



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
**Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization**  
**Small Business AdVocAte**

**Notes From Scott**



I want to start this issue of the VA Small Business AdVocAte by welcoming our newest staff member, Ms. Tamika Gray. Tamika joined OSDBU on March 7<sup>th</sup> as one of our

senior small business specialists for outreach and vendor counseling. In her previous assignment, Tamika served as a contracting officer in VA's Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management, Acquisition Operations Service. Tamika is a skilled acquisition professional and a demonstrative small business advocate. Her work on behalf of small businesses in Acquisition Operations Service has been noticed and appreciated by many small businesses, particularly service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses (SDVOSB) during her tenure as a contracting officer. We are fortunate to now have her on our team. Tamika can be reached via outlook or direct dial at 202-565-

8133 (but please provide her toll-free number to small businesses so we can pay for the call -- 1-800-949-8387).

Speaking of SDVOSBs there has been some recent and important developments on this front. Most importantly is VA's implementation strategy for Executive Order 13360, the Service-Disabled Veteran Executive Order, signed by President George W. Bush on October 20, 2004. The principal reason for the Executive Order was to further Federal contracting with SDVOSBs and enhance the accomplishments of Federal departments and agencies under Public Law 108-183, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003. The Honorable Gordon Mansfield, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs has been designated under the Executive Order as VA's senior official responsible for its implementation in VA. VA contributed to the development and writing of this Executive Order – the Deputy Secretary has referred to this as “VA's Executive Order.”

VA has developed a proactive and

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**FAR Part 19-Smal Business Programs**  
**Order of Program Precedence**

By: Deborah A. VanDover, Senior Procurement Analyst

I have revised an article published a few years ago, as the topic is still a timely and confusing one, at times. Hopefully, this will assist you and alleviate some of that confusion.

1. The Contracting Officer should consider 8(a) first. The US Small Business Administration (SBA) will give priority to HUBZone 8(a) concerns.

FAR 19.800(e) Before deciding

to set aside an acquisition in accordance with Subpart 19.5, 19.13, or 19.14, the Contracting Officer should review the acquisition for offering under the 8(a) Program. If the acquisition is offered to the SBA, SBA regulations (13 CFR 126.607(b)) give first priority to HUB Zone 8(a) concerns.

2. If the incumbent is an 8(a) concern, the HUBZone program cannot **Precedence, continued on Page 2**

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be used in any recompetete, unless SBA specifically authorizes this.

FAR 19.304(d): Requirements currently being performed by an 8(a) participant or requirements SBA has accepted for performance under the authority of the 8(a) Program, unless SBA has consented to release the requirements from the 8(a) Program.

3. If the incumbent contractor is a small business, the HUBZone Sole Source procurement method cannot be used unless SBA specifically authorizes the requirement for the program.

FAR 19.1306(a): A participating agency contracting officer may award contracts to HUBZone small business concerns on a sole source basis without considering small business set-asides (see Subpart 19.5), provided the requirement is not currently being performed by a non-HUBZone small business concern.

4. The HUBZone program has priority over Small Business Set-asides.

FAR 19.501( c): For acquisitions exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold, the requirement to set aside an acquisition for HUBZone small business concerns (see 19.1305) takes priority over the requirement to set aside the acquisition for small business concerns.

5. Small Business Set-Asides:

(d) The small business reservation and set-asides requirements at 19.502-2 do not preclude award of a contract to a service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern under Subpart 19.14.

6. The Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program (DEMO) and HUBZone and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned small business programs.

FAR 19.1007(b)(2): Acquisitions in the designated industry groups must continue to be considered for placement under the 8(a) Program (see Subpart 19.8), the HUBZone Program (see Subpart 19.13), and the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Procurement Program (see Subpart 19.14).

**Small Business Programs and the Order of Precedence**

HUBZone/8(a)  
8(a)  
HUBZone

Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small  
Business Program  
Small Business Set-Aside  
Full and Open competition

A competitive acquisition method takes priority over a sole source. The DEMO program is used when required; however, SDVOSB, HUBZone and 8(a) concerns must be considered priority to considering a full and open acquisition strategy.

**Online Representations and Certifications (ORCA)**

By: **Deborah A. VanDover, Senior Procurement Analyst**



In accordance with FAR Case 2002-24, Federal Acquisition Circular (FAC) 2001-26, and FAR Subpart 4.12 – Annual Representations and Certifications, the use of ORCA became mandatory January 1, 2005. ORCA is available through the Business Partners Network (BPN) at <http://www.bpn.gov/>. Contractors will use ORCA to electronically submit annual Representations and Certifications (Reps & Certs). Contractors will no longer be required to submit hard copies of their Reps & Certs with each proposal. For contractors to be able to upload their Reps & Certs to ORCA, they must have an active Central Contractor Registration record and a Marketing Partner Identification Number. To search for a contractor's Reps & Certs, go to <http://orca.bpn.gov/publicsearch.aspx> and enter the contractor's DUNS number.

