



# DOT Biz Journal

The official publication of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

[www.osdbu.dot.gov](http://www.osdbu.dot.gov)

## From the Desk of the Director

Summer is upon us and our nation's highways are abuzz with families traveling to vacation destinations across the country. It is also seeing the ongoing activity of construction projects as major infrastructure upgrades continue as a result of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which has put thousands of Americans back to work. This Summer issue of the *DOT Biz Journal* highlights some of the work being done at DOT to help the small business community learn about transportation projects that are being planned across the nation. One such effort is our recent series of Small Business Day events, which are highlighted in this issue.



In addition, we are happy to announce a new pilot bonding education program aimed at assisting qualified small and disadvantaged businesses to compete for government contracting opportunities. Through this program, OSDBU is hosting a series of pilot education workshops to help get small businesses bond ready. We know bonding is a major obstacle for small businesses, so we hope this is a first step to addressing that challenge.

The beginning of summer also sees the end of the academic year when graduates begin to transition into the workforce. In this edition, we highlight the graduation of DOT's inaugural Entrepreneurial Training and Technical Assistance Women and Girls Program intern class at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia.

We at OSDBU are pleased with the recent events that will provide continued opportunities and education to small and disadvantaged business owners who are looking to succeed in the transportation industry. We look forward to sharing them with you in this edition and hope you continue to visit [www.osdbu.dot.gov](http://www.osdbu.dot.gov) for up-to-date information on OSDBU initiatives and activities.

**Brandon Neal, Director**  
Office of Small and Disadvantaged  
Business Utilization (OSDBU)

## DOT Helps Small Businesses Get Bond Ready

On April 22, 2010, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced a new pilot Bonding Education Program (BEP) that will help qualified small and disadvantaged businesses compete for government contracting opportunities. This program is in collaboration with the Surety and Fidelity Association of America (SFAA) and is aimed at getting small businesses bond ready, which has proved to be an obstacle for many disadvantaged businesses. It will also address the issue and assist these businesses in growing by providing them with the tools they need to be "bond-ready."

This program includes a 10-week course covering an array of topics and information small businesses need to become bondable. During the course, businesses are then paired with local bond producers to work side-by-side in the bonding process.

The BEP is composed of two interrelated components:

**The Educational Workshops Component** offers a set of ten workshops which include: 1) an introductory workshop on intake and logistics; 2) eight comprehensive workshops, each of which is designed to provide information to the contractors related to improving their company's operations and thereby making it easier to be bonded or to increase their bonding capacity; and 3) a closing workshop focused on networking and next steps. *continued on page 6*

## 2010 OSDBU Small Business Vendor Day

On July 26th, OSDBU hosted the 2010 Small Business Vendor Day. The half day event hosted at DOT Headquarters welcomed over 400 small business owners and gave an overview of contracting opportunities within the agency. OSDBU Director Brandon Neal kicked off the event with Transportation Secretary LaHood and Christina Tchen, Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement. With a theme of encouraging women's involvement in transportation, Secretary LaHood announced the expansion of an internship program designed to attract women into the transportation workforce. The theme was also discussed in two proceeding panels. The first, moderated by Ginger Lew, Senior Counselor to the Director of the National Economic Council, and featuring Congresswomen Laura Richardson (D-CA) and Donna Edwards (D-MD), discussed women's *continued on page 6*

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## OSDBU Hosts a Series of Small Business Days

During the past few months, OSDBU has hosted a series of Small Business Day events in locations across the country to connect small businesses with federal, state and local government contracting opportunities and educate small business owners about available resources that will help them grow their companies. The events include workshops on Access to Capital and How to Contract with the Government and provide participants with the opportunity to meet one-on-one with government buyers to learn about the specific services and products these agencies are planning to purchase in the near future.

These events provide small business owners the opportunity to take advantage of the numerous resources the government has available. They also give them a chance to network with other businesses and perhaps form partnerships for future contracting opportunities.

The first of these events, which took place in Chicago on April 22nd, was sponsored by OSDBU along with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) in the

U.S. Department of Commerce. Secretary of Transportation LaHood and Congressman Bobby L. Rush were both on hand to welcome over 200 small business representatives.

Subsequent events in May, June and July have been held in Prince George's County, Maryland, co-hosted by Congresswoman Donna Edwards with over 200 small business owners; Baltimore, Maryland, co-hosted by Congressman Elijah Cummings with 150 attendees; Honolulu, Hawaii, co-hosted by Congresswoman Mazie Hirono with over 75 in attendance; and Minneapolis, Minnesota, co-hosted by Congressman Keith Ellison and Congresswoman Betty McCollum with over 120 attending.

