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## NAWBO-LA ONLINE NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2008 ISSUE

**Welcome!** to the NAWBO-LA ONLINE NEWSLETTER, a vehicle for communication for the National Association of Women Business Owners - Los Angeles Chapter (NAWBO-LA).

In this issue, we provide highlights from NAWBO-LA's second annual Membership Drive & Diversity Expo, including valuable advice provided by an esteemed panel on how best to pursue corporate and government contracting opportunities. We also discuss the latest news on the public policy front and update you on benefits provided through NAWBO-LA's corporate and affiliate partnerships. Stay tuned as we continue to bring you the information you need to strengthen and grow your business and help propel you into economic, social and political spheres of power!

### [Membership Drive & Diversity Expo Builds Connections](#)

*Attendees learn about procurement and develop business opportunities, while NAWBO-LA adds to its membership base as it works to further support women business owners*

### [Expo Attendees Learn Firsthand About Procurement Prospects](#)

*Corporate and government officials participate in a luncheon panel at the NAWBO-LA Membership Drive & Diversity Expo, serving up valuable advice about how to pursue contracts*

### [NAWBO-LA Enhances Public Policy Advocacy](#)

*Building upon the success of past initiatives, formalized public policy committee will establish new processes to give an even greater voice to women business owners on key issues*

### [Partnerships Create Added Member Benefits](#)

*New and expanded NAWBO-LA corporate and affiliate partner relationships help the organization better serve members and empower women business owners*

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### **About the NAWBO-LA Online Newsletter**

*In each issue of the NAWBO-LA Online Newsletter, we strive to provide timely and valuable information and resources to the entrepreneurial community and share our mission of empowering and inspiring women entrepreneurs into economic, social and political spheres of leadership. The NAWBO-LA Online Newsletter is published six times yearly by NAWBO-LA and written by Mindy Berman/Mindy F. Berman Communications. The publication months are February, April, June, August, October and December. NAWBO-LA's Online Newsletter editor may be reached at [newsletter@nawbola.org](mailto:newsletter@nawbola.org).*

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**Membership Drive & Diversity Expo Builds Connections**

*Attendees learn about procurement and develop business opportunities, while NAWBO-LA adds to its membership base as it works to further support women business owners*

NAWBO-LA's second annual Membership Drive & Diversity Expo, held in September, helped the organization grow its membership ranks while assisting women business owners in making beneficial connections and building resources.

One of many valued-added NAWBO-LA membership initiatives, this year's highly successful event provided the approximately 180 attendees with insight into corporate and government agency procurement opportunities – ranked as the second most important statewide policy concern (after health care) in a recent NAWBO-LA survey. ([click here](#) for accompanying story on the procurement panel speakers.)

In addition, as a result of the expo, NAWBO-LA gained 20 new members, further adding to the organization's ability to showcase strength in numbers as it represents the voice of women business owners through the Los Angeles region.

NAWBO-LA President Jane Skeeter explained to those at the event, "We want to increase our membership numbers and help leverage your voice. Join us as we continue to open doors for all women, women business owners, our daughters and granddaughters."



*Exhibitors, panelists and attendees at the 2008 Membership Drive & Diversity Expo. (click image to enlarge)*

**Expo Highlights**

The expo provided attendees the opportunity not only to hear from corporate and government agency speakers on procurement, but also to network and learn about products and services from 30-plus exhibitors, and to attend two valuable workshops. The first, presented by the Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC-West), gave details about certification of women business enterprises ([click here](#) for story), while the second, offered by the California Department of General Services, provided additional insight into how to do business with government agencies.

For Décor Interior Design, Inc. owner Ronda Jackson, who joined NAWBO-LA at the expo, the event already showcased the value of membership. "It was very, very good," she said. "Some of the information was new to me, which was very refreshing."

About NAWBO-LA, she added, "I'm looking forward to the sisterhood and to plant my legacy among like-minded women."

**Membership Benefits**

New members like Jackson, as well as existing members, can tap into a wide array of benefits and services through NAWBO-LA membership, including:

- Member discounts for all NAWBO-LA events and programs
- New member-only dinner workshops (*coming soon!*)
- Member highlight opportunities on the NAWBO-LA website
- Subscription to the NAWBO-LA e-Bulletins and Online Newsletter
- Access to capacity-building educational opportunities, such as the PEAK Leadership Academy<sup>SM</sup> premier educational program, plus competition-based scholarships toward enrollment in the Management Development for Entrepreneurs Program at UCLA's Anderson School of Management

There's much more, including the business opportunities and corporate connections provided by NAWBO-LA. For example, at this year's expo attendees had the ability to network with representatives of the event's sponsors/partners:

- Presenting Sponsor: Southern California Edison
- Diversity Sponsor: U.S. Bank
- Affiliated Partner: WBEC-West

To learn more about how NAWBO-LA propels women business owners into economic, social and political spheres of influence, and how to tap into the power of an established community of women business owners, visit [www.nawbola.org](http://www.nawbola.org).