Contracting officers shall include FAR Clause 52.204-8 "Annual Representations and Certifications," in all solicitations, except those issued under FAR Part 12. For FAR Part 12 solicitations:

If the contractor has already completed Reps & Certs within ORCA, they only need to complete and submit paragraph (j) of 52.212-3 – Offeror Representations and Certifications – Commercial Items.

If the contractor has not completed Reps & Certs in ORCA, they must complete and submit paragraphs (b) through (i) of 52.212-3.

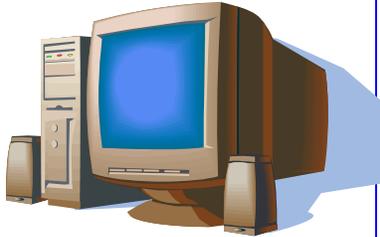
If circumstances arise where the contractor's Reps & Certs in ORCA are not accurate for a particular solicitation (i.e. business size standards for different NAICS codes), the contractor must submit the information required in FAR Clause 52.204-8 (b) or 52.212-3 (j) (whichever is appropriate).

## CENTER FOR VETERANS ENTERPRISE (CVE) CORNER

### INTRODUCING VIP VIDEO!

By: Tyrone Brown

“VIP Video” allows each owner registered in the VetBiz Vendor Information Pages (VIP) to promote their business with a three-minute video feature. We believe this visual outreach tool will enhance customer interest in your business. It will promote the use of the VIP database allowing buyers the ability not only to read about your capability but to see your business as well.



The VIP database in the Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE) may be the first national database to offer such a service at no cost to business owners. You may view a sample video clip by going to “customized search” and clicking “yes” on “Video Included.” When the report screen loads, click on the camera icon associated to view the clips. You will see there are two videos currently loaded. These are actually the Enterprising Veteran award winners from our 2004 Champions of Veterans Enterprise program that we used as sample clips when testing this new feature.

There are six different files associated with each video to accommodate the speed in which users access the Internet. We have provided the two most common video file formats **Real Player** and **Windows Media Player**. Once you’ve determined which file is appropriate just double click and the video clip will begin.

Following are some basic elements of how to construct a high quality video clip that we have compiled based upon feedback from buyers.

1. Focus on Your Objective and Indicate What Action is to be Taken
2. Sell the Benefits of Using Your Product or Service
3. Consider Using Graphics
4. Make it Simple to Learn More

#### How do I submit a commercial for video streaming?

The process is very simple. Submit a three minute maximum video to the CVE via CD-ROM or email attachment. The file format for your video can be in any of the following file formats: AVI, DV, MPEG1/2, Quick Time, AIFF, Windows Media, and MP3. If you have a file format not mentioned above please call 866-584-2344 ext 5248. The video will be reviewed by the CVE staff before it is approved to be placed into a database. The requirements for approval: (1) Does it meet the established time limits? (2) Is the technical quality of the video acceptable, i.e., is it easy to see? And

(3) Does the content reflect positively on the owner(s). CVE staff will communicate receipt of the material and any concerns that may slow posting of the clip. Any material submitted to CVE will not be returned. We are happy to provide this new enhancement to VIP and hope you all will take full advantage of it. This feature is completely optional to you. If you decline to develop a video clip, your decision will not affect your firm’s status in the VIP database.

If you are interested in the technical process of the above feature or have any questions please send questions to Tyrone Brown at [VIP@mail.va.gov](mailto:VIP@mail.va.gov).

### Vendor Information Pages Database

By: Bruce St. John



CVE is building an online database of veteran owned small businesses called Vendor Information Pages (VIP). As of March 2005, the database contains over 8,000 small businesses, of which over 3,500 are owned by service-disabled veterans.

There are over twenty searchable fields. The VIP database has several advantages over only using CCR for market research. It is very user friendly, and the user can select what fields to display in the results and can obtain the results in an Excel spreadsheet.

The enhanced VIP II launched recently with new capabilities, including Federal contract references, business owners can include a video message, owners can register in VIP to receive FedBizOpps announcements that match their NAICS and PSC codes, there is a capability for multiple NAICS searches, and more.

You can search this database at [http://vip.vetbiz.gov/general\\_user/search/default.asp](http://vip.vetbiz.gov/general_user/search/default.asp) to identify SDVOSBs by NAICS code, geographical location, and other criteria. CVE conducts a one hour orientation session to show users how to search this powerful database. To arrange for an orientation, call or e-mail Tyrone Brown at 202-303-3260, [tyrone.brown@va.gov](mailto:tyrone.brown@va.gov).

