



Cleodis D. Vann, Vann & Vann Funeral Directors.  
Photo by Richard J. Brown

## Cleodis D. Vann Vann & Vann Funeral Directors

Vann & Vann Funeral Home is probably Oregon's longest operating Black-owned business. Vann & Vann Funeral Directors has been in operation continuously since 1954.

Cleodis D. Vann is founder/owner of the funeral establishment. He, his wife Roberta B. Vann, and son Cleodis D. Vann, Jr. operate the family-owned business.

The elder Vann is a graduate of St. Louis College of Mortuary Science and presently is a member of the State Board of Funeral Directors. He was the first African-American to serve of the Portland Chamber of Commerce; serving for six years. Vann served two terms on the Portland Urban League Board and is a trustee at the Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church.

Vann was asked why his business has been successful for such a long period of time. He replied by saying "I always give my clients first class service at the right price, and I keep abreast of the changes that occur in the funeral business."

## Minority Enterprise Development Week Proclaimed

President Ronald Reagan has proclaimed October 5-11 as Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week, 1986. The week is proclaimed annually to honor the nation's more than 600,000 minority business men and women and the contributions they have made to the country and its economy. This is the fourth year the week has been proclaimed.

In proclaiming the week, the President wrote, "To remain the leader in bringing new products and services to the marketplace, and to successfully compete with products made abroad, we must do everything in our power to continue providing the widest possible economic opportunity for all Americans. We must also continue expanding opportunities to ensure strong growth for minority businesses. These businesses are adding jobs to

industries that only a few years ago barely existed. The many contributions made by these companies will help generate the managerial and technological developments and the skilled and experienced work force necessary to strengthen and build the American economy in an era of vigorous international competition."

During MED Week, the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) of the U. S. Department of Commerce will sponsor events in Washington, D.C., October 5-9. These events will help participants locate new business opportunities, learn the latest techniques in business management and expand their network of business associates.

Events scheduled include a kick-off luncheon, a breakfast to honor corporations who have supported minority businesses, and a marketplace where minority firms will be able to talk with procurement representatives from the Federal Government and major corporations.

Persons wishing to attend any of the events during MED Week should contact the local offices of SBA or MBDA.

## Richard Neblett is Named NACME President

The board of directors of the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering has announced the return of NACME's presidency of Richard F. Neblett, formerly manager-contributions coordination for Exxon Corporation. As an executive on loan from Exxon, Dr. Neblett served as NACME's first president, on an interim basis, after the organization was incorporated in 1980.

Neblett brings tremendous breadth of experience to his position with NACME including a background in science, a comprehensive knowledge of corporate and foundation giving, a history of activism in educational and non-profit organizations, and a long track record with the minority engineering effort.



Richard Neblett is congratulated on becoming NACME President by LaDonna Harris, president of Americans for Indian Opportunity, at the NACME's sixth annual convention.

During his thirteen years managing Exxon's corporate contributions, Dr. Neblett was involved in the donation of some \$60 million annually and advised Exxon's directors in their external activities with non-profits. A graduate of the University of Cincinnati with BS, MS, and PhD degrees

in chemistry, Neblett began his career with what is now Exxon Research and Engineering Company where he held such assignments as director of agricultural products research and director, government research laboratory.

He is a trustee of Union College in New Jersey, a director of the Council on Foundations, a member of the American Chemical Society and, until coming to NACME, a member of the Contributions Council of the Conference Board, the Commerce and Industry Council of the National Urban League, and the United Way of America Corporate Associates. In his hometown, he has been a member of the United Fund and served on the board of education for 11 years, three of them as president.

Dr. Neblett is gratified with his return. "I feel pleased to come back to NACME; I feel challenged by the opportunity; and to tell you the truth," he laughs, "I'm glad they want me a second time."

NACME is a non-profit organization that works to increase the number of underrepresented minorities—Blacks, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans and American Indians—who earn bachelor's degrees in engineering. In addition to being the nation's largest privately supported source of scholarships available to minority engineering students, NACME assists precollege and university programs with both funding and experience-based technical assistance.

As president, Neblett succeeds Robert A. Fennell who has been on medical leave since January.

## Black-owned Businesses Need Our Patronage

By Robert L. Gordon (Milwaukee Times)

Many Black Americans can remember the time when being a business-person seemed to put one at the lower rungs of the social ladder in our Black world. The professionals—doctors, lawyers and teachers—were felt by most Blacks to constitute the cream of our society.

The most talented in Black America have traditionally made medicine, law and education their first career choice. Now that there are some limited openings available to Blacks at entry and middle levels of management in White Corporate America, we are seeing an increasing number of our young people obtaining degrees in business administration. However, far too few of our most talented young people are thinking about one day starting their own business...and leading our people on the road to economic independence.



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412 Transportation Building, Salem, Oregon 97310

That's right! Because of a law passed by legislature last year, ODOT is the "one stop" certification agency for all government contracting. Thus, in addition to highway construction firms, ODOT now certifies consultants, suppliers, travel agents, and any other type of business which contracts with government agencies.

In order to be certified, a business must complete an application form which asks questions relating to the ownership and management of the firm. A business must be at least 51% owned and controlled by minorities (for MBE certification) or women (for WBE certification). Once certified, firms are listed in a directory which is updated monthly. Both public agencies and private corporations use this directory in their contracting and purchasing programs.

If your business is not already certified and you think it may qualify, please send the form or call 378-8077.