

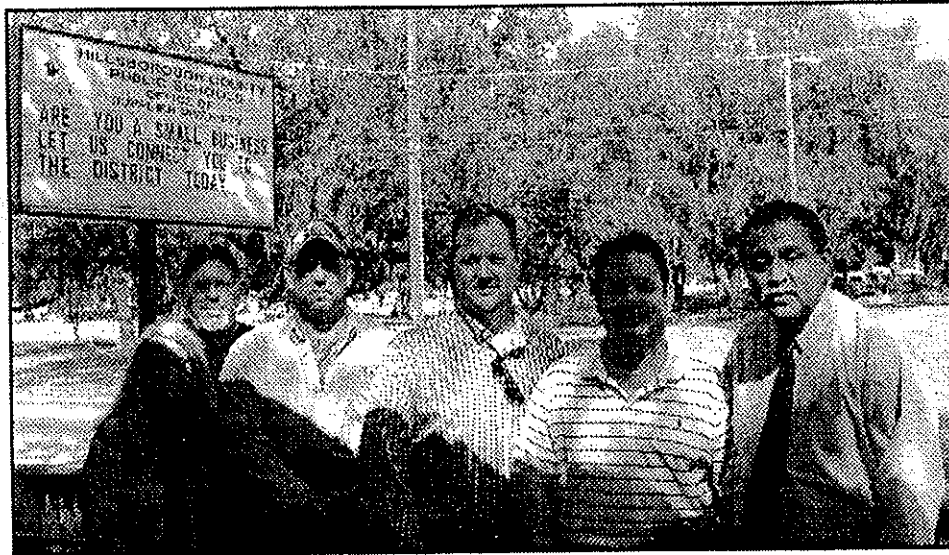
Halfacre Construction Helps Hillsborough School District Recruit Local Small Businesses

Officials with Halfacre Construction Co., a leading Florida-based commercial and industrial builder, recently recruited several small businesses to help the owners qualify for business-related projects awarded by Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS). The outreach was organized by the general contractor along with school district representatives to increase registration and participation in the district's Small Business Encouragement (SBE) program.

Halfacre President Jack Cox and Project Manager Tom Rees worked with Henry Ballard, HCPS Supplier Diversity Officer, and Bob Morrison, of Morrison & Associates, to organize the meeting and brief the businesses represented.

Ballard outlined the SBE program goals and objectives, defined the benefits it offers small businesses, and reviewed requirements for businesses to register and be considered for project bids and contracts.

As a registered vendor that vies for major renovation, construction and other building-related projects with



Henry J. Ballard Jr., far right, welcomes representatives of small businesses to the Office of Supplier Diversity. Photo provided by Office of Supplier Diversity.

the school district, Halfacre relies on subcontractors to help it win bids and successfully complete projects for the school district representing millions of dollars worth of work.

One of the criteria considered when awarding bids for construction projects – which can be worth from a few thousand to more than a million

dollars – is that the primary contractor help increase the number and type of small businesses available through the network.

“There is no better hidden secret than the benefits that this program delivers to the small business community,” said Ballard, Supplier Diversity Officer for the school district. “We

need to re-invest our taxpayer dollars back into the Tampa Bay community. And that is what this program set out to accomplish when it was developed.”

The following businesses participated in the workshop to learn more about the Small Business Encouragement Program, or to complete applications already in the works:

- Absolute Aluminum of Bradenton
- Big J Services of Wimauma
- Ed's Electric Company of Lutz
- Gator Communications of Apollo Beach
- Roesch Housemovers of Largo
- Thunder Bay Construction of Tampa
- T&S Enterprises of Plant City

Tom Rees, a project manager for Halfacre, characterized the need to continually expand and increase the small businesses participating in the program as a “win-win.”

For more information on the Office of Supplier Diversity please call Supplier Diversity Officer Henry Ballard at 813-635-1240 or Henry.Ballard@sdhc.k12.fl.us