

Certification Pays Off for Amigo

Melissa Gombar & Donna Collingwood, Department of Civil Rights

Civil Rights staff worked hard to ensure that the taxpayer dollars invested in the Judge Doyle Square project were spent equitably. This project has been one of the main focal points of downtown development in recent years. The goal for the Judge Doyle Square project was at least 11% of the construction costs to be invested in businesses certified by the City of Madison that are small, women owned, and/or BIPOC-owned. With the project wrapping up soon, 12% of the construction costs have been invested in these certified companies, exceeding the goal by a full percentage point.



Judge Doyle Square is the area behind the Madison Municipal Building where the Wilson Street Garage and NOVO apartments have been constructed.

One of the largest subcontractors that worked on this project is certified as a Small Business Enterprise, Amigo Construction. Amigo was contracted to do the metal panels on the NOVO project. “We no longer only install product, we fabricate as much as possible. We’ll get our raw sheet goods in,

design, create, assemble, crate, deliver, and then install.” Said Wensy Melendez, Amigo’s President & CEO. “We are very proud of our work on this project,” he said. “I always looked at these taller projects as a goal of Amigo’s and a personal goal to land such a project; and when we were awarded the project, that was a very good day for us.”

Prior to contract award, Amigo invited project manager Stevens Construction for a shop tour. Stevens left Amigo’s facilities knowing they could technically perform, but also realizing Amigo had not previously had a project that big. Post Construction, other General Contractors will identify that Amigo Construction has the capacity and expertise to do a project of this complexity and scale.

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Certification Increases Equity in City Procurement

The Targeted Business Enterprise (TBE) program works to encourage Small, Minority, & Women Business Enterprises to compete for City contracting and procurement opportunities. Historically marginalized groups doing business with the City ensures equitable stewardship of tax payer dollars.

The City offers five certifications:

- Small Business Enterprise
- Women Business Enterprise
- Minority Business Enterprise
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
- Section 3 Business Enterprise

Ways the City connects TBEs to Opportunities:

- Setting TBE spending goals on City contracts
- City procurement teams must collect proposals from TBEs for contracts over \$50,000
- DCR is challenging all purchasing teams to contract with TBEs regardless of contract amount
- Reciprocity between the City and Dane County, Milwaukee County,

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NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

September 15 – October 15

4th Quarter Events and Days of Honor

October 1-31

Domestic Violence Awareness

LGBT (was GLBT) History

Italian American Heritage

National Bullying Prevention

October 2

Gandhi's Birthday & International Day of Nonviolence

Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi is one of the most respected spiritual and political leaders of the twentieth century. The Indian people called him "Mahatma," meaning Great Soul.

Thurgood Marshall Sworn Into Supreme Court

In 1967, Thurgood Marshall became the first African American to sit on the highest court in the land. Opposing discrimination and the death penalty, he championed free speech and civil liberties.

October 5

World Teachers' Day

World Teachers' Day is an annual and internationally recognized day devoted to the assessment, improvement, and appreciation of teachers worldwide.

October 13-November 12

Muharram (Islamic New Year)

Kristy's Corner

Racial Justice Summit Reflections

YWCA Madison recently hosted their annual Racial Justice Summit. They welcomed over 1,000 attendees to love unapologetically, practice transformative justice, and radically reimagine in their first-ever Hybrid Summit. The program lasted three days with an incredible line-up of speakers which included Valarie Kaur, Mariame Kaba, Darnell Moore, Mia Mingus, Tokata Iron Eyes, and adrienne maree brown among others. Summits like these can offer a wonderful recharge for those involved in daily equity and social justice work as well as inspiration for those new to these conversations.

After attending events like these, I always find myself inspired and recharged to get to the hard work. But then I get to my desk on Monday morning at 8am, and I wonder, what's different? What's my personal take-away? How can I incorporate these ideas into practice at work and in my life? After several thoughtful processing sessions with colleagues, I found myself reflecting on the following five themes inspired by various speakers.

Knowledge and Practice | Darnell Moore. Worthy ideas developed in an echo-chamber can get disconnected from our everyday practices. It's important to identify some of my own practices of love, transformative justice, and radical imagination that are doable in my daily life with my colleagues, neighbors, family, and friends.

Transformation | Mia Mingus. Transformation is often romanticized. True transformation is hard. It requires the end of something and the beginning of something, often labored through pain. It's the breakdown of what once was, struggling through, to create something new.

Accountability | Mariam Kabe. Within a transformative justice framework, one cannot "hold" another person accountable, people must hold themselves accountable. That requires us to create the conditions by which individuals would be compelled to do so.

Love | Valerie Kaur. Love is not simply an emotion but an action. It is a practice and a choice. Often, it is a harder choice. It requires we see people in their wholeness, not just in a singular action. It requires us to reclaim the humanity of ourselves as well as others.

Imagination | adrienne maree brown. What is compelling about the future for me? What's one thing I can work on that I can reach?

What's compelling about the future for me: my ancestors' progress seemed impossible, but was in fact possible, because they struggled through. Each generation bore new possibilities. The same is true of our future.

One thing I can work on that I can reach is sharing my reflections with you! It serves as a personal practice of knowledge sharing to those who may not have been able to attend, as well as an invitation to continued discussion.

Consider for yourself, "**what is compelling about the future for you? What's one thing you can work on that you can reach?**"

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In solidarity, kristy kumar ■■■

The month of Muharram marks the beginning of the Islamic liturgical year.

October 16

World Food Day

Since 1979, this worldwide event has sought to increase awareness, understanding, and informed year-round action to alleviate hunger, malnutrition, and poverty.

