

May 20, 2010

## Small Business Administration Approves Schneider Electric and Pojoaque Pueblo Services Corporation Mentor-Protégé Agreement

*Agreement spearheaded by Schneider Electric's Energy Solutions Group and Pojoaque Pueblo Services Corporation fosters a long-term and profitable business relationship*



After an application process that began in the third quarter of 2008, the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) District Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico has given official notification it has approved the Mentor-Protégé Agreement between Schneider Electric and Pojoaque Pueblo Services Corporation (PPS). The Mentor-Protégé relationship is the first of its kind for Schneider Electric.

As the largest buyer of goods and services in the world, the U.S. government strives to ensure all businesses have a fair chance to obtain federal contracts. Federal agencies are required to establish contracting goals, with at least 23 percent of all government contracts being "set aside" for small business concerns. Small business set-aside contracts enable small business concerns the maximum practicable opportunity to compete for contracts awarded by any federal agency.

In addition to the 23 percent set-aside goals, the government utilizes innovative strategies to ensure that all Americans share in the jobs and opportunities created by federal procurement. One such strategy is the implementation of mentorship programs. Mentor-protégé programs in the federal government help small businesses compete for prime contract and subcontract awards by partnering with large companies. Such relationships achieve a "win-win-win" objective for the mentor, the protégé and the federal agencies.

Federal agencies with mentor-protégé programs currently include (but are not limited to) the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, Department of Treasury, Department of Veterans Affairs, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Aviation Administration, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, SBA, U.S. General Services Administration, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force.

The SBA's Mentor-Protégé program enhances the capability of 8(a) participants to compete more successfully for federal government contracts. Named for a section of the Small Business Act, the SBA's 8(a) program is a business development initiative that helps socially and economically disadvantaged Americans gain access to economic opportunity.

Schneider Electric's protégé, a woman-owned, HUBZone certified, and Tribally owned 8(a)



enterprise, Pojoaque Pueblo Services Corporation is located in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Pojoaque Pueblo Services is the technical services division of a corporation owned by the Pueblo of Pojoaque, a Native American Tribe that has been in existence since the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The Pojoaque Pueblo are one of the most business oriented Indian tribes in existence and the tribe received the Honoring Nations 2000 award from Harvard University and the Ford Foundation for outstanding examples of governance among American Indian Nations.

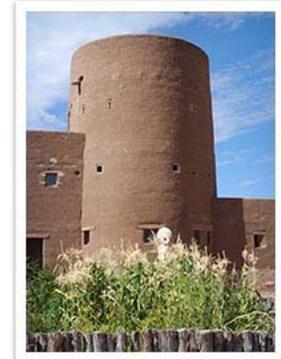
Pojoaque Federal Sales Manager Robert Harding explained the appeal of forming a mentor-protégé relationship with Schneider Electric, "Pojoaque Pueblo Service Corp. entered into a Mentor-Protégé Agreement with Schneider Electric because (1) under the NAVFAC [Naval Facilities Engineering Command] contract, Pojoaque has found Schneider to be a great company to partner with, (2) Schneider had the vision to recognize the potential of a mentor-protégé relationship and (3) Schneider is the market leader and a sought after vendor by the federal government."



"The SBA's Mentor-Protégé Program is intended to develop a productive, business-oriented relationship between Energy Solutions and Pojoaque Pueblo Services to help increase the number of federal government prime contracts and subcontracts awarded to Pojoaque Pueblo Services," explained said [Don Rickey](#), Vice President, Energy Solutions.

Mark Feasel, Director, Sales & Marketing, Energy Solutions offers additional insight into the benefits of the mentor-protégé relationship, "Our partner [PPS] gains access to the institutional knowledge and business systems of a fortune 500 company. They learn best practices to help them avoid costly mistakes and improve the quality of their work. The utilization of common systems and approaches reduces the management efforts required by Schneider Electric and will allow us to scale more quickly and efficiently."

"I am very excited about this new partnership and proud to have been a member of the team that participated in the successful application process to the program. The innovation and enterprising spirit that small businesses bring is crucial to strengthening and increasing flexibility within the federal government and will better position Schneider Electric as the global energy management solutions leader committed to meeting the diverse needs and objectives of the federal government," said [Shauna Baird](#), CPP, MSACM, Contract/Subcontracts Administrator and the Mentor-Protégé Program Administrator, Schneider Electric.



[Tom Scheidt](#), Director of State and Local Taxes, was also instrumental to Schneider Electric's selection for the Mentor-Protégé Program. "We experienced a lengthy and intensive process accommodating the massive requests for tax and financial information from the federal government," continued Shauna. "Tom definitely went above and beyond to ensure Schneider Electric's application was victorious."