



## In This Issue

- 2** When Should You Hire A Project Manager?

---

- 3** What's Your Opportunity Number?

---

- 4** Professional Resources For Small Bussinesses

---

- 5** Creating A Strong... Memorable Marketing Message

---

- 6** How To Keep Your Office Organized

---

- 7** World Class Accounting

---

- 8** 2015 TDOT DBE Annual Meeting In Pictures

---

- 9** Upcoming Seminars & Workshops

---

- 10** New DBEs Recently Renewed Firm

---

- 11** Letting Dates

### TDOT CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION

Small Business Development Program  
505 Deaderick Street, Suite 1800  
James K. Polk Building  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243  
(615) 741-3681 or 888-370-3647

**John C. Schroer**

Commissioner of Transportation

**Deborah Luter**

Director Civil Rights Division

**Elizabeth Michael**

Director of the Small Business Development Program

**DBE Supportive Services**

Tyler Construction Engineers, P.C.  
1-888-385-9022  
DBE Supportive Services

*...It's the Law of the Harvest*

## TDOT Exceeds DBE Participation Goal ...WOW!



**Elizabeth Michael**  
Director of the Small Business Development Program

Yes, TDOT not only met but actually exceeded our April 1, 2015 to September 30, 2015 Bi-Annual DBE Utilization Goal of 8.05%. TDOT achieved 10.10% DBE Utilization. WOW!

On behalf of the Civil Rights Division, I want to thank each TDOT Department head, Regional Construction Offices, DBEs, and our prime contractors for their assistance in tracking DBE goal participation and their timely submittal of information to the Civil Rights Division.

Because of our collective understanding of the importance of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program, our collective effort in teamwork and planning have paid off. We have all just witnessed the Law of the Harvest (e.g., simply put, you reap what you sow).

Now is not a time to slow down our efforts, let us continue our work for the next Bi-Annual DBE Utilization report-tracking period of October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016 as we again, collectively strive to meet and exceed the current TDOT DBE goal of 8.05%.

I would also like to welcome Rickie Carlyle to our small business development team. He has a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Trident University and recently retired as an Officer with 24 years' service in the United States Army. Rickie has served in numerous leadership positions and assignments throughout his military career and has previous experience in the Army as a Logistic Officer.

Rickie has had several deployments with the 82nd Airborne Division and 101st Airborne Division ("Screaming Eagles"). He is married to Barbara Carlyle of Fayetteville, NC and they have two children, Brianna (17) and Tajon (13).

I'm excited about our staff and our accomplishments! I'm sure we all are working and looking forward to a fantastic year. So to everyone, let's collectively continue our teamwork of meeting and exceeding our goals for 2016.



# When Should You Hire a Project Manager?

*Project managers oversee construction jobs from start to finish. They plan construction jobs, manage the budget, oversee completion of activities and handle any issues that arise during construction.*



**Victor C. Tyler, P.E., M.ASCE, NSPE**  
Construction Business Management Expert

Each year, I hear more and more small business owners tell me, “I think I can do it myself. I think I have the time to focus on managing a project, but I think I’m needed elsewhere. I think I have the required expertise to manage my projects. If you’ve made these “I think” statements, you may need to hire a Project Manager. As business owners we must stop guessing about our firm’s (and our own) abilities. We must know.

Project managers are a crucial part of business today. It’s important to recognize when it is time to turn your projects over

to an individual dedicated to that function in your business. As a business owner, you don’t want to pay the salary of unnecessary personnel. However, the absence of key personnel may cause you to spend more money and time because of disorganization and a lack of productivity. Before you decide to undertake a major project, or even if you’re already in the midst of one, answering the following questions in these key categories will help you adequately assess your needs and decide whether you should hire a project manager.

