



PRESS RELEASE

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The BIGGER DISCUSSION™ Kicks Off Supplier Diversity Panel Series in New Orleans

The inaugural BIGGER DISCUSSION™, conducted during the GATEWAY2012 Business Opportunity Conference & Expo, featured a stellar panel of industry experts who tackled challenging issues related to the Future of Supplier Diversity. The first in a series to be held across the country, the Bigger Discussion is designed to “always address the elephant in the room,” says Phala Mire, President of the Louisiana MSDC and host of GATEWAY2012. “We were thrilled to have the first event here in New Orleans and are looking forward to hearing similar discussions, with different panelists representing a diverse cross section of our industry, in other regions of the country.”

Mire introduced an esteemed panel of industry experts including Scott Vowels, President of the Northern California MSDC and moderator for the discussion. “I was pleasantly surprised by the candor of the panelists given the nature of the questions that were posed. Many of the questions I asked came from the live Twitter feed and the audience certainly did not hold back,” expressed Vowels. Joining Vowels was Louis Green, President of the Michigan MSDC; Donald Cravins, Director of the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship; Marquis Miller, Vice President of the National Minority Supplier Development Council; Reginald Layton, Director of Supplier Diversity for Johnson Controls; and Richard Huebner, President of the Houston MSDC.

BIGGER DISCUSSION™ co-founder and Director of the Louisiana MBDA Center, Alvin-o Williams hinted at “bigger” plans for the series, adding that these discussions are meant to address the hard issues in any industry and eventually will move beyond the topic of supplier diversity. “We want to encourage people everywhere, in all walks of life, to engage in honest dialogue about those important topics that we sweep under the rug every day. We want to have public conversations that ultimately change attitudes and behaviors.”

For more information on future events and to view the conversation visit www.thebiggerdiscussion.com

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The BIGGER DISCUSSION™ Photo Attachments:

Group Photo L to R: Scott Vowels, Louis Green, Donald Cravins, Marquis Miller, Reginald Layton, Richard Huebner

Stage Photo L to R: Scott Vowels, Louis Green, Donald Cravins, Marquis Miller, Reginald Layton, Richard Huebner