



COMMISSION<sub>ON</sub>  
DIVERSITY<sub>AND</sub>  
INCLUSION

# Supplier Diversity Report

Submitted to:  
Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton  
Provost Holden Thorp

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April 10, 2017

# Recommendation for Supplier Diversity Initiative

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Washington University in St. Louis is making significant strides toward a more diverse and inclusive community, and these efforts are closely linked to University relations with the broader St. Louis region. Supplier diversity is critical in this regard, and the University's commitment to working with minority- and women-owned businesses in the region will contribute to our broader goals of achieving that truly diverse and inclusive community toward which we are striving.

## BACKGROUND

The Supplier Diversity Initiative has been long established at the University and had enjoyed success, including regional awards. It was managed by a third-party company until two years ago when Hank Webber, Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration, sought to expand and deepen the initiative by bringing its leadership in-house. The University hired Dr. Stephanie Smith, who brought vast experience in the supplier diversity area, as Supplier Diversity manager.

On April 10, 2017, the Commission on Diversity and Inclusion met with Dr. Smith to learn more about her office, its achievements, challenges, and future plans. We learned that last year the University devoted 5.5% of its expenditures to minority- and women-owned businesses. Dr. Smith's goal is to significantly increase this percentage in the years to come. Within the last two years, the enterprise spend in construction has increased to a combined range of 18-23%, with minority and women business enterprises. In addition, we increased the utilization of minority and women business

enterprises providing architectural and engineering services, on the design side of the first phase of the East End project. The Commission also enthusiastically received the news of two recently approved programs that will be housed in Dr. Smith's unit:

- The Underrepresented Capacity Building Program will provide mentoring and coaching by partnering minority- and women-owned businesses with large construction firms that work on campus. This program also includes a curricular component and will encompass other industries – professional services, medical, medical research, goods, and general services.
- The Apprentice Work and Education Program will work with 4 to 6 Construction apprentices who will be rotated across jobs at the University to complete the required on-the-job training hours, along with classroom hours in order to achieve journeyman status within their selected trades.

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission was impressed by Dr. Smith's vision, achievements, and plans for the future. The Commission wants to express its recognition of and support for the Supplier Diversity Initiative and the new programs housed within this office. Moreover, the Commission wants

to commend Dr. Smith's leadership and the detailed information and data she presented. We strongly recommend that the Washington University in St. Louis continue its support for the Supplier Diversity Initiative and consider ways to expand this program in the future.

To view the full report click [here](#);  
to view the Executive Summary of the report, click [here](#).