## **Small business owners should consider these simple questions:**

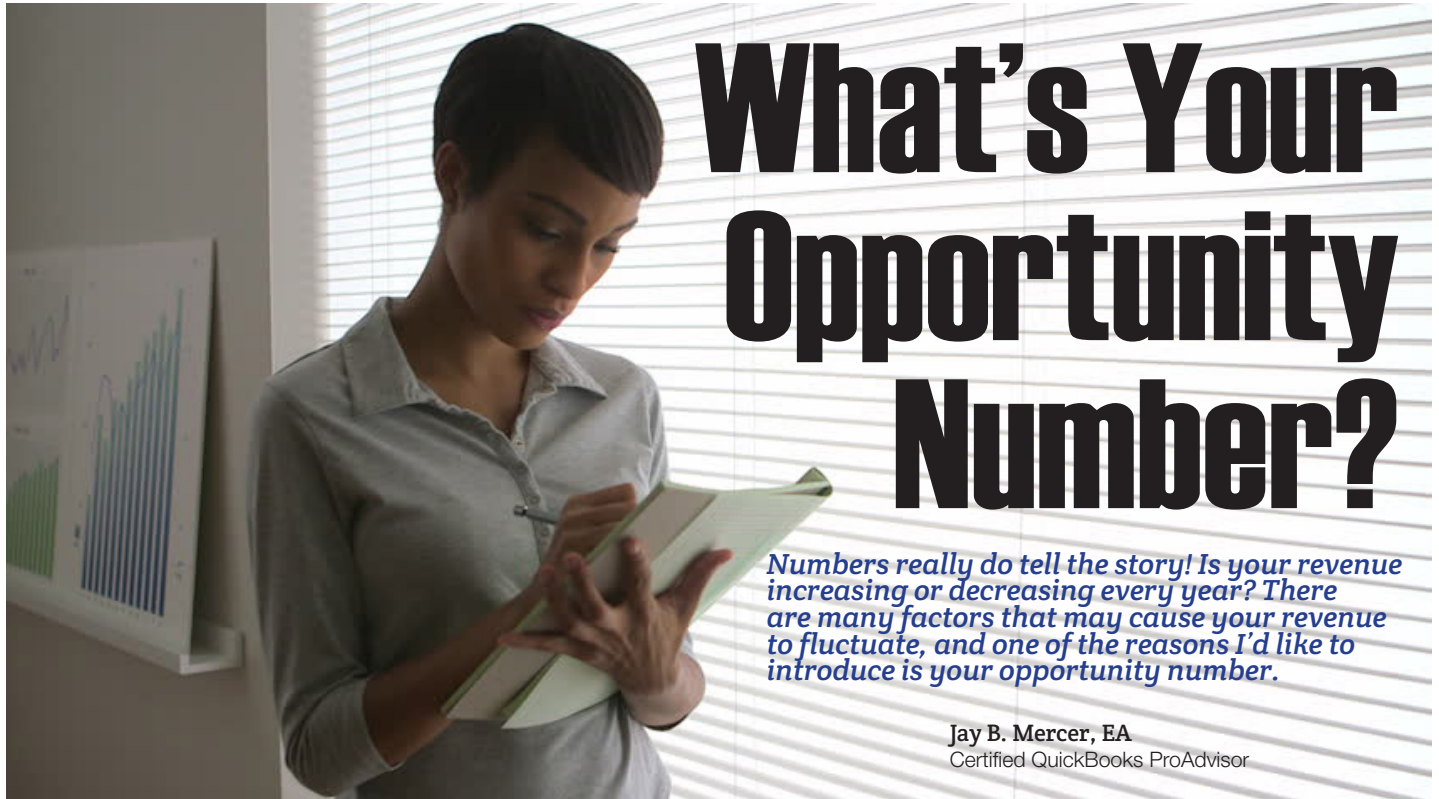
- 1. Do you, or someone on your staff, have a vision for completing the project?** *Just because you’re the owner doesn’t mean you’re the best person to lead every project.*
- 2. Is there someone within the company who has the time and skills to manage relationships with clients, team members, contractors, and other parties?** *The project manager should have good presentation skills, have the ability to conduct effective meetings, and be able to work successfully with different personalities.*
- 3. Is there someone in the company with project management skills?** *The project manager ensures that deadlines are met. This person catches problems before they snowball out of control. A project manager is skilled in controlling costs and decreasing inefficiency to bring the project in at or under budget.*
- 4. If you are the owner, are you actively managing every project?** *Having a project manager will be beneficial in the long run because your company will be able to work on more contracts. An organization’s success is ultimately defined by its ability to execute projects, on time and on budget, and to satisfy customers—these are the project manager’s main responsibilities. By honestly answering these questions it may help you determine if you or another employee has the time and skill set to be a project manager. Although a “yes” answer to every question is not necessary, a significant number of “no” responses may indicate the need to hire a project manager.*

So what is the next step? I suggest an internal look at the talent already on your company’s payroll. Training current employees for advancement is cheaper in the long run than hiring new employees. Promoting from within enables an employee to build upon existing knowledge and skills in less time than a new hire. Another option, is to bring in a third party consultant who will look at employees more objectively than those within an organization to assist with organizing your project management efforts.

