



FLORIDA  
**Advisory  
Council**  
ON SMALL AND MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



**2019  
Annual  
Report**



## INTRODUCTION & STATUTORY CHARGE

The Florida Advisory Council on Small and Minority Business Development (Council) provides insight, expertise, and recommendations to the state regarding the engagement, support, and development of the small and minority business community. The Council, established in Florida Statute 287.0947, is statutorily charged to advise and assist with small and minority business development. Its powers and duties include, but are not limited to the following:

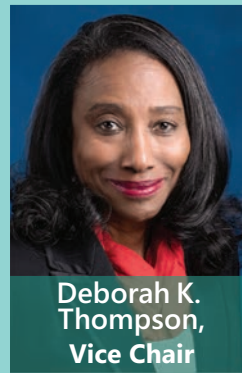
- Researching and reviewing the role of small and minority businesses in the state's economy;
- Reviewing issues and emerging topics relating to small and minority business economic development;
- Studying the ability of financial markets and institutions to meet small business credit needs and determining the impact of government demands on credit for small businesses;
- Assessing the implementation of s. 187.201(21), requiring a state economic development comprehensive plan, as it relates to small and minority businesses; and
- Assessing the reasonableness and effectiveness of efforts by any state agency or by all state agencies collectively to assist minority business enterprises.

## Council Members



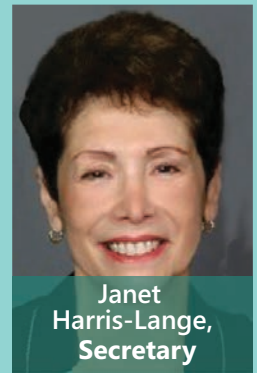
**Jay Narang,  
Chair**

Tech Army  
Fort Lauderdale, FL



**Deborah K.  
Thompson,  
Vice Chair**

Deborah K. Thompson  
Consultants  
Jacksonville, FL



**Janet  
Harris-Lange,  
Secretary**

TaskMasters of  
Florida, Inc.  
Lake Park, FL



**Julius Davis**

VoltAir Consulting  
Engineers  
Tampa, FL



**Eduardo  
Gonzalez Loumiet**

Ruvos  
Tallahassee, FL



**Sherod  
Halliburton**

Manatee Community  
Federal Credit Union  
Bradenton, FL



**Johnny R. Helms**

Lumbee Resource  
Management Group  
Jacksonville, FL



**Mariana Lugo**

United Data  
Technologies  
Doral, FL



**Kathey Porter**

University of Florida  
Gainesville, FL



**Augusto  
Sanabria**

Prospera  
Orlando, FL



**Brian Williams**

School Board of  
Lee County  
Fort Myers, FL



**Christine L.  
Yerkes**

Yerkes South, Inc  
Pensacola, FL



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR & 2019-2020 RECOMMENDATIONS

Greetings from the Florida Advisory Council on Small and Minority Business Development!

First and foremost, I would like to thank all the talented and accomplished Council members with expertise in varying fields from across our great state for allowing me the honor and pleasure of Chairing the Council as we work together to serve and promote Florida's woman-, veteran-, and minority-owned small businesses.

The Council had an active year in 2019! Below you will find a list of plans the Council put together in 2018, the progress made in 2019, and plans for 2020. While significant progress has been made, the Council has a lot of work ahead 2020...

Last year the Council set out to establish simple and achievable goals to aid with its mission of recommending process improvements across the state to benefit small, woman-, minority-, and veteran-owned businesses. The simplified goals were broken down into three categories:

- 1) Assess disparate certification processes spanning various counties, cities, state, and private entities.
- 2) Review and evaluate Enterprise Florida's (EFI) grant criteria for out-of-state businesses to relocate to Florida.
- 3) Assemble the vast plethora of economic development programs and similar initiatives across Florida.

We knew, as we delved deeper into addressing our priorities that these were time consuming and resource intensive priorities. However, Council members were in agreement that these were the priorities that would make the most significant impact on the state's businesses we are charged with representing. Therefore, these goals will remain in place, and the Council will continue to work towards recommendations in the three category areas.

As I outlined in 2018, following the bylaws and procedures as established in Florida Statute 287.0947, the Council instituted three key committees with the mission of meeting our goals listed above, respectively:

- 1) Legislative Committee
- 2) Strategic and State Comprehensive Planning Committee
- 3) Research and Emerging Trends Committee.

