

2025

THE COMPETITIVE
 **EDGE**
CONFERENCE

Resorts World - New York City
June 25, 2025

**ADAPT
ADVOCATE
ACHIEVE**



THE REGIONAL ALLIANCE
FOR SMALL CONTRACTORS

CONGRATULATIONS

The Regional Alliance applauds The Competitive
Edge Conference for 31 years of Providing
outstanding opportunities to



Certified businesses



Learn how we assist minority contractors and businesses at www.Regional-Alliance.org

Zenaida Rodriguez, Executive Director

ACTION, NOT TALK: A RECORD \$2+ BILLION IN CONTRACTS AWARDED TO MINORITY- & WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES AT LAGUARDIA AIRPORT

The Port Authority is breaking down barriers so that minority-and women-owned businesses have an opportunity to grow — with contract opportunities at some of the nation's greatest infrastructure projects, from our airports to the future Midtown Bus Terminal.

We are committed to making sure that the benefits of our projects reach all communities.

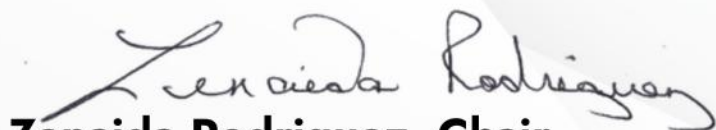
On behalf of the Competitive Edge Committee, welcome to the Annual Competitive Edge Conference. Now in its 31st year of existence and the largest conference downstate highlighting agency participation, we continue to showcase opportunities for the small business community. This year we have an exciting program at the world-renowned Resorts World New York City. The committee has planned an exciting platform of a premier gathering with major agencies and great speakers engaged in robust conversations regarding procurement opportunities throughout NYS.

Our 2025 theme is Adapt. Advocate. Achieve. This captures the spirit of today's resilient and ambitious business community. It reflects the agility of diverse firms navigating change, the power of advocacy in shaping inclusive markets, and the drive for excellence that defines the small business community and workforce development opportunities across the region.

Throughout the years the Competitive Edge Conference remains a critical space for unlocking access to capital, contracts, and connections across both public and private sectors.

We congratulate the 2025 honorees and our deepest gratitude to our agency partners, panelists, sponsors, and media allies who continue to advance the mission of empowering the small business community at this event. Enjoy the conference!

Best,



**Zenaida Rodriguez, Chair
Competitive Edge Conference Committee**



Welcome Remarks



Michael J. Garner, MBA *Chief
Business Diversity Officer
City of New York*



Jason Myles Clark *Executive Vice
President Empire State Development
Corporation*

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE COMMITTEE

Thank you to all of our
committee members

REGIONAL ALLIANCE FOR SMALL CONTRACTORS

Zenaida Rodriguez
Kamaria Aubry
Grace Cepeda
Brandon Washington

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY

Eric Alemany
William Choi
Giselle K. Guerrero

NYC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

Ricardo Rivera

NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF MWBE'S

Michael J. Garner
Migdalia Taveras

DORMITORY AUTHORITY STATE OF NEW YORK

Justin McLaughlin-Williams
Cher Parker

THE PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK & NEW JERSEY

Anthony Miller
Luis Linares

BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY

Jahmeliah E. Nathan

NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS

LA Dunn

NYS INSURANCE FUND

Elvis Perez
Damaris Torres
Amanda Mola

PSEG LONG ISLAND

Jimmy Alty

NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

David Coreas

NYC HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Cindy Estrada

CUNY

Ali Banks

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Terrence Byerson
Karen Padavatton
Christine Norman

OFFICE OF THE NYS COMPTROLLER

Nancy Hernandez
Bruce M. Girigorie

NYC DEPARTMENT OF CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Elizabeth Brown



Zenaida Rodriguez

Chair, CompetitiveEdge
Conference Committee

A New Day for Small Business

Welcome to the 31st Annual
Competitive Edge Conference—
New York's premier forum for
small business opportunity.

Our 2025 theme, Adapt. Advocate.
Achieve., reflects the agility, voice,
and drive of today's diverse firms.

This year's gathering at Resorts
World NYC brings together
agencies, advocates, and
entrepreneurs committed to
inclusive growth.

