



Chicago
Minority Supplier
Development Council



2023

Annual Report

www.chicagomsdc.org

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Stakeholder

As we look back on 2023, I am grateful for the commitment and active engagement of the ChicagoMSDC staff, Board of Directors, our corporate members, and the dedicated minority businesses that form the core of our network. The past year was filled with meaningful interactions and significant achievements.

Our initiatives in 2023 propelled us towards creating a more inclusive economic environment. Enhancing our network's capabilities through expanded development training and stronger corporate procurement connections has equipped our members to navigate the ever-changing business landscape confidently and effectively.

In the face of challenges related to Affirmative Action, ChicagoMSDC has continued to advocate for minority businesses. This was especially apparent during our "A Day on the Hill" event in Washington, DC, where we joined forces with our corporate and MBE board members to champion policies that support minority business enterprises.

As we move forward, let us continue to strengthen these vital connections, which not only benefit our members but also make a substantial impact on the broader economic fabric of our society.

Thank you for your steadfast support and dedication. Your involvement is crucial to our continued success.

Debra Jennings-Johnson

Debra Jennings-Johnson

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Stakeholder

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I join our CEO in expressing immense gratitude to everyone involved with the ChicagoMSDC. The dedication and resilience shown by our corporate members, MBEs, and all stakeholders have been the cornerstone of our success in 2023.

This past year has been a testament to the power of collaboration and collective effort. Our strides in advocacy, training, and development have strengthened our network and advanced our mission toward inclusive economic growth. It is through your committed involvement that we have made impactful legislative advances and forged significant business connections.

As we celebrate these achievements, let us set our sights on the future with renewed vigor and determination. The board is committed to supporting ChicagoMSDC's initiatives that ensure our members are well-prepared to meet the evolving demands of the marketplace. Together, we will continue to build on our foundation of quality connections, which are vital for the prosperity of our community and the broader economic landscape.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication. Here's to a future filled with even greater achievements and opportunities.

Rona Fourte

Rona Fourte
Vice President, Global Supplier Diversity
CBRE



Board of Directors

Rona Fourte

Chairman
CBRE

Kristen Malek

Vice Chairman
CDW

Yvette Moten

Secretary
BP America

Cherise Conley

Treasurer
ComEd/Exelon

**Debra Jennings-
Johnson**

President/CEO

Donna Bridgeforth

Bridgeforth &
Associates

**Joan-Carles
Brugue**

AT & T

Suzi Cabo

United Airlines

Wheeler Coleman **Wendell Davis**

Executive
Consultants United
LLC

National Material
L.P.

Hans de Bruijn

Rose International

Ray Dennis

Navistar, Inc.

**Karmetria
Dunham Burton**
McDonalds

Jackie Dyess
Inner-City Supply
Co., Inc.

