



**SBIR Road Tour**  
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U.S. Air Force (USAF)

James Sweeney

Manager, SBIR/STTR Commercialization Readiness Program (CRP)

James A. Sweeney III currently serves as Manager for the Air Force SBIR/STTR Commercialization Readiness Program (CRP). His background consists of both U.S. Air Force (USAF) and Industry experience. He has held several positions at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH to include Program Manager for: F119 engine Flight Test for the F-22, F-22 Pilot Training, International Flight Simulator Programs for the Turkish, Israeli and Egyptian Air Forces, and began his government career as a Contract Negotiator for the F-16 program. His industry experience includes Program Manager for: the Royal Saudi Air Force Airborne Rangeless Training System, Nellis Air Combat Training System, B-52 Airborne Infrared Camera – Fleet Retrofit, Rangeless Airborne Instrumentation & Debriefing System (RAIDS) – British/French joint Development / Production / International deployment program, and for miniature antennae development and manufacturing for a variety of surveillance organizations in Washington DC.

He has a Bachelors Degree in International Marketing/Business from San Diego State University , and a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Central Michigan University. He also built and flies an RV-6A, Experimental airplane. Prior to his current assignment, James Sweeney was the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC) SBIR Program Manager at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.



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U.S. Air Force (USAF)

Dave Pope

Program Outreach AFRL/SB - Peerless Technologies Corp.



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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.



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U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Dr. Robert Smith

National Program Leader in the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

Dr. Bob Smith serves as the National Program Leader in the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) for USDA. He received his DVM from the University of Illinois and his PhD (Animal Nutrition) from The Pennsylvania State University. His professional background includes private veterinary practice (NJ, MD, PA IL), academia (University of Illinois and Penn State), industry (Feed) and the Federal government (USDA) for the past 15 years. He also served in the U.S. Army (Veterinary Corps), active and reserve, for 28 years and is retired. Currently, Dr. Smith manages the national Food Animal Residue Avoidance Database (FARAD) program, the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP), the Animal Health and Disease Research sec.1433 capacity program and the Animal Production and Health Protection program for USDA's SBIR program.



U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

Chris 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 Energy (DOE)

Manny Oliver  
Director of the SBIR/STTR Programs Office

Manny Oliver has served as the Director of the SBIR/STTR Programs Office within the Department of Energy since 2010. During his tenure he has focused on streamlining the operation of the programs, working collaboratively with DOE National Labs to foster technology transfer, and improving commercialization outcomes.

Prior to joining DOE, Manny spent 16 years leading applied R&D and technology commercialization efforts at Motorola. He performed R&D in Li ion polymer batteries, biochips, haptics, wearable user interfaces and mobile surveillance and has received 18 U.S. patents. He previously held positions as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at MIT and as a Member of Technical Staff at AT&T Bell Laboratories. He received both his B.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Materials Science from MIT.





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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.



Federal Laboratory Consortium (FLC)

Rick Shindell  
President, Zyn Systems

Rick Shindell, president of Zyn Systems, is a long time SBIR and federal technology transfer advocate. Rick has been providing support to the small business community and the 11 SBIR agencies for many years. He is editor of the "SBIR Insider" newsletter and host of the SBIR Gateway web site.

He has provided support and outreach services to the Federal Laboratory Consortium (FLC) for 3 decades and has served as a consultant and proposal reviewer for many agencies including the Navy, SBA, and NSF.

In 2017, the Small Business Administration (SBA) honored Rick with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his "extraordinary contribution to the SBIR program". He was named a 2016 Fellow from the Kentucky Science and Engineering Foundation for advocacy services to small businesses in the state of Kentucky, a lifetime achievement award for SBIR Advocacy from the Small Business Technology Council (SBTC), and an SBA Tibbetts Award for excellence in SBIR.



