



# MBE University Initiative

*Maryland is Open for Business!*

MBE University is a **new** initiative under the O'Malley-Brown Administration for small, minority and women-owned businesses. MBE University is designed as a "Road Show" conference that travels to each of the State's regions, and offers training and information on the tools necessary for successfully doing business with the State of Maryland as a minority or woman-owned business. MBE University was created in collaboration with the State's minority business coordinating agencies and the Governor's Office. Coordinating agencies include the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA), Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED), Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), Maryland Department of General Services (DGS), and the Governor's Grant's Office.

The first MBE University Conference was held in Prince George's County on December 1, 2009. Over 300 attendees joined Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown for the kick-off which was held at the Greenbelt Marriott. Also, several business owners and leaders from Prince George's County participated in a minority business roundtable discussion with Governor O'Malley to address challenges and opportunities of doing business in Maryland.

Conference highlights included workshops on how to do business with the State as a MBE; respond to bid solicitations; how to become certified or expand existing certification; upcoming bid opportunities, access to capital and the ARRA business connection, MBE related laws, and federal contracting, etc. MBE University's private sector partners, **Pepco** and **Verizon**, also hosted workshops on how to do business with their organizations.

## BACKGROUND

Maryland is home to a rich and diverse community of nearly 250,000 minority and women-owned enterprises, many of which are located in Prince George's County. These firms are a significant part of the engine that drives the State's economy. To help minority and women-owned firms remain viable and prosperous, the O'Malley-Brown Administration is committed to promoting maximum inclusion in the State's procurement process, as well as increasing awareness and access to opportunities and resources.

MBE University will aid in strengthening the success of minority and women-owned firms and build upon inclusion efforts that will provide an opportunity for all citizens to share in the State's prosperity.

## FUTURE DATES

The **second** MBE University Conference will take place in Baltimore during early spring 2010, and the remaining regions to follow. A tentative schedule of upcoming dates and times are forthcoming. For more information, contact the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs at 410-767-8232.