

Pathways & Connections

*News and events from the Massachusetts
Supplier Diversity Office (SDO)*



May 2023

Resources for
Diverse and
Small
Businesses

Open Bid
Opportunities
on COMMBUYS

COMMBUYS
Vendor Training
Schedule

Directory of
Certified
Businesses



May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month!

Join the SDO in celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage this month. In 1992, the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 102-450, which annually designated May as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. This month pays tribute to generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders who have contributed to American history.

[Click here](#) to find out more about AAPI Heritage Month celebrations!

Good News for Diverse and Small Businesses in SDO's New Annual Report

The SDO released its FY22 Annual Report, which gives encouraging news in fulfilling the SDO's mission of expanding contracting opportunities with businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, service-disabled veterans, those with a disability, and LGBT individuals, as well as small Massachusetts businesses.

The SDO's report indicates that the Commonwealth spent approximately \$3.26 billion with diverse and small businesses in FY22, a 15% increase over the prior year. Furthermore, benchmarks for state department spending for small businesses, minority-owned businesses, and women-owned businesses were exceeded by 34.6%, 13.5%, and 41.2% respectively.

Other Highlights include:

- Overall Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) spending grew by \$74.8 million in FY22 over FY21.
- The SDO added 436 new diverse businesses to our certified business directory, an increase of 11% over the prior year.
- The SDO recorded an increase of 4% in the number of diverse and small companies doing business with the state directly.
- The SDO introduced several innovations in FY22, including the Supplier Diversity Hub, which connects diverse and small businesses with prime contractor and public buyers.

[Read the full Annual Report here.](#)

SDO at the AIM Annual Meeting



SDO Staff attended the Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM) Annual Meeting earlier this month to celebrate the many businesses who help the Commonwealth run.

Photo: SDO staff pose with members of the Boston Impact Initiative (BII), who received the 2023 Lewis Latimer Award for breaking barriers and creating economic opportunity. Pictured are (from L-R): BII Investment Director Henry Noel, BII Impact Director Aliana Pineiro, SDO Director of SDO Systems and Data Analytics Nani Assefa, SDO Director of State Certification Wanda Colon-D'Angelo, BII President/CEO Betty Francisco, SDO Construction and Disability Program Coordinator Meghan Costa, BII Impact investing Associate Paulina Apone, and SDO Director of Government Relations and Community Affairs Rob Williams.

SDO at the Power Grid 2023 Panel



SDO Executive Director Bill McAvoy (second from left) participates in "Inclusive Procurement IS Possible!," a panel at the Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce's Power Grid 2023: Strength Through Inclusive Relationships Conference. Panel participants are (from left), Steve Naha, CEO, Gardner Resources Consulting; Bill McAvoy, Executive Director, SDO; Joyce Eggers, Lead of Supplier Diversity, Takeda Pharmaceuticals; Josiane Martinez, Founder & CEO, Archipelago Strategies Group; Keith Wang, Vice President Procurement & Strategic Sourcing, Point32Health; Susu Wong, CEO & Founder, Tomo360; and Natalia Urtubey, Foundation Fellow, Eastern Bank, who moderated the panel.

We Want to Hear About Your Success!



The SDO is looking for news about new contracts, business growth, and other milestones for SDO-certified diverse and small businesses. Your story might be featured on our website, the *Pathways & Connections* newsletter, or our social media feeds!

In the last month, we featured two of our vendors: [Velney Development](#) and [V-Solutions Consulting LLC](#). Click the links on their names to learn about their recent victories!

If you have a success story to share, please [fill out this form](#) and hit the “Submit” button. We would love to hear from you!

SBA Capital & Resources Matchmaker on June 8!



Calling all Lawrence and Merrimack Valley-area small business owners and entrepreneurs! Please join the SBA's Massachusetts District Office for an in-person Access to Capital and Small Business Resources Matchmaker event.

This free event is an opportunity to network and learn about the resources available for small businesses to start, grow, and expand your business. There will be representatives from a variety of small business resource provider services as well as a variety of local SBA-approved lenders to connect with.

Event details:

Thursday, June 8

10 a.m.

Lawrence Public Library

51 Lawrence Street in Lawrence, MA

[Register here!](#)

Don't Miss these Upcoming Events!

In addition to the SBA Capital & Resources Matchmaker (above), check out these upcoming opportunities to network and grow your business:



- May 23: Supplier Diversity Networking Event with MGM Springfield - [Register](#)
 - May 31: "Visible Together" - AA & NHPI Connectivity Summit - [Register](#)
 - June 8: Central MA Conference for Women - [Register](#)
 - June 30: Berkshire Small Business Expo [Register](#)
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***How to Know if Your Emails
from the SDO are Legitimate***

***Not sure if the email you received
is real or fake?
read below to know how to
tell the difference***

The SDO will periodically reach out to businesses, agencies, and townships to discuss anything from certification to training to bid opportunities.

To ensure the emails you receive are legitimately from the SDO, please see the email names/addresses below. These are the general mailboxes the SDO will send from. This does not include emails from SDO staff members.

If you received an email and are not certain if it was from the SDO, please send any concerns to Webmaster.SDO@mass.gov.