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aggressive implementation strategy which the Deputy Secretary approved on February 11, 2005. The plan has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget and to the U.S. Small Business Administration, as required. A copy of the implementation strategy is available for review and download at the following URL address:

<http://www.vetbiz.gov/library/VAstrategy.pdf>. I encourage everyone to review the Executive Order and VA's implementation strategy. This information has been made available via the web and other means of distribution to the small business community. SDVOSBs are well versed in the requirements of E.O. 13360 and the implementation strategies at the various departments and agencies. We hope our acquisition professionals will be fully prepared to discuss these documents with SDVOSBs, as we expect these businesses may attempt to ascertain VA's commitment in this area. One way to gauge VA's commitment is through discussions with contracting officers and other logisticians. Feedback we received from SDVOSBs and Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) when the Secretary's VOSB & SDVOSB Task Force Report was released was not particularly positive. Many questioned VA's commitment because when they approached contracting activities to discuss opportunities and the report's goals and recommendations they were told by VA personnel that they had never heard of the task force report. Becoming acquainted with the Executive Order and implementation strategy is a good idea and could save you from potential embarrassment when SDVOSBs bring this up for discussion.

The approved implementation strategy is the collective outcome of numerous meetings with VA officials, service organizations, SDVOSB advocates and officials from other departments and agencies that have worked very hard to ensure everything that can be done for SDVOSBs will be done.

Some of the highlights from the implementation strategy include:

- Incorporating SDVOSB & VOSB socioeconomic goals in performance plans of executives, managers and any employees who influence or are involved in the acquisition process;
- Recognizing outstanding accomplishments and contributions of Contracting Officers (COs) to achieving and exceeding VA's SDVOSB socioeconomic goal;
- Ensuring Heads of Contracting Activities (HCA) and COs include achievement of the statutory 3 percent SDVOSB goal in advance procurement

plans and their Forecasts of Contracting Opportunities;

- Requiring written justification by the HCA for each acquisition not using SDVOSB set-aside or sole source authority when sources are available;
- Requiring VA contracting activities to host at least one SDVOSB/VOSB outreach event annually and to support requests from OSDBU and VA's Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE) to attend local outreach events sponsored by other organizations;
- Encouraging contracting officers to consider SDVOSB Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) contractors first when using the FSS Program; and
- Requiring extensive use of sources sought notices as a tool for acquisitions not reserved for SDVOSB set-aside or sole source award

The approved implementation strategy will also require numerous changes to the Veterans Affairs Acquisition Regulations (VAAR), establishment of a mentor/protégée program, strengthening and providing subcontracting opportunities for SDVOSBs and update VA's Acquisition Training Program (ATP) level courses to include training on the requirements of Public Law 108-183 and Executive Order 13360.

After Deputy Secretary Mansfield approved the implementation strategy, he directed establishment of a work group chaired by OSDBU to begin implementation. The work group is meeting regularly in VACO and the Deputy Secretary has asked I provide him with regular updates on the work group's progress.

I believe that with a little bit of effort VA can be the first major Department to achieve the 3 percent goal in FY 05. I ask you to review all requirements for the remainder of FY 05, use vetbiz.gov and sources sought notices, survey Federal Supply Schedules, contact CVE and match opportunities with qualified SDVOSBs. We owe our SDVOSBs nothing less!

And finally, where are all of our talented designers and artists? Remember, we're looking to VA's acquisition and logistics professionals to design the new banner/logo for the VA Small Business Advocate. The winning design selected will receive a Special Contribution Award in the amount of \$500, as well as the respect and admiration of all of us that do not have talent for such things. The design has to be your own work; it cannot be copyrighted materials or work done by others on your behalf. As we previously noted, most everyone's children could make this look easy and have a great design done in no time, but this must be your own work product. **Scott's Notes, Continue, Page 7**

## SUBCONTRACTING CORNER

### Subcontracting Questions and Answers (Q & A)

Subcontracting Team: Mark Taylor and Lynette Simmons

OSDBU's Subcontracting Team frequently receives questions from the field pertaining to subcontracting plans. This article contains a collection of questions from the field and the responses the Subcontracting Team provided.

- **When are subcontracting plans required for contracts meeting the established dollar thresholds (\$500,000 and \$1 million for construction)?**

Subcontracting plans are required prior to award of the contract.

- **Should the "Information Subcontracting Goals" in block 25 of the VA Form 2268 be included in the solicitation?**

Yes. The 2268 Information Subcontracting Goals should be included in the solicitation package once it is advertised.

- **What happens if a contractor on a contract that meets the dollar thresholds indicates there are no subcontracting opportunities?**

FAR 19.705-2(2)(c) states, "If it is determined that there are no subcontracting possibilities, the determination must be approved at a level above the contracting officer and placed in the contract file. One step further, a copy of the determination must be sent to OSDBU for our records.