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Federal Laboratory Consortium (FLC)

Jennifer Stewart

FLC Far West Regional Coordinator, Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Corona

Jennifer Stewart serves as the Office of Research and Technology Applications (ORTA) representative for Naval Surface Warfare Center, Corona Division. As the ORTA, Jennifer Stewart acts as a broker, connecting Corona Division's scientists and engineers with academia and industry for technology transfer. Stewart, a graduate of California Baptist University, Riverside, Calif., joined NSWC Corona's Product Engineering Assessment Department in 2003.

Corona Division received its Federal Laboratory designation on Jan. 26, 2010. In December 2012, Stewart left Product Engineering Assessment Department to head up the ORTA position full time as the technology transfer officer. In addition to serving as ORTA, Stewart supports community economic development efforts by serving as a liaison for organizations such as InSoCal CONNECT whose mission is to attract high-technology companies to the Inland Empire region of Southern California.



Missile Defense Agency (MDA)

Jordan Reynolds

Deputy Operations Manager, SBIR/ STTR Program

Mr. Jordan Reynolds serves as the Deputy Operations Manager for the SBIR/ STTR program as part of the Missile Defense Agency Advanced Research Directorate. In this role, he executes the Agency's vision for capitalizing on the creativity and innovation of the nation's entrepreneurs and small businesses. Through an aggressive outreach program and encouraging business ties with the Government, the program enhances the technical capability of the Ballistic Missile Defense System.

Mr. Reynolds joined the Missile Defense Agency as a contractor in 2012 supporting the Command & Control, Battle Management and Communications (C2BMC) program. Serving as an Acquisition Analyst, he managed cost, schedule and performance for the program's Logistics, Operations & Sustainment Program. In 2014 Mr. Reynolds transitioned to Project Manager for the new concept C2BMC Training Support System (TSS). He oversaw TSS development from prototype to production and coordinated the system's deployment in support of missile defense operations in STRATCOM, NORTHCOM, PACOM, EUCOM and CENTCOM. Mr. Reynolds began his civilian federal service career in 2015 with the Missile Defense Agency by joining the Advanced Research Directorate in his current role as the Deputy Operations Manager for the SBIR/ STTR Program.

Mr. Reynolds has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Military History from Presbyterian College and a Master's degree in Business Administration from The University of Alabama. He is a First Lieutenant in the Army Reserves and currently serves as a Civil Affairs Team Leader.



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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.



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National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Gray Creech

*SBIR/STTR Program Manager*

Gray Creech is a Senior Technology Analyst with Jacobs Engineering at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center, Edwards AFB, CA.

Leading the SBIR/STTR program at NASA Armstrong, he matches the technical capabilities of small businesses around the nation with existing and future NASA technology needs.

Gray is a U.S. Air Force veteran, serving in roles with B-52, B-2, and U-2 aircraft, as well as other special weapons and platforms test teams. His service included deployment to the Middle East during the Gulf War.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree from Chapman University, and has authored and co-authored many technical articles in various publications, including NASA Tech Briefs.



National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

Mary Clague  
SBIR Program Director/NAIS Administrator

Mary Clague is the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program Manager at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). She has worked in NIST's Technology Partnerships Office since 2001 and has been with the SBIR Program for the past 14 years. Prior to working at NIST, she held corporate information positions with Lockheed Martin, COMSAT Corp., and CALCULON. Ms. Clague graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in Technology Management.



Department of the Navy (DON)

Bob Smith  
Director, SBIR

Mr. Smith is the director of the Navy's Small Business Innovation Research Program. Mr. Smith manages numerous activities designed to assist small businesses in getting their technology fully developed, tested, and inserted into products and services used by our Naval warfighters.

Prior to his current assignment, Mr. Smith was the Director of Disruptive Technologies in the Office of Naval Research. The mission of the Disruptive Technologies program is to provide game changing technical options for the future Navy. Mr. Smith was also the Program Manager for the Department of the Navy's Rapid Innovation Fund which supports small business concerns rapidly inserting their technology solutions into acquisition programs of record.

