

African American Contractors in Solidarity

Advocacy group has been reactivated

A group of 30 local African American contractors have identified a critical need for advocacy and solidarity by reestablishing an active chapter of the National Association of Minority Contractors.

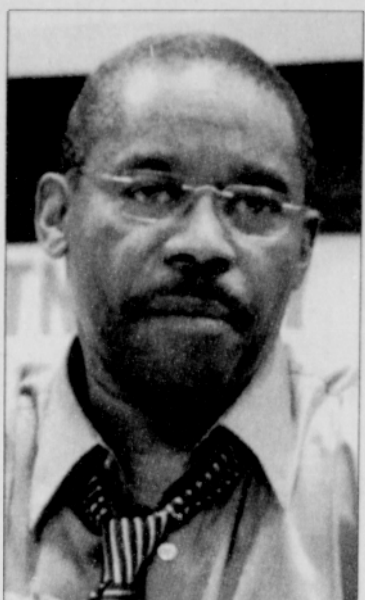
One of the major benefits of the group is to realign local African American contractors with national major corporations and partners to create more consistent long term work opportunities and relationships.

The reestablished chapter has the distinction of being the only chapter in the Northwest and would have broad influence in establishing new programs and initiatives.

Over the last several years it has become increasingly clear that in the absence of an organized effort, African American contractors will continue to face a precipitous decline.

The record shows that fewer certified African American construction firms are now operating effectively in Oregon since the late 70's while the industry has grown to be a major economic engine for Oregon. This is significant because of the long held notion that the African American construction industry is a definitive barometer of the economic health of the local African American community.

The African American construction industry has long been



James Posey

an advocate for economic equality and the leadership and those participating members seek opportunities for themselves and other minority contractors.

Currently the chapter is having dialogues with Legacy Health System and Kaiser Permanente realizing some commitments made to erase long standing biases in their subcontracting programs and established historical precedents for newer programs creating economic opportunities for African Americans and other minorities.

The group is also participating in the African American Alliance organized presentations to the Portland Development Commission about the lack of access and opportunity for the African American community to PDC projects, employment and housing. Members are also discussing the impact of prevailing wage on minority contractors, and

advocating for more subcontractor participation and workforce diversity on publicly funded projects.

The favorable relationship now enjoyed with Tri-Met and the associated benefits derived for the African American community and other minorities on the Interstate Light Rail project came as a direct result of the assertive actions and advocacy of African American subcon-

tractors.

During the Interstate Max project, the African American subcontractors retained a \$50,000 fund to provide funding for community projects and encouraged the Prime Contractor to also find ways to give back to the community.

The National Association of Minority Contractors - Oregon (NAMCO) was a key instrumental entity in initiating the 1996

regional disparity study used to formulate equality programs at the City of Portland and several governmental agencies.

In addition, for several years, NAMCO served as the primary supportive resource agency for African American contractors seeking technical assistance, networking, and industry related training in an environment they trusted. Several local contractors have also maintained their

relationships with the national NAMC office organization during the local chapter's dormancy.

For more information, contact chapter organizers James Posey at 503 936-0277 or via email at posej@comcast.net; Stacey Drake Edwards at staceydrakeedwards@yahoo.com; Faye Burch at fimburchpr@aol.com; or on the web at the National Chapter Website namline.org.

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Annual Wellness Village & Health Disparities Conference

Poor health affects everyone so join us for two great events because a healthy community starts with you!

Friday Oct. 20th, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

2nd Annual Health Disparities Conference: We Can Make a Difference

Ambridge Event Center (formerly Portland Convention Center)
300 NE Multnomah Street

For community members, health care providers, and policy makers to generate solutions to health disparities in Oregon.

Keynote address by Dr. Joy Leary: "Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome"

- 10:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Registration (\$150 for lunch and the workshop)
- 11:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. State of Black Health Report by Oregon State DHS
- 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Lunch & Keynote Address by Dr. Leary
- 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. Workshop by Fred Miller, "African American Health: The Good... the Bad... and the Ugly"

Saturday Oct. 21st, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

11th Annual Wellness Village at The Blazers Boys & Girls Club
5250 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Free health services and activities at the Wellness Village include:

Health Screenings & Services

- Flu shots
- Dental
- Vision
- Hearing
- Diabetes
- Massage therapy
- HIV & STD screenings
- And more

Activities & Exhibits

- African drumming by Chatta Addy
- Cooking demo & tastings
- Gospel choir
- Children's activities
- Raffle prizes

For more information contact the AAHC at 503-413-1850 or visit www.aahc-portland.org

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