



State of Illinois  
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation  
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

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## **Today's Challenge, Tomorrow's Reward: Creating Opportunity for Female- and Minority-Owned Businesses**

*Conference helps small firms grow through skill-building, networking*

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Illinois Department of Transportation will host Today's Challenge, Tomorrow's Reward on March 19 and 20 at the President Abraham Lincoln Springfield Hotel and Bank of Springfield Center. The two-day conference provides female- and minority-owned businesses with opportunities to make connections and develop skills to increase their competitiveness.

"Building a high-quality, diverse workforce strengthens the Illinois economy and promotes more competition on state projects," said Gov. Bruce Rauner. "Getting our small business owners the tools they need to succeed is a small investment that pays off for years to come."

The annual conference, presented by IDOT's Office of Business and Workforce Diversity, offers workshops, seminars on best practices, and networking opportunities for firms and contractors wanting to do business with the state through the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.

Topics covered will include: advanced financing, work category expansion, the Highway Construction Careers Training Program, erosion control, small businesses and tax plan changes, subcontractor payment tracking, changes to the supportive services program, labor agreements, marketing strategies and more. A special awards presentation will conclude the conference.

"The Illinois Department of Transportation is committed to making diversity a priority," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. "Today's Challenge, Tomorrow's Reward was designed to foster a more inclusive business environment by helping disadvantaged businesses grow through networking and skill-building sessions, enabling them to more effectively compete for state projects."

The event is well attended by subcontractors and prime contractors in construction, trucking, engineering and other consulting services. Click [here](#) for registration information and other event details.

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