These events have been extremely successful and well attended by federal, state and local government agencies, as well as the small business community. Look for similar events near you in the upcoming months.

To learn more about these and future Small Business Day events visit: [www.osdbu.dot.gov](http://www.osdbu.dot.gov)

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## Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program on Target to Award \$10 Million in R&D contracts in FY 2010

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program released two Fiscal Year 2010 solicitations providing small businesses an opportunity to submit proposals for 17 research topics. The research topics were aligned with U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood's strategic priorities of safety, infrastructure investment and livable communities, as well as the Small Business Administration (SBA) areas of emphasis – energy efficiency and renewable energy research. This year's topics, developed by participating DOT operating administrations included: driver detecting cell phone blocker systems; application component development for mobile devices; human factors transition tool for the Next Gen air traffic system; radio frequency identification licensing systems for motor vehicles; and safer, greener and user-friendly transit vehicles.

The DOT SBIR research is funded from the 2.5% set aside from each agency's extramural research and development budget. In FY 2010, the Departmental set-aside was \$7.9 million. The Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration supported research topics this year. Sponsoring

administrations also conduct the technical evaluations of proposals and serve as the Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (COTRs) for the duration of the project. The SBIR Program is administered by the SBIR Program Office at the DOT's Volpe National Transportation Systems Center in Cambridge, MA, part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration.

The SBIR Program Office has recently implemented a Commercialization Assistance Program (CAP) web portal. The intent of this initiative is to provide guidance to DOT SBIR awardees on all aspects of commercialization, including market segments and venture capitalists. In addition, the DOT SBIR Program recently became a member of the iEdison system which allows contract awardees to report inventions online. The SBIR Program Office is the first to apply this system within DOT and will use it to track inventions and patents resulting from SBIR research and development.

This year, 194 proposals from 33 states were received in response to SBIR solicitations. In fiscal year 2010, 82 percent of the 17 contracts awarded to date have gone to minority, women-owned, or HUBZone small businesses. By the conclusion of the current Fiscal Year, the SBIR Program Office estimates awarding 30 contracts totaling approximately \$10.7 million. *continued on page 6*

## Inaugural Class of Women and Girls Program Interns Graduate Spelman College

On May 13th, participants in DOT's inaugural Entrepreneurial Training and Technical Assistance Women and Girls Program intern class graduated from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Four of these graduates will begin working in transportation positions this summer. They will be employed with the Federal Aviation Administration, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), and private transportation-related businesses.

"We are very happy to see such extraordinary young women grow and thrive in this program. These interns will entice more of the nation's young women to enter into transportation-related careers and play a major role in the transportation infrastructure industry. Many thanks go to Spelman's exceptional staff for their hard work, and to the graduates for making this first intern class so successful," said Brandon Neal, OSDBU Director.

The Pilot Entrepreneurial Training and Technical Assistance Women and Girls Program was created to encourage girls to pursue careers in science, engineering, and technology and help women in the field achieve their goals. This program provides internships, mentoring and entrepreneurial training for female college students. This program is part of a broader effort, led by the White House Council on Women and Girls, to ensure that federal programs and policies take into account the distinct needs and concerns of women and girls.

### The Class of 2010:

- Michaela Cook – US Virgin Islands; Economics
- Aiesha Davie – Philadelphia, PA; Economics
- Adjji Diagne – Atlanta, GA; Economics
- Jahmese Fort – Los Angeles, CA; English
- Jasmine Gaines – Dayton, OH; English
- Jada Greene – Washington, DC; Economics
- Debrittany Mitchell – Conyers, GA; Political Science
- Jasmine Porter – Decatur, GA; Economics
- Chanel Tyler – Chicago, IL; Economics
- Cinderella Uduh – Maplewood, NJ; Economics/Management & Organization
- Dion Walker – Bronx, NY; Economics
- Alexandra Warr – Cleveland, OH; Economics
- Angelic Washington – Atlanta, GA; Economics/Management & Organization

For more information on the program visit [www.osdbu.dot.gov/WG](http://www.osdbu.dot.gov/WG)



*Entrepreneurial Training and Technical Assistance Women and Girls Program Inaugural Intern Class*

## Over \$48 Billion in Highway Funds Announced Under the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act

On April 21, 2010, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced that \$48.8 billion in highway funds is available to state departments of transportation for federal projects through the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act.

The HIRE Act, which was signed into law in March, includes a provision that extends funding authority for surface transportation programs through December 31, 2010. The law provides \$40.1 billion from the Highway Trust Fund for highway programs in FY 2010. In addition, the HIRE Act restores to state DOTs \$8.7 billion rescinded last year due to a provision in the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU), a surface transportation program authorizing legislation enacted in 2005 and expired in September 2009.

