



Office of Civil Rights

Sacrifice and Synergy

In conjunction with October being Disability Employment Awareness Month, Caltrans is spotlighting Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Synergy Traffic Control, Inc. to showcase Caltrans' contractors' diversity.

The core values of the [United States \(U.S.\) Navy](#) are honor, courage, and commitment. Those values also serve small, disabled-veteran-owned businesses.

In 1992, when Kenny Jones finished his third year of service in the U.S. Navy, he started working for Toomey Industries, where he learned everything about traffic control safety from the ground up.



Highway construction workers have one of the [most dangerous](#) jobs in America, making traffic control a critical – but still dangerous component of highway construction.

In January 2008, Jones founded [Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Synergy Traffic Control, Inc.](#)

The Navy veteran exemplifies honor by being fair and truthful; courage by fulfilling a traffic safety need – although dangerous; and commitment, by putting in the hours needed to start up a small business.

“When I first started, I used to stay up until 3 a.m. sending out [capability statement] faxes to prime contractors,” Jones said. “I would work in the field all day, shower, and go back out to help my three employees. I didn’t have much credit, and I appreciated my employees who sacrificed alongside me.”

Jones, who is an African American, hires all ethnicities. He said he worked hard to give his kids, now 28, 20, and 18, a future. His wife, oldest child, cousin, and cousin’s husband all work at Synergy now.

He said the biggest help to starting his business was the [United Contractors \(UCON\)](#), [Associated General Contractors \(AGC\)](#), [Laborers International Union \(LiUNA\)](#), the [American Public Works Associations](#), and Caltrans contractor [outreach events](#).

“We like to stay abreast of changes within Caltrans or in the industry,” Jones said. “Caltrans and the associations are up to date on the latest topics and help with networking.”

He said his business is awarded 10 out of every 20 projects he bids on. He recommends that new businesses find their niche by thinking outside the box, offer services other companies don’t want to do, be persistent, and build relationships with project managers, estimators, and business owners.

It’s been a journey,” Jones said. “Now we have quite a few jobs, one with Skanska on State Route 57, one with Security Paving [Company, Inc.] in Bakersfield, and one at Big Bear with VSS International. I have a good crew in the field and a good crew in the office. It is fulfilling knowing we provide safety for the public and allow contractors to get home to their families every night.”



Visit Caltrans’ Civil Rights program webpage to get certified as a [Disadvantaged Business Enterprise](#), or visit the Department of General Services [Cal eProcure](#) website for information on [Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise or Small Business Certification](#).