

Columbia University

Minority, Women and Local Construction Trade Certificate/Mentorship Program Report

Comprehensive report covering January 2008 - December 2014

September 2015

Table of Contents

3 Executive Summary

3 Background

5 The Minority, Women and Local Construction Trade Certificate/Mentorship Program

- 5 Mentorship Program Vision
- 5 Program Development
- 6 Program Objectives
- 7 Program Participants
- 8 Program Team: Instructors, Staff, and Volunteers
- 9 Program Cohorts
- 13 Supporting the Program
- 13 Program Costs
- 14 Success Stories

18 Program Results and Conclusions

- 18 Program Impact
- 19 Program Survey Results
- 20 Promising Practices
- 26 Intangible Learnings
- 27 Challenges
- 29 Conclusion

30 Recommendations

35 Appendices

- 35 Program Timeline
- 36 Presentation Tips
- 37 Small Business Success Attribute Checklist
- 38 Business Assistance Programs
- 41 Acronyms



About this Report

Columbia University commissioned Interise to create this final report for the Mentorship Program. Based on its experience in providing entrepreneurial education for small businesses in local communities, Interise is uniquely positioned to assess the impacts of the Mentorship Program, correlate the impacts with the successes of minority, women, and locally owned business enterprises (MWLBE) that participated in the program, and provide recommendations for the future. Adventium was hired by Interise to draft and design this report.

Executive Summary

This report examines the Columbia University Minority, Women and Local (MWL) Construction Trade Certificate/Mentorship Program (Program) from January 2008–December 2014. The Program evolved over six years of operation and was managed in partnership with the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS). It garnered city, state and national recognition. Eighty-six small and mid-sized construction trade firms were accepted into the Program. Seventy-eight firms in four cohorts graduated from the Program and received \$33 million in construction and maintenance contract spend with the University as of December 2014.

The Program was designed to help firms gain the knowledge and skills to bid on large-scale projects. Not all the firms accepted into the program graduated, and not all firms that graduated received contracts from the University. Today, a few of the graduating firms are no longer in business. However, many owners of businesses that survived the economic downturn took advantage of the education provided by Columbia and the technical assistance provided through SBS to enhance their business.

As an anchor institution, Columbia University undertook the Program as part of a larger initiative to expand the number of Minority-, Women- and Locally-owned Business Enterprises (MWLBE) in the daily construction and maintenance programming within the the University's Facilities Department.¹ Under the leadership of then Facilities Executive Vice President, Joe Ienuso, MWL workforce and contracting inclusion became one of the main priorities for Facilities alongside the construction and maintenance goals of “on time, on budget, and quality performance.” These priorities included Facilities managed project, as well as any construction or maintenance projects not directly managed by Facilities but falling within its purview.

While the Program was successful with many of its objectives being met, after more than five years of operations, it has been decided that a new design is needed to meet the number one objective – to build a pipeline of MWL firms prepared to compete on larger projects. Recommendations for an anchor institution seeking to create a successful mentorship program include a strong internal sponsor, expertise and resources to design and implement the program, community partners, MWLBE support networks, and collaboration with local industry, corporate, governmental, and institutional entities. Based on observations gleaned during the Mentorship Program and feedback from procurement officers, a checklist was created that contains attributes that correlate with success by MWBE construction firms contracting with anchor institutions. Attributes include strong marketing skills; proficiency in financial, operational, and industry requirements; proficiency in business technology; excellent customer service and understanding of client protocols; possession of bonding and insurance requirements; and attainment of required licenses and certifications.



Program mentees William Diaz, Jr. and Deb Romain networking with Colleen Galvin from SBS

Background

On October 3, 2002, Columbia University President Lee Bollinger was inaugurated as Columbia's 19th president. In his inaugural address, he reminded those in attendance of two key facts regarding Columbia: the University's role and responsibility within its community, and the need to expand the University's physical space. In his address, President Bollinger emphasized that “Columbia is integrated into the fabric of the neighborhoods and the City. We share life with our neighbors and we have great responsibility to them.” He continued to explain Columbia's importance to New York City, accounting for over a billion dollars a year to the City economy, and generating more than 10,000 jobs and spending \$418 million in research in the previous year.²

¹ Anchor institutions are universities, hospitals, cultural institutions and other place-based enterprises that represent a potent potential force for local economic development. <http://www.governing.com/gov-institute/voices/col-communities-local-government-anchor-institutions-democracy-collaborative-dashboard.html>, accessed on March 2015

²Lee C. Bollinger's Inaugural Address, October 3, 2002; <http://www.columbia.edu/node/8323.html>

President Bollinger described Columbia as “the quintessential great urban University,” and also the most constrained for space—a state of affairs, he said, that could not last. “To fulfill our responsibilities and aspirations, Columbia must expand significantly over the next decade. Whether we expand on the property we already own on Morningside Heights, Manhattanville, or Washington Heights, or whether we pursue a design of multiple campuses in the City or beyond, is one of the most important questions [Columbia] will face in the years ahead.”

In the audience listening to President Bollinger was then-Facilities Assistant Vice President Joe Ienuso, who would soon be tasked to lead the Facilities organization and build the new Manhattanville campus.

Five years after President Bollinger’s inaugural speech, Columbia was in the process of planning a new campus in Upper Manhattan to address the space needs of the University’s students and faculty. Facilities leadership—reminded of President Bollinger’s words about the University’s responsibility to its community—recognized that Facilities had an opportunity to be a catalyst for diversity in construction contracting and workforce, through a multi-decade construction project that would award millions of dollars to construction businesses and a significant amount of ongoing construction and maintenance work taking place on the existing campuses.

Columbia increased its MWLBE construction trade contracting goal from 25 percent to 35 percent, and also set a MWL construction workforce goal of 40 percent for all construction bid solicitations and signed contracts University-wide.



Figure 1: Columbia University local zip code area³
17 zip codes include: Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (UMEZ) and the South Bronx

Source: Columbia University Facilities

³ “Local contracting and workforce” was defined as the 17 zip codes within the New York Empowerment Zone, which includes most of Upper Manhattan above 96th Street and four zip codes within the South Bronx (see Figure 1).

Joe Ienuso, who was now Executive Vice President of Columbia University Facilities, recommended and ultimately included MWL language within the Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions with Empire State Development (ESD) and the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA). The inclusion of this language in these long term governing documents cemented the importance of Columbia's commitment and made it transparent to all who engaged with the University.



Joe Ienuso (r) speaking with Mentorship Program participants

Facilities, in partnership with SBS, saw the potential to help MWL construction-trade firms build capacity to win and manage projects with large organizations, and begin the process of building a pipeline of qualified MWL firms to work with the University. From that potential, the Program was born.

[The Minority, Women and Local Construction Trade Certificate/ Mentorship Program](#)

Mentorship Program Vision

In 2007, Joe Ienuso recognized that many of the firms that had expressed interest in working with Columbia were not prepared for the demands of an institutional project. He became interested in developing a program that could help prepare MWL construction trade firms for the rigors associated with large projects. From the beginning, Joe's goal was to help firms learn to compete on a variety of construction projects with the University, the City of New York or any other large organization. In addition, he knew Columbia would benefit from expanding the number of MWLBs that could become qualified to bid on projects or work with prime contractors at Columbia. His long-range goals included expanding the percentage of MWL participation in normal, everyday operations.

In a meeting with SBS, Joe and then-SBS Commissioner Robert Walsh shared ideas on creating a special initiative to help MWL construction firms. SBS was already running a small construction training program and was enthusiastic about partnering with the University to create a MWL mentorship program. Columbia wanted to increase the amount of construction dollars spent with MWLBs, while the City wanted to increase the number of firms certified to work with the City and the amount of City contracts awarded to MWBEs. Additionally, with discussions around the campus expansion, there was potential for additional opportunities for MWL firms in the years to come. It would be important to build a strong pipeline of qualified MWL firms with the expertise to bid on projects in the coming decades.

Previous to this formation, there were mentorship programs for small, disadvantaged construction firms. However none explicitly linked the free technical assistance services of a governmental agency with the substantial capacity building curriculum supported by an Ivy League institution.

Program Development

As the head of Facilities, Joe served as the internal champion and shared his vision with the staff. Project managers and staff were asked to volunteer and support



Dennis Green, Director in the Columbia University School of Continuing Education, shares expectations and requirements of the Mentorship Program

the Program on top of their existing workload. Senior leadership committed to fostering MWL construction opportunities for Program participants inside and outside the Program. Because of the added commitment, it was vital for everyone involved to have a sense of ownership.

Many businesses, including MWLBes, need assistance obtaining the knowledge and capacity to comply with sophisticated construction requirements, as well as complex technical, administrative, and financial systems of large organizations. To help these firms thrive, Facilities and SBS took the initiative to offer a program that provided training and support for small and medium-size MWL construction trade firms (excluding professional services such as engineering and architecture) to successfully compete for contracts.

To recruit firms for the Program, Facilities hosted many information sessions with the help of project managers, community members, government representatives (including SBS), an advisory council, and construction leaders. Facilities also engaged non-profit partners and prime contractors to help with outreach efforts and to identify potential candidates.

Program objectives:

1. Build the capacity of individual businesses to help create a pipeline of qualified MWLBes capable of successfully performing work for large institutions and government agencies
2. Provide classroom training on the latest advances in the construction industry and business operation principles to improve each mentee firm's ability to successfully bid and work on large projects
3. Introduce key processes and procedures utilized by large organizations when selecting contractors
4. Introduce firms to a network of corporate construction buyers and certifying entities
5. Assist firms in becoming pre-qualified vendors of corporate construction buyers and certifying entities
6. Assist participants with bids and estimates
7. Offer mentoring through individual and group meetings
8. Present bidding opportunities with Columbia University and New York City
9. Create a learning community of instructors and peers
10. Educate firms to perform self-assessments to determine the type(s) of clients they are most capable of serving

The Program combined intensive academic training along with mentoring, technical assistance, networking, bidding opportunities and feedback from Columbia and New York City. By leveraging the expertise of Columbia, SBS, and industry experts, participants gained critical knowledge, skills, and insights to help them compete, win, and successfully perform.

Facilities conducted annual internal assessments to adjust, enhance, and improve the program to respond to the evolving needs of the construction industry and to address program participant feedback. The curriculum was modified and supplemental classes were added to address evolving industry challenges.

Each year, Program participants and alumni interacted with key project managers and decision makers from the University, City and corporate partners. All current participants and graduates were invited to

participate in networking events, special industry specific sessions, and informational sessions regarding upcoming opportunities.

The Program was based on several assumptions:

1. Firms knew their specific trade well
2. Firms wanted to grow their business by adding large institutional and governmental clients
3. Firms had little experience working with large institutions and governmental clients
4. Firms required in-depth knowledge on how to bid and perform these contracts

Once the program curriculum was assumed by the Columbia School of Continuing Education (SCE), graduating participants received a certificate of completion at a graduation ceremony. Family, friends, and construction industry contacts were all invited, creating another high level networking opportunity.