- **Are subcontracting plans required from non-profits?**

Yes, non-profits are not exempt from submitting subcontracting plans, e.g., universities, affiliates, American Red Cross, etc..

- **What happens if a prime contractor that is required to submit a subcontracting plan refuses to do so?**

The subcontracting plan is a contract requirement and is to be negotiated and approved *prior* to contract award..

- **Are there any special requirements that prime contractors must do in terms of FAR Clause 52.219-8, Utilization of Small Business Concerns? Is there a "flow down" requirement?**

Yes, contractors must comply with this policy, which is to assure that all small business concerns shall have the maximum practical opportunity to perform on contracts let by any Federal agency. Contractors must establish procedures to ensure timely payment relative to the contract to all small business concerns. Contractors must agree to cooperate in any studies or surveys conducted by the Small Business Administration or the agency that awarded the contract.

- **Can a subcontracting plan be accepted if it does not meet the Secretary's socioeconomic goals? Statutory Goals?**

Yes, however, the prime contractor must provide legitimate justification as to why the plan was submitted without meeting either set of goals. The justification should include the efforts the prime contractor made to adhere to these goals. For example, database searches, conducting outreach sessions for all small business concerns, attending trade shows, placing newspaper ads and efforts of these sort.

- **Are all subcontracting plans required to come to OSDBU for review if there is a PCR located at the facility?**

No. However, it is the contracting officer's responsibility to ensure that OSDBU receives a copy of the approved plan.

- **Is a subcontracting plan required when a contract is awarded by VA and the contractor states that it has an approved commercial plan under GSA?**

It is the contractor's responsibility to submit a copy of the approved plan to the contracting officer. The plan must be up to date and it also must reflect the products/services that the VA is awarding the contract for if not, the contracting officer can request the contractor to submit a plan for review and approval. It is also the contracting officer's responsibility to submit a copy of the plan to OSDBU.

### Useful Tips for Small Businesses

By: Lynette Simmons

The Federal Government has various databases (Central Contractors' Registration (CCR) database) <http://www.ccr.gov>, the VetBiz Vendor Information Pages (VIP) <http://vip.vetbiz.gov/default.asp>, to use in locating small businesses. A small business must be registered in CCR in order to receive prime contract awards or purchase orders from Federal buying activities. In order to do business with the Federal Government, even as a subcontractor, a small business must:

- Register in CCR and Vetbiz database
- Company's profile must be accurate and up-to-date;
- North American Industrial Classification System Codes (NAICS) should be accurate. (EXAMPLE: If your company only provides A/C and painting then only include the NAICS associated with A/C and painting. Please do not include consulting when you are not in that type of business);
- Update the company profile at the end of a contract; and
- Most of all include accurate and verifiable information regarding the company.

## Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses Keeping in Touch

By J. Terry Stewart, Small Business Specialist

On May 12, 2004, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) hosted its first monthly telephone conference call with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB). The SDVOSB were exhibitors at the March 2004 Office of Acquisition Materiel Management's Los Angeles Logistic Symposium where they displayed a wide array of services and products to Contracting Officers and Procurement Executives.

The conference calls have become a forum where participants discuss topics such as socioeconomic goal accomplishments, VA procurement opportunities, and services provided by VA's Center for Veteran Enterprise (CVE) and other topics of interest to the participants. To answer SDVOSB vendors' questions about the VA procurement system, Contracting Officers were invited to discuss the many barriers and challenges they faced when selecting a procurement strategy, particularly the implementation of Public Law 108-83. SDVOSB vendors also made the Contracting Officers aware of the many problems they faced when marketing VA.

The SDVOSB conference call is held on the third week of each month and lasts approximately 2 hours. VA's OSDBU plans to create 2 more conference call groups composed of vendors in different industries. If you would like to know more about



the conference calls and for information on how to become a participant, please contact Terry Stewart toll-free at (800) 949-8387, or at (202) 565 8130 within the Washington Metropolitan Calling Area.

## When is a Large Company Considered a Small Company? By Terry Stewart

Currently, a company that was small at the time of an award may continue to perform a requirement as a small business notwithstanding that the company is now large. In an article in the on-line GOVEXEC.COM newsletter entitled OMB Wants to Better Protect Small Business Contracts dated May 7, 2003, by Matthew Weinstock, "the loopholes largely exist on government wide acquisition contracts, commonly referred to as GWACs, and multiple awards contracts." Similarly, a Wall Street Journal article by Gwendolyn Bounds dated December 28, 2004 entitled "Small Firms Shortchanged on Federal Contracts, says "... that roughly \$2 Billion in federal contracting money believed to have gone to small business primarily went to large firms instead."

Businesses, large or small, self-represent their size for Federal procurement purposes. Anecdotally,, OSDBU has encountered situations where a small company was purchased by a large company but the company continued to be listed as a small company.



