

Convention Center Mentor-Protege Program

By New Orleans ENM Convention Center

NEW ORLEANS—New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center’s Small and Emerging Business (SEB) Program has a new program manager and recently launched a mentor-protege pilot program. As a major economic driver for the region, the convention center works year-round to create opportunities to help Louisiana’s small and emerging businesses (SEB) and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE) succeed.

The convention center recently appointed LaToya Martin as manager of the SEB program. In her new role, Martin manages SEB and DBE initiatives designed to help promote diverse and small business access to convention center opportunities.

“LaToya’s leadership is proving vital to the convention center’s ongoing mission to give SEBs and DBEs more and easier access to opportunities, a goal that reflects the policy direction of our governing body, the Ernest N. Morial New Orleans Exhibition Hall Authority,” said convention center president Michael J. Sawaya. “Since the SEB

program launched in 2019, 1,300 certified vendors have registered, and more than \$40 million has been awarded to area SEBs and DBEs. We are working to not just continue but accelerate that progress.”

Martin came to the convention center from the City of New Orleans, Office of Supplier Diversity. She served as compliance officer for two years and was later promoted to senior compliance officer. In that role, she trained and supervised a staff of four compliance officers and managed a portfolio of \$700 million dollars of public and private sector funds.

After receiving a bachelor’s degree in sociology from the University of New Orleans, Martin earned her Contract Compliance Administrator Certification from American Contract Compliance Association and Morgan State University for Continuing and Professional Studies.

Martin stepped into her new role after the SEB program’s former director Rocsean Spencer was promoted to become the NOENMCC’s chief diversity officer, the nation’s first person to hold this position at a convention center.



In other good news, the convention center’s SEB/DBE program recently launched MoMentor, a new mentor-protege pilot program. Since its May 17 kickoff, the program has begun matching mid-to-large-sized “mentor” firms with emerging and/or

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Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
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Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program Webinar
Thursday, July 20, 2023, 10:00 am–11:00 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Stephanie Workman, 478-919-7652, stephanie.workman@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
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Selling to the Federal Government Webinar
Thursday, July 27, 2023, 12:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
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