



Fall 2007
Volume 7, Issue 4

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Travis County

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Purchasing Agent

Commissioners Court
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Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis
Pct. 2 Commissioner Sarah Eckhardt
Pct. 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty
Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gómez

Purchasing Board
331st District Ct. Judge Bob Perkins,
Presiding Chair
261st District Ct. Judge Lora Livingston
250th District Ct. Judge John K. Dietz
County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe
Pct. 3 Cnty Commissioner Gerald Daugherty

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Travis County Purchasing Quarterly

In the Spotlight

Jerome T. Guerrero

By Betty Chapa

Have you ever wondered who the writer behind many of the Purchasing Quarterly articles is? I had the privilege of sitting and interviewing the "writer" behind the newsletter, Jerome T. Guerrero. Jerome is our Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program Specialist approaching his third year in the position and enjoys every minute. "We are a good team and we all started off on a good foot." He arrives every morning with an upbeat attitude and briefcase in hand ready to conquer the day's events.

While Jerome attended David Crockett High School, he purchased his first camera and began photographing for the school newspaper, *The Courier* and yearbook. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from The University of Texas at Austin and brings



with him an extensive amount of experience. He began by assisting his father with the family produce business, working as a Print Shop Liaison at the General Land Office. He also runs his own business as a freelance photographer. "I'm slowly finding my purpose... I'm being a

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Purchasing Office Wins 3rd Procurement Award

By Jerome T. Guerrero

For the third year in a row, the Purchasing Office has been awarded the National Purchasing Institute's "Achievement in Procurement Award®." The award, which measures an organization's innovation, professionalism and leadership attributes, was presented at the NPI annual conference in September.

The Purchasing Office earned the highest total score among all counties nationwide. What is the Purchasing Office doing to earn this prestigious and well deserved award? Is it the superior delivery of service to other employees, the awards winning HUB Program, or is it the work environment that fosters a team and individual's sense of worth to contribute to the whole mission of the of-



There is initiative in the Purchasing Office to seek the next level of success in everything that they do. The office has proven that it consistently serves the citizens and employees of Travis County in a competent and cost-effective manner.

Each year, the bar is raised to receive an award. A goal for next year is to have more staff earn professional certification, such as the Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB) designation.

Every staff member of the office continues to demonstrate their efficiency, professionalism, hard work and dedication. Through team work and individual effort, the Purchasing Office will earn its 4th award next year.

Liaison Spotlight

By Jerome T. Guerrero

Cheryl Brown

There was a little nervousness in Cheryl Brown, Executive Assistant to Judge Samuel T. Biscoe when she agreed to be in the Liaison Spotlight. However, after a quick and successful photo session, she was at ease with the idea. "That was the hardest part," she said as we finished the photos, "now, to the easy part."

In 1989, Cheryl Brown, started her career in Health and Human Services with Travis County as a contract manager. She began working for, then Commissioner Biscoe, in 1991. Many people come to the Judge's office for help or assistance. She eagerly helps, as much as she can, assisting those in need or giving an encouraging word. "My gift is servanthood." When she sees a need, she fills it.

A native of Dallas, in Oak Cliff, she attended Huston-Tillotson College, now Huston-Tillotson University. Through an internship with the City of Austin in her junior year, she gained valuable experience working with people and government. After graduation, she was hired full-time at the Austin Area Urban League. The third of five children, her childhood was filled with learning and love. Her mother was an elementary school teacher and her father a postal manager. Her family was busy with school, post-graduate work and teaching others in their community. "I remember before my father passed away, he was tutoring kids in algebra and calculus."

A very involved and caring woman, she worked part-time and raised her three children, Robert, Angela and Leslie. She and her

husband Robert have been married 30 years. "Robert and I were always involved in the lives of our children." Cheryl has one grandson, Payton, 4. "Children are a blessing but grandchildren are even a bigger blessing," she beams.

Her favorite thing to do is go to the casinos in Las Vegas and Louisiana.

"I do set a limit to what I'll play, but I always have fun." She also likes to set aside time with her female friends. Every five years, she likes to give herself a big party with her female friends. She and Robert are very active with their church, in the choir, and the childrens ministry. She also mentors the young women at her church and in her life. She feels that every woman is valuable and should treat herself as such. "I encourage every woman to set aside something from her paycheck to get something special, like a pedicure or a simple piece of jewelry. Do something for yourself."

In her job or for a friend, she is always giving of herself. There are opportunities to serve and help people in her job. Her duties as purchasing liaison are to process the administrative request and invoices that come across the Judge's office. "You never know what you will see each day in the Judge's office. There are challenges and conflicts but at the end of the day, there is a spiritual reward for the hard work. I choose to be happy." ☺

Cheryl can be reached at cheryl.brown@co.travis.tx.



In The Spotlight, continued from page 1

good servant."