A possible solution to the problem may be to require an annual recertification for small businesses. In the past, OMB has required agencies such as NASA, GSA, Commerce and NIH to obtain annual certification from small businesses. Recertification for small businesses may ensure awards intended for small businesses will go to small businesses. Given recent media coverage and Congressional interest in this matter, stay tuned for that possible solution.

## FAR Part 7.107 (e) Alternative Strategies To Reduce Contract Bundling

By Tyrone Lassiter, Victoria Johnson and Terry Stewart

In addition to providing a Cost Benefit Analysis to demonstrate that a bundled requirement is necessary and justified when there is a finding of substantial bundling, Contracting Officer must also provide alternative strategies to reduce the effect of contract bundling FAR 7.107 (e) .

Identify the specific benefits anticipated to be derived from bundling:

The specific benefits anticipated from bundling must be identified. For example, specific benefits may include 10% saving, quality improvement, reduction in acquisition cycle, better terms and condition or any other benefits. The Contracting Officer must specify the specific benefit to be derived from bundling. General or unspecified benefits are not satisfactory.



Include an assessment of the specific impediments to participation by small business concerns as contractors that results from bundling:

The assessment must cover specific obstacles, which impedes small business concerns as a prime contractor. For example, a small business pharmaceutical distributor's inability to manufacture a specific drug may be an impediment to prime contracting or small business set aside opportunities.

Specify actions designed to maximize small business participation as contractors, including provisions that encourage small business teaming:

Actions designed to maximize small business participation as a contractor may vary. For example, mentor and protégée programs provide a venue where a small vendor can obtain practical experience working closely with a larger business. An Industry Day Event facilitates small business vendors coming together for possible teaming arrangements.

Specify actions designed to maximize small business participation as subcontractors (including suppliers) at any tier under the contract, or order, that may be awarded to meet the requirements:

Preferences and special procedures to enhance Veteran-Owned and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business participation in a procurement are actions designed to maximize small business participation as subcontractors.

Include a specific determination that the anticipated benefits of the proposed bundled contract or order justify its use; and

This requirement can be satisfied by stating that the bundled acquisition will result in a saving of at least 10% of the total contract price.

Identify alternative strategies that would reduce or minimize the scope of the bundling and the rationale for not choosing those alternatives.

Alternative strategies may include obtaining a non-manufacturer waiver, multiple awards, awarding specific line items, or carving out a specific region. Reasons for not choosing an alternative may include, time, money or lack of sufficient competition.

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Please get your designs to James T. (Terry) Stewart in our office as soon as possible. Terry may be reached at 202-565-8130 or via MS Outlook.

Thanks again for your continued support of small business programs!

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## CLAYTON HONORED BY SBA

VA Heartland Healthcare Network's (VISN 15) very own Marcus Clayton was recently honored at a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) ceremony with the "U.S. Small Business Administration 2005 Veteran Small Business Champion Award" for SBA's Wichita District Office.

According to Ms. Elizabeth Auer, SBA's Wichita District Office Director, the ceremony is held to "commemorate, with pride and gratitude, the vital role advocates and America's small business owners contribute to strengthening the Nation's economy." Regrettably, and due to a scheduling conflict related to his official VA duties, Mr. Clayton was unable to attend the award ceremony and personally receive the award.

In a letter to VA Heartland Healthcare Network Chief Logistics Officer Stan Vest, Ms. Auer expressed disappointment that Mr. Clayton was unable to attend in person, while noting Mr. Clayton's outstanding contributions to the success of small businesses in general, and veteran-owned small businesses in particular.

Mr. Clayton is well known and recognized as a demonstrative small business advocate in the small business community and veteran-owned small business community. VA's OSDBU has received many compliments over the years from small businesses and SBA extolling the efforts and commitment on the part of Mr. Clayton.

Scott Denniston and the entire OSDBU Staff congratulate Mr. Clayton for this recognition and his longstanding and continuing commitment to small businesses. Thanks for a job well done Mr. Clayton!

## CHAMPIONS OF VETERANS ENTERPRISE AWARDS

On June 14, 2005, the Honorable Gordon H. Mansfield, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs will host the Fourth Annual Champions of Veterans Enterprise Awards Ceremony at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel in Washington, DC.

Deputy Secretary Mansfield will honor individuals and organizations that put veterans and service-disabled veterans to the top of their list. Veterans in business are also honored through this program.

The Champions of Veterans Enterprise Awards formally recognize local, Departmental and other organizations, which “champion” and promote the Veterans Entrepreneurship Program. Champions are nominated and selected based on both quantitative and qualitative criteria. Awards are bestowed upon high performance individuals, contracting activities, contractors and support sector organizations for extraordinary leadership.