*Attendees and exhibitors at the 2008 Membership Drive & Diversity Expo. (click image to enlarge)*

### Scholarship Recipients Recognized at Expo

NAWBO-LA's recent Membership Drive & Diversity Expo also featured recognition of this year's recipients of scholarships toward enrollment in the Management Development for Entrepreneurs (MDE) Program offered by UCLA's Anderson School of Management.

Each year, the Enterprise Institute of NAWBO-LA – the organization's 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable organization – offers a unique opportunity for women business owners to compete for these scholarships as part of its mission of accelerating initiatives that promote entrepreneurship by women.

The MDE Program enables participants to develop essential management skills and strengthen their ability to build and manage effective organizations. UCLA's Anderson School of Management, Union Bank of California and the Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC-West) generously underwrote this year's scholarships.

Congratulations to the 2008 recipients:

- Teri Black-Brann, Teri Black & Company
- Judy Gatena, Abacus One Computer Supplies, Inc.
- Alice Plato, Alice Plato Properties
- Wora Rapp, Legal Video Services

To learn more about the Enterprise Institute Scholarship Program, visit [www.nawbola.org/resources/scholarship.php](http://www.nawbola.org/resources/scholarship.php).

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**Expo Attendees Learn Firsthand About Procurement Prospects**

*Corporate and government officials participate in a luncheon panel at the NAWBO-LA Membership Drive & Diversity Expo, serving up valuable advice about how to pursue contracts*

Attendees at NAWBO-LA's second annual Membership Drive & Diversity Expo, held in September, heard from an esteemed luncheon panel that provided advice and guidance about how to do business with large corporations, ways to secure government agency contracting bids, and how to qualify for supplier diversity programs. Here are highlights of the panel discussion, moderated by NAWBO-LA President Jane Skeeter. ([click here](#) for accompanying story.)



*L-R: Danetta Jackson, Department of General Services; Ken Ashford, Metropolitan Water District; Christine Simmons, Walt Disney Company; and Robin Billups, U.S. Bank. (click image to enlarge)*

**The Walt Disney Company**

**Speaker: Christine Simmons, Manager, Supplier Diversity and Sustainability**

Simmons said the demographic data validates "why we do what we do," given that women make 80% of purchasing decisions and represent more than half of corporate buyers. She noted she believes that diverse firms, including women-owned businesses, are "more creative and hungry" and "bring innovative solutions to the table."

To open doors within Disney, she highly recommended certification, such as that offered through the Women's Business Enterprise Council-West, know as WBEC-West ([click here](#) for accompanying newsletter story for more details on WBEC-West certification). She said Disney also accepts other third-party certification verifications.

However, it's not enough to get certified and wait for the phone to ring. "Show how you can provide solutions," Simmons said. "Do your homework. Tell me why Disney can't live without your product. Don't just come and say I'm a women business enterprise as your 'value add.'"

Another opportunity, she said, lies in Disney's commitment to greener initiatives and productions. "That's another value add," Simmons noted. "Think about how to green your business or product."

For more information, and to register for Disney's supplier diversity database, visit [www.supplierdiversity.disney.com](http://www.supplierdiversity.disney.com).

**US Bank**

**Speaker: Robin Billups, National Supplier Diversity Manager**

Billups – who said she understands the need to be supportive after spending years in business situations where she was the only woman and/or minority – spoke of the bank's commitment to an inclusionary process, noting that demographics show most new businesses are owned by women. "The vendors we do business with should replicate the communities we do business in," she said. "My job is to help create an inclusionary process in everything we procure."

To help make this happen, Billups said, the bank is working to bring to the table other business partners to determine key learnings, plus internal partners to become supplier diversity champions. She also noted the commitment of the bank's new chief procurement officer to establish business liaisons within the company's "silos of business."

For women business owners, Billups said certification is needed "to get in the game." In addition, she recommended becoming active in professional organizations to make connections and to look for champions throughout the potential contract organization. Finally, she suggested creating alliances with other companies that may have a national presence but need a firm to handle their local activities.

"Once you get in, we can help grow you," she said.

To find out more, and to complete the bank's supplier profile registration, visit [www.usbank.com/supplierdiversity](http://www.usbank.com/supplierdiversity).