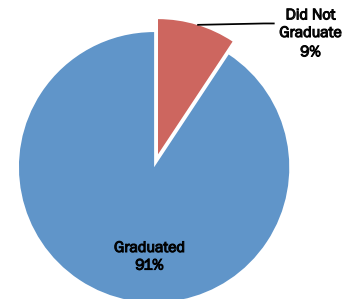
Program Participants

Since 2008, 86 firms were accepted into the program and 78 of those firms graduated, resulting in a 91% graduation rate (see Figure 2).

Eligibility for the Program included:

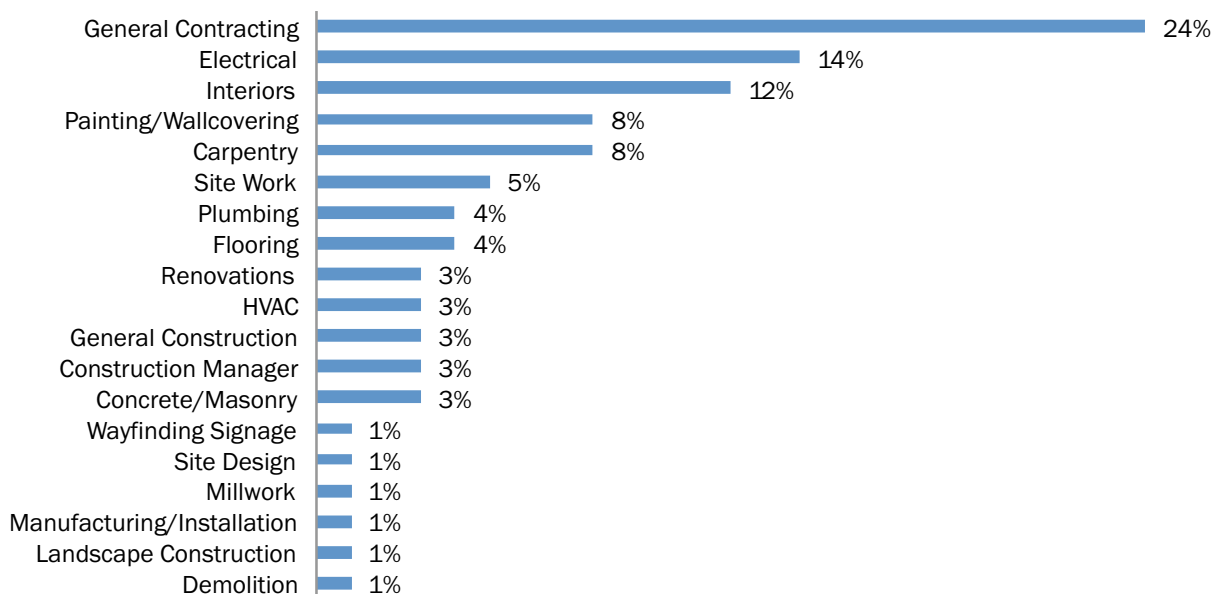
- Be classified as either a small or medium-size firm (bidding capability below \$1 million)
- Have bonding capacity below \$1 million
- Be certified (or working toward becoming certified) as a MWBE by a governmental agency or maintain a primary business address or have significant administrative operations in one of the designated 17 zip codes

Figure 2:
Program participation



Source: Columbia University Facilities

Figure 3: MWLBE trades



Source: Columbia University Facilities

Program participants came from the five boroughs of New York City, as well as Westchester County, Long Island, and New Jersey. The largest proportions of participant trades included firms in general contracting, electrical, and interiors. A list of the participating trades is shown in Figure 3. Both union and non-union firms participated in the program.

Program Team: Instructors, Staff, and Volunteers

A team of staff and volunteers from Columbia University, SBS, and the SBDC, as well as senior-level industry executives, were needed to support the program.

Columbia School of Continuing Education

In 2009, following the pilot year, the Program was enhanced by the expertise of the Columbia School of Continuing Education (SCE). They custom-tailored a rigorous professional development curriculum based on their expertise in administering the Construction Administration Master's Degree program and other Columbia University certificate programs.

Instructors

Classes were taught by University professors and senior leadership, as well as executives from leading construction, accounting, legal, insurance, bonding, and marketing companies such as Skanska, Lend Lease, Grassi & Co., Jones Lang LaSalle, and Aon.

Facilities

Day-to-day administration required two full-time staff (a program administrator and coordinator) who were dedicated to designing, implementing, and managing the program. Their responsibilities included conducting outreach, helping to coordinate instructors, securing classroom space, organizing networking events, coordinating the application and acceptance process, managing budgets, as well as measuring and monitoring MWLBE compliance goals. Program staff provided participants with technical assistance referrals, guidance on required paperwork to become a University vendor, University and City contract opportunities, and advice on performance and developmental issues. They also engaged with project managers and served as liaisons between Facilities and participant firms.

Mentors

Columbia's project managers, staff, and senior executives from construction-related firms volunteered their time to meet with each firm to provide customized guidance on understanding solicitations, pricing analysis, completing bid submittals, marketing, and networking. Additionally, the mentors provided advice regarding operational requirements such as how to successfully manage and schedule construction projects, payment requisitions, preparing and negotiating change orders, and completing project closeouts.

SBS and SBDC

SBS provided personalized technical assistance to program participants for certification, cost estimating, selling to government, connecting to the private sector, financing, bonding, proposal guidance, as well as aiding unsuccessful bidders and proposers in evaluating their bids and proposals. Columbia-Harlem SBDC offered one-on-one counseling with loan packaging, financial statement analysis, finance, accounting, and business plan creation.

Program Cohorts

Pilot Program - Cohort 1 (January 2008–December 2010):



Both Columbia University and SBS participated in the recruitment of firms, program design, and instructor selection for the three-year pilot program. The City University of New York (CUNY), which was already conducting a small contractor training program for SBS, was recruited to support the program.

SBS recommended CUNY to develop the curriculum and instruction for the first year while SBS provided technical assistance for the firms. Firms paid a \$25 fee per person per class, and up to five individuals per firm were able to participate.

Curriculum: *Blue-Print Reading & Construction Cost Estimating, Construction Law, Construction Finance & Accounting, Project Planning, Scheduling & Control, Site Safety, Bonding & Risk Management, Project Closeout, and Doing Business with Columbia University*

Mentorship: A project manager and program coordinator attended all classes, and met with firms individually to assist with completing the required documentation to become vendors in Columbia's vendor system, and provide clarifications regarding the University's procurement process. The program coordinator developed individual assessments of each firm to identify areas for growth. Project directors from Facilities Operations office served as mentors. Additionally, SBS staff provided participant firms with technical assistance and business resources.

First Year of Program - Cohort 2 (September 2009–August 2011):



The program duration was changed to two years, and participants were limited to two senior level administrators per firm. Facilities took the lead in program administration including recruitment, application and acceptance process, speaker selection, and evaluation. SCE was retained to provide an academic curriculum modeled on their Master of Construction

Administration program. A marketing component was added to the curriculum to help firms identify the needs of the client and to better understand their own strengths and weaknesses. Firms were placed into teams and presented marketing plans for a fictitious firm to a panel of judges including Joe Ienuso, who provided immediate feedback. Participants also engaged in networking opportunities with key project managers as well as City and University leadership. Columbia recommended successful program graduates to the Columbia Community Business Program (CCBP), a two-year executive education program designed to support the growth and development of businesses in Upper Manhattan. In addition, SBDC joined as a partner to offer additional technical assistance. Class fees were eliminated, and firms paid a minimal application fee for the entire program.

Curriculum: *Estimating, Cost Accounting, Safety, Project Scheduling, Construction Finance & Accounting, Marketing Construction Services, Human Resources, Communications Throughout Construction, Insurance & Bonds for the Construction Industry, Contracts, Claims & Legal, Future Trends (Technology & Sustainability)*

Mentorship: The University modified the mentorship component to include a highly experienced construction management program facilitator/instructor, Roy Wilson, of Wilson Management Associates. Wilson had helped to design the Columbia University Master's Program in Construction Administration and was enthusiastic about working with the Program. Facilities project managers and senior executives from Capital Project Management, Operations, Finance & Administration, and Construction Business Services also continued to serve as additional resources. SBS continued to provide technical assistance mentorship through its Director of Education and Training.

Second Year of Program - Cohort 3 (August 2010–June 2012):



A case study team competition was added to the program to enable better comprehension of the decision-making process that should occur when submitting bids. Each team had an executive from the construction industry who provided guidance as a mentor. After assessment, the communications and marketing components of the curriculum were revamped to require a

marketing plan presentation from each firm, to ensure they understood the importance of marketing to help their businesses grow. Facilities created a Mentorship Task Order contract, which offered a \$5,000 project award exclusively to program participants who had completed all required vendor paperwork. This small project award provided an opportunity for work to be awarded without bidding, project managers were able to assess competency on a lower risk project and MWLBES were able to gain first hand experience with the University without spending extensive time on bid packages.

Curriculum: *Overview of Construction Industry, Administration & Finance, Marketing & Communications, Estimating, Procurement, Cost Accounting, Safety, Insurance & Bonds, Project Planning & Scheduling, Construction Finance, Human Resources, Construction Disputes & Negotiations, Construction Law, Overview of Building Information Modeling (BIM), Overview of Green Technology*

Mentorship: Wilson continued to serve as the construction business management mentor, and senior executives from major construction firms also served as mentors for each case study team.

Third Year of Program (2011):

No new cohorts were added in 2011. During the third year, previous cohort activities continued and the program was restructured. Special sessions on Project Labor Agreements (PLA) and informational sessions regarding the large volume of bidding opportunities for summer work at Columbia were conducted.

Fourth Year of Program - Cohort 4 (January 2012–May 2013):



The team case study was introduced earlier than in previous cohorts, which enabled participants to refine it throughout the year and to enhance their understanding of the entire construction cycle. The Mentorship Program was expanded to become part of SBS' Corporate Alliance Program, including networking opportunities with four corporate partners: BNY Mellon, Con Edison, Goldman Sachs and National Grid. Each corporate

partner held sessions at their facilities to introduce program participants to key project managers, prime contractors, and supplier diversity staff. Firms received additional training with an intensive focus on marketing, including an introduction to social media, as well as a competition for the development of a three-year marketing plan for their company.

Curriculum: *Introduction to the Construction Industry, Marketing & Social Media, Communications and Branding, Estimating, Procurement, Cost Accounting & Overruns, Safety, Insurance & Bonds, Scheduling, Human Resources, Construction Finance, BIM Overview, Green Building, Construction Law, Researching Large Institutions*

Mentorship: Wilson again served as the construction business management mentor and additional mentorship was provided using an enhanced case study along with industry experts assigned to the various teams

Cohort 5: ADA Capacity Building (January 2013–December 2013):



An assessment of feedback from program graduates indicated a need for more in-depth training in topics such as estimating, bidding, construction paperwork and submittals, and mastering proper back office processes. The program strategy shifted from increasing the number of participant firms to expanding the capacity of existing graduate firms. This new initiative included refresher training,

as well as specialized training in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) construction procedures. The ADA curriculum was designed to provide specialized skill sets to differentiate ADA participants from other firms that performed their same trade. Only those firms that chose to participate in the ADA cohort could bid on the designated block of Columbia University ADA work, and contracts were awarded for all reasonable bids.

