



Fall 2001
Volume 1, Issue 4

Inside This Issue

- 1 Workshop
- 1 In the Spotlight
- 2 F.A.Q.'s
- 3 Cuellar's Speech
- 3 Special Events
- 3 Remember
- 4 Noteworthy

Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M.
Travis County Purchasing Agent

Travis County
Commissioners Court
County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe
Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis
Pct. 2 Commissioner Karen Sonleitner
Pct. 3 Commissioner Todd Baxter
Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gomez

Travis County
Purchasing Board
Pct. 4 County Commissioner
Margaret Gomez, Chairperson
Pct. 3 County Commissioner Todd Baxter
353rd District Ct. Judge Lora Livingston
201st District Ct. Judge Suzanne Covington
331st District Ct. Judge Bob Perkins

Travis County Purchasing Office
314 West 11th Street, Suite 400
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 473-9700

Travis County Purchasing Quarterly

Workshop Makes the Grade with Attendees

By Jorge Talavera

Area business owners hoping to get educated on doing business with Travis County crowded the Clarion Inn late July for the first "How to do Business with Travis County" Workshop. They came to learn about contracting opportunities, network with Travis County personnel and inform themselves about how to get paid on time.

Presenters did not disappoint with entertaining and informative presentations that covered most aspects of the purchasing cycle. "I go to many seminars in marketing my business, but this was very well organized and the speakers did a great job," said one small business owner in attendance.

Cyd Grimes, now beginning her ninth year of service as Travis County's Purchasing Agent, began her remarks by stating her personal commitment to making sure the Purchasing Office fulfills its dual roles. "We are very committed to doing our jobs to make sure that the public gets what they pay for," she told an attentive crowd of about 100, "and also that vendors have the opportunity to share in that economy in spending those taxpayer dollars."

Grimes went on to discuss the nearly \$200 million bond package being hammered out at the time, and after briefly acknowledging the importance of getting vendors paid quickly and the county's intention to keep improving in that area, she introduced the event's keynote speaker, Judge Samuel T. Biscoe.

Judge Biscoe welcomed the crowd on behalf of the "912,000 residents of Travis County," going on to discuss the county's commitment to implement and maintain a simple and fair contracting process. "Better is a constant. It stays there," the judge remarked, "no matter how much it improves." Judge Biscoe expressed the challenging nature of getting HUBs involved in the procurement process while

See Workshop on Page 2

In the Spotlight Richard Villareal

By Jorge Talavera

In 1987, rows of medical products surrounded Richard Villareal in the warehouse where he worked as a shipping and receiving clerk. On his first day, he was familiar with just a handful of the thousands of medical products in stock.

Richard was getting his foot in the door at St. David's Hospital, quickly becoming familiar enough with the products to be promoted to Inventory Control Specialist. Richard eventually became the "go-to guy" in St. David's Purchasing before landing a job with the Travis County Purchasing Office, thanks to a chance encounter.



Frank Holder, Travis County Assistant Purchasing Agent, had seen Richard at the gym frequently in 1998. Richard had caught Frank's attention with his general demeanor: courteous, well mannered and genuinely positive.

Frank soon discovered that Richard was caring for his terminally ill mother. "Something about that spoke volumes about his character," says Frank, "and I remember thinking to myself, 'This is the kind of person that I would like to have working for me sometime.'"

When the opportunity arose, Frank called Richard and after a panel interview by his future coworkers, it was agreed that he would be a good fit. In March of 1998, his mother passed away, dealing him the worst loss of his life.

His loss boosted his appreciation for life and his faith in God, "I'm at peace now," Richard says.

Richard now works as a Purchasing Agent Assistant II and prides himself on his

See Spotlight on Page 4



Clockwise from top left: Travis County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe (left) and Marvin Brice, Purchasing, chat before the presentation begins; top right: Pamela Cunningham and Sona Chandwani of the Austin Community Development Corporation (ACDC) meet Cyd Grimes, Travis County Purchasing Agent, (background) Renee Watson, Bexar County Small, Woman and Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (SWMBE) Program Coordinator, Gracie Sanders, Del Valle Sheriff's Office, Jose Palacios, Auditors Office and Jason Walker, Purchasing; bottom right: Rose Garcia, Marvin Brice and Frank Holder, Purchasing, having a laugh with Jose Palacios; and bottom left: Chris Murray, Tremur Consulting Contractors, receives an award of recognition for sponsoring the event from Judge Biscoe, as Travis County HUB Coordinator and workshop emcee, Sylvia Lopez, looks on.