Mark Hands
Federal Reserve
Bank of Chicago

Charles Harrell
The IT Architect
Group

Rosi Hasan
Northern Trust

**Vasanthi
Ilangovan**
Viva USA Inc.

Joyce Johnson
Anchor Staffing

Travis Latham
Fellowship Fleet
Limousine

Ruby McCleary
Allstate

**Thomas
McLeary**
Endow, Inc.

Susana Meza
Wintrust

Brian Ortiz
Trinidad
Construction

Sharla Roberts
University of
Illinois

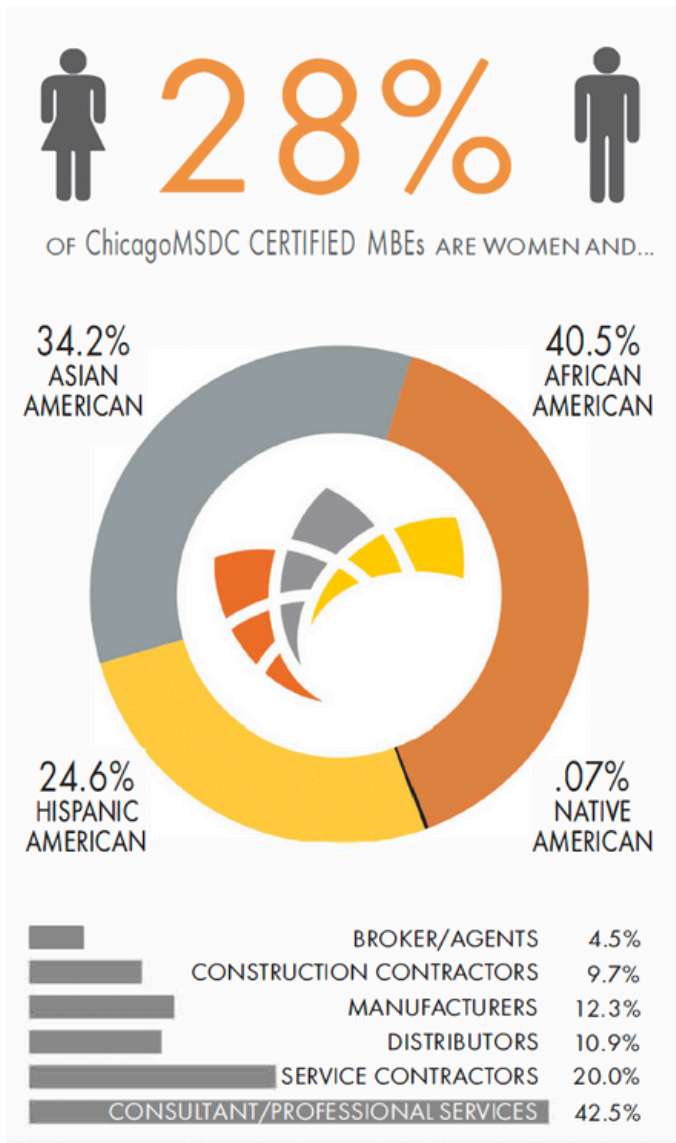
Greg Salinas
Burns &
McDonnell

Rochelle Taylor
Caesar's
Entertainment

Kristel Travis
Diageo

Economic Impact

ChicagoMSDC proudly highlights the diversity and economic impact of its certified MBEs. As a vibrant network dedicated to fostering growth and opportunity for minority-owned businesses, we play a pivotal role in empowering communities and driving economic progress.



OUR 919 CERTIFIED MBEs EMPLOY 50,775 WORKERS OF WHOM 63% ARE ALSO MINORITIES.

This information reinforces the council's mission to create inclusive economic opportunities and uplift minority communities. These businesses are not only engines of growth but also pillars of support for minority employment and advancement.

Brian Ortiz's Journey

At this year's Chicago Business Opportunity Fair (CBOF), attendees had the chance to meet Brian Ortiz, founder of Trinidad Construction. His journey from working at a large piping contractor to founding the Midwest's leading minority-owned construction firm exemplifies resilience, strategic networking, and community focus.

Founded in 2011, Trinidad Construction is now a major MBE-certified general contractor, with 50-100 employees, \$40 million in revenue, projects in 16 states, and 22 Fortune 500 clients—many of which were gained through connections made at previous CBOFs.

Ortiz mentors minority business owners through initiatives like "Changing the Face" and works with organizations like Hire 360 Chicago to get more minorities into construction trades. His vision for Trinidad Construction is one of steady growth, focusing on securing new corporate contracts annually while helping foster a more diverse construction industry.

Ortiz emphasizes the importance of research, effective communication, and persistence. His dedication and networking savvy have allowed Trinidad Construction to secure major clients, such as J.P. Morgan Chase. For Ortiz, CBOF isn't just an event—it's a gateway to meaningful opportunities and a brighter future for minority-owned businesses in construction.



PIPE Program

Reflecting on the success of ChicagoMSDC's PIPE (Progress, Insight, and Performance Education) Program in 2023, it is clear that this initiative has significantly enhanced the capabilities of minority-owned businesses in various sectors including retail, construction, transportation, and service industries like healthcare and facility management.

