

Small Business Administration (SBA). 2017. "KCDO SBW 8(a) Program Company of the Year 2017." Accessed April 20. <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USSBA/bulletins/195731a>.

KCDO SBW 8(a) Program Company of the Year 2017

Small Business Administration (SBA) sent this bulletin at 04/20/2017 02:36 PM EDT

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NEWS RELEASE

PRESS OFFICE

Release Date:

April 20, 2017

Contact:

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Release Number:

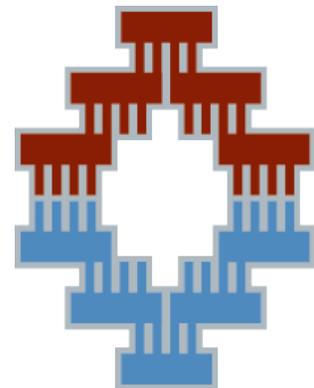
04-17

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KANSAS CITY SBA SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARD FOR 8(A) COMPANY OF 2017 GOES TO TEPA, LLC



*Three of its Companies Secured More than \$100 Million in Federal
Contracts Last Fiscal Year and are Impacting Our Area*

KANSAS CITY - The Kansas City District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration will honor Tepe, LLC with an 8(a) Business Development Program

Company of the Year 2017 award during National Small Business Week. Three of the eight construction and professional services companies tribally owned by the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians - Tehama, LLC; Tukup Technologies, LLC and Medvolt - receive support from the Kansas City District Office and secured more than \$100 million-worth of federal contracts during fiscal year 2016.

"The companies show what SBA's help in contracting can do when coupled with companies that go the extra mile to provide great service," Malcolm Richards, District Director of the Kansas City District SBA Office said.

Their story, "**The Tupa Companies – Creating Sustainable Success**," follows:

The rain just kept falling. So much rain that it threatened to cut off soldiers and civilians trying to drive into and out of Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, Colorado. A new bridge was under construction, and drivers needed help navigating the construction site through the rain and flood waters. That's when the leaders of Medvolt, LLC, one of Kansas City's newest construction companies and the project's prime contractor, stepped in to help.

"It is not often you will see a contractor's lead management staff wading through knee-deep water during torrential rains to help divert traffic safely around flood waters after dark and over the weekend," said Jacob Wiegmann, Resident Engineer/Administrative Contracting Officer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "But, such is the case with this contractor."

This contractor, Medvolt, is an 8(a) certified small business and one of eight construction and professional services companies tribally owned by the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians, known as the Tupa Companies. All of the companies receive support from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), including three in the Kansas City District.

"The SBA has been instrumental in the success of our businesses," said Matt Metcalf, Chief Strategy Officer for the Tupa Companies, "We view our relationship with them as a partnership. They reviewed our business plans, helped us participate in the Mentor-Protégé program and assisted in securing contracts with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, General Services Administration, Veterans Administration, the U.S. Air Force and the Air Force Security Assistance Training Squadron."

In the Kansas City District, the three Tupa Companies are making an impact on the local economy, securing more than \$100 million worth of federal contracts in FY 2016. Tehama, LLC, a Tupa 8(a) environmental consulting firm, earned \$78.3 million in contracts spread out over the next five years. Tukup Technologies, LLC, a Tupa 8(a) information technology company, earned \$37.4 million in contracts over the next five years. Medvolt performed \$1.5 million worth of contracts in FY 2016 and has secured more than \$20 million in FY 2017.

Ken Surmeier, SBA's Business Opportunity Specialist for Tehama, Tukah and Medvolt, says the Tepas Companies are doing the right things to grow business by aggressively marketing their services, producing high-quality projects and delivering with unwavering integrity. "I hear it a lot from their clients – the Tepas Companies are doing the job right the first time," said Surmeier. "They are successfully executing on every contract, being flexible and going the extra mile to make sure their clients are happy. That positive past performance is winning them more work."

As tribally-owned businesses, the Tepas Companies' success affects more than their local economies. It also helps their Native American tribe and other Native communities. The companies provide economic diversification for Tepas's tribe, the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians in Northern California, and help fund educational, housing and medical programs for their members. The Tepas Companies reach out to other Native communities, offering internships through the School of Business at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas. Since its inception two years ago, three Haskell students have gained real-world experience through summer internships. One was hired full-time after graduation.

"Overall, the internship was the best experience I had in my collegiate career," said Janae Levier, Tepas's first Haskell intern, current Tepas Human Resources Assistant and member of the Citizen Band Potawatomi Nation. "I had interest in the human resources and finance areas, and I had involvement in both areas as an intern. That experience is helping me now as a full-time employee."

With the help of the SBA, the Tepas Companies have seen tremendous growth in the number of projects awarded and delivered, in the quality and sustainability of solutions, and in client satisfaction. The three Kansas City companies, Tehama, Tukah and Medvolt, are building a foundation locally that will sustain success and employment opportunities well into the future.

"We are committed to elevating project delivery and customer service even more in the future," said Metcalf, "even to the point of rerouting traffic around flood waters in the pouring rain. The Tepas Companies will always deliver with the professionalism and responsiveness of a small business."

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