

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE CONFERENCE AWARDS GALA

30 YEARS

THE LIGHTHOUSE @ CHELSEA PIERS SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 6:00PM- 10:00PM

Reception hosted by
The Regional Alliance for Small Contractors

RSVP NOW

JESSI MITCHELL

CBS NEW YORK



EMCEE

Jessi Mitchell joined the CBS New York team as a multi-skilled journalist in October 2021, focusing her reporting in Harlem. Nightly, she also anchors the 8pm Atlanta Now News on the CBS-owned station, Atlanta 69. Jessi spent two years in the CBS News Atlanta bureau, where she won a national Emmy for her work covering major breaking news stories. Her time in local news sparked a passion for helping others through storytelling, highlighting issues affecting minority communities, homeless populations, and domestic violence survivors. Jessi was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Atlanta. She attended Hampton University on a full academic scholarship and was captain of the women's golf team. In 2023, Jessi was inducted into the Hall of Fame at Hampton's Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications.

SUZANNE VEIRA

NYC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

Suzanne Veira is the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer of the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA). She is responsible for delivering innovative solutions to increase contract opportunities for minorities, women, and local business enterprises (MWLBE). Suzanne has over 38 years of government experience including budgeting, procurement, small contractor, and workforce program development. Under her leadership, the SCA's mentor programs have been recognized as a national model. From fiscal years, 2015 through February 2023, the SCA obligated over \$ 4.8 billion to MWLBEs firms in prime contract awards; of which over \$653 million were awarded through the agency's Mentor and Graduate Mentor programs.



DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

FRANCILIA WILKINS RAHIM

R.F. WILKINS CONSULTANTS



CLARENCE "GENE" SWANSTON LEADERSHIP AWARD

Francilia Wilkins Rahim is the CEO and Founder of R.F. Wilkins Consultants, Inc., a development and management consulting firm dedicated to providing a comprehensive suite of services to drive the success of the nation's businesses. Founded in 2011, the firm manages a diverse portfolio of public and private sector projects and specializes in project management, compliance, and technology systems integration. In 2023, Francilia founded her second firm AYO Labs. AYO is the nation's largest African American, woman owned health and beauty contract manufacturing facility anchored in an accelerator to help diverse businesses scale. To date, Francilia has led RFW in raising more than \$877 million for clients, completing more than 1000 unique projects and growing into the ranks of the top .1% of management consulting firms, owned by an African American woman in the United States. She has aided in the development of numerous diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and continues to advocate for equal opportunity for minorities in real estate, diverse contractors, and small businesses. Ms. Wilkins Rahim is a staunch advocate for diversity in procurement and management. She is a sought-after speaker on equity and inclusion, the creation of economic opportunities for disadvantaged communities and the diversification of corporate America.

NANCY VARGAS

DH2 CHAFFEURED TRANSPORTATION



WBE FIRM OF THE YEAR

Chief Executive Officer Nancy Vargas is the owner of the JFK based chauffeured ground transportation provider and has successfully provided ground transportation service in the entire New York Metro Area since 1995. Starting with the diversification into corporate transportation in 2016, Nancy expanded the business into new market segments such as government contracts, airline flight crew, construction mobility, hotel shuttle service, employee shuttle service and corporate events. An active business community leader, Nancy is the immediate Past President of The JFK Rotary Club, active member of The JFK Chamber of Commerce and The Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. As a Latina woman in a traditionally male-dominated industry, Vargas has been committed to supporting other women entrepreneurs. She is a member of The New York Women's Chamber of Commerce and is very proactive in empowering other women of the industry. Vargas has been awarded 5 Chamber Alliance Award, Business Woman of the Year, Power Women in Business, CEO of the Year and Transportation Woman of the Year.

STEVEN RIVERA

PROHEALTH CONNECT



RISING STAR AWARD

Steven Rivera a Puerto Rican, born and raised in the Bronx. Over the last 30 years, he has committed his career to Healthcare. In the last 10 years, Steven has launched 2 very successful companies that have made significant impact on Healthcare through technology. In 2016 he launched with his business partners Stella Mateo and Richard Kriss - Sentry Management Solutions which is a technology company that revolutionizes the management and transport of non emergency medical transportation. In 2021 Sentry became the first NY State certified minority owned business to win the largest contract in MTA history. December 2019, Steven formed ProHealth Connect with his partner Victor Ruscitto and later added the missing link Andrew Winakor in 2021. They launched in January 2022 with 1000 local independent retailers made up of Bodegas, supermarkets and pharmacies to provide access to thousands of products under OTC (Over the Counter) and Grocery benefits. As of present ProHealth Connect serves communities in 50 States and 2 US territories of Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. As of July 2024 ProHealth Connect services over 580,000 seniors, and continues to grow.

MARCOS MERCED

QNA TECH



MBE FIRM OF THE YEAR

Marcos Merced is an accomplished entrepreneur, business leader, and technology expert. As the founder and CEO of QnA Tech, a New York-based innovative tech company, he is dedicated to providing cutting-edge solutions for modern businesses. His experience working for local government at CUNY Central and DoITT of NYC further refined his technical knowledge and problem-solving skills. Through QnA Tech, Marcos brings groundbreaking advancements to the world of technology. His passion for excellence extends to community involvement, both personally and through his company. An active member of the National Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Long Island Chamber of Commerce, he contributes time and resources to support emerging minority and women-owned businesses (MWBEs). QnA Tech collaborates with organizations like N-Power to empower inner-city youth seeking careers in tech, and actively supports charities focused on healthcare, children, and education.

ADNAN CHOUDHURY

4HOLDERS CONSTRUCTION



DBE FIRM OF THE YEAR

Spearheaded by a retired Marine Leader with 20 years of Project Management experience, 4Holders LLC is a people-focused company continuing the mission of Actual Construction Inc's 30 years legacy in the concrete industry. 4Holders LLC is a Service Disabled Veteran Owned (SDVOSB) certified concrete contractor specializing in concrete foundation and flatwork for the public and private sector clients in the Northeastern US construction industry. With a projected annual revenue of \$5 million in 2024, 4Holders LLC is a people-focused company continuing the mission of Actual Construction Inc's 30 years long legacy in the concrete industry. The company provides construction, project management and logistics & supply chain services and has generated \$2,516,567 in revenue in 2023.

LEARN MORE AT
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