts.

Representatives from six other California utilities will participate in the webinars, offering suppliers latest updates from the utilities on upcoming sourcing opportunities, support for diverse businesses and available resources to the supplier community.

Q & A

Amanda M. Graves
Founder & CEO
Innovate Marketing Group

Q: How has the pandemic affected your industry as a whole and your business specifically?

A: In the past 15+ years of event experience, this has been one of the most challenging moments. We are in the business of live experiences so COVID-19 has affected our business and industry greatly. We went from an extraordinary live experience of producing a national high profile event dealing with the White House and secret service to two weeks later a stay at home mandate along with numerous upcoming events being canceled or postponed. Luckily more postponed than canceled. We had to pivot very fast to virtual events and stay on top of the game so we can help our clients be proactive with their marketing & event plans. Originally the Shelter in Place order would end in mid-April but last week it was extended to May 15. I adjusted the plan accordingly since one-month remote work is different from two months of remote work.

Q: Adaptability is key when pivoting businesses to digital platforms. Do you have any suggestions on pivoting a business during this crisis?

A: Our current Motto is to: #1 Adapt, #2 Develop, #3 Innovate. Yes, during this time we have been pivoting to digital. We’ve always used digital platforms whether for internal or external use, but even more so now that live-experiences are on hold. Ultimately, it is important to keep the main goal and objective in mind. With that, does the digital platform achieve that? What works for the masses doesn’t necessarily work for your company. It’s important to keep the user experience in mind. Is it easy to use, is it easy to understand, etc. Furthermore, once you have the services all set, to work out a plan to communicate to clients, potential clients, and network. We have a digital platform that is great for a 3,000 person walk/run virtual event. And we use a different one for large corporate events. Again, it goes back to understanding what is the ultimate goal and KPto find the platform that is the best fit.

Q: What are some tips to keep staff motivated and engaged?

A: 1. Communicate proactively: Communicating with the team what the company is doing and how the company is impacted, reassure them about their jobs, how we will serve our clients during this time, and continue communication weekly. Also checking in with the team frequently to see how they are doing personally. 2. Engagement: In addition to the weekly team check-ins and 1:1s we have incorporated the following: Virtual Birthday celebrations, where we take a moment to celebrate birthday’s together virtually via zoom. The present, cake, the card was all scheduled to arrive accordingly. 3. Virtual team building: We’ve sent a seta Lego’s to all our team members and have designated a time to build it together and bond that way. We are always coming up with team bonding experiences for our clients and now taking those same ideas virtual. Why not doing it internally? 4. Share Wins: Celebrate any milestones or successes to keep the morale up. Recently we received a great testimonial from a client, by sharing that with the team, it was a boost in morale and energy.

CATCH UP ON OUR MBE BIZTALK: NOVEL CORONAVIRUS BUSINESS SERIES

Thank you to our outstanding speakers

ICE Safety Solutions
Meijun
The Ultimate LYE
Glass Ladder Group
Small Business Majority
U.S. Small Business Administration

Tune into parts 1-5 here at scmsdc.org/mebiztalk

If you are a leader in your field and are interested in guiding our network of business professionals through a BizTalk of your own, feel free to contact David Delgado, Programs Coordinator, at ddelgado@scmsdc.org.

CERTIFY. DEVELOP. CONNECT. ADVOCATE

SCMSDC is one of 23 regional councils across a national network under the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC).

Southern California Minority Supplier Development Council Inc. | SCMSDC.org | 800 W. 6th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90017 | (213) 689-6960