If you are a TNUCP/TDOT-Certified DBE and would like additional information on creating a project management mindset, contact the Supportive Services consultants at 1.888.385.9022 or [dbesupportiveservices@tyler-engineers.com](mailto:dbesupportiveservices@tyler-engineers.com).

Much Success!





# What's Your Opportunity Number?

*Numbers really do tell the story! Is your revenue increasing or decreasing every year? There are many factors that may cause your revenue to fluctuate, and one of the reasons I'd like to introduce is your opportunity number.*

**Jay B. Mercer, EA**  
Certified QuickBooks ProAdvisor

Your opportunity number is the smallest amount of business you're willing to take on when you undertake a new project. Here's an example: if you have a ten-hour minimum per project engagement and your hourly rate is \$300.00, then your opportunity number is \$3,000.00. Going after a business opportunity that is too small could actually cause your company to earn less. Since our limited resource is time, we will either spend our time going after small fish or big fish. If we want our business to grow, we need to let go of the small fish. In our example above, it's not worth it for you to sign up a new project for less than \$3,000.00.

## **DEFINING YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITY NUMBER**

If you don't already have an opportunity number, the first action item is to create one. Take a look at your average annual revenue per project for last year or for the last twelve months. Continuing with our example, let's say the revenue was \$10,000.00. You always want to be striving to increase your average annual revenue per project year after year, in most cases. Your opportunity number and your revenue per project are related in an important way. If your opportunity number is too low, it can drag down your revenue per project average. This means revenue is going in the wrong direction.

## **EVALUATE YOUR OPPORTUNITY NUMBER**

If your opportunity number is too high, you may be walking away from business that could be profitable after a period of time. It's possible, once you build trust with new business connections after doing a small engagement, that this customer will come back for more of your product or services. So it's important to factor in this potential.

If you have a sales team, you may have a different opportunity number for each sales person as well as yourself. Your team members may have more time to pursue a larger number of smaller deals. If you have lots of leads and less time, then you may want to find a way to work on the largest opportunities by qualifying those leads, estimating the potential revenue, and comparing that to your opportunity number. Once you implement your opportunity number, you might free up quite a bit of time. You'll have more time to go after the larger opportunities while giving yourself permission to "throw the small fish back in the pond."

## **SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY**

There's nothing wrong with taking your opportunity number a step further by proactively seeking power projects and deals that will net far more than your opportunity number. Numbers really do tell the story. Seize the moment.



# Professional Resources For Small Businesses



Marshall Tabb & Victor Tyler of The Tyler Group meets with Erin Donnell & Sara Hedstrom Pinnell of Hedstrom Design, LLC.

## TDOT Supportive Services Consultants on Call

The TDOT Supportive Services Program provides training and business assistance services to TNUCP and TDOT-certified DBEs. The benefit of DBEs participating in the activities of this program can help facilitate their development into viable, self-sufficient businesses capable of competing for, and performing on Federally-assisted highway projects.

This assistance is provided at no cost to TDOT DBE firms. Seminars, workshops and meetings are open to all small businesses and DBEs - to those small businesses seeking TDOT

DBE program certification, to TNUCP DBE-certified firms who hold (or are bidding on) TDOT contracts, to prime contractors doing business with TDOT, to those businesses interested in local municipality projects. More in-depth consultation and one-on-one assistance is also available free (on an appointment basis) for DBEs that are TDOT and TNUCP-certified.

TDOT Supportive Services consultants are ready and waiting to assist you with ANY questions you may have! Have a nagging HR question that has been on your mind? Want to set up a job cost accounting system for your company but don't know the first step? Want to diversify your business but not sure which direction to take? Want to know the easiest and best ways to maximize your estimating and bidding resources?

Supportive Services is managed by experienced industry management consultants at Tyler Construction Engineers, P.C., located at 810 Dominican Drive, 3rd Floor, Nashville, Tennessee. Supportive Services is here for you! Our consultants are a valuable resource with a vast range of knowledge and expertise available to meet you at your convenience at your office or project site.