Mr. Smith was the recipient of the 2013 Department of the Oreta B. Stinson Advocacy Award (formerly Small Business Advocate Award), one of the annual Navy Acquisition Excellence Awards. The award is given by the Department's Office of Small Business Programs as recognition of a non-small business professional within the DON that demonstrated direct strong support for the DON Small Business Program, and through their documented actions contributed significantly to improving the opportunity for small business success.





U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

John Cabeca

Director of the Silicon Valley USPTO

As the Director of the Silicon Valley United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), John Cabeca carries out the strategic direction of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO, and is responsible for leading the USPTO's west coast regional office in Silicon Valley. Focusing on the region and actively engaging with the community, Mr. Cabeca ensures the USPTO's initiatives and programs are tailored to the region's unique ecosystem of industries and stakeholders.

A veteran of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for over 26 years, Mr. Cabeca previously served as the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO. In this role, he worked closely across the Agency's leadership to implement the policies and priorities for the USPTO. He began his career at the USPTO as a patent examiner after graduating from Widener University with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. Mr. Cabeca became a Supervisory Patent Examiner in 1997 and joined the Senior Executive Service in 2008 serving as a Patent Technology Center Director over the semiconductor and electrical systems technologies.

Mr. Cabeca has dedicated much of his career to the USPTO's outreach and education programs focusing on small businesses, startups and entrepreneurs. Over the years, he served in the Office of Petitions, the Office of Patent Legal Administration, the Office of Governmental Affairs and the Office of the Under Secretary. In 2006, Mr. Cabeca was appointed a Department of Commerce Science and Technology Fellow and served on special assignment to the Executive Office of the President in the United States Trade Representative's Office. At USTR, he worked with multiple agencies on a variety of international intellectual property rights issues and played an integral role in the Free Trade Agreement negotiations with the Republic of Korea.



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

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.



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

G. Nagesh Rao  
Chief Technologist & Entrepreneur in Residence

G. Nagesh Rao serves as Chief Technologist & Entrepreneur in Residence with the US Small Business Administration's Office of Investment & Innovation. His portfolio of work includes advising senior leadership around the SBIR/STTR programs, leading the SBA Growth Accelerator program and Co-Leading Coordination of the Fueling Small Business Innovation Interagency Policy Committee for the White House's Lab to Market Commercialization Agenda. As well handle all things "techie" and "nerd-related".

Over the last 15 years, Nagesh has been afforded the privilege to work and/or consult with numerous organizations in the public, private, and not for profit space, which culminated in his helping create programmatic endeavors such as i6 Green, FLoW, Patents for Humanity, VT-Arc Additive Manufacturing Prize Challenge, and SBA Growth Accelerator Competition. Nagesh's musings (written and oratorical) have been featured and/or quoted via TechCrunch, WAMC-NPR, The Scientist, The National Academies, MIT XPrize Lab, Stanford d-School, The Hill, FedTech Magazine, DC Inno, Technical.ly DC, NextGov, Daily Mirror (Sri Lankan version), Financial Times (Sri Lankan version), and The Courier-Journal.

His credentials include a MBA (Global Strategy and Entrepreneurship) from the University of Maryland-College Park, a MSc in Legal Studies-Intellectual Property Law from Albany Law School, a BSc dual-major in Materials Engineering and Philosophy from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and a Patent Bar License from the USPTO (Registration Number: 69006). Nagesh is a former Mirzayan Fellow of The National Academies and a 2016 USA Eisenhower Fellow where he embarked on travels to Vietnam and Sri Lanka engaging in cutting edge endeavors with senior leaders from the private, public, and ngo sectors in those two countries. Among many accolades that Nagesh has received over the years, prominent ones include the Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Samman & Hind Rattan awards from the NRI Welfare Society, and the Scott McKay Commencement Prize & Alumni Key Awards from his undergraduate alma mater.



U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

Brittany Sickler  
*Outreach and Partnership Strategist, Office of Innovation*

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. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)

Anthony Aldrich  
*SBIR Program Manager*

Mr. Anthony J Aldrich is the Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) Program Manager for Special Operations Forces, Acquisition, Technology & Logistics (SOF AT&L), Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. He is responsible for all USSOCOM SOF AT&L SBIR funded activities. Mr. Aldrich has over 14 years of civilian Federal service.

