



# Connecting the DOTs

Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization Newsletter

VOL 2, ISSUE 5 December 2023

## In This Issue

<b><u>SBA Message</u></b>	<i>page 1</i>
<b><u>OSDBU Highlights</u></b>	<i>page 2</i>
<b><u>Welcome New Staff</u></b>	<i>page 3</i>
<b><u>OSDBU on the Road</u></b>	<i>page 4</i>
<b><u>Contract with DOT</u></b>	<i>page 5 &amp; 6</i>
<b><u>DOT &amp; Small Business</u></b>	<i>page 7</i>
<b><u>Success Stories</u></b>	<i>page 8</i>
<b><u>Grant Opportunities</u></b>	<i>page 9</i>
<b><u>What's In Our Toolbox</u></b>	<i>page 10</i>

## Contact Us

### Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization

U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Email: [dot-osdbu@dot.gov](mailto:dot-osdbu@dot.gov)

Phone: [202-366-1930](tel:202-366-1930)



## A Message from the U.S. Small Business Administration, Tamara Murray



The U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Surety Bond Guarantee (SBG) Program provides contract bond guarantees to small businesses on public and private contracts and subcontracts up to \$10 million. The SBG Program aims to improve access to bonding for small and emerging businesses in construction, service, supply, and manufacturing industries who have the knowledge and skills to succeed but may need assistance with obtaining sufficient bonding.

With the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) creating many contracting opportunities for small businesses nationwide, the SBA and the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) signed a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) in September 2022. The MOU established a formal partnership to support each other's complementary missions regarding contract bond support for small businesses. USDOT's Bonding Education Program (BEP) aims to increase small businesses' access to transportation-related opportunities through workshops and resources provided by its network of Small Business Transportation Resource Centers (SBTRCs). The MOU outlines our mutual goals - information sharing, connecting small business owners with SBA authorized bond agents and surety companies, and offering free, regional BEP workshops to increase bond readiness.

Since the signing of the MOU our two agencies have expanded marketing and communication efforts and increased small business participation for these two important bonding programs. The SBG Program increased bond guarantees to small businesses by 11% last year, assisting more than 1,800 small businesses with bonding. As of September 2023, small businesses have secured over \$311 million in bonding dollars for transportation-related contracts through the USDOT BEP and the partnership between the USDOT and SBA.

For more information on the SBA's Surety Bond Guarantee Program, please visit [www.sba.gov/surety-bonds](https://www.sba.gov/surety-bonds). For transportation-related small businesses interested in becoming bond ready, please explore the [USDOT's Bonding Education Program](#).

# OSDBU HIGHLIGHTS

Updates for the Small Business Community



## Everything You Need to Know about the DOT FY24 Forecast

### What is the [DOT Procurement Forecast](#)?

The Procurement Forecast is a place for small businesses to learn what the Federal Government is planning to buy in the upcoming fiscal year. Every year by October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) publishes the [DOT Procurement Forecast](#) in compliance with Public Law 100-656. While the forecast is not intended to be all-inclusive, it is a powerful tool available to small businesses to assist in planning staffing decisions and marketing efforts to the Federal Government.



The DOT forecast is updated regularly and is the best place to find all planned procurements over the simplified acquisition threshold. As new requirements emerge, they are added to the procurement forecast in accordance with the Small Business Act. You can anticipate seeing more requirements for FY24, FY25, and beyond, as they arise – so visit the site regularly to see what's new!

### What the forecast ISN'T:

The forecast data is for planning purposes only and does not represent a pre-solicitation notice, synopsis, nor a request for quote or proposal. The forecast is not a commitment by

the government to purchase the products and services. All projected procurements are subject to revision or cancellation. Final decisions about competition type, small business participation, estimated value, or any aspect of the requirement will not be made until each procurement is initiated.

### How is the DOT Procurement Forecast unique?

One exciting feature of the DOT forecast is the "Point of Contact." We publish the name of the person that knows the most about the planned requirement. This is the requirements writer, Program Manager, and/or the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). This POC is the person that is conducting the market research and making decisions about initiating the procurement.

