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Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

Anne Neumann

SBPO | Program Manager (SETA)

Anne Neumann has been supporting DARPA for over 13 years and is a Program Manager in the Small Business Programs Office focusing on Policy and Outreach for the DARPA SBIR/STTR programs as well as ensuring the office remains focused on creating an environment that considers small business concerns as a primary source of innovative solutions; expanding small business relationships and training opportunities within DoD and other federal agencies; and enabling the small business community to create and transition radical, game-changing technologies. She started her career at DARPA in the Small Business Programs Office and continued onto the Information Processing Technology Office and to the Strategic Technology Office where she was a Business Financial Manager before returning to the SBIR/STTR programs. Ms. Neumann has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and Economics from Elon University.



DoD Joint Science & Technology Office for Chemical and Biological Defense (JSTO-CBD)

Larry Pollack  
Program Manager

Mr. Pollack is the Program Manager for the Chemical and Biological Defense (CBD) SBIR and STTR Programs at the Joint Science and Technology Office for Chemical and Biological Defense (JSTO-CBD). This office is located in the Chemical/Biological Technologies Department at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). His technical expertise encompasses field and laboratory chemical analysis (detection & identification) and environmental sample collection. Mr. Pollack has worked with the DoD SBIR Program for more than 10 years.

Mr. Pollack received his Master of Science degree from the Florida Institute of Technology (Melbourne, FL) and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Maryland (College Park, MD). He was recognized in 2015 by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) with a Tibbetts award for his continuing contributions to the SBIR and STTR small business programs.



Marine Corps Systems Command

Robert Renner, Jr.

Deputy Program Manager for the Small Business Innovation Research Program Office

Mr. Robert Renner, Jr., currently serves as the Deputy Program Manager for the Small Business Innovation Research Program Office at Marine Corps Systems Command. In this role, he executes the Command's vision of enabling small businesses to explore their technological potential and profit from its commercialization.

Mr. Renner recently joined the Federal civilian workforce after over a decade serving as a government contractor, and has worked for Marine Corps Systems Command's SBIR program office since August 2016. Prior to joining the SBIR office, he provided strategic communications support to the U.S. Army's Project Manager Enterprise Services and Project Manager Terrestrial Sensors offices at Fort Belvoir, Va.



National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Mark Davidson

NASA SBIR/STTR Program JPL Center Technology Transfer Lead  
(CTTL)

Mark Davidson is a member of the California Institute of Technology's Jet Propulsion Laboratory office of the Small Business Innovation and Technology Partnerships Office and NASA's Western Water Applications program office. He is the JPL Center Technology Transfer Lead for the NASA SBIR Program and a key contributor for the Water Applications program office in the coordination of projects with western states water managers.

Mark has held positions as the Corporate Director of Business Strategy at Northrop Grumman Corporation where he was responsible for evolving the company's portfolio strategy associated with all defense electronics including space, air, ground and maritime domains and naval systems including navigation, ship, weapons and engineering control. In this function he also participated in M&A, Joint Venture, divestitures and spin-off activities, and as a Corporate Treasurer and Head of Investor Relations at major aerospace parts distribution company.

He is a former Presidential appointee having served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Reserve Affairs and is a retired Navy Captain. Mark holds an MBA from the U.S.C. Marshall School of Business, a Diploma from the U.S. Navy War College, and a BA in Physical Geography from U.C.L.A.



National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Lynn Garrison

SBIR/STTR Technology Transfer Lead – Marshall Space Flight Center

Lynn Garrison serves as one of the Marshall Space Flight Center Technology Transition Leads for the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, which help the agency meet federal research and development needs and increase private-sector commercialization of innovations derived from federal R&D. Ms. Garrison also serves as Marshall's Small Business Technical Advisor in support of the MSFC Small Business Office. She was previously the resource manager for the Propulsion Laboratory and the Materials and Processes Laboratory. She was recently awarded the 2016 NASA Agency-Level Small Business Advocates Award as the Small Business Technical Advisory/Coordinator of the Year.



