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Zones Contact:
media@zones.com

Zones and Partners Bring 2024 National Business Forum to Seattle, Prioritizing Equity and Opportunity

Auburn, WA, February 19, 2024 – Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell and NMSDC CEO Ying McGuire proudly announced Seattle, Washington, as the host city for the 2024 National Minority Business Economic Forum, slated for May 14th to 16th. The event will unite over 500 influential policymakers and academic, business, and community leaders, chaired by Mayor Harrell, Zones CEO Firoz Lalji, ASRC Industrial CEO Steve Ennis, and University of Washington President Ana Mari Cauce as the academic partner.

Zones, a global IT solutions provider renowned for its commitment to sustainability, diversity, and inclusion, stands at the forefront of this initiative. Under the stewardship of CEO Firoz Lalji, known for his quiet leadership and dedication to social responsibility, Zones aims to champion a vision of equity and opportunity for entrepreneurs of all backgrounds.

"This forum epitomizes Zones' values of inclusivity and innovation," Lalji remarked. "We believe in creating pathways for diverse businesses to thrive in an ever-evolving digital landscape."

"Greater Seattle's blend of cutting-edge tech and green initiatives, led by giants like Amazon and Microsoft and pioneers like Bill Gates's Breakthrough Energy, creates an unparalleled ecosystem. This synergy exemplifies the ideal environment our forum seeks to leverage for MBEs, offering them unparalleled opportunities to engage with and benefit from emerging technologies and the green economy," said NMSDC CEO and President Ying McGuire.

Under the theme "Be Next, Now," this year's forum will explore how advancements in AI and clean energy are reshaping industries and creating new avenues for growth. Participants will discuss removing barriers, fostering innovation, and harnessing emerging opportunities to support the growth and scalability of minority-owned enterprises.

The 2024 National Business Forum represents a milestone in the pursuit of diversity, inclusion, and sustainable economic development. With Seattle as its backdrop, this gathering promises to be a catalyst for change, driving meaningful progress toward a more equitable and prosperous future.

About Zones

Zones is a global provider of end-to-end IT solutions with an unmatched supply chain. Positioned to be the IT partner you need, Zones, a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) in business for over 35 years, specializes in Digital Workplace, Cloud & Data Center, Networking, Security, and Managed/Professional/Staffing services. Operating in more than 120 countries, leveraging a robust portfolio and utilizing the highest certification levels from

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key partners—including Microsoft, Apple, Cisco, Lenovo, Adobe, and more—Zones has mastered the science of building digital infrastructures that change the way modern organizations do business. Whatever you need, you can *Consider IT Done*.

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