

Minority Business Owner Leads by Example

Maurice Rahming is advocate for creating opportunities

After 13 years in business, Maurice Rahming, president of O'Neill Electric, Inc., and immediate past President of the Oregon chapter of the National Association of Minority Contractors, continues to lead the charge for creating opportunities for minority contractors.

O'Neill Electric is a proud member of the National Electrical Contractors Association, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the District Council of Laborers, and the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters.

The firm, started by Maurice and his wife Ali O'Neill, has seen substantial growth since its inception, with sales in 2009 of over \$9 million. In 2004 and 2007, O'Neill Electric, Inc. was recognized by the Minority Business Opportunity Committee as the Minority Construction Contractor Award.

Rahming has also been an outspoken leader in advocating for greater utilization of MBE and DBE-certified firms.

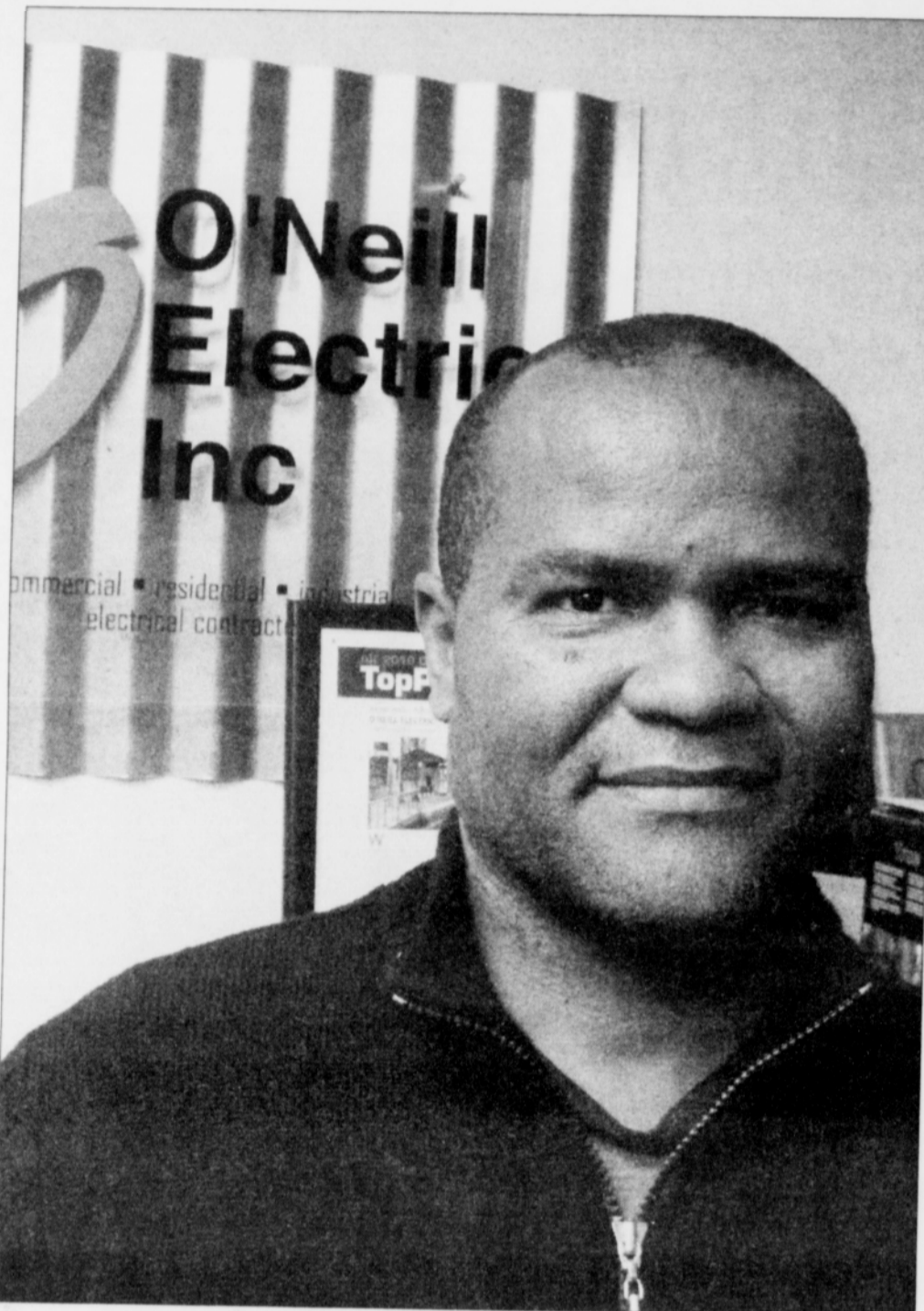
He sits on various committees promoting minority utilization throughout our city and our state, including the Mayor's Fair Con-

