Dear Jennifer,

The mission of the Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council is to significantly increase business relationships between our corporate members and our certified MBEs. We believe that minority business development is a key component of reducing poverty, unemployment, increasing wealth, and integrating American society. You are receiving this email in order to keep you abreast of developments with the Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council, Supplier Diversity Issues and Minority Business Development. If you like what you read please share internally and externally.

**It's Time to Summit Your Nominations!**

It is time for corporate members to provide their nominations for Suppliers of the Year, and for MBEs to provide their nominations for Corporation of the Year (Local and National), Buyer of the Year, and Advocate of the Year. Corporation members can make one nomination for each of the four categories of MBEs. Council staff can provide you information about the eligibility of the MBE and their category. MBEs will submit their nominations to the MBE Input Committee.

These awards are very important for both corporations and MBES. MBEs on the MBE Input Committee select the corporate awardees, and any NMSDC certified MBE is eligible to submit a nominee. There are not too many better ways for an MBE to say thank you to a corporate client for a job well done, than by nominating them for one or more of these prestigious awards.

Corporate members will submit their nominations to Andie Ryoo, the Director for Corporate Services, Akim@gnemsdc.org. These nominations will then be reviewed by the corporate members of the Nominations Committee. After careful deliberations, the Nominations Committee will select the Suppliers of the Year. Corporate members should also note that these awards are very important to MBEs who use these nominations and awards to demonstrate their value to other corporations.

Please take the time to think about those deserving corporations, MBEs, buyers, and supplier diversity advocates. At this point all we need is the names of your nominees. Thank you.

**Business Beyond Gaming Conference**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Business Beyond Gaming is a groundbreaking one day conference aimed at fostering sustainable economic growth in Indian Country and increasing opportunities for Minority-owned businesses everywhere. Attendees will gain in-depth exposure to business experts, innovated ideas, new tools, techniques and resources for establishing successful enterprises.
We look forward to seeing you on March 5, 2015 at Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center. For more information contact Jade Melvin: jmelvin@bridgeportmbdacenter.com

**Special Advanced Leadership Program for Construction MBEs/DBEs**

The GNEMSDC in conjunction with Connecticut DOT and the Community Capital/GNEMSDC BondSure Program will offer a special 6-week training session for MBEs/DBEs in the construction and engineering areas. This six week program will begin on Friday, February 20 and run through March 27. Each Friday, we will have experts who will focus on:

1. Estimating  
2. Bidding  
3. Construction Contract Law  
4. Construction Accounting and Finance  
5. Construction Marketing  
6. Operational Management

Each class will also feature guest presenters from the industry who will share their knowledge and opportunities. Each session will start at 8:00 AM with breakfast, each session will have a luncheon speaker, and each session will end at 4:00 PM.

Because of the support from Connecticut DOT, the program is free to certified DBEs. Scholarships are available for other MBEs who are not currently certified by Connecticut DOT.

Upon the completion of the Special Advance Leadership Program for Construction MBEs/DBEs program and if your company is located in Southern Connecticut you will be eligible to apply for up to $100,000 in guarantee/collateral for a performance bond under our BondSure program. For more details and requirements regarding BondSure please go to BondSure.org or email alopez@gnemsdc.org.

We "GUARANTEE" that this class will make your business more profitable and prevent you from making BIG avoidable mistakes. And we say this for any company doing business with state DOTs or other large prime contractors. You really cannot afford not to attend.

If you are interested in attending this program, contact Diane Thomas at dthomas@gnemsdc.org. Space is limited. Here is what one DBE said about the GALP program that took place this fall:

"I am pleased to report that the GALP program was outstanding. I was particularly impressed by the level of expertise of all the professors. The subject matter was appropriate and will be instrumental in growing our company and improving operating efficiencies. I was also impressed by the luncheon presenters and the advice provided.