## SMALL BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS DEMONSTRATION (DEMO) PROGRAM EXPANDED

Federal Acquisition Circular (FAC) 05-01, dated March 9, 2005, included an Interim Rule with a request for public comment that adds a fifth “Designated Industry Group” targeted by the Demo Program (FAR Subpart 19.10).

Effective March 23, 2005, two additional North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Codes have been included in the Demo Program: NAICS 561730 covering Landscaping and NAICS 561710 covering Pest Control Services.

Although the Interim Rule provides for unrestricted competition in acquisitions of landscaping and pest control services, Acquisition professionals are reminded that FAR 19.1007(b)(2) requires acquisitions in the designated industry groups must continue to be considered for placement under the 8(a) Program (see Subpart 19.8), the HUBZone Program (see Subpart 19.13), and the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Procurement Program (see Subpart 19.14).

## FEDERAL OSDBU DIRECTORS' INTERAGENCY COUNCIL PROCUREMENT CONFERENCE

Over 2,500 individuals from all across the country attended this year's Procurement Conference sponsored by the Federal OSDBU Directors' Interagency Council. The conference was a great success with record attendance.

This national conference, held April 21st, 2005, at the Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro, MD, a close-in suburb of Washington, DC, fostered business partnerships between the Federal Government, its Prime Contractors, and small, minority, service-disabled veteran-owned, veteran-owned, HUBZone, and women-owned businesses. The *Set-Aside Alert*, an industry newsletter for small businesses describes the conference as a “must attend.”

Workshops and one-on-one counseling sessions were conducted during the event. Approximately 70 Federal departments and agencies and nearly 40 large prime contractors exhibited at the conference, the Show Place Arena exhibit area reached its full capacity.

VA was well represented at the conference by acquisition professionals from the VA Capitol Healthcare Network (VISN 5), the National Acquisition Center's Small Business Specialist and staff from the Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE) and OSDBU. With hundreds of visitors to VA's exhibit booths throughout the day, one-on-one counseling sessions and a highly informative and well-received workshop on veteran entrepreneurial programs conducted by Gail Wegner, Deputy Director for Veterans Enterprise, it was a very busy day and one that resulted in very positive feedback from many small business concerns. Our thanks to the NAC's Small Business Specialist and the VISN 5 acquisition professionals for their support and participation!

The Federal OSDBU Directors' Interagency Council Procurement Conference is held the third Thursday of each April at the Show Place Arena. Small businesses are encouraged to attend this important event. Planning is already underway for next year's conference and information will be posted at the Federal OSDBU Directors' Interagency Council website, [www.osdbu.gov](http://www.osdbu.gov).

## PCHS-3 VENDOR DAY

Efforts are already underway to re-compete the Procurement of Computer Hardware and Software (PCHS) contracts. The solicitation is tentatively scheduled to be issued in November 2005.

In an effort to improve small business participation, especially among Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs) and Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs), VA's OSDBU, in cooperation with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and the Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management are hosting a PCHS-3 Vendor Day on June 29, 2005.

It is the intent of the PCHS-3 Vendor Day to bring interested businesses together to hear from the Contracting Officer and Senior Program Officials about the PCHS-3 acquisition of IT products which encompass networks, security, healthcare automation, software, e-business, online documentation, online data services, paperless office, wireless technology, licensing, imaging, voice activated computers, personal digital assistants, maintenance, installation, and office automation.

The PCHS-3 Vendor Day is an opportunity for attendees to network and explore possible teaming or joint venture arrangements with other firms as well as potential subcontracting opportunities with large firms. The session will also assist VA acquisition professionals and program officials to gauge the level of interest and capabilities of small businesses in the various socioeconomic categories, particularly SDVOSBs and VOSBs.

If you know of SDVOSBs and VOSBs, or any small business, with the following NAICS Codes 334111; 334112; 334119; or 423430, please encourage them to attend this important event. Given the sizeable turnout expected, the Vendor Day will be held at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Thomas Jefferson Auditorium in Washington, DC. The auditorium can accommodate 500 people, however, ***all*** participants must pre-register for the event and may register by contacting Thelma Perkins or Carlton Knight, VA OSDBU, toll-free telephone 1-800-949-8387.

## MED/SURG PRIME VENDOR CONTRACTING OFFICER RECOGNIZED

Recent Med/Surg Prime Vendor Contract awards resulted in five of the six awards being made to small businesses. Ms. Maria Ramirez, Federal Supply Schedule Contracting Officer, VA National Acquisition Center was recently recognized by the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization with a Special Contribution Award for her efforts to ensure small business participation at the prime contract level with the Med/Surg Prime Vendor Program.

