

TriMet

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take on new work.”

The goal of TriMet’s DBE program — like others in the field — is to promote a level playing field, remove barriers and increase contracting opportunities for people of color and women in both the professional and construction fields.

TriMet’s main innovation started out simple: Find ways to hire more disadvantaged companies by breaking the contracts up into smaller jobs; over time, as more DBE companies build their capacity and grow, those companies should be in a better position to become prime contractors that can land bigger jobs.

“Breaking the contracts up into smaller contracts is just part of it; I think the greater vision is you find ways to eliminate barriers,” Fetsch says.

The agency says one-third of the contracts for its Clackamas County Light Rail Line so far have been awarded to firms owned by people of color and women

ers,” Fetsch says.

“It could be smaller contracts. It could be that the emerging business needs help with insurance and bonding — just some technical assistance.

So it’s in every way possible, how you eliminate barriers to help DBE firms succeed in the field.”

“We’re proud to have expanded our outreach to the DBE community and have reached a record high participation rate,” said Dan Blocher, executive director of TriMet Capital Projects Division. “And we will continue to hire more DBE firms as construction continues.”

TriMet created its DBE program in 2000 as it planned the Interstate MAX Yellow Line construction. The agency held a series of public meetings which were packed with North Portland residents demanding, in part, job opportunities for disadvantaged communities.

Today, other cities hold up TriMet as a model — even as other transportation jurisdictions in Oregon have endured criticism and even federal scrutiny of their DBE operations.

New City Club Chief



PHOTO BY LISA LOVING

The City Club of Portland announced Wednesday that former Mayor Sam Adams is its new executive director. In a statement, Adams said the nonprofit civic research and advocacy organization, celebrating its 100th year in 2013, will make new efforts at diversifying its membership and engaging a “broader, more diverse group of voices from across the community.” Here, Adams shook hands at Last Thursday this past summer. Adams takes over at the City Club on Jan. 22.

Edmund Tawiah’s engineering and surveying firm, TCC & Associates, Inc., has garnered close to \$275,000 in contracts on the light rail project.

“Previously, most of our work was with new housing, either subdivisions or infill,” he said. “When all of that came to a stop at the height of the recession, the Portland-Milwaukie light rail project kept us in

business.”

With approximately \$100,000 in Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Transit Project contracts so far, Azuri Construction has supplied and installed fencing at project sites along the 7.3-mile alignment.

“Having the DBE certification allows me to compete,” firm owner Jose Figueroa says.

LINKS

Learn more about TriMet’s DBE program at www.trimet.org/dbe. These organizations can also help with DBE certification and contracting opportunities:

Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber
503-222-0280
<http://www.hmccoregon.com/>

Metropolitan Contractor Improvement Partnership
503-288-1211
<http://www.mcip-pdx.org/>

National Association of Minority Contractors Oregon
503-735-9455
<http://www.namc-oregon.org/>

Blood

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and academic balance to her students.

In 2010, while going about her normal duties at work, Hunnicutt sensed that her energy was lower than usual.

She decided to make an appointment with her doctor just to be safe; what she thought was going to be a routine check-up ended as a scheduling for surgery. Her physician assured her that the procedure would be straightforward and her recovery routine.

Soon Hunnicutt learned she had several benign tumors;

If not for generous Red Cross blood donors, SEI leader and youth mentor, Miki Hunnicutt may not be here to guide youth to a brighter future

surgery was scheduled. Even the most seasoned and skillful surgeons can experience patient complications, and in Hunnicutt’s case there were many, and they were severe.

Her blood pressure plummeted during surgery and Hunnicutt began losing blood. She was immediately transfused with multiple units of blood and by the time the bleeding was controlled and the surgery complete, nine large tumors had been removed.

Concerned family members gathered at the hospital and Hunnicutt continued to feel weak and foggy to her surroundings. She remembers asking her mother if she was dying. The nurse came to check on her and found that she was not rebounding as anticipated. After additional testing, her doctor ordered more blood transfusions provided by the American Red Cross.

“At first I was freaked out when I looked up at the blood bag, but I’d already partnered with Red Cross through SEI and this



Miki Hunnicutt is a beloved staff member among the young people at Self Enhancement Inc., including Caalyn Yarbrough, at right.

was just another partnership” Hunnicutt said. “I always pressed others to donate, because I wasn’t eligible. I never knew that blood was going to be a gift for me!”

After several more blood transfusions, Hunnicutt slowly began recover.

She now looks at blood donation as one of the most important types of giving.

“It’s unconditional love, its pure giving,” she says.

These days, she uses blood donation as an example when teaching her students about humanitarianism. She tells her students that blood donors, for the most part, go unrecognized by their recipient, and giving is at its best when it is not done for accolades. Hunnicutt encourages teenagers to find a path of volunteerism that suits them and to pursue it to its fullest.

“I could never thank my donors enough, but I can be here

for my students and honor my blood donors in that way,” Hunnicutt said.

Miki Honeycutt is truly an exceptional SEI staff member and youth mentor. SEI staff and students are grateful that blood donors helped save her life two years ago. Hunnicutt shared her story of being saved through blood donation at a recent assembly. The kids stood up, cheered and said, “We’re so glad you’re still here, Ms. Hunnicutt!”

If you would like to make an appointment to donate blood, call 1-800 RED CROSS or visit us online at www.redcrossblood.org. If you have questions about your eligibility to donate blood call 1-866-236-3276 and a team member will be happy to answer your questions.

Self Enhancement, Inc. creates positive citizens. Find out more at www.SelfEnhancement.org

The American Red Cross hosts their annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blood Drive Monday, Jan. 21, at their Portland Donor Center, located at 3131 N. Vancouver Ave. The drive runs from 1:30 to 8 p.m. Appointments are encouraged, please call 1-800 RED CROSS or visit online at www.redcrossblood.org.