



WHAT'S TRENDING

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY



Supporting Supplier Diversity with ATG

When it comes to supplier diversity initiatives on campus, the terminology may vary, but the goal is the same. Whether it's considered MWBE (Minority and Women-Owned business enterprises), SWaM (Small, Women-owned, and Minority-owned business enterprise), or SMDB (Small and Minority Disadvantaged Businesses), these initiatives focus on providing diversity businesses with greater access to purchasing opportunities.

America To Go (ATG) has worked closely with E&I members to create innovative initiatives that make it easy for staff to find, access and order from diversity restaurants and caterers in their local community and to track diversity spending through customized and detailed reporting.

Here is a brief overview of what ATG does to assist institutions in meeting their diversity goals with local vendors –

- ▶ **Specify Standards** – ATG begins by identifying your specific standards. Some institutions adhere to a state standard, some use federal guidelines, some allow self-identification. It's crucial to clearly specify the standards and what is required for compliance.
- ▶ **Conduct Vendor Outreach** – Using your diversity standards, ATG surveys current and prospective vendors to identify which qualify and even assists them with certification. ATG initially collects all necessary documentation showing compliance with a member's standards and ensures this is kept current by conducting ongoing outreach with vendors to make sure all certifications are up-to-date and on file. ATG also consistently reaches out to the community to identify and increase restaurants and caterers that meet the member's diversity standards.



About America To Go

America To Go is an online food ordering and expense management solution that streamlines all of an institution's restaurants and caterers into one customized platform. The E&I contract helps institutions capture direct and indirect cost savings, automate accounting, reduce risk, and expand sustainability, diversity, and other university initiatives, while providing a dedicated account manager and 24/7 customer service. ATG works as a standalone tool or can easily integrate with any eProcurement system.



- **Highlight Vendors on the ATG Platform** – ATG works with members to highlight diverse vendors on their customized platform. Customizations include:

- Diversity highlight 'tile' that provides information about the initiative
- Diversity filter that allows users to sort the list of vendors accordingly
- Diversity icons on the vendor listing to indicate the vendors that meet your standards
- 'Thank you' language on the order text to reinforce the initiative with both users and vendors

A major Ivy League university found that, without adding new vendors, making these changes to their platform alone generated an immediate increase in spending going to diversity vendors.

- **Conduct Campus Outreach** – ATG looks for ways to piggyback on a member's existing events and communications to ensure successful outreach on campus. These events and communications may include diversity vendor tradeshow and showcases, as well as regular campus newsletters promoting new and existing diversity vendors. ATG also arranges department tastings so users can meet the owners and sample offerings from local vendors in a low-risk environment to consider for their next event.
- **Report Results** – ATG offers extensive and customizable reports in the specific format requested by the institution – whether an institution reports to a state agency or to internal stakeholders. For example, diversity spending can be broken out into categories such as veteran, women or minority-owned or small business. At the individual level, reporting can spur friendly competition through an on-screen dashboard so users can see how their diversity spending stacks up against other users within the institution. ATG also helps members define metrics that allow them to track the initiative's progress, make modifications, and steadily improve over time.

Want to know more?

To find out how ATG can help you better manage your catering expenses online and support your institution's supplier diversity initiatives, please visit www.eandi.org/contracts/america-to-go. You may also contact Jennifer Nisbet, *Business Development Manager, Financial Services & Culinary*, at jnisbet@eandi.org.