

COMPASS & SQUARE

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED MINORITY CONTRACTORS OF NC

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CONSTRUCTION AROUND THE STATE: GLENWOOD SITE 1

REPORT ON 1ST ANNUAL MEETING. 1

ASSOCIATION MANAGER'S CORNER 2

FEATURE: ANTRONIX DISTRIBUTION 3

MEET CORE MEMBER: TED EDWARDS "VISIONARY" 4

UMCNC WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS 5

PICTURE OF THE CORE GROUP 6

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

New Corporate Members come on board.

Application presented at NAMC National Conference in Minn. for charter membership.

Be sure to download a copy of the new UMCNC Strategic Plan that is posted on the Lancaster Craig website!

CONSTRUCTION IN THE TRIANGLE



Construction Site: 3400 Glenwood North, just outside the 440 Beltline Glenwood Avenue exit in Raleigh. *Email us pictures of sites from around the state. Email to: tjones@beckwithbay.com We'll run the best pictures in our newsletter.*

UMCNC 1ST ANNUAL MEETING

Chairman Ron Leeper addressed an enthusiastic room of members at the first annual meeting, April 29th at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill. Since January, the initial group of four well wishers has grown to twenty-seven members.

"UMCNC is as diverse a group of trade professionals as one will find anywhere in North Carolina" said Leeper. "We are comprised of general contractors, landscapers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, pavers, engineers and bookkeepers.

Our businesses stretch across North Carolina from Wilmington to Snow Hill, Rich Square to Raleigh-Durham and Chapel Hill, and from Greensboro to Charlotte. It won't be long before we touch Asheville."

Leeper has high hopes for UMCNC. He is firm in his intent to lessen the gap between big and small business and strengthen the economic grip of

success that can bind together all sectors of our community.

He challenged the membership to join him in that endeavor, first, by announcing the formation of six standing committees: Finance, Planning, Membership, Economic & Business Development and Partnership & Strategic Alliances. It is through an active and engaging membership guided by planning and objectivity that we can become a cornerstone of good business.

Additionally, he talked about creating one activity in particular that he hopes UMCNC embraces.

"We need to have an annual event where our members come together and are complimented for their accomplishments," Leeper continued. "Let us take time to congratulate, recognize and encourage ourselves to strive

even harder to be all that dreams challenge us to be."

He also re-enforced the unique opportunity of UMCNC to become a part of a national network of construction professionals by joining the National Association of Minority Contractors.

A UMCNC delegation will attend the NAMC annual meeting in Minneapolis this month to submit an official application for chapter membership.

"It is an exciting opportunity for a group of minority and women contractors in one of the nation's fastest growing economies," he said. "Next year I want to stand before a membership that is ten times this size and talk about a room full of successful contractors and the bright future ahead of them."

ASSOCIATION MANAGER'S CORNER:

If you have ever had any experience with pursuing policy matters before the North Carolina General Assembly, then you know all about the travails wondering how it works and when it will all end. Well this legislative session is working like a fine Swiss watch and apparently will end on time.

For the first time in Governor's Easley's administration, there is actually new money to spend. The session opened with a projected surplus of \$2 billion. In real terms what that amounted to was \$498 million in recurring revenue and \$1.9 billion in non-recurring revenue. Recurring revenue is that which comes in on an annual basis. Non-recurring revenue comes in one time. Not since the Hunt administration has the Governor or the Legislature had an increase in recurring revenue to appropriate for the future of the state.

Governor Easley proposed a budget to the General Assembly that covered the landscape. Pay raises, public education, health care, law enforcement, tourism, environment protection, water resources and emergency management are just a few of the items he identified for increased funding. His budget also included capital project funding for state agencies and the University system and monies for long overdue repair and renovation projects.

The Senate and House have responded to the Governor's proposals and made a few of their own. As the process goes, the Senate and House are meeting now to iron out the differences in their budget proposals. That process should be complete before the end of June.

There are a number of substantive legislative proposals on the table for consideration this session. UMCNC has put a lot of energy and time into SB 1127 "DOT Minority/Women Business

Programs/SBE Programs." The bill sponsored by Senator Charlie Dannelly of Charlotte and co-sponsored by Senators Graham, Malone and Lucas attempts to address deficiencies in the NCDOT Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program as defined by the courts in other jurisdictions. UMCNC has adopted a posi-



tion that supports the efforts of the bill sponsors with a few enhancements.

Senator Tony Rand of Fayetteville introduced SB 1690 "Small Business Contractor Funds/Sunset." His legislation extends the sunset on the fund and authority to June 30, 2009 and provides for \$10 million for

loans and \$15 million for surety bond guarantees. UMCNC supports that legislation and sees it as a boon to small and minority contractors. It will provide a vehicle for firms that have never been bonded to grow into bondable enterprises in the marketplace.

