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Director of the Small Business Development Program

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DBE Supportive Services

# Changes Are Happening!

## TDOT'S Civil Rights Division makes staff change.

Effective March 6, 2016, David Neese has been promoted Director of the Small Business Development Program (SBDP). He has worked in the SBDP for the past ten years as the Small Business Development Coordinator managing the Supportive Services contract for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs).

As Director, he is responsible for ensuring the SBDP department is following all Federal and State regulations in regards to providing DBE certification and compliance. Duties include verifying prime contractors are in compliance when utilizing DBEs, tracking DBE attainment on TDOT contracts, and ensuring contracting assistance, opportunities and training are available to certified DBEs.

**David Neese**  
Director of the Small Business Development Program



*"Having worked closely with David for the last 7 years, all the consultants at Tyler Construction Engineers, P.C. would like to say congratulations and well deserved!"*

David's career in state government began when he worked for the Criminal Injuries Compensation Program. Part of the Tennessee Department of the Treasury, this program was designed to help defray costs by helping reimburse eligible victims of violent crimes.

He obtained a Bachelors of Science Degree from Middle Tennessee State University and paralegal certification through Southeastern Career College.

When not working, David enjoys spending time with his wife Erin and two young sons, Finley and Reed.

We at Tyler Construction Engineers, P.C. look forward to working with David as Director of the Small Business Development Program!



# Are You Headed In The Right Direction?



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

At the beginning of 2016, did your business reach a three, five, or ten-year anniversary milestone? Did you quickly realize in all that time you never had a formal business strategy or planning document, because you were so hard at work and too busy to look up? So you start to question yourself, "Were we that good, or just plain lucky?" With this in mind, all firms, regardless of age, size or success, should have a vision of where they'd like to go and have a written plan for how they intend to get there. This process is generally known as Strategic Planning.

Without a written plan you are likely to follow the direction of the wind or the most popular thought of the day.

Take time for a formal or at least a structured planning session with your key staff or have it led by a trained management consultant. If done well it can yield a number of benefits and uncover hidden opportunities. The main reason for developing a plan is to remain focused on your key value propositions. To be effective and meaningful, the plan should be implementable within a 12-month period.

*Quote by the late Yogi Berra: "If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else."*

The TDOT Small Business Development Program Supportive Services commenced hosting in February workshops entitled, "How to Drive Your Business, Without Being Driven Out of it: It Takes Planning." Workshops were held in Nashville, Memphis, Knoxville and Chattanooga and were well-attended by small business owners. The topics discussed were Marketing, Leadership, Human Resource, Financial Management, and Business Model Design. The main point of these workshops were to encourage business owners to become energized in

taking the initiative to start a methodical, step-by-step process to drive their businesses along an intended path of success.

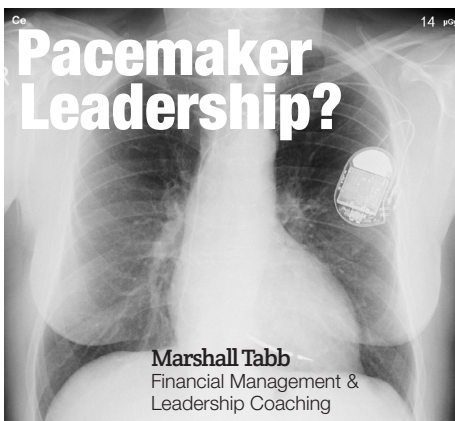
The main idea was to start thinking about the planning process. If done well you will have a viable and visual plan that will have you better prepared to handle the external circumstances during the year. Mostly importantly, you'll recognize success when you see it.



Victor Tyler working with Townes Constr.

If you are a certified TDOT DBE and you are seeking a better way to plan for success, contact the Supportive Services consultants at 1.888.385.9022 or [dbesupportiveservices@tyler-engineers.com](mailto:dbesupportiveservices@tyler-engineers.com).

Much Success!



## Keeping your abnormal ...normal!

How was your day? Did your company miss another bid proposal deadline due to employees not understanding the outdated estimating software? Was it your responsibility to perform management, marketing, accounting, human resources and custodial duties?

