



# BUFFALO STATE

The State University of New York



## Buffalo State SBDC holds a Forum on Minority and Women Business Opportunities



In celebration of the City of Buffalo's Minority and Women Business Enterprise Week billed as "Meet the Experts" Buffalo State SBDC held a sold-out forum on the Buffalo State Campus – the evening of September 25th. Entrepreneurs representing every type of business - attentively participated in a program featuring six leading program officers responsible for the procurement programs that focus exclusively on minority and women business owners. The panel of experts included top officials from all levels of government. They included: Mr. Ryan Smith, Senior Business Development Associate from Empire State Development, Division of Minority and Women's Business Development, Ms. Shatorah Donovan, Esq, Chief Diversity Officer for the City of Buffalo, Mr. Jesse L. Burnette, Director of Erie County Division of Equal Employment Opportunity, Ms. Diane M. Byas, EEO Program Coordinator for the NFTA, Mr. Sheldon Anderson, MPA, Regional Compliance Specialist, New York State Department of Transportation, and Mr. Harold S. Cardwell, Jr. Contractor Compliance Officer, City of Buffalo.





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Most exciting was the extraordinary knowledge and passion given by each speaker. We learned about the truly vast opportunities for minority and women business owners. They provided valuable insight into the various certifications available, the efficient ways to access bidding opportunities, and how to engage with each of the government entities. Following the formal program, each presenter conversed with the entrepreneurs individually. They literally held their post until each person had their questions addressed.

It was an inspiring evening for all involved. Special thanks to Mauricio Canton – program organizer and several members of the SBDC team who helped with management, coordination and logistics: Andrea Lizak, Karina Loera, Dee Davis and Olivia Harbol.







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*In the picture from left to right: Mr. Ryan Smith, Senior Business Development Associate from Empire State Development, Division of Minority and Women's Business Development, Mr. Harold S. Cardwell, Jr. Contractor Compliance Officer, City of Buffalo, Ms. Diane M. Byas, EEO Program Coordinator, for the NFTA, Mr. Jesse L. Burnette, Director of Erie County Division of Equal Employment Opportunity, Susan McCartney, PhD., MBA, director of the SUNY Buffalo State Small Business Development Center and Mr. Mauricio Canton Diaz, WMBE Business Advisor at the Buffalo State Business Development Center.*

