

Diversity in Contracting

Diversity in Contracting 2025 Q3 Newsletter

November 5, 2025

2025 Business Accelerator Program Kick-Off



2025 Port of Seattle Business Accelerator Kick-Off

On September 11th, we kicked off our 2025 Business Accelerator Mentorship program with the [Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council \(NWMMSDC\)](#). This annual program included an application process where select businesses take part in a cohort experience where they undergo a rigorous curriculum and are paired with a mentor in their industry in order to scale up and take on new projects with government agencies like the Port of Seattle.

The room consisted of Port executives, mentors, community partners, and the 13 distinguished businesses selected for this year's cohort! Throughout the event, professional connections were made, stories were shared, and powerful conversations ensued. We are excited to see how this cohort will continue to refine and build upon the great businesses they lead!

To read more about the kick-off, and to meet each of the businesses in this year's cohort, check out the [2025 Port of Seattle Business Accelerator Kick-Off](#) article by NWMMSDC!

If you are interested in hearing more about the Business Accelerator program, please contact [Kelvin Dankwa](#).

Announcements

Port of Seattle DBE-ACDBE IFR Notification 10-3-2025

On October 3, 2025, The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued an Interim Final Rule (IFR) on the certification of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises for the federal DBE/ACDBE programs. The IFR is effective immediately. The IFR mandates significant changes to the DBE/ACDBE program regulations and the Port's implementation of its DBE/ACDBE program.

Key Updates Include:

- All currently certified DBE/ACDBE firms must undergo a reevaluation to determine eligibility under new standards
- Any firm wanting to be certified as a DBE/ACDBE must submit a personal narrative explaining its owner's social and economic disadvantage, without regard to race or gender
- Firms must also submit an updated personal net worth statement as part of the recertification process.
- As directed, the Port of Seattle is suspending, or suspending enforcement of, DBE/ACDBE goals (for individual contracts and for the Port's capital program generally) effective October 3, 2025.
- Federal funding recipients, including the Port of Seattle, must set 0% DBE/ACDBE goals for new contracts and stop counting DBE/ACDBE participation towards existing contract goals until the certification review process is complete and new goals can be set
- Port of Seattle contracts already awarded remain valid; however, DBE/ACDBE commitments and participation under those contracts cannot be enforced during the reevaluation period. The Port of Seattle is evaluating its contracts to determine the best approach to accomplishing this requirement.

Please read the [Port of Seattle IFR Notification](#) for the full statement

Diversity in Contracting Office Hours at Tabor 100!

Have you been looking for an opportunity to speak with Port of Seattle Diversity in Contracting staff in person? Well we are glad to announce that we will now be holding weekly office hours at Tabor 100!

Date & Time: Wednesdays, 10AM - 2PM

Location: Tabor 100

(7100 Fort Dent Way #100 Tukwila, WA)



On any given week, you may have an opportunity to meet with staff from our Community Engagement & Training, Women Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE), or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) teams. Come chat with us at Tabor 100!

SEA Sparks Release of Request for Information RFI 25-5 (Retail)

Airport Dining and Retail (ADR) Program at SEA is pleased to release SEA Sparks Request for Information (RFI 25-5) for one (1) Accelerator Kiosk location for Specialty Retail. Interested small business retail operators should send an email to: adrrfp@portseattle.org to receive a set of the documents.

Advanced PortGen Workshop Series Fall 2025



The [2025 Advanced PortGen](#) is a training series of seven workshops designed for small, minority, and women-owned businesses wanting to learn how to be successful with government contracting. Register today to view recordings from past sessions at any time!

Recorded Training from Previous Sessions (On-Demand Access)

- [You Won! Now What?](#) for Job Order Contract subcontractors
 - [Prevailing Wage Compliance](#) for construction contractors
 - [Indirect Cost Rates](#) for architects, engineers, and professional services
 - [Positioning Your Firm to Work with the Port](#) for any firms looking to sell to the Port
 - [Surety Bonding - Basics](#) for construction contractors
 - [Advanced Bonding Strategies for your Small Business](#) for construction contractors
 - [Construction Contracting at the Port of Seattle](#) badging and Project Labor Agreements information for construction contractors
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**In Remembrance of Josie Regan,
Diversity in Contracting Sr. Administrative Assistant**

We are saddened to share the news that Josie



Regan, Senior Administrative Assistant on our Diversity in Contracting team, passed away recently.

