



Connecting the DOTs

Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization Newsletter

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Contact Us

Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

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

Email: dot-osdbu@dot.gov

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



Message from RAD Manager Peter Kontakos

SBTRC Network Empowers Small Businesses!

Happy New Year 2023! If you're a small business owner needing support to start, grow, or expand in the transportation space, look no further! USDOT OSDBU proudly manages and oversees [a network of Small Business Transportation Resource Centers](#), also referred to as SBTRCs, which provide wide-ranging support to small businesses seeking transportation-related contracts. Our centers are strategically located in 11 regions across the nation, and wear many hats serving as small business advisors, subject matter experts, capacity builders, conduits of information, and resource connectors.

The value and impacts our SBTRCs provide are evidenced by our small business success stories which include obtaining and increasing bonding capacity to gain eligibility and strategic positioning to win contracts utilizing our [USDOT Bonding Education Program](#); successfully performing work during contract administration by providing quality products and services to establish past performance credentials; and accessing capital resources to strengthen financial viability.

SBTRCs serve as USDOT OSDBU representatives in the field as our network continually establishes and further cultivates positive working relationships with a variety of regional, state, and local stakeholders inclusive of Regional and State DOT offices; Federal partnerships with the [US Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#) and [Minority Business Development Agency \(MBDA\)](#) within US Department of Commerce; and a multitude of local resources at the county, city, and town levels. Additionally, our SBTRC network positively impacts our communities and promotes workforce development by offering young women from colleges and universities opportunities to participate in transportation-related internships through the [USDOT Women & Girls in Transportation Initiative](#).

During 2023, a primary focus of our SBTRC network will be leading our efforts to develop and deliver our USDOT Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Small Business Contracting Symposium Series – Advancing Equitable Infrastructure Opportunities. In collaboration with SBA and MBDA, our SBTRCs will be partnering to host monthly symposiums to provide small businesses information and resources related to upcoming contracting opportunities generated at the Federal and state levels from the recently passed BIL. Take advantage of these opportunities to network and connect with valuable resources by checking out our [USDOT OSDBU News and Event page](#), as well as subscribing to receive our [small business updates](#).

Our entire USDOT OSDBU team is here to serve you, our small business owners; and we encourage you to leverage the power of our SBTRC network to achieve success and prosperity in 2023!

