

Benchmark Study Press Statement

US Postal Service OIG Is Looking for the Good Guys

The United States Postal Services' Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has hired Research Assessment Management (RAM), to conduct a nation wide study. The purpose? To reveal what America's business, public and independent sector enterprises consider "best practices" as regards to contracting with minority owned business firms. The project team named the effort "**Looking for the Good Guys**".

Looking for the good guys, means Fortune 500 Firms, plus other huge sole proprietor business and other enterprises that have establish the following; policies, practices and programs that have resulted in successful minority contracting experiences without lowering their expectations or standards to do so.

The contractor, Research Assessment Management,(RAM), is an African American business enterprise owned by a women. Its owner and CEO, Dr. Adreian McCollum, said, that her firm was established in the late 70s, in the National Capitol Area. It is a business enterprise which has been in the research and management assessment business for more than two decades.

When questioned about the purpose of the Postal Service OIG contract, her response was, "I was in on the early beginning of the minority and women owned business enterprise movement, 20 plus years ago. Along with participating in the programs as a business owner, I have also watched it grow from its infancy to its early adolescents years, where it stands today. Therefore, I believe this nation wide search for the best of the best by way of "best practices" regarding contracting with minority business could not have come at a better time".

Dr. McCollum's attitude is its time to learn the facts, about the lack of benefits or the actual benefits that result from policies and programs that are designed to provide

opportunities for minority owned businesses. In other words at what level and how successful are the latter at selling supplies, materials, equipment and services to the public, private, and independent sector of our nation's economy

Regarding Art Fletcher, one of the projects key staffers, she had this to say: "Most observers thought Art had retired to the side lines, watching today's young adult generation build on the equal opportunity foundation that he and others in his generation had put in place. So, when ask about Art Fletcher's role in the project Dr. McCollum said the following; "He was hired to play a major leadership role in the effort because he is the acknowledge Father of the Nation's Affirmative Action Enforcement Policy."

She continued by adding that the record now shows that after being sanctioned by the courts, in 1970, Fletcher's enforcement policies changed America's workforce, workplace and business opportunity culture for every. "The change." she said, "didn't just limit its benefits to minorities and women only, it extended to the country as a whole".

Dr. McCollum also pointed out, that Fletcher, served as the Chairman of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, form 1990 to 95. And in that capacity, he restored, (some say saved) that agency form extinction after it fell on hard times during the anti-civil rights climate of the 80s and early 90s.

RAM'S owner said Fletcher's, proven track record and national reputation as a no-nonsense advocate of economic equity and social justice for African Americans, women, citizens of color and the physically impaired made him her number one choice for the assignment he is to carry out.

When Fletcher was ask why this particular study is so important, he had the following to say about the project; "Most people don't know that the US Postal Service has a annual, procurement budget that exceed \$9 billion dollars. That is one of the largest procurement

budgets in the nation. According to him, this means there are millions and millions of dollars in contracting opportunities for the nation's minority business owners.

The records shows that minority business firms are major employers of minority citizens. Therefore, performing as contractors with the postal service means more business growth and expansion in depressed inner city neighborhoods and rural and thousands of jobs added to the US economy. "Finally" he said, "increased jobs in those areas means fewer dysfunctional families and less crime and violence in these neighborhoods as well".

At that point, he added "I have dedicated my entire life to the challenging task of establishing a national culture that will include rather than exclude minorities and women as full participants, employers and employees, in the nation's economy. Therefore, when I was offered a chance to be a team member for this most important study, I jumped at it".

Fletcher say's that to carry out its mission, the postal service has to "blanket the nation". By that he means, it is located in every state, city, town, village, and hamlet in America and is connected to every household, office building or industrial plant in the country. "They don't get much bigger, important or vital, to the nation's economy, than that," he said.

Therefore, according to Fletcher, it is quite significant to have the United States Postal Services' Office the Inspector General, (OIG) agreed to fund a project that is to explore ways, or better yet, investigate, record, analyze, evaluate and recommend policies that will result in making recommendations aimed at changing the postal services culture. If implemented properly, the recommendations in question will improve contracting opportunities for minority owned businesses all over the country. "

Deliberately funding a nation wide research benchmark study aimed at finding ways to increase contracting with firms owned by minorities is braking new ground and leading

the way toward making our taxed financed economy work for everyone. “Once our findings and recommendations are implement, it will be a new beginning for our nation’s economy,” said Fletcher.

When asked to be more specific about the projects purpose, Fletcher said, this about the team’s nation wide search for Best Practices; “We are not a self-**righteous do gooder posse**. We are not engaged in a nation wide search for the bad guys. The world is full of that kind,” he said. He then added, “ the OIG, didn’t need to fund a sophisticated national study to locate them. They can be found in every direction one looks”.

He explained the project mission by stating the following: “The Minority Business Opportunity Benchmark Study that he and the team of researcher are engaged in is designed to discover and learn all we can from the “**good Guys**” Those among the Fortune 1000 firms, plus others who are doing **it right**. Finding them is of value because by doing the right thing, not only are they contributing to a companies bottom line, they are making America’s Capitalist Free Enterprise System work for everyone, race and gender notwithstanding”.

Once the study is completed, its findings will be presented to the contractor, the Office of the Inspector General. In turn, that office will transmit it to the Postal Service’s Board of Governors. The latter will likely present it to the Senate and House Congressional committees.

These policy-making bodies will assess and evaluate the recommendation contained in the report. And, if they are implemented, they will impact the Postal Department’s procurement policies, practices and procedures in general, and its diversity contracting program and policies in particular.

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