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Small Business is Good Business!

Advocating, Informing and Promoting Small & Minority Owned Businesses

Ohio Legislative Black Caucus says state can do more to connect minority contractors to transportation construction jobs

State report reveals minority-owned businesses receive disproportionately low percentage of state highway contracts

COLUMBUS— State Rep. and President of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC) Alicia Reece (D-Cincinnati) recently called on the state to take action to reduce barriers between state highway contract opportunities and minority-owned businesses in Ohio. A "disparity study" released on April 15 by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) revealed that minority and women-owned businesses receive a disproportionately small percentage of the state highway contract opportunities available.



State Rep. & OLBC President Alicia Reece

"Today's news confirms what we already knew: that minority-owned businesses still face too many barriers – historic and systemic – to economic opportunities in this state," said Reece. "It took over 30 years for the state to finally meet its Minority Business Enterprise benchmarks, and we cannot wait another 30 years to close the gap in connecting minority-owned businesses with highway construction contracts and jobs opportunities. The state can do more to create a fair and equitable environment for minority-owned businesses."

Reece said the OLBC wants to see more the state do more state through increased diversity within the ODOT organization, greater access to capital and bonding for minority companies, a statewide urban apprenticeship and on-the-job training program, Minority Business Enterprise inclusion for ODOT projects, and an internship initiative with Ohio's historically black colleges – Wilberforce University and Central State University.

Reece also said the OLBC is calling for a legislative halt to proposed local hiring bans, Senate Bill 152 and a House-passed companion version, which would prohibit communities from setting local workforce participation standards on infrastructure construction projects – a tool that has been used in urban cores with high-minority population density like Cleveland, Akron, Toledo and Cincinnati.

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WE GOT BIDS!

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OhioMBE welcomes letters to the editor from readers. Typed letters of 200 words or less are preferred; all might be edited. Each letter must include name, home address and daytime phone number. Some letter may appear on our website.

The 912 Group is an Ohio certified Minority Owned and EDGE business. The 912 Group is a certified FBE with the City of Columbus.

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# government briefs

## Winners named at statewide MLK oratorical contest

Ohio students inspired by the lessons and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. presented original speeches on his teachings during the 17th Annual Statewide MLK Oratorical Contest held recently in Columbus.

Thirty-one regional contest winners from grades kindergarten through 12 spoke before judges and others at the King Arts Complex.

Speakers were judged on performance, originality and composition.

“Like Dr. King, these young people modeled bravery, determination and tenacity in the manner they took command of the stage,” said the Rev. Joel L. King, Jr., interim chair of the Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission and a first cousin to Dr. King.

The following speakers placed in the top of their respective divisions:

Senior Division (grades nine through 12) First place – Ivy Holley, 15, ninth-grade, Lima Senior High School, Lima.

Junior Division (grades six through eight) First place – Playon Patrick, 13, eighth-grade, Columbus Gifted Academy, Columbus.

Intermediate Division (grades three through five) First place – Mackenzie Lewis, 9, fourth-grade, Berwick Alternative K-8 School, Columbus.

Primary Division (grades kindergarten through two) First place – Elena Earley, 7, second-grade, Clinton Elementary School, Columbus.

First-place finishers are invited to speak at the 2017 Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration on Jan. 12 in downtown Columbus.

The celebration and oratorical contest are sponsored by the Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.



Columbus students placing at the top of their respective age groups in the Statewide MLK Oratorical Contest held April 8 at the King Arts Center in Columbus are (from left) Playon Patrick, 13, eighth-grade, Columbus Gifted Academy; Adonia Balqis, 7, second-grade, Clinton Elementary School; Elena Earley, 7, second-grade, Clinton Elementary School; Maddie Hainen, 11, fifth-grade, Indian Springs Elementary School; Cameron Dewberry, 12, seventh-grade, Patriot Preparatory Academy; and Mackenzie Lewis, 9, fourth-grade, Berwick Alternative K-8 School.