**California Department of General Services**

**Speaker: Danetta Jackson, Manager, Communication and Outreach Branch, Procurement Division**

California currently purchases more than \$9.6 billion annually in goods, services and construction, with the Small Business Certification Program designed to "allow small businesses a more level playing field," according to Jackson. She noted that the state

mandates a 25% contracting level with small businesses, which it exceeded last year and continues to try to increase.

The state offers a quick, free certification process which is accessible online 24/7 (have tax returns handy to complete it) and provides certified small businesses and micro businesses a 5% bid preference on applicable state solicitations. There are approximately 30 other "reciprocity partners" that accept the state's certification. Plus, larger contractors looking for subcontractors can review certified small businesses in the state's database.

Jackson said that once a business gets certified, "first do some homework on each state department's mission and where you fit." The California State Contracts Register provides extensive information on state contract opportunities, and the state's Consolidated Annual Report breaks down each department's purchases.

In addition, state agencies make available small business advocates to serve as liaisons on contracting issues, and the state holds education and business opportunity enhancement events for small businesses.

According to Jackson, when it comes to the bottom line, "we would like to see more small businesses get certified and get contracts with the state."

Additional information, along with a certification link, is available at [www.dgs.ca.gov](http://www.dgs.ca.gov) (see "Quick Links: Doing Business With the State"). To access information on upcoming small business events, log onto [www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/recipro/events.htm](http://www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/recipro/events.htm).

#### **Metropolitan Water District of Southern California ( MWD)**

##### **Speaker: Kenneth Ashford, Business Outreach Representative**

The Small Business Program at MWD (a cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving 18 million people in Southern California) is gender-neutral, with an 18% small business contract goal – which the agency has greatly exceeded in recent years. To assist small businesses, MWD applies incentive credits to bids from firms qualified in this category and to those located in the region.

"We support organizations like NAWBO-LA to help their members build capacity to do business with MWD and the government," Ashford said, noting that firms qualified through MWD's self-certification program also become certified with the state as a micro business and with several other regional agencies.

Ashford recommended that small businesses attend pre-bid conferences to market themselves to prime contractors requiring small business subcontractors – "large prime contractors need you and you need them," he said.

Also, he suggested that small businesses look at public agencies' capital improvement budgets for information on key projects, and keep in mind long budget process lead times. For example, he said that now (the October-November timeframe) public agencies already are working on their 2009-2010 budgets.

Before pursuing a contract, Ashford advised to "make sure you're ready to do business with the government and have your financial house in order." For businesses that do bid on a contract and come in second, he said to ask for a debrief, so "you'll know how to position yourself the next time around."

To learn more, and complete MWD's self-certification, visit [www.mwdh2o.com](http://www.mwdh2o.com) and click on "Doing Business."

Thanks to all of the 2008 Membership Drive & Diversity Expo speakers, and stay tuned for more valuable events coming soon.

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**NAWBO-LA Enhances Public Policy Advocacy**

*Building upon the success of past initiatives, formalized public policy committee will establish new processes to give an even greater voice to women business owners on key issues*

As NAWBO-LA continues to rise to new heights, a formalized public policy committee chaired by new board Vice President of Public Policy Wendy Mitchell will set up processes for taking and communicating positions on issues of importance to women business owners.

Mitchell, with a 15-year record of senior strategic planning positions in both California state government and the private sector, said the committee's work also will enable NAWBO-LA members to further amplify their voices and gain additional access via the organization to state and local decision-makers.

Other members of the committee include President-Elect Daphne Anneet, Vice President of Membership Madelyn Alfano, and new board member Gayla Kraetsch-Hartsough.

"In recognition of the diversity and strength of women entrepreneurs, NAWBO-LA increasingly is asked to weigh in on policy issues," said Anneet. "This reflects the value and importance of the organization. We're being asked to be at the table because of who we are and who our members are."

Added Mitchell, "The committee will allow us to weigh issues carefully and look at which warrant taking a position on, plus enable NAWBO-LA members to engage on a new level, stay current on key issues and become even more influential with their collective voice."



**About NAWBO-LA's 2008-09 Vice President of Public Policy**

Vice President of Public Policy Wendy Mitchell, new to the NAWBO-LA board this year, brings knowledge, experience and political access to her NAWBO-LA role. Recruited to the board by former Vice President of Public Policy Susan McCabe, she succeeds Mary

McCormick in this role.

