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From the Minneapolis / St. Paul Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2021/10/04/small-biz-org-taps-st-paul-expert.html>

## **MaKee Co. CEO R. Lynn Pingol joins National Small Business Association**

*Oct 4, 2021, 2:45pm CDT*



Nancy Kuehn | MSPBJ

Lynn Pingol (left), founder and CEO of MaKee Company, is the newest member of the National Small Business Association Leadership Council.

One of St. Paul's best-known experts on diverse government contract procurement is joining a national organization that

advocates for pro-small business policy.

The National Small Business Association in Washington, D.C., has appointed R. Lynn Pingol, founder and CEO of St. Paul diverse contracting consultancy MaKee Co., to its Leadership Council, NSBA announced Oct. 1. MaKee Company, which launched in 2017, has helped 90 firms land \$35 million in contracts over the past three years, Pingol previously told the Business Journal.

Founded in the midst of the Great Depression in 1937, NSBA advocates for a plethora of policies it deems beneficial to small businesses. For 2021, the organization has set its sights on improving small businesses' access to credit, strengthening SBA lending and upskilling the labor force, among other things, according to its website.

Pingol told the Business Journal that her invitation to NSBA was prompted by her experience combating "procurement barriers for minorities."

In her work with NSBA, Pingol said she'll push for a more racially conscious federal diverse-contract-procurement policy; improved access for diverse businesses to workshops and training; and improved government outreach to diverse businesses about contract opportunities.

So far, Pingol's contract-procurement efforts have involved communicating with state government and municipalities — Pingol currently has contracts to assist the city of St. Paul with small-diverse-business development and with the city of Brooklyn Center to remove barriers from its procurement efforts. But she's noticed that federal policy dictates much of what state and local governments can do to better their procurement strategy. That's a big reason Pingol accepted NSBA's invitation to join the leadership council.

"That's really what I'm looking for, opportunities to have conversations with political folks and then having conversations with Congress," Pingol said.

In 2019, MaKee Co. helped 72% of its clients land at least one government contract, Pingol previously told the Business Journal. Its clients have included Trott-Binns Construction in St. Paul; J

Benson Construction in Hopkins, and Genius Innovation Group in Minneapolis.

"I am proud to have R. Lynn Pingol as part of our Leadership Council," NSBA President and CEO Todd McCracken said in a news release. "She came to us highly recommended, and I look forward our coordinated efforts for years to come."



**Iain Carlos**

Reporter - *Minneapolis / St. Paul Business Journal*

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