

May 12, 2021

Subject: Nomination of Oscar Zavaleta for CMAA Chair's Award for Diversity & Inclusion

To Whom it may concern:

I have had the pleasure of collaborating, and working, with Mr. Oscar Zavaleta for nearly ten years and I am thrilled to offer my letter of recommendation for the CMAA Chair's Award for Diversity & Inclusion. My history with Mr. Zavaleta encompasses his efforts as an entrepreneur as well as a community builder. Throughout the past decade I have watched his efforts to empower minority, women, Disabled Veteran and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) businesses in both the public and private sectors. Across the board Oscar is a man of great integrity, passion, and tenacity. In my role as President of BuildOUT California, which is the world's first LGBT Industry Association dedicated to the sustainable growth of LGBT owned & certified businesses, and our allies, in the fields of Architecture, Engineering, Construction Services, and Real Estate Development I have seen him step forward in a pro-active manner to ensure all communities have an equal seat at the table.

Oscar and his company, The Montez Group, are recognized throughout California as leaders in the Architecture & Engineering/Construction industries. Within the minority business community his talents have earned him invitations to represent the views of diverse businesses on high-profile public agency councils such as the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Small Business Advisory Council and the Small Business Support Services Program. Oscar is continuously invited to participate in these public programs because of his business acumen, his ability to 'lift-all-ships-equally', and his proven track record of success in creating sustainable jobs. In addition, Oscar also sits on the Board of the Oakland Latino Chamber of Commerce and is a member of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials where he advocates for the advancement of small minority businesses within the local construction industry.

As a visionary leader, Oscar was the primary force behind the historic 'Meet the Primes' event whereby the CMAA NorCal and BuildOUT California joined forces to introduce minority, women, Disabled Veteran and LGBT businesses to a large group of Potential Primes in the A&E/Construction sectors. Because of Oscar's drive and commitment to excellence, the CMAA and BuildOUT California brought together top transportation agency directors from throughout the San Francisco Bay Area including Caltrans, BART, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority to forge new working relationships.

It's often said that when you want to get a job done, and done right, be sure to give the task to a very busy person! Oscar is the embodiment of what 'inclusion' means in these days of heightened awareness. Supporting the A&E/Construction industries in the areas of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is part of Oscar's DNA. He is authentic, he is inspiring, and he is highly regarded by so many in our industries. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



**Paul Pendergast**  
President  
BuildOUT California