# government briefs

## Lt. Governor Mary Taylor to speak Tuesday at Ohio Business Expo

Free networking event at Ohio History Center targeting small, minority- and women-owned businesses

COLUMBUS – Lt. Governor Mary Taylor will “kick off” the Ohio Business Expo being held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday, April 19 at the Ohio History Center, 800 E. 17th Ave., Columbus, 43211.

This free networking event supports the continued efforts of the State of Ohio to expand access to state contracts for small, women-owned and minority-owned businesses.

“Connecting the right people with the right resources is critical to successfully growing a business,” said Lt. Governor Taylor. “Small businesses are the backbone of Ohio’s economy and we encourage the collaboration of all the attendees.”

**What:** Ohio Business Expo, a networking event for minority-owned, women-owned and small businesses. State officials are hosting informational and “matchmaking” sessions to help promote the state’s Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity (EDGE) programs. Businesses will have the opportunity to learn how to do business with the state.

**Who:** Prospective and current MBE- and EDGE-certified businesses (approximately 300 people); Procurement representatives from state agencies, boards and commissions and representatives from construction firms; State officials representing business assistance programs.

## Danielle Thompson is new CRAA Manager of Business Diversity

Danielle Thompson has joined CRAA as the Manager of Business Diversity. Danielle is an experienced diversity and inclusion administrator with nearly 10 years of program management, compliance and community engagement experience.



Danielle Thompson

She holds a Bachelors of Arts (BA) degree from The Ohio State University in Sociology with a minor in Human Development & Family Science and a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) from Ohio Christian University. She is also trained in process improvement, cost effectiveness, and lean practices and Certified as a Lean / Six Sigma Black Belt.

Danielle and her husband Lamar, will celebrate their thirteenth wedding anniversary this year. They live in Columbus with their three children Lanielle, Lael, and Levi. Danielle is a proud OSU Alumni, and loves smooth jazz, tea, and all confectionary delights.

## Barry D. Peel to join LA SBA Office



Barry D. Peel

Barry D. Peel has accepted the Lead Economic Development position with the Los Angeles SBA office. His first day in LA will be Monday, May 16th. Barry can be reached via email at [Barry.peel@sba.gov](mailto:Barry.peel@sba.gov). Please send him a note wishing him well. Good Luck Barry!

Jon Husted  
Ohio Secretary of State

RECORD BUSINESS  
FILINGS IN MARCH

10,478 BUSINESSES FILED  
IN MARCH 2016  
COMPARED TO THIS POINT IN 2015,  
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2,978  
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THIS POINT IN 2015



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# business updates

## Jenell Ross named Woman of the Year

Bob Ross Auto Group President honored for Business Leadership, Community Advocacy



Jenell Ross

Bob Ross Auto Group President Jenell Ross was recently presented with the Cox Automotive 11th annual Barbara Cox Automotive Woman of the Year Award. The honor is awarded to women who demonstrate business leadership and community advocacy, as well as a commitment to advancing the automotive industry.

Ross, a second-generation dealer, has stores operating Buick, GMC, Mercedes-Benz, Alfa Romeo and Fiat franchises.

The Bob Ross Auto Group has the distinction of being the only Buick-GMC, Mercedes-Benz, Alfa Romeo and Fiat dealerships owned by an African-American woman.

Cox Automotive President Sandy Schwartz presented the award during the Northwood University Dealer Education Award annual breakfast on April 2 at the National Automobile Dealers Association Convention and Expo.

"Jenell positively influences the automotive industry and leads an award-winning dealer group while advocating for important community causes," said Schwartz in a statement.

Ross is a member of NADA; the National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers; the General Motors Minority Dealers Association; and the Chrysler Minority Dealers Association.

## Al Edmondson receives Jefferson Award



Al Edmondson

Al Edmondson, was recently recognized at the Jefferson Awards for founding Making A Difference, Inc., a nonprofit designed to address the issues of the Near East Side community. A Gulf War veteran, Edmondson and his team have created health fairs, farmers markets, basketball camps, back-to-school rallies, and free health screenings. He also provides haircuts and checkups for neighborhood youth in his barber shop

The Jefferson Award winners honor those for their community-service efforts.

