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The **Investing in California Small Businesses** newsletter is published monthly by the External Affairs Division of the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

To view past newsletters visit:

[www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/](http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/sb-resources.aspx)

[sb-resources.aspx](http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/sb-resources.aspx)

## Certification Workshops Give Small Businesses a Leg Up

In its continued outreach and assistance to small businesses, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) will host a series of statewide workshops to help certify small businesses that want to count towards the 30 percent goal on the statewide high-speed rail project. The Authority will provide small businesses with hands-on technical assistance which includes on-the-spot certification that can be completed online. Participants will also receive pertinent information on upcoming procurement opportunities around the State that would be of interest to their businesses.

“The Authority is committed to creating opportunities for small businesses with an aggressive 30 percent goal of participation in California’s high-speed rail program,” said Jeff Morales, Authority CEO. “We have been working to engage small businesses and encouraging them to get involved. Many of our contracts are long-term and will be a

big boost economically for small businesses. We want to help small businesses prepare to work on the project.” The Authority’s Small Business Advocate Robert Padilla added, “The initial construction in the Central Valley is expected to cost \$6 billion dollars and a significant amount of that could go to certified small businesses. These

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“These workshops are a critical part of the process for the Authority to partner with California’s small businesses.”

– Robert Padilla,  
Authority Small Business Advocate

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# Investing in California Small Businesses

SMALL BUSINESS NEWSLETTER

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## Contact Information

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To access and download more information pertaining to the small business program, visit the Authority's SB Resources webpage at [www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/sb-resources.aspx](http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/sb-resources.aspx)



» The workshops are RSVP-only events and limited to non-certified small business that meet the California Department of General Services (DGS) eligibility criteria to be certified. Specifically, that means that DGS must certify them as a Small Business (SB), Microbusiness (MB) or Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) for the State of California in order for their participation to count toward the 30 percent goal. The first series of certification workshops will be held:



#### April 17, 2013

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Wolfe Educational Center  
723 W. 13th Street  
Merced, California, 95340



#### April 25, 2013

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Small Business Development Center  
550 East Shaw Avenue  
Fresno, California, 93710



#### May 15, 2013

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Small Business Development Center  
2323 N. Broadway  
Santa Ana, California, 92706  
Orange County Board and  
Executive Rooms



#### May 22, 2013

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
City of Oakland  
150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, California, 94612  
Computer Lab A and Classroom 4

### Workshop participants should bring the following materials with them to the workshop:

- Applicant/Affiliate Federal Tax Returns for the past three (3) years
- Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) (if applicable)
- Secretary of State Number (if applicable)
- Home address of Officers, Member/Manager and Partners
- Social Security Number (if sole proprietor)
- Dunn & Bradstreet Number (if applicable)
- Contractors State License Board Number (if applicable)

The Authority will host several more workshops around the State in the coming months. If you'd like to register for the workshops, please email [sbworkshops@hsr.ca.gov](mailto:sbworkshops@hsr.ca.gov) and include full name, business name, address, contact number, and workshop location that you are interested in attending. Workshops are limited to non-certified small businesses.

### Small Business Program

The Authority is committed to Small Businesses (SB) playing a major role in building the statewide high-speed rail project. The Small Business Program (SBP) has an aggressive 30 percent goal for SB participation including Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE) and Micro-Businesses (MB).

# Authority Hiring Policy Invites All Workers to Get on Board

The California High-Speed Rail Authority wants the high-speed rail system to be the engine that jump-starts the Central Valley, an area struggling with a sagging economy and the highest unemployment rate in the State. The area's dismal financial picture was the catalyst that prompted the Authority to begin developing an agreement that creates job opportunities for California community business and residents, especially those residing in the Central Valley.

It's called the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA), a hiring plan that will help remove barriers facing disadvantaged workers and small businesses interested in getting a piece of the action when work gets underway this summer on the first leg of high-speed rail.

"Working people help strengthen the economy and communities," said Authority CEO Jeff Morales. "Many will learn new skills that will serve them for a lifetime."

The CBA will be included in the design-build contract for Construction Package #1, which covers about 30 miles of the system between Madera and Fresno. Under the CBA, contractors will be required to adhere to the National Targeted Hiring

Initiative, which says 30 percent of the employment will go to targeted workers and 10 percent with disadvantaged workers.