Thank you to our partners, sponsors,
and honorees for championing
progress. Let's connect, learn, and lead
forward—together.

ADAPT ADVOC

8:00a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 Resorts
World New York City

7:00 AM — 8:00 AM

Exhibitor Booth Setup Exhibits open 1:00 pm — 5:00 pm

8:00 AM — 8:35 AM

Registration & Networking Breakfast

Connect with agency partners, exhibitors, and attendees.

Includes: Opening Remarks · Invocation ·

8:45 AM — 8:55 AM

Invocation

WELCOME REMARKS

Adapt, Advocate, Achieve

- Zenaida Rodriguez, CE Conference Chair,
RASC Executive Director
- Michael J. Garner,
Chief Business Diversity Officer, City of New York
- Jason Myles Clark, Executive Vice President
Empire State Development Corporation

9:00 AM — 10:00 AM

Plenary Session 1: Adapt. Advocate. Achieve.

A conversation with top agency and industry leaders on
transformation, advocacy, and achievement in today's procurement
and business landscape. Integration into the major projects
currently underway and the opportunities available for the small
business industry. Learn how workforce initiatives, public-private
partnerships, and investment pipelines are expanding access and
capacity for the minority business community.

Moderator

- Tracey Mitchell, Senior Director, Civil Rights and Diversity,
Gateway Development

Panelists

- Lourdes Zapata, Chief Diversity Officer, MTA
- Hersh Parikh, Deputy Chief Intergovernmental Affairs, PANYNJ
- Sandra Bleckman, Director Workforce Development
- Gordon Tung, Vice President, Construction Management,
NYCSCA
- Annette Duran, Director, Design and Construction, DASNY

CATE ACHIEVE

10:15 AM – 10:20 AM

Special Project Presentation

Bidding Opportunities at Kenneth C. Goffner Pavillion
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Turner/Consigli Joint Venture

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Plenary Session 2: Regulatory Requirements for Small Business

Moderator: Patricia L. Gatling, Esq., Counsel, WindelsMarx

Panelists:

- Lorraine Grillo, Bravo
- Fuquan Collins, Vice President, Chief Diversity Officer, Turner Construction
- Jackie Waddell, Senior Director, LIRR Procurement and Logistics, MTA
- Justice Favor, Director Strategic Partnerships Local 79

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

The Competitive Edge Conference Leadership Award

- Carrie Torres, Director, Opportunity Programs, Dormitory Authority of the State of New York
- Robert J. Rodriguez, Dormitory Authority State of New York

Luncheon/Fireside Chat

Plenary Session 3: Power Moves: Small Businesses Reshaping procurement, Policy, and Possibility

An intimate conversation on building bold through equity in infrastructure.

Moderator: Zenaida Rodriguez, CE Conference Chair, RASC Executive Director

Special Guest:

- Jayson Williams, President Rebound on the Road
- Robert Rodriguez, President Dormitory Authority, State of NY
- Malik Yoba, President, Yoba Development

2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Exhibitor Booths and 1:1 Matchmaking Opportunities
Attendees rotate through three themed tables for deep-dive discussions:

- Capital Connections: Lenders, CDFIs, and investors
- Certification Guidance: Experts on MWBE, SDVOB, & DBE processes
- Prime Connect: Opportunities and insights from GCs & agencies

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE 2025 CONFERENCE

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Competitive Edge Service Awards Presentation & Reception

- **Michelle Stoddart, SVP**
Community Development/Public Affairs, RWNVC Video Presentation
- **Lipsig, Shapey, Moverman Freund & Wisell, PLLC**
Platinum Sponsor

Wrap up the day with casual networking, photo ops, and appetizers hosted by Lipsig.

CLOSING REMARKS

Kamaria Aubry, Regional Alliance for Small Contractors

CHAIRMAN

BANKS

MEMBER

COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND SMALL BUSINESS

INSURANCE

LABOR

PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS

RACING, GAMING AND WAGERING

VETERANS, HOMELAND SECURITY
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



JAMES SANDERS JR.
SENATOR, 10TH DISTRICT

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SATELLITE OFFICE:
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FAR ROCKAWAY, NY 11691
(718) 327-7017
FAX (718) 327-7970

June 25, 2025

Zenaida Rodriguez
Chairperson
Competitive Edge Conference
625 8th Avenue 2nd Floor North Wing
New York, NY 10018

Dear Friends,

It is with great pride that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Competitive Edge Committee on the occasion of your 31st Annual Conference. The theme—Adapt – Advocate – Achieve—could not be more timely or powerful.