What about the call you received from a long time customer who is threatening litigation because of sub-par work? And oh, did you again leave the office at midnight trying to get ahead of tomorrow's challenges? If this describes your day as company leader, you may be a candidate for "Pacemaker Leadership" to change your abnormal days to normal.

A pacemaker is a medical device used to help control abnormal heart rhythms. It uses low-energy electrical pulses to prompt the heart to beat at a normal rate. As company leader, your "pacemaker" should include: People, Systems, and Processes. Here's why.

**People** – need to have appropriate education, skills and industry experience to perform the job they were hired to do. It is fair to say "poor hiring processes lead to poor hiring choices." Great

leaders have the ability to engage employees to assist in making company goals a reality.

**Systems** – includes innovative technology used to meet both clients and business needs. System operations should be documented to assist in minimizing down time resulting from software/hardware malfunctions.

**Processes** – these are supported by policies and procedures developed to promote consistency. Well defined processes create predictable, measureable and repeatable outcomes. It is important to consider internal control when documenting processes.

For more information on "Pacemaker Leadership," plan on attending our seminar in the Spring of this year. See you then!





# CHALLENGES OF BEING A WOMAN OR MINORITY BUSINESS OWNER

Reputation • Perception • Expectation

## The Dilemma Of Being Pre-Judged ...Wrongly!

A customer's culture and upbringing influence their perception and expectations about you as a woman or minority business owner. Those perceptions influence expectations which in turn determine in large part of how we act. Those actions, finally, build upon our existing culture which many take for granted as your reputation.

Curtis Webb,  
Strategic Marketing & Business Development Specialist

### Case Study...

Older gentleman walks into a hardware store looking to buy special fasteners needed for a job. He's greeted by a young female who kindly offers to help. He simply responds by asking her if she could get a man over to help him. She replies to the gentleman that she could help. He looks at her with aggravation on his face and says "I need someone that can help me select the right fasteners for a job I'm working on, is that something you have any knowledge of?" She replies, "yes sir it is." Hesitantly, he shows the lady the item and explains what he is trying to do. She directs him to what he was looking for and also gives him a few suggestions he hadn't thought of and finally lets him know the special tool needed to install the fastener. The older gentleman later showed appreciation for the lady's help and insight but he was very curious about how she knew so much about fasteners and tools? She eventually told him that she owned a construction company that specialized in maintenance service and she just happened to be in her dad's hardware store helping him out for the morning! She had not only been around hardware all her life, but actually knew the business of construction repair. The takeaway here is... The older gentleman had discounted the potential knowledge of the person because she was female... she had been prejudged!



move on! Based on the conversation, their perception of you starts to take shape. It's not necessarily a true vision of you, but of someone that they feel looks like you. It's a combination of all three that makes our starting point as a woman or minority business owner difficult. With this in mind, make sure when you are developing new business, your sales pitch is all about customer advantages and benefits. Your look, personality, and marketing pitch should set a true customer's perception and expectation of you and your business. Having said all that, you still will have to deal with how people position you and labeling you with a pre-defined reputation.

So how should a small business owner address this problem? Through the power of marketing! Marketing is the process or activity that should create interest in you and your offering. If you offer great customer benefits then the unopen doors will open. This activity is the absolute lifeblood of your business. Many times our potential customers have a perception of your business and expertise that is not correct. It's only through marketing that you can clearly layout your expertise and added benefits. Make a compelling offer that will excite your customers and follow up with excellent service to produce positive results.

Many of the most common and fundamental business challenges are discussed in our seminars and workshops. Stay tuned, and plan to attend our next monthly workshop so you can learn techniques and strategies to better your business and watch your profits grow! **-Provide excellence, stay consistent, and above all ...Be Epic!**

**9** 8% of every woman and minority business client I've ever met struggles with what I call, *cultural reputation, personal perception and business expectations* when doing business where they are not known. A solution (if ever mentioned), is talked about in a very indirect and disjointed way. We normally don't connect these three words (reputation, perception and expectation) together as being the starting focal point of our initial business challenges when prospecting for new customers. Know this, if you are seeing and/or communicating (maybe through email) with a potential client for the first time, that person is quickly trying to get a read on you so they can



# FAST Act

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act signed by President Obama in December 2015, provides \$305 billion to highway and transit funding through 2020, is the first long-term highway funding bill since 2005.