Thirty-four firms that completed the Program or the CCBP were invited to participate in the ADA initiative. Eighteen firms accepted the invitation and took part in the five-week training sessions, which included the actual RFP that would be used for the ADA project. Of the 14 firms that submitted bids, 12 were awarded contracts and two firms were unsuccessful due to extremely high bids.

The ADA work was overseen by a Facilities project manager, who engaged with each firm every day that work was performed, ensured firms had the right materials for their projects, and inspected the completed projects with an architect and the head of Columbia's ADA office to make sure the quality of the work and the spaces could be used as intended per ADA guidelines. Each firm's performance was evaluated from the bidding process, throughout construction to submission of final invoices.

Curriculum: *ADA Basic Training, ADA Bidding & Estimating, ADA Project Scheduling, ADA Contract Law, Columbia Building Familiarization, Columbia Finance & Administration, Columbia Vendor Protocol*

Mentorship: Facilities' Project Manager, Executive Director of Construction Business Services, Director of Design and Compliance, and Director of Administration served as mentors.

Building Information Modeling (BIM) (Fall 2013):

Facilities and the School of Continuing Education worked with Skanska and The General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen to host a pilot program to teach BIM to 23 minority and women contractors. The goal was to enhance knowledge of new construction technology and to help provide firms with a competitive advantage. As a result of this pilot program, Autodesk, the company that owns the BIM software, offered the software at a significant discount to The General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen. This course is now offered as a part of The General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen's ongoing curriculum.

Fifth Year of Program - Advanced ADA Capacity Building (May 2014–August 2014):

Based on evaluations from the project manager and other members of CBS, six firms that successfully participated in the initial ADA initiative were invited to compete for more complex ADA projects. Working with the project manager, a refresher session was held and five firms bid successfully and were awarded contracts.

Money Matters (June 2014–July 2014):

In partnership with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) and BOC Capital, Columbia University offered Money Matters courses to assist MWLBE firms to better understand financial matters. Participants were encouraged to participate, and were informed that non-participation may impact their overall performance assessment when bidding on work as Mentorship Program participants. Forty-eight firms completed the special six-week program, which focused on utilization of financial concepts and available financing products to successfully perform government and large institutional construction contracts. Through a combination of workshops and individual business counseling, firms gained the financial proficiency and knowledge needed to plan for and access financing. Participants learned how to build and maintain good business credit, manage cash flow, find flexible financing sources, develop productive lender relationships, and meet lender expectations to successfully deliver contracted projects.

Curriculum: *Financing Your Business and Understanding Credit, Cash Flow and Financial Essentials, Contract Law, Advanced Financial Projections, Access to Capital and Communications, Reading and Understanding Construction Documents*

Supporting the Program

Externally, it was important to communicate information regarding the program and MWL opportunities, as well as manage the expectations of local stakeholders, government officials, community leaders, labor union representatives, construction trade firm owners, and Columbia and City personnel. In order to communicate information and project updates, Facilities staff wrote articles and reports, attended community board meetings and hosted open houses. Mentorship firms were also invited to attend information sessions regarding upcoming summer projects—the time when much of the construction and maintenance work takes place on the University campus. Attendees were able to interface with the project managers, directors, and Vice Presidents of each of CUF’s business units.



CUF Project Manager Keith George talks with mentee Gloria James during an information session

Program Costs

Columbia provided the primary program support including staff to manage the day-to-day functions. Additionally, beginning in the second year, Columbia University School of Continuing Education provided the academic curriculum and faculty. A total of \$1.5 million (both in-kind and cash) was spent on the Minority, Women and Local Construction Trade Certificate/Mentorship Program from 2008 to 2014. Corporate partners contributed an additional \$27,000.⁴ Perhaps most notable were the hundreds of hours donated by dedicated volunteers. Much of the program cost was spent for curriculum development, instruction, and program staff. Columbia had agreed to match government and private sector funding up to \$250,000 per year for five years to support this program. Although the commitment to implement the program was contingent upon matching funds, beyond the training and technical assistance provided by SBS and Columbia-Harlem SBDC, no public funds were provided.

⁴ Columbia University Facilities Finance Department, December 2014

Success Stories

Deb Romain Consulting

www.debomain.com

Years in business: 9

Services provided: wayfinding, masterplanning, design, fabrication, and installation of signage



Deb Romain, Lead Client Solutions Officer of Deb Romain Consulting

Deb Romain, Lead Client Solutions Officer of Deb Romain Consulting, a wayfinding and signage company, has had great success in substantially increasing work with Columbia and other anchor institutions as a result of the knowledge gained and connections made through the Mentorship Program.

Anchor institutions, particularly educational and medical institutions, are natural clients for her firm because their expansive spaces require clear, informative and attractive signage for building and campus navigation. Deb’s firm designed the exterior pedestrian wayfinding and created a signage master plan for Columbia University’s Morningside campus. Additionally,

Deb provided signage at three key Columbia locations: the new Campbell Sports Center, the Business School, and the Medical Center. Other signage clients include White Plains Hospital, North Shore Long Island Jewish Health System (NSLIJ), Hackensack University Medical Center, and CUNY. Personal engagement from Deb has made a noticeable difference—numerous project managers consistently remarked that she was always onsite at every job no matter the time of day to ensure work was getting done properly. The firm has earned a reputation for reliable and high-quality performance on extensive wayfinding projects, which has also led to signage refresh work from existing customers.

Deb reviews and forecasts each project carefully, since sales cycles are important in her business. Clients often commission wayfinding studies without immediately implementing them. This has taught the firm to create separate estimates for wayfinding studies and project implementation. A more accurate estimate for each phase of the work is calculated by not assuming the implementation will occur immediately. For each prospective bid, she determines whether there is enough cash flow to take on the project, how quickly payments can be made, as well as whether the project can be successfully completed within the designated deadline.

Hiring the right staff and partnering with the right people is instrumental to Deb’s success. In order to expand capacity, she has assembled a team of architects and landscape designers to help her deliver large projects. The firm is currently focusing on hiring employees instead of depending on freelancers to supplement their workforce. However, the ability to increase staff can be achieved only through consistent incoming and contracted work. Therefore, careful planning and forecasting is essential. Her goal is to continue to grow the company and potentially introduce new concierge services for more demanding customers. Additionally, she has recently been certified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firm and plans to pursue state and federal airport and transportation work.

“Knowing and understanding the expectations and needs of my client have fueled my success.”

– Deb Romain, Lead Client Solutions Officer, Deb Romain Consulting

King Rose

kingroseny.com

Years in business: 7

Services provided: general contracting and construction management



Yoel Borgenicht, President of King Rose, with his employees at a project in Columbia's John Jay Hall

The Mentorship Program helped Yoel Borgenicht, President of King Rose, make direct connections to contract opportunities, forge relationships with key decision makers that he would not have had, improve his team's skills and knowledge, and elevate his company's credibility with potential clients by linking its success with Columbia University. Prior to the program, King Rose had never worked with the University. Since participating in the program, the firm has increased revenues by \$4 million,

completed work in the President's House and Carman Lounge at the University, as well as other government and corporate projects.

When King Rose submitted and lost their first bid for a Columbia project, they learned a valuable lesson: the University is a very frugal client that carefully watches the bottom line when sourcing work. Through the program's classes and mentorship, Yoel mastered how to determine when projects are not a good fit based on his company's cost structure and overhead—he can assess when certain work at stipulated price structures would not be profitable. The firm meticulously monitors customer payment cycles to determine whether or not to bid on projects to ensure positive cash flow. For slow-paying clients, they may not submit bids for large-dollar projects, or may include a small premium in the bid to cover the cost of payment delays.

King Rose continually invests in additional resources and technology to ensure they have cutting-edge capabilities. The company's project managers all have laptops, iPads, or smartphones to access the company's construction management software—with the same technology and reports in the field as they would normally have at the office. This facilitates the ability to quickly provide information to clients onsite. Superior backroom operations have been a great source of pride for the company. Sophisticated accounting and estimating processes, including detailed job costing with project manager reviews and sign-offs, as well as overall operations, costs, and regulatory compliance, are continuously monitored.

"To help your business grow, provide your staff with the latest technology and knowledge to excel."

***– Yoel Borgenicht, President,
King Rose***

Yoel has learned the importance of having a financing source to work with large clients and to cover lag time for clients that take a long time to pay. Prior to obtaining a loan, work had to be turned away due to lack of financing. The Mentorship Program introduced the firm to Seedco, a not-for-profit partner that helped King Rose access financing to work on large projects and grow.

The core of King Rose's operating principles is to always ensure complete client satisfaction. This is the landmark of what they do and is sought even more than profitability. The level of satisfaction is defined by the client and is reflected in their roster of satisfied clients.

IDL Communications & Electric

idlelectric.com

Years in business: 8

Services provided: installation of electrical, fiber optics, alarm, phone, and public address systems



Paul Vieira, President of IDL Communications & Electric

Starting as a contractor installing telecommunications systems and low voltage wiring, Paul Vieira, President of IDL Communications & Electric, grew his firm from one employee operating from the back of a 1996 Suburban truck and \$24,000 in first-year sales to 29 employees and \$10 million in sales. Paul began his workdays early and attended industry networking events at night to learn about business opportunities and develop crucial relationships with potential clients, including major construction companies and government agencies.

Paul realized that his firm's growth would be limited if he focused only on communications work—he needed to diversify his services. He noticed that large contracts bundled communications in an overall electrical package, which provides a wider scope and greater potential to grow. Also, firms had to be signed with a union in order to bid on some contracts. Although he tried to obtain union affiliation for three years without success, his luck changed when IDL was awarded a contract with the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) and added electrical workers. As a result, IDL became a union electrical contractor and was able to start working with government agencies.

IDL has since won contracts with NYC Department of Design and Construction, NYC Economic Development Corporation, Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, MTA (\$3.2 million job) and Columbia University. As the firm grew, IDL began pursuing prime contracting opportunities in 2013.

Paul was a participant in the program, but did not graduate. He had to leave the program to focus on performing three winning bids that were submitted prior to starting the program. Grateful for the knowledge gained through the program's classes, as well as contacts the program provided, Paul continues to keep in touch with Columbia University Construction Business Services, and regularly communicates his successes and availability for new work.

“Focus on building a strategy for growth.”

