



Diversity – Good business from the inside out

On the surface there are many reasons why **James Threkill** is a successful Senior National Director of Diversity Skanska USA. He is an acclaimed artist and teacher. He is an advocate for minority organizations and a leader in the community.

Text Gary Fabbri Photo Skanska Paintings James Threkill

However, it's what's beneath the surface and his passion for strengthening communities that has guided Threkill through his career and makes him a model for diversity leadership.

Threkill leads Skanska USA's commitment to proactively identify, include and support minority and women-owned businesses in the communities where they work. "We have a growing culture of inclusiveness which creates an enriching and dynamic environment for our employees," says Threkill. "It's about providing our clients with the best we have to offer."

His outreach efforts began when he received a scholarship to attend Vanderbilt University as an athlete and scholar. Upon graduation, he returned to the public housing community where he grew up and began to develop neighborhood youth art programs.

His work with the community and ability to create opportunities for minority- and woman-owned businesses are only two reasons why he received this year's Impact Award as Corporate Representative of the Year from the Tennessee Minority Supplier Development Council.

Threkill is no stranger to awards. In 1994, he received the Metropolitan Jaycees Distinguished Service Award and an Emmy Award for a mural created for the Viacom Television network. He was named CSAAM Man



of the Year in 1997 and in 1998 the YMCA Black Achievers Program named him Achiever of the Year.

When I ask him what it is that drives him to coordinate youth activities, develop outreach and fundraising programs and help woman- and minority-owned businesses, he replies, "I'm a part of the community. It's where I come from and it's something that I've always done."

He served as Special Assistant for Community Affairs and Arts in the Office of the Mayor of Nashville, Tennessee, and worked as a teacher, before making his way to Skanska.

"There's a strong business case for diversity, as well," he continues. "Skanska is recognized for partnering with woman- and minority-owned businesses on our projects, and it becomes a differentiator with our subcontractors and clients."

"We go way beyond any governmental quotas on our projects in regards to diversity issues. We want our projects to reflect the communities where they are constructed. People are proud to go to a sports stadium, for example, that has been built by people from their community. We give local talent the chance to benefit from business opportunities whenever we can. It really sets Skanska apart from the competition."



In addition to working with youth, developing outreach and fundraising programs and helping woman- and minority-owned businesses, James Threkill is also an accomplished artist.

