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JOHN F. ROBINSON

President of NMBC, Inc.

THE DEAN OF MINORITY BUSINESS

Interviewed by

Thomas Crater Jr. Editor of the New York Page

THOMAS: This is Thomas Crater, Jr., publisher and editor of New York Page. I am here, I have the opportunity to meet with John Robinson, who IS one the Founder and current President of the National Minority Business Council, Inc. John I want to thank you very much for meeting with us this afternoon. How are you?

JOHN: Thank you, thank you. I am happy to meet with you and do this interview.

THOMAS: Well thank you very much. John Let's start from the beginning. When was the National Minority Business Council started?

JOHN: The National Minority Business Council was founded on December 12, 1972 by 12 individuals including myself and Fritz McLymont. Some of the founders have passed and some of them are scattered around the country. We were then all active minority business owners. I was a partner in a management consulting firm and Fritz McLymont ran a chemical distribution business. We also had other people who were really on the cutting edge of minority business development.

You must remember that 3 years prior to 1972 President M. Nixon signed the first Executive Order that got the government involved in minority business development by setting up an Office of Minority Business Enterprise; then the private sector followed suit and started to set up their own programs.

THOMAS: And one of the



things that I would like to know is What were some of the challenges that you had in the early years? Not just for you but for the National Minority Business Council?

In 1972 when we started one of the challenges we faced was that we all had careers while trying to keep the Business Council alive. So from 1972 to 1979 we

worked part-time at the Business Council but we wanted to have an organization with an Executive Director and a small staff. In 1979 we achieved that goal when the Pfizer Corporation gave us a small office in their facility on 42nd Street. I was then no longer with the consulting firm so the Board of Directors asked me to head the organization for a year. I agreed

to do that on a trial basis for one year because I was in my 30s and did not want to waste any time disrupting my career.

We are now in 2010 so, a one year commitment turned into a 37-38 year commitment.

THOMAS: John how helpful has the corporate business community been to the National Minority Business Council over the last 38 years. How have they helped you?

JOHN: Starting with the Pfizer Corporation as I previously mentioned the corporate community has been extremely supportive of our efforts; we have a Corporate Contributing membership category within the membership consisting of at least one dozen major corporations. However, our strength as an organization comes from the minority business community particularly those minority businesses who are members of the Business Council. We exist to serve them, we are accountable to them and the corporate community, like the Bank of New York Mellon, supplements our efforts on their behalf with financial and other resources.

THOMAS: What are the programs and services the National Minority Business Council offers its membership?

JOHN: We offer a host of services to our member companies which we can put into four categories. We offer: One, Procurement services to help our members acquire assets for and get contracts.

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JOHN F. ROBINSON, *President of NMBC, Inc.*

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Two, Education and Training programs via seminars and conferences. One of the programs we are currently offering is an Entrepreneurship Boot Camp. Three, Business Development services to help our companies structure their businesses for growth. Four, our most important service we believe is advocacy. Although we are a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization, we inform our membership on current economic and political trends that can impact their businesses.

THOMAS: We would like to know how have some of the success stories of the National Minority Business Council helped the membership over the last few years?

JOHN: Throughout the years we have taken pride in providing business opportunities for our members whether through purchasing exchanges with major corporations or whether by doing one-on-one where we ask member companies to contact Xyz Corporation because the corporation is seeking to do business with your type of company. We take a lot of pride in being the 'voice of minority businesses' for the last 38 years.

THOMAS: What have been the three most important accomplishments in your 38 years as head of the National Minority Business Council?

JOHN: One, during that period of time I have been most proud that we have helped Dartmouth College set up their Minority Business Executive Program. Two, that in 2004 the National Minority Business Council and the Minority Business News USA news magazine of Dallas, TX put together the Minority Business Hall of Fame and Museum to be heralded at Hampton University to document the historical contribution of minority businesses and the trailblazers of minority businesses; and three, that for the past 38 years we have been the first organization to talk about small minority businesses on a global basis. We set up an International Trade Committee in 1974 and we have been involved in international trade development ever since.

THOMAS: Who are some of your current Board Members?