***– Paul Vieira, President,
IDL Communications & Electric***

Bitá, Inc.

www.bitainc.info

Years in business: 7

Services provided: carpentry, flooring, drywall, plastering, wall covering, and painting



Fateme Modarres, President of Bitá in the lobby of her company's completed project in Butler Hall

Bitá is a shining example of a company that started small, implemented knowledge and skills learned from the program, earned and built a solid reputation as a dependable vendor, and blossomed into a successful business with a roster of government and institutional clients. The company's first interaction with Columbia was a \$5,000 mentorship task order contract for painting, which opened the door to additional opportunities. By delivering an exemplary job on the initial project, Fateme Modarres, Founder and President of Bitá, was able to develop trust with the project manager, who referred her company to other project managers.

A few factors in Bitá's success are the superior quality of products utilized and performing on time and on budget, usually exceeding contract specifications. The firm received a \$135,000 award for rough and finish carpentry, flooring, cabinetry, painting and general contracting work at Columbia's East Campus, and was awarded an additional \$510,000 contract to renovate another full floor at East Campus. The company has won \$900,000 in contracts with New York City School Construction Authority, and more than \$670,000 with Columbia University. Since program completion, the firm has more than doubled its contract awards, and recently won an award with the MTA.

Fateme has an unwavering commitment to always have a best-in-class team consisting of consultants, architects, engineers, and a network of high-quality subcontractors. A "virtual workforce" for accounting, invoicing, and estimating is utilized to keep overhead and expenses down while making it possible to compete with larger companies that have many more employees. While she would like to hire additional full-time employees, like many small companies, meeting payroll remains a challenge when work and income are prone to great fluctuations.

"Working with the corporate partners was helpful, as they presented good ideas and insights."

- Fateme Modarres, Founder & President, Bitá, Inc.

While some firms are challenged with understanding and implementing client expectations, Bitá's priority has always been to meet and exceed client needs. She knows when to decline projects that are not a good fit for her company whether due to her firm's workload capacity, or when contracts were too large for her firm to handle. Columbia recognizes this smart business acumen, which reinforces CUF's confidence in working with Bitá. The firm recognizes the importance of each project and lets the client know before and after every job how privileged they feel to perform the work.

Fateme continues to attend construction workshops, training and networking events, and keeps in touch with her peers in the program by sharing ideas, attending industry events together, and proposing collaborative opportunities..

Program Results and Conclusions

Program Impact

While some organizations track bid award amounts, Columbia University tracks dollars spent. The award amount often does not reflect the true impact of what is paid to a firm. By tracking actual spend, the University can accurately measure the economic impact to these firms and to the community.

By the end of December 2014, Columbia University spent nearly \$33 million with mentorship firms. Of that, the spend on contracts for tier 1 firms ranged from \$1,800 to \$7,396,000, while the spend on contracts to tier 2 firms ranged from \$2,000 to \$4,134,000.^{5,6} The City of New York awarded at least \$73 million in contracts to mentorship firms through December 31, 2012.⁷ Several firms also received awards from participating corporate partners during the program. From FY10 to FY14, Columbia paid \$431 million overall to MWL firms for construction-related spend, which is 30 percent of total construction spend.

Program Participant Success with Columbia University

- 553 bid opportunities offered to mentorship participants
180 bids awarded to mentorship participants
- 1,514 task order awards
- \$32,835,000 Total spend*
\$28,536,000 in tier 1 (Prime) construction and maintenance spend
\$4,299,000 in tier 2 (subcontract) construction and maintenance spend

Cohort Spend

(as of November 2014)

\$15.1 million	Cohort 1
\$4.9 million	Cohort 2
\$13 million	Cohort 3
\$377,000	Cohort 4

ADA Maintenance Spend

(as of November 2014)

\$104,000	ADA spend - first phase
\$221,000	ADA spend - second phase
\$325,000	Total ADA spend

*This data may not contain awards associated with residential work performed by MWLBE firms or work associated with projects where construction management vendors served as the prime contractor.

Source: Columbia University Facilities

⁵ Columbia University Facilities Finance Department, December 2014

⁶ Tier 1 firms (commonly referred to as "primes") are firms that have contracted directly with Columbia. Tier 2 firms (commonly referred to as "subcontractors") are contracted by Tier 1 firms and do not have a direct relationship with the University.

⁷ MWL Mentorship Program report to state, October 2014

Program Survey Results

In May 2013, Columbia distributed an online survey to the 78 program graduates, and conducted in-person interviews with each of the four corporate partners to gather feedback. Thirty-six program participants responded to the survey, resulting in a response rate of 46 percent. Incomplete responses were not included in the final results.

Participant Feedback

The majority of program participant feedback was positive—participants expressed gratitude for the invaluable insights that helped them gain crucial industry and business knowledge, and the frequent networking events that enabled access to potential clients and opportunities. Most respondents indicated that they increased their knowledge in marketing techniques that helped them build credibility and attract prospects; learned ways to organize and operate their business to increase profitability; and became more knowledgeable about pre-qualification requirements needed to work with anchor institutions, government agencies, and large corporations.

Many of the smaller firms indicated they would have liked more bid opportunities. Feedback from all firms included a desire for additional events to meet project managers and key personnel at the University, the City, and corporate partners, as well as continuation of mentoring. They also would have liked additional courses in Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certifications, solar and renewable energy, bonding, and non-construction related instruction such as operations, accounting, and finance management.

“What we’ve learned isn’t necessarily trade specific. We honed our contract negotiation, conflict resolution, project management, marketing, and business management skills. As a business owner, these skills are invaluable.”

*– Deb Romain, CEO,
Deb Romain Consulting
Mentorship Program graduate*

“The mentees blossomed from artisans to becoming good business people with strong business acuity.”

*– Claire Scanlon,
Vice President, Supplier Diversity,
BNY Mellon,
Mentorship Program corporate partner*

Corporate Partner Feedback

Corporate partners wanted to participate in the program to work with, invest in, and hire MWLBES, and to build relationships that support small businesses and workforce within the communities in which they serve.

Program partners thought the Mentorship Program was well executed in preparing MWLBE businesses to work with corporations. The partners noticed major improvements in participating firms’ capabilities from the time they were first interviewed. However, there were limitations in how the partners could work with mentorship participants because most large corporations in New York City use only union contractors, and 66 percent of program firms

were non-union. The non-union projects from the corporate partners sometimes needed specific trades that were not offered by participant firms, which limited the amount of work that could be awarded.

Promising Practices

Many promising practices were learned through implementation and continuous improvement of the Mentorship Program. Some of those promising practices were achieved through the formation of an advisory council, mentorship forums, special events, incorporation of a case study into the curriculum, partnerships with corporations and unions, and exclusive contracting opportunities for program participants.



INTERISE INSIGHT

Interise, in delivering its StreetWise 'MBA'™ curriculum to over 3,500 small businesses, has encountered many similar outcomes to those of the Columbia University-SBS Mentorship Program. These shared anecdotal observations and learnings are noted as Interise Insights, with Columbia's findings in the following sections.

MWL Advisory Council

To ensure program success, an advisory council was formed to provide guidance in the shaping and delivery of the program. Advisory Council members consisted of local community and government leaders, as well as executives from top construction firms. Serving as more than program ambassadors, council members helped publicize and recommend the program to potential candidates, hosted recruitment events, and invited CUF staff and mentorship firms to attend networking events.



Program mentees at Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Day and Business Awards Luncheon



Members of the MWL Construction Advisory Council receive a tour of the Manhattanville Construction site

As a result of the Advisory Council's involvement, by the second year of the program, the number of applicants was four times the size of the pilot class. Members of the MWL Advisory Council can be found on page 34 of this report.



INTERISE INSIGHT

Interise has witnessed the importance of and enjoyed the benefit of counsel from a variety of community partnerships such as those with municipal, nonprofit, philanthropic, and industry partners. This network of counselors are ambassadors of the StreetWise 'MBA'™ actively participating in our outreach events, assisting with small business recruitment for the StreetWise 'MBA'™, sharing their expertise and networks with small business owners during the program, and sustaining capacity building and access to resources for alumni through Interise's Continual Engagement effort.

Mentorship and Networking

Each program participant had an opportunity to pitch their business to the CUF team during monthly “Meet-and-Greet” sessions. Columbia project managers and directors provided feedback and evaluated each presentation to determine if the University had opportunities to match the firm’s capabilities. Prior to the presentation, program participants received preparation advice and were given a list of questions and materials that should be included in their presentation. Some that had significant deficiencies in the first session were brought back and given a second chance to present after improving their presentation skills and materials. See appendix B for the presentation tips. Not just an exercise in presentation skills, the “Meet and Greets” were actual opportunities to be on the decision-makers’ radar. Firms that understood the valuable opportunity this presented were often rewarded with follow-up contact leading to bid opportunities.



INTERISE

INTERISE INSIGHT

Feedback on participant presentations from a variety of instructor and expert panelists is beneficial for mentees because it enables them to receive constructive critique from different perspectives. Expert panels are integral to the StreetWise ‘MBA’™. Participants receive peer and subject matter expert feedback on many components of their program from elevator pitches to growth plans. Participants value this type of interaction because it helps them gain vital know-how from the panelists, and in some cases, the panelists facilitated relationships that have led to business, lending, and contract opportunities.

Feedback Throughout the Years

Annual “Chat-and-Chews” were held for current program participants and alumni to meet with high-level executives, including the Commissioner of SBS, the Executive Vice President of CUF, leadership from the Columbia School of Continuing Education, corporate partners, and project managers. This forum enabled the participants to share successes and challenges as well as provide program evaluations and suggestions.



Former SBS Commissioner Rob Walsh talks with the mentees at a Chat-and-Chew

Special Sessions

To enhance knowledge, informational sessions on topics such as Understanding Project Labor Agreements, Union vs. Non-union, Social Media, and Legislative and Business Trends were held throughout the year.



Special Session on Union vs. Non-Union. Panelists included Joe Ienuso, Lou Coletti, President of Building Trades Employers Association, Paul Viera, President of IDL Communications & Electric, and Ray McGuire, General Counsel for Building and Construction Trades Council

Informational Sessions

Information sessions on upcoming projects at the Morningside campus enabled MWLBE firms to discuss opportunities with project managers and internal teams. Often more than 80 individual projects could take place during the summer months. Speed networking tables were set up to match trades with project needs.



INTERISE

INTERISE INSIGHT

Interise hosts networking events for participants to meet one-on-one with subject matter experts from such areas as banking, accounting, and marketing. These sessions not only give small business owners the chance to seek advice, but expand their access to a network of business support services. In addition, such connections have led to on-going mentor relationships and potential business connections.

Giving Back to the Community

Program participants were encouraged to participate in the Lend Lease Annual Community Service Project Day. Lend Lease serves as one of the construction management firms on Columbia's planned Manhattanville Campus. Firms were reminded that networking happens in many places and the ability to give back to the community is an important value for Columbia and should be for organizations of all sizes.



Mentorship firms helped restore a senior citizen garden. While restoring the garden, they interacted with key contacts, including staff of SBS, Columbia University, Lend Lease, and community leaders. Key participants included Philip Pitruzzello, Senior Vice President of the Manhattanville Development Group, Ralph Esposito, President of the Lend Lease New York Office, Sheena Jones, former Columbia employee and current project manager with another anchor institution.



