

Obama Foundation Announces Lakeside Alliance as Construction Manager for Obama Presidential Center

By **crusader** - January 5, 2018

Recently, the Obama Foundation announced that it has selected Lakeside Alliance to serve as the construction manager for the Obama Presidential Center. Lakeside Alliance is a newly created joint venture consisting of Turner Construction Company, and the Presidential Partners consortium of Powers & Sons Construction, UJAMAA Construction, Brown & Momen, and Safeway Construction. Powers & Sons, UJAMAA, Brown & Momen and Safeway represent some of the most established and well-respected African-American owned construction firms in Chicago.

The creation of the joint venture will ensure that minority firms from the South Side will be in significant leadership positions in the construction of the Obama Presidential Center. Not only will the Presidential Partners have 51% of the overall financial equity of the contract, key roles in the day-to-day decision making and strategy-setting will be performed by people of color and women.

Smaller firms are often precluded from winning large-scale construction projects because they lack the necessary resources or experience with similarly-sized projects; the joint venture structure is designed to solve for that problem by creating a consortium that includes minority firms working in partnership with a national firm. This structure goes beyond a typical arrangement where a national firm receives the majority of a contract and an MBE/WBE receives a smaller share. The Obama Foundation anticipates that participation by the minority firms will provide the experience they need to grow and compete for other significant projects in the future.

Some of the major projects that members of Lakeside Alliance have completed include the Modern Wing and Nichols Bridgeway at the Art Institute of Chicago, the University of Chicago Reva & David Logan Center for the Arts, and the University of Chicago Booth School of Business Charles M. Harper Center. Members of Lakeside Alliance have also completed multiple other projects at the University of Chicago and with such institutions as the University of Illinois at Chicago, City Colleges of Chicago, the Illinois Institute of Technology and Purdue University. In addition, members of Lakeside Alliance provided more than \$600,000 in philanthropic giving to causes in Chicago in 2016, including community development, education, and others.

“The Obama Foundation believes in creating opportunities for diverse and local businesses and building pathways to meaningful jobs for minorities and other underrepresented populations,” said **David Simas, CEO of the Obama Foundation**. “The development of the Obama Presidential Center gives us an opportunity to make a major, unprecedented impact on the South Side in terms of hiring talented, local businesses and individuals. We look forward to working with Lakeside Alliance to achieve our goals, set new benchmarks and make the Obama Presidential Center a landmark that our neighbors can be proud of.”

The members of Lakeside Alliance have demonstrated a deep, longstanding commitment to increasing diversity and inclusion in the Chicago construction industry. For the Obama Presidential Center, they are committed to exceeding industry standards and surpassing their own milestones by awarding as much as half of the expected \$300 million + of subcontracts on the project to diverse suppliers, and to ensuring that a significant percentage of the total project work hours are performed by minorities and residents from the project’s neighboring communities. The contract Lakeside Alliance signed with the Obama Foundation includes financial incentives for exceeding these ambitious goals and penalties for falling short of the goals set.

“We received compelling proposals from incredibly talented teams, and we deeply appreciate the efforts of everyone who participated in this process,”

said **Roark Frankel, Director of Planning and Construction for the Obama Foundation**. “Lakeside Alliance stood out, first, because they’re excellent builders. But what impressed us most was their passionate and thoughtful commitment to infuse diversity and inclusion into every aspect of this project, at levels far beyond what has been done in Chicago for projects of this size and complexity. These values are at the heart of what the Obama Foundation wants to accomplish in all its work and initiatives, including constructing the Obama Presidential Center. One of the reasons we made this decision almost a year before we hope to begin construction is that we are eager to begin partnering with Lakeside Alliance to start the hard work of making sure that the local community and businesses are very much a part of this project and process.”

“We are honored to help construct the Obama Presidential Center, which promises to be an iconic institution that will attract visitors from the South Side and around the world,” said **Mamon Powers of Lakeside Alliance**. “If it weren’t for the Obama Foundation embracing this unique joint venture and making local hiring a priority, diverse firms like ours would not get the chance to have a seat at the table and play a meaningful role in the process. We applaud the Obama Foundation for their vision and look forward to working with them to increase diverse participation in the construction industry.”

About Lakeside Alliance (Turner Construction Company/Powers & Sons Construction/UJAMAA Construction Inc./Brown & Momen Inc./Safeway Construction Company, Inc.)

One of the nation’s largest construction managers, **Turner Construction Company** has been working in and around Chicago since 1924. The firm employs 215 people in Illinois and manages approximately \$500M worth of local construction activity annually. Turner is consistently recognized as the leading “green” builder in the United States.

Powers & Sons Construction Company just celebrated its 50th year in business and has grown over that time to become one of the most-recognized

African-American owned general contracting, construction management and design-builders in the region. The firm has more than 70 professionals and fully-staffed offices on the South Side of Chicago, as well as in Gary, IN and Indianapolis, IN. In 2016, the company managed more than \$200 million in construction projects.

Founded in 2002 by owner and architect Jimmy Akintonde and based on the South Side down the street from the future site of the Obama Presidential Center, **Ujamaa Construction Inc.** (UJAMAA) has consistently built its portfolio with successful projects and satisfied clients. Under Akintonde's leadership, the UJAMAA team is equipped with decades of combined general construction experience from the most premier construction companies in the Midwest. In 2016, UJAMAA completed over \$42 million in local construction projects.

Brown & Momen, Inc. is a professional, South Side-based corporation established in 1988 providing comprehensive services in general contracting, construction management, owner's representation, and carpentry. Brown & Momen has worked on several notable Chicago-based projects, including museums, apartment complexes and schools.

Safeway Construction Company, Inc. has provided quality and affordable construction services for over 30 years. Based on the West Side of Chicago, their team offers a unique combination of Chicago construction experience, minority & women outreach, relevant project experience, along with well-established construction best practices.