The FAST Act establishes a slight increase in funding over the prior funding of MAP-21. It authorizes funding for highways, public transportation, passenger rail, and highway safety programs.

Over the past several months you may have read various articles or heard industry speakers discuss the technical minute details concerning this legislation. Mostly we hear that it provides state and local officials with five years of funding certainty which will spark some long-delayed larger and more complex projects to get started. It will also help the travelling public see decreases in congestion, improved transportation safety and additional capacity. But what does this legislation mean for businesses that build the transportation infrastructure?



For contractors, suppliers, and consultants that build transportation infrastructure, it means greater opportunities to win new work, expand their staff and review opportunities to purchase new equipment. This is a huge opportunity for the transportation industry. The question is, are transportation officials, contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and consultants staffed up and ready to work on reducing the backlog of transportation projects? Let us all act fast and rebuild our nation's infrastructure.



## The FAST Act At A Glance:

**Five-year**, fully paid-for transportation bill to provide needed certainty for:

- States and local governments** to plan and undertake long-term, complex projects
- Reforms and strengthens** surface transportation infrastructure and safety programs
- Refocuses programs on national priorities**, including nationally and regionally significant projects and the movement of freight
- Increases flexibility** for states and local governments to better address their unique infrastructure priorities
- Streamlines environmental review** and project approval processes
- Improves passenger rail infrastructure** and safety programs, reduces costs, leverages private sector resources, creates greater accountability and transparency for Amtrak, and accelerates rail project delivery
- Promotes innovation**
- Maintains a strong commitment** of highway, rail, and hazmat safety

This legislation will help ensure that Americans can get where they're going more safely and spend less time sitting in traffic; that raw materials and products can get to their destinations more efficiently; that the cost of goods and services we depend on every day are not needlessly inflated by poor infrastructure and freight bottlenecks; that programs work better for states and local partners; and that American businesses can be more competitive and enabled to create more jobs.

The above is taken from the US House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure online summary of the FAST Act.





The best method to create accuracy in your bid is to implement a job-cost estimating process. Job-cost estimating requires assigning a cost to each component to complete the work and then adding a reasonable amount for contractor overhead and profit. Other factors that may influence costs are the project's unique characteristics, location, market factors and economic volatility.

## Working On Your Bid Accuracy



**Victor C. Tyler, P.E., M.ASCE, NSPE**  
Program Manager - Construction Business Specialist

**T**o successfully implement job-cost estimating, the estimator must have experience in construction methodologies and have detailed records of actual job production. Although more time consuming than using historic unit pricing from cost data books, once the appropriate data and records are identified and easily retrieved, the process will become very routine, especially with the use of spreadsheet templates or estimating software.

process, the job superintendent or project manager can better manage the job and control cost. The goal is to get job details into the estimate, before they become surprises during the actual installation.

**Secondly**, to improve accuracy, the estimator must always take time to compare his/her bid to final actual costs records to see how close the estimate was to actual costs, and make adjustments accordingly to make ready for the next bid. Next, the estimator must have open and honest discussions with field foremen and/or superintendents. These discussions are needed to further refine the estimating process to arrive at accurate costs, in uncovering every possible cost item on a job.



### The benefits of implementing a job-cost estimating system:

- Less money left on the table on bid day
- Getting more of the work you perform best
- Change order pricing become more profitable
- Job performance is more easily measured
- More predictable job profits
- Better able to repeat the profitable results

**First**, job-cost estimates contain seven (7) basic elements: Labor, Material, Equipment, Subcontractor, Job Overhead, Home Office Overhead and Profit. A project can be broken up into definable tasks that it takes to complete the project. Those tasks or items of work will contain these 7 basic elements.

The bidding process can be an expensive and time consuming task. I encourage you to create your own process to limit the expense and time required to assemble bids.

If you are a certified TDOT DBE and are you are seeking to increase your bid accuracy contact us at TDOT Supportive Services at 1.888.385.9022 or [dbesupportiveservices@tyler-engineers.com](mailto:dbesupportiveservices@tyler-engineers.com).

Profitable contractors realize the key to success lies in their ability to accurately calculate and control cost. When all costs are captured during the estimating

Much Success!



