Small Business Success at GSFC

Alutiiq Pacific, LLC

BY JENNIFER PEREZ,
Small Business Specialist
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Alutiiq Pacific, LLC, is an 8(a) small, disadvantaged business that competed in an 8(a) set-aside competition for the Protective Security Services contract at GSFC. The contract provides consolidated protective service operations at Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD; Wallops Flight Facility in Wallops, VA; the Independent Validation & Verification Facility in Fairmont, WV; and the Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York, NY. The security services contract provides year-round security protection of GSFC’s assets (personnel, equipment, materials, facilities, and information). Services include physical security and armed uniformed guards, patrol operations, K-9 operations, emergency medical technicians, identification management, badging, access control, security investigations, evidence collection, emergency management, incident command and response, continuity of operations, 911 operations, electronic security systems, locksmith services, and document control. A firm-fixed-price contract for core services was awarded. The contract includes an indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity (IDIQ) component that allows firm-fixed-price task orders to be issued when additional services are needed. The contract was awarded to Alutiiq Pacific, LLC, on January 23, 2013, for a total contract value of $64.6 million.

Alutiiq Pacific, LLC, proposed on the security requirement in May 2012 and competed against five other 8(a) companies. Alutiiq Pacific, LLC, won the contract by submitting a proposal that was rated as excellent in technical merit, received a high confidence rating in past performance, and proposed the lowest price. Contracting Officer Debra Kaelberer was instrumental in getting this contract awarded in less than 8 months. Debra used procurement-streamlining procedures to expedite the procurement process. The Source Evaluation Board (SEB) produced a competitive range determination, discussion sessions, and a contract award. Debra was instrumental in ensuring that the SEB ran smoothly and ahead of schedule.

The 8(a) program was designed to provide Federal contracting opportunities to socially and economically disadvantaged minority-owned businesses. Alutiiq Pacific, LLC, is a shining example of how the Government can continue to sustain, build, and preserve small businesses by maintaining the integrity of the 8(a) program.

In This Issue:

- PAGE TWO: SBS Spotlight
- PAGE TWO: AA’s Corner
- PAGE THREE: NASA Acquisition Forecast
- PAGE THREE: NASA Procurement
- PAGE FOUR: NASA Small Business Policy Update
- PAGE FOUR: NASA Small Business Legislative Update
- PAGE FIVE: NASA Glenn Research Center
- PAGE FIVE: NASA Stennis Space Center
- PAGE SIX: NASA Mentor-Protégé Program Update
- PAGE SIX: OSBP Program Manager Highlight
- PAGE SEVEN: NASA Small Business Outreach Photos
- PAGE EIGHT: Metrics Update
- PAGE EIGHT: New to OSBP
- PAGE EIGHT: Important Dates To Remember
- PAGE EIGHT: OSBP Newsletter Article Submission Schedule
- PAGE EIGHT: OSBP Staff
- PAGE EIGHT: OSBP Web Site

www.nasa.gov
SBS SPOTLIGHT

DONNA J. BRODERICK,
SMALL BUSINESS SPECIALIST
NASA GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

Tell us a little about your background: where you grew up, life experiences, and how you got into the civil service?

I've lived in the Washington metropolitan area most of my life and grew up in Hyattsville, MD. My family visited what was then Cape Canaveral when I was young, and so, like many people, I've always loved NASA. I was happy for the opportunity to work at NASA. I came to the civil service after several years in private industry and 2 years of self-employment. I sought employment in the Federal sector based on the advice of a college career counselor who advised me that Federal employment would provide many career opportunities, including the opportunity to complete my education. I started my career as a civil servant at GSFC in 1988 as a secretary. After 2 years at GSFC, I had an opportunity to work in procurement as a purchasing agent and then as a contract administrator on the Earth Observing System Data and Information System (EOSDIS) project. Next, I worked as a contract specialist and contracting officer; I supported projects including construction, engineering, and travel service contracts. I worked on an innovative environmental contract with a small business, Landfill Gas, on the Outsourcing Desktop Initiative for NASA (ODIN), an innovative NASA-wide information technology (IT) services contract, and on several engineering services contracts. While working at NASA, I received a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland University College in business management.

What made you want to become a Small Business Specialist?