National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute (NIH - NCI)

Dr. Jonathan Franca-Koh

Program Director at the National Cancer Institute's SBIR  
Development Center

Dr. Jonathan Franca-Koh is a Program Director at the National Cancer Institute's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Development Center. Jonathan manages SBIR & STTR grants and contracts with a focus on cancer therapeutics and novel tools for research and drug discovery. He provides oversight throughout the award period and mentors small business applicants and awardees in developing their technology goals and commercialization strategy. Additionally, he plays an active role in several Center initiatives, including recent investor forums, workshops, and targeted funding opportunities. Prior to joining the SBIR Development Center, Jonathan was a Program Director at the NCI Division of Cancer Biology and Center for Strategic Scientific Initiatives, overseeing the Physical Sciences-Oncology Centers (PS-OC) program, a network of interdisciplinary centers that brought together physical scientists and cancer biologists. Jonathan received his PhD in Cell and Molecular Biology from the University of London's Institute of Cancer Research in 2003, and completed post-doctoral research at Johns Hopkins University and the J. Craig Venter Institute. In 2014 he completed his MBA from Johns Hopkins University, focusing on finance and health care innovation.





National Science Foundation (NSF)

Kerstin Mukerji  
Staff Associate

Kerstin Mukerji is a Staff Associate in the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP) at the National Science Foundation (NSF), Directorate for Engineering (ENG). Prior to joining IIP, Ms. Mukerji served as a Program Manager in the ENG Office of Emerging Frontiers and Multidisciplinary Activities (EFMA) and Acting Operations Specialist for the ENG Electrical, Communications and Cyber Systems Division (ECCS) Division. In FY 2016, she received the NSF Director's Award for Excellence.

Before coming to NSF in 2011, Ms. Mukerji served as a faculty member of Northeastern University's Engineering Cooperative Education (Co-Op) Program, and later as the Assistant Director of the Women in Engineering and NSF-funded Connections Programs at Northeastern. While at Northeastern, she led university/industry outreach activities as well as taught introductory engineering courses for the College of Engineering.

She holds graduate degrees in both Biological Engineering from Cornell University and Instructional Design and Evaluation from Syracuse University. Her research has focused on both biological treatment and remediation of agricultural and industrial waste, as well as STEM educational design and assessment at the middle school, high school and undergraduate level. Her research has been funded by NSF and NASA.

Before returning to academia for her second graduate degree, she spent time in industry as a practicing engineer for Weston Solutions managing abatement and remediation activities for the New England United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste (HTRW) Division. She received an award from USACE for outstanding safety performance, dedication, and service.



National Science Foundation (NSF)

Graciela (Gracie) Narcho

Deputy Division Director (DDD) for the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP)

Graciela (Gracie) Narcho is the Deputy Division Director (DDD) for the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP) as well as the Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization and Small Business Research and Development at the National Science Foundation (NSF). In her role as DDD, she manages the Division that includes the NSF SBIR/STTR, I-Corps, Industry-University Cooperative Research Centers (IUCRC), and Partnerships for Innovation (PFI) programs. She has over 25 years of experience in science and engineering administration and management.

Prior to working in IIP, Gracie worked in the NSF Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE) for ten years where she served in multiple senior positions including CISE Deputy Assistant Director, Deputy Division Director for the Division of Computer and Network Systems, and Special Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grants at the Department of Health and Human Services. She was also the program manager for several large CISE grants and agreements, including the Global Environments for Networking Innovation (GENI), the National Center for Women in IT (NCWIT), and the Computing Community Consortium (CCC). Prior to joining CISE, Gracie was a Grants Officer in the NSF Division of Grants and Agreements, where she provided business oversight of NSF's Federally Funded Research and Development Centers and large facility projects. Gracie holds a MPA in Government Contracting from George Washington University and a B.A. in Economics from Tufts University.



National Science Foundation (NSF)

Ben Schrag

Senior Program Director for SBIR/STTR

Ben Schrag is the acting Deputy Division Director for the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships at NSF, and the Senior Program Director for the SBIR/STTR program. He joined the NSF as a Program Director in 2009, leading the Advanced Materials and Instrumentation portfolio in the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs. Prior to NSF, he was the Director of Research and Development at Micro Magnetics, where he led a development effort to commercialize a new family of high-performance magnetic microsensor products for demanding consumer and military applications. Ben received his Ph.D. in Physics from Brown University.



Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR)

Donna Hillegass Attick  
Program Manager

Ms. Attick became the Program Manager of NAVAIR's Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transition (STTR) program in 2011. The SBIR program was established by congress in 1982 to stimulate technological innovation via the small business. Ms. Attick is responsible for the management and implementation of DoD, Navy, and Command policy aimed at stimulating innovation by small businesses, technical development and the successful transition of SBIR S&T products of federally funded research into the Naval Aviation Enterprise. Over 300 companies participate in the NAVAIR SBIR program through multiple solicitations each year. The NAVAIR SBIR/STTR program has grown significantly in the past few years with more 1200 contracting actions and over \$500M in Phase I, II and III contracts executed annually across all the NAVAIR locations. Additionally, Ms. Attick serves as the Technical Manager for the Navy SBIR/STTR Contracting Center of Excellence. The result is the successful technology transitions to the war fighter each year.