For over three decades, your commitment to uplifting small, minority, and women-owned businesses has helped pave the way for a more just and inclusive economy. As the State Senator representing one of the most diverse and entrepreneurial districts in New York, I understand firsthand how essential your work is to the future of our communities.

I also extend warm congratulations to this year's honorees and sponsors. Your leadership and unwavering support for MWBEs have made a lasting impact, and today we recognize you for not just what you've accomplished, but for the doors you continue to open for others.

Let us all continue to adapt with the times, advocate for what is right, and achieve equity and opportunity for all.

With deep respect and appreciation,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Sanders Jr.' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Senator James Sanders jr.

JSJR/jg



OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN ADRIANO ESPAILLAT

New York's 13th Congressional District



June 25, 2025

Dear Friends:

Congratulations on the Competitive Edge Committee in recognition of your 31st Annual Conference, and thank you for your unwavering dedication and remarkable contributions to small businesses, minority businesses, and contractors.

Small businesses are the lifeline to New York communities and provide opportunities to help families thrive. The Competitive Edge Conference, comprised of city and state agencies, authorities, and corporations, works to ensure accessibility of projects throughout the tri-state area to support minority and small businesses in meaningful ways. Your unique engagement provides these businesses with a network of opportunities and support, including contracts with government agencies and authorities, that they might not otherwise have.

Congratulations as you celebrate another year of successful service to New York's minority and small businesses. Our community thrives because of your efforts to champion entrepreneurship, community values, and prosperity.

I look forward to our continued collaboration in ensuring that New York's minority and small businesses remain strong, vibrant, and connected for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS
NEW YORK STATE SENATE, 35TH DISTRICT
PRESIDENT PRO TEM ♦ MAJORITY LEADER

July 25, 2025

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the **31st Annual Competitive Edge Committee Conference, “Adapt – Advocate – Achieve”**. For over three decades, this important event has championed the growth of small businesses, especially those that are disadvantaged, minority, women, and locally owned. By providing education and fostering beneficial business connections, the Competitive Edge Committee is helping create a more inclusive and equitable future.

I join you in congratulating this year’s honorees whose dedication uplifts our communities. These outstanding individuals have demonstrated their commitment to the success of small, minority, and women-owned business. I commend them for their contributions and thank them for their tireless efforts.

I thank each of you for your attendance, your participation has made this event possible. Your involvement strengthens the work of the **Competitive Edge Committee** and helps create meaningful change in the lives of others.

Best Wishes,

Andrea Stewart-Cousins
New York State Senator, 35th District
President Pro Tem, Majority Leader



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
ADRIENNE E. ADAMS
SPEAKER

June 25, 2025

Dear Friends:

As the Speaker of the New York City Council and a longtime champion of minority- and women-owned businesses, I am happy to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 31st Annual Competitive Edge Conference!

For more than three decades, this unique event – a collaborative effort between several city and state agencies, authorities, and corporations – has provided minority and women business owners across our city and state with access to the tools, resources, and networking opportunities they need to take their businesses to the next level.

This commitment to expanding equitable economic opportunities for MWBEs and entrepreneurs of color is one that the City Council and I proudly support and share, and I would like to thank the entire Competitive Edge Committee and all of today's attendees for contributing to the continued success of this event.

Congratulations as well to this year's honorees.

May the conference continue to serve as a shining example of all that we can achieve when we work together to promote equity and create a brighter future for all.

Sincerely,

ADRIENNE E. ADAMS
Speaker



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RODNEYSE BICHOTTE HERMELYN
Assemblymember 42nd District
Kings County

MAJORITY WHIP

CHAIR, Subcommittee on
Oversight of Minority & Women-Owned
Business Enterprises (MWBE)

COMMITTEES
Education
Governmental Operations
Health
Higher Education
Housing
Ways and Means



June 13, 2025

Dear Friends,

It is my sincere pleasure to congratulate the **Competitive Edge Committee** on the occasion of its **31st Annual Competitive Edge Conference and Service Awards Gala**.

