

## Recommendation Form Worksheet

**TITLE** Develop and Execute a Marketing and Education Program

### **PROBLEM**

The communication problem is multi-faceted.

First, other than our identified percentage goals for small, women-owned and minority-owned businesses the university itself has no established vision that identifies how supplier diversity aligns with our organizations mission, vision and values. We have no clear and consistent message, other than the need to meet the percentage goals, and that does not create passion or support for the program.

On campus, Procurement Services attempts to distribute communications through newsletters, their website and a Procurement Facebook page, but those items can be and are ignored by many and they do not reach everyone in a meaningful manner. While Procurement does meet suppliers through various trade shows and conferences, there is not an effective campaign to bring awareness and training to potential suppliers.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1- With appropriate representatives and a champion from JMU Administration establish a JMU vision for the supplier diversity program. Reflect how the program benefits JMU and aligns with our overall mission, vision and values.
- 2- Engage with a diverse firm to assist Procurement Services in coordination with Communications and Marketing in developing a sustainable marketing strategy and content to:
  - a. Organize a public awareness campaign to encourage women and minority owned businesses to become SWaM certified and eVA registered vendors for JMU and other Commonwealth of Virginia agencies to utilize. (Also coordinate this activity with the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity and the Small Business Development Center)
  - b. Organize a public awareness campaign for those internally with decision making and purchasing power at JMU to support SWaM businesses.

**RATIONALE** All stakeholders need to understand the meaningful reasons behind supplier diversity. It's not just something we have to do to meet a numerical goal. Supplier diversity done right has the potential to encourage innovation in the market place, it reflects changing demographics (our awareness of that generally will be a factor in recruiting diverse faculty and staff and students), ultimately if we have more providers available to us in the market place it could increase competition to offer gains in both price and overall service value, supplier diversity efforts may have positive impact on

maintaining eligibility for federal and other sponsorship dollars. Small businesses rather than Fortune 500 corporations are the engine of American innovation and job growth. Virginia small businesses are the backbone of the Commonwealth of Virginia economy. Directing more of our discretionary dollars to these businesses helps with the Commonwealth's revenue streams, which ultimately helps our organization and living conditions of our community. Virginia businesses hire Virginians and that has a direct impact on families all across the Commonwealth. Diverse businesses specifically often are more willing to hire diverse workers; studies suggest that these firms are positioned to help reduce the high rates of unemployment in minority communities.

## SUCCESS

- Established Vision and goals that internal stakeholders can support.
- Spend with women and minority owned businesses would see continual growth.
- Growth of diverse businesses, which would ultimately directly support diverse communities through employment opportunities and growth.
- Potentially increased interest in diverse communities for entrepreneurship.