The Jefferson Awards were founded nationally in 1972, and in central Ohio in 1996.

A panel of community leaders chose 20 finalists and the five winners. Each of the five receives \$500 and a medallion. The national Jefferson Award committee will choose one of the local honorees to attend a June ceremony in Washington, D.C

## XYZ PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, LTD is an Angie's List Good Metal Service Recipient.

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XYZ Survey Service, LTD dba XYZ Professional Services is a 100% minority-, and woman-owned business enterprise founded in Grove City, Ohio in 1991. Melva C. Williams-Argaw is the owner.

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# bid opportunities

To post a bid notice, call 614-522-9122 or email [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com)

**kokosing INDUSTRIAL**  "Attention State Approved MBE/WBE/SBE Companies"

Kokosing Industrial, Inc. is preparing bids for the Erie Interceptor Express Sewer project in Springfield, Ohio which bids April 29, 2016. We are seeking quotes for any portion of the project listed that you are qualified to perform or provide supplies for which includes the following: Electrical, Masonry, Painting, Paving, Plumbing and HVAC, Rebar, Roofing, Seeding and Landscaping, and Trucking. Bidding documents can be examined at Kokosing Industrial, Inc., 6235 Westerville Rd., Westerville, OH 43081 or online at <https://kokosing.sharefile.com/i/i86c9e7e418b47988>. Please have your quote to John Rigo by 12:00 PM April 28, 2016: e-mail [snichols@kokosing.biz](mailto:snichols@kokosing.biz) or Fax 614-212-5711.


"Kokosing Industrial is an equal opportunity employer."

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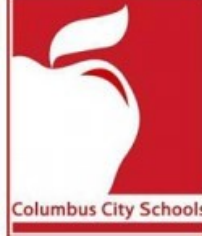
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**NOTICE TO VENDORS**  
Columbus City Schools seeks a vendor to provide a diesel particulate filter cleaning machine. Additional information can be found on the District's website at <https://columbus.munisselfservice.com/Vendors>



**NOTICE TO VENDORS**  
Columbus City Schools seeks a vendor to provide vacuums, floor scrubbers, and floor buffers. Additional information can be found on the District's website at <https://columbus.munisselfservice.com/Vendors>.



**NOTICE TO VENDORS**  
Columbus City Schools is seeking a vendor to assist the District in providing controlled access to and within the Columbus City Schools by using a Visitor Management System. Interested vendors will find a copy of the RFP at <http://www.ccsok.us/Vendors.aspx>

**Need to meet your EDGE/MBE or Good Faith Contracting Efforts?**

When you need EDGE participants, The 912 Group and OhioMBE can help.

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614-522-9122

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# #bidnotices

# bid opportunities

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**COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
COMMUNITY. COMMITMENT. COLLABORATION.

Legal Notice: IFB 2016-004 Poin-dexter Intergenerational Center Flooring Replacement

The Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority "CMHA" is

seeking bids (IFB) for the replacement of flooring at the Poin-dexter Intergenerational Center located at 240 N. Champion Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43203. The bid opening is Friday, April 22, 2016 at 11:00AM. A bid meeting is scheduled for 2:00PM on Thursday, April 14, 2016 at our corporate office. Specifications may be obtained by visiting our website, [www.cmhanet.com](http://www.cmhanet.com) or by contacting the Purchasing Department of the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority at 880 E. 11th Ave, Columbus, Ohio 43211 or by calling 421-4434, 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, Monday - Friday.



