

# RECAP: LOS ANGELES

## 2nd Annual Conference – November 5 & 6, 2018

Over 300 Veteran Businesses, Corporations, and Government Agencies were in attendance for the VIB National Conference held at the historic Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles, CA. This two-day conference was packed with motivational speakers, exhibitors, workshops and tons of networking, there was something for all businesses to help create opportunities.

The conference kicked off with motivational speaker Tony Perez who recently had his company purchased by GoDaddy and is now Vice President of Product Management at GoDaddy. He shared his story of owning a business and "Embracing the Suck". This was followed by Master Strategist, Jim Wittmack on "How to Pitch Your Business" and Chris Steely finished off Motivational Monday Morning with "Why the Business World Needs You, and How to Best Contribute as a Veteran". After lunch we had a great panel discussion moderated by Chairman Cole Woodman on "The Secrets & Differences of Working with Corporations, Government Agencies, and Prime Contractors". During the panel we heard amazing insight from Southern California Edison, US Army Corps of Engineers and Sundt Construction. Next up, "Tactical Networking" – this was an interactive roundtable discussion with Corporations, Government Agencies and Veteran businesses sharing information and opportunities. The energy and networking from this session was high, and eventually moved outside for the VIB Networking Welcome Reception surrounded by city buildings, music and lively conversations to close out day one.

Day 2 began with remarks from Wayne Shank of USAA and a ribbon cutting ceremony with exhibitors to open the Expo Hall doors. With over 70 exhibitors, there was plenty of opportunities for Veteran Businesses to continue to connect with buyers and supplier diversity professionals. There were several business development workshops throughout the day. At lunch Chairman Cole Woodman sat for a Fireside Chat with Doug Baurder, Navy Veteran and Vice President, Operational Services and Chief Procurement Officer of Southern California Edison. Doug shared his story of transitioning out of the military and becoming a Corporate Executive at SCE. The conference concluded with the Above & Beyond Award Banquet Dinner UNDER the Space Shuttle Endeavour. We enjoyed live music by SkARMY, an Army Reservist Ska-Band and continued the networking. We celebrated and recognized the hard work of those who help the Veteran business community succeed with the Above & Beyond Award.

### Congratulations 2018 Above & Beyond Winners:

- **Veteran Business of the Year:** Kana Subsurface Engineering owner Erick Castro (DVBE)
- **Corporation of the Year:** California Water Service Company, American Water and Golden State Water Company
- **Government Agency of the Year:** California Department of General Services
- **Teaming Partners of the Year:** Prime Contractor - Blair, Church & Flynn Consulting with Veteran Business Moore Twining Associates
- **Bravo Zulu Award:** Dawn Gilbert of Frontier Communications
- **Oscar Mike Award:** Aliahu "Alli" Bey owner of Haight Bey & Associates (Veteran Business)

**2019:**  
*See you in San Diego!*

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