



The Most Livable
City in America

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the City of Saint Paul's RiverCentre! We are thrilled that you have chosen this outstanding venue in Saint Paul to highlight the University of Minnesota's great work on equity in contracting. Please accept my heartfelt congratulations for all that you have accomplished, as well as my ongoing support for all of the critical work that still lies ahead.

You have chosen the perfect place to host this event, because here in Saint Paul we are also "Raising the Bar through Sustainable Strategies." Saint Paul has made equity in contracting our highest priority. We know that working together makes us stronger and that no effort by any single government office, community partner or business owner can make the improvements in equity that we all need.

Working with partners such as the University of Minnesota and other local governments, the City strives to include local small, woman-owned and minority-owned businesses in its contracting. The City of Saint Paul's Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Department (HREEO) is the lead agency for the Central CERT certification program, along with Hennepin and Ramsey Counties. The U of M Office for Business and Community Economic Development has been a long-time subscriber in this effort. It is collaborative efforts like this that are the sustainable strategies that raise the bar for our vendors. Thank you for your continued support.

With your help, the City's activities through HREEO and the CERT program have increased exponentially. We currently serve nearly 1,500 local small businesses with certification, resources and workshops to help them thrive and benefit from the local economy. However, our programs are not enough without more tangible resources. The work you are doing today creating a space for small, woman-owned and minority-owned businesses to network with primes, government agencies, University buyers and managers, and other small businesses is critical to meeting the needs of our community. We are honored to share in this critical work with you.

I hope you will be able to stop by the booth for HREEO today to meet some of the staff who work daily to bring greater opportunities to our local businesses.

Again, thank you for all that you do and for your support. Congratulations on a great event!

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Coleman

Mayor