I highly recommend this course to any entrepreneur that is interested in developing his or her management skills and improve their ability to run a more efficient company." - Ray Boa, A & J Construction, 2nd Place Winner in the GNEMSDC 2014 Shark Tank Competition.
January 21 Boston MBDA CEO Roundtable Event

On Wednesday, January 21 the Boston MBDA Business Center will hold its first Roundtable Event of 2015. This event will be held from 10am - 12pm in the Palladium Room at the Towers in the Copley Place Mall (2 Copley Place, 4th Floor, Boston). For more information or to RSVP, please contact Joanne Wang at jwang@bostonmbdacenter.com

Speakers:
Jonathan DePina, the City of Boston's Assistant Director, Capital Construction in the Property & Construction Management Department will be speaking about opportunities with the city of Boston.

Jennie Peterson, Manager of Development at Wynn Resorts, will discuss the procurement opportunities at Wynn’s newest location in Everett.

Michael Randazzo, Vice President of Corporate Purchasing for Penn National Gaming, Inc. will discuss procurement opportunities at Plainridge Park Casino in Plainville, MA
Upcoming Events

There are several events coming up on our calendar that are designed specifically for MBEs to learn about corporate opportunities. We know how busy everyone's schedule is, but these are events often hosted by our corporate members with the expressed purpose of finding out more about you and your business with the ultimate aim, to make you a valuable supplier to their companies. Here are some events you should consider:

- **January 20, 2015** - Pullman & Comley - Legal Seminar at 9:30
- **January 21, 2015** - Boston MBDA Business Center CEO Roundtable, 10am - 12pm at The Palladium, 2 Copley Place, 4th Floor, Boston.
- **January 23, 2015** - MBE Orientation at 9:00 am, GNEMSDC Bridgeport Office, 333 State Street, Bridgeport CT. Click here to RSVP.
- **January 28, 2015** - GNEMSDC 1st Quarterly Meeting hosted by Boston Scientific. RSVP
- **March 5, 2015** - Business Beyond Gaming, at Foxwoods
- **March 25, 2015** - Capital Summit at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
- **April 10, 2015** - Eds, Meds, and Pharma Supplier Diversity Conference at Boston Convention and Exhibition Center
- **April 11, 2015** - GNEMSDC 40th Anniversary Awards Gala, Boston Convention and Exhibition Center
- **July 13, 2015** - GNEMSDC Supplier Diversity Golf Classic, Lake of Isles at Foxwoods
- **September 24-25, 2015** - GNEMSDC Trade Expo at Foxwoods
- **November 18, 2015** - GNEMSDC - MBDA - CWE Supplier Diversity Best Practices Forum at Fenway Park, Boston, MA

GNEMSDC 40th Anniversary Annual Sponsorship

We are excited to announce that in 2015, the GNEMSDC will be celebrating 40 years of Minority Business Development and Supplier Diversity. We hope that all of our certified MBEs and Corporate members will consider being an Annual Sponsor this very special year. Attached is the Sponsorship Package for 2015. Your support is greatly needed and appreciated.

[Annual Sponsorship Package 2015](#)
Comfort Essentials has offered a wide selection of hospitality products in the business industry since being established in 2009. Their high quality fabrics and good savings provided have been the foundation behind satisfied customers such as Linen Table Cloth and Cotton Love, LLC. Health clubs, restaurants and conference centers have benefitted from Comfort Essentials services. With various fabric materials and signature products, like luxury wraps and soothing amenities, this leading organization has built a base of trustworthy supplies and loyal clients.

One of the many distinct qualities about Comfort Essentials is the ability to customize products that are tailored to make your guests feel more welcome. By creating unique products, businesses can stay at the top of a prospective client’s mind. Providing clientele with therapeutic take-aways are sure to make a long lasting impression.

From office towels and fragrances to elegant banquet linen, using Comfort Essentials will make your business stand out from the others.

For more information about Comfort Essentials services, please email sales@gocomfortessentials.com or call (800) 935-3006.
Can your business survive a disaster?

According to the Red Cross 40% of businesses do not reopen after a disaster. A Disaster Recovery Plan can increase your chances of survival. Please go to www.PrepareCT.com for more information or email Andres Lopez alopez@gnemsdc.org for one on one consultation. Get ready today to develop a Disaster Recovery Plan.