"How to do Business with Travis County" Workshop July 25, 2001



Frequently Asked Questions

Workshop • Continued from Page 1

abiding by "the legal standards involved that serve as guideposts."

The county "leans over backwards" to have in place and implement procedures that are simple, open and fair, he said. "We want to facilitate your accessing county contracting opportunities," he announced, "and they are numerous."

A "golden opportunity," Judge Biscoe called the chance for local vendors to do business with the county, particularly with the economy's effect on the private sector.

Reflecting on his last 10 years in Travis County Government, the judge said he believed that "substantial progress" has been made toward increasing the number of contracts with HUB entities.

A question and answer session concluded the workshop, with one attendee asking about the steps necessary to start a HUB program in their area. Travis County, one of only three of the 254 counties in Texas with a HUB program, offered to provide direction and assistance in establishing the program, as it has done in the past for neighboring counties including Bexar and Dallas. ☺

Q: *Liaison: How do I cancel a purchase order?*

A: You don't. All purchase orders must be cancelled by the Purchasing Office. To do so, simply email the appropriate buyer to notify him or her. That buyer will then cancel the purchase order. Note: The purchase order must be "unreceived" in order to be cancelled.

Q: *What is the upcoming bond election for and why do we have them?*

A: First of all, bonds are sold to borrow money to pay for major capital projects such as roads, bridges and parks. The proposed bonds are general obligation bonds and will be repaid over the next twenty years from property taxes.

Bond elections allow voters to approve or reject long-term financing for major County Capital Improvement Projects. Financing projects through bond authorizations allows for the current and the next generation of citizens to pay their share of the cost of the improvement.

The total cost of the bond package to be voted on in the November 6th election is \$199,060,000, with \$57.43 million going to local roads, drainage, bridges and pedestrian access and another \$66.2 million planned for the State Highway 130 Right of Way project. For more information on these and other bond projects, contact the Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources staff at 473-9383.

Q: *With the economy in its current state, is government procurement being affected like the private sector?*

A: Although government procurement is affected, it is not as profoundly affected as the private sector. In difficult economic times, the public sector is actually an oasis of financial opportunity for vendors. Taxes are still paid, and national, state and local government must continue to serve its citizens, meaning commodities and services must still be purchased, facilities must be maintained and roads, bridges and highways must continue to be built, creating numerous contracting opportunities. ☺

Cuellar: "The Changing Face of Texas"

By Jorge Talavera

In one of his last speeches as Texas Secretary of State, Henry Cuellar discussed "the changing face of Texas" and the issues affecting the future of minority business in the state at the recent Central and South Texas Minority Business Council (CSTMBC) "Strategic Alliance" seminar.

Glenn Murray, Director of Supplier Diversity at HEB Corp., introduced Secretary Cuellar, noting some of his numerous accomplishments including Cuellar's distinguished honor of being the most degreed official in Texas State Government. With degrees from Laredo Community College and Georgetown University, a law degree from the University of Texas Law School and a Ph.D. in government from UT Austin, "he lives and breathes education," said Murray.

Which is why his focus on this day was on how education, and business, are being affected by the changing landscape of Texas.

Cuellar described how "the changing face of Texas" could be attributed to three main factors that are sure to affect the future of education and minority business in Texas and the nation.

The first, "economy diversification," is the apparent shift in Texas' long-time economic staples to what Cuellar calls the current "service-oriented economy."

In the history of Texas, land, cotton, cattle and oil used to be king, said Cuellar, "and we all know what happened to oil in the '80s. The state of Texas would lose \$100 million of state revenues every time the price of oil dropped one dollar per barrel."

With this new "service oriented economy" existing on a local, national and global level, "it means performance has more to do with knowledge," and in turn education, said Cuellar.

Technology is the second factor profoundly affecting education and business, with the

Remember

**In the hours of deep dark despair
When our world is torn apart
It is now that we must give care
And show to all our strong brave heart
For in the days and nights to pass
We shall our victory work to secure
And woe to those who broke our fast
For America-Our America shall endure**

-Donald Rollack

Internet creating "a classroom with no walls." In business, the challenge now is to keep up with the latest technology in order to take advantage of it in every way possible and moreover not fall behind the technology curve.

