



PUBLIC BUILDING COMMISSION of Chicago

Board of Commissioners Meeting
12.13.22

CONSTRUCTIVE NEWS YOU CAN USE

IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from Carina | PBC New Commissioner | Contractor's Spotlight - Jackie Koo
PBC Forms New Partnerships | Phillips High School Grand Opening
Community Hiring Events | Hancock High School Industry Award



PBC Establish Partnership to Mentor and Grow Minority and Women Business Enterprises

The PBC and HIRE360 have partnered to increase minority and women job seekers participation on PBC's construction or renovation projects.

"HIRE360 was founded on the premise of increasing opportunity for communities that are rich in talent, but often lack the resources necessary to grow and thrive," Jay Rowell, Executive Director of HIRE360 said. "Our partnership with Government Agencies like the Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago Housing Authority, and now the PBC will allow us to further reach into those communities and provide underrepresented populations with an expansion of employment opportunities that will ultimately strengthen the communities as a whole."

The PBC and HIRE360 will have targeted information on their respective [websites](#) where contractors can enter position details and be connected directly with pre-screened qualified candidates. In addition, HIRE360 will assist career seekers with placement into trade unions and the necessary vocational training/resources to connect construction employers to a skilled talent pipeline.

"Our partnership with HIRE360 will strengthen the participation of underrepresented populations in the Chicago area," Carina E. Sanchez, PBC Executive Director said. "HIRE360 will help to provide ongoing

support for community residents in the construction industries through recruitment, training and placement assistance."

PBC contracts include goals and requirements intended to promote a diverse local workforce and business participation on projects. These provisions encourage competitive business opportunities for minority and women business enterprises in its delivery of construction and professional services, while supporting the use of minority and female journeyworkers, apprentices and laborers. HIRE360 will assist in bolstering participation for minorities and women job

6 CONSTRUCTIVE NEWS YOU CAN USE

PBC Joins Forces to Increase Minority and Women Participation in Construction Jobs

The PBC and the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) have joined forces to spur greater minority and female participation in construction jobs and vocational training in the City of Chicago and the greater Cook County area.

By working together, the PBC and The Partnership are assisting minority and female job candidates who have been traditionally underrepresented in the unionized skilled trades to contractors working on PBC's construction or renovation projects.

In addition, The Partnership will assist career seekers with placement into trade unions and connect them to vocational training/resources. This will also serve to connect construction employers to a skilled talent pipeline. All interested candidates can apply for these hiring opportunities by completing the following form [here](#).

"The Partnership works to promote workforce development in the construction sector, connecting ready-to-hire employers with qualified job seekers, many of whom have been historically underrepresented in the trades," Patrick Combs, Interim Partnership CEO said. This collaboration with the PBC allows us to further serve residents and employers in this growing sector, ripe with career opportunities."

The PBC is uniquely structured to plan, design, construct, and renovate public facilities for Cook County and City of Chicago, while The Partnership is the designated workforce development administrative agency for the same geographic areas. The Partnership has historically administered several construction trade initiatives that meet industry demand for training and apprenticeship programs with public agencies and private contractors.

"This ideal collaboration will afford The Partnership the opportunity to advance provisions included in PBC's procurement documents and construction contracts. The PBC and The Partnership will assist those seeking career opportunities and participation within the skilled building trades, including office and field management support," Carina E. Sanchez, PBC Executive Director said.

Sanchez went on to say, "Both organizations are aware of each other's great work in leveraging public and private resources to connect employers to a skilled talent pipeline. We look forward to working together."

CONSTRUCTIVE NEWS YOU CAN USE 7

A Message from Carina

I was honored to join Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and members of her cabinet to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month.

The Mayor's celebration was just a small sample of the vibrance that subsist in our city's Latino communities. Latinos have helped shape and strengthen the fabric of our communities, our cities and our nation. They have enriched the story of our country and play an important role in shaping our future.

