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MARQUEE Earns Dual SBA Certifications

Recognized as Women-Owned Small Business and Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned Small Business

Youngstown, OH – October 1, 2024 – MARQUEE Creatives LLC is proud to announce its earned certifications as both an [SBA-Certified Women-Owned Small Business](#) (WOSB) and an [Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned Small Business](#) (EDWOSB). This prestigious achievement marks the culmination of a 556-day effort, from the initial application submission to the final acceptance, solidifying the full-service marketing firm's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and business excellence.



These new certifications are in addition to the [Ohio Women Business Enterprise \(WBE\)](#) state-level certification MARQUEE earned in March 2022. With these three business certifications, the agency can compete for contracts with U.S.-based corporations and government-owned entities at national and state levels. **The federal government aims to annually award at least five percent of all contracting dollars to women-owned small businesses.**

"We are thrilled to have earned these certifications after such a lengthy and complex application process," said President Aundrea Cika Heschmeyer. "This milestone positions our team to expand our presence in federal and state contracting, and it is a testament to our commitment to delivering quality services and contributing to economic development."



MARQUEE is a client of the [Ohio APEX Accelerator at Youngstown State University](#), and Heschmeyer credits the agency's success in securing these certifications to the guidance and persistence of that relationship. "[Director Scot Loveland](#) and the APEX

Accelerator have been instrumental in helping us navigate the complex federal and state certification processes. Their support has been invaluable in achieving this goal," she said.

Located in YSU's Williamson College of Business Administration, the APEX Accelerator supports Trumbull, Mahoning, and Columbiana companies navigating government contracting. Part of a national program overseen by the U.S. Department of Defense, APEX staff offers clients personalized training and guidance on certifications, bid-matching contract opportunities, bid preparation, and the government supply chain—all at no cost to Ohio businesses.

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About the WOSB and EDWOSB Certifications

The WOSB Federal Contract Program was initiated in February 2011 by the SBA to increase opportunities for women-owned businesses in federal contracting. The program enables certified businesses like MARQUEE to compete for federal contracts in industries where women-owned small businesses are underrepresented. Additionally, EDWOSBs can vie for contracts set aside specifically for economically disadvantaged women-owned businesses in certain sectors. These certifications provide numerous benefits, including:

- **Eligibility for Federal Contracts:** Access to set-aside contracts, which help level the playing field for women-owned businesses.
- **Increased Visibility:** Greater visibility with potential customers in both public and private sectors.
- **Access to Training & Education:** Specialized programs to enhance business development and capabilities.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Enhanced connections with other certified businesses, government agencies, and corporations.
- **Mentorship:** Participation in the SBA's Mentor-Protégé Program provides valuable guidance from established businesses.
- **Capital & Support Networks:** Access to capital support and an extensive network of business resources, including training and mentorship.

Why SBA Certification Matters

Becoming SBA-certified offers businesses like MARQUEE a competitive edge. With access to federal contracts, business development assistance, and networking opportunities, certified companies are better equipped to grow, sustain operations, and thrive—even in challenging economic times. The firm is now poised to take full advantage of these opportunities as it continues to expand its reach.

Ohio WBE Certification

In addition to the federal SBA certifications, MARQUEE achieved Ohio Women Business Enterprise (WBE) certification in March 2022. The State of Ohio established the WBE program to foster the development of women-owned businesses and increase their participation in the marketplace. This certification further strengthens the firm's ability to compete for contracts at the state level and contribute to the local economy.

About MARQUEE Creatives LLC

Founded in 2005 in Youngstown, MARQUEE is a full-service experiential marketing agency specializing in strategic marketing and inspired events for clients who are passionate about their mission and goals. With a focus on creating impactful and immersive brand experiences, MARQUEE helps clients build stronger connections with their audiences. The firm has been recognized for its innovative approach, commitment to excellence, and commitment to fostering diversity and excellence in the marketing industry. For more information about MARQUEE Creatives LLC and its services, please visit www.marqueecreatives.com.

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