After many years of working in procurement, I had a desire for new and different work experiences. Also, I grew up in a household where service and helping others were important. I wanted to work more directly with people in a capacity in which I could be of help to them. In 2011, there was an opportunity to assist with Goddard’s Small Business Conference. Because of my work on the conference, I learned firsthand that working in GSFC’s Industry Assistance Office (IAO) was a real chance to assist small businesses by helping them learn how to do business with NASA and by advocating for them. Working in the IAO enables me to apply the knowledge and skills I learned in procurement toward increasing small businesses’ presence in Federal contracting.

What is your favorite part of being a Small Business Specialist?

My favorite part of being a Small Business Specialist is helping people while advocating for small businesses. As is so often said, small business is the backbone of our Nation’s economy. This means that wherever Small Business Specialists can advocate on small businesses’ behalf, we are helping to strengthen our Nation’s economy. When small businesses succeed, it is really the people behind those businesses who are succeeding, and it’s great to be a part of that success.

In your opinion, what is the biggest issue facing small business this year or in the future?

The biggest issues facing small business are the impacts of persistent economic uncertainty and budget constraints. Economic uncertainty is linked to reduced spending in the private sector and reduced budgets in the public sector. It is also tied to reduced sales for small businesses, impacting their operations, particularly in the areas of obtaining financing and staffing. Fortunately, Federal small business incentive programs provide small business opportunities where they may not have existed otherwise.

AA’S CORNER

As I start this edition of “AA’s Corner” today, there is a lot of uncertainty about the Federal Government’s fiscal future. But there’s one thing that is very clear: NASA will remain focused on ensuring that all types of small businesses have the opportunity to bid on contracts that will further our future missions.

As usual in Federal contracting, there are a lot of new rules that affect the Agency small business program that will come into effect in the coming months as a result of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for 2012. This act deals with everything from the training of Small Business Specialists to the establishment of new guidelines on how the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will work with Federal agencies on establishing small business goals. The act also included new policies and procedures for the Mentor-Protege Program and for transparency in subcontracting and subcontracting plans. Furthermore, the act changes where in the Agency the head of the small business programs reports. The NDAA covers a gamut of items, several of which require changes to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and many of which don’t require FAR rewrites. So we will have our hands full understanding and implementing all of the changes that are outlined and training NASA’s acquisition personnel.

I am very happy with the way the Agency’s Small Business Technical Coordinator program is working to date. Over the last 6 months, I have been to several NASA outreach events and witnessed the program in action. The Center Small Business Technical Coordinators truly appear to be embracing the program and interacting with the small businesses they are counseling. This is helping the Small Business Specialists at the Centers to be able to have more contact with the small businesses looking to do business with NASA. The small businesses are also very happy dealing with personnel who truly understand both the
requirements of the Agency and the capabilities of the companies. Based on the feedback I am receiving from both the Center Small Business Technical Coordinators and the businesses that they have interacted with, it appears that the program is a big success. If you look at the NASA small business numbers since the beginning of this program, you will see significant improvements. The number of actions with small businesses increased significantly from FY 2010 to FY 2011—from 18,322 to 22,178, respectively.

Due to sequestration, changing budgets, and travel and conference restrictions, the NASA Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) regrets to announce that the 5th Annual NASA Small Business Symposium and Awards Ceremony scheduled for April 24, 2013, in Washington, DC, has been canceled. The one-on-one matchmaking sessions on April 23 are also canceled. Each NASA Center will contact its FY 2012 Small Business Advocates Awards (SBAA) and Small Business Industry Awards (SBIA) winners directly to recognize their accomplishments, which would have been highlighted at this event. Administrator Charles Bolden announced the Agency-Level SBIA winners during the annual CEO Roundtable Summit he hosted at NASA Headquarters on April 23, 2013. The Fiscal Year 2012 Agency-Level winners are A2Research, Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year; Tri Models, Inc., Small Business Subcontractor of the Year; and Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne, Inc., Large Business Prime Contractor of the Year. I recently returned from Ames Research Center, where they were holding one of the Agency’s specialized outreach events that focused on Woman-Owned Small Businesses (WOSBs). I was truly impressed with how the outreach event provided training and matchmaking opportunities for those in attendance. I personally witnessed, on several occasions during matchmaking, other Center Small Business Specialists identifying WOSBs that could potentially bid on their Center’s requirements that will be offered in the near future. NASA is planning our last focused outreach event for fiscal year 2013 at Goddard Space Flight Center on August 13, 2013. This event will focus on Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs). I’m sure there will be a large turnout that will provide plenty of opportunities for small businesses to network not only with each other, but with many NASA program and technical personnel and Small Business Specialists from the other various Centers.

