

Benge Named Minority Small Business Person of Year

Scott Benge, President of Benge Construction Company, has been named as the Minority Small Business Person of the Year by the Small Business Administration, Portland District Office. Each year the SBA honors an outstanding minority business person, whose selection is based on successful business development and community involvement.

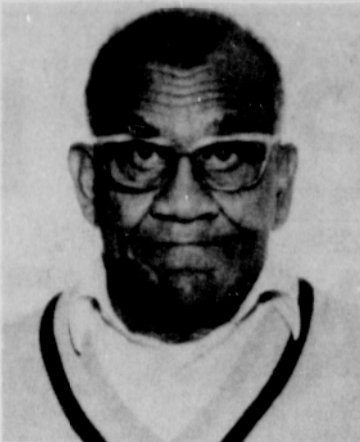
Benge Construction Company is a four year old firm involved in heavy construction with specialties in asphalt paving, underground utilities and site grading. Since establishing this firm in 1985, Mr. Benge has been successful in substantially increasing sales for each year in business, and in the past year showed an increase of over 200% over the prior year, achieving almost \$5 million in revenues.

Mr. Benge attributes the rapid growth of the company to the existence of the Government's minority business programs which gave the firm the opportunity to prove itself. Once given this opportunity, the company delivered by providing top quality work and timely performance. Mr. Benge estimates that when he started the firm about 90% of the jobs came as a result of his minority business status. Now he indicates that

it's down to about 40%, and that much of his business now comes as a result of the reputation of the firm and its ability to compete in the marketplace.

Mr. Benge has also been cited for his substantial community involvement, which includes serving as Co-Chair of the Oregon Department of Transportation's Emerging Small Business Committee, member of the Metropolitan Service District's Minority Business Committee, past President of the local chapter of the Associated General Contractors and past Chair of the AGC Minority Business Committee. Other activities include working on the construction of Oregon's Vietnam War Memorial, and serving as a presenter at Portland State University's Minority Student Week.

Mr. Benge and other minority business persons will be recognized at the Annual Minority Enterprise Development Week Luncheon, held to commemorate National Minority Enterprise Development Week. This year the luncheon will be held at the Red Lion, Jantzen Beach on October 10. Tickets for the luncheon, which will feature former New Mexico Governor Toney Anaya, can be obtained by contacting Impact, Inc. (503) 245-9253.



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Nero and Associates Discusses Changes in Black Community

Nero and Associates, Inc. (NAI) congratulates the Portland Observer on twenty years of publication, serving both the Portland Black community and the entire City of Roses.

"What's in it for us?" How does the Portland Observer help the Black community? How does it help the city?

Black-oriented newspapers give their readership the opportunity to see daily events from the point of view of other Blacks, in contrast to the more sterilized views of our local television stations and regional newspaper.

Minority-oriented newspapers provide a forum for the minority community to express its views without hesitation. We can view and discuss the progress and vitality of our community, as well as address the solutions to problems of crime, drugs, prostitution, and broken families, without the political expediency of others diminishing our voices.

We can no longer afford to ask, "What's in it for me?" We must ask, "What's in it for us? How do minorities benefit? How does the entire Portland community benefit?" If we do not do this, we stand the risk of being seen as self-centered, self-righteous, and unresponsive to others--precisely the qualities seen by many in today's mainstream

society and government.

NAI encourages the Portland Observer and all Portlanders, whatever race or ethnic group, to join in an effort to improve ourselves and our relations with others. Without the ability and willingness to cooperate, no actions we take as individuals or small groups can have a lasting impact to cause positive change.

We must improve our educational system to provide equal opportunity, financially as well as academically. We must change our aid and social welfare programs to encourage families to come together and stay together. We must improve our legal system to promote the concepts of fairness and consistency in enforcement, and compassion in providing alternatives to those and only those who can and are willing to be helped through education, training and counseling.

"What's in it for us?" Hopefully, a society in which we can all live, without daily fear of crime, violence, drugs, family disintegration, and hatred. One which responds to our humanity, rather than our inhumanity. One which helps rather than hinders, tears down walls instead of building them, shows caring rather than apathy.

That's a lot of "in it" for all of us.

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"At the banquet table of nature there are no reserved seats.

You get what you can take, and you keep what you can hold. If you can't take anything, you won't get anything; and if you can't hold anything, you won't keep anything.

And you can't take anything without organization."

A. Philip Randolph

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

It is the policy of the Clark County Public Transportation Benefit Area Authority (dba C-TRAN) to encourage Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation on all C-TRAN projects. Therefore, C-TRAN maintains a DBE Program based upon Department of Transportation (DOT) Rule 49, CFR, Part 23, and directives of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) Office of Civil Rights.

The overall goal of C-TRAN'S DBE Program is to ensure that DBEs are given the maximum opportunity to participate in all projects. Specifically, C-TRAN is securing a minimum of 15% Disadvantaged Business Enterprise participation in all procurement opportunities.

The Procurement and Grants Manager, acting as the DBE Program Coordinator, is responsible for monitoring the DBE program, insuring Program compliance with federal and state guidelines, and soliciting DBE participation in all procurements. All Departmental Directors assume responsibility for DBE Program compliance within their department. DBEs are welcome and encouraged to apply for C-TRAN certification in order to facilitate participation in any present and future contracting opportunities.

Ms. Sandy French, Procurement and Grants Manager

C-TRAN

P.O. Box 2529

Vancouver, Washington 98668

(206) 696-4494



Support Minority Businesses-- They Care, Share, Contribute

Nero and Associates, Inc. salutes Portland's minority and women businesses on the 20th anniversary of Portland's Black voice, the Portland Observer.

Minority and women businesses employ more minorities than non-minority businesses. They are willing and able to work with other minority community members to improve the conditions of minorities, individually and as families. Many provide services in the old-fashioned neighborhood style and are located in the communities they serve, offering a caring alternative to the sterile mainstream marketplace.

Nero and Associates has been minority-owned and headquartered in Portland since its founding 20 years ago. We understand and support the minority and women owned businesses of Portland.

Support minority businesses. Support small businesses and the neighborhood staff they employ.

They care about your neighborhood and the Portland minority community as a whole; they share in our dreams and hopes for a better tomorrow; and they contribute jobs and personal service to all of us.

David M. Nero, Jr.
C.E.O./Chairman



Serving Portland for 20 Years

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