

BUSINESS

SBA'S MINORITY BUSINESS SHOWCASE DRAWS OVER 1,350 TO WASHINGTON 'ONE-STOP' PROCUREMENT AND TRADE FAIR

•Saiki calls exhibiting firms 'vital' to USA's economic future•

WASHINGTON — An inaugural "one stop" business exposition bringing together more than 350 historically underutilized firms and over 1,000 purchasing agents from government and corporate America this week in the nation's capital.

SBA Administrator Patricia Saiki on Monday greeted the opening-day crowds at the Sheraton Washington Hotel, site of the three-day trade fair, with a call for more recognition of the value of minority firms, both through utilization of their products and services, and respect for their economic contributions.

Saiki was joined at the opening ceremony by Washington, D.C., Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly, who encouraged all exhibitors to continue their march toward full economic realization, while also extending a warm welcome to the city.

Commenting on the recent expansion in the ranks of ethnic firms, Saiki said, "Changes are already evident on the business landscape...The SBA estimates that there are now approximately one million minority-owned businesses. This growth — this potential — means that your contributions will be the most significant, the most felt, the most vital in the coming years."

SBA's First Annual 8 (a) Procurement Exposition and Trade Fair was launched on Jan. 20, the day set aside to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The theme, 'Economic Freedom: The Key, reflects the slain civil rights leader's aspirations for economic self-determination for

people of all ethnic backgrounds.

Exhibit space is available exclusively to businesses in the SBA's 8 (a) program, which provides business development assistance and access to federal contracting opportunities to businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Commercial networking, with an eye toward long-term contracting relationships, is the agency's goal in bringing together these minority vendors and buyers from government and corporate America.

"To those of you in the private sector," said Saiki, "you have the opportunity to work with some of the most qualified small

businesses in this country. These are the companies that have demonstrated the competence to be included in our 8 (a) program and are anxious to show you how well they can perform."

Organizers estimate that around 400 private sector purchasing agents would attend over the three days, with an equal number of procurement officials from all levels of government. The balance of those expected to stroll the exhibit floor are other members of the business community, and many former participants in the SBA's 8 (a) program who have now attained commercial self-sufficiency and no longer need assistance.

Self-sufficiency through busi-

ness development is a major goal of the agency's 8 (a) program. Emerging firms are given SBA management and technical assistance, in addition to access to federal contracting, until these companies evolve to where they can compete with other similar firms not in the program. The nationwide 8 (a) pool currently includes more than 3,700 firms.

The trade fair also featured a number of educational seminars, ranging from marketing tips on contracting in the private sector, to dealing with federal agencies like the Dept. of Defense and Resolution Trust Corporation, to an examination of the full range of assistance offered by the SBA.

PEARSON SPONSOR SEMINAR ON NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLARK COUNTY MINORITY BUSINESS

Commissioner William U. Pearson and the Clark County Minority/Women Business Council sponsors a half-day seminar on local and national opportunities for minority and women business enterprises. The seminar will focus on local opportunities, specifically those not requiring formal competitive bidding, for small business concerns. Clark County and other local government purchasing agents will be on hand to give step-by-step instructions on procedures.

Purchasing representatives invited to participate from other local governmental entities are the Cities of Las Vegas, North

Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City, the Clark County Sanitation District, the Las Vegas Valley Water District, the University Medical Center, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Clark County Housing Authority and the Las Vegas Housing Authority.

In addition, Commissioner Pearson has invited the SUPERCONDUCTING SUPER COLLIDER LABORATORY representatives from Dallas, Texas to share its procurement policies, procedures and minority business opportunities it presents for local minority businesses. Executive personnel from the (See Pearson, Page 17)



WILLIAM U. PEARSON

Real Estate Perspective

By Loretta A. Hall



"HOMEOWNERS" REDUCE YOUR MONTHLY UTILITY BILLS WITH THESE HELPFUL ENERGY TIP!

Homeowners, face it, utility bills like death and taxes, are one of life's few certainties. However, you can reduce your utility bills with a few simple energy saving steps. For most homeowners, saving money is a priority and conserving energy is also good for the environment. Try practicing some of these energy saving tips and come out a winner with extra money saved.

Let us start with the water bill: your shower is one of the easiest places to cut down on water use. Install a low-flow nozzle to save up to 50 percent usage. A shower head with its own on/off switch makes it easy to conserve water. Leaky faucets and toilets are some of the biggest water wasters. A leaking faucet can waste up to 25 gallons daily. There are dozens of other ways to conserve water; you just need to think about them. Before beginning any household chore that requires water, stop and consider how you could use less and combine tasks. For example, don't leave water running when washing your car. I can mention several other wasteful habits, but I think you get the message.

The next item of discussion is the electric bill and it can be shocking — However, simply turning out the lights will make a big difference in reducing your electric bill. Also, replace high wattage bulbs with energy conserving bulbs. Set appliances, such as your dishwasher, on

low-energy settings. Don't locate heat-producing appliances, like a stove or dishwasher next to a refrigerator or freezer. Heat will cause cooling equipment to work harder. Install electric water heaters as close as possible to the kitchen and bathrooms. This will mean shorter pipes and less heat lost as water travels through them. If long pipes are necessary, wrap them in insulation. Use cold water whenever you can — it requires no energy. Check your home's insulation. Do you need weather stripping around your windows and door? If you can feel air coming in, the answer is yes. Keep fireplace dampers closed when not in use so heated or cooled air can't escape. Keep vents and doors closed in infrequently used rooms. Heating or cooling unused rooms is a waste of energy and money.

Last, the gas bill — many of the tips provided for saving on electric bills also apply to gas appliances. In addition, gas heat is nearly immediate; when cooking, don't waste energy with lengthy pre-heating. Regularly clean and adjust your gas heater so the the flame is blue. Homeowners who truly are committed to saving on their utility bills should consider an energy audit. A complete energy audit will show you many ways to conserve energy and save money. If you are interest in an energy audit, you can call the local utility company in your area to find out if they offer free audits. To get the most out of a free inspection, prepare a list of questions in advance. Private firms can conduct a more in-depth audit, but can cost around \$200.00. Check the Yellow Pages under "energy conservation services" for a listing of private firms.

Saving energy is important — saving money, however is the greatest side benefit of all and most of us would welcome the savings with "open arms and hands". Please send all inquires to the REAL ESTATE PROSPECTIVE, c/o the Las Vegas Sentinel Voice.

AM 970

Knews

YOUR TOTAL NEWS & INFORMATION STATION

FREE NEWS EVERY DAY ... ALL DAY