The obvious demographic shifts in Texas, the third factor cited by Cuellar, are perhaps the most apparent catalysts of change as shown by Texas' changing population's effect on "politics and the electoral process."

On politicians' courting Spanish-speaking voters, "It used to be one word in Spanish, then a phrase, now conversation is expected...so now, many statewide officials are

having to learn Spanish."

Cuellar's bilingualism may serve as an advantage to him soon, as he resigned weeks after this event to pursue an elected office.

"It is a tremendous time to minority business owner in the state of Texas. The dynamics have changed," Cuellar said. "friendlier corporate America," as exemplified by Supplier

Diversity Programs across the nation, has realized that "(including HUBs) is not only the right thing to do but the smart thing to do."

Cuellar said there are "millions and millions of dollars that go out on contract with the state," and he stressed the importance of maximizing HUBs' role in that economy. "Those doors have to be open to make sure that everybody has an opportunity not only to deal with corporate America but also the state (and local) government. The prosperity of the state of Texas depends on making sure that we get all segments of our society involved." Q

Purchasing Staff Phone List

Four digit extensions may be reached by calling (512) 473-9700

Purchasing Agent	Cyd Grimes	473-9761
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Frank Holder	473-9451
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Vacant	473-9764
Business Sys. Consultant	Scott Worthington	708-4851
HUB Coordinator	Sylvia Lopez	708-4561
HUB Specialist	Jorge Talavera	2058
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lolly Jones	473-4204
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lori Clyde	473-4205
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Rose Garcia	473-9763
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Loren Breland	708-4854
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Ella Hill	708-4853
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Richard Villareal	708-4881
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Manuel Perez	473-9762
Purchasing Agent Asst. I	Donald Rollack	473-9760
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lou Britt	708-4852
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Jason Walker	708-4562
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Eric Francois	473-9853
Executive Assistant	Lana Boling	473-9766
Purchasing Clerk IV	Melissa Hanson	3705
Purchasing Clerk III	John Gonzalez	3702
Purchasing Clerk III	Elsa Uresti	3703
Purchasing Clerk II	Betty Chapa	5437/9700
Fixed Asset Manager	Ron Dube	236-6458
Warehouse Supervisor	Dan Rollie	236-6459
Fixed Asset Associate	Matt Phillips	236-6459
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Marvin Brice	473-9765
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Jerry Raisch	473-9724
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	David Moreno	708-4850

Quarterly Quote

- "...let us strive on to finish the work we are in: to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

-Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1865

Special Events Calendar

Corpus Christi
10/24/2001
4 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.

MINORITY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT WEEK VENDOR FAIR"

Hosted by:
Minority Business Development Center and the Minority Business Opportunity Committee
Location Bayfront Convention Center - Corpus Christi
For information call: Caroline Chavana at (316) 883-9917.

Houston
10/30/2001
8 A.M. - 5 P.M.

SECOND ANNUAL "BUILDING TOMORROW TODAY"

Hosted by:
Texas Building & Procurement Commission
Statewide & Agency HUB Program
City of Houston - Affirmative Action Pgm.
Metropolitan Transit Authority
University of Houston (Main Campus, Downtown, Clear Lake & Victoria)
Texas Workforce Commission
Texas Department of Transportation
University of Texas - Health Science Center
University of Texas System - Office of Facility Planning/Construction
Location University of Houston - Hilton Hotel @ 4800 Calhoun
For information call: Jennifer Flores at (888) 863-5881 or Sandra Webb at (713) 743-5662

San Antonio Convention Center
12/5/01 7 A.M. - 7 P.M. "HOW TO GET IN THE GAME AND STAY IN THE GAME"
Presented by:
Bexar County and the City of San Antonio - Small, Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise
For information call Renee Watson at (210) 335-2478 or visit <http://www.co.bexar.tx.us/smwbe/>

To Living Well!

Why talk about a Disaster Supplies Kit?

After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it may take days. Basic services, such as electricity, gas, water and telephones, may be cut off, or you may have to evacuate at a moment's notice. You probably won't have time to shop or search for the supplies you'll need. Your family will cope best by preparing for disaster before it strikes.

What is a Disaster Supplies Kit?