The HIRE Act provides employers with two new tax benefits if they hire certain previously unemployed workers (“qualified employees”). The first benefit is referred to as the payroll tax exemption and provides employers with an exemption from the employer’s 6.2

percent share of social security tax on wages paid to qualifying employees. This will be effective for wages paid from March 19, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

The second benefit will provide eligible businesses a general business tax credit, referred to as the new hire retention credit, of 6.2 percent of wages paid to the qualified employee over the 52 week period, up to a maximum credit of \$1,000 for each qualified employee retained for at least 52 consecutive weeks.

The provision included in the HIRE Act that extended highway programs through the end of this year now allows the Administration time to work with Congress on a more comprehensive, long-term authorization proposal. With the steady pace of summer highway construction, these funds will enable states to put individuals to work and begin a number of long-term projects.

For additional information on the HIRE Act visit [www.dot.gov/affairs/2010/dot7310.htm](http://www.dot.gov/affairs/2010/dot7310.htm) and [www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=220745,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=220745,00.html)

## Small Business Receives Major NextGen Engineering Contract

In April, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced that CSSI, Inc., of Washington, D.C., a woman-owned small business, won a contract to perform engineering work that will help transform and modernize the nation’s airspace system into the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen).

Founded in 1990 as a provider of technical services in air traffic management, CCSI now provides a broad range of services in Applied Research and Development, Operations Research, Systems Engineering, Modeling and Simulation, and Information Technology Solutions.

The contract, valued at \$280 million, is the first of up to six that will be awarded under an umbrella portfolio called System Engineering 2020 (SE-2020). SE-2020 will be the largest set of awards in FAA history with a ceiling value of \$7 billion.

Small businesses will serve as the prime contractors for two of the six possible awards under SE-2020, with all of the contracts designed to have small business participation. CSSI will take the lead over 10 subcon-

tractors in performing engineering work in support of NextGen projects.

Work performed under SE-2020 will complement NextGen programs that are currently in full deployment, such as Automatic Dependent Surveillance – Broadcast (ADS-B), the satellite-based system that controllers use to monitor and separate aircraft in the skies over certain parts of the country and will be deployed nationwide in 2013. Companies awarded SE-2020 contracts will research emerging procedures and technologies and perform systems engineering in order to determine the most appropriate way to deploy the NextGen initiatives on a broad scale.

Some new airspace procedures are being tested in demonstration flights. Examples of future enhancements that will be further evaluated under SE-2020 include Trajectory Based Operations, which allow aircrafts to operate the most efficient routes, and Optimized Profile Descents, which allow aircrafts to fly smooth, continuous descents to airports.

# ARRA follow the money

As part of our continuing effort to highlight projects that have been funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to improve the nation's transportation infrastructure and put Americans back to work, we present the progress and plans made by the states of Missouri and New Mexico. Although much of the work is completed or underway, there are still projects in the planning stages, and these are excellent opportunities for small businesses to consider when researching transportation-related contracts.

## MISSOURI

When the Recovery Act was signed by President Obama in early 2009, Missouri was one of the first states to begin highway construction with ARRA funds allocated for transportation projects. As of July 2010, the state has been awarded \$637 million in ARRA funds for 335 highway and bridge projects, of which 182 are currently underway.

In addition, the High Speed Rail grant project is also underway with all three of the required ARRA certifications finalized. Bridge plans for the Osage project are complete and the track plans are 99% complete. The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) has continued ongoing discussions with the Federal Railroad Administration and Amtrak to ensure safety requirements for the execution of stakeholder agreements and grant agreements for obligation of funds.

The largest ARRA project in Missouri, the Route 141 Improvement Project from Ladue to Olive, has also begun construction of major work including utility relocation and the clearing of trees. Once the project is complete it will improve safety and traffic flow, prevent flooding and reduce congestion along Route 141 between Olive Boulevard (Route 340) and Ladue Road (Route AB).

For more information on Missouri's transportation projects that are both active and planned, visit:

[www.modot.mo.gov/plansandprojects/](http://www.modot.mo.gov/plansandprojects/)

## NEW MEXICO

New Mexico has received more than \$282 million in ARRA funds for transportation projects statewide, including airport improvements, public transportation, and major highway construction. There are 92 highway projects, 8 transit projects and three aviation projects obligated in the state.

Just last year, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) began work on two projects along U.S. 491 at a total cost of \$33 million which was funded through the Recovery Act. The work included adding an additional lane in each direction and rehabilitation of the existing roadway.

New Mexico was recently awarded \$31 million to continue construction of U.S. 491 in McKinley and San Juan counties. The construction includes expanding the highway to four lanes from its original two. Funding was made available through DOT's ARRA funded Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program that provided funding for road, bridge, rail and other transportation projects nationwide.

