

Minority Contractor Excels with TriMet

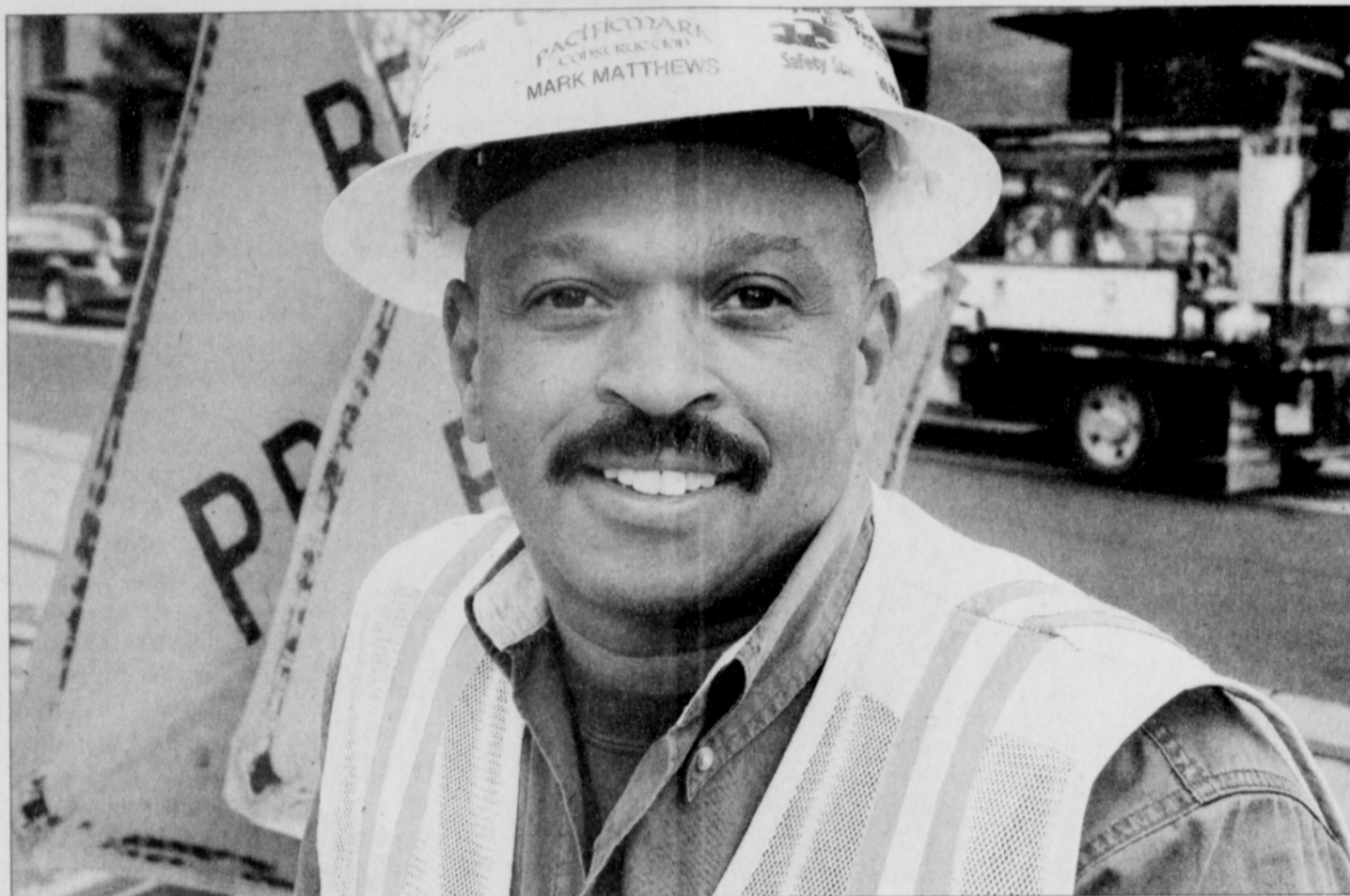
Grows own business with transit projects

When you grow up with 22 brothers and sisters, like Mark Matthews did, you learn a lot about the importance of both relationships and independence. And those lessons served Mark Matthews well when he decided to start his own business.

"I'd been in the construction business all my life, working for other people," said Matthews, recalling of the years before he started Pacific Mark Construction Corp. in 2000. "I decided I wanted my own business, so we started doing remodels and new construction for residential and commercial properties."

