

January 2010



INROADS

Paving the Way for Montana's Disadvantaged Business Enterprises



Montana Department of Transportation
DBE Program
Civil Rights Bureau
P.O. Box 201001
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Like so many small businesses in this weak economy, Kaos Worldwide, a sports apparel company just outside Houston, has been struggling. But it has managed to survive while its competitors have folded because it won a five-year, \$1.5 million contract last year to supply sports bras to the United States military.

While it may seem that only large corporations like Halliburton and Lockheed Martin would have a shot at lucrative military contracts, the Defense Department actually awards more than half, or \$55 billion, to small businesses.

"Small businesses play an important role in the economy and the military," said Joseph E. Misanin, deputy director of small-business programs at the Defense Department. "They have an agility and flexibility that gives them an advantage over bigger companies."

Although the regulatory hurdles to becoming a military vendor can be daunting and frustrating, small-business owners who persevere say it is tremendously profitable and even essential to their survival. With the United States currently in the midst of two wars and tending to a multitude of other security concerns, they say the military is a recession-proof customer that has insulated them from the current economic downturn.

In order to be certified to work for the government, it means getting listed on the Central Contractor Registration database. This is required of all current and potential military contractors. Applications can be made online and require a company's tax identification number.

Once in the database, small businesses get a Commercial and Government Entity code; a Marketing Partner Identification Number and Trading Partner Identification Number. These are all essential for finding, bidding on and getting paid for military contracts.

Helping small businesses make sense of the credentialing process are regional procurement technical assistance centers. There are 93 of these federally financed offices nationwide, run by former military procurement officers.

"The first meeting takes a few hours when we learn about the business to see if it even has a product that's possible to sell to the military," said Debbie Smith, procurement specialist at the assistance center in New London, Conn.

If the answer is yes, then the center guides the small-business owner through the registration process and enters him or her into a central database that patrols the federal system for bid solicitations that fit their profile. Small businesses can also look through the listings on www.fedbizopps.gov for opportunities.

But getting that first contract is difficult, said Ms. Harshfield of Exhibit Arts. "They want you to have experience working with the military," she said. "They aren't as interested in your commercial experience. So it's really hard to break in." It took two years, she said, for her company to get the military to accept a bid.

Mr. Emanuel said he was lucky that, through personal connections, a general in Iraq had learned of his product. The general ordered 10,000 bras for his female soldiers by credit card in 2005. So when Mr. Emanuel bid on the five-year contract that he eventually won last year, he was able to point to that experience.

Rather than bidding on contracts, some small businesses try to get their products listed on the [General Services Administration](#) schedule, which is essentially a giant e-mall where military procurement officers can buy items online with a standard credit card. If the company's product is consumer-oriented, it is eligible for listing on the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, an online, tax-free store for active-duty military and their families.

Kathline Springer, director of business development at Rust Bullet in Reno, Nev., said it took two years of paperwork and lobbying various officials to get her company's rust-retardant coating listed in 2005 on the General Services Administration schedule. Still, she said, "it was worth it" because the military is now Rust Bullet's biggest customer. "I don't have to worry if they are going to pay their bills."

Another option is to get a so-called National Stock Number, which gets a product in the Defense Department's database of items approved for military use. Mark Ewald, owner of Groove Tech in Waterbury, Vt., got a stock number in 2000 for his company's industrial-strength bungee cord. "I get most of my orders through word of mouth," he said. "One military unit will get my product and tell another unit who wants to get it." The unit's procurement officer then uses the stock number to place an order. The military now accounts for more than half of Groove Tech's business, he said.

To expand his sales, Mr. Ewald said he had begun making marketing calls to military bases and National Guard units. "Most of the work is finding out who the supply sergeant is and how to reach him," he said. Adding to his frustration, he said, is that military personnel are mobile, so contacts change frequently.

Rick Horn, who is with the assistance center in Las Vegas, said: "It's certainly more complicated than dealing with a commercial entity. But the way the economy is these days, the government still has money and the private sector doesn't."

By KATE MURPHY
Published in the New York Times

INROADS

Bid and Contracting Opportunities

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MDT holds two bid lettings each month.

