



Monday, July 26, 2004

Diversity Trade Fair to premier at OU Aug. 11

By **Dawn Pauli**, contributing writer

OU is hosting its first-ever Diversity Trade Fair on Wednesday, Aug. 11, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Oakland Center Banquet Rooms.

At the fair, vendors representing minority and woman-owned companies as well as small businesses that provide supplies and services used by the education sector of the procurement community can meet with procurement representatives from universities, colleges, public and private K - 12 schools, hospitals, and city and county governments.

The trade fair was initiated after Judy Burton, buyer in the Purchasing and Risk Management Department, attended several Detroit-area procurement services' exhibitions and noticed they focused on the automotive industry.

"It always struck me that the trade fairs are geared to automotive industry, which makes sense in the Detroit area," said Burton, who envisioned a trade fair that focused on products and services used by learning institutions, hospitals and government agencies.

Burton brought her idea to Maria Ebner-Smith, purchasing manager, and Kate Lark, director of purchasing and risk management, and they encouraged her to create OU's Diversity Trade Fair.

"We're supporting the minority initiative for the university by helping promote minority and women-owned businesses" Burton said. "And it gives people the opportunity to see our beautiful campus and what we have to offer."

Fifty vendors will be at this year's trade fair, offering a range of services and supplies needed by educational institutes, such as cleaning companies, computer companies and travel.

"I would like to see this become an annual event and grow," Burton said. "It's a good way for vendors to meet people who are in the procurement side of it."

Admission to the trade fair is free. For more information or to RSVP, contact Burton at (248) 370-3172 or burton@oakland.edu.

SUMMARY

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Created by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Monday, July 26, 2004
Modified by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Monday, July 26, 2004
Article Start Date: Monday, July 26, 2004