**Victor C. Tyler, P.E.**, Cost & Pricing Expert / Lead A/E/C Management Consultant  
**Marshall Tabb**, Program Manager, Financial Specialist / Leadership Development  
**Curtis Webb**, Strategic Marketing Expert / Business Development  
**Ericka L. Hayes, CPA**, Strategic Business Consultant / Business Plan Specialist  
**Jay B. Mercer, E.A.**, QuickBooks Pro-advisor / Small Business Tax Specialist  
**Sandra T. Webb**, QuickBooks Pro-advisor Trainer / Certified Payroll Consultant  
**Teresa C. Daniel, PHR**, Human Resource Consultant / Leadership Development  
**Marie Y. Williams**, Human Resource Consultant / Leadership Development

The answers are at your fingertips with Consultants on Call. It's that easy! Please contact supportive services toll free **1.888.385.9022** or email at [DBE\\_Supportive\\_Services@tyler-engineers.com](mailto:DBE_Supportive_Services@tyler-engineers.com).





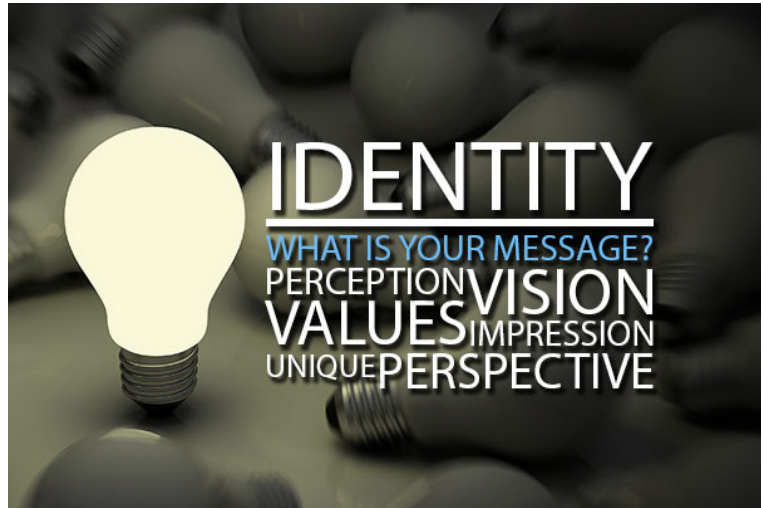
# Creating a Strong... Memorable Marketing Message

**Curtis Webb,**  
Strategic Marketing &  
Business Development Specialist

Many business owners make a big mistake in thinking that the only marketing message to be shared is to simply let people know what it is they do. In reality, letting others know what you do is only the beginning.

A more effective message shows how what you do will help your clients. But even in sharing this information with potential new clients, there needs to be ownership of a consistent underlining theme. This theme is designed to make people remember you. I call it your "business focus."

When I need what you have, how do I remember you and what you're offering? For the business owner that has no underlining theme and has no consistent message that people can latch on to, people simply won't remember you.



*Creating a strong tagline tells people exactly what their benefits will be in purchasing from you.*

Many small business owners provide and represent several services and/or a host of non-related products thinking that if they offer more products and services they will generate more business. The reality is, this seldom works and these business owners struggle year after year. The majority of struggling business owners have at least one critical business fundamental piece missing, and it is a lack of marketing focus.

As a business owner, you need to clearly define who you are, what your niche is, and know what you represent within that niche. When your company name is called out, your market should clearly understand who you are and the services and/or products you provide. It's at this point when you start building consistent customers, creating name recognition, and a memorable marketing message. Feedback from your customers allows you to start tweaking your offerings and branding your business to your business niche.



Curtis Webb meets with  
Deborah Erby of Erby  
Contractors, Inc.

Many of the most common business pitfalls and strategies are discussed in our annual and monthly meetings. Stay tuned and plan to attend our next monthly workshop so you will not only know what you are doing wrong in presenting your business, but learn how to fix it so to streamline your focus and watch your profits grow!