The first cohort of 2023, supported by the Fifth Third Chicagoland Foundation, was a virtual learning experience culminating in a unique session at a historic bank location featuring its original, functioning vault. The second cohort included not only business owners from the Illinois region but also representatives from New York, underscoring the program's broad reach and impact.

Aramark's continuous sponsorship has been pivotal. This cohort marked several firsts for the program: the introduction of aligned mentors providing corporate guidance throughout the program and specialized award recognitions for significant contributors including Nately Santos of Aramark and Dr. Rhonda Henderson for their dedicated support and facilitation.



These achievements highlight the importance of continuous business improvement and the role of corporate and community support in advancing the mission of ChicagoMSDC to empower minority businesses through insightful education and strategic performance enhancements.

Diversity Mastermind Recap

ChicagoMSDC organized two notable Diversity Mastermind events that significantly advanced our commitment to supplier diversity. Hosted by Burns & McDonnell and ComEd an Exelon Company in Chicago, these gatherings proved to be critical platforms for strategic collaboration and networking among leaders dedicated to enhancing supplier diversity.

The Diversity Mastermind events are not merely meetings; they are dynamic, strategic forums designed to foster learning and sharing among top executives. During these sessions, participants, including new corporate members like Mercer, the Cubs, and American Water, engaged deeply with the content and discussions. The events welcomed influential speakers, including Chief Procurement Officers from BMO Bank and ComEd, who shared invaluable insights into their direct involvement and progress in supplier diversity initiatives.

Cherise Conley, representing Exelon's Supplier Diversity, highlighted the significance of these quarterly gatherings, noting their role in providing

a secure space for directors and vice presidents of diverse businesses to exchange best practices and strategies. This exchange is vital for breaking down barriers and paving the way for minority business enterprises (MBEs) to thrive.



The impact of these masterminds is clear. They enhance business diversity leaders' ability to effect change within their organizations and provide MBEs with a platform to showcase their expertise, further integrating them into broader corporate strategies. As we look back at these enriching experiences, it's evident that such forums are crucial steps toward creating a more inclusive and diverse corporate world.



Missouri MBDA

In 2023, the Missouri Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) hosted several pivotal events to advance equity and inclusion for minority-owned businesses. MBDA Under Secretary Donald Cravins visited St. Louis for a leadership roundtable that discussed enhancing access to capital and leadership diversity. The MBDA also facilitated the IGNITE Entrepreneurship Network Forum and Pitch Competition, connecting Black tech entrepreneurs with Fortune 500 executives and potential investors.



Additionally, a fireside chat with the Department of Energy highlighted efforts to diversify the energy sector and provided insights on accessing capital and procurement opportunities. These events collectively emphasized the MBDA's role in fostering an inclusive business environment and supporting economic growth in underserved communities.

Legislative Advocacy

Following the NMSDC National Conference in Baltimore, nearly 70 leaders from the NMSDC network, including regional affiliate council presidents and major corporations, gathered in Washington, D.C. to advocate for minority-owned businesses. They met with 60 congressional members to address the impact of recent legal challenges on these businesses.

The Supreme Court's decision on affirmative action has led to increased attacks on minority business programs. This has created uncertainty, necessitating immediate Congressional action to establish a "compelling government interest" in supporting these programs.



Key strategies included:

- Educating Congress on Affirmative Action: Highlighting lawsuits impacting minority business programs.
- Highlighting Economic Impact: Emphasizing contributions of minority businesses, with \$482.1 billion in spending and 1.8 million jobs.
- Collecting and Sharing Data: Urging data collection from businesses to inform Congressional action.

Informational sessions featured NMSDC CEO Ying McGuire and other key figures, reinforcing the urgency of the cause.

Celebrating Milestones

The Annual Meeting and Holiday Brunch on December 1, 2023, at Willis Tower was a standout event of the year. The gathering celebrated the council's significant achievements in 2023 and explored "The Future of Business in the Age of AI."