October 19

Multicultural Diversity Day

October 24

United Nations Day

October 28

Statue of Liberty Dedication

In 1886, President Grover Cleveland dedicated the Statue of Liberty, officially titled “Liberty Enlightening the World.” It was a gift of friendship from the people of France.

October 29

National Organization for Women (NOW) Founded

NOW’s goal: to take action to bring about equality for all women.

November 1-30

American Indian Heritage Month

November 6

Dalip Singh Saund Elected to the U.S. Congress

In 1956, he was the first Asian American to win a seat in the U.S. Congress.

November 11-15

Diwali

Known as the “Indian Festival of Lights,” this major Hindu holiday

Amigo is City certified as a MBE and SBE but will soon be graduating from the SBE program. Because of their success as a business, they will have revenues above \$7M, ending their SBE status. They will still be a MBE.

“I would love to see more companies become certified—it is a great program. I have echoed my opinion about how the percentages are fairly low to community leaders, but these are practices that had been in place for so long, that it is simply difficult to increase percentages on State/County/City jobs” said Wensy. He’d like to see higher MBE/SBE percentages met, in hopes that the General Contractors have more due diligence to seek bids, scope out contractors, and award contracts to MBE/SBE firms.

One of the barriers for getting certified is the amount of paperwork that goes into the process and follow through during

signifies the renewal of life, and the victory of good over evil.

November 25

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

One out of every three women and girls around the world experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes, most frequently by an intimate partner.

November 25-December 10

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign

Each year, new partners join the campaign to bring local, national, and global attention to the various forms of violence that women face and to

the phases of construction, Wensy believes. A lot of smaller MBE/SBE contractors are not able to manage it themselves or hire someone else to do it. Often, they opt out because of lack of guidance. “Part of the journey is to challenge yourself, allow for setbacks, welcome new territories,” said Wensy “We have been successful in the commercial sector in large part because we welcome the paperwork and the challenges of having commercial contracts,” he said.

Wensy’s father, Odilon “Ode” Melendez, started the company in 1992 as Amigo Painting, in the City of Madison. In 2008, they restructured their business, Wensy became a partner, and they changed the name to Amigo Construction.

“Treat people fairly, and it will work out. That is my philosophy,” Wensy advises. The growth and success of Amigo seem to bear him out. ■■

look at the structures in place that permit gender-based violence to exist and persist.

November 28-December 6

Hanukkah

December 10

Human Rights Day

December 26-January 1

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday based on the agricultural celebration of the times of harvest, gathering, reverence, commemoration of the past, recommitment to cultural ideals, and celebration of the good.

Welcome Aboard ● ● ●

Interns Melissa Yerena and Sydney Flock



My full name is **Melissa Yerena**. I live in Evansville, Wisconsin. I'm a current student at Madison College getting my Spanish Certificate. I want to become a Spanish interpreter hopefully for the courts in Wisconsin, or have my own interpreter agency. In my free time I enjoy tutoring students where I live. Also, I enjoy baking a lot for my family. ■■



My name is **Sydney Flock**, and I am from Wisconsin Dells. I am in my final semester of Madison College's ABA Paralegal Program. After completion of my program, I will be taking the State Bar of Wisconsin Certified Paralegal Exam. I plan on furthering my education at UW-Milwaukee next fall, majoring in Political Science.

I am a big Wisconsin sports fan; the Bucks are my favorite team. In my free time, I love to cook. I also enjoy hiking at Devil's Lake with my Saint Bernard.

I am looking forward to working with you all and learning as much as I can! ■■

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and Wisconsin Department of Transportation for federally funded projects, expanding outreach and networks for TBEs

- Automatic consideration for WHEDA projects

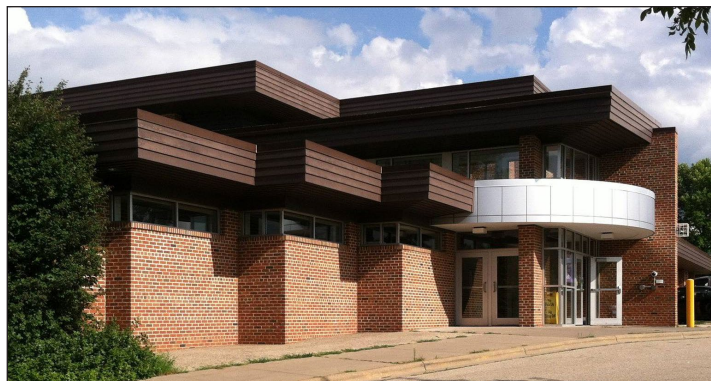
We are making our application process more equitable and accessible. It will soon be online and will be easier to fill out, automatically removing questions unrelated to the applicant's industry or certification. Needed documentation will be specified. We plan to launch the application in multiple languages and accept alternative forms of submissions, such as video recordings.

For more information: Check out our [applications](#) and [steps to certification](#)!

Questions: Email TargetedBusinessEnterprise@CityofMadison.com. ■■

Kirsten Donkle, Affirmative Action Specialist

Neighborhood Resource Teams



Anana Elementary School, Facebook

Community Renames School with Hammersley Theresa NRT Support

Falk Elementary School became Milele Chikasa Anana Elementary School, after the Madison School Board approved the renaming proposal Monday. Board members voted unanimously to name the west-side school in honor of the late Chikasa Anana, the community leader and magazine publisher who died in May 2020.

Chikasa Anana was also the City's first Affirmative Action Coordinator and started the Women's Initiatives Committee and the Multicultural Affairs Committee. ■■



Allied Neighborhood Bike Giveaway was a huge success.

- 25 kids learned how to ride a bike
- Over 50 bikes fixed
- 80 bikes given away
- 100 helmets given away
- Over 350 participants
- 55 individual volunteers
- 20 different partners and providers