Mentee Bid Lists

From time to time, Columbia was able to position a project so that a bid list would contain 100% mentee firms. On one occasion, wide price quote discrepancies were received from program participants. Joe Ienuso thought this was a prime teaching moment, so he asked CUF staff to hire an external estimator and conduct a special session to provide a step-by-step process review to guide participants on how to properly estimate and submit the bid. After reissuing the bid, contracts were awarded to three of the original bidding companies that had significantly improved their bid responses by adjusting the price and demonstrating a much clearer understanding of the project requirements.



Two program mentee firms, First Choice Mechanical and Corinthian Construction Company, working together on a project



Sharon Sinaswee, President of Armada Painting reviewing one of the awarded projects

Case Study

A case study competition was incorporated into the program to enhance understanding of complex decisions and issues general contractors and subcontractors must consider before submitting any bid. Program participants were assigned to one of six teams, and each team received mentorship and support via senior leadership from major construction companies.

Teams were given a fictional scenario of a gut renovation for a large, complex organization with an aggressive six-week construction and completion deadline. While much of the needed data was provided, key details were purposely omitted and extraneous information was deliberately included. Participants had to work as a team to sift through data, formulate analysis, think more expansively, and engage in broad-reaching discussions while approaching the project.



Cohort 4 winners of the case study competition: Yam Gurung, J&Y Electric and Intercom Company Inc.; David Muñoz (mentor), Skanska USA Building Inc.; Kimberlee Kelley, Artisan Construction; Jorge Barbosa, U. Arias Corp.

Each team was required to utilize the data provided, incorporate information learned in class, and leverage the strengths of individual team members. The teams faced numerous challenges including lack of information, loss of teammates, friction amongst team members, and differences in strengths and understanding — which are real world business challenges that may be found on any project. The goal was to overcome the obstacles and submit a successful proposal.



INTERISE INSIGHT

The StreetWise 'MBA'™ utilizes case studies of participants' businesses during class sessions to which peers and expert panels provide feedback. This is an effective learning vehicle for individual business owners and for classmates as this format creates learning opportunities from each other's presentations and from feedback. CEO Mentoring Groups, similar to informal advisory boards, meet between curriculum sessions to reflect on learnings from class sessions, to brainstorm, and to problem-solve.

Marketing Presentations

Participant firms were required to give presentations of their marketing plans for the ensuing three years. Firms were divided into teams to discuss their strengths and weaknesses. The Women’s Chamber of Commerce provided technical assistance to help participants develop their marketing materials. Corporate partners and Facilities staff assessed each presentation’s effectiveness in clearly communicating the company’s marketing goals and strategy, areas for growth, proposed marketing efforts, identification of new marketing tools that had not been previously used, goals that were realistic and obtainable, and budgets that were reasonable and affordable.



Jody Albanese, President of Floor Expo presents her marketing plan to her classmates and judges

Corporate Partners

BNY Mellon, Con Edison, Goldman Sachs, and National Grid joined as partners during the fourth year of the program in an effort to increase the diversity in their pool of qualified vendors and help MWL firms break into the corporate supply chain. The corporate partners actively engaged with program participants from the interview and selection process through graduation. Each corporate partner held informational sessions to explain how to enroll in their vendor system, the type of work in their portfolio, eligibility requirements, and their sourcing process. Networking opportunities were also held to introduce program participants to key staff, as well as “Meet the Primes” events for participants to meet the prime contractors working with the corporate partners.



Mentees networking with Con Edison and McKissack McKissack during a training session



BNY MELLON



conEdison



nationalgrid

Strategic Partnerships

Columbia understood the need to build strategic partnerships with unions, government, corporations, worker training, and referral facilities. Union members led sessions during the Mentorship Program to explain to program participants the benefits and challenges of being a unionized firm. This exposure gave program participants an unfiltered view to consider the costs and benefits of unionization for their own businesses, now and in the future.



INTERISE INSIGHT

When corporate sponsors are engaged throughout the program, they have a vested interest in the success of program participants and of the program.

Interise regularly engages our sponsors and volunteer subject matter experts in the classroom, during program launch events, at graduations, and for continual engagement with alumni.

\$5,000 Mentorship Task Order Contract

Columbia created a new procurement vehicle exclusive to participant firms that successfully completed Columbia’s vendor enrollment process and submitted a list of fixed labor and materials rates. Firms that fulfilled the requirements were awarded \$5,000 task order contracts, which allowed contract awards without competition. It also enabled project managers to engage firms on low-risk projects to observe their capability. After two years of successful performance, construction-trades firms could be elevated to standard task order contracts for up to \$20,000, and general contractors could receive task order contracts for up to \$50,000, provided all-inclusive unit pricing had been pre-submitted. Many firms received multiple awards and grew their businesses through mentorship task order contracts.

Facilitating Opportunities for Mentorship Firms

A system enhancement was created to highlight MWLBE firms and Program participants in the University’s vendor database. This enabled project managers to quickly identify and prioritize opportunities for these firms, and improve performance monitoring and utilization of mentorship firms.

Ceremony

The graduation ceremony was not only a chance to celebrate the accomplishments of program participants, but also enabled firms to network and share their capabilities with potential clients including executives from SBS, CUF, corporate partners, and the construction industry. Columbia observed that many program participants invited their families to attend the graduation ceremony in order to share their accomplishment and success.



INTERISE INSIGHT

Interise holds graduation ceremonies for StreetWise ‘MBA’™ participants to commemorate the completion of the program and the participants’ completion of their Strategic Growth Action Plans™. In addition, the commencement acknowledges the sponsors, volunteers, and staff that made the class possible. There is often strong turnout from family, friends, and supporters of the graduates, who watch with pride as participants receive their certificates. The culmination of these experiences communicates a sense of accomplishment by the participant and reinforces the strength of the network and highlights the potential of small businesses to be a catalyst for greater community development.



Cohort 3 case study winners at graduation with instructor Roy Wilson



Paul McNeil, former Vice Dean at Columbia’s School of Continuing Education and Hector Gordon (r) of Esteem Building Company

Intangible Learnings

Providing a Business Self-Assessment

Prior to the program, many firms thought they had the experience and knowledge necessary to work with large organizations, without fully understanding all requirements. Through the program, some firms were able to recognize their capacities were better suited for small-scale projects instead of large-scale institutional work. Others learned how to target clients based on their capabilities and make more strategic decisions on whether to bid on large jobs.

The firms needed to focus on accurately representing their trade and better articulation of their unique selling proposition. Routinely, firms identified themselves as general contractors when they did not possess the financial capacity, operational systems, back-office expertise, or required experience to successfully operate as a general contractor. This has triggered performance failures for many construction firms.

While SBS offered a magnitude of technical assistance to help small businesses, MWLBs often did not have the time to take advantage of these services. Many of the program participants were not clear on how SBS' services could help their companies. Furthermore, there were misconceptions of how government jobs are awarded and additional training on the government procurement process was needed.

Participants learned performing and keeping a steady workflow while pursuing new opportunities is a constant juggling act for all types of firms. Maintaining incoming work is time consuming and identifying the correct procurement officer or project manager often proves to be a large hurdle for small and medium-sized firms.



INTERISE INSIGHT

Interise research has found that in order to successfully delivery anchor contracts, small business owners need to thoroughly understand and articulate the range of their products and services to procurement officers at anchor institutions. In interviews with Interise, procurement officers report that when potential vendors proactively and articulately share information about their products and services, the procurement officer is more likely to work with that vender or refer the business owner to another office that has a better fit with regards to the vendor's specialty.

Peer-to-peer opportunities

In addition to peer-to-peer learning, business-to-business (B2B) contracting also developed amongst peers as they became familiar with and built trust with each other throughout the program.



INTERISE INSIGHT

Interise noticed that B2B contracting, teaming on proposals, and referrals among peers naturally developed in their cohorts. Individuals who initially saw one another as competitors recognized the advantages of collaboration on large institutional and corporate projects. In 2012, the average value of new business generated from connections made through our program was \$100,000.⁸

⁸ 2012 Impact Report http://www.interise.org/images/Interise_Impact_Report_2013_11-05-13_FINAL.pdf

Shifting Pressures/Changing Demographics

Columbia's strong commitment to the local area is based on its existence as an anchor institution and its role as part of the local community. Columbia has made local hiring a top priority, while also prioritizing hiring minority and women-owned firms and workers.

As with many urban areas, community demographics shift over time, which was noted by the *New York Times* in 2010 in regard to Harlem.⁹ Since the beginning of the Program in 2008, the 17 zip code area that Columbia considers its local community has experienced a demographic shift, which has caused some local tensions and discussion on the importance of including local as a designated category when developing MWBE programs.

Challenges

Competing Priorities in Construction Work

From the beginning, comprehensive internal and external strategies were developed to ensure the success of the Program. While the focus was to assist MWL firms, contracting decisions required quality, cost effectiveness and efficient operations, which all impact the ability to achieve success.

Unlike some large government agencies with expansive project portfolios and accompanying support staff, the University has a smaller number of projects and resources to contribute to a MWL initiative. Additionally, Columbia has a large internal unionized trade workforce. There is a balance between projects performed by internal employees and those that are bid out to external contractors. To remain compliant with the requirements of its internal union contracts, this balance is continually monitored and reinforced. While 66 percent of program firms were non-union, most of the larger projects at Columbia as well as those of many government agencies and corporations are union projects which limited the amount of work Columbia was able to award.

Not all trades proved a good fit for the program. Trades such as painting, carpentry, dry wall, and flooring were successful in obtaining contracts. However, the University had few opportunities for other trades, such as concrete, asphalt, or those relating to roadwork. This inhibited the ability of some firms to win Columbia contracts. Nevertheless, program participants were able to gain knowledge from classroom learning and build business relationships through the program.

Separating construction project work into smaller packages is time consuming, inefficient, and costly. However, Facilities sometimes required prime contractors to break bid packages down to a size that could be bid to small and medium size MWL firms. This sometimes caused tension with the primes because of the additional time and cost required to accommodate MWLBE participation. Often, primes were asked to subcontract work to MWL firms they could have performed themselves. Although these practices may incur greater expense and time, they were necessary for the University to achieve its MWLBE goals. The willingness to make concessions on everyone's behalf is what has enabled the program to be successful.

Capacity Constraints of Small Size Firms

Years ago, prime contractors may have created separate systems--adjusting payment schedules and providing additional resources to help smaller MWLBEs. However, in recent years, large contracting firms have become subject to greater governmental scrutiny regarding such practices. By treating MWBEs differently, there is at least the appearance of the MWBE serving as a "front" firm. Many have received stiff fines and the reverberations have had a chilling effect on what prime contractors are willing to do to support MWBEs. Providing additional support could be counterproductive because the goal is for the smaller MWLBEs to gain capacity and grow on their own without extraordinary reliance on the primes. Not having the support has also constrained the ability of small firms to grow and at times survive.