Assembling the supplies you might need following a disaster is an important part of your Family Disaster Plan. Following a disaster, having extra supplies at home or supplies to take with you in the event of an evacuation can help your family endure evacuation or home confinement. Learn more about Disaster Supplies Kits by contacting your local Red Cross Chapter at (512) 928-4271.

Disaster Supplies Kit Basics

Keep the following items in an easy-to-carry backpack or duffel bag near your door in case you need to evacuate quickly, such as in a hurricane, flash flood or major chemical emergency. Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members.

Kit basics are:

- A portable, battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- First aid kit and first aid manual.
- Supply of prescription medications.
- Credit card and cash.
- Personal identification.
- An extra set of car keys.
- Matches in a waterproof container.
- Signal flare.
- Map of the area and phone numbers of places you could go.
- Special needs, for example, diapers or formula, prescription medicines and copies of prescriptions, hearing aid batteries, spare wheelchair battery, spare eyeglasses, or other physical needs.

-National Disaster Education Coalition

Spotlight • Continued from Page 1

ability to use his interpersonal skills to relate to different types of people when interacting and working with user departments and outside vendors, including Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs).

Regarding Travis County's HUB program, which Richard has been involved in throughout his time with the County, he says, "As a minority, I can relate to HUBs...and the only way to meet any type of goal is to do everything you can to include HUBs in the bidding process."

"I currently have four contracts that are HUB awarded," he says.

Based on his experience as a buyer in the medical field, Richard understands the importance of acquiring products and services for users in a timely and accurate manner and the value of strong working relationships.

While working as a buyer at St. David's, he was called one day and asked to find a product as expeditiously as possible due to a patient's allergy to latex. "This person was on their death bed," says Richard incredulously. "By having good relationships, I was able to have a local vendor drive their personal vehicle to San Antonio to get the product, and the surgery was able to be performed that day."

Though admittedly life and death situations are few and far between now, the value of good business relationships still holds true for Richard. The most important thing to do as a buyer is to listen, says Richard.

"I like to communicate and listen to (vendors' and departments') needs and I get satisfaction from pleasing the departments when we fulfill those needs." Richard was recently recognized at a buyer's meeting for some positive comments received about his outstanding job of serving those needs.

Recently married, Richard is devoted to his wife and family of three stepdaughters and a 15-year-old son. "On a personal level, everything is based around my family and always has been."

"To see my girls and my son go to college and finish," is Richard's long term goal. For the short term, Richard would like to continue gaining governmental purchasing experience and move up the career ladder.

In the wake of the recent tragedy, many are discovering what Richard claims drives his own "genuinely positive" attitude. "Life is short. You need to do what you can to be at peace with your family and your friends," says Richard, "because tomorrow is not promised to anybody." ❧

NOTEWORTHY...

Donna Scarbrough has left the building, and the public sector, at least for now. After eight years of exceptional service to numerous Travis County departments including the Sheriff's Office, Planning and Budget Office, Purchasing Office and Travis County Government as a whole, Donna has returned to the private sector as a consultant. A Resolution was passed in Commissioners Court on Tuesday, September 25th, in appreciation of her outstanding efforts and contributions to Travis County.

Travis County officially kicked off the 2001 Combined Charities Campaign on October 5th at Wooldridge Park, with departments braving some light rain and heavy humidity to raise \$3,061.55 through food sales, a dunking booth, a silent auction and other fund raising booths. The goal of this year's campaign is \$170,000, with the Purchasing Office setting a goal of \$2,600, double the amount raised last year.

Travis County will have a bond election on Tuesday, November 6. Early voting will begin Monday, October 22nd, and end Friday, November 2nd. For more information about Early Voting or Election Day polling locations and hours, contact the Travis County Elections Division at 238-VOTE (238-8683) or visit the Travis County Website at www.co.travis.tx.us.

The Travis County Purchasing Quarterly is a work in progress that will continue to grow and improve. We are always open to your suggestions so please feel free to email your ideas to Jorge.Talavera@co.travis.tx.us. We at the Travis County Purchasing Office are striving to improve our service to you. Please let us know how we can better serve you.



When visiting the Purchasing Office, to ensure that you are serviced efficiently, please stop at the front desk. All documents will be logged in, date stamped and distributed appropriately. If you need to speak with a staff member, someone in the Purchasing Office will be happy to assist you.