

Tiffany Torrey: Grant Writer Extraordinaire

Advancing the maritime community one grant at a time

Maritime grant strategist, consultant and writer, Tiffany Torrey launched her business, Torrey Enterprises, LLC, to fill a significant need that was holding back the maritime industry and mitigating the commercial success of supply chain stakeholders throughout the United States.



It is no secret to keep cargo moving and the supply chain fluid, terminal operators and port authorities need to consistently invest in their operations, technology and infrastructure, which often requires millions of dollars in upfront capital. A lack of funding often causes these projects to slow down or be canceled altogether.

Mrs. Torrey, who learned from a family friend how to locate potential funding and then strategically position and write effective grant proposals, knew there was, in fact, federal and state funding available and just how to get it. Mrs. Torrey took the risk and entered the entrepreneurial world of consulting. Once a few clients began receiving grant funding as a result of Mrs. Torrey's skilled approach to drafting a proposal, word quickly spread and before she knew it, she was the CEO of her own business with clients on the East Coast, Gulf Coast, West Coast, Great Lakes, Puerto Rico and Guam.

"Although our industry is comprised primarily of men, I have learned through my 25 years of education and experience this industry wants the right person for the job—it doesn't matter if you are a man or a woman. I know I can bring value to a team and my colleagues and customers respect me for it," said Mrs. Torrey.

One of the keys to Mrs. Torrey's approach to maritime grant writing is her decades worth of experience in the maritime and logistics space, starting from her first day as a plebe candidate at King's Point.



Mrs. Torrey began her college career at the United States Merchant Marine Academy as one of the few women enrolled in the program. Initially drawn to the school to become an Air Force pilot, she eventually fell in love with the sea, from both a military perspective as well as the commercial aspect of transporting cargo. Invited to join the Maersk Operations Training Program—which only selected three out of 500

candidates throughout the United States —Mrs. Torrey spent the next year working at terminals in Elizabeth, Oakland, and Charleston. Upon completing the training program, she began her career in Elizabeth, NJ, a no nonsense environment that fit her personality well.

“As a lifelong athlete, I have always believed in the value of discipline and fully committing to doing my part well and getting the job done. I’m a coach for my son’s travel soccer team and I try to teach that in sports, as in life, we are all going to make mistakes—but we don’t need to make excuses,” said Mrs. Torrey, who, along with playing soccer for 30 years was also a state-ranked racquetball player in South Carolina.

Over the next few years, Mrs. Torrey built her confidence and her resume the hard way, one containership at a time. As her skillset grew, so did her reputation as a leader—a woman who was respected by her colleagues and her managers for her ability to live the King’s Point motto—“Deeds Not Words”—as in, she got the job done.

Mrs. Torrey’s career moved her from NJ, where she served as a superintendent overseeing 100 longshoremen, to Charleston where she was a Port Captain with MSC. Later, she held a management position with Ceres Stevedoring in Savannah.

Although she was born in California, raised in Texas, traveled the world, and had the opportunity to experience life in multiple cities, when it was time for Mrs. Torrey to return to her roots, she opted to head back to New Jersey, where she knew this industry rewards honest, hard work.

“This is a very social business that requires trust in relationships. It is filled with strong personalities and you need to be able to hold your own so people learn to trust you. I felt connected to the folks in NJ—they were tough but also very honest and straightforward-- and I was glad we had an opportunity to come back to this area,” said Mrs. Torrey.

While Mrs. Torrey welcomed the roles that combined managerial responsibilities with the day-to-day, hands-on activities on the ships, she felt ready for a change that would fit her lifestyle as a mother.

A conversation with Beth Rooney, Deputy Director of the Port Authority of NY/NJ, encouraged Mrs. Torrey to move forward with her idea of combining her grant proposal writing expertise with her passion for maritime and supply chain operations. There was clearly a void and Mrs. Rooney felt there was no one better suited to fill it.

“One of the things I love about this industry is women tend to invest in and encourage other women. We encourage one another to challenge ourselves to grow and take advantage of all the opportunities this amazing industry has to offer,” said Mrs. Torrey.