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Multnomah County MWESB, Procurement:

Featuring Sophia Cavalli

NEWS

Bruce Poinsette of The Skanner News **September 27, 2012**



Sophia Cavalli has been with Multnomah County for four and a half years. Currently the county's Procurement and MWESB supervisor, she has over 13 years experience in designing and implementing small business programs. In addition, she now works on sustainable purchasing efforts.

Cavalli began working in the private sector in sales and commodities. Following that, she was at the City of Portland, where she oversaw its small business program for close to seven years. Cavalli

currently serves on the National Associations of Counties Green Purchasing Task Force.

She says her vision is to include as many businesses as possible to foster a diverse vendor pool and workforce.

"We believe that (having a diverse vendor pool and workforce) is part of not only economic development, but community development," says Cavalli. "Specifically here in Multnomah County, 95 percent of all businesses are small businesses, and generally small businesses hire the most workers. It's a good responsible business practice."

The percentage of contracts the county has awarded to minority, women and emerging small businesses has exceeded 30 percent for the third straight year. In addition to awarding contracts, the county also sponsors training programs and holds quarterly meetings between a host of over 20 regional agencies to ensure the long-term success of minority, women, and emerging small businesses in the region.

When awarding contracts, Cavalli says the county is looking for firms with responsible business practices.

"How we buy the goods and services needed by the County and who we buy them from matters," she says. "Social equity is an important aspect of how we make our Advertisements





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buying decisions, this includes the participation of local minority, women, and emerging small businesses. Chair (Jeff) Cogen and our Board of Commissioners have been very supportive of our efforts."





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