## **LEGAL NOTICE: DOCK CEILING REPLACEMENT**

Sealed proposals will be received by the **BOARD OF EDUCATION**, City School District of Columbus, Ohio, Office of Capital Improvements, 889 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Ave, Columbus OH 43211 until Tuesday, April 26, 2016, at

2:00 PM and will be opened and read publicly immediately thereafter for the Columbus City Schools Food Service Production Center Ceiling Replacement Project #16009, according to the plans and specifications, dated April 05, 2016, prepared by Food Plant Engineering, LLC. The total estimated cost for materials and labor for Base Bid Package #100 - Dock Ceiling Replacement Contract is \$50,000.00. Plans and Specifications may be secured at the bidder's expense plus shipping costs from ARC Document Solutions, 1159 Dublin Rd, Columbus, OH 43215, (T) 614-224-5149 or [www.e-arc.com/oh/columbus](http://www.e-arc.com/oh/columbus). Public inspection may be made at the McGraw Hill Construction Dodge / Builders Exchange of Central Ohio Plan Room, 1175 Dublin Road, Columbus, Ohio 43215; the Minority Contractors Association, 1393 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43203; and Columbus City School Capital Improvements Office, 889 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Ave, Columbus OH 43211. A pre-bid conference will be held Friday, April 18, at 2:00 PM at the following location: Columbus City Schools Food Service processing Center, 450 E. Fulton Street, Columbus OH 43215. Inquiries concerning these plans and specifications shall be directed to Jim Larva, PH 513-619-

1321, [jimlarva@hendonredmond.com](mailto:jimlarva@hendonredmond.com). Any written addendum will be sent to all plan holders. Each bid must be accompanied by a bid guaranty and contract bond meeting the requirements of Section 153.571 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Board of Education reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. Prevailing Wage Rates do not apply to this Invitation to Bid. By Order of the Board of Education, Gary L. Baker II, President; Stanley J. Bahorek, Treasurer.

PPI

Performance Pipelining is requesting quotes for the City of Oregon, OH Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project. Opportunities include: Excavation, Traffic Control, Trucking, Sewer Lining, Landscaping, Televising & Cleaning of Sewer lines and Manhole

Lining. For details contact: Lonnie Avery with Performance Pipelining at [lonnie6272@gmail.com](mailto:lonnie6272@gmail.com) or 815.433.0080. Completed quotes are due no later than April 18<sup>th</sup>.



TAM Construction, Inc., welcomes MBE/WBE/DEB subcontractor and supplier bids for the following project: Waterford/and Punderson State Park Water System Improvements with a bid date of April 20, 2016. All plans may be reviewed at 6648 Hudnell Road, Athens Ohio 45701 or phone 740-592-5700.



## NOTICE TO VENDORS

Columbus City Schools is seeking a vendor to provide athletic equipment for inter-scholastic sports.

More information can be found at <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/rfp>

## #bidnotices



*"We need to accept that we won't always make the right decisions, that we'll screw up royally sometimes -- understanding that failure*

*is not the opposite of success, it's part of success." - Arianna Huffington*

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## Property Manager Honey Locust/Maplewood

The primary purpose of this position is to oversee all aspects of property management for one or more housing site(s), in accordance with the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority's ("AMHA" or "Authority") asset management model and all applicable regulations, policies and procedures. The incumbent directs and manages all day-to-day operational activities, including vacancy reduction, leasing, lease enforcement, resident problem resolution, property appearance, maintenance, purchasing, and budget responsibility. This position is responsible for the supervision of assigned staff.

"This is a Section 3 covered position and we encourage HUD recipients to apply."

Internal applicants respond by completing an internal form (AMHA-364) to the Human Resources Department by 4:30 p.m., April 19, 2016. External applicants submit resume or job application to AMHA, Human Resources Department, 100 W. Cedar St., Akron, OH 44307; e-mail in WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, or Microsoft Works format to [personnel@akronhousing.org](mailto:personnel@akronhousing.org); or apply in person Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. AMHA job line (330) 252-9262

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## Tenant Accounting/Quality Assurance Supervisor

The primary purpose of this position is to oversee and coordinate the tenant accounting operations of the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority ("AMHA" or "Agency"). The incumbent is responsible for reviewing and auditing tenant accounting work for accuracy, thoroughness, timeliness and adherence to applicable policies, procedures and regulations. This position supervises subordinate staff and provides training and assistance to all account clerks, management aides, managers and recertification clerks relative to tenant accounting work. All activities must support AMHA's mission, strategic goals and objectives.