Mr. Aldrich entered Federal Service in 2002 as a Physicist at Eglin Air Force Base in Fort Walton Beach, Florida where he served in the Guided Weapons Evaluation Facility as a Hardware-In-the-Loop Test and Evaluation engineer. In 2005, he transferred to the Eglin Range Support Squadron serving as an Electronics Engineer and Program Manager for the threat radar, tracking radar and telemetry systems. Mr. Aldrich transferred to Us Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation in 2009, where he supported the Range Radar Replacement Program as a Project Director.

Prior to entering Civil Service, Mr. Aldrich worked at various small businesses designing Industrial Control Systems, Medical Equipment and Aviation Electronics.

EDUCATION: University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK -Bachelor of Science degree in Physics, 1984.



U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)

Sonia Lizotte  
SBIR and Science and Technology Contracting  
Officer

Ms. Sonia M. Lizotte is the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Science and Technology Contracting Officer for Special Operations Forces, Acquisition, Technology & Logistics (SOF AT&L), U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. Served as the lead Procurement Contracting Officer (PCO) and business advisor for several multi-functional teams. Responsible for awarding and administration duties for large number of contracts. Mr. Lizotte has over 10 years of civilian Federal service.

Ms. Lizotte entered Federal Service in 2005 as a Contract Specialist training program at Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, GA. Assigned to the Ground Support and equipment team as a Contract Specialist. Started work in the small dollar spares section, later moved to spares II, and then moved on to Major Programs. Obtained limited \$10M warrant in January 2009. In 2009, assigned to the Missiles and Armament Group as a Contracting Officer to assist in a pending source selection. Transferred as a PCO with unlimited warrant to the Support and Equipment Group (WR-ALC/GRVKBA) to serve as the lead Procurement Contracting Officer (PCO)

In 2011, she transferred to USSCOM, as a Contract Specialist in C4 within two months, she obtain an unlimited warrant and served as a PCO for the PEO Maritime Undersea Program until November 2016.

In 2016, she transferred to the Science and Technology Directive as a PCO for the Small Business Innovation and Research Program.

Prior to entering Civil Service, Ms. Lizotte worked at as an Office Manager and later an Area Human Resources Manager in charge of the hiring process, coordinating and conducting interviews, advertising, coordinating with outside agencies, setting up polygraphs, drug tests and physicals, preparing personnel files, advising management on disciplinary actions, briefing employees on benefits, personnel training, terminations of employment, setting HR budget for the Area and monitoring expenses for a security firm.



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The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
(NOAA)

Vince Garcia  
SBIR Program Manager

Vince Garcia is the Program Manager for the Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), an agency under the Department of Commerce (DoC). He has worked at NOAA for over 17 years and in his current capacity, he coordinates and manages the agency's SBIR program with participating offices in the organization and small business concerns nationwide.

Before joining NOAA SBIR, Vince served as a program and portfolio manager under the Chief Information Officer of the NOAA Research line office. He has extensive background on Project Management, Information Technology, Enterprise Architecture, Capital Planning & Investment Control, Cybersecurity, Government Contracting and Federal Acquisitions, all of which has helped in the current success of the NOAA SBIR program. He received a Department of Commerce Bronze Medal award in his work on an enterprise-wide cybersecurity initiative.





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National Science Foundation (NSF)

Ruth Shuman

Program Director for Biological Technologies in the  
SBIR/STTR Program

Ruth Shuman joined the National Science Foundation in August 2009 as a Program Director for Biological Technologies in the SBIR/STTR Program. Before coming to NSF, she was the founder, president, and CEO of a successful venture-backed life science company, Gentra Systems, Inc., that developed, manufactured, and sold products for genetic testing and research to clinical and research laboratories worldwide. Following Gentra's acquisition, she held various consulting/advisory positions with start-up companies, and was CEO-In-Residence for Life Science with the University of Minnesota's Venture Center evaluating the business potential of University-developed technology. She began her career as a faculty member at North Carolina State University and was a pioneer in the development of gene transfer and genetic engineering technology. Ruth holds a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in the area of Genetics and Cell Biology.





