

## 2020 MWBE Program Overview

### Summary

The mission of the Division of Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Development (MWBE) is to promote equality of economic opportunities for Minority and Women owned Business Enterprises and to eliminate barriers to their participation in State contracts. Specifically, the Division implements Article 15-A of the Executive Law, which codifies the State policy of supporting the participation of minorities and women in State contracts.

There are currently over 8,300 NYS-certified MWBEs as of February 20, 2020. In FY 18-19, the Division reported New York State MWBE Utilization rate at 29.13% - the highest rate to date. Over \$2.9 Billion in State contracts were awarded to MWBEs in the last fiscal year, and \$15.9 Billion since the Governor took office in 2011.

### Article 15-a

In July of 2019 the Governor Cuomo signed the law reauthorizing the New York State MWBE program which includes enhancements that will enable even more MWBEs to participate in and benefit from the program including:

- Extending the term of MWBE certification from 3 years to 5 years;
- Increasing discretionary purchasing threshold to \$500,000 without a formal competitive process;
- Increasing the personal net worth ("PNW") certification cap to \$15 million and providing the Director the authority to set regulations for PNW requirements on MWBE certification on an industry-by-industry basis;
- Creating a workforce program with goals for the employment of minority and women group members on state construction and construction related contracts;
- Enhancing opportunities for MWBE prime contractors by establishing a ten percent bidding credit for low-bid construction projects;
- Providing the Director with the authority to conduct outreach events, seminars, training workshops, and identify and establish mentorship opportunities for MWBEs throughout New York State;
- Requiring the New York State Tax & Finance Agency and the Department of Labor to share records with the Division for certification purposes.

### Additional Certification Improvements

To address the timeliness challenges within the certification process, the Division implemented new protocol efficiencies by streamlining application processing and reducing the required application supporting documents by 30%, coupled with the addition of 10 new staff members over the past two years to assist firms with the application process and increase Upstate business development.

This year, the Governor announced the creation of a Statewide Integrated MWBE Application Portal. This will allow business owners to apply for any and all MWBE Certification programs in New York using one website and one common application. The portal will also provide applicants with direct assistance from program staff in order to make the process of completing the application as accessible as possible. ESD will conduct a business analysis of the various certification systems and application processes utilized by the other MWBE certification programs to determine the best platform and related application under which to develop the portal.

### **Outreach**

The Division's Business Development Unit (BDU) continues to collaborate with existing external partners and build new partnerships to assist in advancing the MWBE Program's Strategic Plans. In 2019, the Division hosted 15 Meet & Greets, in which the public had the opportunity to learn about important updates from Executive Vice President and Executive Director, Valerie White.

The Division continues to strive to equip NYS certified MWBEs with programs that will lead to capacity building, scalability, increased utilization, and access to equitable State contracting opportunities. The Division has launched a Business Growth Accelerator 2.0 and a Mentor-Protégé Program 2.0 both of which are designed to build capacity and increase utilization. We continue to conduct training Webinars, which have reached over 5,350 participants and educated over 3,500 MWBE participants on how to do business with NYS Agencies and Authorities.

BDU has expanded and continue to expand our Boot Camps and Train-the-Trainer workshops to strategic partners. Since 2015, BDU has hosted 32 MWBE Boot Camps to over 685 MWBE firms and over 94 service providers.

In addition, BDU strives to raise and build awareness of the NYS MWBE program through the launch of the social media campaign. The ESD press office promotes the Division's outreach events on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The Division has also created our first edition newsletter highlighting key information for MWBE firms.

The Division continues to encourage minority and women business owners to certify with the State and take advantage of billions in State procurement opportunities through a series of outreach efforts. Since 2015, we have hosted 26 MWBE Regional Expos and 5 MWBE Forums. The Division's Regional Expos each attract 75-150 attendees and the MWBE Forums have each attracted over 2,000 registrants.

In December 2019 BDU launched the Industry Opportunity Day initiative. By hosting targeted Industry Opportunity Days , the Division aims to increase utilization by bringing together NY State Agencies, Prime Contractors, and certified MWBEs in underutilized industries. BDU will continue to host these events throughout New York State in 2020.