**-Provide excellence, Stay consistent, and above all ...Be Epic!**



# How To Keep Your Office Organized



**Ericka Hayes, CPA**  
Business Organization &  
Technology Information

*As a business owner, office organization is the key to workplace efficiency and effective time management. Many people are challenged with maintaining organized documentation, receipts, and files. Being able to easily access tax records, receipts, vendor files, etc. will, without question, save you time, money and headaches.*

## **Here are a few suggestions to help you create a system of organization you can maintain going forward:**

- 1)** Create a system that you know you will maintain. If you prefer to maintain paper or manual systems, don't create a computer system that you won't use (and vice versa).
- 2)** Choose a landing spot for all mail and receipts that you bring into your home or office. On your landing spot, have a trash can, a shredder, a file caddy, colored file folders and an accordion file for your receipts.
- 3)** When you bring in mail, immediately throw away any ads or junk mail that you don't need and will not read. Don't keep paper file copies of any items you can easily access from an online account.
- 4)** File all other mail in the folders labeled To Be Read, Tax Documents, Bills, To Be Filed, Warranties, Coupons, etc. Use different color folders for each file category to make filing easier.
- 5)** Shred all mail that contains your vital information like credit card and insurance offers.
- 6)** File all receipts from your wallet, purse or pockets in the accordion file. Depending on the accordion you purchase, you may file by date or category. Make sure to keep up with all business receipts and invoices for tax and audit purposes.
- 7)** Use online banking and online bill pay to simplify bill payments and records if you pay bills online. You may also use online banking to download your bank activity and track your purchases on personal accounts.
- 8)** Use all automation tools at your disposal. Email receipts are your friends; they can be maintained in a folder in your email box. Use your phone or tablet to take pictures of important documents that you may need frequent access to.
- 9)** Create accounts with vendors you use frequently to ensure they are tracking your purchases just in case you need to get proof of purchase for lost receipts.
- 10)** Always use a business debit or credit card for purchases. Don't use cash or mix business and personal funds. If you create a designated space to put everything, you won't have to search through papers when it's time to file your taxes or find a receipt. The more organized you are, the more time you will have to focus on running your business. If you need help, I'm here to assist you with getting started on creating an organization system that works for you.





# World Class Accounting



**Marshall Tabb,**  
Financial Management &  
Leadership Coaching

*As fiscal year 2015 comes to an end, what plans do you have for your accounting department for the New Year? As an owner, do you recognize the need for improvement in some areas of your firm's accounting department? If so, that's great! A good accounting department requires continuous improvement to become a "World Class Accounting" department.*

As a firm owner, I'm sure you want good financial information to assist in making sound business decisions. Consider your financial statements as your "business report card" to support those all too important decisions. As we move into fiscal year 2016, consider these opportunities to achieve a "World Class Accounting" department:

## **Internal Control**

Internal control (IC) is an accounting method, procedure, or system designed to promote operational efficiency and to safeguard company assets. A good system of IC utilizes the ARC concept.

*Authorization* – Transactions are approved by an appropriate level of management.

*Reporting* – The task of recording properly approved financial transactions in company books.

*Custody* – Having physical custody of company assets.

ARC ensures no one individual controls or performs all three functions at the same time. IC procedures reduce process variations which lead to more predictable outcomes.

## **Personnel**

Employees are your most valuable assets as they play a key role in ensuring the long term sustainability of your company. It is not enough for employees to merely come to work, collect a paycheck and then return home, only to repeat the same routine five days a week. As an owner, take a good look at your accounting department staff. Do employees have adequate technical skills and training to perform their assigned task? Have you provided employees with up-to-date computer systems and software? Can employees benefit from attending workshops designed to increase their knowledge and skills? If so, are you encouraging your accounting staff to take advantage of such opportunities?

## **Policies and Procedures**

I can never overemphasize the importance of maintaining up to date accounting policies and procedures. Accounting policies are important for your business to maintain consistency in processing financial information. Accounting procedures are developed and followed based on company policies. Procedures dictate how your company records and reports financial information. This becomes very important when a key employee is out sick or on vacation. The backup or replacement person will then have step-by-step instructions to accurately process financial information consistent with company policy.

## **Financial Statement Review**

A financial statement review should be a standard part of your accounting policies and procedures. As an owner, have regularly scheduled meetings with members of your accounting staff to review your firm's monthly financial "report card." The monthly balance sheet, profit & loss statement and job cost reports should be discussed. Solicit input from your accounting staff regarding concerns or difficulties they may be experiencing in performing their jobs. Always encourage your staff to offer recommendations for improvement of current systems and processes.

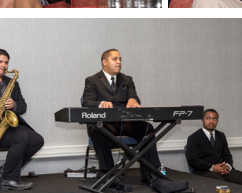
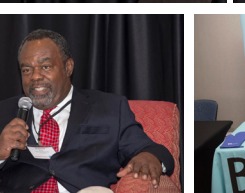
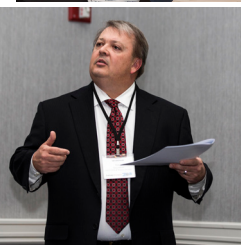
Let us all be thankful for this year and look forward to a "World Class Accounting" department in 2016!