Ms. Attick began her career in Navy career in 1984 at the Naval Air Test Center at Patuxent River, Maryland. During her tenure, she has held multiple positions that involved innovation and leading change with technology including Information Management Department, Director and Deputy Director for Plans and Programs; PMA 231 Program Manager with the Radar E2 Modernization Program, PMA 203 Sigma/ERP Principal Program Manager; NAVAIR Deputy CIO for Business Intelligence and Applications Integration; NAVAIR, AIR 7.0B—Assistant Commander for Corporate Operations, Operations Officer and Total Force Readiness Strategic Planner/IT Architect and NAVAIR Navy ERP Business Office (NBO) Director/Program Manager. She has earned a Master's degree in Management and Business from the Florida Institute of Technology and Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from the University of Virginia.

Her Awards include Department of the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award, 2004, 2008, Department of the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Award, 2006, Department of Defense Chief Information Officer Award recipient, 2004. The NAVAIR Commander's Award for Business Operations 2005. The Naval Air Systems Command Small Business Advocacy Individual Award 2014 and DoD Vanguard – Small Business Innovation Research Award 2016.



Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA)

Jonathan Leggett

SBIR/STTR Outreach Coordinator

Mr. Leggett is responsible for planning and executing the outreach activities for the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) SBIR/STTR Program Office to educate and encourage small businesses to participate in the program. Mr. Leggett has been working with various Department of Defense Programs since May 2000. He worked two years in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Space Policy as the Office Administrative Manager. Mr. Leggett previously worked on NAVSEA's Force Advanced Warfare Technologies (FACT) Program and the Navy's Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense Program as a Test Planner. Mr. Leggett graduated from Marymount University in the spring of 2003 where he obtained his Master's in Business Technologies. He has a Bachelor degree in Business Writing from Christopher Newport University.



U.S. Air Force (USAF)

Michael Bilinski

Air Force SBIR/STTR Portfolio Manager

Michael Bilinski currently serves as the SBIR/STTR Commercialization Readiness Program (CRP) Portfolio Manager for the Air Force SBIR/STTR Program. He currently resides and supports the Air Force Research Lab in Rome NY. Michael also supports the Air Force Office of Scientific Research at multiple locations. He has active duty and industry experience. Michael started his career as an All-Source Intelligence Analyst in the U.S. Army. As an analyst Michael supported the All-Source Analysis System Program (ASAS) and the Trojan Spirit Program both in Korea with the 532nd MI Battalion and with the 103MI Intelligence Battalion 3rd Infantry Division. His industry experience includes working as a Senior Systems analyst and Geo-Spatial analyst 16 years for BAE systems at the Air Force Research Lab in Rome N.Y. He has worked for the SBIR/CRP program since October of 2016. Michael has a Bachelor's Degree in History from St. Bonaventure University and a Masters in History from Central Michigan University. Michael was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal among other service awards.



U.S. Air Force (USAF)

Dave Pope

Program Outreach AFRL/SB - Peerless Technologies Corp.

Dave Pope currently serves as the Program Outreach Specialist for the Air Force SBIR/STTR Program. His background consists of technical writing, audio/visual engineering, as well as communications and marketing as a contractor for the Air Force. He has held positions including technical writing and database manager for the BigSafari contract on the Predator and C130 variants. He has also worked recording graduate level classes for students at the Air Force Institute of Technology in their distance learning program. Supplemental and other course material recorded has been used at the campuses of University of Dayton and Virginia Tech. In his current position, Mr. Pope helps prospective SBIR companies get in contact with Air Force directorates, attends SBA and SBIR events for matchmaking sessions, gathers metrics, and works as a key grip for SBIR success story and seeding the future videos.

He has a Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communications from Wright State University. Prior to his current assignment, Dave Pope was an audio/visual engineer at the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.



