

PHOTOS BY KENNETH NEELY

HANKING MURPHY—From left: Pittsburgh Tom Murphy accepts appreciation from AACC board chair Gregory Spencer, past oard chair Robert Agbede and Doris Carson Williams.

Chamber luncheon marks high hopes for procurement

By C. Denise Johnson New 19th Courter
Courier Staff Writer 12/7-13/05

Far from being yet another rubber chicken luncheon, he African-American Chamber of Commerce's seventh innual business luncheon caught everyone's ear when ncoming Presidential Roundtable chair Murry Gerber innounced the goal of doubling the procurement dollars hat Pittsburgh's top 25 regional corporations spend

vith minority businesses. Gerber, president and CEO of Equitable Resources, Inc., made ris remarks before a full house of nearly 400 attendees at the Omni Villiam Penn. His remarks trigered applause and comments.

"The next step will be to work vith (chamber president) Doris Carson Williams to bridge the ap," continued Gerber. The Chamber's Presidential Roundtable is made up of top execitives of Pittsburgh's major corpo-

Current procurement numbers are being compiled to develop a : for goals; however, ench he Atman American Chamber, vhich comprises a 10-county service area in western Pennsylvania extending from West Virginia n the south up to Erie, has been preparing for the objective

which assists minority-owned business in positioning themselves to meet the procurement needs of large corporations like Equitable.

According to Gerber, Equitable is already moving toward that goal. "Our largest contact at this point has been with a minority gas marketing company for almost \$29 million.

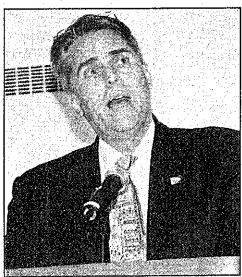
"The goal was picked to be aggressive and visionary," Gerber said after the luncheon. "It also gives us a bench-

mark against which to measure our progress. We will be happy to exceed this goal and then we will set another."

Carson Williams is excited about Gerber's challenge. "We look forward to meeting this goal because not only will it be good for our rank-and-file members, but help our corporate members expand their procurement base. This will not only be good for Pittsburgh, but also for the entire region."

The Chamber also took time to express its thanks to outgoing Pittsburgh mayor Tom Murphy for his cooperation and support during his 12-year tenure (which included the formation of the AACCWP).

"He's been with us from the very beginning, so it is fitting that we honor him on this occasion," remarked Carson Williams.



AGGRESSIVE PLAN—Equitable Resources president/CEO Murry Gerber details his aggressive plans for procurement.