In closing, as usual, I would like to thank everyone in the entire Agency for making the NASA small business program one of the best in the Federal Government.

GLENN A. DELGADO
ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR
NASA OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS

NASA Acquisition Forecast

It is NASA policy (see NASA FAR Supplement 1807.72) to prepare an annual forecast and a semiannual update of expected contract opportunities, or classes of contract opportunities, for each fiscal year. The forecast consolidates anticipated procurements (in excess of the Simplified Acquisition Threshold) at each NASA Center with the aim of increasing industries’ advance knowledge of NASA requirements and enhancing competition.

The procurements described in this forecast are expected to be solicited in this fiscal year and beyond, based on the best information available at the time of publication. All projected procurements are subject to revision or cancellation. Final decisions as to the extent of competition, small or disadvantaged business set-asides, estimated value, etc., will not be made until each procurement is initiated. The data are for planning purposes only; they do not represent a presolicitation synopsis or constitute an invitation for bid or request for proposal, nor are they a commitment by the Government to purchase the described supplies and services. You are urged to review FedBizOpps.gov and the NASA Acquisition Internet Service for the actual notice of a pending contract action.

The Consolidated Agency-wide Acquisition Forecast is provided to allow users to search multiple NASA Centers for specific types of opportunities to match their organizational interests. This tool contains “pivot table” capabilities and graphics to easily manipulate and illustrate the data. Please note that there are five separate tabs at the bottom of this Excel-based tool to facilitate the use of unique, useful datasets.

For additional information, visit http://www.osbp.nasa.gov or http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/forecast/index.html.

AA’s Corner (continued from page 6)

NASA PROCUREMENT PREPARING A SOLE-SOURCE CONTRACT IN THE 8(a) PROGRAM

BY BILL P. MCLAIN, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
NASA HEADQUARTERS OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

Here is a top-level look at what you need to do:

First, the requirement needs to be identified, and the estimated value of the contract needs to be below the threshold as described in the FAR. Now you need to find the right contractor to perform the work. Though you won’t use formal source-selection procedures, you should do a thorough evaluation of potential companies you are considering using to meet your requirement. Working with your requirements person, you should bring in representatives from companies that are in the 8(a) program and interview them to determine if their companies are capable of meeting the NASA requirement. In addition to this, you should review the companies’ past performance. It is also a good idea to talk with the customers of these companies.

Once you have picked the company to do the work, you need to get a proposal. Remember, you do not have adequate price competition, so make sure you get a thorough proposal that has a good basis for the estimates and full disclosure of direct labor rates, overhead, and fee/profit. A contractor may want to justify its rates by telling you its General Services Administration (GSA) Schedule rates. That isn’t adequate justification. Check the contractor’s rates by using the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) through a rate check and other sources. Now that you have done your thorough cost analysis, it’s time to negotiate. Make sure you don’t settle for anything other than a fair and reasonable price.

I hope this has been helpful. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 202-358-2090 or send me an e-mail at wmcnally@hq.nasa.gov.

LinkedIn

The NASA Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) has a new Facebook page! Why? NASA OSBP would like the public to have instant access to small business information. Whether it is news that impacts the small business community, outreach and matchmaking events, or procurement opportunities—we want to simplify the process.

So please take a moment to like us on Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/NASAOSBPsmallbusiness), follow us on Twitter (https://twitter.com/NASA_OSBP, and tune in to Glenn’s Blog (http://nasaoosp.blogspot.com). It will only take a few minutes of your time, and it will be well worth the effort! Besides, we would love to hear from you!
NASA Small Business Policy Update

8(a) Partnership Agreement

BY CRAIG W. BOWERS, PROCUREMENT ANALYST
NASA Headquarters Office of Procurement

NASA and the Small Business Administration have entered into a new partnership agreement (PA) allowing for the continued direct award of section 8(a) contracts by NASA without separate SBA contract review and signature. The new PA was implemented by Procurement Information Circular (PIC) 12-06 on November 28, 2012. The terms will be incorporated into the new NASA Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Supplement (NFS) Part 1819, and then the PIC will be canceled when the NFS is issued.