The workers live in economically disadvantaged areas or they've dealt with issues that are a hindrance when they try to find work – being homeless; being a custodial

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**"Working people help strengthen the economy and communities. Many will learn new skills that will serve them for a lifetime."**

- Jeff Morales, Authority CEO

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single parent; receiving public assistance; lacking a GED or high school diploma; having a criminal record; being chronically unemployed; being emancipated from foster care or being a veteran. Targeted workers can also be apprentices with less than 15 percent of the required graduating apprenticeship hours in a trade program.

The definition of disadvantaged and targeted workers comes from State and federal programs that are almost 20 years

old. They are win-win programs. They're a win for targeted workers, who get jobs and get off public assistance. They're a win for employers, who get Work Opportunity Tax Credit incentives for hiring the workers.

Morales pointed out, "Anyone hired to



work on the program, including disadvantaged workers, will have the training and qualifications to perform their jobs."

The CBA also creates opportunities for non-union and union workers and businesses who want to work on the high-speed rail system. And the agreement protects the high-speed rail project and California taxpayers from work stoppages because it contains a "No Strike Clause."

High-speed rail will mean thousands of jobs for qualified workers who apply. Excitement is building as the beginning of this massive infrastructure project draws closer. The Authority wants qualified workers to know the train is coming down the tracks – it's time to get on board.

— Karen Massie



The Department of General Services (DGS) serves as business manager for the State of California. With a budget in excess of \$1 billion and 4,000 employees, DGS helps to serve the public by providing a variety of services to state agencies through procurement and acquisition solutions, real estate management and design, fleet management, environmentally friendly transportation, professional printing, design and Web services, and funding for the creation and construction of safe schools.

The DGS Procurement Division, Office of Small Business and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) Services (OSDS) is the State's certifying agency that administers the Small Business and DVBE Certification Programs. The OSDS is working with Authority staff member on a series of certification workshops we are hosting around the State so that firms interested in working on the high-speed rail project get certified.

In addition, the Communications & Outreach Section assists Small and Disabled Veteran businesses by participating in outreach events, providing resource guidance and supporting the businesses through advocacy. For more information contact [OSDSHelp@DGS.ca.gov](mailto:OSDSHelp@DGS.ca.gov) or call (916) 375-4940.

### *Strategic Partnerships*

To achieve greater effectiveness in the delivery of procurement opportunities to small businesses, the Authority has cultivated ongoing strategic partnerships with local, community organizations and agencies. The intent of these partnerships is to leverage shared services and resources to become more transparent, accessible and accountable by enhancing the quality of the Authority's services. The Authority is confident that these strategic partnerships will not only maximize the participation of Small Business participation in its procurement process, but will also strengthen and sustain California's economy.

### *Spotlight: Sam Hassoun, Business Advisory Council Member*

## *From Busboy to Management Consultant*

### *Sam Hassoun Inspires Interest in Engineering*

When you meet Sam Hassoun, you feel like you've known him for years. Talk comes quickly for the high energy Hassoun, but his easy-going manner hides a steel resolve to finish projects ahead of scheduled completion dates.

Hassoun knows how to get jobs done after more than 30 years of experience as a civil engineer. Fresh out of college, Bechtel Corporation, the largest construction and engineering company in the U.S., came calling. "I was really lucky," Hassoun declared. "I landed my dream job – a job that allows me to be an engineer and make money."

Getting there wasn't easy, but great role models helped smooth the way. His

father and his uncles were engineers. One in particular, became his mentor and was always available with sound advice. Like his



Sam Hassoun talks to a fellow engineer atop the 525-foot tower of the new span of the Bay Bridge.

uncle, Hassoun put himself through school. That meant working at a Mexican restaurant, where he started out washing dishes and bussing tables.

After graduating from the University of Toledo, Hassoun dove into his work at Bechtel Corporation. Nuclear power plant, space shuttle and defense contracts took him around the U.S. to Michigan, Texas, South Carolina and California. Hassoun explained "I was in awe of some of the projects I worked on. I loved it. But I was a gypsy. I moved seven times in eight years."

