

ONE PERCENT PLUS HIGHLIGHTS

Together As One – We Can Be The Difference.

August 27, 2024

In this edition of **Highlights**, we are excited to feature Sophia Johnson, CEO of Alpha Business Images, who shared her perspective during the **View From the Top Discussion with Minority Business Owners at the ACCESS 2024 Luncheon**. Sophia shared her journey and insights on becoming a successful business owner.



Could you provide examples of innovative solutions or products that have emerged from collaborations with diverse suppliers?

In advertising, it's common for buying entities to separate their spend by race and ethnicity. Typically, there is a Hispanic agency for Hispanics and a Black agency for Black people, and majority agencies usually get the lion's share of the spend because it's assumed they can develop creative for everyone. Our agency breaks that mold by having a cross section of cultures, native languages, geographies, gender/identities and generations. We are intentionally diverse, so our buying entities can come to one shop to get authentic, impactful messaging to connect with their audience. We do the same with our partner suppliers, hiring across demographic segments to ensure our buying entities can attract the largest percentage of the market.

What role do mentorship and professional development opportunities play in fostering the growth and sustainability of diverse suppliers?

Our firm instituted a mentor/protégé program more than 10 years ago. Today that relationship is still flourishing and one of our mentee suppliers is now our top suppliers. While establishing the relationship, we didn't just coach her firm – she also taught us so much. In another instance, we have two sub-contractors that were hired for a specific scope of work (SOW) and we have watched the subs learn to lead projects that they weren't hired to do but learned on the job from us in a year or two. We are intentional about always exposing other diverse suppliers to more so that they can not only provide their expertise but learn from our team and expand their skill set. We believe there is much more work available, so every time we teach them more about our business – we are setting them up to get some of the fruit that we are all shaking from the tree. There's more work than there are MWBEs and we all need focus on learning to collectively increase market share.

What recommendations do you have for organizations seeking to overcome internal or external challenges in advancing supplier inclusion initiatives?

Get recommendations on the best suppliers for your organization from Council leadership and current MWBEs. The proximity of the Council and fellow MWBEs to other great suppliers means they know who is great for a particular product or service. You cut through a lot of cold conversations by getting a warm intro from the Council or a current supplier. Unfortunately, and fortunately, it's a small universe so the great suppliers know one another whether we've been in business a few years or for decades.

ABI is a full-service advertising and marketing firm headquartered in downtown Dallas with offices in Fort Worth and Atlanta. **They specialize in four industries – travel/transportation,**

healthcare, education and non-profits. This year they celebrated their 21st year in business working for some of the nation's most notable companies and organizations including DFW International Airport, Dallas EDC, North Texas Commission, Dallas County, Dallas College, and Tarrant Regional Water District. Working in partnership with their clients to win their audience, they integrate digital strategies, traditional media, experiential events and disruptive promotions to win and retain customers. Learn more about ABI at: <https://www.alphabusinessimages.com>

ABI looks to partner with businesses that are experts in marketing tools, from traditional to the most innovate, cutting edge ideas and if you're looking for a partner to help your business or clients with seriously increasing the size and loyalty of their customer base consider ABI.

To hear more from Sophia Johnson, follow her on [linkedin.com/sophiarjohnson](https://www.linkedin.com/sophiarjohnson).

One Percent Plus substantiates the broader rationale of the need for thriving diverse communities and workplaces. Together as one – we can be the difference. Share your voice and experience to inspire others, drive change, and advocate for inclusion! To learn more about the One Percent Plus Initiative, go to <https://dfwmsdc.com/onepercentplus/>.