



NATIONAL
MINORITY SUPPLIER
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL, INC.

NMSDC SALUTES THREE BUSINESS EXECUTIVES FOR LONG-TERM ACHIEVEMENT IN MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

David B. Dillon, Alex López Negrete and Kenneth M. Ricketts Feted at New York Awards Dinner



Pictured, left to right: NMSDC Vice Chairman Richard A. Hughes; honoree Alex López Negrete, president and CEO of López Negrete Communications; NMSDC President Harriet R. Michel; Earvin Johnson, who served as master of ceremonies; Lynn Marmer, group vice president of corporate affairs for The Kroger Company, who accepted the corporate award on behalf of honoree David B. Dillon, the company's chairman and CEO; honoree Kenneth "Mike" Ricketts, president and CEO of Quality Packaging Specialists International; and Honorary Dinner-Dance Chairman Gerald J. Parsons, chairman and CEO of Communications Test Design, Inc.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, May 14, 2009 — The National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC), one of the nation's foremost corporate membership organizations, honored David B. Dillon, chairman and chief executive officer of The Kroger Company; Alex López Negrete, president and chief executive officer of López Negrete Communications; and Kenneth M. Ricketts, president and chief executive officer of Quality Packaging Specialists International, at its annual Leadership Awards Dinner-Dance on Wednesday, May 13th. The black-tie event was held at the Hilton New York and Towers in New York City.

"These three business leaders have a legacy of unparalleled commitment to minority business development," said NMSDC President Harriet R. Michel. "We are proud to celebrate their long-term accomplishments and continued efforts to provide opportunities for all Americans to fully participate in our nation's economy."

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More than 1,250 guests attended the event, including CEOs and executives of Fortune 500 corporations and minority business owners from across the nation.

David B. Dillon is chairman and chief executive officer of The Kroger Company. Its 2008 sales were \$76 billion. The company, which has 323,000 employees, celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2008. While Kroger has diversified through acquisitions – adding jewelry and general merchandise to its mix – food stores still account for most of its sales. Kroger operates 3,660 stores, including nearly 2,485 supermarkets and multi-department stores, under two dozen banners in about 30 states. The company has had a supplier diversity process and has been a national corporate member of NMSDC for more than 25 years. In 2008, Kroger increased its diversity spend by 5%, purchasing \$746 million in products and services from 507 Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American businesses. All totaled, the company achieved over \$1 billion in expenditures with minority- and women-owned business enterprises for the third consecutive year. Kroger also encourages its major suppliers to increase their supplier diversity opportunities. In 2007, Kroger reported \$190.6 million through Second Tier spend. In 2006, the company reached its goal of spending more than \$1 billion annually with minority- and women-owned businesses and was inducted into the Billion Dollar Roundtable.

Alex López Negrete is president and chief executive officer of López Negrete Communications. He founded the Houston-based advertising and communications agency with his wife and partner, Cathy, with a guiding conviction: that the Hispanic market is a viable and powerful consumer segment and that thoughtful, relevant, fully integrated, in-language and in-culture communications are the best way to reach this important market. His approach has produced results. The agency has more than 160 employees, and had \$165 million in billings in 2008. Mr. López Negrete credits the success of the agency to the fact that it comprises a team of multicultural, multinational, bilingual and bicultural communications professionals. Last year, the agency utilized 45 other minority firms. Mr. López Negrete is intricately involved in providing strategic counsel and creative direction to all of the agency's clients, which include Bank of America, Microsoft, NBC Universal Pictures Group, Reliant Energy, Shell Oil Products U.S., Tyson Foods, Visa U.S.A. and Wal-Mart Stores. The company is an NMSDC Corporate Plus[®] member.

Kenneth M. Ricketts is the president and chief executive officer of Quality Packaging Specialists International, a packaging company based in Burlington Township, New Jersey. He describes the company as a “supply chain solution provider.” The company had sales of \$139 million in 2008. Their customers for marketing, packaging and fulfillment services include top consumer brands such as Johnson & Johnson, Procter & Gamble and Wal-Mart. Quality Packaging has 993 employees, of which 918 are minorities. The company spent more than \$1 million with other minority businesses in 2008. Quality Packaging is an NMSDC Corporate Plus[®] member. Mr. Ricketts serves on the boards of the Procter & Gamble Advisory Council and the Philadelphia Drug Exchange, the oldest active trade organization in America. Additionally, he participates with the National Minority Manufacturing Institute which is dedicated to increasing the number of minority manufacturers in the U.S.

Gerald J. Parsons, chairman and chief executive officer of Communications Test Design, Inc., served as Honorary Chairman for the gala event. More than 170 chairmen of America's top corporations including AT&T, Allstate, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Chevron, Chrysler, Coca-Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, Eastman

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Kodak, Ford, Hilton, Johnson & Johnson, Marriott, Nestlé, Pfizer, Procter & Gamble, Raytheon, and Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing serve on the Honorary Dinner-Dance Committee.

Earvin “Magic” Johnson, chairman and chief executive officer of Magic Johnson Enterprises, served as master of ceremonies for the evening.

About NMSDC

Providing a direct link between corporate America and minority-owned businesses is the primary objective of the National Minority Supplier Development Council, one of the country’s leading business membership organizations. It was chartered in 1972 to provide increased procurement and business opportunities for minority businesses of all sizes.

The NMSDC Network includes a national office in New York and 38 Regional Councils across the country. There are 3,500 corporate members throughout the network, including America’s top publicly-owned, privately-owned and foreign-owned companies as well as universities, hospitals and other buying institutions. The Regional Councils certify and match more than 15,000 minority-owned businesses with member corporations that want to purchase their goods and services.

For more information about NMSDC, call (212) 944-2430 or visit the Web site at www.nmsdc.org.

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