Sincerely,

Peter Kontakos

Regional Assistance Division (RAD) Manager

2022 BY THE NUMBERS

Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization 2022 Recap



\$22
Million

Secured Federal
Contracting Dollars
by SBTRC Clients



\$42
Million

Secured State
Contracting Dollars
by SBTRC Clients



\$102
Million

Secured Local
Contracting Dollars
by SBTRC Clients



15

Bonding Education
Programs (BEPs)
hosted by SBTRCs



132

BEP Graduates



\$199
Million

Bonding Capacity
Obtained by Graduates



98

Women and Girls
in Transportation
Initiative (WITI)
Events



22

WITI Interns
Hosted

308

New SBTRC
Clients Counseled

2263

SBTRC
Client Hours

6377

Connections Marketplace
Participants



21

Connections Marketplace
Webinars with USDOT & Primes



81

OSDBU
Presentations at
Outreach Events

SMALL BUSINESS DATA

Tracking Our USDOT Small Business Achievement



DOT-Wide Small Business (SB) Achievement FY21 vs FY22

Source: sam.gov
Date Last Updated
01/17/2023

Home DOT Wide

SDB %

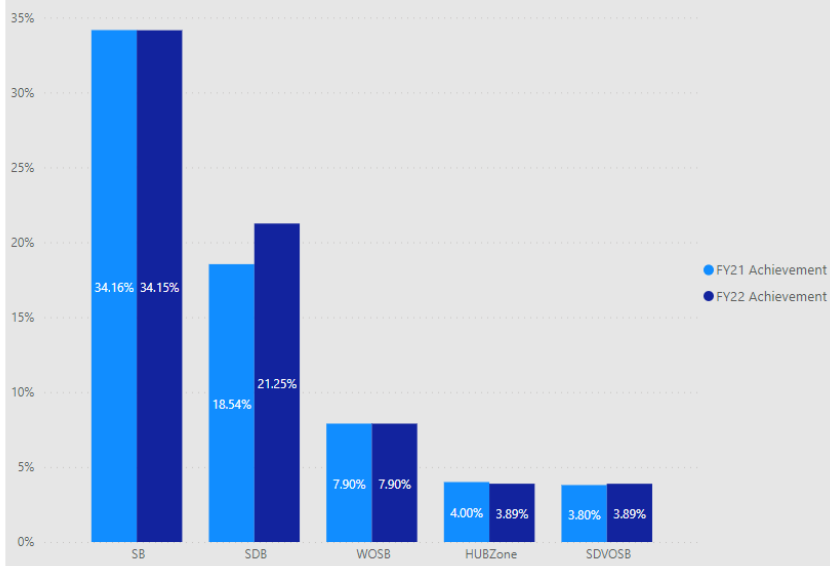
WOSB %

HUBZONE %

SDVOSB %

SB Achievement by
OA

SB Achievement by Socioeconomic Category



Total Small Business Eligible Dollars FY21

\$ 7.4 Billion

Total Small Business Eligible Dollars FY22

\$ 8.4 Billion

SB Categories	2021 SB by %	2021 SB Dollar Awards	2022 SB by %	2022 SB Dollar Awards	Increase/Decrease
SB	34.16%	\$2,523,978,625.15	34.15%	\$2,875,794,160.1	\$351,815,534.95
SDB	18.54%	\$1,369,655,226.18	21.25%	\$1,789,641,797.08	\$419,986,570.9
WOSB	7.90%	\$583,646,590.76	7.90%	\$665,232,802.44	\$81,586,211.68
HUBZone	4.00%	\$295,501,985.25	3.89%	\$327,603,953.05	\$32,101,967.8
SDVOSB	3.80%	\$280,790,441.11	3.89%	\$327,350,883.62	\$46,560,442.51

How Data Analytics Tools Help the Department Track Its Annual Small Business Performance

Every year, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) works with each federal agency to set their prime and subcontracting goals. Each federal agency has a different small business contracting goal, negotiated annually in consultation with the SBA. The SBA ensures that the sum total of all of the goals meets the 23 percent target for the federal government as well as the socio-economic goals established by statute, including the small disadvantaged business goal.

The SBA performs an annual assessment through its Small Business Scorecard to measure how federal agencies reach their small business, socio-economic prime and subcontracting goals. The Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) works closely with Operating Administrations (OA) to ensure the Department meets its goals.

As part of its small business program oversight, the OSDBU closely monitors OA performance to support DOT's small business achievements. Recently, our office hired a Data Scientist to support our monitoring and oversight efforts through data analytics and data visualization. The chart included above helps us understand how the Department performed compared with FY2021. Although we have not completed the data validation for FY2022, as of today the Department is on track to exceed all socioeconomic goals. The Department's SDB contract awards increased by \$400 million in FY2022 compared with FY2021. Additionally, OSDBU continues to enhance and develop internal dashboards to assist monitoring Departmental small business utilization and technical assistance provided to small business concerns.



SUCCESS STORIES

Recognizing & Celebrating our Small Business Community



Antonio Evangelista (third from the left) on the job site with AEAK LLC team.

Capacity Building for Successful Small Business with Southeast SBTRC Support

With over 15 years of technical and management experience in the construction industry, CEO and licensed General Contractor Antonio Evangelista, drives the mission of his construction firm, [AEAK LLC](https://aeak.net/) to be a “Single Source Solution” providing general building, bridge, road, civil works, pipeline, and specialty construction services.

Establishing the company in 2021 with one employee, Mr. Evangelista has grown AEAK project team to 11 experienced and dedicated members who share his values of hard work and perseverance. Landing two major prime contracts

within months apart, including the Fort Lauderdale Federal Courthouse and the Surfside, FL Search and Rescue, AEAK LLC is positioned for rapid growth providing critical infrastructure construction and engineering services to the government and private sector. As a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), HUBZone and Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), the company’s project pursuits are underway in the Carolinas and Central Florida with an eye on industry sectors receiving investments from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, including e-charging opportunities.

Antonio attributes his success to persistence, preparedness and paying forward the lessons learned during his journey. “Understanding the industry and nurturing business relationships are key to driving business Success. The U.S. DOT Southeast Region Small Business Transportation office is a welcomed resource”.

AEAK LLC.

