



WINTER 2014

U.S. VETERANS

M

I N E

Pro

ment Opportunities



SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

EQUAL ACCESS FOR ALL

CELEBRATING MILITARY WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

CREATING A FUTURE FOR OUR SERVICE DISABLED VETERANS

FROM COMBAT TO COLLEGE

VET BUSINESS OWNER SUCCESS STORIES

STEM CAREER BIOMEDICAL ENGINEER

MICHELLE OBAMA

SALUTING WOMEN WARRIORS



MARK ELLSON, PRESIDENT, JEMNI INC.

CREATING A FUTURE FOR DISABLED VETERANS

Mark Ellson is the president of JEMNI Inc., a value-added reseller (VAR) packaging solution provider and a service-disabled veteran-owned business (SDVOB), with customers throughout the United States. Just like any other successful company president, Ellson's values are reflected in how he runs his business. In fact, his business tagline is, "creating a future for disabled veterans."

Ellson explains, "I have a passion for helping veterans and have committed to developing and launching a website that will allow veterans to evaluate/comment on any nonprofit services they received."

His Own Boss

Following his military service, Ellson returned to the United States and started a long and distinguished career providing products and services to the federal government and Fortune 500 companies. During that time, his experience encompassed 30 years of progressive executive leadership with large private manufacturing concerns.

"I have always wanted to be my own boss and control my career," he says. "The opportunity didn't happen as soon as I had hoped, and it wasn't until the company I worked for was sold in 2010 that I committed myself full time to growing JEMNI, Inc."

Today, JEMNI is mentored by xpedx—the multibillion dollar distribution business of International Paper (IP). xpedx is a premier supplier of paper products, printing, packaging and facility solutions. The partnership between the two companies has proven of value to both. JEMNI brings value to the relationship by providing resources as close as possible to the customer to create world-class customer service.

JEMNI helps customers gain competitive advantage through efficient "green" sourcing, including packaging design printing/fulfillment services, facilities solutions (safety, PPE, liners, tapes, janitorial) and kitting/small-assembly services. The company also offers facilitation of third-party logistics, warehousing services,



JEMNI Inc. President Mark Ellson

PHOTO © LAWRENCE ROEHEE PHOTOGRAPHY

energy conservation products and supply chain management.

Adding True Value

When the current contract with xpedx came due for renewal, supplier management buyers from The Boeing Company started the negotiating process with xpedx—the incumbent supplier since 1998. The supplier management team decided that working with JEMNI could help increase the company's supplier diversity spending goals and long-time support of veteran-owned businesses (in fact, in 2012, the company contracted with nearly 1,000 veteran-owned small business suppliers). JEMNI will also now support front-end business requirements and hire veterans to work in the xpedx facility in Kent, Washington.

Over the years, laws have evolved to establish goals and requirements for utilization of service-disabled veteran-owned businesses—with varying degrees of success. Most recently, with the return of thousands of veterans to the United States, increasing attention is being given to accelerating opportunities for employment and self-employment or entrepreneurship among veterans and service-disabled veterans.

That is why companies such as JEMNI serve as such excellent examples of what can occur when veterans are given an opportunity to start and develop businesses of their own.

Their success will, in turn, fuel opportunities in employment for others and encourage entrepreneurs with disabilities, including SDVOBs.

Providing 'One Voice'

Ellson believes it is critical to have a national organization provide "one voice" to support and help create awareness for the benefits of utilizing certified disability-owned businesses in the marketplace.

JEMNI is certified as a disability-owned business by the US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) and is supported in gaining access to commercial contracts through the USBLN® Disability Supplier Diversity Program®.

Ellson continues, "Even today, very few companies nationwide include certified disability-owned business enterprises (DOBEs) in their supplier diversity programs. It's not because they don't want to, but because they are unaware of this reliable business certification program. I encourage disability and service-disabled veteran entrepreneurs to become certified if they want to grow their companies."

Ellson is also certified as a service-disabled veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB) through the Veterans Administration. He is a national board member for the Elite SDVOB Network, a networking and advocacy group comprised of service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses and their affiliates.

Ellson is clearly a dedicated individual who is utilizing his engineering and business expertise to bring value-added solutions to his customers while helping veterans nationwide.

Contact JEMNI Inc. at 612-670-4397; sales@jemnitechnology.com or www.jemnitechnology.com.

If you or someone you know is a business owner with a disability, including service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, learn more about certification at <http://usbln.org> or 800-706-2710.

Source: USBLN