Small Business Owner Helps Prepare Others for Future Projects at SAN

Maryory Contreras is a civil engineer and president/CEO of Escondido-based MarCon Engineering Inc. Her 10-person crew worked on San Diego International Airport’s Rental Car Center, a project that will create 4,600 total jobs during its construction. This project presented an attractive and challenging opportunity for Contreras.

Contreras learned of the bidding opportunity for her woman-owned business through Austin|Sundt and the Airport Authority’s opportunity awareness events for small and local businesses. The job appealed to her partially because it didn’t require securing bonds. “Bonding is a big headache for small businesses,” she said.

Initially, Contreras was concerned that MarCon Engineering may get overlooked in the bidding process, but Sonia Cruz, small business development program manager, and Maria Quiroz, program manager for the Airport Authority’s Bonding and Contract Financing Assistance Program, helped her navigate the process.

“They were like angels to me,” she said.

The Airport Authority team helped Contreras learn the systems and methods associated with government projects. Eventually, MarCon Engineering won a $1.9 million contract for the Rental Car Center.

Contreras’ crew was one of the first to begin working on-site. It installed underground water and sewer lines and also storm drains for the facility.

Later, the Airport Authority’s small business development department invited Contreras to participate on a panel for a seminar called, “How to Work with the Airport.” She jumped at the opportunity because she wanted to help other small businesses prepare for future opportunities at SAN by sharing the knowledge she gained through her experience working on the Rental Car Center.

“Working at the airport is a great opportunity for small businesses,” said Contreras.

Contreras has become a seasoned pro at working with the Airport Authority. She has also secured an additional contract at SAN as a general contractor for the terminal link roadway.