Currently principal of WM Consulting, Inc., Mitchell is a veteran of the California State Assembly and State Senate. She previously served as chief of staff to powerful Senate Budget Chair, Denise Moreno Ducheny (D-San Diego); senior budget consultant in the California State Assembly; liaison to the Latino Legislative Caucus; and legislative consultant to the Senate Majority Caucus and the California Senate Majority Leader. She also worked extensively in external, government and public affairs in the private sector.

In addition to running her own firm, Mitchell currently serves as Los Angeles City Council Member Jack Weiss' appointee to the Mulholland Design Review Board (a Los Angeles City Planning advisory board) and sits on the board of the California League of Conservation Voters.

**A Foundation of Public Policy Successes**

The committee's work builds on past public policy initiatives, with credit going to current NAWBO National President Cynthia McClain-Hill (a former NAWBO-LA president) and Renee White Fraser (a past president of both NAWBO-LA and the Enterprise Institute of NAWBO-LA) for spearheading much of the organization's previous policy leadership.

A few examples of previous policy initiatives and activities include:

- Anneet's and current board President Jane Skeeter's participation in this year's Access Washington, D.C. trip – organized by the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa – where they joined more than 200 business and civic leaders and represented the voice of women business owners. This builds upon NAWBO-LA leaders' and members' participation in the chamber's annual Access Sacramento advocacy visit to the state capital.
- Skeeter's additional involvement in the 2008 Border Governors Conference, designed to develop agreements and policies to address regional issues.
- Mitchell's participation in the California Environmental Protection Agency Small Business Roundtable in Sacramento.
- NAWBO-LA's role in 2008 as a founding member of the Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed) – a large-scale, grassroots alliance of regional business organizations that offers tools to communicate instantaneously with decision-makers and effectively advocate to create a better economic and political environment.
- NAWBO-LA's active engagement in the statewide process to reform the health care system, including a panel discussion for members featuring the governor's health policy advisor and the League of Women Voters-Los Angeles' health care consultant.
- The participation of board President Skeeter and board member Maria de Lourdes Sobrino last year in a trade mission trip to Mexico City with Mayor Villaraigosa and other local business and policy leaders.
- Extensive work with then-State Assemblyman Mark Ridley-Thomas that garnered the attention of legislators and led to the 2004 passage of Assembly Bill 1643 to establish a new contract service provider designation that protects small businesses and independent contractors.

**A Commitment to a Strong Policy Future**

As NAWBO-LA moves forward with additional public policy advocacy that advances the interests of women business owners, it will take into account the results of a recent survey of members and other stakeholders about state and local policy priorities. The organization also plans to establish a team to address sustainability issues both from a business and social

responsibility perspective.

Noted Skeeter, "It's all about strengthening the organization and the members who form our core."

**Public Policy Breakfast with Cal/EPA Secretary Linda Adams**  
**Thursday, October 23, 2008; 8:00am - 9:30am**  
**Maria's Downtown**  
**615 South Flower Street, Los Angeles CA 90017**

Join us at a Public Policy Breakfast with Linda Adams, Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency. She will discuss AB 32, the Governor's green initiatives and his vision for growing California's green economy.



Linda Adams, former director of the California Department of Water Resources, was appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in May 2006 as Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency – making her the first woman to serve as head of the agency.

As Cal/EPA's Secretary, Adams oversees the environmental activities of the Air Resources Board, California Integrated Waste Management Board, State Water Resources Control Board, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, Department of Toxic Substances Control, Department of Pesticide Regulation, and the approximately 5,000 employees that serve the state's diverse environmental programs.

Immediately upon appointment, Secretary Adams was designated as Governor Schwarzenegger's lead negotiator on AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. Adams is now working closely with states, provinces and countries around the world to develop a network of climate initiatives to achieve the greatest global reductions.

**Registration:**

Limited seating. Attendance is \$30. Please contact NAWBO-LA's office at 213.622.3200 or [events@nawbola.org](mailto:events@nawbola.org) by Friday, October 17, to reserve your seat.

**Speaker of the Assembly Bass Installs New Boards**

California Speaker of the Assembly Karen Bass (D-Los Angeles), fresh off of helping resolve California's budget stalemate, served as the installation officer for the 2008-09 NAWBO-LA and Enterprise Institute of NAWBO-LA Boards of Directors on Sept. 23.

She noted, "I'm so impressed with the quality of women business owners involved in NAWBO-LA. I encourage all of these women to engage in public policy processes on issues that impact their businesses, communities and the entire state – and that starts with making sure they vote on Nov. 4. Longer term, working through NAWBO-LA to make their voices heard, women business owners can truly affect policy for the betterment of their own businesses and the rest of society for years to come."

For information on the measures on the Nov. 4 ballot, visit California's General Election website at [www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov](http://www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov).



