

# AMP helps businesses gain competitive edge

Jin-ah Kim

As a female-owned small business here in the Bay State, Arvest Press Inc. has learned how to play the game — and the name of the game is knowing how to use the Commonwealth's resources.

For the Waltham-based commercial printing company, doing business with state departments started five years ago when it obtained certification as a Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) from the state Office of Minority and Women Business Assistance (SOMWBA).

So far, the company has won dozens of contracts with the Commonwealth. Michael Kaye, Arvest's vice president of sales and marketing, attributed the company's

success in part to the Affirmative Market Program (AMP).

"AMP was extremely helpful," said Kaye. "AMP showed us how to use that certification, how to start meeting people within the state and how to do business with them."

Kaye said he has attended workshops on conducting business with the state, vendor conferences and social events where he could network with the state procurement officials, all hosted by AMP.

Housed at the offices of the state's Operational Services Division at 1 Ashburton Place, the Affirmative Market Program was established in 1996 through Executive Order 390, which promotes state contract awards to develop and strengthen certified Minority and Women Business Enterprises, also known as M/WBEs.

"We work with the Executive

Branch and we set policies for the inclusion of minority- and women-owned businesses," said AMP Executive Director Monserrate Quinones. "We work with the vendor community for its growth and development."

Quinones said that under Executive Order 390, all departments in the Executive Branch of the state government, as well as all state entities participating in AMP, must set their own M/WBE spending targets called "fiscal

year benchmarks" that represent the total dollar amount that a department anticipates spending with M/WBEs. An AMP Plan is required for all large procurements over \$50,000.

Each department calculates a separate benchmark for individual M/WBEs based on past spending,

which is tracked and reported annually in the AMP's Fiscal Year Report.

Piles of papers and books sit on the round table and wooden desk in Quinones' office. She and AMP business coordinator Maria Gonzalez are in charge of monitoring the departments' benchmarks and their actual spending, as well as generating the annual report.

Pinning down the numbers and charts, Quinones said that statewide expenditures with certified M/WBE vendors have significantly increased in each of the last three years, with the largest spike coming last year with the support of first-year Gov. Deval Patrick.

The state's combined M/WBE expenditures on goods and services increased by 6.5 percent in 2005, by 8 percent in 2006, and by 15 percent in

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*"We work with the Executive Branch and we set policies for the inclusion of minority- and women-owned businesses."*

— **Monserrate Quinones**



Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick delivers his first State of the Commonwealth speech as House Speaker Salvatore F. DiMasi (right) looks on, Jan. 24, at the Statehouse in Boston. Patrick has pledged \$300 million in casino licensing fees in his state budget proposal, and has been an advocate for state control of gambling expansion by the Mashpee Wampanoag Indian tribe. (AP photo/Bizuyehyu Tesfaye)

# Patrick uses Indian casino bid to trumpet his own

Ken Maguire

Gov. Deval Patrick, trying to persuade lawmakers to bring casino gambling to Massachusetts, is bolstering his jobs-and-revenue pitch with the argument that the Mashpee Wampanoag Indian tribe will beat everyone to it.

The tribe wants the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to approve its request to place 540 acres in Middleborough into federal trust — a key step for the tribe to build a \$1 billion casino.

Even though the tribe's casino could be years away, Patrick is using it to try to gain support for his plan to license three resort casinos, which he says would generate thousands of jobs and \$400 million in annual tax revenue.

He's warning that the state would

lose out on a significant amount of tax money, leaving lawmakers to dig into state savings to cover budget deficits, if the tribe wins federal approval for its land.

"We can either do this or have this done to us," Patrick said.

Patrick even put \$300 million in would-be casino licensing fees — separate from annual tax revenue — in his state budget proposal announced last month, in an effort to prod the state Legislature. Top House lawmakers, including House Speaker Salvatore F. DiMasi, oppose Patrick's bill, but the governor's coalition includes labor unions and industry interests, all of whom have considerable sway in the Statehouse.

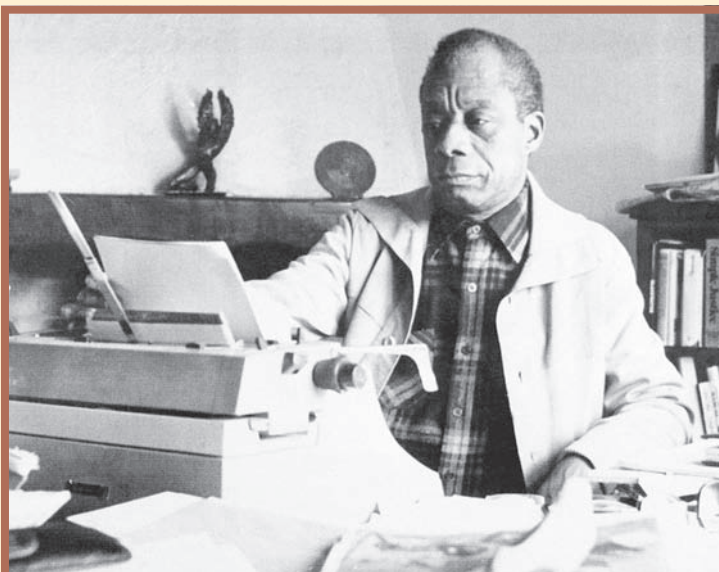
At issue is control — and revenues. Patrick wants the state to control any expansion of gambling. Under his bill, the state would have

strict oversight of three commercial casinos and tax them heavily, using the revenues to pay for road and bridge repairs and property tax credits.

Under the federal process, he'd lose control and revenue. The tribe and the governor would have to negotiate a compact, which would formalize a revenue-sharing agreement. That's how Connecticut makes money from its two Indian-run casinos, but the state would make much more by licensing commercial casinos.

"There are smarter and better ways to go down this path, but we've got to get going," Patrick told WTKK-FM during his monthly appearance last Thursday.

Tribes are limited to operating gambling that is currently legal in **Casino**, continued to page 16



Novelist James Baldwin, shown in the study of his home in St. Paul de Vence in Southern France in this 1983 file photo. Baldwin, who passed away over 20 years ago, was an outspoken intellectual and critic of racial injustice throughout his life. (AP photo)

# BALDWIN: A LITERARY STANDARD

Talia Whyte

*"I know that what I am asking is impossible. But in our time, as in every time, the impossible is the least that one can demand — and one is, after all, emboldened by the spectacle of human history in general, and American Negro history in particular, for it testifies to nothing less than the perpetual achievement of the impossible."*

— **James Baldwin**, "The Fire Next Time"

James Baldwin had fire, all right.

He was a dynamic public intellectual, a friend to some of the most important figures in history, and a brave writer who became an oracle for African Americans during the height of the civil rights movement. Baldwin motivated people around the world to think about what social change could really look like.

In the 20 years since his death, however, any memory of his illustrious career has usually been relegated

to the back annals of black history. Conventional wisdom suggests that bigotry toward Baldwin's homosexuality has kept him off par with other black luminaries.

Nonetheless, Baldwin is known for his outspoken, militant and often unpredictable viewpoints, behaviors that created countless enemies and may explain the lingering resentment.

Baldwin, in more ways than one,



was a walking contradiction. While he was an out and proud gay atheist, he was also close allies with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm

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