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CVS Health and RWU Partner on Professional Development Program to Support Diverse Suppliers

Training program at RWU’s University College will help diverse-owned suppliers develop skills in finance, leadership and technology

April 1, 2019  |  By Edward Fitzpatrick

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – As part of its commitment to support the development of diverse business leaders, CVS Health is partnering with University College at Roger Williams University on a customized professional development program – CVS Health: Executive Learning Series for Diverse Suppliers.

The training program, now in its fifth year, will help diverse vendors gain critical management skills that allow them to expand their partnerships with CVS Health and drive their companies’ success in areas such as marketing, finance and human resources.

Supplier diversity is critical to CVS Health’s purpose of helping people on their path to better health. The company relies on its suppliers to collaborate with their more than 295,000 colleagues across all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico to solve cost, quality and access issues in the evolving health care landscape. The Executive Learning Series is a cornerstone program in the company’s ongoing focus on supplier diversity, a commitment recognized by Billion Dollar Roundtable, a top-level corporate advocacy organization that promotes supply-chain diversity excellence, for reaching its goal of spending more than $1 billion with diverse suppliers.

“At CVS Health, we recognize how important it is to deepen our partnerships with small business owners, who often have few resources and can find it challenging to approach large corporations for business opportunities,” said Monette Knapik, Director of Strategic Procurement for CVS Health. “As part of our commitment to building healthier and thriving communities, we are dedicated to investing in their development by creating training opportunities that expand their capacity, skill level and growth potential. We value our collaboration with RWU immensely for helping us to create a unique training program catered specifically for our diverse suppliers.”

“I value our relationship with CVS Health and am honored to work on this amazing professional development program with their team,” said Dawne Pezzuco, Director of the Center for Workforce & Professional Development at RWU’s University College. “The training continues to improve and build on past successes each year and has made a positive impact for so many small diverse suppliers. The classroom, online training and networking events are the perfect blend to support skills learning for these businesses.”
The Center for Workforce & Professional Development and CVS Health developed the curriculum with help from several national diversity chambers and councils, including Women’s Business Enterprise National Council and Regional Partner Organizations, National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, National Minority Supplier Development Council and its Regional Affiliates, National Veterans Business Development Council, Rainbow Push Coalition, U.S. Business Leadership Network and the U.S. Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce.

The Executive Learning Series for Diverse Suppliers was awarded the program/initiative of the year by the National Business Inclusion Consortium and the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. When selecting the awardee, the committee looks at the breadth of the program, how developed it is, plans for growth, community impact, and internal and external messaging.

Applications will be accepted for the training program from April 15 to May 10. The program will start on July 18 and conclude Oct. 24.

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