As we begin speaking of his family, a sense of happiness and love fills his face. Jerome is the youngest of six siblings and was brought up in a home with strong family ties and values. Jerome and his wife Karen recently celebrated 21 years of marriage and have two young boys, Micah, 6, and Josiah, 9. Karen has been teaching for 14 years and is working on her Master's Degree. "She has a heart for the kids," he says.

The Guerrero family enjoys spending time outdoors and engaging in various sporting activities. When they are not out swimming or riding bikes you can catch the family enjoying a good movie. The eldest son, Josiah has showed interest in the arts and enjoys creating comics. The two recently joined in a father and son project for Brown Santa Fun Run. "It was a great time with him... going through the creative process and bonding."



Jerome, oldest son Josiah, Karen and Micah
photo courtesy D. Calderon

His career and passion as a photographer introduced him into the area of many civic organizations while photographing the various expos and forums. As a HUB Program Specialist, he

enjoys performing outreach initiatives for minority and woman-owned businesses. He understands the stress of a business owner - the need for someone to provide them with leads and be truthful. This in return makes him successful in the job he performs. Much of his influence for the business industry came from his father, and like him, Jerome wants to, "...carve out his own foundation."

He also enjoys producing the Purchasing Quarterly. In speaking with his sister, who is an administrator at Austin Independent School District, she provided advice to carry him through his position at Travis County, "...focus on the newsletter because it will be your show piece." With that he closes and says, "... it's my creation for the world to see." ☺

Vendor Tracking System (VTS) Update

By Jerome T. Guerrero

Training for the Vendor Track System (VTS) started with a combined meeting and kick-off with FaulknerUSA (FUSA) and Pink Consulting. FUSA has subcontracted with Bobbie Garza-Hernandez of Pink Consulting to provide minority and women contractor outreach and Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program compliance for the Travis County Correctional Complex Project (TCCC). FUSA committed to achieving a 30% minority participation goal.

The HUB staff demonstrated the steps to FUSA and Pink Consulting on the proper procedures to login and enter accurate data in VTS. The HUB staff will enter payments made to the prime contractor, FUSA, then the system will notify FUSA that payment has been released.

FUSA will enter their payments to the subcontractors. The system will notify the subcontractors that payment has been made to them. The subcontractors will then confirm or dispute the payment.

When payments were entered by FUSA, the total time to enter the payments was about 20 minutes. The time for the subcontractors to respond can be less than 5 minutes.

Another benefit to the system is added communication between the prime and subcontractor about the status of payment.

VTS will eventually be required on all county construction projects and professional services contracts.



The Project Manager for FUSA with the HUB Team and Pink Consulting at the meeting and kick-off



HUB Program Outreach

By Betty Chapa

The Purchasing Office staff continues to extend outreach initiatives to the business community. These efforts have attracted the interests of county departments, outside agencies and a wide-range of vendors who want to do business with the County.

Sylvia Lopez, HUB Program Coordinator was invited by Caula McMarion, Travis County Health and Human Services Finance Division to participate in their first Health and Human Service Contractors Conference held on July 19, 2007. This was the first partnership with HHS and the HUB staff looks forward to future partnerships.

A big thank you to HUB Staff and Purchasing Agent Assistants (PAA) Lori Clyde, CPPB and



Jerome T. Guerrero and Lori Clyde at the City of Austin's "Get in on IT" Conference in September. Both participated by presenting a "How to do Business with Travis County" program.

See HUB Program Outreach cont. on page 4

Quote of the Day

"There are no shortcuts to any place worth going."

Beverly Sills, (1929 - 2007)
American Opera Singer

Special Events Calendar

11/29/07 - Travis County
"Business Bus Hop"

The Purchasing Office's Award Winning HUB Program is organizing a **Bus Hop** to tour several Austin businesses. The tour starts at 9:00 AM and should end at 3:30 PM. Contact Sylvia Lopez at sylvia.lopez@co.travis.tx.us if you are interested in participating

12/05/07 - San Antonio
Bexar County & City of
San Antonio's

7th Annual

SMWBO Conference

"How to Get in the Game
and Stay in the Game"

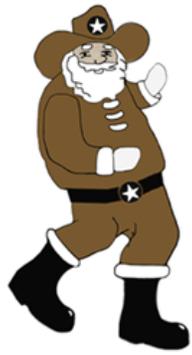
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center

This all day conference will feature workshops, vendor education, and access to the DELL Procurement Technology Center. Public attendance is free

Contact: Bexar County
SMWBE Program

PH: (210) 335-2478

<http://www.bexar.org/smwbe/>



4th Annual
BROWN SANTA
5K & KIDS K

Sunday, Dec. 2, 2007
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**A chip-timed foot race/fun walk
 and Wellness Fair at the
 Travis County Expo Center**

www.brownsanta.org

**For additional information, contact
brownsanta5K@co.travis.tx.us**

NOTEWORTHY...