Senator Vernon Malone of Raleigh has introduced SB 2009 "Capital Lease Financing for Public Schools." His bill creates an alternative school construction mechanism for counties that have or foresee difficulties in passing school bond referenda. The bill allows for private developers to build schools and lease them back to county school districts. The bill requires that the private developers abide by public bidding laws and other standards for construction that counties would otherwise adhere to. UMCNC has not taken a position on the bill as of yet.

Access to legislative documents and proceedings is available over the internet at www.ncleg.net.

There is a treasure trove of information available about the North Carolina General Assembly. Call (919) 834-1211 if you need assistance with learning how to maneuver the website.



UMCNC bridging the gap

MEMBER

ANTRONIX DISTRIBUTION & SUPPLY

PROFILE

Company: Antronix Distribution and Supply, Inc.
 103-M Creek Ridge Road
 Greensboro, NC 27406
 336-272-0878 [office]

Website: www.antronix.com

Owner: Yvonne J. Anderson, President and CEO

Specialty: Telecommunications Material Supplier

In Business: 26 years

David Clark: Sales & Market Development Manager

Employees: Four [will fill three new positions]

Immediate Goal: To expand our business portfolio to include communications services to small and medium size businesses.

Antronix Distribution and Supply, Inc. of Greensboro has a history and client list that is practically contrary to the definition of a small business. Under the steady leadership of second-generation owner, Yvonne J. Anderson, President and CEO, the company continues to serve the national telecommunications industry.

Antronix is a woman/minority owned (ISO 9001:2000 certified) supply chain partner with expertise in material management of industrial and NEBS certified telecommunication air filters as well as cable and connectivity products in the commercial, government, and construction markets. The importance of air filtration can't be overlooked as the firm has become a knowledgeable resource, providing service for telecommunication network elements, inside and outside plant cabinets, and central office HVAC applications.

"Essentially, we are a materials supplier," says Anderson. "Many of our clients are either telecommunications/



Antronix President/CEO, Yvonne Anderson and David Clark, Sales & Market Development Manager. The company has established a remarkable reputation in the industry for high quality products and services.

communications companies, or are in the business of providing those services to consumers. Several are builders of network infrastructures that go well beyond the borders of North Carolina."

Antronix was at the forefront of the burgeoning technology expansion back in 1980 when Anderson's parents formed the company. Greensboro was the center of activity for AT&T as the new, minority-owned firm signed on to supply materials and services to the world's largest phone company.

In 1984 the now-historic agreement struck between the US Department of Justice and AT&T, broke the communications giant into eight companies. Once again Antronix was identified as a certified vendor to supply the new "baby bells" as they were unofficially identified.

"There was always a strong push for diversity with the divestiture," Anderson continues. "We were able to follow the divestiture, nationally."

"Technology of communications rapidly changed and evolved with new services that were being offered by our clients," explains Anderson about that period. She recounts that the Telecommuni-

Continued on Page 5

MEET “CORE GROUP” MEMBER: TED EDWARDS



The idea of creating a minority association was developed by five people who are informally referred to as the “Core Group.” This is the first in a series profiling each core group member, their background, contribution and thoughts on the progress of UMCNC.

Admitting frustration is one thing. What one does about it is always the challenge. Ted Edwards knows about challenges.

As one of the busiest attorneys around and a partner in the prestigious law firm of Kilpatrick Stockton, LLP, Ted is experienced in determining how a problem can be resolved to the advantage of both parties.

“Although the firm represents large construction clients, I kept getting some frustrating phone calls from several black small contractors about not being included on new construction projects around the state,” says Edwards, about how the idea of a minority association began to take shape.

A native of North Carolina and graduate of Duke University School of Law, the tall, mild-mannered and soft-spoken Edwards is a specialist in construction law and admits he may be the only black construction attorney in North Carolina who practices with a national law firm.

“Ironically, I was also getting calls from general contractors who were looking for me to help them comply with good faith programs that specified minority inclusion,” he continues.

Neither group seemed able to formulate a consistent process that would allow both sides to come together. There was an obvious gap and in Edwards’ mind, an opportunity. Why not have an association that represents minority contractors, statewide, and partner with majority contractors looking to comply with diversity regulations.

“I want to be sure people understand what my vision was: to create an organization that would assist minority contractors in their effort to grow their businesses by understanding the system and developing partnerships with majority contractors,” Edwards explains.

To move the idea toward reality would require some additional expertise in coalition building.

“I knew Garland Burton, HUB (Historically Under-utilized Businesses) coordinator at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and decided to give him a call,” says Edwards. “I also did some research and found NAMC (National Association of Minority Contractors). I thought it would be good to bring the organization to North Carolina.”

Both men discussed the concept and realized that closing the gap between GCs and black small contractors wasn’t going to be easy. (For example, several of those same minority contractors distanced themselves from previous minority groups in order to get work on big projects). Edwards also needed to consult with a major construction firm that had active projects in the state.

“I called Lloyd Dunn at Skanska USA, and we discussed the idea,” says Edwards. “Lloyd took the idea back to his management people and they got excited.”

