



Contractor Accelerator Success Story: Victoria Wilson

Victoria Wilson graduated from Elevate’s Contractor Accelerator program in 2021. Here’s what Victoria had to say about the experience!

Her Story

Victoria is the president of Naturally Urban Environmental Inc. (NUE Inc.), an environmental and construction service consultation company that she founded.

“My focus at NUE Inc. is to renew, revitalize, and reshape communities by supporting them in their resilience efforts and decarbonization goals. That has pretty much been the core of what our mission and our values are, to focus on the people in our communities, reduce the carbon emissions to protect that planet, and then, ultimately, figuring out how to make it profitable for everybody.”

Victoria wanted to participate in the Contractor Accelerator to join a network of like-minded small businesses like hers working in renewable energy.

Making Connections

“The Elevate Accelerator cohort experience has opened my eyes to many opportunities that are available for minority firms like my company NUE, Inc. to engage in so that we are a bid-ready contractor. The Accelerator cohort had the ability to prepare and ready NUE, Inc. for our corporate ICC approval in the renewable energy industry for the state of Illinois.

Being able to have access to a vast network of alumni members brings great project partnership opportunities and community support, which is amazing. Because of this opportunity, we can help each other with project ideas and giving actionable insight to meet our project scopes of work for full completion.

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What I value, more than anything, is the network and the quantity of project opportunities that are being presented to alumni of the Accelerator program in the renewable energy industry.”

While participating in the Contractor Accelerator, Victoria realized she wanted to do even more in clean energy.

“I signed up for the Walker-Miller ComEd Energy Efficiency Service Provider program, while at the same time doing the Elevate’s Contractor Accelerator program. But it worked! ComEd’s training is focused on lightbulbs, LED, and programs, whereas Elevate’s was more the solar track. I’ve learned a lot in the clean energy space.”

Looking Ahead

“It’s not often that you see an African-American female environmental scientist and licensed general contractor in the clean energy industry executing projects outside of the residential construction projects. I know that there are great opportunities available for female business owners in renewable energy market, and I hope my journey will encourage and spark a flame for so many more minority and women-owned construction businesses so that they are excited to get involved.

There are people who don’t want to participate in programs like the Elevate Accelerator because it requires time commitment, an investment into your future self, and sweat equity to clearly define business goals. Many minority start-up owners don’t understand the importance of this time-demanding sacrifice for the longevity, financial growth, and security of their company. However, business development programs such as the Elevate Accelerator are essential for those entrepreneurs who do value the tools and resources learned in these opportunities. With the business model and service offerings I’ve learned in the Accelerator cohort, Naturally Urban Environmental, Inc. officially incorporated ComEd EESP and ICC service offerings into the new Renewable Energy Division that is set to launch in Spring of 2022.”

Victoria also works on the Cook County Environmental and Sustainability Commission and will join Governor Pritzker’s Commission for Environmental Justice in 2022, where she intends to ensure resiliency and equity stay at the forefront of the conversation.

Want to learn more?

The Contractor Accelerator was originally implemented through FEJA legislation, while the Light Bulb project is conducted in partnership with Business Services Collective and S.O.U.L. Services. Visit ElevateNP.org/Clean-Energy-Jobs-Accelerator to learn more about our workforce and small business development opportunities.