

MBA RECEIVES MEDA'S COMMUNITY PARTNER OF YEAR AWARD



At its 39th Annual Recognition Luncheon on June 11, the Metropolitan Economic Development Association (MEDA) presented its prestigious Community Partner of the Year Award to the Minnesota Ballpark Authority (MBA). It was only the third time in its history that MEDA has presented the award.

MEDA President and CEO Yvonne Cheung Ho said that MEDA does not select a community partner every year. MEDA only formally recognizes an organization when it truly stands out in showing great commitment and cooperative efforts to improve the health of the minority business community.

"The Minnesota Ballpark Authority saw the inclusion of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises as an integral part of the successful construction of Target Field," Cheung Ho said. "Its leadership invited MEDA into discussions very early on in the planning so that, through a services contract, MEDA could identify and recruit qualified woman and minority- owned businesses to bid on the project."

Cheung Ho also praised the MBA for its ongoing commitment to this important cause, placing the topic on the agenda of its board meetings during the entire construction process. "They truly walked the talk," Cheung Ho said.

Accepting the award on behalf of the MBA, Vice Chair Michael Vekich thanked MEDA for the honor and said the project team is very proud that it exceeded its Business Enterprise Goal of 30% – ultimately reaching 34%. In addition, Vekich said he wanted to share the Community Partner of the Year Award with the Minnesota Twins and Mortenson Construction, the ballpark's construction manager, for this successful team effort.

"We all wanted to build Target Field in a way that had a positive and lasting community economic impact," Vekich said. "We set aggressive workforce and Small, Women and Minority-owned business enterprise goals. Thank you to MEDA for helping us exceed our goals. Together we built a world-class ballpark and a stronger community."

MBA



MBA Vice Chair Michael Vekich speaks at the MEDA luncheon. Executive Director Dan Kenney also attended the luncheon where Vekich highlighted additional participation levels for the project:

- \$314 million dollars of work was procured with \$108M spent with qualifying firms.
- 130 different firms were awarded work, with 90% of them being local.
- 29 companies had multiple contracts, and 18 had prime contracts.
- 50% of the SWMBE firms were suppliers and 50% were subcontractors.
- Contract values have ranged from \$4,000 and \$6 million.

While the numbers are impressive, Vekich said ultimately it would be the quality of work that stands out.

When the ballpark canopy was topped-off in June of 2009, Vekich said the lead architect from Populous, the same person who led the design team for the new Yankee Stadium, remarked that Target Field was a model project in terms of safety and quality of construction.

“The men and women who designed and built Target Field should take great pride in what they have achieved,” Vekich said. “They have created an iconic new landmark in downtown Minneapolis for many generations to come.”

The previous times MEDA presented the Community Partner of the Year Award were in 2004, when it honored both the Latino Economic Development Association and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Minnesota, and in 2009, when it honored Associated General Contractors.

MEDA was founded in 1971 in response to economic inequities that were growing across the country and in Minnesota. The corporate executives who formed MEDA saw business ownership as a positive, long-term solution to help narrow the gap of racial economic disparity. Today MEDA provides assistance to about 500 businesses owned and managed by entrepreneurs of color every year.