

Celebrating SBE Legend Gerald W. Johnson

By Kato Cooks

Gerald W. Johnson turns 98 on January 28, and I want to get a lead on celebrating this incredible man. I met Mr. Johnson in 1996 in Sacramento at a Croson Decision conference co-hosted by the Bay Area Contract Compliance Officers Association, of which I was a member and, later, vice president. I made it a point to interview him at his home in snippets over the following 20 years for a biography we anticipated, but life had other plans.

He is best known as co-founder, along with his wife and business partner, Valerie Voorhies Johnson, of the San Francisco-based Small Business Exchange (SBE) newspapers in 1984.

Johnson's legacy, however, extends back to at least 1946, when he arrived in San Francisco. There, he organized a successful picket line to protest the dearth of Black workers employed in retail shops in the Fillmore District. With that under his belt, he and some friends formed the Civic Progressive Union and took the protest to San Francisco's theatre district where he conducted

his initial picket line as a solo effort (his friends didn't show up). Eventually, the local NAACP joined in with its support.

But it didn't stop there. Johnson organized in the Carpenters Union to get more Black business agents hired. And most notably, he got renaissance man Paul Robeson booked into a local Black church to perform at a time when Robeson was blacklisted in the United States and unable to secure concert bookings.

By the mid-1970s, the United Minority Business and Professional Association, founded by Johnson and under his direction, negotiated an affirmative action program for the reconstruction of San Francisco's public schools (aptly called ABLE: Asian-Black-Latino Enterprises). (Reference: *The Postwar Struggle for Civil Rights, African-Americans in San Francisco, 1945-1975*, by Paul T. Miller.)

And there is SBE, which boasts three online and print publications covering the nation from coast to coast.

"SBE was founded with the explicit purpose of providing small (minority-, woman-, disadvantaged-,



disabled-, disabled-veteran- and veteran-owned) businesses with access to information that enables them to successfully enter and compete in the US economy. The goal was to provide a communications network that would serve as an alternative to

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Long Slip Fill and Rail Enhancement GC-02 Station Tracks, Platforms, and Railroad Infrastructure in Jersey City and Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey

NJ TRANSIT Contract (IFB) No. 22-048X

Bid Date: March 10, 2023

Brief description of work:

The construction of six new electrified tracks serving three high-level boarding platforms connected to the existing railroad right of way and includes a passenger concourse as part of a new rail personnel structure to an elevation above the FEMA base flood elevation (BFE). Other related rail infrastructure work involves two pit pedestal inspection pits in the station area: an existing bridge modification; a new, two-track railroad bridge that connects the new station to the existing commuter tracks with the related track: catenary, signal, and other work including a realignment of active commuter tracks and the related overhead catenary structures.

ALL QUOTATIONS ARE DUE BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS Friday, March 3, 2023.

For further information concerning subcontracting and/or purchasing opportunities, and to register as a subcontractor or vendor, please respond to solicitations@tutorperini.com or contact Arlene McBayne at (914) 739-1908. Come and join our team!

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NORTHEAST EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

2023

SBA and SOS Monthly Webinar

Thursday, February 2, 2023, 9:00 am–11:00 am

Online

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, New Hampshire Secretary of State Corporation Division

Contact: Miguel Moralez, 603-225-1601, miguel.moralez@sba.gov

Fee: Free; registration required

Starting a new business? Looking for capital and finance options? Looking for general advice on starting or maintaining your business? Hear from representatives from the local SBA office and the New Hampshire Secretary of State Corporation Division. This workshop (currently held online during the pandemic) is offered on the first Thursday of every month. To join this free webinar, copy and paste the link below into your browser, then register for tickets for the date of your choice to receive the access code. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/secretary-of-state-quickstart-and-small-business-administration-programs-tickets-262004180557>

Fee: Free; registration required

The West Virginia Women's Business Center is hosting a valuable webinar on the System for Awards Management (SAM.gov). Join us as Melissa Loder (SBA's West Virginia District Office) and Sommer Straight (RCAC Procurement Technical Assistance Center—PTAC) guide you through how to register for your SAM.gov account. They will also provide tips, FAQs, and directions on where to get additional assistance, as well as answer questions you may have. To register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/getting-registered-in-the-system-for-award-management-samgov-tickets-483757992177>

Selling to the Federal Government Webinar

Thursday, February 23, 2023, 1:00 pm–4:00 pm

Online

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration

Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov

Fee: Free; registration required

Did you know that the federal government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world? Interested in learning how your business can market your services or goods to the federal government? Register on line at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-sell-to-the-federal-government-tickets-21790713611> SBA helps to ensure small businesses get fair opportunities to share federal government prime contracts. Topics will include: How to Register, Small Business Certifications, Finding Opportunities, Marketing Your Firm, Federal Supply Schedules, Getting Paid, Tips to Prepare Your Offer, How to Seek Additional Assistance. All training sessions are held via Microsoft Teams Meeting. Participants must ensure Microsoft Teams is functioning.

Getting Registered into the System for Awards Management (SAM.gov)

Tuesday, February 21, 2023, 11:00 am–12:00 pm

Online

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, West Virginia Women's Business Center

Contact: Melissa Loder, 304-623-7448, Melissa.Loder@sba.gov

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