

VETREPRENEUR

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for VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES

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Walking the Walk

IN THE WORLD OF VETERAN BUSINESS, the term “three percent” is kicked around with regularity, and often a lack of accountability. Such is not the case at CH2M Hill, a full-service engineering, procurement, construction, and operations firm.

The Denver, Colo.-based company racked up some impressive veteran contracting numbers in 2007.

CH2M HILL added VOBs into its Corporate Small Business Policy in 2001. The policy was signed by senior management and distributed throughout the company to ensure everyone understood its importance in the corporate vision for inclusion of VOBs. The company subsequently restructured its practices to identify, award and track VOBs.

The results were immediate, as the company successfully awarded \$1.2 million to veteran-owned firms and since then, CH2M HILL has awarded more than \$107 million to VOBs.

“We are proud to say that we continue to increase the number of awards and dollars to VOBs, year after year,” said Willie Franklin, manager of Supplier Diversity and Small Business Programs.

And they’ve only gotten better through practice. While the numbers for VOB/SDVOB spending in the corporate enterprise arena were just 1.8 percent and 0.4 percent, respectively, the company far exceeded the federal minimum with total VOB/SDVOB participation of 6.9/3.7 percent in 2007 in the company’s contracting efforts. That includes a total of 1,723 contracts with VOBs and 194 with SDVOBS for a total of more than \$38 million.

“CH2M HILL knows that veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses provide innovative and creative solutions at a competitive price,” said Franklin. We know they continue to strengthen the economic vitality in our business communities and time and time again VOBs have enhanced our performance to our clients.”

The company typically looks for companies related to: water and sewer line construction, remediation services, testing laboratories, engineering services, explosives manufacturing and logistics consulting services.

For VOBs interested in partnering with CH2M HILL or with any potential client, Franklin’s words of advice are simple – “Before you meet with anyone, understand what it is CH2M HILL (or other potential company) does, know how your company can support our (their) objectives, and be able to demonstrate success on previous projects.” •



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