Hispanic Heritage month offers us an opportunity to celebrate the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Mexico, Spain and Latin America.

As the proud daughter of Mexican immigrants and the first PBC Latina Executive Director, it has been my focus that the PBC provides favorable circumstances where small businesses, minority business enterprises and women business enterprises can gain valuable work experience that can make them more effective and sustainable.

By ensuring Latinos and other minorities have professional service and construction opportunities on PBC projects, we reaffirm that diversity is one of our city's greatest strengths. I believe that Chicago will reach its full potential when its diverse populations are represented at the business table and when every hardworking citizen with the drive and desire to succeed in their chosen occupation has a pathway to success.

Please enjoy this edition of Constructive News You Can Use.

Sincerely,

Carina E. Sánchez
PBC Executive Director



Change Innovator Joins PBC Board of Commissioners' Membership



As a leading innovative change maker in K-12 education and non-profit organizations, Myetie Hamilton was sworn in as a member of the Public Building Commission of Chicago's (PBC) Board of Commissioners.

Serving as the President of the Chicago Park District, Hamilton oversees one of the oldest and largest park districts in the United States. With her Board appointment, she becomes a part of a governing body that advises the PBC on the construction and renovation of municipal buildings, facilities and infrastructure in Chicago.

"Despite the world-wide pandemic dramatically creating new challenges that all Americans

must face, the PBC has remained committed to developing cutting edge environmentally responsible infrastructure so that all Chicagoans can receive necessary public services – safely and effectively," Hamilton said. "I am grateful for this appointment and look forward to continuing the important and excellent work of the PBC as they deliver valuable public amenities in a way that illustrates excellent stewardship of the public funds, all while affording every Chicagoan an opportunity to enjoy these facilities and the services they provide."

Hamilton is Senior Vice President and Executive Director of City Year Chicago where she leads the largest site of AmeriCorps Members across the national organization. Before joining City Year, Hamilton served most recently as Executive Director of EPIC Academy, a public charter high school on Chicago's southeast side where she led organizational strategy and vision, fundraising, external relations and board engagement.

Carina E. Sanchez, PBC Executive Director, welcomed Hamilton to the Board by saying, "We are honored that Ms. Hamilton has agreed to add her skills and expertise to serve on the PBC's Board of Commissioners and join the other business and civic leaders whose dedication to the city and its communities has led them to volunteer their time to shape Chicago's built environment and its future."



professional service providers. This project has achieved 32.39% MBE participation and 5.47% WBE participation.

Gabrielle Lewis, an 11-year union laborer and one of the dedicated workers on the project, lives only five minutes from the school. Lewis said that she loved the convenience of working so close to home and to her baby.

“It’s so easy for me to get to work. I never realized how much time is saved living so close to a project,” Lewis said. “However, even though I live close to work, I have to still be responsible and not hold the pillow too long in the morning.”

Lewis along with five other qualified community residents worked on the Phillips High School project. Lewis said that she felt welcome since day one of the construction and enjoyed the



opportunity of working with so many African Americans on a project in her community.

“Phillips is one of the best schools in our state for athletics and I was happy to be part of the team that helped to build them a space that adequately fits the needs of the students and staff,” Lewis said. “Not only do current students get a great gym but former students are featured in the school’s Hall of Fame.”

The PBC was responsible for the design and construction for Phillips and believes that this project will not only enhance the athletic experience of students and staff, but the community as well.



Behind the Build of Phillips High School

Recognized as the oldest African American high school in the City of Chicago, Phillips Academy High School has undergone selective interior renovations to the existing structure and received a new two-story 21,000-square foot athletic annex facility housing a gymnasium/multipurpose space and sports hall of fame.

Earlier this year, the PBC staff was honored to join Mayor Lightfoot, Alderman Pat Dowell, Illinois Senator Mattie Hunter, CPS and a host of Phillips’ alumni and community leaders to cut the ribbon for the official opening of the new facility.