⁹ http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/06/nyregion/06harlem.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0, accessed on January 2015



INTERISE INSIGHT

During interviews with Interise, procurement officers shared their advice to small businesses which is to use relationships with prime contractors to gain experience when they are not yet large enough or experienced enough to deliver large contracts. A company may have a good product, but if it cannot deliver in greater capacity, it will have a difficult time in obtaining institutional contracts. The prime/subcontractor relationship can be beneficial if small business owners use it as a capacity-building opportunity, as opposed to continual reliance on the larger firm.

Nine firms that participated in the program went out of business. Some failures were attributed to the firms' attempts to work beyond their capacity, promoting themselves as prime or general contractors when they lacked the technical and financial capacity to perform to the requirements of a large organization. Columbia also observed that some of the challenges experienced included struggles with finances and access to capital, and an inability to properly forecast projects.

Despite rigorous training, challenges regarding access to capital, bonding, and operational efficiency persisted with many firms.



INTERISE INSIGHT

Having proficiency in business systems and technology that meets anchor institution requirements is crucial for small businesses to be successful in obtaining contracts. Procurement officers have identified the importance of firms using electronic invoicing and project tracking software along with a user friendly website for ease of research. They also emphasized the importance of small businesses having the required insurance, bonding, and certifications required by the anchor institution.

Obstacles that persisted among firms:

1. Limited financial capacity (mobilization capital, inability to forecast and secure financing to complete a job)
2. Inadequate bonding
3. Insufficient insurance requirements
4. Non-union status, which hinders the ability to work on projects with firms and agencies that bid only union work to larger organizations
5. Limited technology (e.g., inadequate office management systems that hinder the ability to manage financial and operational information, antiquated equipment and technology that impede the ability to be competitive, as well as absence of a web presence and a business email domain)

Unrealistic Expectations

Columbia observed serial mentorship program attendees who rely on various mentorship programs to obtain work. Some mentorship programs either ensure contracts to participants or offer in-mentorship competition for contracts. There was strong belief that a methodology where firms competed for contracts best prepared participants for future success. Occasionally, Facilities offered competitive awards limited to participant firms, which allowed participants to see how they fared among their peers. Program firms could access \$5,000 task orders and forge relationships with the University's project managers. Although requirements for receiving the task order were clearly articulated repeatedly throughout the program, many firms continued to expect contracts simply by participating in the Program—without submitting the required vendor paperwork, obtaining necessary insurance, or performing the due diligence necessary to obtain work.

Opportunities for growth. Firms can achieve greater success by:

1. Adopting new skills and applying new knowledge
2. Incorporating new technology into business operations
3. Enhancing business and customer service skills
4. Increasing comprehension of accurate RFP documents and submissions and being able to properly read and interpret blueprints
5. Understanding the importance of marketing; able to clearly articulate specific skill sets and communicate their unique value

Conclusion of the Minority, Women and Local Construction Trade Certificate/Mentorship Program (December 2014)

At the conclusion of the five-year Program, 78 firms, representing 91% of total participants, graduated the Program. Firms received \$33 million in construction spend with the University. Several mentee firms added MWL workforce to their staff, and committed to hiring additional MWL workers when their businesses expanded. Through classroom training and mentorship from construction-industry experts, program participants learned the procurement processes and requirements of large organizations, how to enhance their company's capacity, accurately respond to large institutional RFPs, implement strategic marketing initiatives, and improve operational efficiency.

The learnings gained from the experience of the Program can assist anchor institutions and large organizations that may want to launch similar initiatives or desire to reevaluate their existing programs. The learnings also provide important information and offer valuable lessons on how to incorporate basic operating principles on becoming an economic driver for its community, as well as strategies to improve its mission.



INTERISE INSIGHT

Interise recognizes that identifying, mentoring, and building capacity for small and medium-size MWL construction-trade firms is a very complex and challenging objective for any organization. Balancing its core mission combined with its desire to increase capacity and opportunities for MWLBEs through this program required significant dedicated human and financial resources from CUF.

At the time of the writing of this report, site visits were being conducted to ascertain which firms have the capacity to continue working with Columbia University, which firms need additional technical assistance to maintain or grow their capacity, and what types of technical assistance are needed. Columbia continues its commitment to the MWL community and will continue to work with New York City and State governmental agencies and its own Columbia-Harlem Small Business Development Corporation to refer graduate firms for additional technical support.

Columbia met its commitment to provide a bidding opportunity to mentorship firms. Not all firms took advantage of the opportunity and not all firms won their bids. CUF plans to continue its strong record of working with qualified locally owned firms in Upper Manhattan and the South Bronx, as well as minority and women-owned firms. The goal is to continue to meet the University's academic and academic research mission while also remaining a committed member of the surrounding community.

Specific actions Columbia University Facilities will undertake include:

1. Invest in targeted initiatives to address deficiencies often found in MWLBE firms, as well as forming strategic partnerships to help MWLBEs build capacity
2. Post the “Small Business Success Attributes Checklist” which lists attributes needed to be successful in bidding on Columbia University contracts on the CUF website. See Appendix C for the checklist
3. Strategically partner with MWL firms that meet the “Small Business Success Attributes Checklist” guidelines, in trades where CUF has few qualified MWL vendors, and help them build and enhance capacity
4. Support graduate firms by hosting tables at tradeshow and expos to help promote their companies
5. Provide referrals to existing financing, bonding, construction mentorship, and business development training programs via the CUF website. See Appendix B for the list of recommended programs

Recommendations

La-Verna Fountain, Vice President for Construction Business Services and Communications, provided the following list of recommendations to help create a strong MWBE construction community. These recommendations can help government, corporations, and institutions strengthen local communities and build healthy competition. She spearheaded the Mentorship Program, and has been recognized at city and national levels for her work as a community developer and passionate leader for the MWBE community.

1. Any institution seeking to have a successful mentorship program should begin with a few critical items:
 - a. A high-level champion to “sell” the vision and keep employees motivated.
 - b. Skilled personnel to manage the details of the program. Do not underestimate the amount of time that will be needed to meet the individual needs of the firms in the program.
 - c. Skilled and committed mentors to provide guidance to the program
 - d. Roles, responsibilities, and expectations clearly delineated in writing and reinforced throughout the program
 - e. Financial (or in-kind from experts) resources to offer specialized technical assistance and a significant pool of funds that could be used to build the capacity of the mentee firms through specialized bidding opportunities and supplemented with additional training
 - f. Strategic partners to support the vision, expand opportunities to create real and long-lasting results
2. A strong community foundation or governmental agency should convene a strategic planning meeting among anchor institutions, including higher education, government, hospitals, and corporations, as well as construction associations to create a city or statewide mentorship program linking large construction firms with small minority and women-owned construction firms. Goals may include:
 - a. Identifying areas where additional support is needed for MWBEs. For example, many reports have highlighted the need for funding and bonding programs. In response, government agencies have implemented programs to support these needs
 - b. Identifying business vernacular barriers faced by many MWBEs
 - c. Discussing if a similar focus should be considered for MWBE architect and engineer communities
 - d. Identifying the misconceptions regarding project award and work processes for large institutions
 - e. Creating a guide to educate small businesses before attempting to work with large institutions
 - f. Developing general guidelines for large institutions to consider before creating a mentorship program
 - g. Collaborating to share resources, staff, as well as standardizing mentorship qualifications and learnings
 - h. Ending serial mentee participation. Graduating from a collaborative mentorship program would save money, and staff, as well as launch firms from the “mentee” status to create a pool of MWBE firms ready to compete.

3. Create a new or enhance a current association for MWBE advocates and practitioners in the construction industry to develop promising practices, share resources, and support policies to improve the effectiveness of MWBE initiatives.
 - a. Those in the field who advocate for the MWBE firms are often pressured from multiple sides and need to have a “safe place” where they can explore opportunities to support the firms and at the same time gain needed skills for their work so as to not be pigeon-holed into one type of job
 - b. By its nature, MWBE work can be stressful. The pressures of “isms” can be particularly difficult for those who are aware of the dual-edge sword of a mentorship identity and the multi-layered implications around race and gender. A quality association would be able to create training for those in the advocacy industry to support a healthy balance among the various identity attachments that might impact the advocate.
4. Meet with labor unions and specialized training programs such as Non-traditional Employment for Women, and develop a plan to create a pipeline from underrepresented communities going beyond the programs focused at the high school level to include adults who are family breadwinners
5. Convene a meeting with key local industry, corporate, governmental and institutional executives to understand and meet the projected workforce needs across a city or region. Attempt to determine:
 - a. Which trades will be most needed
 - b. What is the technological impact and what programs are available to teach the skills
 - c. What matchmaking organizations exist to help connect workers to the opportunities
 - d. What programs exist within the K-16 level that can prepare the workforce for the changing demands

Interise Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and outcomes of the Columbia University-New York City Department of Small Business Services Minority, Women and Local Construction Trade Certificate/Mentorship Program are consistent with Interise's experience in running similar programs and research regarding relationships between anchor institutions and small businesses.¹⁰ Anchors cite the following as benefits with working with MWL businesses:

- Innovation and Competition: new vendors can bring novel solutions and lower costs;
- Vendor Network: additional businesses create a richer pool of qualified vendors;
- Economic Development: collaborations with local businesses increase employment in the community; and
- Community Development: collaborations with small or local businesses create robust environments that help improve and strengthen the community.

These benefits notwithstanding, there are also common challenges with implementing supplier diversity programs that are compounded by adding capacity building and mentoring functions, as was the case at Facilities. Challenges include:

- Limited staff and resources dedicated to supplier diversity, training, and mentoring;
- Limited staff dedicated to monitoring and accountability;
- Meeting procurement goals with minimal budgets;
- Large and complex project RFPs and needs that are too complicated for some small firms to provide accurate bids and adequately service; and
- Limited growth potential of smaller firms to successfully work on larger projects due to insufficient financing, bonding, and technology.

The recommendations made by Ms. Fountain are also consistent with recent anchor institution research. The recommendations necessitate:

- A means to strategically match small businesses to anchors in terms of products and services, scope, and scale of the procurement;
- Support programs and opportunities for small businesses to build capacity in their trades, services, and products; customer service; bidding and proposal writing; proficiency with technology; and many other technical and operational areas;
- A commitment from anchor institutions to support small businesses as they build their capacity; and
- A commitment from anchor institutions to shift their culture and to make operational changes to integrate small businesses into their procurement processes.

In collaboration with Facilities, Interise created a checklist of attributes that correlate with success for MWL construction firms and anchor institutions. The categories of attributes are those cited by procurement officers as critical: marketing the business; proficiency in financial, operational, and industry requirements; proficiency in business technology; providing excellent customer service and client protocols; possession of bonding and insurance requirements; and attainment of required licenses and certifications. This checklist is a step towards an institutional and governmental effort to engage MWL businesses and anchor institutions. See Appendix C for the checklist.