This year, new leaders took on the helm of committees with new energy and fresh set of ideas. The Legislative committee was Chaired by Council Vice Chair Ms. Deborah Thompson, the Strategic and State Comprehensive Planning Committee was Chaired by Ms. Mariana Lugaro, and the Research and Emerging Trends Committee was Chaired by Ms. Janet Harris-Lange. The progress of each committee is included in this report.

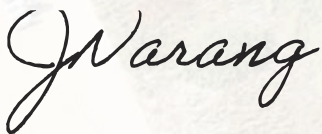
Additionally, just as we did in 2018, the Council invited and listened to input from esteemed commentarians in leadership positions across the state. During the Council's October meeting, we received valuable guidance from Secretary Satter. Including commentarians on each call allows the Council to learn from each guest's experiences, providing guidance and valuable insights.

Council members agreed on a new goal for 2020, placing additional focus on the state's technology renovation programs. This meant research and recommendations in 2020 on inclusion of Florida's Small and Minority technology centric firms, especially in cybersecurity and data archival space.

The council members remain grateful to the Office of Supplier Diversity Director Ms. Donna Williams and her staff, especially Ms. Bre Stephens for their support, guidance, and hard-work in keeping us on track!

I look forward to a productive and results oriented 2020!

Very Best Regards,



Jay Narang



## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee, comprised of the Council's Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Chairs, meets the week before each full Council meeting.

At these meetings, this leadership team discussed and finalized the agenda for each full Council meeting. Committee Chairs also provided progress reports for each committee. Committee discussion included procedural matters, suggestions and agreement on guest commentarians for upcoming meetings, and issues to be placed on the full Council agenda for further deliberation.

### **Legislative Committee**

The Legislative Committee, chaired by Deborah K. Thompson, meets every other month. Committee members include Christine Yerkes, Johnny Helms, and Brian Williams. Together, the committee monitors and reviews legislation and policies that impact small business and provides recommendations for Council consideration. Over the past year, the committee has pursued issues such as the Microloan Act, funding for a small business development study, and Florida Statute 287.

This year, the committee's focus was on a unified certification process for the state of Florida. This would greatly impact small minority- and women-owned businesses and relieve the burden of completing separate applications in every city, county, or area within the state. To that end, each committee member researched and gathered information on the certification processes in their geographic area. From that data, the committee compiled the research in a chart, to ultimately make recommendations of reciprocity for consideration.

### **Research and Emerging Trends Committee**

The Research and Emerging Trends Committee, chaired by Janet Harris-Lange, meets every other month. Committee members include Eduardo Gonzalez Loumiet and Brian Williams. Together, the committee is charged with four core activities: IMPACT of small and minority business; EMERGING TRENDS related to small business; FINANCE/CREDIT needs of small business; and, ENTREPRENEURSHIP and REGULATIONS of governing bodies. During committee calls, one of these topics is researched and discussed. The following input was received:

**IMPACT** - it was noted that Florida small businesses created 152,330 jobs in 2015 and 95% of the 59,617 companies who exported goods in 2015 were small businesses generating 58.9% of Florida's \$49.5 billion in total exports.

**EMERGING TRENDS** - entrepreneur bootcamp, normally conducted at colleges and universities across the state, is gaining popularity and co-working spaces are springing up allowing entrepreneurs the opportunity to work with other business owners in an open environment.

**FINANCE/CREDIT** - the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) states that the Florida State Small Business Credit Initiative's (SSBCI) has deployed more than \$31 million in program funds and leveraged more than \$138 million in private financing for small businesses. Businesses with less than \$1million in revenues faced greater challenges in obtaining financing.

**REGULATIONS** – goals include favorable business tax structure, streamlining regulatory environment, eliminating rules that create hurdles among others. Florida corporate income tax exemption was raised from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and sales tax was exempted to certain industries. There continue to be regulatory/policy barriers for companies to respond to an RFP or ITN.

### **Strategic and State Comprehensive Planning Committee**

The Strategic and State Comprehensive Planning Committee, chaired by Mariana Lugaro, meets every other month. Committee members include Julius Davis, Eduardo Gonzalez Loumiet, and Augusto Sanabria. Together, the committee continued to focus on the economic development programs and similar initiatives available to small and minority businesses across the state.



## GUEST COMMENTARIANS -YEAR IN REVIEW

Each Council meeting included guest commentarians from different agencies and organizations. These commentarians shared information on their organization and what work they do in relation to Florida's small business community.