"This is a Section 3 Covered Position and we encourage HUD recipients to apply"

To Apply Internal applicants respond by completing an internal form (AMHA-364) to the Human Resources Department by 4:30 p.m., April 18, 2016. External applicants submit resume or job application to AMHA, Human Resources Department, 100 W. Cedar St., Akron, OH 44307; e-mail in WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, or Microsoft Works format to [personnel@akronhousing.org](mailto:personnel@akronhousing.org); or apply in person Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. AMHA job line (330) 252-9262.



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# Ohio Certification Center

## Ohio Certification Center:

### Why you should get your business certified?

There are several reasons why you should get your business certified:

1. Some entities have purchasing goals. Only certified businesses can participate.
2. Certification adds legitimacy to your business. You have gone through a process that has determined that your business is owned and controlled by a minority, woman or disadvantaged business.
3. Certification can afford you loan and bonding opportunities. The State of Ohio has loan and bonding programs specifically for certified minority owned businesses.
4. Certification can be a marketing tool for your business. You can add your certifications to your marketing materials, business cards, website, etc. Many consumers like doing business with veteran, minority or woman owned businesses.
5. Certification can be used in the private sector. Many companies don't have a certifying program but in an effort to have supplier diversity, will accept the certifications from some governmental agencies.




Attend a class and learn how to get your business certified. Visit [www.OhioMBE.eventbee.com](http://www.OhioMBE.eventbee.com) for the upcoming class schedule. For more information on certification, call 614.522.9122 or attend a certification class.

Construction from page 1

"We cannot have taxation without participation," Reece added. "The bottom line is: we can be doing more."

The ODOT state report showed that overall, minority- and women-owned businesses received only 14.2 percent of the relevant contracting dollars that ODOT awarded during the study period. Furthermore, African American-owned businesses fared especially poorly, receiving approximately only 31 cents for every dollar that they might be expected to receive based on their availability for the ODOT contracts awarded during the study period.

Increasing state contract opportunities for minority-owned businesses has long been at the top of the OLBC Action Agenda, and the organization has previously helped lobby to secure \$800,000 in Ohio Department of Transportation workforce development grants, including \$300,000 for the Greater Cincinnati Urban League's highly successful Construction Connections program.

  
**"If you are successful, it is because somewhere, sometime, someone gave you a life or an idea that started you in the right direction. Remember also that you are indebted to life until you help some less fortunate person, just as you were helped."** - Melinda Gates

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# Ohio Diversity Network

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[www.OhioDiversityNetwork.com](http://www.OhioDiversityNetwork.com)

Email: [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com) for  
login information

**Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at 5:30pm**  
Columbus WBC – The Stand Out Brand Workshop – Unlock Your Brand Distinction

**Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 1:00pm**  
OhioMBE Procurement Fair @ CMHA

**Thursday, April 28, 2016 at 6:00pm**  
Columbus WBC – Business Operations – The Key to RUNNING a Successful Business



**Ohio**  
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# business tips

## Are you Keeping Ecommerce Info Safe?

*How to Assure Your Customers That Their Info is Safe*

Ecommerce has become commonplace as businesses and online tools have made it easier and easier to exchange goods and services with customers around the globe.

While some consumers may have advanced knowledge of online security practices and feel confident shopping on various ecommerce sites, other consumers may not feel as comfortable. It's up to you as a business owner not only to convince potential customers to [shop with you](#), but also to protect their information online. Follow best practices to protect your customers' sensitive online data.

### Invest in an SSL Certificate

If you're collecting usernames, passwords, email addresses, and payment information for online transactions, calm customer anxieties by investing in a secure socket layer certificate, or an [SSL certificate](#). Conscious shoppers look for the "https://" URL prefix and green address bar that indicates the presence of an SSL certificate as an added layer of protection from malicious interception.