The project achieved participation of more than 85% of minority journeymen and over 30% female apprentices. In addition, a total of more than \$8M has been paid to contractors and

Contractor Spotlight



Architecture is a Universal Language

Jackie Koo

Founding Principal of Koo Architecture

Jackie Koo has become known, in part, for her design of many award-winning hospitality, multifamily and public projects. She is the inaugural Chicago Women in Architecture 2022 Broken Glass recipient for her pivotal role in advancing the profession. She has been profiled in the 2021 Crain's Chicago Business for her design of the Wit Hotel and Sable Hotel on Navy Pier. In addition, Jackie has been recognized by the Chicago Tribune as a 2020 Chicagoan of the Year in Architecture for the revitalization of the Old Cook County Hospital and was appointed to Chicago's first Committee on Design. However, if you ask her what she wants to be recognized for, "Simply put," Koo says. "Creating a place for the next generation of architects."

"I want the firm [KOO] to continue beyond me. I want to ideally maintain a majority minority and women owned business after I'm gone because it's that type of legacy, that a business owner strives for," Koo said. "Simply put, creating a place for the next generation of architects. I feel that I have a

responsibility to try to build upon what we have created."

Founding Principal of KOO, Jackie initially chose to study architecture because it was related to her undergraduate degree of philosophy.

"During that time, architecture was a very theoretical field, and my initial thought was that I was going to become an architectural theorist," Koo said. "However, once I got a little taste of working on buildings and seeing them constructed in an office setting - I never looked back. I love it."

KOO, established in 2005, is now a mid-sized Chicago-based architecture, interior design and urban planning firm that includes close to 20 full-time employees. Koo's diverse practice is grounded in hospitality and the desire to create a specific identity for each project.

"I love the actual design of buildings and seeing them built, but the most rewarding thing is seeing people utilize the space that we helped to create. It's amazing," Koo says.

KOO has worked on several PBC led projects and has been placing an emphasis on increasing the representation for women and minorities at all levels of architecture.

"I think that [architecture] firm leaders have to understand the advantages of diversity and then they will make it a priority," Koo said. "The world is made up of a lot of different types of people, and a diverse staff can provide valuable insight into the users who will be inhabiting our buildings."

This drive to help the next generation of minority

The old adage is true - 'If you can't see it, you can't be it.'

or women architects get a foothold into the industry, has spurred Jackie to serve as a mentor for many employees in her firm.

"I love giving advice. I love giving women in the firm a lot of opportunity," Koo said. "Communication styles for women are not always the same. Encouraging expression and showing confidence in a young woman's capabilities goes a long way.

"The old adage is true - 'If you can't see it, you can't be it.' So, I try to be out there and be a role model. But it's tough. I'm always grappling with; how can I keep the business and the energy going for more than my generation. I think that I'm doing pretty well because I have such talented and capable young women of color in the office."

Jackie says that she continuously gives people in her firm opportunity and tries to expose them to all aspects of the field. "Making them the leads on projects and supporting them at the same time, in addition to encouraging them to take leadership roles outside of the office," Koo said. "I really want to show them what it means to take the next level from being a project architect or manager to being a leader because it not only benefits our firm but helps them further their careers."

In addition to mentoring, Jackie says that she is looking to institute change in the industry to further help minority or women led architecture firms prosper.

"Selection for architects is largely qualifications based. When you're just starting a firm, you don't have five libraries or six schools to qualify for these types of projects. It is a barrier to entry for many smaller minority and women led firms just starting out," Koo says. "In my mind architecture is only partly about your experience in a certain building type. Architecture is a universal language that goes across all building types.

"I would like to see the industry adapt its procurement standards on smaller projects. A firm that is just starting out, who may not have huge portfolio of a specific typology can do these projects," Koo said. "You don't need to have the experience on multiple projects of the same kind on every sized project. People have to start somewhere. Just give them a try. You may be surprised once people show you what they can do."



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*best wishes for the new year from the
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