### Pro Tip:

Download the entire forecast in Excel and use the sort and filter tools to find requirements that match your companies NAICS codes and core capabilities. To view a complete listing of all forecasted procurements in Excel format, click the spreadsheet icon (looks like a green button with an X in the middle) on the top right of the [DOT Procurement Forecast](#).

For any questions, please email us at [dot-osdbu@dot.gov](mailto:dot-osdbu@dot.gov). Visit our website to find more about OSDBU, upcoming events, and available technical assistance: [www.transportation.gov/osdbu](http://www.transportation.gov/osdbu).



# WELCOME NEW STAFF

## Meet the New OSDBU Team Members

### Meet Gordon Everett Jr, Public Engagement Specialist



Gordon Everett, Jr joins OSDBU on detail as a Public Engagement Specialist. He comes to us from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), where he's a Communications Outreach Specialist in the Office of Aviation Safety (AVS), responsible for implementing effective and concise outreach across the organization while promoting continuous aviation safety.

Before Gordon joined the FAA, he spent seven years as a Strategic Communications and Project Management consultant supporting the Department of Defense and U.S. Intelligence Agencies. During his tenure, he helped manage one of the largest Information Technology conferences within the Intelligence Community, the Department of Defense Intelligence Information System (DoDIIS) Worldwide.

Outside of DOT, Gordon officiates Division 1 college football, enjoys working out, traveling and spending quality time with his wife Serina and their Labradoodle Caesar. A graduate of Lincoln University (MO), Gordon received his Bachelor of Science in Broadcast Journalism/ Communications. While at Lincoln, he was a four-year letterman wide receiver in football, served as the SGA's Public Relations Representative, and became a devoted member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

### Meet Teena Curry, Program Analyst



Teena Curry currently serves as a Program Analyst for the OSDBU Regional Assistance Division (RAD). RAD provides compliance oversight, program development and management to the Department's National Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) Program.

Prior to OSDBU, Teena worked in U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Acquisition and Assistance and Private Sector Engagement Hub as an Assistance and Contracting Officer and then Scalable Innovation Director. Before USAID, Teena served as a grants management specialist at AmeriCorps and analyst, tasked with procurement auditing, at the U.S. Department of Transportation. Prior to moving to the D.C. metro area, Teena served as a health and food security Peace Corps Volunteer in Madagascar where she worked at a local health center and managed community development grants.

In addition to several contracting and grants management certifications, Teena holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Washington and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree from Syracuse University.



# OSDBU ON THE ROAD

Engaging with the Small Business Community Across the Nation



## U.S. DOT SBTRCs Connect with Small Businesses at Matchmaking Event in Connecticut



The USDOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) and its Northeast regional Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) participated in the annual Department of Defense (DoD) Northeast Regional Council for Small Business Advocacy and Education Matchmaker, Business Training, and Resource Fair. The two-day small business conference was held in Groton, CT on August 9 & 10 and yielded hundreds of participants connecting with various Federal agency representatives including DoD APEX Accelerators, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), among others.

Featured speakers included Khalil Mack, Director of APEX Accelerators (previously Procurement Technical Assistance Centers/PTACs); and Larry Stubblefield, SBA Acting Associate Administrator for the Office of Government Contracting and Business Development.

*U.S. DOT OSDBU Regional Assistance Division Manager, Peter Kontakos and Northeast Regional SBTRC Project Director, Lizbeth Rodriguez attend DOD Northeast Regional Matchmaker Business Training and Resource Fair*

USDOT OSDBU and its Northeast regional SBTRC, along with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Small Business Program Office, connected with a wide array of small businesses regarding Federal resources and contracting opportunities ranging from

DOT's Connections MarketPlace platform to procurement forecasts across all DOT operating administrations inclusive of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law opportunities.