# Marketing Subcontractor Services

*The Tyler Team is always looking for effective business approaches and marketing strategies for our women and minority business owners. We came across this very interesting article written by Greg Hoyle of FMI. The interesting thing about this article is, it was written in Feb. 1986! The EPIC factor about this article is how relevant the information is for today's market 30 years later! Here is an excerpt from the article. The complete article can be accessed from the link below.*

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## Winning That Big Contract is More Than Just Low Bid Today

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Often subcontractors come to our consultants and say, "How do we market subcontractor services? Everything is low bid. There is no way for us to use a marketing technique in a subcontracting firm." That is the myth of subcontractor marketing. In fact, marketing subcontractor services is possible and even necessary. Subcontractor marketing is based on the same principles of marketing that general contractors use. You need to know to whom you are going to market—who the decision makers are and what their selection criteria are. Then you contact these people and show them how you can meet their needs. We're going to explore subcontractor marketing both from the point of view of the general contractor who is selecting a subcontractor as well as the subcontractor's perspective.

If you're a small sub, you've probably found yourself thinking "Surely, most extremely large and sophisticated subcontractors know how to market their services."

contractor involved and ask if they can submit a bid. That is the marketing process.

But does it seem to you that some subcontractors are more successful at finding out about jobs and at getting those jobs than others? Of course it does. When you hear of a competitor like that, do you decide to work harder and find out about more jobs? "If I could just find out about the jobs, then maybe I could get as much work as they do!" The idea that job chasing is the only way to market subcontract services is perhaps the biggest single misconception in construction marketing today. In reality, job chasing is widely used, and general contractors and construction managers purchase many subcontract services in that environment. But, chasing jobs won't allow you to make the most of your resources as a subcontractor. A far better approach to subcontractor marketing is to chase clients or customers rather than jobs. In doing

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**"One of the best things you can do to sell your services is to keep general contractors informed about any upcoming jobs you may have heard about."**

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You know the ones we're talking about—the big well-known ones that seem to get all the work. They must know the sales and marketing games quite well. Obviously, they are successful. So, it follows that they must know how to market. However, many large subs are no more sophisticated about marketing than small subs. Both large and small subcontractor firms can market in the same way; it's just a matter of scale. In the traditional subcontractor marketing or sales approach, subcontractors look for jobs. They hear of a job, and they decide they want to bid it. They then contact the general

contractor and ask if they can submit a bid. That is the marketing process.

As the major purchaser of subcontract services, the general contractor provides the key to subcontractor marketing. We are going to examine just how the general contractor makes decisions and how a subcontractor can be more effective at influencing those decisions.

To see this complete article click on the following link:  
[http://www.awci.org/cd/pdfs/8602\\_k.pdf](http://www.awci.org/cd/pdfs/8602_k.pdf)





## Upcoming Seminars and Workshops

Module	Title	Seminar Location	Date
<b>Module II</b> Strategic Marketing & Business Development  <i>Part 2</i> Estimating, Bidding & Project Accounting Fundamentals	<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.  During Part 2, we will review the estimating, bidding and project accounting fundamentals so that you can leverage your pricing as an influencer. This technique has shown to be a highly successful guide in targeting and bidding on jobs that are most profitable to your company. Bankers and investors are impressed with a contractor that knows and understands their business' competitive advantage.  <i>The following topics will be discussed during this workshop:</i> -Targeting the Right Work: Marketing, Selling & Closing -Estimating the Work: Costing -Controlling the Work: Project Management & Budgeting -Bidding the Work: Pricing -Reporting the Work: Project Accounting -Business Case Study -Open Class Discussion  <i>Presenters for these sessions are:</i> Curtis Webb and Victor Tyler, P.E., Tyler Construction Engineers, P.C.	8:30am - 3:00pm 2 International Plaza, Suite 108, 37217 Nashville, TN	April 12, 2016
		8:30am - 3:00pm City of Memphis, Renaissance Business Development Center, 555 Beale Street Memphis, TN	May 17, 2016
		8:30am - 3:00pm McGhee Tyson Airport, 3rd Flr Conference Rm Alcoa, TN	May 24, 2016
		8:30am - 3:00pm INCubator at the Business Development Center, Boardroom, 100 Cherokee Blvd, Chattanooga, TN 37402	June 14, 2016
<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, TN	June 28, 2016
<b>Module IV</b> Leadership Academy	<b>Part 1: How To Deal Effectively With Difficult Employees Problems</b>  <b>Part 2: Pacemaker Leadership for Small Business</b>	INCubator at the Business Development Center Chattanooga, TN	July 12, 2016
<b>Capstone Event</b>	<b>TDOT DBE Small Business Annual Meeting</b>	Cool Springs Marriott Hotel Franklin, TN	August 22-23, 2016

