



2014 - 1st Quarter

## Supplier Diversity

By Daryl Hodnett, Director, Supplier Diversity and Small Business Development

I have assumed the role of Director—Supplier Diversity and Small Business Development within Management Services, replacing Jackie Kelly. You will notice we've changed the name of the program as well, reflecting total inclusion of our effort. Our focus is to support both Procurement and Design and Construction system-wide in sourcing activities and to be the external face of supplier diversity for the university.

I have worked in the area of supplier diversity for about 20 years now, first building the program for fifteen years at The Procter & Gamble Company in Cincinnati and as a consultant for the last 7 years training newly appointed supplier diversity leaders across the country. I've had the opportunity to help develop and grow many minority and women-owned businesses during that time...and have seen in many cases the positive economic impact they have had in many communities across the country.

So why should the University of Missouri System and its campuses embrace supplier diversity? I've come to learn that it makes good business sense. Small businesses are the engine that fuel America's economy. If they are not healthy, the business prospects for America and Missouri cannot be healthy. Additionally, minority and women-owned businesses continue to be the most underrepresented and underutilized business segments in America. That plays out here in Missouri as well. These firms create jobs and taxpaying citizens. Part of UM System's mission is economic development in Missouri. Part of the mission of our campuses is to be good corporate citizens in the communities they serve. Supplier diversity and small business development fit very well with both goals.

Additionally, as UM System continues to look at ways to be more cost efficient, the continued inclusion of minority and women-owned businesses on our bid lists will provide more competition for our business. Sometimes they may win the business. Other times, because we have inclusion, incumbents may deliver a better cost to retain business. Both are clear wins for us. When you look at the business case for supplier diversity and the position the University of Missouri plays overall in this state's economy, it becomes real important that we play a lead role here.

Over the next few months, I will be updating you on what we are doing differently and what our plans and goals are for supplier diversity. Additionally, we'll do some important and in-depth benchmarking on how UM System and its campuses are performing versus other key universities in our peer group.

We have a simple vision ...to be among the leaders in supplier diversity among America's higher education institutions. I will need your help for us to achieve the vision. Together, we can get there.



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