¹⁰ Interise, personal interviews, 2012; Henry Louis Taylor, Jr. and Gavin Luter. 2013. *Anchor Institutions: An Interpretive Review Essay*. Anchor Institutions Task Force: University of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY; Kim Zeuli, Lena Ferguson and Austin Nijhuis. 2014. *Creating an Anchored Local Economy in Newark Recommendations for Implementing a Comprehensive Local Procurement Strategy*. ICIC: Boston, MA.

Special thanks to:

Columbia University

Joseph A. Ienuso, Former Executive Vice President, Facilities
La-Verna J. Fountain, Vice President, Construction Business Services, Facilities
Philip Pitruzzello, Senior Vice President, Manhattanville Development Group, Facilities
Tanya Pope, Former Executive Director, Construction Business Services, Facilities*
Dan Held, Assistant Vice President for Communications, Construction Business Services, Facilities
Noah Lichtman, Assistant Director, Communications, Construction Business Services, Facilities
Radhy Miranda, Assistant Program Manager, Construction Business Services, Facilities
Sheena Jones-Basu, Former Assistant Program Manager, Construction Business Services, Facilities
Kristine Billmyer, Former Dean, School of Continuing Education
Paul McNeil, Former Vice Dean, School of Continuing Education
Dennis J. Green, Director, School of Continuing Education
Jolyon Handler, Director, Projects Administration
Ed Lauth, Director for Commercial Property Services
Janet Grapengeter, Director, Design and Compliance
Keith George, Project Manager
Raphael Lynch, Project Manager

New York City Department of Small Business Services

Robert W. Walsh, Former Commissioner
Kerri Jew, Deputy Commissioner
Gregg Bishop, Deputy Commissioner
Anne Rascon, Former Deputy Commissioner
Colleen Gavin, Former Assistant Commissioner
Ophelia Gabrino, Executive Director, Capacity Building and Corporate Partnerships
Todd Lang, Director Financial and Business Services
Daphne Emerson, Former Senior Program Manager

Columbia-Harlem Small Business Development Center

Kaaryn Nailor-Simmons, Director

Corporate Partners

Bank of New York Mellon: Claire Scanlon, Vice President, Supplier Diversity

Con Edison: Michael Jones-Bey, Director, Supplier Diversity, Stacy Simpson, Administrator, Supplier Diversity,
Paul J. Skretkowicz, Administrator, Supplier Diversity

Goldman Sachs: Ken Muir, Former Vice President Corporate Services & Real Estate,
Jeff Struble, Vice President, Services Division

National Grid: John Kavanaugh, Director of Procurement, Construction, Carla Hunter-Ramsey, Director,
Supplier Diversity, Robertha Fleur Callander, Analyst, Supplier Diversity, Carol Castanza,
Senior Analyst, Supplier Diversity, Andrea Sotomayor, Analyst, Supplier Diversity

MWL Advisory Council

Harlem Business Alliance—Walter Edwards, Chairperson

Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce—Lloyd Williams, President/CEO; Patricia Ricketts, Vice President

New York Women's Chamber of Commerce—Quenia Abreu, President

New York State Chapter of the Association of Minority Contractors—Leo Fabio, Chairperson

Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone—Ken Knuckles, President/CEO

Women Builders Council—Cheryl McKissack, President, (Sandra Wilkin, Former President)

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce—Maria Castro (first two years of the program)

*Tanya Pope, the National Expansion Senior Manager at Interise, who is part of the team that created this report, was the previous Executive Director of Construction Business Services at Columbia University Facilities from February 2012–January 2014 and previous Executive Director for Education and Corporate Program at New York City Small Business Services from October 2008–February 2012.

Program Participants

Cohort 1

ARK Systems Electrical Corp.
Ashnu International Inc.
Bronx Base Builders LTD
Chernak Contracting
Eagle Two Construction Inc.
Golden Development & Construction Corp.
Head Contracting, LLC
Interstate Contracting, Co., Inc.
Jaysan Contracting, Corp.
JCF Electric, Inc.
KND Licensed Electrical Contracting
Noble Electrical Contracting
Quigg Development Corp.
Smart Wiring Electric, Inc.
Spectra & Dean Construction
Synergy Design & Construction, Inc.
TARU Associates Corp.
Work of Art Painting Company

Cohort 2

Adroit Development Corporation
Alkem Electrical Corp.
Blue Water Construction**
C. James Plumbing & Heating*
Christine Painting
Corinthian Construction Company
Curtis Development
Deb Romain Consulting, LLC
Derrick Development, LLC
Divine Shepherd Construction
Dorcas Garcia Design
EZ Runer Construction*
G&S Decorating Corporation
Innovative Building Solutions, LLC
Marmolp General Contracting
Mur Construction Company
Office of Contracting Services
Ramon Flooring
Razor Development, LLC
Roy Home Improvement Construction
Stanco Electrical Contractors, Inc.
USA Painting, Inc.

Cohort 3

Alcom Electric, Inc.
All in One Construction, LLC
Architectural Flooring Resource, Inc.
Armada Building Services, Inc.
Bitu, Inc.
BOBTEK Electrical Corp.

Civil Projects Developers Corp.**
First Choice Mechanical, Inc.
Floor Expo, Ltd.
Interior Cooling Mechanical
JGT Contracting, Inc.
KDS Developers, Inc.
Key Home Construction, Inc.
King Rose of NY
Pisos Contracting
Prism Construction & Renovation
Robert Parchment Plumbing
Taylor Group Plumbing**
Veronimos Painting & Home Improvements

Cohort 4

Artisan Construction USA
Belier Construction Corp.
Bronx Base
Castlestone Construction Corp.
Corporate Construction & Project Management**
Earth Construction Corp.
Elite Partitions Plus, Inc.
Ensome Builders, Inc.
ESC Cabling
Esteem Building Company
Honest Quality Corporation
J&Y Electric & Intercom Company, Inc.**
Lerco Electric LLC
PMY Construction Corp.*
SCK Team Work Corp.
Scott Electrical Service LLC
The Cardenas Group
U Arias Corp.
W&B Electric Corp**

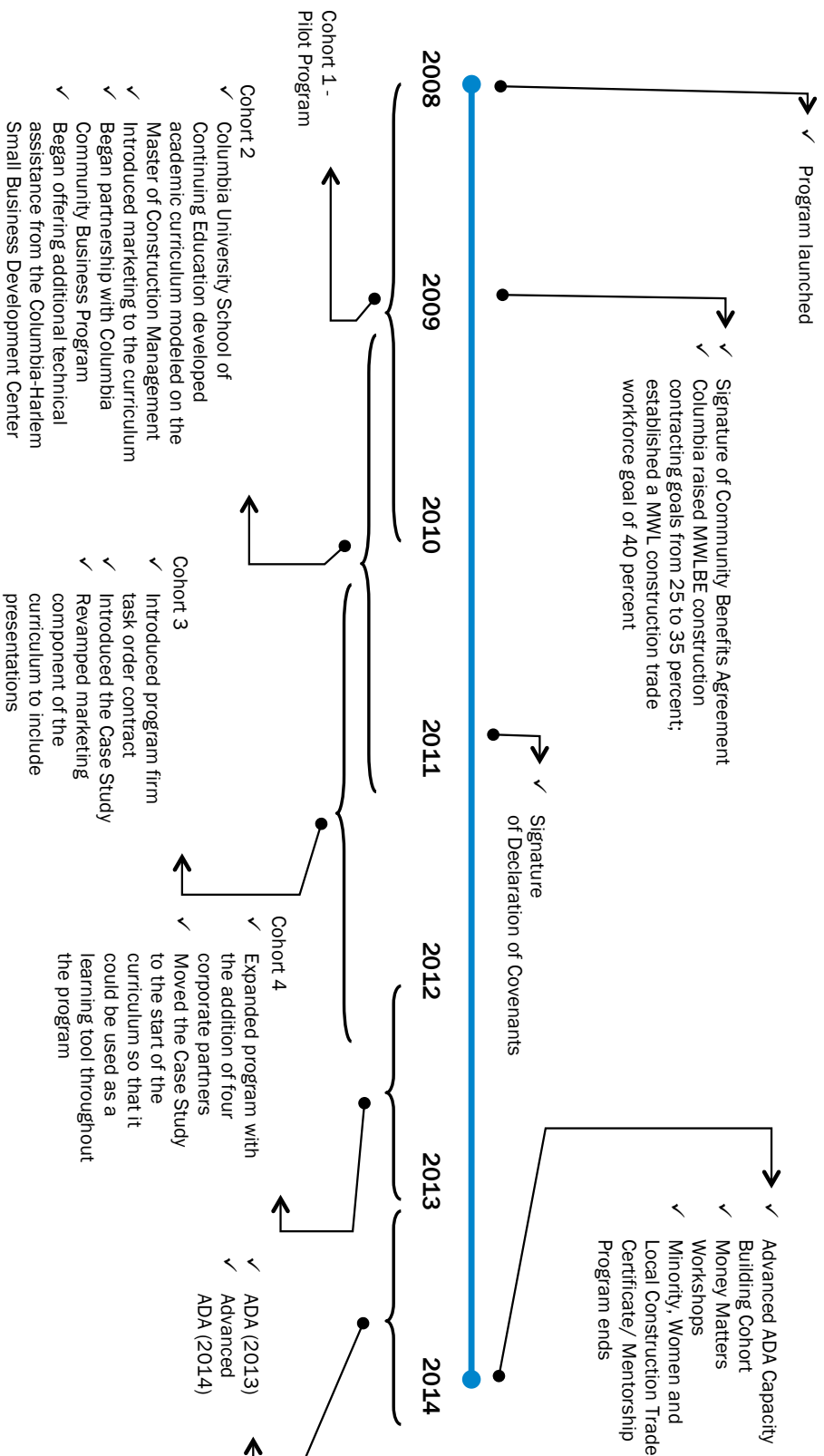
Money Matters

Acoustical Concepts
GM Insulation Corp.
Bunkers Hill Construction
Inniss Construction
Champion Construction
JPR Builders 07 Inc.
Charles-Williams Construction
SGL Services Corp.
Diaz Electric
Thruway Builders Inc.
Double "D" Repairs
Vinoleo Solutions

* ADA Capacity Building Cohort Participant

** Advanced ADA Capacity Building Cohort Participant

Appendix C
Program Timeline
 Minority, Women, and Local Construction Trade Certificate/Mentorship Program



Appendix B

Presentation Tips for Columbia University MWLBE Meet & Greet

- **Know your audience's needs** and match your content to their needs.
- **Know your material thoroughly.** Practice and rehearse your presentation in front of a mirror, your family, friends or colleagues. Tape-record or videotape your presentation and analyze it.
- **Speak with conviction.** Show that you really believe in what you are saying in order to persuade your audience effectively. Your material should progress similar to a written research paper, with an INTRODUCTION (general information about your business), BODY (more detailed information about your business' history, specialization, and examples of work that your organization has done), and CONCLUSION (goals for your business, your involvement in the MWL Mentorship Program, etc).
- **Speak to your audience, listen to their questions, and respond to their reactions.** Remember that communication is the key to a successful presentation.
- **Do not read directly from notes.** It is acceptable to occasionally glance at your notes.
- **Speak loudly and clearly.** Do not mumble. Sound confident. If you made an error, correct it, and continue. No need to make excuses or apologize profusely.
- **It's okay to pause.** Allow yourself and your audience a little time to reflect and think. Don't race through your presentation and leave your audience, as well as yourself, feeling out of breath.
- **Use the appropriate body language.** Using appropriate hand gestures or facial expressions is preferred to sitting or standing still with your head down and reading directly from a prepared speech.
- **Maintain sincere, direct eye contact with your audience.** Look straight into the eyes of the person you are addressing for 2-3 seconds at a time. Glance at the entire audience every now and then while speaking.
- **Make sure that audio-visual aids, such as PowerPoint, are set up and in good working order prior to the presentation.** Do not over-dazzle your audience with excessive use of animation, sound clips, or gaudy colors which are inappropriate for your topic. If possible, have an emergency backup system readily available.
- **Know when to STOP talking.** Use a timer or the microwave oven clock to time your presentation when preparing it at home. Summarize your main points in the same way as you normally do in the CONCLUSION of a written paper. Thank your audience.
- **Have handouts, business cards, and other business-related material ready to distribute at the appropriate time.** Tell audience ahead of time that you will be distributing an outline of your presentation at its conclusion so they do not waste time unnecessarily taking notes during your presentation.