Meanwhile, Burton made a few phone calls. He contacted Henry Lancaster and A. Jami Craig, of Lancaster Craig Associates, a lobbying firm in Raleigh that specialized in development of minority organizations.

He also contacted Shari Harris, Associate Vice-President for Finance/Capitol Projects at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Harris provided a statewide perspective on construction for the public higher education system.

“This process of gathering professionals and talking logistics took about four or five months,” remembers Edwards. “Next we talked about prior attempts by other parties to create a minority group, what previous lessons

Continued on Page 6

ANTRONIX DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY, INC. (CONTINUED FROM PG 3)

cations Act of 1996 had a profound effect, both on the company and the general public, especially in the area of wireless service at the consumer level.

This led to Antronix picking up several new clients including Lucent Technologies, the manufacturing division spun-off by AT&T.

“Now it was a matter of providing more products to support expanded new services in addition to local and long distance,” Anderson recalled.

In 2002 Antronix earned (the ISO 9001:2000) certification for its quality management system (QMS). The company pursued this goal in order to ensure the consistent and highest customer satisfaction measured by on-time delivery, accurate order completion and clear customer communication would be guaranteed.

Combining those standards (with core skills gained by serving the telecommunications industry), the company branched out into supplying the construction industry.

In recent years, Antronix has steadily increased its cable and connectivity division by servicing area contractors involved in both commercial and private construction.

“Our focus is to help our customers create network infrastructure to support anytime, anywhere communications,” says David Clark, Sales and Market Development Manager.

Clark says the company is a CISCO Partner and has plans to further expand business in a slightly different, but deliberate direction.

“We are looking to support small-to-medium size businesses with networking products for home or small office operations,” he continues. “That includes providing network design, installation and services.”

Antronix intends to bring value to the customer with a home or small office by following the same focus of creating network infrastructure for anytime, anywhere communications.

The resulting quarter-century of consistently providing quality service to their customers has enhanced the reputation of Antronix Distribution and Supply, Inc. They intend to continue that process for the future.

Just ask Yvonne and Dave.



UMCNC WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Individual Members

Alphonso Hall

Hall Builders North & South Carolina, LLC
Wilmington, NC

Ted Edwards

Kilpatrick & Stockton, LLP
Raleigh, NC

Michael High

M&H Associates
Charlotte, NC

J. Stanley Pearson

A-1 Masonry & General Contracting
Winnsboro, SC

Karl Davis

Davis Technical Staff & Consulting
Durham, NC

Ricky Lanier

Global Construction, Inc
Kinston, NC

James Campbell

CODE, LLC
Hickory, NC

Jose L. Munoz

Munoz Contracting, Inc
Charlotte, NC

Corporate Members

Calvin Stevens

Centex Construction
Durham, NC

Robert Douma

Batson-Cook Company, Inc.
Atlanta, GA

Vernetta Mitchell

Rodgers Builders
Charlotte, NC

Scott Cutler

Clancy & Theys Construction
Raleigh, NC

Marshall “Skip” Hildebrand

BE&K Building Group, Inc
Raleigh, NC

Lloyd Dunn

Skanska USA Building
Durham, NC



You've seen them, Get to know them. **The Core Group**: seated: A. Jami Craig, Ted Edwards, NAMC's Owen Tonkins & Henry Lancaster. Standing: Garland Burton & Shari Harris, our profile for the next newsletter.

TED EDWARDS (CONTINUED FROM PG 4)

that were learned and what to avoid," he continues.

During the preliminary brainstorming to first identify contractors who might be interested in forming an association, the effort proved to be challenging. The feedback coming from those contractors recalled incidents where others tried to organize an association. That led to lots of arguments and protests, statements with no substance and always a frustrating ending. They couldn't put together a broad-based association to represent a majority of minority contractors in North Carolina.

It took several, regular meetings to flesh out a structure, and develop vision and mission statements. Additional months went in to crafting organizational goals and most importantly, developing a professional presentation to contractors.

Edwards then asked everyone to take a *leap-of-faith* because this was to be a serious organization, unlike any before.

"We wanted potential members to feel comfortable in knowing that core group members were serious people with integrity and reputations for doing positive things."

"We five felt that to get it started and to overcome prior issues, a firm foundation for the organization was

needed, he continues. "Once birthed, we needed to turn it over to the membership to run the day-to-day operation."

With founding members and election of a board and officers, a formal announcement was made at the annual State Construction Conference last January.

When asked his opinion about how things are progressing, Edwards smiled and commented that (as of this writing) the association has 36 active members, has created an ongoing membership campaign and this summer, is joining the NAMC to represent the state chapter.

"It takes time but I have a lot of confidence in the association and we're pleased that it's growing into the vision."

After all, Ted Edwards vision is to help others grow toward success.

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5 West Hargett Street, Suite 311 Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-1348

Off: 919.834.1211 Fax: 919.834.4891

Email: umcnc@lanastercraig.com

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