Ms. Ramirez selected an acquisition strategy that used a "cascading set-aside" whereby offers from the various socioeconomic categories would be considered consistent with the small business program hierarchy and before offers can be considered from large business. This acquisition strategy is generally used for large, complex acquisitions where the contracting officer's market research shows very limited numbers of small businesses capable of performing the acquisitions requirements. Using and awarding contracts under a cascading set-aside is not an easy undertaking and requires serious commitment to small businesses on the part of the contracting officer to ensure small business offers are evaluated fairly and consistent with the strategy. Such was the case with the conduct of the Med/Surg Prime Vendor re-compete.

Thanks to Ms. Ramirez's commitment to small businesses in using a cascading set-aside acquisition strategy, approximately \$70 million will be spent with small businesses over the life of the contracts if all options are exercised.

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization recently recognized Ms. Ramirez's efforts with a Special Contribution Award. Thanks again for a job well done!

## FEATURED SMALL BUSINESSES

### CENTURIA CORPORATION

Mr. Kevin Burke is the founder of the Centuria Corporation (Centuria). After his tour with the Marine, Corps, Mr. Burke went to DHH, where he became an Oracle DBA in the Office of Information Resource Management and in 1996, he started Centuria.



(l to r) Kevin Burke, Chris Winebrenner, V.P., and, Glenn Robinson Sr. Acct. Mgr.

Centuria provides the government with system analysis, design, Oracle database services, implementation and ongoing support of large and small databases. The company also provides training and project management. Centuria has provided service to the FBI, IRS, TSA, Army, Navy and other agencies and holds a GSA Schedule GS-35F-0164P.

Centuria has worked with the Marine Corps, Department of the Navy and the Defense Information Systems Agency on projects. Centuria's largest project has been the FBI Fingerprint database (AFIS). Twenty-one employees worked on this initiative for 4 1/2 years. Mr. Burke can be reached at 703 435 4600 or kburke@centuriacorp.com

### BAR CODE EQUIPMENT SERVICE, LLC

Bobby Rose is the President and CEO of BAR CODE EQUIPMENT SERVICE, LLC, a SDVOSB firm, established by Mr. Rose in 1992. Mr. Rose has 20 years of experience and holds a top Secret clearance in electronics. His degrees are in Occupational Education from Southern Illinois University and a Master in Business Administration from NOVA University.



Bobby Rose

Mr. Rose was instrumental in the working design of RF (802.11b) technology. He is an active Member of the National Convenience Store Association and was elected Chairman of a committee with the National Retail Board in 2003. He has been a member of the Uniform Code Council and AIM (Automatic Identification Technology) for many years.

Mr. Rose's company provides design competence and practicality, a help desk for technical bar code questions and

offers free telephone site surveys to Government agencies and contractors. Call Mr. Rose for accessories or hard to find bar code products. The company provides on site installation and training.

BAR CODE holds FSS Contract No. GS-35F-0656M with SIN's 132-8 for purchase of equipment, 132-12 for repair of equipment and sells hardware and software for bar code, Point of Sale, and RFID.

Mr. Rose's facility includes a completely automatic robotic system to diagnose electronic printed circuit boards. BAR CODE EQUIPMENT'S telephone number is 904-249-3862 or 888-464-2237. Fax 904-247-3862. E-mail: [brose@barcodeservice.com](mailto:brose@barcodeservice.com) and web site: [www.barcodeservice.com](http://www.barcodeservice.com).

## Featured Websites

The Vendor Information Pages (VIP) database at the Vetbiz.gov web portal contains veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned business small businesses in almost all NAICS Codes: <http://vip.vetbiz.gov/default.asp>

SUB-Net contains notices of Subcontracting Opportunities, for contractors and subcontractors <http://web.sba.gov/subnet/>

In order to receive prime contract awards or purchase orders from Federal buying activities, contractors must be registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database. This database and other helpful information is available from the at the Government's Business Partners Network Website at : [www.bpn.gov](http://www.bpn.gov).

## Victoria Johnson Detailed To Capitol Hill

Victoria Johnson, Small Business Specialist, was detailed to the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship (Committee) for six months. The detail should end on June 30, 2005.

Ms. Johnson's duties with the Committee include issues related specifically to contract bundling and also includes legislative and oversight projects, Government Accountability Office (GAO) activities and other small business procurement initiatives.

Ms. Johnson is extremely pleased to have the rare opportunity for career executive branch employees that are detailed to the legislative branch.

## OSDBU COMMUNITY PAGE

### OSDBU Welcomes New Small Business Specialist for Outreach & Vendor Counseling

Ms. Tamika Gray joined the OSDBU staff coming to us from the Office of Acquisition & Materiel Management (OA&MM), where she served as a contract specialist and a contracting officer. In addition, she also trained and served as a mentor to government-wide rotational interns.