The event brought together a diverse group of members, fostering connections and sharing insights on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Attendees engaged in meaningful discussions, reflecting on a year where ChicagoMSDC not only met but exceeded its goals.

The Holiday Brunch was a testament to the power of community and collaboration, strengthening bonds among customers, friends, and colleagues.



Small Business Source Program and Goldman Sachs Initiative

In 2023, ChicagoMSDC made significant strides in supporting minority business enterprises through two impactful initiatives: the Cook County Small Business Source Program and the Goldman Sachs 10K Small Businesses Program. Both programs were pivotal in providing MBEs with resources, training, and opportunities for growth.

Small Business Source Program: The Cook County Small Business Source Program focused on delivering comprehensive support to MBEs, offering a range of services designed to enhance business operations and competitiveness. Key features included:

- **Customized Business Consulting:** Participants received tailored advice from industry experts, addressing specific challenges and opportunities unique to their businesses.
- **Access to Capital:** The program facilitated connections with financial institutions, helping MBEs secure the funding necessary for expansion and innovation.
- **Market Expansion:** Through networking events and partnerships, MBEs were introduced to new markets and potential clients, broadening their business horizons.

The Goldman Sachs 10K Small Business Program, in collaboration with ChicagoMSDC, elevated MBEs through advanced training and development initiatives. Highlights of the program included:

- **Executive Education:** Participants engaged in intensive courses covering strategic growth, leadership, and financial management, equipping them with the skills needed to scale their businesses.

Cook County
**SMALL
BUSINESS
SOURCE**



Providing Access, Fostering Growth





*Business Development Video Series SMEs
(Henderson, Pendleton and Callery).*



Cook County Small Business Source
Bureau of Economic Development team
and ChicagoMSDC staff.

- **Mentorship and Networking:**
The program connected MBEs with seasoned professionals and industry leaders, fostering mentorship and creating opportunities for strategic partnerships.
- **Growth Opportunities:**
Through targeted workshops and seminars, MBEs were exposed to best practices and innovative strategies to drive sustainable growth.

Both programs underscored ChicagoMSDC's dedication to empowering minority businesses by providing them with the tools, knowledge, and connections needed to thrive in today's competitive marketplace. The combined impact of the Cook County Small Business Source Program and the Goldman Sachs 10K Small Businesses Program in 2023 highlighted the council's ongoing commitment to fostering a robust and inclusive business ecosystem.

The Benefits of Supplier Diversity and Certification

In 2023, ChicagoMSDC and its corporate partners continued to underscore the importance and benefits of supplier diversity and certification, reinforcing their commitment to creating inclusive and equitable business environments. Several initiatives and programs highlighted the tangible impacts of these efforts.

These programs collectively illustrate the profound benefits of supplier diversity and certification:

- **Economic Equity:** Providing opportunities for underrepresented groups to participate in the mainstream economy.
- **Innovation and Creativity:** Diverse suppliers bring unique perspectives that drive innovation in product development and services.
- **Resilient Supply Chains:** A diverse supplier base mitigates risk and ensures adaptability in the face of disruptions.
- **Community Empowerment:** Investing in diverse suppliers fosters local job creation and economic growth.

CDW's Global Business Diversity Program: For the past 15 years, CDW's global business diversity program has been a cornerstone of its DEI efforts. By prioritizing supplier diversity, CDW promotes economic equity and social justice, providing opportunities for historically marginalized communities. Diverse suppliers contribute unique perspectives and innovation, essential for staying competitive in today's business environment. This approach not only strengthens CDW's supply chain resilience but also fosters stronger customer relationships and economic growth.



ChicagoMSDC President Debra Jennings-Johnson and Rona Fourte, Vice President of Global Supplier Diversity for CBRE

CBRE's Supplier Diversity

Commitment: CBRE has made significant commitments to supplier diversity, pledging to spend at least \$1 billion with diverse suppliers in 2021, with a goal of increasing this to \$3 billion over five years. By engaging with suppliers from underrepresented groups, CBRE enhances its value proposition and supports economic empowerment in the communities where it operates. As a corporate member of various diversity councils, CBRE actively mentors and integrates diverse suppliers, facilitating mutual success and competitive advantage.