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 Institutes of Health  
Robert Vinson  
Program Manager, SBIR

Mr. Vinson serves as a Program Manager for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) SBIR/STTR Program in the Office of Extramural Programs, Office of Extramural Research (OER). In this role he is responsible for providing resources to Federal staffers and access to critical information for the small business community seeking early-stage Federal funding. His duties include serving as the Contracting Officer's Representative for the NIH Niche Assessment Program and the Commercialization Accelerator Program. These programs provide technical assistance, market analysis, and commercialization guidance for NIH SBIR/STTR Phase I and Phase II awardees. Rob is also the OER Task Manager for the NIH Performance Outcomes Data System.

Before joining the SBIR/STTR Program Office, he was a Senior Grants Policy Analyst at the National Heart, Lung, & Blood Institute (NHLBI). In that role, he managed initiatives and special projects on a variety of grants and administrative policy issues. Rob had been with NHLBI since 1993 where his career began as a Grants Management Specialist and rose to the positions of Team Leader, Grants Management Officer, and Branch Chief. Prior to joining NIH Rob was a commercial loan officer, with an emphasis on small business development and community revitalization.



National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Patricia Swayne  
SBIR/STTR Specialist

Patti Swayne joined the NIH SBIR/STTR Program from the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia where she worked to promote collaboration and innovation in the regional business community through unique health care, education, and community outreach initiatives.

As the Communications Specialist, Patti helps develop, implement, and evaluate the team's outreach strategy which specifically targets demographics that historically have lower application rates, including Women-owned and Socially Disadvantaged small businesses. Patti is invested in progressive public health initiatives, the impact of technology in solutions and delivery of care, and aging research. Her goal is to translate important, effective information into a language that everyone can understand.

Patti is a proud alumna of Temple University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications.



OSD - Office of Small Business Programs

David Sikora

SBIR/STTR Program Administrator, Acting

David Sikora is the Acting DoD Small Business Innovative Research / Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) Program Administrator. The mission of the DoD SBIR/STTR Program is to help small business, non-profit organizations, and research institutions quickly create and deliver cost-effective innovations that will sustain America's technological superiority over adversaries.

In addition, Mr. Sikora Mr. David Sikora is also the program manager for the Air Force Mentor Protégé Program. The mission of the Air Force Mentor Protégé program is to develop small businesses through technology transfer that results in small business sources of supply and services for Air Force prime contracts and subcontracts.

Mr. Sikora previously served as the Air Force Small Business Innovative Research / Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) and Technology Transfer Program Manager. And Mr. Sikora has a wealth of experience leveraging industry, academia, and private sector research. Before entering government service, He worked as a design/project engineer in the paper machine and environmental equipment industries.

Mr. Sikora received his bachelor's degree in Engineering Technology from the University of Dayton and his M.B.A. from Wright State University.



OSD - Office of Small Business Programs

Christopher Walters

Senior Program Analyst, DOD SBIR/STTR Programs

Christopher Walters is a Senior Program Analyst supporting the Department of Defense (DOD) SBIR/STTR Programs. There, he is challenged with implementing innovative outreach strategies to increase program awareness, highlight military and economic impact, and communicate the mission of the DOD SBIR/STTR Programs.

Before joining the DOD SBIR/STTR Program, Mr. Walters provided strategic communication's support to the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) where he was instrumental in developing and executing a strategic outreach plan to identify and procure Counter-IED technologies. Prior to JIEDDO, he managed the outreach efforts for the DOD Joint Test and Evaluation Program.

A native of Holly Hill, South Carolina, Mr. Walters received a BA in Communications from Claflin University, and a MA in Advertising and Public Relations from the University of Georgia.