Section 8(a) partnership agreements with the SBA have been in place for the past decade. Without one, NASA, when awarding 8(a) contracts, would be required to contract directly with the SBA, and the SBA in turn would subcontract to the selected 8(a) contractor. Avoiding this intermediate negotiation step, with the need to prepare additional documentation and acquire SBA approval, is a great time saver for all involved. Under the agreement, the SBA officially remains the prime contractor, but as a practical matter, NASA contracting offices will deal directly with the chosen 8(a) contractor after the SBA confirms the company’s 8(a) availability and eligibility.

The agreement adds a few new requirements, emphasizes several existing terms, and recognizes several changes that have been added to the FAR. Copies of all awards, task orders, delivery orders, and modifications are to be provided to the SBA within 15 days. Contracting officers can assume that an offered requirement has been accepted in the program if they do not receive a reply from the SBA by the 6th working day for actions under $20 million. Actions below the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (SAT) do not require a separate offer and acceptance letter. Contracting officers must ensure that a Justification for Other Than Full and Open Competition (JOFCC) in accordance with FAR 6.303-1(b) is prepared when a sole-source action over $20 million is contemplated. The standard Limitation of Subcontracting clause found at 52.219-14 is to continue being included in all 8(a) awards.

There are several significant new requirements. One applies to offering letters greater than $20 million. If an SBA reply is not received by the 6th day, contracting officers are to contact the Associate Administrator for the Office of Business Development (AA/BD) at SBA Headquarters. On competitive actions, the Contracting Officer (CO) can proceed with the award if no reply is received from the AA/BD within 6 working days. In a sole-source action, the CO cannot proceed without SBA acceptance. Perhaps the most significant change is that NASA now must notify the SBA and receive approval to go outside the 8(a) program for requirement renewals that were previously in the 8(a) program. Many of you probably have heard of the unwritten rule “Once in an 8(a), always in 8(a).” Now there is a formal requirement to contact the SBA and receive a release of repetitive requirement from the 8(a) program. The most likely reason a release would be approved is to permit another specialty set-aside (e.g., WOSB, Historically Underutilized Business Zones [HUBZone], or SDVOSB) to be used in lieu of the 8(a) program. This approach is consistent with the current parity that exists between all of the socioeconomic programs. The SBA will make the release decision within 10 days.

The new partnership agreement will allow us to continue to efficiently access qualified contractors to perform NASA requirements while supporting the Nation’s and Agency’s socioeconomic goals.

NASA Office of Procurement: http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/

NASA Small Business Legislative Update

BY EVE LYON, ATTORNEY
NASA Headquarters Office of the General Counsel

The NDAA of 2013 makes significant changes to the Small Business Act. These changes increase the significance of small business by elevating the importance of achieving small business goals within an agency. Many changes require implementing regulations before the authority in the NDAA may be used.

The NDAA grants Procurement Center Representatives (PCRs) access to any procurement documentation, including unsolicited proposals. It requires that PCRs have a Level III Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FACC), that the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) and the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) establish courses on small business that are necessary to obtain a FACC, and that Small Business Specialists have a Level I FACC. Additionally, the NDAA requires training for Senior Executive Service (SES) employees and requires SESs associated with acquisition (including program managers) to assume responsibility for the agency’s success in meeting its small business goals. No implementing regulations are required.

While not changing Government-wide goals, the NDAA directs that agency goals shall also include goals for subcontracting awards; that the SBA shall revise goaling guidelines; that agency subcontracting goals are to be established on realistically achievable improvements rather than on the previous year’s subcontracting performance; that the SBA document when agency goals are lower than the Government-wide goals; and that the SBA conduct independent assessments on Government-wide goals. In their yearly report, agencies must justify their goals. The report, available on a public Web site, also must describe the tools an agency used to obtain the percentages achieved. No implementing regulations are required.

The NDAA highlights the importance of subcontracting goals by modifying the requirements for subcontracting plans to require agencies to collect and report the extent to which a contractor meets the goals. Failure to comply with the plan in good faith shall be a material breach and may be considered in any past-performance evaluations. Implementing regulations are required.

The NDAA provides tools to achieve goals for subcategories of small business by not applying limitations on subcontracting to “similarly situated covered small businesses,” e.g., excluding subcontracts with another WOSB when there is a WOSB set-aside; by recognizing that leaving the 8(a) program is a way to meet goals in other subcategories; and by removing the dollar limitations for set-asides for woman-owned businesses. Implementing regulations are required for certain provisions.

The NDAA elevates the head of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) by requiring that the head be an SES if the agency’s Chief Acquisition Officer and Senior Procurement Executive are SESs, by having the head “report directly and exclusively to the head of the agency,” and by increasing the duties of the head. No implementing regulations are required.

