

Historic First! VTA Expands Business Outreach to Include LGBT and Disabled Veteran Businesses: DIVERSE BUSINESS LEADERS GATHER TO STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH ORLANDO'S LGBT COMMUNITY

San Jose, CA - On June 13, 2016, The Minority Business Consortium (MBC) is proud to announce that Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) has voted unanimously to expand their Business Diversity Program to include Disabled Veterans and Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgender Business Enterprises. It marks the first time in the history of the United States that a government transportation agency has codified into its policies and procedures the inclusion of LGBT businesses.

To celebrate this historic occasion, VTA is hosting the Business Diversity Program Expo. The expo will be held in San Jose, California at the Rotunda at San Jose City Hall on June 14, 2016; doors open at 9am.

The purpose is to assist Bay Area small and diverse businesses learn how to do business with local cities and public agencies and hear about upcoming contracting opportunities. The event will offer information and assistance to the area's LGBT, Disabled Veteran, Minority and Women owned businesses, in order to enhance participation and ensure that these businesses are afforded an equitable opportunity to compete for public projects.

"We celebrate VTA joining the state of California in recognizing that disabled veterans deserve special consideration for suffering permanent disabilities as a result of their service to our nation and helping them compete more effectively for contracts and share their expertise for the good of all." states Mike Sabellico, Executive Director, Disabled Veteran Business Association.

In 2016, VTA continued on its path of 'historical firsts' by expanding its program to include the LGBT business community. "The VTA's inclusion of DVBE and LGBT-certified firms into their procurement programs is not only historic, it underscores the VTAs commitment to securing the best products and services for the best price possible. Including qualified DVBE and LGBT-certified firms into the competitive bidding process everyone wins." stated Paul Pendergast, President of the Golden Gate Business Association, the Nation's first LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

Roark Clayton, President of the Rainbow Chamber Silicon Valley confirms, "We applaud the VTA Board of Directors, executives and its small business programming staff for their commitment to ensuring that the workforce who is building the critical transportation projects throughout Silicon Valley looks like the people who are utilizing the vast network of transportation systems."

What: VTA Business Diversity Program Expo & Solidarity with Orlando LGBT Community

Where: 200 E. Santa Clara Ave., Rotunda, San Jose City Hall

When: 9:30am to 9:55am, Tuesday, June 14, 2016

Attendees: Nuria Fernandez, CEO/General Manager of VTA,, Mayor Sam Liccardo, City of San Jose; Supervisor Ken Yeager, County of Santa Clara and Cindy Chavez, VTA Board President and Supervisor, County of Santa Clara; Representatives from the LGBT and Disable Veteran Business Community.

Visuals: Business Diversity banners, LGBT and DVBE Tabling

This outreach event is supported by City of San Jose, Small Business Alliance, Rainbow Chamber Silicon Valley, Disabled Veterans Business Alliance, Billy DeFrank LGBTQ Community Center, Santa Clara County, Office of LGBTQ Affairs, Department of Governmental Services, Golden Gate Business Association, Silicon Valley Business Journal, and Minority Business Consortium.

For more information, call MBC business office at 408-660- 9171.

About Minority Business Consortium Silicon Valley

Minority Business Consortium was established to address the needs of Minority and Women-owned small businesses seeking opportunities in public and private-sector Supplier Diversity programs or their Local and Federal government procurement opportunities. Our efforts strengthen, Women and Minority Businesses and Trade organizations. For more information, visit MBC online at www.minoritybusinessconsortium.com

About the Disabled Veteran Business Alliance

The Disabled Veteran Business Alliance was formed in 1994 following the establishment of the first DVBE program in the nation by the California legislature. Its mission is to empower, provide resources to, and work side-by-side with disabled and other veterans to promote and support them in establishing, maintaining, and growing viable business enterprises. A key element of this support is effective use of various government and corporate disabled veteran procurement programs. Founded in California, the DVBA recently expanded its service area to encompass the entire country. Visit DVBA online at www.dvba.org

About the Rainbow Chamber Silicon Valley

Established in 1999 to give exposure to the LGBT business community, with over 100 members, the Rainbow Chamber of Commerce Silicon Valley is the largest not-for-profit corporation in greater Silicon Valley for LGBT businesses comprised of LGBT and LGBT-supportive business owners and professionals. The Chamber's mission is to create a vibrant LGBT supportive business community through development, facilitation, promotion and advocacy. For more information, go to www.rainbowchamber.org

About the Golden Gate Business Association

Founded in 1974, the Golden Gate Business Association (GGBA) is the nation's first LGBT Chamber of Commerce. With nearly 400 members who live and do business across San Francisco, Marin, San Mateo, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, the GGBA proudly serves as a leading voice for the San Francisco/Bay Area's LGBT business community. GGBA's mission is to champion opportunity, development and advocacy for our LGBT and Allied business community. Visit GGBA online at www.ggba.com

About Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)

VTA provides sustainable, accessible, community-- focused transportation options that are innovative, environmentally responsible, and promote the vitality of our region. For more information, visit VTA online at www.vta.org

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