tracting Forum and the Oregon Department of Transportation Industry Leadership Committee. He is on the Board of Directors for the Clean Energy Works; Portland and Clean Energy Works; and is chair of the CEWP Stakeholder Evaluation and Implementation Committee.

He helped draft the Portland Development Commission North/Northeast Redevelopment Community Workforce Agreement. He also recently worked with Multnomah County to set up a county-wide legal summit on DBE utilization.

His leadership in this area has been recognized with his recent appointment by Gov. John Kitzhaber as a Team Leader for Kitzhaber's Energy Efficiency Team. In 2010, he was recognized with the Daily Journal of Commerce "Newsmakers" award and was inducted to the National Association of Minority Contractors Hall of Fame.

"I would be quite a hypocrite if I did not back up these efforts with minority utilization in my own company," says Rahming. O'Neill Electric, Inc. reports that, since 2007, 34 percent of its subcontracted work has gone to MBEs and DBEs. "Our



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efforts to obtain MBE/DBE sub-contractors and suppliers on every project are very aggressive. Because of our relationships through associations and mentoring, this happens naturally," says Rahming.

NAMC-Oregon is proud of O'Neill Electric's efforts to ensure utilization of MBE and DBE certified firms and Maurice Rahming's continued advocacy on those issues.

"Maximizing the utilization of certified firms should be a goal for all owners and firms who contract, including certified firms," says Faye Burch, NAMC-Oregon vice-president. "We must each do our part."

NAMC-Oregon is a nonprofit trade association that advocates for building the capacity of local minority construction and contracting businesses. Based in Portland, the organization works toward removing barriers for minority businesses, and finding solutions to the low percentage of Minority and Disadvantaged businesses participating in public projects.

While membership is open to people of all races and ethnic backgrounds, the organization's mandate, "Building Bridges - Crossing Barriers," focuses on construction industry concerns common to African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans.

Community Builders Partnership Formed

O'Neill Electric expands link with Walsh Construction

O'Neill Electric, Inc. and Walsh Construction Co. have announced the formation of O'Neill/Walsh Community Builders, LLC. The formal partnership is the extension of an existing 10-year business relationship, which will build on both companies' strengths and will provide opportunities to offer expanded services to new and existing clients.

Maurice Rahming, President of O'Neill Electric, Inc., and Bob Walsh, President of Walsh Construction Co., will co-manage O'Neill/Walsh Community Builders, LLC.

"O'Neill/Walsh Community Builders will be a leader in ensuring that the diversity in the construction industry will grow to reflect the diversity of the communities in which we build," said Rahming. "We share a desire to continuously increase diversity within our workforces and our subcontractor pool, and to increase the capacity of diverse businesses."

