

MCDP[®] SPOTLIGHT: QUALITY FIRST MARINE



This issue's MCDP[®] Spotlight is on Quality First Marine, of New Orleans, LA. President Christina Couvillion participated in a U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT)/SFAA Bonding Education Program in August 2011.

Christina Couvillion ran the office in her family-owned marine transportation and contracting business. With a keen eye on her father, an engineer and former Navy Captain, Christina learned more and more about the operations of the family business. She quickly adapted to the inner workings of the marine industry, but realized she needed assistance in formal business operations.

Quality First Construction LLC (DBA Quality First Marine), a certified women-owned business entity, commenced operations in October

2005 with just two employees. Since its inception, Quality First Marine has successfully provided tugs, vessels, labor and support equipment for projects in both the private and governmental sectors. The company currently employs 20 local residents and owns an extensive fleet of boats and other heavy equipment. Annual revenue is on track to exceed \$3 million by the end of 2013, up 55% from last year.

In August 2011, Quality First Marine participated in the Gulf Region Small Business Transportation Resource Center's (SBTRC) USDOT/SFAA Bonding Education Program (BEP), held in New Orleans, LA. Upon entering the BEP, the company's total bonding capacity was \$500,000. Soon after completing the program, the company was able to increase its bonding capacity to \$4 million and now has an aggregate bond line of \$10-15 million. Quality First Marine is working with Bob Davis, a bond producer with Bowen, Milette & Britt Insurance Agency, LLC in Houston and their surety company is NAS Surety.

In August of this year, Quality First Marine secured its 8a/SDB certification and has participated in a Community Volunteerism Project with the Restore the Earth Foundation by donating vessels and captains to Gulf Coast restoration non-profit work. Quality

First Marine believes in living out its motto: "Quality First Marine...leaving a positive wake wherever we go!"

Christina is extremely appreciative of the role that the DOT/SFAA BEP has played in her success. In her own words: "The USDOT/SFAA Bonding Education Program has taught us how to prepare and position our company to become bondable. Quality First Construction LLC, DBA Quality First Marine, is looking forward to being able to bid on contracts that require bonding in the near future."