Since its inception in 1993, the Competitive Edge Conference has served as an invaluable platform for empowering Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs). For over three decades, this premier event has been rich in resources, guidance, and opportunity—offering MWBEs a chance to connect directly with government agencies, learn from industry experts, and engage with a supportive community of entrepreneurs. It has continued to grow, as a powerful catalyst for business development, capacity building, and economic equity.

The theme of this year's Conference, "ADAPT.ADVOCATE.ACHIEVE.," reflects a timely and necessary focus. While equity in MWBE contracting with the city and state remains foundational, true economic empowerment is realized through ownership—of assets, opportunities, and outcomes. This year's program continues to help bridge long-standing disparities and move us closer toward sustained equality in every sense of the word.

New York State's MWBE program was created to address these disparities and support the growth of diverse firms across industries. As Chair of the New York State Assembly's Subcommittee on Oversight of MWBEs, I remain committed to legislative and policy solutions that keep leveling the playing field, while working closely with valued partners, agencies, organizations, and entrepreneurs to ensure MWBEs have the access and tools needed to thrive. The Competitive Edge Conference plays a critical role in advancing this shared mission, and I commend the Committee for their continued leadership and vision.

I wholeheartedly congratulate this year's honorees: who have made significant strides and inspiring, groundbreaking achievements through their leadership in the MWBE community, while bolstering success and paving the path for more.

Sincerely,

Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn

ALBANY OFFICE: Room 727, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York 12248 • 518-455-5385, FAX: 518-455-3881
DISTRICT OFFICE: 1312 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11210 • 718-940-0428, FAX: 718-940-0154
EMAIL: bichotter@nyassembly.gov



JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS

The Public Advocate For the City of New York

To the Competitive Edge Committee,

On behalf of the City of New York, I would like to offer you my congratulations and well-wishes as you celebrate your 31st annual Competitive Edge Conference. For over three decades, the committee has been committed to its mission of uplifting businesses, empowering owners, and creating visibility to projects available throughout New York, and the entire tri-state area, for minority and small business industries. Additionally, you provide leaders and business owners with a platform to network and gain support through training programs, and I offer you my gratitude for your tireless efforts.

I want to acknowledge you in particular for the unique blend of outreach, support, and other topics that you engage in order to enhance and enrich the lives of business leaders within the community, ensuring strength in diversity and inclusivity. As a dynamic committee encouraging Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MBWEs), locally based enterprises, and Service Disabled Veteran Owned-Businesses, among others, you advocate for businesses, business leaders and entrepreneurs, and provide access to services, information, and resources, including the conference as a key platform, for them to succeed.

As Public Advocate, I know the importance of community and connection, motivating others, inclusivity, and spreading a positive message throughout New York City. I support your work to empower and inspire, and appreciate your dedication. Congratulations on your 31st annual Competitive Edge Conference, and I wish you success for many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J.D. Williams", is written over a horizontal line.

Jumaane D. Williams
Public Advocate



NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

June 25, 2025

Dear Friends:

Please accept my best wishes as you gather to celebrate the 31st Annual Competitive Edge Committee Conference and honor exceptional business leaders and entrepreneurs.

The Competitive Edge Committee continues encouraging and guiding compelling conversations to help attendees forge important connections. This annual conference builds on the committee's history of helping minority- and women-owned small businesses connect with city and state agencies, business owners in similar industries and potential partners, while also providing opportunities to business owners so they can grow and thrive.

I want to extend my congratulations to this year's honorees, whose leadership and business acumen make them more than worthy of these accolades.

By working collaboratively and supporting business owners from a wide variety of backgrounds, Competitive Edge Committee is an invaluable community partner in helping ensure a rising economic tide truly does lift all boats.

Best wishes for a successful conference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carl E. Heastie".

CARL E. HEASTIE
Speaker

You built your business. We'll help you grow it.

Unlocking the growth and
job creation potential of
small businesses across
the United States.

Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* provides business education, support services and access to capital. Participants **gain practical skills** to take their business to the next level with topics like financial statements, negotiations, and marketing. Participants develop an **actionable growth plan** for their business with the help of business advisors and like-minded entrepreneurs.

