

# NEWS RELEASE PORT OF PORTLAND Box 3529 Portland OR 97208 503.415.6000

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## **Grow your small business with expert advice from industry leaders and Port of Portland**

Are you a certified small business and want to take your business to the next level?

The Port of Portland's nationally recognized Mentor-Protégé Program is looking for you. The Port is now accepting applications for the next protégé cohort.

The program exists to build effective working relationships between leaders of mature, established companies and emerging minority and women-owned companies in order for the latter to benefit from the knowledge and experience of the established firms. The program matches motivated small businesses with industry leaders to collaborate, advise and develop a roadmap for growth for the small business.

Once accepted into the program, each protégé firm is paired with two industry specific mentors. The mentor-protégé team works together in monthly meetings addressing the specific needs of the protégé firm. Mentors assist protégés in developing business plans, marketing strategies, understanding financial statements, and identifying and implementing other action items needed to meet the protégé company goals.

"Our Mentor-Protégé Program reflects our commitment to ensuring small businesses have the education, tools and resources they need to not only survive, but thrive in a competitive marketplace," said Kimberly Mitchell-Phillips, Port small business development program manager.

"Being a part of the Port of Portland's Mentor Protégé program has been extremely valuable to our company and my family," said Eric Ufer, owner of Pest Solutions. "They provide us with the essential resources and force us to examine and resolve the challenges we have with our business. They bring relationships and perspectives and the ability to have candid, confidential, conversations that as a small business is greatly appreciated."

The Port is seeking about 15 protégé companies for the program that has assisted 121 firms since launching in 1995. Due to current construction industry needs, firms are especially encouraged to apply if they specialize in landscaping, plumbing, surveying, excavation, drywall, roofing, painting, striping, electrical work, sawcutting or boring.

Firms interested in participating must be certified as a small business by the State of Oregon Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity; be current in all taxes and licenses, and be in business for at least two years. Applications must be received by the Port no later than Jan. 2, 2017.

For more information about the program and to apply, visit [www2.portofportland.com/smallbiz](http://www2.portofportland.com/smallbiz).

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