

## SBA Awards Grants to Support Business Teaming

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) today announced grant awardees in a pilot program designed to help small businesses work together to compete for federal contracts, grow, and create jobs.

Eleven grantees were selected from hun-

dreds of applications submitted. Grantees were awarded between \$200,000 and \$500,000 in funding, for a total of approximately \$5 million in Fiscal Year 2011.

“Government contracts are a crucial source of revenue for small businesses,” said SBA Administrator Karen Mills. .”

“We are so pleased with Mercy Corps Northwest’s selection for the “Teaming Pilot Program” said SBA Portland District Acting Director Robert DuCote. Mercy Corps Northwest has a strong track record in helping numerous small business grow and succeed and I am confident that they

will help many more small business owners through this pilot program. For more information about the Small Business Teaming Pilot Program, please visit [www.sba.gov/teaming](http://www.sba.gov/teaming).

## MESO

continued from page 2

their incomes by 400 percent.

“For micro-businesses, which is who we work with, this recession has lasted so long, and the idea that it may last even longer makes it harder for people. But I still think there is excitement at being entrepreneurs. They still have high hopes.”

### Save \$1000 and End up With \$4000

MESO works through helping businesses, plan and save, and through access to matching funds. The Individual Development Account program, for example, helps people build capital through matching their own savings. Even people who can only save a small amount each month can end up with a substantial capital boost. The program runs from 13 months to 24 months, depending on how much you can save each month, Shah said.

“It’s such an awesome program. If you save \$2000, the state and the feds will match it with \$6,000. So you end up with \$8,000 for inventory or whatever you need to grow your business.”

MESO is not the only local nonprofit to

offer help to small businesses. Mercy Corp too offers several program, including an IDA saving program, loans and a six-week Business Foundations course.

Charles White is CEO of Corporate Credit Builders, Inc., a Portland company that helps business owners improve their credit scores so they can access market-rate loans from banks. Many people have found their credit rating dropped because of the housing collapse, he says. But, he says, if your credit is good, it’s not hard to get start up funds.

“Now is a good time to start a business,” he said at the Oregon Small Business Fair, Sept. 24. “The US economy, number one, needs small business owners to start businesses and start employing other people. Number two, this is a great time because banks are lending, and other financial companies are lending also. And number three is that the American spirit still lives, and there are a lot of people with great ideas out there, and people will finance that idea so you can employ other people and make money in America.”

**CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR DIRECTION.**

- ✓ Suspended or No Driver's License?
- ✓ Delinquent Child Support?
- ✓ Owe Thousands in Court Fines to Multnomah County?
- ✓ Minor convictions stopping you from being hired for a job?
- ✓ We might be able to help you!

**Project Clean Slate**

Project Clean Slate is an award winning program which allows qualifying individuals to help remove some of the barriers to employment, housing, driving and other opportunities. We have assisted Over 8,000 people Since July 2005!

- Currently limited to Multnomah County Only
- Must attend mandatory personal and community responsibility classes (\$200)
- Must be sincerely dedicated to changing your life course.

Approved clients will be required to perform community service in exchange for all or part of delinquent traffic fines, must be able to make minimum monthly payments on traffic fines until case is resolved and enter into a child support repayment program (if applicable).

**Roy Jay**  
FOUNDER

Project Clean Slate operates in tandem with Multnomah County District Attorney's Office and in cooperation with Multnomah County Circuit Court. It is a program of Independent Development Enterprise Alliance, a nonprofit organization.

Pre-apply online today! **PROJECTCLEANSLATE.COM**

503-244-5794 • 4300 NE Fremont Street • Suite 220 Portland OR 97211  
Business Hours: Monday-Friday 9am -12 Noon and 1PM to 5PM.  
All payments of classes can be paid by money order, cashiers check or debit or credit card only.

## The Skanner thanks our sponsors for their support:

- African American Alliance for Homeownership
- City of Portland Bureau of Purchasing
- Home Forward
- Legacy
- Lincoln City
- Metro Purchasing
- Pierce County
- Port of Portland
- Portland Development Commission
- Portland Public Schools
- Project Clean Slate
- TriMet
- Turner Construction

**Promoting diversity in the workplace and in the community**

Just as we strive to build a workforce that reflects our community, TriMet promotes diversity in our business relationships, including our selection of suppliers, contractors and business partners. This helps ensure that all qualified firms and individuals have an opportunity to succeed, and that TriMet receives the highest quality products and services.

For more information about TriMet contracting opportunities, visit [ebidexchange.com/trimet](http://ebidexchange.com/trimet) or contact Kimberly Sutton at 503-962-2213.

**TRIMET**  
See where it takes you.