

## Adding a Seat at the Table

By: Jean-Marc Villain

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Across the country, hospital and health systems are recognizing that they can intentionally leverage their supply chains and construction projects to address the upstream economic and environmental conditions that have the greatest impact on the health of the communities in which they serve. In doing so, healthcare anchor institutions like MUSC can create family-supporting, local jobs and build community wealth. Connecting local and diverse vendors into our procurement process can help realize cost savings from contracting opportunities and create a more resilient supply chain. We spoke to the principal of a diverse contracting firm about his journey in doing business with MUSC.

Ask Calvin Whitfield, President of Charleston-based certified minority business enterprise (MBE), CCCS International, “What is the biggest obstacle his company faces as a diverse supplier?” He will promptly respond “getting a seat at the table”. As Whitfield explains it, smaller construction firms are often looked at as “not having the bandwidth” to perform on the job. “Nowadays, companies like CCCS are every bit as capable of providing superior value and services as larger, more well-known firms,” said Whitfield. “Even though we’re small, we think big – we just need the opportunity to prove ourselves.”

Since moving to the Lowcountry in 2005, Whitfield, a civil engineer, worked for the Dorchester School District as Director of Construction Projects for two (2) years before starting CCCS International in 2008. Whitfield has been growing a steady business, beginning with his first contract to paint the exterior of the Ralph H Johnson VA Medical Center. Since 2008, CCCS has been engaged in the construction space as a licensed general contractor that primarily self-performs in specific trades such as drywall, framing, mechanical, plumbing, and all interior finishing work.

Things took a dramatic turn for the business during the real estate crash, when construction projects in South Carolina all

## SUPPLIER SUCCESS STORY



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CCCS International, LLC

“The job was completed on time and within budget with a 15%-20% range in cost savings”.

Iggy Pla

ART Facilities Manager

### CCCS Company Profile

Charleston, South Carolina  
Reported Annual Sales: \$4.5m  
MUSC Vendor Since Feb. 2016

but came to a halt. It was during this time CCCS decided to expand its operations to Texas and Louisiana where the business climate was more favorable, mostly due to increased federal contracting in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Ike. In 2014, CCCS redirected its operations back to Charleston to capitalize on the many construction projects available in the Lowcountry, including, The Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital & Pearl Tourville Women's Pavilion (SJCHWP) and the Consolidated Service Center (CSC) for MUSC Health.

When Iggy Pla, ART's Facilities Manager, was looking for a contractor (on an emergency basis) to cure a long-standing structural defect in the building's air filtration system, knowing the value in including diverse suppliers, he reached out to the office of Supplier Diversity, who was able to provide three (3) companies who could do the project. Through the recommendation, CCCS was brought in to complete the project.

"We knew this contract would provide us with a good foundation to work with MUSC and present a unique opportunity for a long-term partnership, so we sharpened our pencil and gave MUSC our best pricing". Pla has confirmed the job was completed on time and within budget. Including a 15%-20% range in cost savings when compared to the larger companies he's used to dealing with. This further proves the t h a t smaller and experienced diverse companies bring value to MUSC. CCCS has subsequently secured seven-figure contracts in SJCHWP and the CSC.

CCCS' first contracting engagement with MUSC is a demonstrable example of how the purposeful integration of diverse suppliers in our supply chain practices can reduce the cost of procurement and be a positive contributor to the bottom line.

These engagements resulted in the creation of dozens of well-paying jobs that allow more families to afford health insurance and thereby decreasing community need for and use of uncompensated care. As a mission-driven anchor and economic engine in South Carolina, MUSC's future is inextricably linked to the long-term well-being of those we serve and because of this, we are uniquely positioned to play a more active role in supporting our local economies, especially for the most vulnerable members of our communities.