Mr. Antonio Evangelista, CEO
Miami, FL

<https://aeak.net/>



AEAK LLC team working on infrastructure projects in Florida



BEP HIGHLIGHTS

Updates from the USDOT Bonding Education Program



Regional SBTRCs Presented USDOT BEPs from Coast to Coast

This past quarter, the Bonding Education Programs (BEPs) were presented from coast to coast to include our Southwest Region SBTRC (Arizona, California, Hawaii & Nevada); the Gulf Region SBTRC (Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma & Texas); the Northeast Region SBTRC (Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island & Vermont); the Mid-Atlantic Region SBTRC (Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland & Pennsylvania); and the Great Lakes Region SBTRC (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio & Wisconsin).

Surety bonds help businesses win contracts by providing the financial security that a contract will be completed. Each USDOT BEP includes at least 10 hours of workshops with industry experts in all areas that concern small business owners most – from proposal writing to contract law. Additionally, each attendee is afforded the opportunity to have private meetings with a local, SBA-approved surety bond professional, who will help attendees compile and understand the necessary components of a bond application. The BEP is tailored to businesses competing for transportation-related contracts.



Lizbeth Rodriguez, Northeast SBTRC Project Director



Lisa Leone, USDOT Bonding Education Program Manager



Michelle Moore, Mid Atlantic SBTRC Project Director

OSDBU was happy to attend and celebrate the [NE/MA Joint BEP](#) Graduation, which partnered with SKANSKA and wrapped around multiple projects in the region, including the [Hudson Tunnel project](#). Over 30 small and minority-owned businesses graduated from the program and are more prepared for the local, state, and federal opportunities awaiting as a result of the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#).



**BONDING
EDUCATION
PROGRAM**

The [Bonding Education Program \(BEP\)](#) provides a minimum of 2 BEPs per region annually. To find a BEP in your region, please reach out to the Project Director covering your state found [here](#). For questions, please contact the Bonding Education Program Manager, Lisa Leone at Lisa.Leone@dot.gov.

WITI HIGHLIGHTS

Getting Women and Girls Involved in Transportation Careers



MSA SBTRC Engages with HBCU Clark Atlanta University Women about Opportunities in Transportation Sector



OSDBU Director Shelby M. Scales and Program Analyst, Steronica Mattocks discuss transportation careers on panel.

In November 2022, OSDBU Director Shelby M. Scales and team participated in the Women and Girls in Transportation Initiative (WITI) program hosted at Clark Atlanta University, an HBCU, in Atlanta, Georgia. The OSDBU team was welcomed by Dr. G. Dale Wesson, Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs, CAU, and other leaders from the university. Program participants included over 65 students and 10 professors, primarily from the school's business and engineering schools, and students had an opportunity to learn about:

- The Biden-Harris administration's commitment to HBCUs and equity.
- Emerging technology and the wealth of opportunities in the transportation industry.
- WITI HBCU internship opportunities through the USDOT regional SBTRCs.
- Underrepresentation of women in transportation-related degrees and careers, and the average salaries for positions such as Air Traffic Controller, Highway Engineer, Digital Media Manager, and Logistics Manager.
- Pathways to Entrepreneurship Program (PEP).
- USDOT internships and fellowship opportunities (*i.e. FLIPS, STIDIG, Pathways, etc.*)
- Shared experiences from 4 panelists with transportation careers.

Following the program, a presentation was made to the OSDBU Team by Dr. Olu Olatidoye, Professor of the Dual Degree Engineering Program at Georgia Tech University and North Carolina A&T, three female engineering students and Inga S. Willis, Vice President, Brand & External Affairs of [The PROPEL Center - HBCU Consortium](#) to share their current projects; notably, the building engineering and design of the center. CAU has been selected as 1 of the 2 HBCUs for [The PROPEL Center Innovation Hub](#) which will support the entire 100+ HBCU community through a robust virtual platform accessible to all HBCU students and faculty. This center is a first-of-its-kind innovation and learning hub for the entire HBCU community that will serve as a catalytic epicenter of learning, providing students with the knowledge, skills, tools, and resources necessary to transform the nation's talent pipeline and workforce, supported by founding partners, Apple and Southern Company.



MSA Executive Director, Joe Jackson and OSDBU Director, Shelby M. Scales speak to HBCU students.

The USDOT [Women & Girls In Transportation Initiative \(WITI\)](#) administered through our Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) offers young women from colleges and universities across the country the opportunity to participate in transportation-related internships. To host a WITI intern, contact Program Analyst, Steronica Mattocks at Steronica.Mattocks@dot.gov.