Other changes in the NDAA include requiring the SBA to establish a mentor-protégé program for agencies except the Department of Defense (DOD), having an appropriate Federal Web replace the Commerce Business Daily for notices of subcontracting opportunities, repealing the provisions on consolidation contained in the Small Business Job Act, reimbursing sureties to small business under certain conditions, and requiring the SBA to publish procedures when in-sourcing affects small business concerns. Implementing regulations are required.
**GLENN RESEARCH CENTER**

**TERESA L. MONACO, SMALL BUSINESS SPECIALIST**
**NASA GLENN RESEARCH CENTER**

**SMALL BUSINESS LINK AT THE LIBRARY**

Historically, libraries have proven to be vital sources of information and centers for gleaning knowledge and wisdom. Libraries can also be leveraged to help small businesses learn about conducting commerce with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). NASA’s target audience is small business owners or those considering starting their own business.

We constantly strive to obtain more small business vendors. NASA representatives recently partnered with five branches of the Cuyahoga County Public Library during their “Smart Business at Your Library” initiative.

The NASA representatives landed at five Cleveland-area library branches for unique “brown bag” lunch seminars. We discussed how to bid on NASA contracts and the resources available for small businesses. We also provided attendees a copy of our latest Acquisition Forecast. This document provides expected contract opportunities 18 to 24 months before projected award. These branches represented a cross section of Cleveland’s business communities. The number attending ranged from 1 to 12. Many attendees were locally self-employed, while others attended from out of town on my advice.

The information is useful for both small and large businesses so they can plan for proposal preparation and organize teaming arrangements.

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**STENNIS SPACE CENTER**

**MACC, A/E, and FOSC Contractors A Meet-and-Greet Success!**

**BY MICHELLE M. STRACENER, SMALL BUSINESS SPECIALIST**
**NASA STENNIS SPACE CENTER**

Recently, the NASA Stennis Office of Procurement and the Mississippi Enterprise for Technology (MSET) hosted a meet and greet featuring the awardees from the Multiple Award Construction Contracts (MACC), the Architect and Engineer (A/E) Services contracts, and the Facility Operating Services Contract (FOSC). The event was conceived with the goal of introducing local small businesses to the awardees so that their products and services might be used to address future work orders.

The MACC and A/E contract awardees will be performing the majority of work in those two areas at Stennis for the next 5 years, but no one is certain what the specific tasks might be. The meet and greet gave these prime contractors the opportunity to identify subcontractors that might help them efficiently perform on task orders. We want them to be aware of what products and services are available from local companies.

The event was the first of its kind, bringing winners of NASA multiple-award contracts together, allowing them to collect as much information on local capabilities as possible in a single session. Alternatively, a small business could introduce itself to all NASA prime contractors involved in construction, A/E, and facilities support during that same session.

“‘It’s a win-win situation;” stated Charlie Beasley, MSET’s president and CEO. “The prime contractors will know which local companies they can look to for support, and those local companies have the opportunity to support work at Stennis.”

Further, we discussed the pamphlet “Doing Business with NASA Glenn Research Center,” which includes Web site resources not only for NASA, but also other Federal agencies. It provides instructional information on small business and procurement topics (sources-sought notices, small business set-asides, and draft requests for proposals). This booklet has been a significant resource for large and small businesses. NASA representatives were also available for questions afterwards and provided follow-on contact information.

We have typically targeted larger conferences for our outreach activities, so using local libraries was a first. The libraries provided free use of their facilities, including meeting rooms, laptop computers, screens, and parking. They promoted the event in pamphlets and flyers that were distributed to their patrons. The libraries also provided NASA documents for patrons to take home. It was an opportune time to present these details at the libraries since Glenn Research Center’s (GRC) upcoming HUBZone Industry Day was only 2 months away. We promoted the event during the presentation, and many of the library attendees came to the HUBZone Industry Day. One attendee mentioned that she received work as a direct result of attending the HUBZone Industry Day.

Overall, attendees deemed the events a huge success, and the seminars further strengthened the relationships between NASA, the small business community, and the Cuyahoga County Public Library system.

This collaboration with NASA demonstrates that libraries remain important places for sharing information. Small business owners from the greater Cleveland area have benefited from the experience.
way in assisting us with business contacts as we prepare for the upcoming construction projects on the Space Center,” stated participating MACC contractor Bill Graham, ADVON Corporation.

