



Gerald W. Johnson: Celebrating 100 Years

By Kato Cooks,
 California State Coordinator
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He steps smoothly into Mr. B's, his favorite New Orleans retreat, to relax with his spouse and business partner, Valerie Voorhies. He is dressed casually, neatly, and comfortably. Adorning his head is a cap with the inscription: Took 100 years to look this good.

And he smiles about it. "He" is Gerald Johnson, publisher and co-founder of the *Small Business Exchange* trade newspaper, digital and print. "It" is his 100th birthday, which impends (January 28).

There were a lot of experiences leading up to this and several yet to come. For example, the California-based Construction Contractors Alliance announced a scholarship in his honor. And something is stirring in San Francisco along the lines of a proclamation [see below]. His world percolates. But leading up to today . . .

In 1946, Gerald W. Johnson left service in the US Navy and returned home to New Orleans. He was forced to leave town in a hurry after refusing to sit behind a sign in an area designated for "Coloreds." He ended up in San Francisco and almost immediately began building his legend.

Shortly after getting settled in San Francisco, he organized a successful picket line to protest the absence of Black workers employed in retail shops in the Fillmore District. He was just getting started.

Next, he and some friends formed the Civic Progressive Union and took the protest to San Francisco's theatre district. Subsequently, the local NAACP joined in with its support.

Johnson then organized in the Carpenters Union to get more Black business agents hired. That organizing continues in Southern California to this day. And where titans connected, Johnson got renaissance man Paul Robeson booked into a local Black church to perform, at a time when Robeson was blacklisted in the US and unable to secure concert bookings.

In 1969, according to research by writer Marie Sheahan Brown, "(t)he Martin Luther King-Marcus



Garvey Square Cooperative Apartments were slated for the Fillmore District—the first in San Francisco to be built by Black construction workers." Johnson, however, decried the absence of Black-owned lumber companies involved in the

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Sub-Bid Requests

Proclamation

Whereas, Gerald W. Johnson, born January 28, 1925, in New Orleans, Louisiana, has championed legendary contributions to the San Francisco community through organizing and advocating for social justice and equal employment opportunities, particularly within labor union movements; and

Whereas, Gerald W. Johnson arrived in San Francisco in 1946 after serving with the United States Navy in North Africa during WWII, and alongside friends and allies, immediately formed the Civic Progressive Union to protest the dearth of Black workers within San Francisco's Theatre District, a movement that was later supported by the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and

Whereas, In 1969, Gerald W. Johnson started his own lumber company after discovering the absence of Black-owned lumber vendors in the construction of the Martin Luther King-Marcus Garvey Square Cooperative Apartments despite it being built in the historic Black community of the Fillmore District; and

Whereas, In 1984, Gerald W. Johnson, and his wife and business partner, Valerie Voorhies, co-founded the San Francisco-based Small Business Exchange (SBE) newspaper with the explicit purpose of empowering businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, disadvantaged and disabled entrepreneurs, with equitable economic opportunities; and

Whereas, In order to further the movement to integrate African Americans into trade unions during the 1970s, Gerald W. Johnson brought together communities of color, created the Asian Black Latino Enterprises (ABLE), and successfully negotiated an agreement to ensure that the city's minority groups secured work on at least 25% of San Francisco's public school seismic retrofit projects; and

Whereas, Gerald W. Johnson's steadfast organizing, fearless advocacy, and tireless work to empower small businesses and diverse communities is truly inspirational; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco, in recognition of and to honor his groundbreaking contributions and lifetime of accomplishments dedicated to advancing social and economic justice, do hereby declare January 28, 2025, as Gerald W. Johnson Day; and be it

Further Resolved, That the Board of Supervisors extends its highest commendation to Mr. Johnson on his centennial birthday celebration.

