



## MBE University Initiative

*Maryland is Open for Business!*

MBE University is a new initiative under the O'Malley-Brown Administration for small, minority and women-owned businesses. MBE University is designed as a "Road Show" conference that travels to each of the State's regions, and offers training and information on the tools necessary for successfully doing business with the State of Maryland as a minority or woman-owned business. MBE University was created in collaboration with the State's minority business coordinating agencies and the Governor's Office. Coordinating agencies include the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA), Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED), Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), Maryland Department of General Services (DGS), and the Governor's Grant's Office.

The first MBE University Conference was held in Prince George's County on December 1, 2009, the second was held in the Central Region (Baltimore) on May 7, 2010, and the third was held on May 21, 2010 in Southern Maryland (La Plata). Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown were joined by 300+ attendees for both Prince George's and Baltimore's conferences; and Lt. Governor Brown was joined by 150+ attendees for the La Plata conference. Also, several business owners and leaders participated in a minority business roundtable discussion with Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown to address challenges and opportunities of doing business in Maryland.

Conference highlights included workshops on how to do business with the State as a MBE, respond to bid solicitations, how to become certified or expand existing certification, upcoming bid opportunities, access to capital, MBE related laws, the importance of commercial insurance, partnering and teaming arrangements, niche marketing, public/private partnerships, and federal contracting. MBE University's private sector partners and sponsors for the conferences included **Pepco, Verizon, Wachovia, Constellation Energy, National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), Maryland Chamber of Commerce, College of Southern Maryland, and Small Business Development Center-Southern Region.**

For more information on the MBE University Initiative, contact Ms. Sharon Moore Jackson, Governor's Office of Minority Affairs, at 410-767-8232.