Proposed for letting February 2010

UPN/UNIT	PROJECT ID	FINANCIAL DISTRICT	PROJECT DESIGNATION	TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION	LENGTH MILES
6797 000	NH 7-1(121)68	1	N OF STEVI WYE-FLORENCE	RESURFACING – SEAL & COVER	5.9
6793 000	NH 1-2(152)139	1	STANTON-ESSEX	RESURFACING-ASPHALT (THIN LIFT<=60.00MM) (INCLUDING SAFE.IMP.) (PAVE PRES)	11.5
6799 000	STPP 52-1(31)0	1	POLSON – EAST	RESURFACING – SEAL & COVER	3.4
6823 000	STPP 14-3(24)77	2,5	WEST OF TWO DOT – W	RESURFACING – ASPHALT (THIN LIFT<=60.00MM) (SCHEDULED MAINTENANCE)	5.7
6811 000	STPS 540-1(21)20	2	CARTERS BRIDGE – SOUTH	RESURFACING-SEAL & COVER	12.2
6813 000	STPS 222-1(6)0	2	DILLON-JACKSON INTCH	RESURFACING-SEAL & COVER	3.6
6820 000	STPS 322-1(5)0	4	JCT MT 7-SOUTH	RESURFACING-ASPHALT(THIN LIFT<=60.00MM)(INCLUDING SAF IMP.)(PAVE PRES)	13.0
6056 000	HSIP 317-1(11)3	1	SF069-CONRAD DR-E OF KALISPELL	RECONSTRUCTION – WITHOUT ADDED CAPACITY	
6078 000	HSIP 317-1(13)4	1	SF069 – CONRAD DR/ SHADY LN-KAL	ROADWAY & ROADSIDE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS	
5303 000	HSIP 227-1(11)2	3	202-CURVES-N OF TRACY	ROADWAY & ROADSIDE SAFETY	1.3
5123 000	BR 213-1(16)10	3	ROCKY COULEE-NW OF SANTA RITA	BRIDGE REPLACEMENT WITH NO ADDED CAPACITY	
5107 000	ARRA 11-1(51)53	2	LIVINGSTON-NE	MAJOR REHAB-WITHOUT ADDED CAPACITY	3.8
6986 000	ARRA 1810(4)	2	GRAND AVE-FLORENCE TO CONT	RESURFACING-ASPHALT(THIN LIFT<=60.00MM)(INCLUDING SAF IMP.)(PAVE PRES)	1.3

Do you know someone who could be a DBE?

If they are a small business owned by a minority or a woman and have less than \$750,000 in personal net worth and less than \$22.41 million in sales averaged over the last 3 years, they may qualify! Tell them to contact Wendy Stewart, DBE Program Manager at 406-444-6337 or westewart@mt.gov for an application packet.

Welcome, Recently Certified DBEs!

Shelley O'Leary
Bitterroot Valley Masonry
Masonry work

Christine Johnson
Clover Creative Consulting
Grant writing and Marketing

Fred Fisher
Fred Fisher Trucking
Erosion control, Site Preparation, Trucking



Don't forget to complete the Needs Assessment! We need the information by January 31, 2010. You can access it by using the following link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/678PR6R> The Needs Assessment is used in our annual Statement of Work and our DBE goal.

The State of Montana offers one stop vendor information at the following link:
<http://svc.mt.gov/gsd/onestop/SolicitationDefault.aspx>

This website contains information from all agencies that are soliciting a contract. Check it out!

Watch for your recertification letter. Recertification letters are sent out about 4 weeks before your paperwork is due. If you do not submit the necessary paperwork by the date indicated on the letter, you risk losing your DBE certification. If you have questions regarding recertification, contact Wendy, 444-6337.

Is there some training that you need? Contact Shannon at 444-7287.

The Small Business Administration has developed the following programs in conjunction with the The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 offers additional federal contracting opportunities to small businesses across the country. You can click on the links provided below to register for the classes.



To learn how to participate in the Federal procurement arena, please review SBA's online training program, [Recovery Act Opportunities: How to Win Federal Contracts](#) – it's free, comprehensive, and includes numerous resources to help you understand and engage in the government's contracting process. The program is fully automated and indexed so you can review all or only the parts you are interested in.

[Review the Contracting Program](#)

In addition, SBA is pleased to introduce its newest online course for women small business owners, [Winning Federal Contracts: A Guide for Women Entrepreneurs](#). This training module is also free, very comprehensive and includes numerous resources, including many targeted for women-owned businesses.