Appendix C

Small Business Success Attribute Checklist

Skills presentation

- Clearly articulate the services the company provides
- Clearly state the opportunities the company is poised for—union/non-union and maximum contract value
- Can present valid examples of experience that would qualify the firm for an opportunity
- Can read and understand blueprints and construction documents

Finance and industry requirements

- Has adequate cash flow to successfully complete the project being bid
- Knows the correct NAICS and SIC codes for the work the company performs
- Has a Dunn & Bradstreet number

Operations and administration

- Use professional accounting software for payroll, invoicing and finance management
- Use construction management and/or scheduling software
- Has a written safety plan
- Has a written HR plan including affirmative action and sexual harassment policies

Technology

- Has a professional website that includes applicable NAICS and SIC codes, experience, and services
- Uses a company email domain (not AOL, gmail, yahoo, or Hotmail): e.g., John.Doe@CompanyName.com
- Is able to respond promptly to email requests
- Can complete the necessary paperwork to enroll as a vendor

Client protocol

- Has the ability to properly, accurately and fully complete RFPs and RFQs
- Has a diversified client base to manage risk
- Understands who the ideal client is and what they buy
- Researches both the client and their projects prior to networking events
- Ensures understanding of the project is consistent with client expectations
- Prioritizes the firm's benefits and value as the most qualified in the trade first, and mentions MWLBE status as secondary support
- Ensures every team member is well groomed and has good hygiene before attending networking events

Bonding and insurance

- Has required per project and aggregate bonding
- Has required insurance including: General Liability, Workers' Comp, Professional Liability, and Auto Insurance
- Ensures all workers have proper OSHA certification

License and certifications

- Has required trade license(s)
- Has required certification(s)

Appendix D

Business Assistance Programs

Financing Programs

Empire State Loan Program

Empire State Development provides access to short-term bridge loans for New York State certified minority and women-owned firms doing business with New York State.

http://esd.ny.gov/BusinessPrograms/Data/BridgetoSuccess/Bridge_to_Sucess_program_description.pdf

SBS Contract Financing Program

SBS helps MWBEs and small businesses secure low-rate loans to perform on City contracts. Businesses can access up to \$150,000 in capital to cover contract-related labor and equipment costs.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/html/growing/nyc_construction_loan.shtml

NYCEDC Kick-Start Loan Program

Minority, Women, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (MWDBEs) working on public construction projects may apply for loans up to \$150,000 to finance mobilization efforts and ensure healthy cash flow throughout project work.

<http://www.nycfedc.com/opportunities/opportunity-mwdbbe/kick-start-loan-program>

BOC Construction Loan Program

Short-term loans of \$20,000-\$150,000 are available to help small MWBEs cover contract-related labor and equipment costs in order to mobilize or bridge contract-based needs.

<http://www.bocnet.org/boc/siteDocuments/Construction-Contract-Based.pdf>

Bonding Programs

SBS Bond Readiness Program

This program helps certified MWBE construction firms seeking new or increased bonding to work on City construction projects. Workshops on accounting, financial management, insurance, safety, and risk management, as well as one-on-one assistance for credit repair, bookkeeping, proposal preparation, and surety referral are also available.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/html/growing/bond_readiness.shtml

NYS Surety Bond Assistance Program

Technical and financial assistance is provided to help contractors secure surety bonding. Contractors may be eligible to receive a guarantee of up to 30 percent to secure a surety bond line, bid bond, or a performance and payment bond on state and city projects.

<http://esd.ny.gov/BusinessPrograms/BondingAssistance.html>

DASNY Surety Bond Program

Designed to help MWBE firms acquire the surety bonding needed to successfully make the transition from subcontractors to prime contractors or to increase capacity as a prime on construction projects. This program also offers robust educational courses and one-on-one technical assistance.

<http://www.dasny.org/MWSBES/DASNYSuretyBondProgram.aspx>

Construction Mentorship Programs

SCA Construction Mentorship Program

MWLBES are partnered with large construction management firms and provided contracting opportunities. Participating firms receive experience working on SCA projects; technical assistance and training; assistance with general business, organizational, personnel skills, marketing, and business development; fast track payment systems; and access to working capital and bonding.

<http://www.nycsca.org/Business/GettingStarted/Pages/MentorPrograms.aspx>

MTA Tier 1 Small Business Mentoring Program

MWBE firms are partnered with one of the industry's largest construction management/mentoring firms. The program provides pre-qualification training; general business, organizational, and professional skills development; construction expertise; access to working capital; experience working with MTA construction projects (\$25,000 to \$1,000,000); and fast-track payments.

<http://web.mta.info/sbdp/tier1.htm>

NYC Construction Mentorship Program

For certified MWBE construction firms, this program provides access to contracting opportunities, training, and assistance to help increase revenues and grow. Services include helping companies prequalify for contracting opportunities with NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD), NYC Department of Design & Construction (DDC) and NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR); providing a customized growth plan; classroom instruction; and on-the-job training for contract winners.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/html/growing/nyc_construction_mentorship.shtml

Turner University and Turner School of Construction Management

Turner Construction offers online construction training to help construction personnel interested in enhancing their skills or their company's performance. In-depth online learning is offered to increase knowledge of construction-related topics, business skills, finance, and technology. In addition, Turner School of Construction Management is a construction management certificate program that is ideal for those in the industry who would like to enhance knowledge on the critical path method theory behind daily activity. The courses will help students gain the knowledge needed to manage a construction project from conception to completion.

<http://www.turneruniversity.com>

<http://www.turnerconstruction.com/office-network/new-york/turner-school-of-construction-management>

Business Development Training

NYC Business Solutions

Free business courses and workshops in all five boroughs to help businesses develop a business plan, and receive guidance on business strategy. Classes include computer-based bookkeeping, marketing, certification, selling and navigating the government, and more.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/html/summary/courses.shtml>

Strategic Steps for Growth

Offered by NYC Department of Small Business Services and NYU School of Business, this nine-month executive business management education program is designed to help certified MWBE firms grow. Using their own businesses as real-life business case studies, this program helps entrepreneurs gain knowledge through classes, as well as advice from business leaders and other entrepreneurs.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/html/summary/course_catalog_application_based.shtml#ssgmwbe

Business Technical Assistance

Columbia-Harlem Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

Assistance for New York residents or businesses including business plan development, funding sources, e-commerce, exporting goods and services, marketing plans, licensing, and regulation compliance.

<http://www8.gsb.columbia.edu/sbdc>

SBS Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs)

These centers help small businesses navigate and understand the government procurement processes by providing guidance and direction on government vendor enrollment systems, identifying appropriate small business certifications, as well as finding and responding to government contracting opportunities.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/html/summary/ptac.shtml>

Appendix E

Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BIM	Building Information Modeling
CBA	Community Benefits Agreement
CBS	Construction Business Services
CCBP	Columbia Community Business Program
CUF	Columbia University Facilities
CUNY	City University of New York
EDC	New York City Economic Development Corporation
ESDC	Empire State Development Corporation
MWBE	Minority and women-owned business enterprise
MWL	Minority, women, and local
MWLBE	Minority, women, and locally owned businesses enterprises
RFP	Request for Proposal
SBDC	Columbia-Harlem Small Business Development Corporation
SBS	New York City Department of Small Business Services
UMEZ	Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone
WHDC	West Harlem Development Corporation
PLA	Project Labor Agreement.



Interise is a nonprofit organization that works with local, regional, and national partners to offer an advanced small business management program—the StreetWise ‘MBA’™ (SWMBA)— that includes support through a network of peers and experts to facilitate greater access to new sources of capital, markets, and knowledge. Ninety-two percent of participants are women, minorities, recent Americans, Native Americans, or have businesses in low- to moderate-income communities. Each participating business owner produces a three-year Strategic Growth Action Plan™, and moves from isolation into a cohort of peers who continue to support each other as they implement their plans. Participants have been shown, through Interise’s evaluation program, to have generated net new job growth throughout the recent recession at a rate five times that of the private sector as a whole. Strengthening local small businesses not only creates new jobs, it also helps free their owners and employees for deeper engagement as community leaders. Since 2008, Interise has been the contracted national instructional provider for the Small Business Administration’s Emerging Leaders Program. In 2015, Interise will be offering programs in sixty four communities nationwide.



Adventium is an award winning strategic marketing and branding firm with a proven track record for delivering innovative and effective solutions to complex problems. Corporations, government agencies, and institutions rely on Adventium to create smart strategies and meaningful communications that are engaging, memorable, and emotionally connect with the target audience. As a certified minority, woman-owned business, Adventium is dedicated to helping companies and organizations grow and prosper by helping clients define their competitive advantage to build remarkable, insightful and successful brands.



In addition to managing the Mentorship Program, CUF supports the University’s core mission of advancing the learning and research of its students and faculty by providing end-to-end project management, planning, design, development, campus operations, security, and construction-related services. CUF manages a wide array of maintenance, renovation, and repair projects for existing buildings, and oversees all new construction. Its goal is to excel in service delivery by being responsive to clients, and ensuring projects are built with the highest standards, completed on time and within budget

As an anchor institution, Columbia continues to strengthen the University’s ties with its Upper Manhattan neighbors. It aims to increase tangible benefits for the local community by linking a greater percentage of purchasing dollars and enhancing partnerships with local vendors, increasing a wide spectrum of local jobs, providing business and workforce training, as well as serving as a network builder.