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Ohio Business and Career Expo targets minorities, women and disadvantaged business owners, job seekers

COLUMBUS (March 8, 2017) — Job seekers and business owners are invited to attend the Ohio Business and Career Expo being held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 17 at the Ohio Expo Center's Cardinal Hall, 717 E. 17th Ave., Columbus. Several hundred attendees are expected.

This free networking and learning opportunity is geared toward job seekers and business owners who are minorities, women, or otherwise socially and economically disadvantaged.

Attendees will have the opportunity to connect with employers and procurement officials from the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, Ohio Department of Transportation and other state agencies as well as the Columbus Regional Airport Authority and more. In addition to one-on-one networking opportunities, the event also will include many workshops.

The purpose of the expo is to support the efforts of the State of Ohio and its partners to support equal employment opportunities and efforts to expand access to state contracts for small, minority- and women-owned businesses.

For job seekers, the expo provides the chance to explore career opportunities with government agencies and construction trades. In addition, participants will include contractors who work on state and state-assisted construction projects and are interested in further diversifying their workforces. Representatives from construction apprenticeship programs also will be available to discuss opportunities in their fields. In addition, a computer lab will be available for job seekers to start creating a profile on the State of Ohio job posting site, careers.ohio.gov. Workshops will be offered on resume writing, interviewing techniques and application processes.

For business owners, the expo provides networking opportunities for businesses certified through the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), EDGE (Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity) or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) programs as well as those interested in learning more about becoming certified. MBE and EDGE are administered by the Ohio Department of Administrative Services. DBE is administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation.

In addition to networking opportunities and scheduled "matchmaking" appointments with purchasing officials, workshop topics will include financing programs, registering to do business with the state and responding to a state bid request. A computer lab will be available to help business owners begin the application process for MBE and/or EDGE certification, recertification or cross certification. Participants also will be able to begin the forms to do business with the state and to receive bid notifications. Help also will be available to navigate the state procurement website, procure.ohio.gov.

Admission is free. Parking is \$5.

Job seekers and businesses are encouraged to register for the expo, but walk-ins are welcome. To be notified when registration opens, email das.mbe-edge@das.ohio.gov. For more information, visit das.ohio.gov/eod or call 614-466-8380.

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