You may receive emails from the SDO under the following email addresses:

Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) - Used for general news, bids, events, and the *Pathways & Connections* newsletter
sdocommunications@notice.anf.mass.gov

Webmaster (SDO) - Used for news and technical inquiries
Webmaster.SDO@mass.gov

SDOCertrak (SDO) - Used for certification news/inquiries
SDOCertrak@mass.gov

No Reply: Supplier Diversity Portal - Used for the Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub")
noreply.sdh@ad.autocene.com

Please note: Several of these emails do not accept responses. If you ever need to contact the SDO via email, please send all inquiries to
Webmaster.SDO@mass.gov



**The Supplier Diversity Hub - an Easy, Free Way to
Help Grow Your Business**

Diverse and small vendors now have full access to the Supplier Diversity Hub ("The Hub")! Already in use by state agencies, The Hub is a free, new way to help grow your business.

Using The Hub, diverse and small businesses can now receive a number of benefits. Communication between them and prime vendors and contractors as well as public buyers is easier, they can receive immediate notifications about new bidding opportunities, and they have instant access to check the status of their SDO certification.

Diverse and small certified vendors may have received (or will soon receive) an inquiry from an SDO partner asking about their experiences and questions about The Hub and, if they haven't yet signed up for the Hub, providing information on its many benefits. Your answers will help make The Hub easier and more useful for everyone.

If you are a certified vendor and haven't yet signed into The Hub, please follow the directions below to get started:

1. Visit <https://masdh.autocene.com> to reset your password.
2. Your username (which is also your email address) should be the same one you use to access your certification account.
3. For a video with step-by-step instructions on how to change your password, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?>
4. Congratulations! You now have access to The Hub!

Once you have signed in, the first thing you need to do is to ensure your information is up-to-date in The Hub so that prime vendors and state agencies can find your business in a search. Follow the instructions below to update your search information:

If you need help, click the "Help" button on the left inside the Hub to see an instructional video.

1. Once signed in, click on your email address in the upper right of your screen.
2. Click on "Edit Profile."
3. Click on "Company Profile."
4. You will need to update your NAICS, CSI, and UNSPSC codes. In many cases, NAICS codes for diverse businesses are already entered.
5. Click on the category you want to update (NAICS Code Search, CSI Code Search, or UNSPSC Code Search) on the left. You will need to update each code individually.
6. Once on the NAICS Code Search screen, put your business category in the "Description" field. Click the "Search" button and select the items on the bottom of your screen that are applicable to your business. Then click the button "Select these Codes" on the right.
7. Once on the CSI Code Search screen, enter your business category in the "Sub Title" field. Click the "Search" button and select the items on the bottom of your screen that are applicable to your business. Then click the button "Select these Codes" on the right.
8. Once on the UNSPSC Code Search screen, put your business category in the "Class Title" field. Click the "Search" button and select the items on the bottom of your screen that are applicable to your business. Then click the button "Select these Codes" on the right.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at webmaster.sdo@mass.gov.

Meet the SDO: Joyce Kwong, Certification EDP Analyst

Each month, we feature a different member of our team to share a little bit about themselves and discuss useful information and resources the SDO has available for

Favorite quote:

"Be the change you wish to see in the world." - Mahatma Gandhi

Favorite song:

diverse and small businesses. Please send any questions for the SDO team to robert.keane@mass.gov.

What advice do you have for businesses looking to be certified?

Once certified, the SDO provides resources and support to help certified businesses grow and succeed. This includes networking events, training, education programs, and access to business development resources.

Tell us something about certification that other businesses may not know:

Not all certification applicants will be certified. The SDO conducts investigations to ensure only qualified applicants are granted certification(s). Although certification does not guarantee a business will win state contract bids, it adds value to the bid evaluations if a prime bidder submits a supplier diversity plan that includes diverse business partners and also provides value to public buyers looking to buy from diverse contractors.

Joyce Kwong can be reached
at joyce.kwong@mass.gov

The Way we Were, Barbara
Streisand

Favorite vacation spot:
Yosemite national park

Favorite food:
Sushi

Pet peeve:
People who interrupt during a
conversation

Last TV Show seen/binged:
Soul Mountain

Dog person or cat person?
Cat person

Tell us something about you that others may not know:
I love hiking but I have a fear of
heights.

**SDO Means
*Business***

Click here for more!



Diverse Business Certification Updates

SDO certified 29 businesses in April 2023. For a full list of newly-certified businesses, please click [here](#).

REMINDER: SDO certification expires three years after the date of issue and renewal notices are sent via email to the primary contact on file. SDO-certified businesses should [log in](#) and review your contact information periodically to ensure that your certification stays up to date.



Pre-Certification Webinars

For businesses wishing to apply for SDO certification, attending a Pre-Certification Webinar is a must. This webinar discusses the different types of SDO and SDO-recognized third-party certifications as well as the State certification process.

Registration is now available for webinars from now through December 2023. Sign up [here](#).



New SDO training now available!

Buyer Onboarding - Introduction to SDO Programs and Policies

This class is for new employees or anyone who would like a refresher on SDO programs and policies, and to learn how they relate to state procurement and purchasing.

This class gives an overview of the SDO and covers SDO programs and policies, meeting annual benchmarks, and identifying diverse and small businesses.

This class is available on **Tuesday, June 27 at 9 a.m.**

If you are interested in attending a class, [Click Here to register](#) (Class can be found under "SDO - Buyer Onboarding")

If you need special accommodations to fully participate in the training, please email Katherine.L.Thomas@mass.gov for assistance.

Follow us on:



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1 Ashburton Place
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Certification HelpDesk: Webmaster.SDO@mass.gov
SDP & SBPP HelpDesk: sdp@mass.gov
Phone: (617) 502-8843

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