The program is **free for participants** and delivered in partnership with academic institutions across the country. To date, Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* has served over 15,000 businesses in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico.



Leo Fabio

10,000 Small Businesses Graduate

LLF Construction Services, Inc. – White Plains, New York

Interested?

Scan the QR code to tell us more about yourself. Learn more about
eligibility and how to apply at 10KSBApPLY.com

X: [@GS10KSmallBiz](https://twitter.com/GS10KSmallBiz)

#10KSmallBiz

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How It Works

Business Management Education

We partner with local colleges to provide small businesses owners with a practical business education:

- 12-week program focused on business growth
- Best-in-class curriculum
- Network of fellow business leaders, business advisors, and trained faculty
- No cost to all participants
- Available to small businesses across the United States

Results and Impact

Program results show that *10,000 Small Businesses* graduates consistently grow their revenues and create jobs at rates that outperform the broader economy.

67%	44%	85%	96%
increase revenues	create jobs	collaborate with each other	completion rate

Beyond the Classroom

A Network of Support

Through the education program, you will have opportunities to learn from other small business owners, receive expert advice from business professionals, get one-on-one business advising, and join a national network of 15,000 entrepreneurs following graduation.

Access to Capital

Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* partners with Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and other mission-driven lenders to expand access to capital for small businesses. Through these partnerships, loans are available to qualifying small businesses that lack access to affordable capital or may not qualify for traditional sources of credit.

Is Your Business Ready?

We look for applicants who are passionate about growing their business and creating jobs in their communities, and generally meet these criteria:

- Owner or co-owner of a business
- Business in operation for at least two years
- Business revenues of at least \$75,000 in the most recent fiscal year
- Minimum of 2 employees (including the owner)

Interested?

Scan the QR code to tell us more about yourself. Learn more about eligibility and how to apply at 10KSBapply.com

X: [@GS10KSmallBiz](https://twitter.com/GS10KSmallBiz) [#10KSmallBiz](https://twitter.com/10KSmallBiz)

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WBC

WOMEN BUILDERS COUNCIL

OPENING DOORS WIDER

Open the Door to New Opportunities

The Women Builders Council (WBC) is the leading professional association representing women and underrepresented groups in the construction industry in NY and beyond. We advocate for inclusion, growth, and empowerment across all areas of the built environment.

We welcome all industry professionals to join our network.

OUR COMMITTEES

- **Public Policy:** Champions DEI and equal opportunity by reviewing policies affecting MWBEs, women and minorities in the workforce & advocating on their behalf.
- **Insurance & Surety:** Tackles rising insurance costs, surety best practices, and develops educational resources to offer strategic guidance on risk management challenges.
- **Sustainability:** Emphasizes sustainability in the built environment, promotes greener projects and highlights the industry's role in achieving environmental and social progress through meetings, briefings, and programs.
- **Membership:** Develops strategies to build strong connections within the community, expand professional networks, and cultivate new business opportunities.
- **Ambassador's Council:** Comprised of emerging leaders, it coordinates a Mentorship Program and Career Development Program, to empower young women to excel in the industry.

WHY JOIN?

- **Influence:** Shape industry policies and standards by contributing to our committees.
- **Visibility:** Gain recognition in a network of construction leaders.
- **Resources:** Access educational programs and partnerships to advance your career.
- **Professional Development:** Hone skills through specialized workshops and seminars.
- **Networking & Events:** Meet industry professionals at exclusive gatherings.
- **Leadership & Recognition:** Celebrate women's accomplishments through high-profile awards.
- **Collaborative Community:** Share knowledge with peers, mentors, and industry allies.

TOGETHER, WE'RE BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE FOR WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION.



INFO@WBCNYC.ORG



WWW.WBCNYC.ORG



212-317-2400

Join Now!





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GENTING AMERICAS



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guestfeedback@rwnewyork.com



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LEARN MORE



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STRENGTH TO BUILD A BETTER TOMORROW

Forte Construction Corp. is a leading general contractor specializing in public works throughout the New York metropolitan area. Serving government agencies such as NYCT, MTA, LIRR, SCA, NYCHA, and DASNY, Forte is recognized for its commitment to quality, safety, and innovation, establishing a strong reputation as a trusted industry leader.