# 2015 TDOT DBE Annual Meeting In Pictures

*Click here and see more online!*







## Upcoming Seminars and Workshops

Module	Title	Seminar Location	Date
<b>Module I</b> Business & Management Planning	<b>How to Drive Your Business and Not Be Driven Out of It: Planning is the Key</b>  This workshop will provide a practical business education of the fundamental elements to building a profitable and sustainable business. At the end of this workshop, you will have a thorough understanding of the planning (Financial and Human Capital) processes that make a business successful.	Nashville	Jan. 20, 2016
		Memphis	Feb. 9, 2016
		Knoxville	Feb. 23, 2016
		Chattanooga	TBA
<b>Module II</b> Strategic Marketing & Business Development	<b>How To Acquire Profitable Work: Dominating Your Niche</b>  Generating new business is the foundation of every successful company. Business success starts with influencing decision-makers to buy your products or services. You will learn a simple yet effective approach to understanding how to best position and market your business to decision makers.	Nashville	April 12, 2016
		Memphis	May 17, 2016
		Knoxville	May 24, 2016
		Chattanooga	TBA
<b>Module III</b> Accounting & Financial Management	<b>How To Be Profit Driven: Job Cost Accounting is the Key</b>  Your company's job-costing system can help your business run more efficiently. Successful job costing can mean the difference between a profitable business and one that struggles to stay alive. Use the information you gather from job-costing reports to improve not only your business but also your way of doing business.	Nashville	June 28, 2016
<b>Module IV</b> Contracts & Law	<b>Construction Law &amp; Contracts</b>	Nashville	TBA
<b>Capstone Event</b>	<b>TDOT DBE Annual Meeting</b>	Nashville	August 2016
<b>Miscellaneous Topics</b>	<b>Advanced Estimating and Bidding for Small Contractors</b> Public Works and DOT Line Item Estimating and Commercial Projects  <b>How to Deal Effectively With Difficult Employee Problems</b> Effective Coaching/Counseling Tools and Techniques  <b>Effective Leadership and Project Team Development</b> For DBE Small Business Owners and Key Managers  <b>Strategic Marketing Session for Developing Your Niche</b> How To Be Epic	<b>Bring This Training To Your Organization</b>  If you have multiple employees who can benefit from our training offerings, we bring you onsite seminars to your office upon request.  (TDOT Certified DBE firms only)	

These seminars are open to DBE, Small Businesses and Prime Contractors interested in continuous improvement. Seating is limited. No cost to register. Watch your email inbox for seminar announcements.



# New DBEs *Welcome*

## Region 1

### **Contract Support Services Betty Gail Denmark**

Highway, Street & Bridge Construction;  
Human Resources Consulting Services;  
Office Administrative Services

### **Road-Runner Highway Signs, LLC Joseph DeLaGarza**

Highway, Street & Bridge Construction;  
Sign Manufacturing

## Region 2

### **SmallBiz Resource, LLC dba SmallBiz Staffing, LLC**

**Vicki Baucum/Norma Solloway**  
Employment Agency, Temporary Help  
Staffing, Drug and Alcohol Screening

## Region 3

### **Magan Environmental, Inc. Zaibi Naqvi**

Environmental Consultant Services

### **LG Environmental Engineering Laura J. Gimpelson** Engineering Services

## Region 4 N/A

# Recently Renewed Firms

## Region 1

### **Data Consulting Service, Inc. dba San<sup>2</sup>, Inc..**

#### **Ashok Chatra**

Transportation Traffic/Planning Consulting  
and Import/Export of Durable Goods

### **G & G Rebar, Inc.**

#### **Elvia V. Palacios**

Steel Placement for Concrete Structures

### **Lynn Sanford Construction, Inc.**

#### **Mary L. Forrester**

General Construction Contractor, Hydro-  
seeding, Landscaping, Sodding, Seeding  
and Erosion Control, Weatherization, Tie  
Rebar, Concrete Construction (Flatwork,  
Pour and Form)

### **MPI Business Solutions, Inc.**

#### **Jacqueline Whiteside**

Commercial and Institutional Building  
Construction, Facilities Support Services