Roger Meehan
MBJ
John F. DeLeon

Gerald W. Johnson Day

Supervisor Connie Chan, District 1
 January 28, 2025

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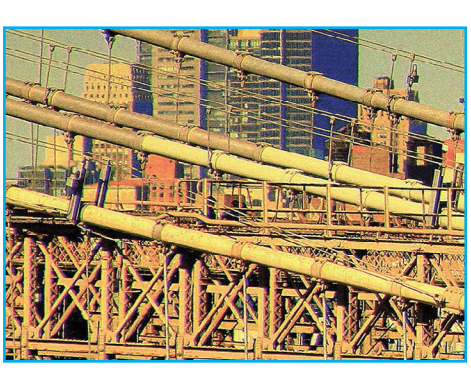


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IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY, AND CONNECTICUT DBE SUBCONTRACTORS AND VENDORS

Rehabilitation of Primary Settling Tanks and Ancillary Facilities at North River WRRF
 NYC DEP Contract No. NR-111
 Bid Date: February 13, 2025

Description of project:
 The scope of work at the North River WRRF includes the replacement of the eight PST sludge collection system mechanisms, rehabilitation of the PST interior concrete structures, and improvements to related PST systems, such as the influent channel motorized slide gates, the primary sludge pumps, scum collection and concentration system, and the grit suspension pumps. The scope also includes replacement of the two SCT collection mechanisms and rehabilitation of the SCT interior concrete structures.

Many bidding opportunities are available: CPM scheduling, progress photos, pest control, demolition, spall repair and crack repair, sawcutting, structural concrete, rebar supply and installation, survey, masonry, miscellaneous metals, roofing, doors, mechanical pumps and equipment, HVAC, hazardous material removals, piping, electrical, I&C, office cleaning, trailer rental.

If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator: Aislinn.Speranza@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

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IS CURRENTLY SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM QUALIFIED AND CERTIFIED DBE AND SDVOB SUBCONTRACTORS, VENDORS, SERVICE PROVIDERS

Midtown Bus Terminal Replacement Program Construction Services for the Staging and Storage Facility and Ramp Structure Project
 PANYNJ RFP No. 62272
 Bid Date: February 13, 2025

Brief description of work:
 The project's scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the preparation for construction and the construction of the SSF and associated ramp structure that serves the SSF, underground utility work and relocations, demolition of existing car and bus ramps, and construction of a new temporary ramping system to facilitate and maintain an uninterrupted operation at the existing main terminal. Once the project is completed, the SSF and ramp structure will serve as a temporary terminal for the duration of the existing PABT demolition and construction of the new main terminal. The Port Authority expects zero impacts to all existing operations, inclusive of all city street and tunnel traffic.

Invitation to Bid for DBE and SDVOB firms

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!

SKANSKA
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IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK STATE DBE SUBCONTRACTORS AND VENDORS

Design-Build Services for LIRR West Side Yard Flood Mitigation Measures
 MTA Construction and Development Contract No. 6401
 Bid Date: April 3, 2025

Description of project:
 Design, furnish, construct, and install concrete perimeter flood walls, seepage cut-off barriers below the concrete flood walls, flood gates, deployable flood barriers, sump pumps, a tide gate chamber, drainage system improvements, workable aisles and a diesel generator, an automatic transfer switch, ancillary electrical equipment, and required communications.

This project will develop flood protection solutions for the West Side Yard in order to prevent and mitigate flooding of the LIRR Tunnels. The flood protection along the WSY perimeter will be accomplished via a combination of permanent flood walls and deployable flood barriers.

Many bidding opportunities are available: deep foundations, minipiles, jetgrout, sheeting, rebar installation, concrete supply, site work, electrical work, painting, paving, curb and sidewalk, site utilities.

If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Diversity and Outreach Coordinator: Aislinn.Speranza@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

NORTHEAST EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

2025

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar
 Tuesday, February 18, 2025, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
 Online
 Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
 Contact: Patrice Dozier, patrice.dozier@sba.gov
 Fee: Free; registration required

SBA is creating a space for Woman-Owned Small Businesses, via WOSB certification! Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions include an overview of the self-certification process, and a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/woman-owned-small-business-wosb-certification-program-tickets-1123658967219>

8(a) Orientation and SAM Registration Webinar
 Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 10:30 am–12:00 pm
 Online
 Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
 Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
 Fee: Free; registration required

Join the Small Business Administration (SBA)

Illinois District Office for a virtual workshop providing an overview of the 8(a) Business Development program, eligibility requirements, and program benefits. Also learn how to increase your potential for federal contracting opportunities through System for Award Management (SAM) registration, including information that you need for the registration process. SBA presenters will offer additional tips, address FAQs, give directions on where to get further assistance, and answer your other questions. To register for this free webinar, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basics-of-sbas-8a-business-development-orientation-and-sam-registration-tickets-1030102924577>

Selling to the Federal Government Webinar
 Thursday, February 27, 2025, 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 online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-sell-to-the-federal-government-tickets-1013616774057> 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.