A partnership to **connect** your business with **contracts & capital**

JOIN AN OPPORTUNITY ECOSYSTEM

Ascend New York City, led by BOC Network, is a collaboration between major institutions and organizations, which supports local wealth creation and economic growth for local small businesses.

ABOUT ASCEND NEW YORK CITY



Management



Markets



Money

We help businesses build relationships with institutions leading to **Procurement Opportunities**.

Ascend NYC helps local businesses secure more contracts and access **Capital** to deliver on those contracts.

Building on each business' management capacity together with networking and collective learning, our customized coaching approach provides feedback, accountability, challenge, and support to drive **Long-term Business Results**.

Completing Ascend NYC will better position your business to procure contracts with major institutions. If you have any questions, contact John Frias at jfrias@bocnet.org or (718) 624-9115. Visit our website: ascendnewyorkcity.org

ANCHOR PARTNERS

- LEADERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
- CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS
- EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
- HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS
- GOVERNMENT
- OTHER MAJOR CORPORATIONS

COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS

- BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTER NETWORK
- COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY FACILITY AND OPERATIONS
- BOC CAPITAL CORP.

COMPLETE OUR INTEREST FORM



bocnetwork
Business Outreach Center Network



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Facilities and Operations

Powered by:

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.



boccapital
What's your next step?

Turner

TEAMWORK | INTEGRITY | COMMITMENT



TURNER IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE 31ST COMPETITIVE EDGE CONFERENCE

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The New York Power Authority (NYPA) is the largest state-owned power organization in the U.S. and is a catalyst for community progress. The NYS Canal Corporation, administered by NYPA, is the nation's largest state-run inland waterway system.



**NY Power
Authority**

**Canal
Corporation**



We are paving the way to a brighter future by assisting business owners, championing community-based environmental justice initiatives, and investing in workforce development.

These efforts promote equitable economic opportunities, enhance environmental stewardship, and support a resilient, skilled workforce that drives New York State's long-term growth and prosperity.



To learn more:

- nypa.gov/supplierdiversity
- supplier.diversity@nypa.gov



Supplier Diversity programs include:

- Mentor-Protégé
- Surety Bonding
- Small + Local Business Capacity Building
- PowerUp2030!



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Department of Diversity and Civil Rights

Grow Your Business with the MTA

- MTA Capital Plan - Up to \$7.5 billion in contracting opportunities for M/W/DBEs and SDVOBs
- Over \$400 million in contracts dedicated to the Small Business Mentoring Program.
- Discretionary spend opportunities up to \$1.5 Million for NYS certified M/W/DBEs, SDVOBs and qualified Small Business Concerns



Small Business
Development Programs



Discretionary Opportunities



Doing Business
With Us

MTA congratulates all of the Awardees, and looks forward to continuing to deliver on its commitment to providing opportunities for small businesses.

New York, NY

Teams build dreams

AECOM Tishman is one of the world's leading builders, spanning **over 125 years** and responsible for managing construction of more than **900 million square feet**.

AECOM Tishman is part of AECOM, the global infrastructure leader, committed to delivering a better world. Our teams partner with public-and private-sector clients to create innovative, sustainable and resilient solutions throughout the project lifecycle – from advisory, planning, design and engineering to program and construction management.

AECOM TISHMAN

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2025 COMPETITIVE EDGE
CONFERENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS!



On Behalf of Parking, Taxi Dispatch, and Fleet Shuttle Services
Serving the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey at
John F. Kennedy Airport | Newark Liberty International Airport | LaGuardia Airport

SESSION 1 | 9 AM

PLENARY SESSION: ADAPT. ADVOCATE. ACHIEVE.

TRACEY MITCHELL

Senior Director, Civil Rights and Diversity
GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT



MODERATOR

A conversation with top agency and industry leaders on transformation, advocacy, and achievement in today's procurement and business landscape. Integration into the major projects currently underway and the opportunities available for the small business industry.

Learn how workforce initiatives, public-private partnerships, and investment pipelines are expanding access and capacity for the minority business community.