WITI SUCCESS STORY

USDOT WITI Internship Instrumental in Transportation Career

Former Gulf SBTRC WITI Intern Goes on to Lead Major Transit Projects in Dallas

Since grade school, Reyna Hurtado knew she wanted a career that involved her passion for math and science. After graduating with honors from high school, Reyna enrolled at Southern Methodist University and majored in civil engineering.

Reyna's SMU advisor suggested that she consider applying for the 2014 USDOT Women in Transportation Initiative (WITI) Summer Internship Program being offered by the USDOT Gulf Region Small Business Transportation Center (SBTRC). Reyna applied, was accepted, and learned about transportation careers through her internship at ARREDONDO, ZEPEDA & BRUNZ, LLC, a civil engineering firm in Dallas. The firm was impressed by the work she completed on the projects they assigned to her, so they made her an offer to work for the firm full-time. While there, Reyna served as the project control lead for a number of transit and highway related projects.



Reyna Hurtado, Deputy Construction Manager on the DART Silver Line Job Site.



Reyna Hurtado and team on-site at a transit project.

Currently, she is the Deputy Construction Manager on the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Silver Line Project. She is responsible for the planning, design, and construction management of this \$18 million-dollar urban construction project.

The USDOT WITI was instrumental in helping Reyna land her first job as a civil engineer, so she is paying it forward! She is active in mentoring female students interested in transportation. She serves as the co-chair of the Outreach Committee of the Greater Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter of WTS Transportation YOU. This organization works with female students to expose them to the jobs available in the transportation sector and the education needed to prepare for those careers.

Reyna Hurtado, EIT
AZ&B | Arredondo, Zepeda & Brunz, LLC
rhurtado@azb-engrs.com

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Central SBTRC Notice of Funding Opportunity



Information Session for Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Central Region Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC)

January 11, 2023

Presented by OSDBU
Regional Assistance Division Team



Regional Assistance Division Program Manager, Peter Kontakos and Program Analyst, Steronica Mattocks provide a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) informational presentation

Become a USDOT SBTRC Grantee in the Central Region

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) offered an information session on January 11, 2023 as a resource for prospective applicants interested in becoming a grantee for the Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) in the Central Region which covers the states of Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, and Missouri.

The OSDBU established the SBTRCs as a network of grantees across the country, and these centers work closely with the transportation contracting community and other technical assistance providers to serve small and disadvantaged, transportation-related businesses. These centers provide technical assistance to small and disadvantaged businesses to build their capacity so they can become more competitive when bidding on U.S. DOT procurement opportunities and federally-funded contracts.

Eligible Entities

Business-centered community-based organizations, transportation-related trade associations, colleges and universities, community colleges, or chambers of commerce, registered with the Internal Revenue Service as 501 C(6) or 501 C(3) tax-exempt organizations can compete for participation in OSDBU's Small Business Transportation Resource Center (SBTRC) program in the Central region (Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, and Missouri).

NOFO Release

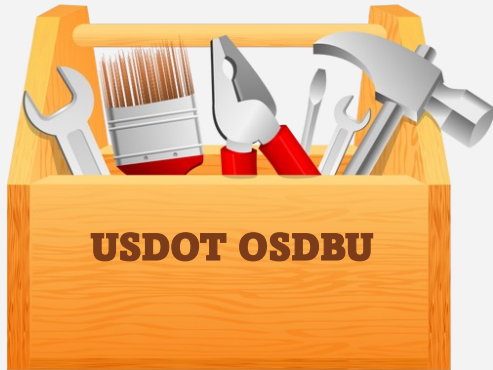
The Central Region Small Transportation Resource Center Notice of Funding Opportunity is planning to be released **March 1, 2023** on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

For questions regarding this session or the NOFO, please contact the Regional Assistance Division Program Manager, Peter Kontakos at peter.kontakos@dot.gov.



WHAT'S IN OUR TOOLBOX

The Tools Your Small Business Needs to Know



Grant Resources Available for Technical Assistance

USDOT established the [Thriving Communities](#) program to provide technical assistance and capacity building resources to improve and foster thriving communities through transportation improvements. This initiative launched a new online portal called the [DOT Navigator](#) to help communities understand the best ways to apply for grants, and to plan for and deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services. To learn about what money is available, check out potential options on the [Overview of DOT Funding and Financing](#) webpage.

Small Businesses are Small and Mighty



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

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

Meet with OSDBU on the Road or Virtually



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

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