An SSL certificate doesn't guarantee to a customer that your business will keep their info safe. But it does ensure that their information will be safe in transit between their computer and the business taking their order.

Investing in this extra service will cost between \$50 and \$150 a year; a small price to pay to provide customers added peace of mind.

### Be Transparent

You won't find too many customers who are keen to spend time reading the small print of a company's terms of service and privacy policy. But it's still important to spell out your policies and procedures on a terms or policies page on your website.

Your **privacy policy** doesn't have to be complicated, but it should explain what information is collected from users and customers and how your company uses that information. For instance, your email opt-in and opt-out policies should be stated here. If you're using a third-party payment service for ecommerce, you may want to refer customers to that service's terms of service and privacy policies as well.

Once you've posted your privacy policy, make sure all staff members adhere to it. A policy is useless if it's not in use!

### Welcome Customer Contact

No matter what you state on your website or sales page, some

## Business Etiquette: Presenting Yourself

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression." That old line is most important in any new business meeting. People will notice how you walk, dress, the language of your body, your speech, and certainly your attitude. You might be able to change their opinion of you at a second meeting, but it's not easy. Of course, if you mess up that meeting too, you have made an almost unchangeable impression to them now.



Dress appropriately:

When in doubt what to wear, just follow the lead of your boss and your other such superiors. Of course, the rules of the office should be followed regarding dress, even in exterior situations. People notice your hands, especially if you speak with them. Make sure they are well-manicured, yes, even the men. Clear nail polish is always a trick to make your fingernails appear to be well-manicured. Your business attire itself is an investment, so it's always better to have a few fine quality clothes than numerous garments that actually look cheap. And, by all means, make sure to polish your shoes!

Introductions:

When you are being introduced to someone, always rise and shake hands, being sure to smile and give your name if necessary, politely correcting him if he mispronounces it. Unlike social interactions which go by gender and age, business intro-

*See Etiquette on page 12*

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potential customers may just need reassurance they can trust your business. Make it easy for customers to get in touch with you by live online chat, email or phone.

And if you receive questions about how you do business online, welcome them! Answer promptly, and volunteer to seek more information if you don't have the specifics a customer wants.

Your willingness to interact one-on-one with customers, along with your online security measures, will work together to create a shopping environment that's comfortable and trustworthy.

Source: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

# Looking for New Customers?

## OhioMBE Procurement Fairs

Meet one-on-one with purchasing agents on April 21 at CMHA & Columbus WBC on May 18

The OhioMBE Procurement Fairs introduces small, minority and female-owned businesses to area purchasing agents. During this fast-paced session, small businesses are allocated 15 minute appointments to meet one-on-one with represented companies/agencies.

The goal of the OhioMBE Procurement Fair is to engage minority businesses and small businesses with contracting opportunities.



**Register TODAY!**

[www.ohiombe.eventbee.com](http://www.ohiombe.eventbee.com)

[www.OhioMBEProcurementFairs.com](http://www.OhioMBEProcurementFairs.com)

*Etiquette from page 11*

ductions go by power or rank. The higher ranking person is the first to offer a business card, and is referred to as Mr. or Mrs. unless he uses your first name and specifically states that you may call him by his. If you forget his name--and who of us hasn't forgotten a name?--don't be embarrassed about it; just admit it.

Shaking hands: It used to be that a man would shake a woman's hand only if she extended it first. Now, either may extend for a handshake. A complete and firm handshake at that. Of course, sweaty palms are certainly never very nice. At least try to be inconspicuous when you dry off your palms. If the other person fails to extend his hand, don't worry about it. That would be his own fault.

Avoid these:

Negative body language, such as tightly crossing your arms, tapping your fingers or foot, swinging your leg. Slumping or sitting all the way back in the chair instead of on just the front two-thirds, which gives you better posture. Chewing gum. Hiding your hands in your pockets.

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