Thank you...

...to Mike Long for being the Facilities Coordinator for the Texas Association of Public Purchasers (TAPP) meetings. Mike has been an active member for many years.

...to Vic Chanmugam for his "cheerleading" the Toastmasters for Travis County. Vic is always recruiting new members and encouraging everyone to be their best at public speaking.

...to Donald Rollack from the Juneteenth Celebration committee for his contribution and commitment for helping support the Juneteenth Event.



The dollars saved for FY07 was \$316,077.30. Remind vendors to register at www.rfpdepot.com It's easy, it's quick and it's free!

HUB Program Outreach cont. from page 3

Vic Chanmugam, C.P.M., who participated in the Department of Information Resources (DIR) roundtable discussion session in July. On September 17, HUB staff and Lori Clyde attended the First Annual "Get in on IT" Conference and Expo sponsored by the City of Austin. The event was attended by over 250 participants at The University of Texas J. J. Pickle Research Campus. This conference and Expo was held as a result of the 80th Legislative Session (HB 2918) which eliminated the Catalog Information Systems Vendors (CISV). Mrs. Clyde participated in a panel discussion providing a brief overview of Travis County's purchasing process and future IT procurements.

A special thank you to Betty Chapa and Jerome Guerrero, HUB Program Specialists, for being volunteers at the 2007 American Contract Compliance Association Training Institute held September 5-9, 2007.

FY08 has started to be a great year. We will continue to work on learning new ways to serve you and the citizens of Travis County. There will be a new look for the *Purchasing Quarterly* Volume 8, Issue 1. Let us know what you think of the new design.

Happy Holidays from
the Purchasing Office!



Journey

There is a place where peace still reign
 An oasis of calm to help us maintain
 A wisp of etherealness that's hard to find
 Especially when walking that long thin line
 There is a place where only joy abides
 No matter what comes or what beides
 It's hard sometimes to reach that destination
 But worth the trip in any estimation
 A place of love, peace, and joy never ending
 Where sorrow and woes are ever mending
 It is a rendezvous out of space and time
 The infinite solace of a beautiful mind

©Donald E. Rollack
 October 11, 2007

*"Providing resources to help one
 grow and prosper is the ultimate
 goal of the program."*

Betty Chapa, on the goals of the
 Historically Underutilized Business Program (HUB)

Supplement to the Fall 2007 Issue

Holiday Stress Management and Tips

The holidays can bring unwelcomed stress and depression. There is an excess of work, parties, shopping, baking, cleaning, grandparents or kids on school break, and other chores. So much for "Happy Holidays."

Holiday stress and depression are often the result of three main trigger points. Understanding these trigger points can help you plan ahead on how to accommodate them.

Relationships can cause turmoil, conflict or stress at any time, but tensions are often heightened during the holidays. Family misunderstandings and conflicts can intensify. Conflicts are bound to arise with so many different personalities, needs and interests. If you're facing the holidays without a loved one, you may find yourself especially lonely or sad.

Like your relationships, your financial situation can cause stress at any time of the year. Overspending during the holidays on gifts, travel, food and entertainment can increase stress as you try to make ends meet while ensuring that everyone on your gift list is happy. You may find yourself in a financial spiral that leaves you with depression symptoms such as hopelessness, sadness and helplessness.

Physical demands - The strain of shopping, attending social gatherings and preparing holiday meals can wipe you out. Feeling exhausted increases your stress, creating a vicious cycle. Exercise and sleep may take a back seat to chores and errands. High demands, stress, lack of exercise, and overindulgence in food and drink are ingredients for holiday illness.

Acknowledge your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.

Seek support. If you feel isolated or down, seek out family members and friends, or community, religious or social services. They can offer support and companionship. You don't have to go it alone. Don't be a martyr.

Be realistic. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Hold on to those you can and want to. Set differences aside. Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all your expect-

tations. Practice forgiveness.

Stick to a budget. Before shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend on gifts and other items.

Plan ahead. Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities to prevent last-minute scrambles to buy forgotten ingredients.

Expect travel delays, especially if you're flying.

Learn to say no. If you say yes only to what you really want to do, you'll avoid feeling resentful, bitter and overwhelmed.

Don't abandon healthy habits. Some indulgence is OK, but overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt.

Continue to get plenty of sleep and schedule time for physical activity.

Take a breather. Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do.

Rethink resolutions. Resolutions can set you up for failure if they're unrealistic. Set smaller, more specific goals with a reasonable time frame.

Forget about perfection. Something always comes up. Accept imperfections in yourself and in others.

Seek professional help if you need it. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for several weeks, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional. You may have depression.

Remember, one key to minimizing holiday stress and depression is knowing that the holidays can trigger stress and depression. Then take active steps to manage stress and depression during the holidays. You may actually enjoy the holidays this year more than you thought you could.