Matthews' two-person firm first contracted with the city of Portland and Multnomah County working on affordable housing units and government offices. He also performed work on the Portland International Airport and the Salem Conference Center before connecting with Bill Bruce, the then-Project Manager for TriMet's primary contractor, Stacy and Witbeck.

"I met Bill Bruce and we sat down and discussed how TriMet could work with us



Mark Mathews learned his trade working for others before starting his own business, Pacific Mark Construction.

hand-in-hand," Matthews said. "At first, I thought I couldn't work with TriMet, because I mostly do buildings. They opened my eyes to a whole new way of doing business."

Matthews began working at the north end of the Interstate MAX project, refurbishing old buildings and creating new ones. The work included creating construction field offices and a systems substation.

On the Portland Mall, Matthews contracted for more than \$230,000 worth of work when his firm undertook the rehabilitation of the 1908 train control tower at Union Station. The tower will be used as a signal and communications center for MAX light rail trains when the I-205/Portland Mall Light Rail Project is completed in fall of 2009.

In the meantime, Pacific Mark Construction has grown to eight employees thanks to the contracts on TriMet projects. "It enhanced my business from being a little mom-and-pop shop," Matthews said. "It opened the door to better developing my small business."

Being in a formal DBE Mentorship program with Stacy and Witbeck, Matthews also noted how much he has learned from working on the

projects and from being able to see how Stacy and Witbeck handles issues. "Whenever there is a problem, they show me how they deal with it and how they handle it, so it's really helped me develop my business."

He's learned so much, in fact, that Pacific Mark Construction is one of the first DBE subcontractors on a TriMet project to become the

prime contractor on a major construction job. With Stacy and Witbeck's guidance, Pacific Mark Construction is serving as the project manager for maintenance and upgrades to the east approach to the Steel Bridge, work funded by the city of Portland.

Matthews' move into prime contractor status marks a major milestone in TriMet's DBE efforts. There are very few DBE firms that operate as prime contractor on public construction projects. Pacific Mark Construction is just one of many DBE firms working with TriMet to grow opportunities. TriMet began the program on the Interstate MAX Yellow Line project, where ultimately DBE firms garnered 19 percent of the contracting funds, totaling \$36 million.

At just over the halfway point in the downtown transit mall project, DBE subcontractors accounted for \$20 million in contract value through June of this year.

Firms like Pacific Mark Construction have found opportunities where few existed before. Working with TriMet and Stacy and Witbeck, Matthews now not only enjoys new business acumen, he finds himself in the company of some of the biggest construction firms in the region.

Matthews' move into prime contractor status marks a major milestone in TriMet's DBE efforts. There are very few DBE firms that operate as prime contractor on public construction projects. Pacific Mark Construction is just one of many DBE firms working with TriMet to grow opportunities. TriMet began the program on the Interstate MAX Yellow Line project, where ultimately DBE firms garnered 19 percent of the contracting funds, totaling \$36 million.

At just over the halfway point in the downtown transit mall project, DBE subcontractors accounted for \$20 million in contract value through June of this year.

Firms like Pacific Mark Construction have found opportunities where few existed before. Working with TriMet and Stacy and Witbeck, Matthews now not only enjoys new business acumen, he finds himself in the company of some of the biggest construction firms in the region.

Trades Program Targets Disadvantaged, Expands Job Training

Two local job training programs have merged to expand outreach to disadvantaged or underrepresented populations.

The Evening Trades Apprenticeship Preparation, a

Housing Authority of Portland program run by a group of Portland-area contractors, will merge with the Margaret Carter Skill Center and Trades and Industry programs on the Cascade

Campus of Portland Community College in north Portland.

Both the ETAP and PCC programs offer a similar combination of "soft skills" such as how to apply for a job,

how to dress and speak at an interview, and "hard skills," hands-on, trades-related skills training, as well as courses in basic math and reading competency.

Combining both programs

will allow PCC to expand its workforce development offerings to encompass job placement, retention and follow-up services.

"We will be able to more effectively and thoroughly

help the people of this community acquire the skills they need to find and keep a living-wage job," said Algie Gatewood, president of Portland Community College's Cascade Campus.

BDS Director Paul Scarlett emphasizes the importance of Diversity to better serve our community.....



The Bureau of Development Services is committed to creating an inclusive, diverse and culturally competent workforce because we understand the value this brings to our work environment and to serving our customers.