DOT representatives included Peter Kontakos, OSDBU Regional Assistance Division Manager; Lizbeth Rodriguez, Northeast regional SBTRC Project Director; Mahagoba Banu, Northeast regional SBTRC Project Coordinator; and Christine M. Sager, FAA Management and Program Analyst, Acquisition Policy and Oversight Small Business Program.



*Northeast SBTRC Project Director, Lizbeth Rodriguez and Project Coordinator, Mahagoba Banu meet with small businesses during the event.*



# CONTRACT WITH DOT

## SBTRC BIL Regional Symposiums for Small Business Opportunities

### U.S. DOT Southwest SBTRC Hosts BIL Small Business Contracting Symposium in Rancho Cordova, CA



**First photo from left to right:** Panel with Karen Nelson (CalAsian Chamber) and Jessica Bennick Shevlin (SacRT).  
**Bottom left photo:** Panelists Daniel K. Williams (Hawaii Department of Transportation) and Candace Huff (Phoenix Sky Harbor

On August 23, the Southwest Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) hosted the “*Advancing Equitable Infrastructure Opportunities: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Small Business Contracting Symposium - Southwest Region*”, a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) funded outreach event held at the Rancho Cordova City Hall in California. Approximately 150 small business owners, government agency representatives, financial institutions, prime contractors and technical assistance partners participated.

The event began with an introduction and welcome by Lucie-Anne Radimsky, Interim Director of the SW-SBTRC who highlighted the mission of the SBTRC and set the tone for the program of engagement and networking amongst the small business community.

The discussions focused on accessibility to BIL investments, state and local procurement, access to capital, and advocacy and technical assistance.

Recorded messages from U.S. DOT Secretary Pete Buttigieg and MBDA Under Secretary Donald Cravins Jr. provided context and clarity as to the opportunities and focus of the agencies to assure greater participation of small and diverse businesses within the BIL funded projects to help close the racial wealth gap. The event included an Access to Capital panel moderated by Samuel J. Boyd Jr., OSDBU’s Manager, Access to Capital Initiative, focused on how the financial community works closely together to help build bridges for businesses to seamlessly be serviced by the right advisors. The panelists represented various types and levels of financial support.





# CONTRACT WITH DOT

SBTRC BIL Regional Symposiums for Small Business Opportunities



## U.S. DOT Great Lakes SBTRC Hosts BIL Small Business Contracting Symposium in Chicago, IL



*U.S. DOT OSDBU Director, Brad Mims providing opening remarks during the symposium.*

On September 12, 2023 the USDOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) and its Great Lakes regional Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) hosted a Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Small Business Contracting Symposium at Roosevelt University's Chicago campus. The symposium was held both in person and virtually, with over 200 participants registered, ranging from small business owners, government agency representatives, financial institutions, prime contractors and technical assistance partners. The symposium equipped small businesses with insights, resources, and connections to capitalize on the various opportunities emerging from such a substantial infrastructure investment.

The event began with opening remarks from OSDBU Director, Brad Mims, welcoming and thanking all of the participants for joining along with a brief update on what OSDBU is doing in support of the BIL. The event continued with four live and engaging panel discussions highlighting Airports & Highways, moderated by Angela Washington, Senior Business Development Specialist, MBDA, Transit, moderated by Tanya J. Adams, Senior Vice President, Inclusion & Diversity, WSP USA, Resources for Small Businesses, moderated by Robert Corneilo, Principal, Cornelio Consulting and Access to Capital moderated by Samuel J. Boyd Jr., Manager, Access to Capital Initiative, U.S. DOT OSDBU.



