

2017 ACE Awards & Chairman's Scholarship Gala: MMSDC Celebrates Ambassadors Championing Excellence & 40 Years in Supplier Diversity Excellence





December 8, 2017, Detroit, MI— Michigan’s top corporations and MBEs gathered last week at the Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council’s 2017 ACE (Ambassadors Championing Excellence) Awards and Chairman’s Scholarship Gala at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center to honor those who champion excellence in business.

2017 ACE Award Winners were:

Supplier of the Year: Presented annually to Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) who have excelled in growing their businesses, enhanced their operations, and actively participated in MBE-to-MBE purchasing. There are four awards given, with one going to each of the four revenue categories of MBEs:

- **Class I – Annual gross sales less than \$1 million**
- **Class II – Annual gross sales between \$1 million and \$10 million**
- **Class III – Annual gross sales between \$10 million and \$50 million**
- **Class IV – Annual gross sales greater than \$50 million**

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class I Winner: Sowell Law Partners

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class II Winner: The Orsus Group

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class III Winner: W3R Consulting (Tie)

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class III Winner: SEEL, LLC (Tie)

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class III Winner: Mac Arthur Corporation
(Tie)

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class IV Winner: Epitec (Tie)

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class IV Winner: Ideal Group (Tie)

Minority Supplier of the Year – Class IV Winner: Chemico (Tie)

MBE Luminary of the Year Award: A minority business owner who exemplifies the spirit of minority business entrepreneurs conducting business with other minority business entrepreneurs; providing mentoring, apprenticeships or internships while being actively involved in community and other special programs.

MBE Luminary Award Winner: Christie Wong Barrett – Mac Arthur Corporation

Corporate Buyer of the Year Award: One who directly makes purchases and through his/her efforts advances the cause of minority economic development. This award acknowledges the buyer who goes above and beyond normal purchasing requirements by significantly aiding MBEs, increasing his/her dollar purchases over the previous year, offers referrals to other companies, and attempts to identify new market opportunities.

Corporate Buyer of the Year Award Winner: Matthew A. Cheetam – DTE Energy

Jethro Joseph Advocate of the Year Award: An individual who is not a buyer but drives the process that promotes economic development of Minority Business Enterprises, such as a VP, director, or manager. This award acknowledges the individual that goes above and beyond in their efforts to not only source and mentor MBEs but also help their company and community understand why it's so important to do business with minority suppliers.

Jethro Joseph Advocate of the Year Award Winner: Brenda Marshall – Kelly Services

President's Award: The Entire MMSDC Constituency for their efforts

Corporation of the Year Award: Presented to the corporation(s) who actively include certified minority suppliers in their procurement opportunities, assist in the development of minority suppliers, promotes supplier diversity and business development within their corporation, their vendors, other businesses, and organizations.

Corporation of the Year Automotive OEM Winner: Ford Motor Company

Corporation of the Year Commercial Products Winner: Herman Miller, Inc.

Corporation of the Year Consumer Products Petrochemical, and Energy Winner: DTE Energy

Corporation of the Year Financial & Insurance Services Winner: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Corporation of the Year Construction Winner: Barton Malow (Tie)

Corporation of the Year Construction Winner: Walbridge (Tie)

Corporation of the Year Professional Services & Staffing Winner: Kelly Services, Inc.

Volunteer of the Year: This award recognizes a leader who is the ultimate giver of their time and talent in an effort to support minority supplier development and the work of MMSDC.

Volunteer of the Year Award Winner: Jacquelyn (Jackie) Jackson – Walbridge

Executive of the Year Award: This award recognizes a senior corporate leader who empowers his or her team to drive minority supplier development, while personally remaining actively engaged.

Executive of the Year Award Winner: Robert Young – Toyota

The Michigan Minority Business Hall of Fame recognizes those who have made a positive transformational impact on Michigan's minority businesses, including devoted government and community leaders as well as iconic MBEs and corporate leaders.

Michigan Minority Business Hall of Fame Inductee: Dr. William F. Pickard – GAA Manufacturing & Supply Chain Management

Michigan Minority Business Hall of Fame Inductee: Andra Rush – Rush Group

“We recognized corporations, minority businesses, and individuals who excelled in engaging, mentoring and advocating for minority suppliers this past year,” said Michelle Sourie Robinson, President & CEO of MMSDC. “Our Ambassadors and this year’s winners are true champions of excellence in minority supplier development.”

Boasting an attendance of over 750, the ACE Awards is one of the most prestigious business events that takes place annually in our state where the top leaders, executives, and visionaries in the region gather to celebrate the people who are making significant contributions to minority supplier development. At this event, minority business enterprises (MBEs) are honored for their excellent service in the past year as well as corporate members for their commitment to supplier diversity and supporting minority-owned businesses through purchasing contracts.

Note: In those instances where there is a tie, there is no coin toss. All individuals or businesses scoring the same in a category will be awarded.

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