The bureau's goals are to:

- Increase the overall bureau-wide percentage of minorities to 20%, which is representative of the percentage of minorities in the region. Currently we are at 16%.
- Increase the overall bureau-wide percentage of people of color in the following types of jobs: inspectors, plan examiners, engineers, planners, administrative support and office support.
- Increase the overall bureau-wide percentage of women in the following types of jobs: inspectors, engineers and supervisors.

As Director of the bureau, I have taken a comprehensive approach to setting goals to promote diversity in the workforce and work environment:

Implementing the following committees to cultivate diverse and positive work relationships:

- **Labor Management Committee** - Promote a collaborative and positive relationship between labor and management through trust, fairness, and open communication.
- **Diversity Committee** - Cultivate the developments of a diverse culturally competent workforce and to create an inclusive workplace culture through strategic initiative planning and implementation.

Broadening the outreach efforts of the bureau to ensure that we reach all segments of the population:

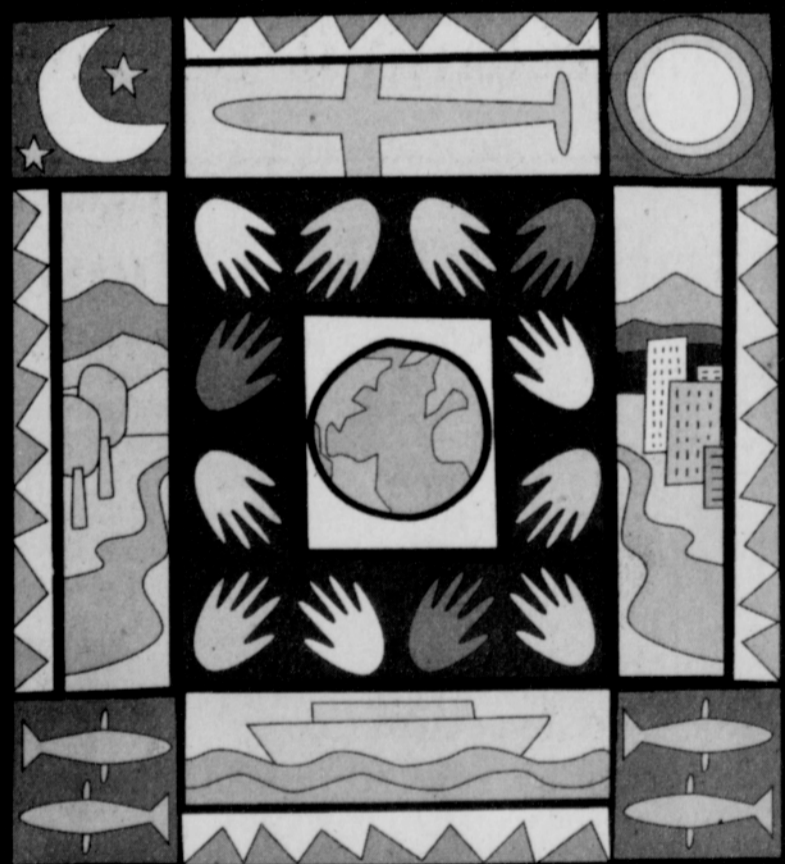
- **2008 Youth Summer Internships** - for youths age 16-18 from Immigrant Refugee Community Organization and Jefferson High School.
- **Training Program** - for Inspections, Plan Review and Permitting Services Sections.
- **Advertising** - jobs, programs and services in community newspapers, radio ads and on TriMet buses.
- **Translating BDS brochures and Web site information** - into Spanish, Vietnamese and Russian.

Creating training and a position that assists in supporting the bureau's diversity efforts:

- **Diversity & Relations Manager** - incorporated to address issues surrounding diversity and grow relationships within the bureau.
- **Cultural Awareness Training** - required training for all employees to ensure they are equipped with the necessary information and tools to better serve our customers and contribute to a positive work environment.
- **Doughnuts for Diversity** - a monthly program created to educate staff on different diversity topics.
- **Diversity Library** - contains useful information in the form of videos, books and articles for employees to check out at any time.

For additional information about the bureau and it's services visit our Web site at www.portlandonline.com/bds or contact Tiffani Penson, BDS Outreach Coordinator, at (503) 823-1109.

"From Concept to Construction, the Bureau of Development Services is here to help make your project a success."



**DIVERSITY OF PEOPLE,
THEIR IDEAS
AND EXPERIENCES,
ARE THE RICHES
OF A COMMUNITY.**

The Port of Portland celebrates diversity of all people.



The Port is an equal opportunity employer, committed to affirmative action. Please call the 24-hour Job Hotline at 503.944.7480 or visit www.portofportland.com.