



Procurement Diversity Quarterly Connection

Vol.2 No.3
April 2020

Director's Note

Greetings,

As we are all impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a major impact is on businesses, especially small businesses. During this time, and during times of recovery, we are committed to supporting the small businesses owned by minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and veterans.

Whether it's assisting with certification, business development services, or simply helping point you in the right direction—we are here.

To all of our colleagues, you play an integral role in what we do. I appreciate your flexibility and being able to adapt to these new working conditions. Thank you for your continued support and good work.

Kind Regards
-Sharla

Contact Us



Chicago:

809 S. Marshfield Ave., 4th Floor
Chicago, IL 60612

Urbana-Champaign:

507 E. Green St., 5th Floor
Champaign, IL 61820



UIC: (312) 996-2971
UIUC: (217) 244-9671
Fax: (312) 413-8369



procurementdiversity@uillinois.edu



obfs.uillinois.edu/supplier-diversity



Leaders of Chicago Inventors (left); Marcus Betts, Assistant Vice Chancellor for External Engagement (3rd from left); Debra Matlock, UIC Purchasing Director; Mike Bass, Special Advisor to the President; Sharla Roberts, Director of Procurement Diversity; Congressman Danny K. Davis; UIC Chancellor Michael Amiridis; Dr. Robert Barish, Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs; Michael Zenn, Chief Executive Officer for UI Health Affairs

New Decade, New Opportunities in Healthcare

The State of Illinois is learning that our responsibilities to our stakeholders are multifaceted and interconnected. When we strive for diversity in an industry full of technology and innovation, it benefits everyone. Healthcare is one of the most innovative and profitable industries in the US. According to Inc. Magazine, in 2017, Health ranked number one on the list for a total revenue of \$36.3 billion with Financial Services number two at \$15.1b.

Chicago's very own US Congressman Danny K. Davis' office teamed up with the Office of Procurement Diversity this

past January to host their first Diversity Healthcare Expo, to provide a platform for highly motivated diverse business owners and inventors in the healthcare industry. These firms showcased their innovative products and services to influential local healthcare providers and higher education leaders serving the Chicagoland area.

Bevel Douglas, owner and inventor of Cert Alert was one of the attendees that benefited from the event. He understands the challenges that minorities encounter in the technological and innovation space

[Continued on Page 4](#)



In the Spotlight

New Award: Neta Scientific



Neta Scientific (#IPHEC1809) is excited to announce its new partnership with the University of Illinois and its punch-out catalog in iBuy.

For 20 years, Neta Scientific, Inc. has been a leading distributor of laboratory supplies and solutions to the Pharmaceutical, Biotechnology, and Academic industries. Neta Scientific is a minority and women-owned business (BEP and WBENC certified) that is synonymous with integrity, excellence in supply chain management, and optimum in customer satisfaction.

[Continued on Page 3](#)

B2B Strategic Solutions and Workplace Diversity



In this era of globalization, diversity in the business environment is about more than gender and ethnicity. It includes religious beliefs, education, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientation, cultures, and disabilities. Also, for the first time in America's history, there are five generations in the workforce at the same time.

While implementing a diversity initiative can seem like an arduous task, we are in a unique position to foster creativity, innovation, and empathy in ways that a homogeneous workforce does not. It takes careful nurturing to unlock the power of a diverse workforce. To do this, we must embrace many different types of people who represent various cultures, generations, ideas, and thinking, and invest in creating diversity initiatives that are intentional, supportive, and strategic.

[Continued on Page 3](#)

South Coast Paper is the University's Preferred Paper Choice

Purchase your next order of copy paper from South Coast Paper. South Coast Paper is a State of Illinois Business Enterprise Program certified firm that offers two great options for Letter Size (8 1/2" x 11") copy paper. "Destiny" paper offered by South Coast has the exact same specifications as Boisex9, yet costs less. If you are looking for an eco-friendly product, "Envirocopy" is 30% recyclable. Please support the University's drive to support diverse businesses and order your paper today from the Office Depot punch-out catalog in iBuy or your Campus Central Stores.



COVID-19 Small Business Resources

US Small Business Administration:

The US Small Business Administration (SBA) has launched its Economic Injury Disaster Loan Assistance Program.

The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides small businesses with working capital loans of up to \$2 million that can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing.

More information here: <https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19#section-header-10>

Downstate Small Business Stabilization Program:

To support small businesses in downstate and rural counties across Illinois, DCEO is repurposing \$20 million in CDBG funds to stand up the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Program. This Fund will offer small businesses of up to 50 employees the opportunity to partner with their local governments to obtain grants of up to \$25,000 in working capital.