Invitations for Bid and Opportunities

- Greater Hartford Transit District - Contracting Opportunities
- CT Department of Transportation Examination Announcement: Transportation Rail Officer 1 & Transportation Rail Officer 2
- Triad Construction Services is currently seeking HVAC & Refrigeration Installer & Service Technician

- Keolis Commuter Services - following new job opportunities are available:
  - Signal Maintenance and Construction Apprentice; Training Coordinator

- Suffolk Construction is currently accepting applications for a Compliance Officer
- Mass Dept of Revenue has several job openings: MassDOR.
- Harvard University is committed to increasing their efforts in hiring a more diverse population at Harvard Medical School. Please visit their career website for employment opportunities.
- The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's vision revolves around the core notion of excellence in serving the public. They have highly skilled and proud employees and provide meaningful and challenging development opportunities to a diverse workforce. Please visit their career page for additional information and a listing of open positions.http://www.bostonfed.org/about/employment/index.htm

Bridgeport MBDA Project Director - Job Posting

The Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council (GNEMSDC) is the program operator of the Bridgeport Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) Business Center. The Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency. The purpose of the Center is to assist minority business enterprises with growing their sales and profits, and increasing their access to capital. The Center supports its clients by offering business critical advice and expert consulting services. The Bridgeport MBDA Business Center is one of 44 Business Centers across America. The Bridgeport MBDA Business Center has a particular focus on growing Native American business enterprises.

The Project Director is the professional responsible for the accomplishment of performance goals and metrics. The goals include contracts, client financings, exports, the establishment of maintenance of strategic relationships and job creation and retention. The position is full-time. The Project Director reports to the CEO of the GNEMSDC and works closely with other MBDA Centers across the country and the National Office of the MBDA at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

The Project Director needs to possess strong senior-level managerial and business development skills along with great oral and written communication skills. The position also requires that the person have experience in corporate and government supply chain management and minority business development. The position is available immediately.

If interested, send your resume to Diane Thomas at dthomas@gnemsdc.org.
And Finally...

It is interesting how history and reality today intertwine in ways that force us to assess our connectedness. Yesterday, we celebrated the Rev. Martin Luther King holiday and this past week, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences selected nominees for their prestigious awards and not one diverse actor or actress was selected for any of the major awards. This is particularly troubling given that this year a major film, Selma, was released and eligible. To the Academy’s credit, Selma was nominated for the Best Picture category. However, Selma did not garner any of the major individual award nominations. The question on many peoples’ minds and what has been widely reported is: How could this happen?

The answer to this question goes right to the demographic composition of the members of the Academy who vote for the nominees and ultimately the winners. We know that the lack of diversity among decision makers is not a guarantee that there will be a lack of diversity whether we are talking about movie nominations, or contracts with large purchasing organizations. But we know that the lack of diversity among decision makers does not help. In the case of the Academy, it is reported that despite having an African American woman as its president, over 90 percent of voters are White and 76 percent are men and the median age is about 63 years of age. Nothing against old white men, but this is an institution that is crying out for change.

Change is not easy, and it is often not welcome and often vigorously resisted by those in power. For those in power, change is often viewed as a rejection of what they stand for, and an accusation or at least an assumption of an inability on the part of this regime to be color/ethnic/gender neutral. But it is never necessary to cast aspersions on the motivation or the morality of decision makers. It often simply boils down to a matter of experience which informs cultural points of view. In this case, the Academy made a serious political blunder, and perhaps an artistic error as well. Appearances and perceptions are very important. Now they have the unenviable task of trying to justify, or at least ameliorate the growing perception that something is desperately wrong in Hollywood.

It is an interesting problem that any organization, including this one has when there are awards and the results come out in ways that question the decisions of the decision makers. My personal view is that when this happens, the executive should step in and force or cajole a decision that is more politically acceptable. Because five years after the event, people will forget the winners, but they will never forget the lack of diversity among the nominees. We like to think we should live in a world where merit is the basis of success. However, we also live in a political world where decisions may not always be fair, but need to be made. Supplier diversity is no different from what is going on in Hollywood. Sometimes, corporate leaders need to have a perspective that goes beyond perceptions of short-term profit calculations. In the big picture, diversity matters and sometimes matters even more than profits.

In your service,
Dr. Fred