

Associated General Contractors Honors San Antonio Chapter with Inaugural Diversity & Inclusion Award

At the 100th annual AGC of America national convention in New Orleans, the San Antonio Chapter received the first-ever Chapter Diversity & Inclusion Award, which was created to honor those who promoted diversity and inclusion within the chapter's leadership, membership, programs, and events. The San Antonio chapter's work with the Black Contractors Association (BCA) and long-time partnership with Bexar County on The "Basics" of Construction Program and the Mentor/Protégé Program. The award was presented at Bexar County Commissioner's Court on March 13th where Bexar County staff and members of the AGC were recognized for their efforts and dedication.

"Bexar County is committed to building diversity in our workforce, ensuring everyone has a seat at the table," said Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff. "This award is representative of Bexar County's dedication to diverse and inclusive small contractors, and our efforts to help them grow."

The BCA was initiated more than two years ago by Turner Construction and the Alamo City Black Chamber of Commerce. Under the leadership of Henry Boone, it grew to be a viable and productive organization. Today, the BCA is administered by the Chapter's Director of Education Dana Marsh and it produces valuable educational programs and meaningful networking opportunities.

Bringing information and resources to business owners is essential to their success, especially as they look to grow. The AGC/Bexar County "Basics" of Construction Training Program is a ten-session educational program designed to assist small contractors in understanding the basic elements of running a commercial construction business. The sessions included elements of running a successful construction business, project scheduling, financial management, understanding contracts and more. 155 firms have completed the Basics class. The current 2018 class has 25 firms.

"Providing the knowledge, skills, and resources for business owners in the construction industry to thrive is essential to a diverse and inclusive workforce," says Renee Watson, Director of the Bexar County Small Business & Entrepreneurship Department (SBED). "Connecting these diverse business owners to industry veterans through the Mentor-Protégé Program and information in The Basics Program helps them grow and succeed."

Once firms complete The "Basics" Program, they are eligible to apply for The Mentor Protégé Program. This relationship is a two year commitment where the protégé, two mentors, AGC staff, and the County SBED Director work together to help develop the protégé firm's marketing, operations and financial performance. While mentors provide their protégés with advice and assistance based on their real life business experience, on occasion one-on-one assistance is needed to help the protégé develop the tools they need to develop sustainable business.

"The Chapter's commitment to diversity and inclusion began 13 years ago in partnership with Bexar County. The team visited Portland, Oregon to learn more about The Stempel Plan, which serves as the foundation for a very successful Mentor/Protégé Program" says AGC San Antonio Chapter Executive Vice President Doug McMurry. "Our partnership with Bexar County has been fantastic, and has now been

nationally recognized success in helping minority and women-owned construction businesses. We look forward to more accomplishments in the future.”

13 firms have graduated from the Mentor-Protégé Program since it began in 2009. The next group of protégés is scheduled to begin in May 2018.

“Our partnership with Bexar County has been fantastic,” says McMurry. “It has been recognized nationally for its success in helping minority and women-owned construction businesses. We look forward to continuing this success into the future.”