These grants will be offered on a rolling basis.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/Pages/EmergencySBAInitiatives.aspx>



B2B Strategic Solutions

([Cont. from Page 2](#))

B2B Strategic Solutions Inc. consultants have been providing solutions that support diversity for corporations, universities, and school districts for 20+ years. B2B has developed a reputation for excellence and integrity, which Eric Smith, Director of Human Resource Diversity, & Strategy Facilities & Services at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign highlights in the statement below:

"The Foundations of Bias workshop was an excellent way to introduce our supervisors to the concept of unconscious bias... [the workshop] style put participants at ease and provided a safe space for them to explore and engage with each other on a level they had not done before. Overall our supervisors responded to the workshop positively and left with a desire to have their employees participate in a similar workshop."

This reflection is a glimpse into the impact that B2B Strategic Solutions Inc. provides. B2B takes pride in its ability to create an inclusive environment in which each member of the community is valued, respected, and can fully contribute their talents. That includes reducing bias and increasing the diversity of the employee and management population.



If your department is looking for resources on how to properly integrate a diversity initiative, contact Donna C. Bryant at donna@b2bssi.com. For more information about B2B Strategic Solutions Inc. and other services, visit b2bssi.com.

Neta Scientific ([Cont. from Page 2](#))

As a diverse aggregator and neutral provider, its product lines in chromatography, life sciences, chemicals, lab supplies, and lab equipment are trusted, preferred, and always offered at a fair market price. Neta offers a robust catalog of leading brands like Agilent Technologies, Corning, GE Healthcare Life Sciences, and IKA Works, to more effectively conduct cutting-edge research and development.

"Our customers are our priority! We pride ourselves on delivering exceptional customer focused service, with the flexibility needed to go the extra mile. We will be integrated into the iBuy system where we will provide our integrated catalog of lab supplies and solutions."

For questions or support, contact Neta's local and home office contacts below:

Local Illinois Account Support - Tim Bolognani
tim.bolognani@netascientific.com

Inside Account Support - Tiffany Freeman
tiffany.freeman@netascientific.com

Customer Service - orders@netascientific.com;
609-265-8210

Check out Neta's new products:
www.netascientific.com



Resources

Vendors! Register with each bulletin to ensure you receive notifications on all bidding opportunities that match the goods and services that your company provides.

- General Services—BidBuy: <https://www.illinois.gov/cpo/PathwayToProcurement/Pages/BidBuy.aspx>
- State Procurement Sites: Illinois Procurement Bulletin: www.purchase.state.il.us
- Public Institutions of Higher Education: www.procure.stateuniv.state.il.us
- Capital Development Board: www.illinois.gov/cdb
- Illinois Department of Transportation: www.idot.illinois.gov
- Illinois Tollway Authority: www.illinoistollway.com

Picture This: 2020 Diversity Healthcare Expo



Diversity Healthcare Expo

(Continued from Page 1)

"Chicago is lucky to have resources to offer entrepreneurs such as myself. Entrepreneurs and small businesses are the backbone of the American economy. This event allows us to demonstrate our importance to those that may not realize what we have to offer," said Douglas. Douglas invented CertAlert, a pendant worn around the neck, that sounds an alarm to remind the user to take their medication. The alarm is deactivated when the user opens the pill bottle cap and swipes the pendant over a sensor placed under the cap. Watch a short video of Bevel's story [here](#).

Congressman Davis, UIC Vice Chancellor of UI Health Dr. Robert Barish, and other institutional buyers spent the afternoon acquainting themselves with the capabilities of world-class diverse businesses.

Over 50 exhibits filled the boisterous room. In one corner attendees were seen giving a "state-of-the-art CPR mannequin" chest compressions that visibly displayed bright colors when the user pressed the correct area with the right amount of force. On the other side of the room was "virtual eye wear" that allowed the user to augment reality using systems such as artificial intelligence and "Internet of Things (IoT)".

Angelique Warner, owner, and creator of [GoGovie Premium Baby Carrier](#) was excited to participate at the event. Warner, strapped with her baby mannequin, demonstrated the versatile and fashionably-unique design features of the GoGovie Premium Baby Carrier. The carrier ensures that the baby and adult are comfortable and safe while carrying an infant in a fast-paced society.

"This is my first time participating at a university-sponsored event and I think the partnerships with the hospitals and the Chicago Inventor's Organization are great. We don't always know who the players are or where the opportunities lie, so I'm grateful to have been a part of this network, and to the University for bringing it all together," Warner said.

Attendees left the event with a new sparkle in their eyes--motivated and equipped with a host of new connections and new ideas.

A heart-felt thank you to all those in the healthcare and medical industry who are putting their lives on the line to find cures, save lives, and find solutions to end the COVID-19 pandemic.