“The recent Stennis Space Center (SSC) Multiple Award Construction Contract (MACC) will have a significant impact on the strategic NASA mission of Space Launch Systems (SLS). This valuable procurement mechanism will not only streamline the procurement process for future SSC construction projects, but it will also be a valuable tool in the event SSC experiences another major disaster such as Hurricane Katrina,” stated Jason Edge, Contracting Officer for the MACC.

Another added feature of these MACCs is the flexibility to set aside task orders among the small business subcategories, which will greatly assist SSC and, in turn, NASA in achieving their small business goals, making it a win-win situation.

From left to right: Tabisa Tepfer, NASA Headquarters OSBP; Peter Kane, Invertix; Ed Harkins, General Dynamics C4 Systems; Randy Rankin, Invertix; Christina Grado, General Dynamics C4 Systems; Gil Del Valle, NASA GSFC; Stephanie Poppe, General Dynamics C4 Systems; and Dave Leeson, General Dynamics C4 Systems.

NASA Mentor-Protégé Program Update

NASA’s Mentor-Protégé Program Brings General Dynamics and Small Business Invertix Together for Growth

BY TABISA T. TEPFER, PROGRAM MANAGER
NASA Office of Small Business Programs

General Dynamics C4 Systems entered into a mentor-protégé agreement with McLean, VA-based Invertix Corporation. The agreement is sponsored by NASA’s Mentor-Protégé Program as part of the Agency’s Space Network Ground Segment Sustainment (SGSS) program. General Dynamics is the prime system integrator for the SGSS.

The General Dynamics C4 Systems/Invertix Corporation Mentor-Protégé Agreement is a wonderful example of a partnership that exemplifies the principles of the NASA Mentor-Protégé Program. As a result of this agreement, the Agency will have a stronger industrial base, which will be a step forward in helping NASA reach its mission and goals.

Invertix Corporation is a technology company serving the national security community. A small business with 275 employees, the company addresses complex research and development, engineering, and mission support challenges in the areas of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; enterprise information technology; and communications mission systems.

As part of the mentor-protégé agreement, General Dynamics employees who are experts in quality management systems will assist Invertix in achieving an ISO 9001:2008 certification. The quality standards required for ISO 9001 certification improve systems quality and reliability; by obtaining the certification, Invertix will ensure greater systems reliability for the SGSS program.

The agreement also includes a business development initiative that will help create a larger supplier base for NASA by developing and growing Invertix as a key small business supplier for the Agency. Long-term benefits of the agreement include greater opportunities for Invertix to grow and add to the local workforce.

Invertix will become a member of the General Dynamics C4 Systems-sponsored EDGE Innovation Network, Space EDGE Innovation Center. The EDGE is an open, collaborative environment where industry, academia, nonprofit organizations, and Government entities rapidly deliver new technologies and innovation to the military, homeland security, and public safety communities. The Space EDGE Innovation Center in Seabrook, MD, will focus on the advanced technologies and innovations needed to launch NASA’s next-generation space missions.

“Invertix is honored to be a part of this important collaborative process with General Dynamics and NASA,” said Peter Kane, vice president of Invertix. “The mentor-protégé agreement is a unique opportunity for Invertix to work side by side with seasoned quality management system leaders who will help us reach our goal of achieving ISO 9001:2008 certification.”

About the Space Network Ground Segment Sustainment (SGSS) program:

In June 2010, General Dynamics C4 Systems received a contract from NASA to modernize all of the space agency’s ground station systems that provide the ground-based command, control, and communications for satellites and spacecraft. More information about General Dynamics C4 Systems expertise in building, integrating, and sustaining satellite ground systems is available at http://www.gdc4s.com/space.

Wanting to open this article with a reference to the SAT test that haunted (or tantalized) some of us from our high school days, I had to research what SAT actually stood for. “Standardized Achievement Test” was a guess, but that isn’t quite it. Maybe it stood for “Sorry About That”? Now there’s an acronym I can use. Anyway, my 20 seconds of Internet research says that while SAT once stood for “Scholastic Aptitude Test,” it now doesn’t stand for anything. An empty acronym!