In May, NMDOT announced that they will award over \$12.1 million in federal transit grants throughout the state in support of public transportation projects. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants for Fiscal Year 2011 will be awarded for the following transit programs:

- \$9.5 million for rural public transit to 24 rural public transit systems throughout the state.
- More than \$1.3 million for buses and vans to 16 organizations to provide transportation for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities.
- \$750,000 to organizations and transit systems to operate job access and reverse commute transportation.
- More than \$288,000 to transit systems for operations and capital for the New Freedom Program that supports public transportation services and alternatives that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

For information on New Mexico ARRA transportation funding visit [www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid=16555](http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid=16555)

**DOT HELPS SMALL BUSINESS GET BOND READY**

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**The Bond Readiness Component** offers one-on-one interactions with surety bond producers, underwriters and other professionals. The surety bond professionals work with small business owners on a case-by-case basis to assemble the materials necessary for a complete bond application and address any omissions and/or deficiencies that might impede the successful underwriting of a bond. To deliver this component, SFAA is joining with the designated Small Business Transportation Resource Centers (SBTRCs) and using the network of Local Surety Associations (LSAs) to identify surety professionals in each local area who will volunteer to assist the small businesses in becoming bondable or increasing their bonding capacity. In addition, the SBTRCs will provide additional technical assistance and coordinate the program at the local level.

Chicago, Dallas, and Atlanta are the three cities currently participating in the pilot program that started in June.

For more information visit:  
[www.osdbu.dot.gov/bap/bep.cfm](http://www.osdbu.dot.gov/bap/bep.cfm)

Look for the program to expand to other cities around the country after the pilot has been completed.

**2010 OSDBU SMALL BUSINESS VENDOR DAY**

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impact on public policy, identified obstacles that prevent more contracts from going to small businesses, and provided a congressional update on pending resolutions that will give greater contracting opportunities to small businesses. The second panel highlighted workforce development strategies for small businesses and featured Lydia Mercado from RITA Workforce Development and Heidi Gerding, CEO of HeiTech Services, Inc. as guest speakers. At the conclusion of the presentations, attendees were given a networking opportunity to speak with presenters, panelists, and contracting officers, as well as meet other small business owners for possible joint venture opportunities on future endeavors.

**SBIR PROGRAM ON TARGET TO AWARD \$10 MILLION**

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With over 25 active Phase I, II and III projects, the DOT SBIR Program is a vibrant and growing program that is addressing key research gaps in the Department's R&D agenda.

Since 1982, the DOT's SBIR Program has invested \$152 million in new technological innovations designed to advance the nation's transportation system by capitalizing on the valuable resources, creative capabilities and entrepreneurial spirit of the small business community.

For more information about the DOT SBIR Program: [www.volpe.dot.gov/sbir](http://www.volpe.dot.gov/sbir) or contact the SBIR Program Director, Leisa Moniz, at [leisa.moniz@dot.gov](mailto:leisa.moniz@dot.gov) or by phone at (617) 494-2051.

# calendar

**AUGUST 16**

**Asian Business Association Orange County  
 Anaheim, CA**

[http://abaoc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=68](http://abaoc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68)

**SEPTEMBER 1-2**

**Community Forum: Partnering with Communities on Major Projects to Assure Success in DBE Participation (OSDBU, FHWA, FTA, COMTO)  
 Phoenix, AZ**

**SEPTEMBER 13-16**

**2010 AASHTO National Civil Rights Conference  
 Norfolk, VA**

**SEPTEMBER 15-18**

**Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.  
 2010 Annual Legislative Conference  
 Walter E. Washington Convention Center,  
 Washington, DC**

<http://cbcfinc.org/alc-2010/registration.html>

**SEPTEMBER 21-24**

**America's Small Business Development Center  
 Network Annual Conference  
 San Antonio, TX**

[www.asbdc-us.org/conference/conference.html](http://www.asbdc-us.org/conference/conference.html)

**SEPTEMBER 22**

**Women's Business Development Center  
 Annual Entrepreneurial Women's Conference  
 Chicago, IL**

[www.wbdc.org/Calendar/EWConference.aspx](http://www.wbdc.org/Calendar/EWConference.aspx)

**SEPTEMBER 22-25**

**U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 31st Annual  
 National Convention & Business Expo  
 Dallas, TX**

[www.usbcc.com/convention/index.html](http://www.usbcc.com/convention/index.html)

**SEPTEMBER 28**

**Small Business Matchmaking event  
 Raleigh, NC**

[www.businessmatchmaking.com/events.shtml](http://www.businessmatchmaking.com/events.shtml)