*From left to right: Angela Washington, Senior Business Development Specialist, MBDA, Brad Mims, OSDBU Director, and DBE Program Analyst, Lynn Bailey.*

# DOT & SMALL BUSINESS

Get to Know our DOT Small Business Specialists



## Meet VOLPE's Small Business Specialist



Christopher Dooley has been with the US DOT's Volpe National Transportation Systems Center since 2021 serving as the Volpe Center's Small Business Specialist. In addition to his role as Small Business Specialist, he also serves as the Simplified Acquisition Procedures (SAP) Team Lead and as a Contracting Officer in Volpe's Operations and Simplified Acquisitions Branch. Prior to working for the Volpe Center, Chris worked for the U.S. Department of the Navy where he served as a Project Support Branch Team Lead and Contracting Officer for 4 years. Preceding his civilian government experience, Chris worked for private industry with 8 years of experience in the regulated commercial nuclear power sector which he started following his service

in the U.S. Army. Chris's educational experience includes a Bachelor's of Science (BS) degree in Business Administration, and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Leadership and Organizational Behavior from Southern New Hampshire University.

### What is VOLPE's mission?

The Volpe Center's mission is to advance transportation innovation for the public good. Volpe works to anticipate emerging transportation issues and objectively address the nation's most pressing and complex transportation challenges, particularly those solved with an intermodal, systems perspective.

### What are the most common NAICS codes for VOLPE procurements?

- 541330 - Engineering Services
- 541990 - All Other Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- 541715 - Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering and Life Sciences
- 541611 - Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
- 541511 - Custom Computer Programming Services

### How should small businesses reach out to VOLPE procurement officials and any tips?

Any small business interested in doing business with the Volpe Center may reach out the Volpe Small Business Specialist. In addition, small businesses should be on the lookout for potential Volpe procurement opportunities via the DOT [Procurement Opportunity Forecast](#) webpage, request for Information (RFI) via GSA Market Research as Service (MRAS) tool, or [SAM.gov](#).

### What are VOLPE's small business achievements from the past fiscal year?

The Volpe Center understands the importance of small businesses in the government procurement process and strives to have them deeply integrated into the procurements, either with small businesses directly or via sub-contracting efforts. In FY22, small business dollars totaled over \$44M making up a 48.4% Small Business (SB) achievement, well past their 34% goal. Volpe also surpassed their Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) and Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) goals in FY22. Are you a small business interested in direct procurement with VOLPE? Reach out to Christopher Dooley at [Christopher.Dooley@dot.gov](mailto:Christopher.Dooley@dot.gov) today!



# SUCCESS STORIES

Recognizing & Celebrating our Small Business Community

## U.S. DOT South Atlantic SBTRC propels small woman and minority owned businesses to achieve greater success



Michele Horn is the CEO and Owner of LandArt Solutions based out of Fayetteville, North Carolina. Horn has experience in art and business and has put together her two passions to create a thriving landscaping business.

Since 2008, LandArt Solutions has been providing premier landscaping services to North Carolina. LandArt believes in providing innovative and sustainable landscaping. They provide their services to residential, government, and commercial clients.

Horn and her team believe in the acronym G.R.I.T which stands for Growth, Respect, Integrity, and Teamwork. It is these beliefs and values that have helped LandArt to grow throughout the years. In fact, LandArt Solutions has been recognized as a North Carolina “Best Place to Work.”

“I have been blessed with an ongoing multi-year relationship with the SBTRC and I don't take that for granted. The SBTRC has an overwhelming amount of resources in place for women and minority owned businesses, you have to learn when to plug yourself into what is offered. Two very large personal and company growth leveraging opportunities were afforded to me through the sponsorship partners of the SBTRC; both required large commitments of my time away from my day to day business. I now approach business with more confidence, with the power of information based decision making skills, and with a network of peer entrepreneurs as accountability partners.” – Michele Horn



With a continued drive to succeed, there is no doubt that LandArt Solutions will continue to grow and thrive. LandArt has continued to get larger contracts - recently obtaining over \$1 million in contracts with Barnhill Contracting, and a \$1.4 million contract in Morrisville, NC. LandArt Solutions also has completed Federal contracts at Fort Liberty in Fayetteville.

