



## Professional Women in Construction Opportunity Fair makes connections count

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"You are the backbone of the economy, the engines that make the State run" said State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson, guest of honor at the morning Opportunity Fair held September 14 by Professional Women in Construction at the General Society of Mechanics & Tradesmen in New York City. The senator was addressing the highly receptive crowd of W/M/SBEs (woman, minority-owned and small business enterprises) and noted that the role of government must be to "remove, not create, barriers" and to "help those who need to be helped."

Senator Hassell-Thompson applauded PWC president Lenore Janis for having worked to "even the playing field" since the founding of PWC in 1980, and recalled the days when she and Janis met with then Governor Mario Cuomo to appeal for Article 15A mandating participation by women and minorities in State contracts.

Workshop leader Carl Peters, business analyst with the Port Authority of N.Y. & N.J., outlined the steps required for certification as a W/M/S/DBE, and spoke of the agency's certification program success in generating almost \$2B in economic regional activities over the past five years

Larry Turk, CEO of SOMAQ International, urged qualified workshop participants to get certified, then noted, "Your success as a profitable business will be measured by three performance standards: 1) Quality, 2) Innovation, 3) Preparation - develop a solid business model, including a means of identifying problems before they occur."

Judith Juback, president of Keynote Connections, said, "I've been a PWC member for many years, and have generated over \$50,000 in revenue as a result. PWC networking works big time."

Exhibitors heaped praise: Christina Grinnell, director of business development of Noble Strategy, called the organization "one of the best in town" for business to business interchange." Lloyd Mair, manager, NYC School Construction Authority, congratulated PWC for drawing a "tremendous interactive crowd" and producing an upbeat event to encourage W/MBEs and small businesses.

Dana Crawford, account executive with Nu Flow America came because she is "the new kid of the block," and eager to educate people on the product. M/W/DBE liaisons, Aidee Reyes, for Schiavone Construction Co., LLC, and Naomi Glean, esq., for John P. Picone Inc. were glad to connect. Said Reyes, "We have met many W/MBE subcontractors interested in bidding on future work."

Kathleen Coval, CPA, audit supervisor with Anchin Block & Anchin reported meeting "a lot of new people interested in learning how we can assist them."

Ira Elmore, Deputy Agency Chief Contracting Officer with NYC Environmental Protection appreciated the opportunity to "reach out to the vendor community."

Ben Erle, engineer estimator with Kiewit Infrastructure found the trip from Boston worthwhile. "We are meeting subs and suppliers - it's better to network face to face than online." Attendee Alexis McSween, president of Bottom Line Construction & Development LLC, was similarly pleased to find

potential subcontractors.

Hayley Kucich, RKL Building Specialties, applauded the "great networking." Roya Shavolian, principal with Shelter Rock Builders thanked PWC for "Leading me right to the source, to the people I needed to meet."

Leah Steinmetz, IIDA, LEED, project manager with Diane Paparo Associates, said, "PWC assists small businesses growth by bringing together the key parties - the contractors and suppliers who can be team partners, and the public agencies who buy their products and services."

The event co-chairs were Flora Ramos of Tishman Construction Corp. and Andis Woodlief of CxA Services, a W/DBE.

Sponsors included: Anchin, Block & Anchin LLP; Dragados USA, Inc./ Schiavone Construction Co. LLC /John P. Picone Inc.; Kiewit Infrastructure; SEW: (JV) Skanska / ECCO / White; Tishman Construction Corporation; SOMAQ International; DASNY; NYCDEP; NYCHA; NYCSCA; PANYNJ; and the U.S. SBA.

For more information about PWC contact [pwcp@pwcpusa.org](mailto:pwcp@pwcpusa.org) or visit [www.pwcpusa.org/ny](http://www.pwcpusa.org/ny).

Shown (from left) are: Flora Ramos, Tishman Construction Corp.; Andis Woodlief, CxA Services; Lenore Janis, PWC; NYS Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson; Carl Peters, PANYNJ; Lina Gottesman, Altus Metal & Marble; Larry Turk, SOMAQ International.

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