



THE JOURNEY

HELPING WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES
GAIN GREATER ACCESS TO FEDERAL CONTRACTING

THE BACKGROUND

February 4, 2011 marked the rollout of the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) new procurement program, which is designed to give women-owned businesses greater access to federal contracting. The Women Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contract Program allows contracting officers, for the first time, to restrict competition for federal contracts to women-owned businesses.



"For 11 years, we asked Congress and the federal agencies to enact this program. That time is finally here, but our challenge is not yet over. Now we must work to identify federal opportunities that would utilize this program. We will work closely with the SBA and federal agencies to ensure that this program is a success."

--Barbara Kasoff, President and CEO, WIPP

Women business owners made the program happen - from passage of the law to implementation by the SBA. WIPP repeated the message that women need this program to succeed in government contracting, and we kept repeating it to Congress, Federal Agencies, and the White House for 11 years. It is a story of determined women business owners who knew that this program, if put into place, would provide tremendous growth opportunities for their businesses. We are here today because we provided a united voice.



PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

For American Express OPEN, government contracting has been an important strategy to help small businesses grow. Recognizing the unmet gap to reach the government's 5% goal, WIPP and OPEN formed Give Me Five. From the very first moment, OPEN's commitment to this initiative and women business owners has been strong and unwavering, and a shining example of how the public and private sectors can make a difference.



GM5 is designed to:

- ★ Give women business owners a greater voice.
- ★ Prepare and educate women for success in government contracting.
- ★ Give WBOs the tools and resources to get started, and help them become contract-ready.

October 28, 2012 Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP) joined forces with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to increase government contracts for women-owned businesses. The partnership with SBA, combined with our experience and relationships, bring a renewed focus to achieving our goal.

The partnership is designed to:

- ★ Help highlight the benefits of the Women Owned Small Business (WOSB) Federal Contract program.
- ★ Educate women business owners on how to participate, and connect them to federal agency procurement officers in industries where women are historically underrepresented.
- ★ Enable more women-owned firms to take advantage of contracting opportunities so they can grow their businesses and continue to create jobs.

THE CHALLENGE: LET'S MAKE IT WORK!

Getting this program in place is just the first step. Now our challenge is to make it work.

It will require:

- ★ Registering on the System for Award Management (SAM).
- ★ Getting WOSB Certified.
- ★ Visits to the federal agencies.
- ★ Local SBA offices to promote the program.
- ★ Identification of contracts that could be utilizing this program.
- ★ Educating women on the specifics of the program.

7

Number of agency & regional district events in FY2013

2140

Number of women who registered to be a part of ChallengeHER in FY2013

98%

of respondent attendees reported that ChallengeHER Forums provided helpful information towards meeting their contracting goals.

And so, we begin on this next phase.



For additional information, please contact Erika Wilhelm at ChallengeHER@wipp.org.