She graduated from the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, Princess Anne, Maryland in December 1999 with a B.S. in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing. Upon graduation, she began her career as an Intern employed with a non-profit organization, *Student Conservation Association (SCA)*, Vienna, VA. SCA placed Tamika with the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI), Office of Acquisition and Property Management before entering into DOI's Government-wide Acquisition Intern Management Program, where she officially began her government career. The two-year program consisted of four rotational assignments, six months each at: Coast Guard, National Institutes of Health, VA, and Health and Human Services before accepting a permanent position with VA's OA&MM.

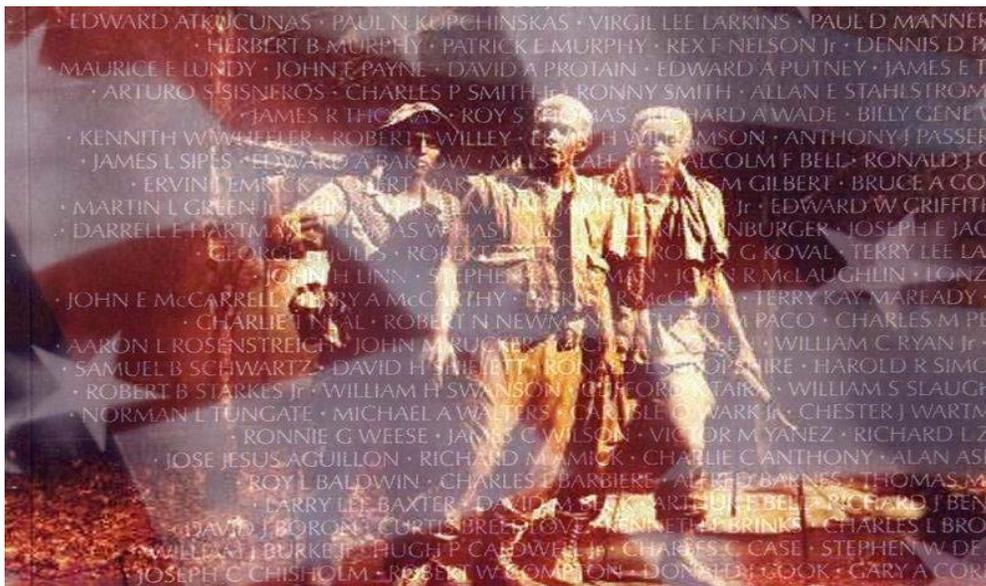
Tamika is a member of National Contract Management Association, Sigma Tau Delta, and, Rotoract Club.

Tamika is energetic individual genuinely committed to enhancing business opportunities for service-disabled veteran-owned and veteran-owned small business. Tamika currently resides in Baltimore, Maryland.

### Marsha White Joins OSDBU

Ms. Marsha D. White recently joined VA's OSDBU as the new Administrative Officer, having most recently served as a Program Support Assistant with VA's Board of Contract Appeals. Prior to her assignment with the Board, Ms. White served as a Purchasing Agent with the National Cemetery Administration's Centralized Contracting Division, Quantico, VA.

A native Washingtonian (DC, that is), Ms. White has worked for VA for 18 years. Welcome Ms. White!!!



Graphic by: Lee S. Girard

# Upcoming Events

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT/LOCATION</b>
June 14, 2005	Champion of Veterans Enterprise Awards Ceremony, Four Points Hotel,
June 15, 2005	National Contract Management Association Conference/Government Contractors Small Business Subcontracting Conference, Tyson's Corner, VA
June 20 –22, 2005	Department of the Army Veterans Conference, Las Vegas, NV
June 28—30, 2005	Women's Business Enterprise National Council National Conference and Business Fair, Las Vegas, NV
June 29, 2005	PCHS-3 Vendor Day, Washington, DC
June 30, 2005	Dept. of Transportation & Federal Aviation Administration Conference — Building Business Relationships with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned
July 19, 2005	Alliance Small Business Procurement Fair, Arlington, TX
July 19, 2005	Environmental Protection Agency Region 4 — 2005 Small Business Conference, Atlanta, GA
August 9—11, 2005	VA & Department of Health and Human Services Procurement Confer-
August 17, 2005	SBA Veteran Program, Fort Campbell, KY
August 17, 2005	SBA Small Business Contracting Symposium, Grand Prairie, TX
August 18, 2005	University of North Carolina & Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina HUBZone and Federal Procurement Conference, Lumberton, NC
September 1—2, 2005	"Opening the Doors for Small Business Conference" — General Services Administration, Phoenix, AZ
September 14, 2005	SBA Matchmaking Event, Milwaukee, WI
October 3-4, 2005	VA National Acquisition Industry Day, Chicago, IL
November 2, 2005	Alliance Small Business Procurement Fair, Atlanta, GA
November 3, 2005	Ohio Department of Development — Ohio State University, Pike, OH
November 10, 2005	Veteran Entrepreneur Procurement and Job Creation Diversity Conference, Chicago, IL

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