[Review the Women's Contracting Program](#)



MDT Awarded Contracts for November and DBE participation:

Prime	Location	Project	DBE Participation
KNIFE RIVER – BILLINGS	8 TH AVE-MAIN TO 9 TH -LAUREL	ARRA 6905(2)	0.00%
TAMIETTI CONSTRUCTION CO	CLARK FORK-2 KM E WARM SPRINGS	ARRA 9012(131)	5.09%
PRINCE INC	BIG HORN COUNTY LINE-EAST	ARRA 90-9(98)473	1.35%
KNIFE RIVER – KALISPELL	KBP-US 93 TO AIRPORT RD	ARRA-MT 15(90)	0.00%
WICKENS CONSTRUCTION INC	JCT US 191-WHITWATER	ARRA-STPS 208-1(6)0	0.79%
SHUMAKER TRUCKING AND EXCVTG	JCT BOOTLEGGER TRAIL-NE	MT 10-1(25)3	4.57%
PRINCE INC	S OF CULBERTSON-SOUTH	NH 62-2(20)12	2.53%
L S JENSEN CONST & READY MIX	VICTOR URBAN-NORTH	NH 7-1(116)60	0.00%
DIAMOND CONSTRUCTION INC	LIMA REST AREA	IM 15-1(95)15	0.00%

Average Participation

0.70 %

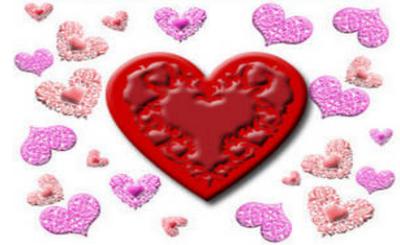
MDT Civil Rights Bureau Directory

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Happy Valentine's Day



WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

Inroads, the Montana DBE Newsletter, is your tool to gain new ideas, meet new people, network with other businesses, blow your own horn, and move your business down the road to success.

- *Have you or an associate won an award or been promoted?*
- *Do you have an idea for an article, or would you like to have your firm profiled in the newsletter?*
- *Do you want to show off your contracting handiwork?*
- *Do you want to hire an employee or buy/sell a business-related item?*

Let us know what's new! Send questions, comments, ideas, photos, and want-ads to: Wendy Stewart at westewart@mt.gov or call (406)444-6337.

Meetings, Workshops, and Training Opportunities

February

- 2/16 Kalispell Chamber Luncheon Featuring Semitool Founder, Ray Thompson. "American Free Enterprise. Dream Big."**
11:30 am – 1 pm, Red Lion Kalispell Center Hotel, Kalispell
Cost: \$21 for non-members
Call 758-2800 or make a reservation online at www.kalispellchamber.com
- 2/17 Cold-in Place/Full-Depth Recycling**
The increased cost in asphalt, aggregate, and their supply has increased the need for high quality, cost effective alternatives to conventional pavement reconstruction and virgin paving mixtures.
8 – 11 am
Interactive video @ multiple MDT Conference Room Sites
Cost: Free
Contact Shannon Hahn at MDT, 444-7287 or shahn@mt.gov by February 12, 2010 to reserve your space
- 2/17 Double Your Trade Show Results – Guaranteed**
Part of the International Business Seminar Series sponsored by the Governor's Office of Economic Development, an industry expert will share the secrets of trade show success.
11:15 am to 1:30 pm, MonTech, 1121 Broadway in Missoula
Cost: \$35 for non-members
Contact 243-6982 or email seminar@mwtc.org

- 2/19 Workshop for Montana Contractors with Senator Tester**
8 am, Best Western GranTree Inn in Bozeman
Cost: Free
RSVP: 866-554-4403 or 406-586-4450

- 2/20 Women's Symposium**
8 am – 5 pm, Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula
Cost: \$50 for non-members
Contact 396-5561 or mbsymposium@gmail.com

- 2/24 – 2/25 OSHA Work Zone Safety**
This training program was developed by ARTBA and the National Safety Council to focus on the hazards and situations that roadway construction workers face every day. This package meets OSHA's requirements for 10-hour accreditation. From work zones to night work, this acclaimed training sets the standard for the entire industry.
2/24 – 8 am – 3 pm AND 2/25 – 8 am – 1 pm
Interactive video @ multiple MDT Conference Room Sites
Cost: Free
Contact Shannon Hahn at MDT, 444-7287 or shahn@mt.gov by February 12, 2010 to reserve your space