[landartsolutions.com](http://landartsolutions.com) (910) 960-7411 1031 Robeson St. STE A Fayetteville, NC 28305

Article prepared by Jenine Stevenson



Project Director of South Atlantic SBTRC



# Regional SBTRC Updates

Technical Assistance Centers Dedicated to Small Business



## OSDBU Welcomes New Regional SBTRC Centers

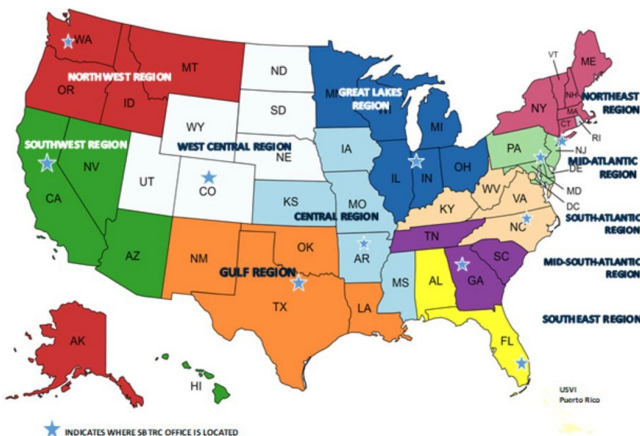
The Women's Business Development Center is a grantee of the U.S. Department of Transportation and hosts the [Central Regional Small Business Transportation Resource Center \(SBTRC\)](#) which serves the states of Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi and Missouri.

The Women of Wisdom Tri-Cities (WOW) is a grantee of the U.S. Department of Transportation and hosts the [Northwest Regional SBTRC](#) which serves the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington.

The Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council is a grantee of the U.S. Department of Transportation and hosts the [Southeast Regional SBTRC](#) which serves the states of Alabama, Florida, and the territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

## Reach out to a U.S. DOT SBTRC Today

The U.S. DOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) established the [Small Business Transportation Resource Centers](#) (SBTRCs) as a network of grantees to work closely with the transportation contracting community and other technical assistance providers to serve small and disadvantaged, transportation-related businesses.



These centers provide technical assistance to small businesses to build their capacity in order to become more competitive when bidding on USDOT procurement opportunities and federally-funded contracts.



# WHAT'S IN YOUR TOOLBOX

The Tools Your Small Business Needs to Know



## Grant Resources Available for Technical Assistance

U.S. DOT established the [Thriving Communities](#) program to provide technical assistance and capacity building resources to improve and foster thriving communities through transportation improvements. This initiative launched a new online portal called the [DOT Navigator](#) to help communities understand the best ways to apply for grants, and to plan for and deliver transformative

infrastructure projects and services. To learn about what money is available, check out potential options on the [Overview of DOT Funding and Financing](#) webpage.

## Small Business Technical Assistance Support



Check out all the essential tools for small businesses on the [OSDBU Resources and Tools](#) page. Learn more about the tools, resources and programs with our federal partners, the [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) and [Minority Business Development Agency](#) (MBDA). The SBA provides free or low-cost [local assistance](#) in an array of technical centers, financial opportunities, and programs for small businesses. MBDA invests in a national network of MBDA [Business Centers](#) and [Federal Procurement Centers](#) which offer customized business development and industry-focused services to provide greater access to capital, contracts and markets.

Don't forget to talk with our [DOT Small Business Specialists](#) in each Operating Administration whose primary role is to serve as small businesses advocates. Our Procurement Assistance Division works closely with each of these specialists to ensure that adequate procurement opportunities are made available to small businesses.

## Meet with OSDBU on the Road or Virtually



Attend an upcoming virtual event on our [Connections Marketplace platform](#), which features an online community, roundtable sessions, and business match-making services with our DOT Operating Administrations.

Join the OSDBU team at one of our upcoming small business contracting symposiums to learn more about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law opportunities in your region, navigating procurements within the region and federally, receiving technical and financial resources, and meeting one-on-one with procurement professionals and other stakeholders. To get all the info on upcoming events, go to our [event page](#) and please [subscribe to our listserv](#) for updates.