

ZENA NEWS

Lead the Change You Want to See

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ZENA CONSULTING

Government is Big Business for Small Business



Zena Consulting
Founder / Owner

While people often associate Washington with a few huge and famous tech firms, small businesses comprise over 90% of our economy. Since state government's *Dept. of Enterprise Services* (DES) buys about 4 billion dollars worth of goods and services from entities of all sizes every year, it has a lot of power in the Northwest marketplace.

Small Business is Part of the DEI Equation

Inclusion and equity for small businesses in this environment yields greater diversity, which results in more resilient local or regional economies and healthier communities.

In 2018, I was asked to serve a 3-year term on DES' *Business Diversity Advisory Group, BDAG*, whose goal is to increase state spending with small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses.



*Shana Barehand and me
at my last BDAG meeting*

Communication Closes Gaps Between Buyers & Sellers

Changing large, system-based inequities is slow and complex. To be effective on the team I had to learn about the state's hierarchical buying process from a new perspective- that of agency employees.

DES leverages *BDAG's* input to shift organizational culture by providing training to buyers and creating more business-friendly procurement policies and procedures for owners like me. Due to the work of many, DES is now more aware of and committed to reducing challenges that are unique to small and diverse businesses.

I was thanked (*above*) by Shana Barehand and honored with a gift from [Camp Wa-Ya](#), a local indigenous culture and science outdoor school. Shana is the Business Diversity & Marketing Manager and lead of the *PIE (Procurement, Inclusion, and Equity) Program* at DES.

EVENTS



7/27

What Does DEI Mean to Us?

AMIBA was founded in 2001, to support locally-owned, 'indie' businesses, encourage local purchasing, and address competitive disadvantages smaller organizations often experience, due to policies and economic structures that favor large corporations.

It's been at the forefront of the national grassroots campaign to "*Buy Local*", and highlight the unique value of every community.

Having added DEI to it's mission, AMIBA has asked us to facilitate a conversation with leaders of the Local Economy movement on this vital yet complex topic. [Join AMIBA](#) to be part of this event, 10:00-11:00 am PDT.

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