**On August 1, 2018,** Tom Berger, Director of Real Estate Development and Management (REDM) at the Florida Department of Management Services, spoke to the Council regarding the Division's role in providing real estate services for state government. Under DMS' purview, REDM manages approximately 12 million square feet of office space throughout Florida. REDM contracts with vendors who build and maintain buildings/properties. The Division spends approximately \$13 million on maintenance contracts.

**On October 17, 2018,** Joe Marino, Interim Executive Director, Veterans Florida, spoke to the Council about Veterans Florida, a state funded non-profit organization that markets to veterans and encourages them to stay in Florida or relocate to Florida. Veterans Florida offers services to veterans including career services, employer workforce grants, and an entrepreneurship program.

**On December 5, 2018,** Chasity Ash, Lead Small Business Technical Analyst, Office of Small Business Utilization/ GSA gave the Council an overview on the GSA and how small businesses can contract with the Federal Government. GSA has 11 regions and Chasity is the Lead Small Business Technical Analyst for Region 4, covering the eight southeastern states, based in Atlanta, Georgia.

**On February 6, 2019,** Melody Thelwell, Chief Procurement Officer for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) Procurement Management Services, shared information with the Council on the findings and recommendations from phase two of their disparity study on goods and services. She also gave information on several resources MDCPS provides to assist small businesses in becoming more knowledgeable about the procurement process, building relationships with government agencies, and other key stakeholders. MDCPS is working to include feedback from small businesses on trainings and streamline the certification process with other certifying bodies.

**On April 3, 2019,** Robert Major, Stakeholder Manager, Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD), Florida Department of Management Services (DMS), introduced the OSD Mentor-Protégé Program to the Council. Robert outlined the program's goals, current status, and need for mentors. He informed the Council on the requirements for both the mentors and protégés, and he encouraged the Council to take a further look at the program.

**On June 5, 2019,** Cliff Nilson, Deputy Director, State Purchasing, DMS, informed the Council on how the State of Florida purchases during emergencies. Purchasing is governed by Florida Statute Chapter 287 and DMS Rule Chapter 60A-1. During a declared emergency, the Governor typically suspends the control of these regulatory statutes, lifting the requirements of competitive procurement. In preparation to procure during emergencies businesses can register for the Emergency Supplier Network, market services, and build relationships with agencies that purchase what the vendor supplies.



## COUNCIL NEWS

This year, the Florida Advisory Council on Small and Minority Business Development continued disseminating information about Council activities across the state. Below are some activities and accomplishments relating to the Council and Council members.



OSD Executive Director Donna Williams, Tech Army Relationship Management Officer India Hairston, and Tech Army Executive Vice President and **Florida Advisory Council on Small and Minority Business Development Chair Jay Narang** enjoyed meeting with small business owners at the Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council's 34th Annual Business Expo.



**Johnny Helms** of Lumbee Resource Management received the Small Business of the Year Award from the Jacksonville Chamber Information Technology Council. Lumbee Resource Management also received the Small Minority Business of the Year Award from the Northeast Board of Education during the First Coast Business Alliance, Inc. MED Week celebration.

### FLORIDA Advisory Council Council Corner

ON SMALL AND MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

*Provided by the Florida Advisory Council on Small and Minority Business Development (FACSMBD)*

During the August meeting, the Council had the pleasuring of hearing from Wilneeda Emmanuel, Jon Van Arnam, and Allen Gray from Palm Beach County. The council gained information on the Certification Program and the Compliance Program offered by the Palm Beach County Office of Equal Business Opportunity.

More information on the Palm Beach County's Office of Equal Business Opportunity can be found at [here](#).

The Council has a dedicated section in each issue of the Office of Supplier Diversity's newsletter. The "Council Corner" highlights commentarians, small business resources, member accomplishments, and Council activities.

SBDC Florida SBDC at UWF

November 6 at 2:55 PM

National Veteran's Small Business Week continues with a salute to Christine Yerkes and Yerkes South, Inc!

Christine Yerkes served 14 years of active duty in the United States Navy, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Commander, and served another 11 years on reserve duty, retiring after 23 years of total service. In 2015 she decided to take her years of experience in military construction and facilities, and formed Yerkes South Inc., her own design-build, construction and renov...

Continuous Reading



**Christine Yerkes** of Yerkes South, Inc. was recognized during National Veteran's Small Business Week with a salute and special feature from Florida's SBDC at UWF.



**Julius Davis** of VoltAir, Inc. received his 2019 MBE Supplier of the Year Class II award at the 44th Annual FMSMDC Awards Gala.



**Kathey Porter** joined a panel of experts at the Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council Business Expo, sharing insight on how small businesses can do business with federal, state, and local government.