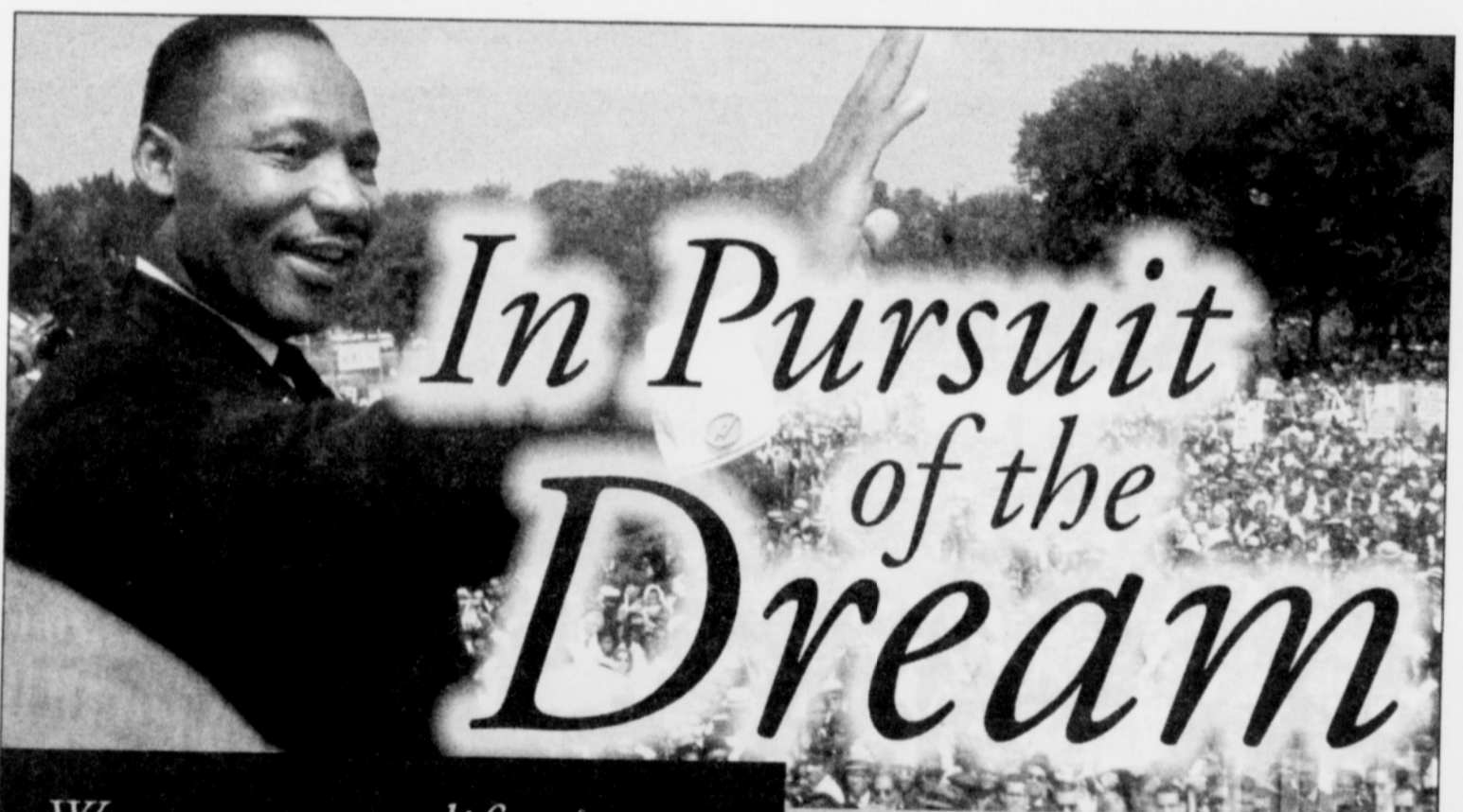
O'Neill and Walsh have joined forces on over 20 projects with a total construction value of \$100

million. In the last seven years, O'Neill, an MBE/DBE certified firm in Oregon and Washington, has expanded its operations from an electrical contractor to include general contracting work.

Walsh's years of general contracting experience will help O'Neill learn the skills to compete for and build larger general construction projects. At the same time, O'Neill's strong ties in the minority contracting community will increase Walsh's outreach capabilities and their access to diverse subcontractors, and will provide opportunities to improve their mentoring efforts.

"The timing for a formal partnership is perfect," said Walsh. "This is the direct reflection of our own values and of what we've heard from our clients: community involvement on projects is important to owners. Building on the capacity of historically disadvantaged firms over the long term has become an integral part of building buildings."

continued ▼ on page 27



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