

June 15, 2021

## Session 1 - Fundamentals of Teaming and Partnering

### About the Speakers



#### **Anisha Jackson - Supplier Diversity Manager**

##### **American Family Insurance**

Anisha Jackson joined American Family Insurance in September 2020 to launch their Supplier Diversity Program. She has broad finance, sourcing & procurement experience in the telecom industry through various roles with H&R Block, CenturyLink, Ericsson and T-Mobile (formerly Sprint). Her passion for diversity and inclusion, and desire to make a difference in her community led her to build a best-in-class supplier diversity program for Ericsson while also serving as Co-Secretary on the board of the Technology Industry Group. Under her leadership, Ericsson's supplier diversity program received multiple awards from national organizations recognizing the program's contributions and leadership in advancing supplier diversity.



#### **Eric Ness - District Director**

##### **U.S. Small Business Administration**

Eric Ness is the director for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Wisconsin District Office, one of 68 SBA field offices nationally. He is responsible for the delivery of SBA programs and services throughout the Badger State, helping small businesses start, grow, expand, and recover from adversity. Ness began his SBA career in 1990 as a commercial loan officer, working on both processing and liquidation of loans. He has served as finance chief and assistant district director for economic development. He was selected for his current position in December 2001. In spring 2014 he served as acting regional administrator for the SBA's six-state Great Lakes region for several months.



#### **Adonica Randall – President and Chief Problem Solver**

##### **Abaxent, LLC**

Adonica Randall is President and Chief Problem Solver of Abaxent, LLC, an 18 year-old certified MBE/WBE technology solutions company. With over 35 years of technical and business experience she has specialized in development of business startups, new services and process improvement, with experience across a variety of industries including healthcare, insurance, manufacturing and construction. She is a well-recognized as a thought leader that speaks widely on the future of women and minorities in STEM careers. Adonica is a Professor Emeritus from Alverno College Business School - Computing and Information Technology and Business Analytics.



#### **Jean Marie Thiel - President and CEO**

##### **Belonger Corporation, Inc.**

Jean Marie Thiel owns and operates a specialty trades Mechanical Contracting Company including all HVAC/R aptitudes, waste-water, plumbing, and medical gas, and also providing services in Construction Management, Facility Management, and Energy Based Performance Contracting. Experience in construction and services industry going on 33 years, specializing in federal agency procurement emphasis on contract compliance with joint venturing and mentoring opportunities. Ms. Thiel founded Belonger Corporation, a mechanical and plumbing firm in March 2000.

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#### **Pete Coffaro - Deputy Director, Community Outreach and Business Engagement - Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District**

Pete Coffaro oversees District contracting and works to align procurement opportunities with social responsibility policies, such as diverse business participation and local workforce goals. His team also manages the Workforce and Business Development Resource Program to help develop local workers and small, diverse businesses to participate on District projects. Pete is also responsible for leading the District's workforce equity and inclusion efforts in all District procurement. For the prior five years, Pete served in several leadership capacities at Employ Milwaukee, the State of Wisconsin's largest workforce board.

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#### **Robert L. Simpson - Director Business Development Aon Diversity Solutions**

Robert is a director, business development, within Aon's centralized supplier and business diversity platform, known as Aon Diversity Solutions (ADS). He is responsible for leading the implementation of supplier and business diversity best practices to exceed Aon and client goals and objectives for diverse supplier engagement across the Central, South and Southeast markets.

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#### **Jessie Leonard - Associate Director, WBE Certification/Milwaukee Women's Business Development Center**

The Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) is a 501(c)(3) nationally recognized leader in the field of women's economic development. The organization was founded in 1986 to provide programs and services to support and accelerate women's business ownership and strengthen the impact of women on the economy by creating jobs, fueling economic growth, and building strong communities. The mission of the Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) is to support and accelerate business development and growth, targeting women and serving all diverse business owners, in order to strengthen their participation in, and impact on, the economy.

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#### **Aina Vilumsons - CEO Wisconsin Procurement Institute**

WPI Assists businesses in creating, developing and growing their sales, revenue and jobs through Federal, State and Local Government contracts. WPI offers: Individual Counseling at our offices, at client's facilities or via telephone/GoToMeeting; Small Group Training through workshops and webinars; Conferences to include one-on-one or roundtable sessions. Last year WPI provided training at over 100 events and provided service to over 1,200 companies.