U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Charles Cleland

Transportation Program Specialist in the Federal SBIR National Program Leader

Charles Cleland received his B.A. from Wabash College in 1961, and a Ph.D. in Plant Physiology from Stanford University in 1966. He spent two years at Michigan State University (1966-68) as a postdoctoral research fellow studying the hormonal control of flowering. He continued his research on the physiology and biochemistry of flowering as an Assistant Professor of Biology at Harvard University (1968-74), Visiting Assistant Professor of Botany at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (1974-75), and Plant Physiologist at the Smithsonian Institution Environmental Research Center (1975-87). During this period, he authored over 30 scientific publications. Dr. Cleland joined the USDA as Director of the SBIR program in May of 1987. In 1998 he received a National Tibbetts Award in recognition of his contributions to the SBIR program. In 2018 he received the Small Business Technology Council 2018 Champion of Small Business Technology Commercialization Award. Today he continues to work with the USDA SBIR program as one of ten National Program Leaders with responsibility for different parts of the SBIR Program.





U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Elden Hawkes  
Program Specialist

Elden is a Program Specialist and coordinates and implements the procedures for the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) related to the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. This includes planning, developing, and providing logistical expertise for competitive SBIR grants and applications and special projects related to the advancement of the SBIR program.

Prior to joining NIFA, he served as the Policy and Development Coordinator for the American Fisheries Society. He holds a B.S. in Environmental Science and Marine Science and an M.S. in Food and Agriculture with a concentration in Natural Resource Management both from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.



U.S. Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Research Service  
(USDA – ARS)

Cathleen Cohn  
Technology Transfer Liaison

Cathy Cohn serves as the USDA-ARS Technology Transfer Liaison in the Office of Technology Transfer. Cathy's duties involve outreach activities and overseeing the Agricultural Research Partnerships (ARP) Network, a public private partnership model which expands the impact and reach of ARS technology transfer efforts.

Prior to this position, she served as the Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) and Licensing Officer for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). She also served as the NIST Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program Manager and Marketing and Outreach Coordinator.



U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

Christopher O'Gwin  
Outreach and Assistance Program Manager

The mission of the DOE SBIR/STTR Programs Office is to manage the administration and evaluation of about 2,000 Phase I and Phase II grant applications each year. The annual budget of the DOE SBIR/STTR programs is \$205M and enables the DOE to award approximately 400 Phase I and II grants every year.

Chris is principally responsible for managing the DOE SBIR/STTR Outreach and Assistance program. In this capacity, he facilitates a nationwide effort to develop and increase its underrepresented small business research and development base in search of SBIR/STTR grant opportunities.

Chris has worked for the DOE since November 1987, holding positions of leadership in both administrative and technical organizations. He received a BS in Business Education from Longwood University and an MS in Government from the Johns Hopkins University.



U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Dusty Lang

SBIR Management and Program Analyst

In 1998 Dusty began working at Patuxent River Naval Air Station at the Hazardous Materials Warehouse. After subsequent positions in the Information Resource Management Office and PMA-207, in 2006 she moved to the Naval Air Systems Command Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) office. During her time in the NAVAIR SBIR office, she served as the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Lead, with a brief intermission, from 2015-2016, as the Department of the Navy STTR/STP Program Manager. In 2016 she moved to the Department of Homeland Security SBIR program.



U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

Joshua Arnold  
General Engineer

Joshua Arnold is a General Engineer in the Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration Office of Pipeline Safety, Washington, DC. He has worked at DOT PHMSA since October 2015. At PHMSA, Joshua is a Research and Development manager for the university and small business programs, conducts special permit reviews, and is a composite piping subject matter expert. Prior to joining PHMSA, Joshua worked at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in the Bio-Acoustic & Flow Laboratory. He studied mechanical engineering at Washington State University, earning his Bachelor of Science in 2011 and Master of Science in 2013, with an emphasis on acoustics and thermofluids.



U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

Kenneth Blacks

Transportation Program Specialist

Kenneth Blacks, a Transportation Program Specialist in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Office of Research, Demonstration, and Innovation (TRI), is the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program manager.

A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Kenneth received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and his Master's in Public Administration from The Ohio State University. In his spare time Kenneth enjoys volunteering, working out, and attending live Jazz concerts. An interesting fact about Kenneth is that he sailed on a schooner from the Port of Miami to St. Andros Island in the Bahamas.



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

April Richards  
Program Manager

April Richards is the Program Manager of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA's SBIR program focuses on supporting small businesses to develop and commercialize novel environmental technologies needed to address high-priority issues such as water treatment, air quality, land revitalization, homeland security, manufacturing and sustainable materials management. She has worked at EPA for over 15 years and is also the team lead for the People Prosperity and the Planet (or P3) Program, a student design competition. April has worked as a fellow on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee where she provided technical expertise on environmental issues. She previously worked for an environmental engineering consulting firm in Florida primarily in drinking water treatment. She has a Master's degree in Civil/Environmental Engineering and is a professional engineer.