Peoples Gas and SDI Presence

Collaboration: Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas, in partnership with SDI Presence, demonstrated their dedication to diversity through participation in Chicago United's Five Forward™ program. This collaboration focused on capacity building and innovation, significantly benefiting the communities they serve. The implementation of advanced systems like the Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system showcased the effective integration of diverse supplier expertise. The partnership's success was highlighted at the 2023 NMSDC Annual Conference, emphasizing the creation of employment opportunities and community revitalization through diverse supplier engagement.

AON and Supplier Diversity: AON's approach to supplier diversity underscores the belief that diverse supplier and vendor programs drive significant positive change. By investing in these initiatives, AON and similar organizations promote economic resilience, benefiting customers and communities alike. The collaboration with ChicagoMSDC exemplifies a commitment to DEI, reinforcing the importance of marketplace fairness and partnerships between minority businesses and corporate America.

Awards and Scholarships

The Dolores Saxton Walker Scholarships were instituted by the ChicagoMSDC, in 1979. For nearly 45 years we have provided academic scholarships to high performing, well-rounded high school students who have the potential to be future business, industry and government leaders. To date more than \$650,000 in financial support has been awarded to Chicago area, college bound, minority high school students graduating with a 3.5 or higher GPA.

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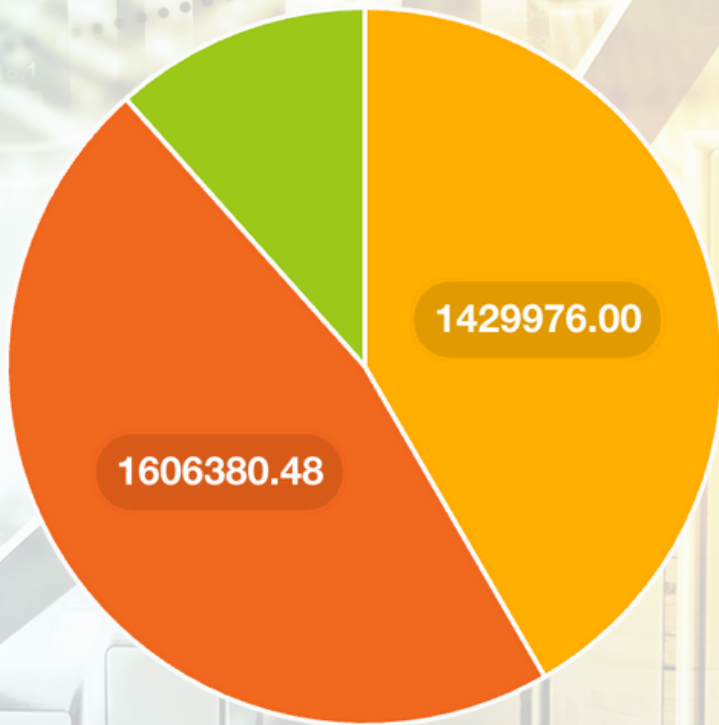
Jim Osborne Scholarship Golf Classic

The Jim Osborne Scholarship Golf Classic continues to make a significant impact, raising funds to support deserving high school graduates with scholarships.

These awards were given to students who demonstrated exceptional academic achievements and entrepreneurial potential, positioning them as future leaders in business, industry, and government.

The event brought together over 200 participants for a day of golf and networking, reinforcing its reputation as a key fundraiser for our scholarship initiatives. Through these scholarships, we continue our commitment to empowering the next generation of diverse talent.

Financials



Revenues

\$3,435,335

Expenditures

\$1,429,976

Programs & Services

\$1,606,380.48

Management & General

Net Assets

\$398,978.52



2023 Corporate Sponsors

Legacy Leaders



Emerging Leaders



Next Gen Leaders



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