

Inaugural Small and Minority Business Expo Brings Arkansas Businesses to UAPB

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University of Arkansas Pine Bluff (UAPB) hosted its first Small and Minority Business Expo in May 2023 with plans to hold the opportunity annually each Spring. Hosted as a combined initiative from the UAPB Office of Procurement and The Facilities Department, the coordinators for the event were Mrs. Alisha Lewis, UAPB Procurement Interim Director, and Mr. Terrell Langley, UAPB Facilities Director, and their teams.

Carla Martin, UAPB Vice Chancellor – Finance and Administration, says, “I am proud of both campus leaders for spearheading such a historical event. The Expo has never been done on the UAPB campus for small and minority businesses.” Open to the public and with UAPB Faculty and Staff in attendance; participants heard department overview presentations from Alisha Lewis and Terrell Langley. Stephanie Pugh, UAPB Affairs Project/Program Specialist, shared how vendors can become licensed to use the University logos and names. Ms. JaQuita Steward, UAPB Purchasing Specialist, discussed PaymentWorks, a business identity platform. This platform automates vendor onboarding and strengthens controls for vendor and university information.

The overviews were designed to assist all participants in how to better engage with university departments and vendors. In addition, a vendor application table for potential vendor partnerships was on hand to encourage small businesses to engage with the university. “The event was great, very informative, and purposeful. I can see it getting bigger and better year after year!” said Richard Redus, UAPB Multimedia Specialist.

Karen Castle, Director of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise provided an overview of the mission and services available to businesses through the Arkansas Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Division (MWOBE). To promote networking and business exposure for business participants, the Expo allowed each participating vendor to share a three-minute elevator pitch, followed by time to visit each vendor’s table.

A special thanks to the businesses and agencies with offices in Hot Springs, Little Rock, North Little Rock, Jonesboro, and Pine Bluff who attended. A special thanks to the following businesses participating in the inaugural UAPB Small and Minority Business Expo. Here is a list of the companies and agencies participating in the inaugural UAPB Small and Minority Business Expo.

- All In One Properties, Inc. | www.allin1properties.com

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- Arkansas APEX Accelerator | <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/business-communities/Arkansas-APEX-Accelerator/>
- ART Advertising, Inc. | <https://www.artadvertising.com/>
- Certification Program Manager Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise | <https://www.arkansasedc.com/community-resources/Minority-and-Women-Owned-Business-Enterprise-Resources>
- Choice Promotion | www.choicepromousa.com
- Expand True Creations | tabitharobinson52@yahoo.com
- Healthwise Wellness Direct PPL | www.healthwisewellness.com
- Master Floor Cleaning | <https://www.masterfloorcleaninginc.com/>
- Nelson Intelligence Solutions LLC | www.nelsonintelligencesolutions.com
- Sanlor Technologies | <https://sanlortech.com/>