JOHN: All of our board members are from our membership and many of them have been leaders in minority business development. Our current Chairman is Gregory

L. Reid and our Vice Chair, Benjamin E. Jones has headed different entities over the last 40 years. He brings a lot of business acumen to the organization. We do have a Corporate Advisory Board composed of representatives from BNY Mellon, Colgate-Palmolive, Citigroup, Citi Bank to name a few.

THOMAS: What has been your relationship with BNY Mellon?

JOHN: BNY Mellon has been a Corporate Contributing member since the early 90s.

THOMAS: Really, that long?

JOHN: Yes, that long and in 2007 BNY Mellon was kind enough to offer us office space at our current location at 120 Broadway. We work closely with Claire Scanlon, Head of their Vendors Development Program. We also offer programs to our members in cooperation with BNY Mellon. It is a beneficial relationship.

THOMAS: What has the National Minority Business Council meant to you during the last 38 years?

JOHN: Well, one of the people I admire very much, President Jack Kennedy said: It is important to contribute, to give back and to make a difference through our life. To make a contribution that is not necessarily measured by dollars". That has been my motto: "What can I give to my community?" I grew up in South Jamaica, Queens and am still a resident of Jamaica, Queens. My involvement with the National Minority Business Council over the last 38 years has given me what I call a quasi public service: To do good while being faced with both personal and business challenges.

THOMAS: I think you know that by now you are a legend. Why do you think you are the 'Dean of Minority Business'?

JOHN: I always say if you keep at what you are doing long enough you will become the dean because you would have outlived everyone else. I have outlasted everybody and I think I have made a significant contribution to minority business. I was among the first group that helped Governor Carey put together the first Executive Order of New York State to set up a Minority Business Office. In 84/85 I helped the State of New Jersey set up their Minority Business Program when Thomas Kean was

Governor. I helped set up the Minority Business Hall of Fame and Museum. I was a member of the first Advisory Committee for the City for Minority Business under Mayor Dinkins and then on the Advisory Committee under Mayor Bloomberg which led to the signing of the public law that estab-

lished a Minority Business Program for minorities for New York City.

So, yes, I am the Dean!

THOMAS: Thank you John for entertaining this interview this afternoon.

NMBC HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS 2010

- Founded in 1972 by 12 Active Minority Business owners in New York City.
- John F. Robinson & Fritz E. McLymont were part of the 12 original founders of the NMBC, Inc.
- The NMBC has been in business through 8 United States Presidential Administrations.
- The NMBC has 350 active M/WBE and Veteran-owned businesses across the United States.
- The NMBC has had an active Women's Business Committee for over 8 years. The WBC does an annual Women's Business Leadership Conference each year at the Bank of New York Mellon under the leadership of Ms. Claire P. Scanlon.
- The NMBC has an active Global Business Program for its members that provide business opportunities for them around the world.
- The NMBC has assisted hundreds of its members obtain contracts through purchasing exchanges, expos and other procurement events from the private and public sector over the years.
- The NMBC is one of the oldest organizations of its kind serving the business needs of minority and women owned and veteran-owned businesses in the United States of America.
- * The NMBC provides on going educational services, advocacy and business development programs for its members. One of the NMBC's newest educational programs is its Entrepreneurship Boot Camp Program done in cooperation with the Bank of New York Mellon, The Network Journal and the New York State Office of Minority Business.
- The NMBC has a host of corporate contributing members such as PepsiCo, AT&T, New York Power Authority, Bank of New York Mellon to name a few.



A U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION STRATEGIC PARTNER
FOUNDED 1972

NATIONAL MINORITY BUSINESS COUNCIL, INC., TO CELEBRATE ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY AWARDS LUNCHEON AND 38 YEARS OF HELPING TO GROW MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESSES

The Organization Will Introduce a New Award Category and Will Announce
Details of its Plan to Assist in the Reconstruction of Haiti

February 1, 2010 (NEW YORK) – The National Minority Business Council, Inc., will hold its 30th Annual Awards Luncheon on Thursday, February 25th, at the New York Marriott Marquis, located at 1535 Broadway, at 45th Street in Times Square, New York City. The event will honor major corporations and minority enterprises whose leadership and endeavors in the past year contributed to the small business sector as a whole as it coped with the economic recession in the country. The event will also celebrate the NMBC's 38th year of helping to grow minority businesses through education, training and advocacy.

