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On time and on budget.....is what we promised the taxpayers of Jackson County as we began the renovations of Kauffman and Arrowhead Stadiums. We also made a commitment to assure that the opportunities are maximized for minority and women businesses and employees to participate in the stadium renovation projects. I can truly say that everyone involved in the project made this a priority and we have been extremely successful in achieving the goals that were set forth in the Fair Share Agreement with both the Royals and the Chiefs.

As Chairman of the Jackson County Sports Authority Complex it has been my mission to ensure that we were prudent with taxpayer dollars and that we constructed two world-class stadium renovations of which the citizens of Jackson County can be proud.

The Jackson County Sports Complex Authority and its staff have maintained its commitment to involve and provide opportunities to the numerous qualified MBE and WBEs. It has been a pleasure to see these companies provide the numerous professional services to these projects and it has been rewarding to see many of them playing such a pivotal role. I want to take this time to thank all of them for their hard work. We can honestly say that these stadium renovations were built by the men and women of Jackson County.

Sincerely,
Mike Smith
Chairman
Jackson County Sports Complex Authority

Hoffman Cortes Contracting



Rita Cortes is counting down the days until the Royals home opener on April 10. Like many Royals fans, she is excited about the stadium's renovation. But she has a very keen interest in the new features beyond the outfield walls. That's because Cortes' company, Hoffman Cortes Contracting Co., helped build those amenities which include the Royals Hall of Fame atop the left-field bleachers and a baseball-themed restaurant in right field. "It will be exciting to see the outcome of our efforts," said Cortes, who succeeded her father as the company's president ten years ago.

As a large masonry contractor for the Kauffman Stadium renovations, Hoffman Cortes has been responsible for the installation of glazed block materials and other associated components for those new buildings. Hoffman Cortes also did sub-contracting work for Star Signs, in which it installed way-finding signs around the concourse. And it was a masonry contractor for the new Chiefs training facility. Cortes' family has owned the business which was founded in 1921 by her great-grandfather Morris Hoffman. Gary Cortes became president in 1972 and is still active with the company. "He has been a great mentor," Rita Cortes said about her father. Under Rita Cortes' leadership, the company has split into three divisions-general contracting, masonry restoration and new masonry. Its management team also includes Charles Scammell, who oversees the masonry divisions and Scott Moffitt, director of operations.

The company, which has more than 100 employees, is headquartered in the Crossroads District downtown. It has worked on numerous projects around the area, including the restoration of the old Empire Theatre in the Power & Light District. As a certified MBE, Cortes said the MBE program has allowed her firm to showcase its quality work to other contractors that might not have known much about the company. And she encourages business leaders to provide as much mentoring as possible to new companies, as well as entrepreneurs who want to become MBEs or WBEs. "Invest time in that person," she

said. "Provide technical support. Educate them and provide resources for them. To help them work through their challenges is a great feeling. And her advice to would-be business owners: "Grow your business to a size that works, stay hungry for knowledge and don't be afraid to ask any questions." www.HoffmanCortes.com

Resource Links

- [State of Missouri](#)
- [City of Kansas City, Missouri](#)
- [NWBOC](#)
- [MidAmerica Minority Business Development Council](#)
- [Kansas Women's Business Center](#)
- [Nat'l Assoc. of Women in Construction](#)
- [KC Council of Women Business Owners](#)
- [Greater KC Chamber-Commerce](#)
- [Black Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Hispanic Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Asian Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Women's Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [KC Hispanic Assoc. Contractors Enterprises](#)
- [Missouri Women's Business Center](#)
- [KC Society of Black Architects & Engineers](#)
- [Urban League of Kansas City](#)

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Did You Know?

During the month of March, we celebrate the accomplishments of women. It began in 1980 with a Presidential Proclamation declaring a week in March as National Women's History Week. A Congressional Resolution in 1987 expanded the celebration to the entire month of March.

If you have a story idea or know of a business that should be profiled, please contact:
 Joli Wimer at
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Farris Law Firm

When Denise Farris' teen-aged son was able to watch on YouTube her testimony before a congressional sub-committee last year, he was impressed. "That's the only time I have heard him tell me, 'Mom, that's cool'," said Farris, a Stillwell lawyer who is the founder and managing member of the Farris Law Firm. But for more than a decade, Farris has impressed peers with her expertise on affirmative action in the construction industry.



Currently, she is putting that expertise to use as the Chiefs' attorney for MBE/WBE compliance oversight on the stadium renovations. Described in that congressional testimony by U.S. Rep. Dennis Moore as "a rising star" in the local legal community, Farris specializes in general business, commercial construction and equine law. She has received multiple awards, spoken at numerous conferences and written several articles on affirmative action. With the stadium renovations, Farris said she has worked closely with Gayle Holliday, the project's MBE/WBE coordinator, to make sure the MBE and WBE goals are being met. At first, some of the project's construction managers voiced reservations about being able to meet the goals, Farris said. But after lengthy discussion with various trade organizations, contractors, Chiefs and Royals representatives and county officials, she said everyone was much more receptive to the MBE/WBE program. "I think they realized that it was a win-win scenario for everyone," Farris said.

Farris also praised the Jackson County Sports Complex Authority for its transparency in posting upcoming bid packages on its Web site. Such transparency, she said, has allowed for more MBE/WBE contractors to find out about opportunities with the renovation project. And it could serve as a nationwide model for major capital projects that use MBEs and WBEs, she said.

Farris explained why MBE and WBE programs like the one being implemented for the stadium renovations are important. "It is difficult for anyone to recognize that there have been barriers to people based on race or gender particularly if you have not experienced it yourself," she said. "These programs have gone a long way in beginning to equalize opportunities but require oversight to make sure they are administered properly." Farris added that MBE and WBE programs contribute to a healthy local economy by empowering small businesses. "If people would get away from looking at affirmative action as a race and gender preference program and instead look at it as a small business program," she said, "it would totally transform the way people look at these programs." www.FarrisLawFirm.com

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