



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

For Immediate Release

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**MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO AND GREATER  
ROCHESTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CELEBRATE  
INAUGURAL CLASS OF LOCALLY-CERTIFIED  
MINORITY/WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES**

*Nearly 200 MWBEs honored during breakfast event at the Rochester Riverside  
Convention Center*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello, along with the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce today honored the inaugural class of Minority/Women-Owned Businesses certified through the county's local MWBE Certification program. The program, a recommendation of the Commission on Racial and Structural Equity (RASE Commission), began on January 1, 2022 as a way to reduce the bureaucracy necessary to bid on local city and county contracts. One hundred and ninety-four MWBEs were certified in 2022.

"As our community continues to recover, we want to Bring Monroe Back better than it was before. That means ensuring all our businesses have the opportunity to successfully and equitably compete," **said Monroe County Executive Adam Bello**. "Our new MWBE certification program creates a clear pathway to economic competitiveness and greater access to locally-funded contracts and county procurement. These businesses employ our neighbors and friends, build generational wealth and positively impact quality of life. I congratulate all of the MWBEs who have achieved certification through the county's new program, and look forward to their continued success."

"Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce is delighted to support the local businesses that have registered as Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprises in 2022. With a complimentary year of Greater Rochester Chamber membership, these organizations and their teams will have access to a wide range of services, resources, and connectivity to help them thrive," **said Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Bob Duffy**. "By celebrating and nurturing these businesses, we help to create a more equitable, inclusive economy that provides opportunities and a great way of life for all. We encourage our members and community to get to know and patronize this talented group for all they have to offer in the months and years to come."

The MWBE certification program is administered through the county's Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The program can certify a MWBE in days — not months — and makes

certification easier to access for newer businesses. Organizations certified into the program can participate as prime and subcontractors on locally-funded contracts.

Under the 2022 Monroe County Shared Services Plan, Rochester and other participating municipalities are able to accept the county’s MWBE certification, rather than develop their own programs to ensure they meet utilization goals set by each municipality’s legislative body.

The county’s certification program works in parallel with County Executive Bello’s focus on giving minority and women-owned businesses greater access to county contracts. Under Gantt’s Law for Utilization of Minority and Women-Owned Businesses, the county set utilization goals for most county contracts at 12% for Minority Business Enterprises and 3% for Women-owned Business Enterprises. Additionally, the MWBE Utilization Program is no longer limited to its traditional focus on construction contracts and now includes professional and nonprofessional services, greatly expanding the areas where MWBEs can participate in county procurement.

More information — including a list of all county certified MWBEs — and applications for the MWBE certification program are available at [monroecounty.gov/dei-mwbe](http://monroecounty.gov/dei-mwbe). DEI and the Monroe County Economic Development Division provide businesses with technical assistance including an annual training forum focused on the MWBE community. The 2023 forum will be scheduled in coming weeks.

The Commission on Racial and Structural Equity (RASE) was appointed in August 2020 by County Executive Bello in partnership with the City of Rochester. The charge of the commission was to review local city and county laws, policies and ordinances to identify areas of structural inequity and recommend ways to change those laws to achieve fair application for all citizens. For details, visit: [rocrase.com](http://rocrase.com).

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