(click image to enlarge)

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**Partnerships Create Added Member Benefits**

*New and expanded NAWBO-LA corporate and affiliate partner relationships help the organization better serve members and empower women business owners*

NAWBO-LA continues to build and enhance its roster of corporate and affiliate partners that support its mission of propelling women entrepreneurs into economic, social and political spheres of power.

Corporate partnerships meet the needs of both women business owners and of the larger business community by enabling corporations to tap into an established community of successful women entrepreneurs. Affiliate partners build upon these advantages by creating mutual benefits that strengthen the capacity of women business owners.

This newsletter issue looks at NAWBO-LA's newest corporate partner, Manufacturers Bank, and at additional value created by a stepped-up relationship with affiliate partner Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC-West).



**Manufacturers Bank**

Founded in 1962 in downtown Los Angeles, Manufacturers Bank serves the specialized needs of California middle market businesses, including small business companies. The bank will showcase its commitment as a corporate partner by sponsoring new member-only evening events in 2009 featuring informative workshops, well-connected speakers and more.

Manufacturers Bank offers a variety of specialized products and services that can meet the needs of NAWBO-LA members, including but not limited to commercial loans and lines of credit, cash management services, asset-based financing, and deposit, merchant, and insurance and investment services. In addition, the bank provides business owners:

- Market update e-mails immediately following Federal Reserve meetings/decisions
- A quarterly business improvement series
- Annual economic summits

"Our experienced relationship bankers take the time to know you personally, understand your goals, help identify opportunities and provide an unequalled level of relationship-based banking services to help you better manage your business," said Vice President/Integration Sales Manager Cindy Rude. "We are unique in the market. Large banks do not offer the entrepreneurial company the kind of focus, attention and experience we are able to provide. Smaller banks cannot keep pace with the growing company's increasing need for credit and cash management services."

Rude added, "Manufacturers Bank looks forward to developing a strong relationship and partnership with NAWBO. We understand the importance of supporting and providing solutions and opportunities to women business owners. Over the years we have assisted many women business owners in growing their businesses and providing them with solutions. Our objective is to find the right solution for each client and add value to them. In order to do this we provide seminars and business-to-business connections with business experts."

To learn more about the bank, visit [www.manubank.com](http://www.manubank.com).



**Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC-West)**

As a regional partner of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), WBEC-West implements the women business enterprise (WBE) certification standards of WBENC, a nationally recognized and accepted certification by over 750 major corporations and government entities.

Certification serves as a tool for women business owners to gain access to potential procurement opportunities through corporate supplier diversity programs, plus to access corporate supplier diversity representatives.

Some of the key certification benefits include:

- National recognition by major U.S. corporations and public agencies as a certified WBE.
- Eligibility to exhibit at WBENC's national business conference.
- Automatic inclusion in WBENCLink, WBENC's Internet database of certified WBEs, which is accessible by WBENC's corporate members and other certified WBEs across the country.
- Access to a current list of supplier diversity and procurement executives at thousands of major U.S. corporations and other entities.
- Use of the WBENC member seal on marketing materials, which identifies a women business enterprise as certified through WBENC's national network.
- Eligibility to receive sourcing opportunities through WEBuy (WBENC's e-mail opportunity network).
- Eligibility to participate in WBENC-discuss (WBENC's e-mail information network).

As part of its enhanced relationship with NAWBO-LA, WBEC-West now offers NAWBO-LA members a **10% discount** on the WBE certification fee. Plus, this year WBEC-West sponsored one of the Enterprise Institute of NAWBO-LA scholarships awarded toward enrollment in the Management Development for Entrepreneurs (MDE) Program offered by UCLA's Anderson School of Management.

"The enhanced relationship between NAWBO-LA and WBEC-West provides tremendous value to both organizations," said WBEC-West Executive Director Pamela Williamson, Ph.D. "NAWBO-LA provides a variety of resources to our certified WBEs. Through our enhanced

partnership, WBEC-West is able to reach a larger audience, educating women business owners about the resources available to them and the benefits of certification.”

Of WBEC-West’s MDE scholarship sponsorship, Williamson noted, “Education for women business enterprises is vital to developing their business and increasing their ability to compete in a global economy. Through the support of scholarship programs such as NAWBO-LA’s we are able to expand our reach and help to create opportunities beyond our constituency.”

To find out more about WBEC-West certification, visit [www.wbec-west.org](http://www.wbec-west.org) or call (480) 969-9232.

For additional information about NAWBO-LA’s complete partnership program, log onto [www.nawbola.org/partners](http://www.nawbola.org/partners).

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