*These seminars are open to DBEs, 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 N/A

## Region 2 N/A

## Region 3

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

**Magan Environmental, Inc.**  
**Zaibi Naqvi**  
Environmental Consultant Services

## Region 4

**Green Thumb of Dyersburg, LLC**  
**Phyllis Kraus**  
Landscaping Services

# Recently Renewed Firms

## Region 1

**B & B Lawn Services, Inc..**  
**Mr. Baffin R. Harper, Sr.**  
Poured Concrete Foundation and Structure Contractors, Erosion Control, Commercial Landscaping and Mowing, Traffic Control, Clearing & Grubbing

**East Tennessee Mechanical Contractors, Inc.**  
**Mark Deathridge**  
Concrete curb gutter driveway sidewalks small culverts earthwork gen. Contracting steel erection masonry steel or timber bridges.

**Planet, Inc.**  
**Janet M. Manuel**  
Commercial Painting and sandblasting

**Straight-Line Striping of Tennessee, LLC**  
**Teresa D. Nuchols**  
Pavement Markings

## Region 2

**Gibco Construction, LLC**  
**Sharon Gilbert**  
Excavating and Trucking, Spread Rock

## Kimberly, Inc.

**Kimberly Danson**  
Silt Fencing, Soil Erosion Control, Curb, Gutter, Driveways, Sidewalks, Inlets, Catch Basins, Manholes, Small Culverts, Ditch Paving, Vertical Concrete

## Pecs Construction

**Timothy Pruett**  
Asphalt Paving, Trucking and Light Concrete Work (Concrete Curbing, Sidewalks) Silt Fencing, Chain Link Fencing, Erosion Control, Traffic Control, Supplier of Liquid Asphalt and Aggregate Stone

## Region 3

**I.C.F. Builders & Consultants, Inc.**  
**Roger Ligon, Sr.**  
General Construction

**Logan Patri Engineering, Inc.**  
**Narasimha Rao Patri**  
Consulting and structural engineering

**R & M Contractors, Inc.**  
**Robert Crutchfield**  
Underground Utilities, Drilling, Blasting

**Williams Group Enterprises, LLC**  
**Marqueze Williams**  
Real Estate Brokerage Firm, Real Estate Development and Property Management

## Region 4

**Airfield, ETC., Inc.**  
**Stephanie Poole**  
Highway, street and bridge construction, traffic control, concrete work, electrical contractor

**Phinnessee Earthmoving Contractor**  
**Milton Phinnessee**  
Other Building Finishing Contractor/ Earthwork, Demolition, Moving, Building, Aggregate Construction, Clearing, Grubbing, Sodding and Seeding, Trucking and Hauling

**SMS Contractors, Inc.**  
**Claudette Sanders**  
General Construction (specializing in Trucking, Clearing and Grading, Rip-Rap, Structural Steel, Coatings and Painting, Demolition, Drainage Systems, Masonry, Temporary Barricade, Sidewalks, Ditch Paving and Box Culverts

**WMC Contracting Co., Inc.**  
**Dennis Garcia**  
Concrete (driveways, sidewalks, curb, gutter, catch basins, inlets, median barrier walls and parapet), Erosion Control, Fencing, General Freight Trucking (Local), Rip Rap, Aggregate, Base Stone, Liquid Asphalt





**TDOT**  
Department of  
Transportation

### Scheduled Letting Dates 2016

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

## TDOT DBE Supportive Services

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

#### 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

*"It's incredibly important that we all work together to make what is seemingly impossible, possible."*

– Scott Kelly

### Civil Rights Division Small Business Development Program Team

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