Tired of traipsing around the country, he landed at an entry-level engineering job at Caltrans. His experience allowed him to work in project design, construction and mainte-

nance for dozens of road and bridge projects.

When the Loma Prieta earthquake shook loose a 50-foot section of the Bay Bridge in 1989, Hassoun was tapped as one of the engineers on the massive repair. Working over the San Francisco Bay made the job difficult. "We were working above and below the water line and we couldn't drop anything in the water because it's environmentally sensitive," explained Hassoun. "We worked 24 hours a day. We were fixing the bridge,

**"I was really lucky I landed my dream job – a job that allows me to be an engineer and make money."**

**- Sam Hassoun, Founder & President  
Global Leadership Alliance (GLA)**

inspecting and painting the rest of it -- all at the same time." Political and commercial pressure to finish was high because the Bay Bridge is a major artery to and from San Francisco. "We finished fixing it and reopened in 30 days," Hassoun said proudly.

Within five years, Hassoun's tenacity landed him in the Director's Office as Quality Program Manager. He was soon tapped as Office Chief of Partnering and developed specifications for Caltrans projects. Hassoun explained, "It's a way to connect private industry and government agencies on a common goal: to deliver a quality project that's safe and done ahead of schedule and within budget."

In 2001, Hassoun founded Global Leadership Alliance (GLA), a partnering and management consulting firm. The core values are integrity, commitment to excellence and

exceed customer expectations. "Everyone who works here has to believe in our mission," he said. "It's the reason why clients stay with us." He also makes sure interns find a spot in his office. Hassoun said, "My uncle was my mentor and now I have to do that for somebody else."

It's a mantra he also sings as the Engineering Director for the Associated General Contractors of California (AGC). He directed the non-profit's education foundation which encourages students to get involved in the engineering and construction industry. According to Hassoun, "Most people think of construction as being a dirty job that keeps people outdoors in the elements. But we bring them in by thousands to AGC's Construction Career Awareness Day." There, they find out construction projects also need accountants, internet technicians and underwriters and more. Students also learn about colleges, universities and technical schools with strong engineering and construction curriculums. And they can apply for scholarships supplied by AGC.

AGC of California also provides training and resources for its members, about 600 contractors and subcontractor member firms and another 400 associate member companies which include suppliers, equipment manufacturers, law firms, insurance



companies, accounting firms, and other organizations that support the construction industry. According to Hassoun, the majority are small businesses with less than \$5 million a year in contracts. The most experienced members mentor other members. And all of them can count on AGC to keep them abreast of job opportunities.

Hassoun represents AGC on the Authority's Business Advisory Council.

— Karen Massie



GLA founder Sam Hassoun confers with Alta Vista Solutions engineer Patrick Lowry and Caltrans engineer Gary Thomas as they stride across the new eastern span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

# Calendar of Upcoming Events

EVENTS	DATE	TIME	ADDRESS
California Public Utility Commission: Small Business Expo and Match Making	April 11, 2013	7:30 am – 1:30 pm	Bakersfield Marriott 801 Truxtun Ave., Bakersfield, CA
Authority Small Business Certification Workshop	April 17, 2013	9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Wolfe Educational Center 732 W. 13th Street, Merced, CA
Authority Business Advisory Council	April 18, 2013	9:30 am – 3:30 pm	Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce 1725 Eye Street, Bakersfield, CA
3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual SBA Southern Cal 8(A) Conference	April 24, 2013	7:00 am – 6:00 pm	Double Tree by Hilton 100 The City Drive, Orange, CA
Authority Small Business Certification Workshop	April 25, 2013	9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Small Business Development Center 550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno, CA
Keeping the Promise: Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Conference	May 13, 2013 May 14, 2013	8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Hyatt Regency Irvine 17900 Jamboree Road, Irvine, CA
Authority Small Business Certification Workshop	May 15, 2013	9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Small Business Development Center, Orange County Board and Executive Rooms 2323 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, CA
Authority Small Business Certification Workshop	May 22, 2013	9:30 am – 12:30 pm	City of Oakland, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Computer Lab A and Classroom #4 150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza Oakland, CA

\*Meeting dates, times and locations are subject to change.