Josie was a wonderful, bright, and energetic co-worker who will be remembered and deeply missed. Josie had been with the Diversity in Contracting Department for four years. Josie is survived by her loving family and her niece Zaria who she loved very dearly. This loss weighs heavy on the entire Diversity in Contracting Team and Economic Development Division. Our deepest condolences to Josie's family, friends, and colleagues. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

Blog Posts

Coopasims Transportation and Logistics - Black Business Month

With August being Black Business Month, the Diversity in Contracting team had an opportunity to interview Markiss Cooper, co-owner of [Coopasims Transportation and Logistics](#)!



"...Becoming an entrepreneur has changed my life... The fact that we own a house today is huge because I never lived in a house in my entire childhood. I went to five different elementary schools, three different middle schools, and for so long all I knew was instability.

Now, I get to watch my daughter be able to go to one elementary school, and one middle school, and being able to provide that stability for her is why my wife and I work so hard on this business...As a Black man married to a Black woman, raising Black children, and having my oldest being able to see her father start from nothing with a pickup truck to having a warehouse, vehicles, employees, I've now inspired her to be an entrepreneur." - Markiss Cooper

Read the full interview on the [Diversity in Contracting website](#)!

Yanet Maldonado - Hispanic Heritage Month Port Spotlight

September 15th to October 15th is

commemorated as Hispanic Heritage Month and the Diversity in Contracting team had an opportunity to interview Yanet Maldonado, Construction Contracting Manager!

"At least once or twice a year, I have meetings with Hispanic business owners for whom English is their second language. I meet with them in-person to show them VendorConnect, to let them know how the procurement process works and where to go for information- all of the things that Diversity in Contracting provides to diverse and small businesses but which I translate in Spanish. Soon, [the Central Procurement Office] will be communicating using a translation services app to improve our outreach to business that speak other languages. Our goal in CPO is to see small businesses be able to start on a small contract or as subcontractors, then gain the experience they need to bid on larger projects." - Yanet Maldonado



Read the full interview on the [Diversity in Contracting website!](#)

Quarter 3 Updates

Q3 Outreach Statistics:

- PortGen Events: 4 events
 - PortGen First Look (7/30/25): [Maritime & Aviation Construction](#)
 - PortGen 101 (8/20/25): [Goods and Services](#)
 - PortGen First Look (9/11/25): [East Waterway Cleanup Design](#)
 - PortGen 101 (9/24/25): [Construction](#)
- PortGen Attendance: 143 attendees
- PortGen Unique Business Attendance: 118 firms
 - 73 WMBE Firms
 - 53 DBE Firms
 - 78 SBE Firms
- Collaborative Presentations & Tabling Events: 2 events
 - [Planes, Trains, and Automobiles](#) (8/27/25)
 - Regional Contracting Forum (9/17/25)

Please check out our [How to do Business with the Port](#) page to view all presentations and registrants lists for our events

Upcoming Events

PG 101: Goods and Services

Attention all diverse and small businesses that provide

goods/supplies, and off-the-shelf services (e.g. catering, janitorial, photography, etc)! If you have been wanting to understand how the Port procures its goods and services, why it procures in the way it does, and what that means for you, this is the webinar for you!



**Wednesday, December 3rd
2PM - 4PM**

Online (link available upon registration)

Register Here

Year-End Celebration and Accelerator Graduation



Calling all WMBE firms and supporters of WMBE firms: Join Diversity in Contracting, Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council, and APEX Accelerator in celebrating all that you do! Hear about upcoming opportunities at the Port in 2026, celebrate the graduates of our 2025 Accelerator cohort, and close out the year right by making new revenue-

generating leads and reconnecting with old friends!

Register Here

**Tuesday, December 16th
4PM - 6:30PM**

Pier 69 (2711 Alaskan Way Seattle, WA)

In Case You Missed It



Daren Kumar, Sound Transit Sr. Economic Development Specialist, speaking to Planes, Trains, and Automobiles attendees

Thank you for joining us for a packed Planes, Trains, and Automobiles event!
We can't thank Sound Transit, WSDOT, OMWBE, and you enough for being with us!

[All Current Solicitations](#)

[Future Solicitations](#)

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About the Port

Founded in 1911 by a vote of the people as a special purpose government, the Port of Seattle's mission is to promote economic opportunities and quality of life in the region by advancing trade, travel, commerce and job creation in an equitable, accountable and environmentally responsible manner. In 2018, Port Commissioners adopted a new Diversity in Contracting (DC) policy, Resolution 3737, that drives equity in Port contracting. It established a five-year goal to triple the number of women and minority owned businesses doing business with the Port, and to increase the amount of spend on WMBE contracts to 15%.



Port of Seattle | 2711 Alaskan Way | Seattle, WA 98121 US

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