But never fear, the Federal Government arrives to rescue us! That, of course, would be the Government’s version of SAT—the Simplified Acquisition Threshold. Why all the recent fuss over low-dollar procurements, specifically between $3,000 and $150,000? Well, take (1) the Small Business Act requirement that exclusively reserves all simplified acquisitions for small businesses, (2) the tendency for the Government’s actual percentage of simplified acquisition dollars awarded to small businesses to hover in the mid-60s, and (3) the recent White House Small Business Procurement Group’s attention to all things small business, and there’s your recipe for new visibility.

As you probably know, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) is an arm of the Office of Management and Budget, which itself is an arm of the Executive Office of the President. There can come a time when something has OFPP’s attention. When money is quickly found to fund a new Federal Procurement Data System—Next Generation (FPDS-NG) standard report for simplified acquisitions, and when there’s a whole new Chief Acquisition Officers Council award category created for maximizing small business participation simplified acquisitions, those are pretty good indicators.
In FY 2012, NASA's percentage of simplified acquisition dollars awarded to small businesses was 72.5 percent. Thus, NASA is doing a bit better than the Government as a whole, and the Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) thanks you for that. There are some valid reasons why this number isn't higher, such as the fact that subscriptions, licenses, and training orders with universities all count. Nevertheless, the Small Business Administration and OFPP are asking NASA, as well as all other Federal agencies, to increase our simplified acquisition metric by 5 percent, which for NASA translates to 76.1 percent. (If NASA hadn't made its overall small business goal in FY 2012, we would have been asked to increase the simplified acquisition metric by 10 percent instead of 5 percent.)

Please keep in mind that it doesn't matter whether an award is identified in FPDS-NG as a purchase order or a definitive contract, if it's within the $3,000 to $150,000 range, it counts in the simplified acquisition statistics. Calls against Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) and orders against Blanket Order Agreements (BOAs) also count. Orders against IDIQs, however, do not count as simplified acquisitions.

All of this is why OSBP is adding simplified acquisitions to Baseline Performance Review (BPR) presentations. It's also why we are asking Centers to please pay close attention to the automatic reservation of simplified acquisitions for small businesses in the upcoming months. OSBP thanks you for your support!
NEW TO OSBP

DWAYNE E. RAX,
Program Analyst (Contractor)
NASA Office of Small Business Programs

Born and raised in Louisiana, I moved to the Washington, DC, area after transferring from the University of Southern Mississippi to Howard University, where I received my bachelor’s degree. Most of my work experience has come from my time with the U.S. Department of State, where I began in 2003 within a student program. Before starting with NASA OSBP, I was an analyst working in the Bureau of Consular Affairs within the Program Management Office at the Department of State.

I look forward to meeting the challenges of this position and positively affecting the programs within my portfolio, especially the Mentor-Protégé program.

OSBP STAFF:

THE OSBP OFFICE IS A TEAM COMMITTED TO PROVIDING EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE AND INFORMATION TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

GLENN A. DELGADO, Associate Administrator

DAVID B. GROVE, Program Manager

RICHARD L. MANN, Program Manager

TABISA T. TEPFER, Program Manager

NAEEMAH A. LEE, Executive Assistant

CHRISTOPHER J. GREY, Program Analyst (Contractor)

TRUPHELIA M. PARKER, Editor/Program Analyst (Contractor)

DWAYNE RAX, Program Analyst (Contractor)

OSBP NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION SCHEDULE:

DEADLINE PUBLISHED
January 31 March
April 30 June
July 31 September
October 31 December

OSBP WEB SITE:

The NASA OSBP Web site helps individuals and companies to navigate small business policies, procedures, and best practices at NASA.

The purpose of the Web site, http://www.osbp.nasa.gov, is to share the vision of the Small Business Program at NASA, as well as provide pertinent information on how to do business with NASA.

METRICS UPDATE

FY 2013 NASA Agency Prime Goals vs. Actual Percentages
AS OF JANUARY 9, 2013, FROM FPDS-NG

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDB</td>
<td>$250,542,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(a)</td>
<td>$117,252,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUBZone</td>
<td>$13,619,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOSB</td>
<td>$82,948,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDVOSB</td>
<td>$39,573,204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small Business: 17.20% of Goals, 17.39% of Actuals

SDB: 5.00% of Goals, 8.51% of Actuals

HUBZone: 3.00% of Goals, 0.46% of Actuals

WOSB: 2.82% of Goals, 5.00% of Actuals

SDVOSB: 1.34% of Goals, 3.00% of Actuals

Data generated January 9, 2013, from FPDS-NG.

This is the first metrics report of the new fiscal year and represents the first month of FY 2013.