"We're proud to honor such a distinguished group of entrepreneurs and corporations in our 30th anniversary luncheon year. The awards luncheon has been an annual tradition of the NMBC since we started the program in 1980, and over the years we have consistently honored the best of the best," said John F. Robinson, the NMBC's president and CEO. "We welcome our key sponsors this year — Bank of New York Mellon, Consolidated Edison and Nationalgrid — and extend our sincere gratitude to Kurt Woetzel, head of Bank Operations and Technology at Bank of New York Mellon and who has assumed the responsibilities of our good friend and new retiree, Donald Monks, for serving as keynote speaker."

Monks, who retired in December as vice chairman, will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award for his distinguished career at Bank of New York Mellon and for his long-term support of the NMBC. The

bank is a past chair and lead sponsor of the annual luncheon.

The Luncheon will also introduce the Dena Coye Outstanding Woman Entrepreneurship Award, in memory of Dena Coye, founder of Dena Coye Productions, who passed away in 2007. An early associate of the NMBC, Coye headed the organization's education training efforts in the 1980s and 1990s. "Dena gave her best to the NMBC. We regret her passing," Robinson said.

The Mistress of Ceremonies for the 30th Anniversary Luncheon is Renee Brown, president of the construction management firm, C.W. Brown, Inc. Brown is the immediate past chair of the NMBC's Women's Business Committee and currently serves as the secretary of the NMBC Board of Directors.

As in the past, the Luncheon will be preceded by a networking reception from 11:00 a.m. to noon. The entire program is scheduled to conclude at 2:00 p.m.

"In addition to recognizing our award recipients, the NMBC is proud to be celebrating 38 years of pioneering action in enhancing minority and women-owned businesses," said Gregory L. Reid, Esq., chairman of the NMBC's Board of Directors and a partner in the law firm, Reid Rodriguez and Rouse LLP. "As an example, last year the organization partnered with The Network Journal, a leading small business magazine, and Bank of New York Mellon to launch an Entrepreneurship Boot Camp series for new and early-stage entrepreneurs. The Boot Camps have been a tremen-

dous success and they will continue throughout 2010 and beyond."

The Entrepreneurship Boot Camp concept will be part of the NMBC's plan for assisting Haiti's reconstruction after the devastation of the January 12th earthquake, Robinson said.

"We believe that small, minority and women entrepreneurs must be factored into U.S. reconstruction assistance for Haiti. The NMBC will have a comprehensive plan to address the participation of this critically important sector in that assistance," he said. He added that details of the NMBC's plan will be announced at the Awards Luncheon in February.

This year's award recipients are:

Outstanding Corporate Supplier Diversity Award: Tishman Construction;

Outstanding Minority Business: Full Spectrum of New York; Integrated Packaging Corp.; World Pac Paper, LLC;

Dena Coye Outstanding Woman Entrepreneurship Award: Frank, Frank, Goldstein & Nager, P.C.; AIA New Dimensions in Marketing;

Outstanding Technology Firm: Diversant, Inc.; San Vista, Inc.;

Outstanding Education and Training Institution: Hampton University School of Business;

Outstanding Media Award: The New York Page;

Charles T. Haffey Community Service Award: Harlem Commonwealth Council, Inc. (HCC);

Special Achievement Award: Donald R. Monks, Retired Vice Chairman, Bank of New York Mellon;

Luncheon Chairman's Award: Kurt Woetzel, Head of Bank Operations and Technology, Bank of New York Mellon.

Claire P. Scanlon, Bank of New York Mellon's vice president of vendor development the Bank of New York Mellon and chair of the Luncheon's Corporate Advisory Committee, said, "My Committee colleagues — Jeannie Maddox of Colgate-Palmolive, Lloyd Mair of New York City School Construction Authority, Debra White of New York Power Authority and Chris Knox of PepsiCo — and I are privileged to combine our respective resources to ensure the success of this Awards Luncheon. We congratulate the honorees for their outstanding leadership and the NMBC for its 38 years of visionary work."

For further information about the 30th Annual Awards Luncheon and/or the Entrepreneurship Boot Camps, please call (212) 693-5050, e-mail info@nmbc.org, or visit the NMBC'S Web site at www.nmbc.org. National Minority Business Council, Inc. February 2010 Issue Business Report

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