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Note: Headshots of Bridget O'Connor and Aimee Massie provided.

O'Connor Connective Certified By State of Wisconsin as a Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)

The De Pere marketing communications consultancy attains certification in Department of Administration's Supplier Diversity Program, expanding visibility in the New North.

DE PERE, Wis. — In just seven years, O'Connor Connective has helped shape and enhance economic and workforce development, customer experience, and collaborative spirit in Northeastern Wisconsin—also known as the New North. The strategic planning and marketing communications consultancy is ingrained in the 18-county region, working hand in hand with leadership teams from Door County down to Fond du Lac County to better tell their stories.

Now, O'Connor Connective is taking a page out of its own storytelling book for clients by boosting its reach and marketability. The De Pere company is certified as a Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE) by the state of Wisconsin.

O'Connor Connective recently earned the WBE certification after completing a rigorous application and review process administered by the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration's Supplier Diversity Program. To qualify for WBE status, a business must be at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more women who are United States citizens, the business was formed and is located in the U.S., and the business is managed and operated by one or more of the women owners.

"This certification as a WBE business in Wisconsin is significant for O'Connor Connective as we continue to be a difference maker with the uniquely diverse communication experts, skill sets and services we provide and deliver our clients in the New North and other parts of the state," says Bridget O'Connor, owner and principal of O'Connor Connective.

"As a WBE-certified small business, we gain increased visibility to companies, nonprofits and other organizations that get to learn more about us—and vice versa," O'Connor adds. "That is huge, particularly in the expanding and competitive New North, when government, corporate, and nonprofit entities may have to fulfill industry regulations to bid out and give a certain percentage of their contracted work to women-owned businesses. We are proud to say O'Connor Connective is one of only about 30 WBE-certified businesses in Brown County, the largest of the New North counties with more than 260,000 residents."

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O'Connor launched O'Connor Connective in 2013. She later found a permanent home for the business, purchasing and fully restoring a nationally historic 100-year-old building in the heart of downtown De Pere before opening the doors in 2015.

With the newly awarded WBE certification, O'Connor Connective will have an expanded business reach as it continues to help businesses and organizations of all sizes align their strategic goals with marketing communications to achieve growth and reputational objectives.

According to Wisconsin's Department of Administration, WBE-certified companies are listed on the Wisconsin Supplier Diversity Program State Directory. The directory connects WBE firms to hundreds of local, state and national corporations, government agencies and other organizations that accept WBE certification.

Aimee Massie, office manager at O'Connor Connective since 2016, facilitated the WBE certification for the company.

"A lot of time was devoted to the application process. There's a self-assessment for your business to determine whether WBE certification is right for you, followed by the application itself with the required submission of several personal and financial documents for the business to the state Department of Administration for review and validation of your business," Massie explains. "For other companies owned by women as well as those owned by minorities or disabled veterans, the many opportunities and benefits to market and grow your business makes pursuing certification through the Wisconsin Supplier Diversity Program well worth the investment."

The WBE certification is good for three years, and a certified company can then apply for recertification for three more years. To learn more about the Wisconsin Supplier Diversity Program and Woman-Owned Business Enterprise certification, go to wisdp.wi.gov.

About O'Connor Connective

O'Connor Connective partners with senior leaders of organizations to crystallize their vision and leverage integrated marketing communications to bring that vision to reality. Based in De Pere, Wisconsin, O'Connor Connective brings together strategic planning and strategic communications to grow revenue, raise dollars, engage and recruit employees, and build brand awareness. Services offered by O'Connor Connective include communication and marketing strategy, executive communications and coaching, facilitation and senior leadership team alignment, public and community relations, fundraising communications, culture architecture as well as employee engagement communications. Clients include privately held and service-based companies, school districts, universities and nonprofits. For more information, visit oconnorconnective.com.

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