## Region 2

### **Development & Environmental Planning Associates, LLC (DEPA, LLC)**

#### **Tina M. Burgess**

Environmental and Ecological Consulting

### **Gilley Construction, Inc.**

#### **Vicki A. Gilley**

Placement of Reinforcing Steel

### **K & E Trucking, Inc.**

#### **Donna Mullins**

Trucking/hauling

### **W & W Construction Company, LLC**

#### **Henry Wood**

Underground Utilities & Building  
Construction

## Region 3

### **Civil Infrastructure Associates, LLC**

#### **Linda Sullivan**

Civil Engineering Consulting Services,  
Surveying and Drafting

### **Grand Slam Universal, LLC**

#### **Marcus Lillard**

Power and Communication Line and  
Related Structures Construction; Electrical  
Contractors and Other Wiring Installation  
Contractors; Computer Facilities  
Management Services; Other Computer  
Related Services; Temporary Help Services

### **Mitchell & Everett Construction, Inc.**

#### **Anetra Mitchell**

Painting & Sandblasting

### **Sunago Supply Corporation**

#### **David Tucker**

Commercial Construction Materials

## Region 4

### **A-1 Electrical Contractors, Inc.**

#### **Willie Frazier**

Electrical Contractors and Electrical  
Utility Installation-Installing and Servicing  
Electrical Wiring and Equipment in  
Commercial and Industrial Locations

### **Interstate Transportation, LLC**

#### **Marsha Via**

Transportation: Hauling asphalt, sand and  
gravel

### **Powers Hill Design, LLC**

#### **Nisha Powers**

Civil Engineering Design and Consulting  
Services

### **Self Tucker & Architects, Inc.**

#### **Juan R. Self/Jimmie Tucker**

Architecture, Interior Design, Master  
Planning





## TDOT DBE Supportive Services

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

#### Scheduled Letting Dates 2016

February 12, April 1, May 13,  
June 24, August 19, October 7,  
November 4, (Mowing & Litter  
Removal), December 2

#### BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

- Business Planning
- Financial Analysis
- Leadership Development
- Business Coaching

#### ONE-ON-ONE TRAINING

- Strategic Marketing
- Accounting Software
- Construction Accounting
- Bidding & Estimating
- Project Management
- Contracts & Specifications
- Construction Plan Reading
- Project Controls

*“I never dreamed about success, I worked for it.”*

– ESTEE LAUDER

#### Civil Rights Division Small Business Development Program Team

**Deborah Luter**

Deborah.Luter@tn.gov  
Director of the Civil Rights Division

**Elizabeth Michael**

Elizabeth.Michael@tn.gov  
Director of the Small Business Development Program

**David Neese**

David.Neese@tn.gov  
Small Business Development Coordinator

**Stephanie Brooks**

Stephanie.D.Brooks@tn.gov  
Contract Compliance Officer

**Ross Webb**

Ross.H.Webb@tn.gov  
Contract Compliance Officer

**Barbara Booker**

Barbara.Booker@tn.gov  
Contract Compliance Officer

**Rickie Carlyle**

Rickie.Carlyle@tn.gov  
Contract Compliance Officer

#### DBE Supportive Services Team

## T Y L E R

Construction Engineers, P.C.  
cost consultants | estimators | management consultant

810 Dominican Drive, 3rd Floor  
Nashville, TN 37228

Phone: 615.469.5398

Toll free: 888.385.9022

DBE\_supportive\_services@tyler-engineers.com

**Victor C. Tyler, P.E.**

Program Manager - Construction  
Business Specialist  
victor@tyler-engineers.com

**Curtis Webb**

Strategic Marketing & Business Specialist  
curtis@curtiswebb.com

**Jay B. Mercer**

QuickBooks Pro-Advisor & Tax Specialist  
jay@j-merc.com

**Marshall Tabb**

Financial Management & Leadership  
Coaching  
pa\_tabb2@yahoo.com

**Sandra T. Webb**

Accounting Software Trainer  
sandra818@aol.com

**Ericka L. Hayes, CPA**

Accounting - Business Organization  
& Information Technology  
erickalhayes@gmail.com

**Marie Y. Williams**

Human Resource & Leadership Coaching  
mywilliams777@att.net

**Teresa Daniel, PHR**

Human Resource Specialist  
tcdphr@comcast.net

Phone: 615.741.3681 or Toll Free: 1.888.370.3647