U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

NaThanya Ferguson  
Supervisory Innovation Development Program Specialist

NaThanya Ferguson is currently a Supervisory Innovation Development Program Specialist in the Office of the Associate Commissioner for Innovation Development. Her office focuses on outreach to and engagement of independent inventors, small businesses, entrepreneurs, university inventors, and underserved communities across America. NaThanya joined the USPTO in 1989.

During her twenty-nine year tenure at the USPTO, NaThanya has worked as a Paralegal Specialist in the Patents Technology Centers, Lead Patent Analyst for the Patent Reengineering Lab, Management and Program Analyst in the Science and Technology Information Center, Contracting Officer Technical Representative in the Office of Data Management, and Project Manager in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Patent Operations.

NaThanya is a recipient of numerous awards including a Department of Commerce Gold Medal Award in 2015 for her contribution to the innovative and collaborative implementation of the First Inventor to File statutory provisions of the America Invents Act, a Department of Commerce Distinguished Career Award in 2011 for continued outstanding service, and a Silver Medal Award in 1999 for her contribution to the development and implementation of the Patent Reengineering initiative to increase quality of products and services and increase customer and employee satisfaction.





U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

Brittany Sickler

Senior Innovation Policy Advisor, SBIR/STTR

Brittany Sickler serves as outreach, training, and partnership strategist for the SBA's Office of Investment and Innovation. Her primary duties support the advancement of the Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/ STTR) programs, which enable small businesses to explore their technological potential and profit from its commercialization. She oversees initiatives to increase understanding of SBIR/STTR opportunities with SBA offices and partner networks across the country, as well as manages the agency's Federal and State Technology (FAST) Partnership Program. Brittany spent almost four years in SBA's North Dakota District Office as an Economic Development Specialist, building and strengthening connections throughout the state, particularly with regional startup networks and rural communities. She also served as Special Advisor in SBA's Office of Entrepreneurial Development, advancing strategic initiatives and coordinating SBA's first Virtual Conference.

Prior to SBA, Brittany served in Guatemala as a Peace Corps Volunteer and Volunteer Leader in the Sustainable Community Tourism program, a combination of economic development and environmental conservation. She was a Masters International Fellow, completing a Master's in International Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University. She also holds degrees in Business Administration and Spanish from Indiana Wesleyan University. Her career in economic development started in Southern Florida with microlender ACCION USA, providing small business loans to individuals who could not access traditional credit.



U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

Star Wilbraham

Senior Advisor, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

Star Wilbraham is on detail to SBA's Office of Innovation assisting with several projects/programs including the SBIR Road Tour. In her regular role, she is the Senior Advisor for SBA's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs serving as a liaison to elected and appointed officials of state, county, local, and tribal governments, the organizations that represent them, as well as to other federal agencies. While at SBA, Star has also worked with the Office of Government Contracting and Business Development and the Office of Disaster Assistance's Program Policy and Evaluation team.

In addition to her SBA experience, Star has worked extensively with community development financial institutions (CDFIs) and other organizations supporting underserved and underrepresented communities across the country. She worked for several years with the U.S. Department of the Treasury's CDFI Fund and as an independent consultant. Star has a Master of Science in Policy and Program Management from Carnegie Mellon University and a Bachelor of Business Administration from James Madison University. She also completed the Coro Fellows Program in Public Affairs (Los Angeles). She currently lives and works in the Washington, D.C. area.



U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)  
**Office of Investment and Innovation**

John Williams  
Director of Innovation and Technology

Mr. John Williams is the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Director of Innovation and Technology. His primary responsibility is for Federal policy implementation and oversight, of the \$2.5 B per year Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs across all participating agencies. He also manages the Growth Accelerator program, Federal and State Technology Partnership (FAST) program.

Prior to joining the SBA in December of 2014, Mr. Williams served as the Director of the Navy SBIR and STTR programs. Through his leadership the Navy led the way in supporting the acquisition and transition of SBIR/STTR technologies, awarding more Phase III contracts than the rest of the DOD combined. His career with the Navy spanned 27 years.

Mr. Williams is a member of the Senior Executive Service (SES), has a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland College Park, and a Masters in Engineering Management from George Washington University.