LOURDES ZAPATA

CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY



HERSH PAREKH

DEPUTY CHIEF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL &
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS - PANYNJ



SANDRA BLECKMAN

DIRECTOR
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
NYPA



GORDON TUNG

VICE PRESIDENT,
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT
NYCSCA



ANNETTE DURAN

DIRECTOR
DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION - DASNY



SESSION 2 | 10:30 AM

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SMALL BUSINESS INDUSTRY

Patricia Gatling, Esq.
Counsel
WINDELSMARX



MODERATOR

A discussion on the impact
of PLAs collective
bargaining agreements,
and other regulations on
small business.



LORRAINE GRILLO
CEO
BRADFORD CONSTRUCTION CORP
OF NEW YORK



JUSTICE FAVOR
DIRECTOR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
LABORERS INTL UNION LOCAL 79
NEW YORK CITY



FUQUAN COLLINS
VICE PRESIDENT
CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER
TURNER CONSTRUCTION



JACKIE WADDELL
SENIOR DIRECTOR,
LIRR PROCUREMENT AND LOGISTICS
MTA



SUZANNE VEIRA
RETIREE OF
CITY SERVICES



PAISLEY DEMBY
Director Outreach, Recruitment & Partnerships
Goldman Sachs - 10,000 Small Businesses

SESSION 3 | 1:00 PM

FIRESIDE CHAT - POWER MOVES: HOW SMALL BUSINESSES ARE RESHAPING PROCUREMENT, POLICY, AND POSSIBILITY

ZENaida RODRIGUEZ
CE CONFERENCE CHAIR,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RASC



MODERATOR

SPECIAL GUESTS



JAYSON WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT
REBOUND ON THE ROAD



ROBERT J. RODRIGUEZ
DORMITORY AUTHORITY
STATE OF NEW YORK



MALIK YOBA
PRESIDENT
YOBA DEVELOPMENT



CAPRESE SALAD

Beef Steak Tomatoes, Fresh Mozzarella Cheese, Basil,
Olive Oil & Balsamic Glaze

CAVATAPPI PASTA SALAD

Cubed Provolone, Tomatoes, Red Onions, Peppers,
Olives, Soppressata, Italian Dressing

RESORTS WORLD HOUSE SALAD

Romaine Hearts, Radicchio, Endive, Tomatoes,
Cucumbers, Red Onions, Balsamic Vinaigrette

Assortment of Breads and Rolls

ENTREES

Pork Chops with Peppers and Onions,
Chicken Marsala, Eggplant Rollatini
Penne & Marinara Sauce

DESSERTS

Rice Pudding, Carrot Cake, New York Style Cheesecake
Italian Cannolis

VIP RECEPTION & AWARDS CEREMONY

Passed Hors D'oeuvres
Crab Cakes with Lemon Caper Aioli
Spanakopita
Stewed Chicken Lollipops
Steak and Cheese Spring Rolls

House Red, and White Wines by Canyon Road
Domestic and Craft Beers

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PRESENTATIONS & AWARDS



MICHELLE STODDART
SVP COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/PUBLIC
AFFAIRS, RWNYC VIDEO PRESENTATION
VENUE HOST



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AWARDS



THE COMPETITIVE EDGE CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Awardee: Robert J. Rodriguez, Dormitory Authority, State of New York

Presenter: Carrie Torres, Director, Opportunity Programs, Dormitory Authority of the State of New York



MBE FIRM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Awardee: Vishal Dipchand, RDM Electric Corp.

Presenter: Ricardo Rivera, School Construction Authority



DBE FIRM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Awardee: Tony Dagnachew, Dagnachew and Associates, Inc.

Presenter: Karen Padavatton, Metropolitan Transportation Authority



SDVOB FIRM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Awardee: Jonathan Ebanks, Transit Resources, LLC

Presenter: Eric Alemany, New York Power Authority



RISING STAR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Awardee: Gladys Vonglahn, Gladys Cleaning Service, LLC

Presenter: Anthony Miller, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey



CLARENCE "GENE" SWANSTON LEADERSHIP AWARD

Awardee: Joan Capobianco, President - AMG Demolition, Inc.

Presenter: Zenaida Rodriguez, CE Conference Chair



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