

REMARKS FOR ADMINISTRATOR BOLDEN
2012 SBA SMALL BUSINESS WEEK BREAKFAST

May 21, 2012

[Norah Jones and Piers Sellers PSA about technology development plays.]

Isn't that a great video? As Norah says, space is in your life more than you know. NASA is charting the next horizon in exploration at the same time we're making an impact on people's everyday lives. I want to talk a little this morning about what that means for small business, because those partnerships lead to innovation and job creation that impacts communities everywhere and technologies that are very often spun off for wider use.

But first, I want to thank Administrator Karen Mills for inviting me to join you today and congratulate today's award recipients.

It's my pleasure to be among so many friends from a community that means so much to NASA.

You know, NASA researchers and test facilities have made improvements in aviation and space technologies for decades. Right now we're helping facilitate the development of a new commercial space transportation industry. Although we weren't able to get the SpaceX *Dragon* launch off as planned last Saturday, we are planning to go for another launch attempt tomorrow morning. This will be an historic milestone for our nation, and when the astronauts onboard the International Space Station (ISS) grapple the *Dragon* module and berth it to the ISS several days into the mission, this will be yet another first.

NASA is also developing the technologies to support our efforts to send our astronauts farther into the solar system -- to places we've never been, like an asteroid and Mars – all while helping to rewrite textbooks with the next generation of science missions.

We're also playing a key role in the discovery, testing, and development of core tools and technologies to realize the Next Generation Air Transportation System or NextGen.

Small businesses have been essential to the many successes we've had, and their skills and dedication will continue to be critical as we pursue new ways of doing business, new efficiencies, and new directions that will give us new capabilities for exploration.

I'm very proud of the work our space program does with small businesses. Due to the hard work of everyone in the agency, NASA exceeded our Small Business Goal for FY11. We were only 1 of 3 of the "BIG 7" federal agencies -- the ones that together spend approximately 90% of small-business-eligible dollars -- that exceeded its Small Business goals.

Approximately \$2.5 billion in prime contracts were awarded directly to small businesses – an increase of approximately \$75 million from FY10.

Additionally, our large Prime Contractors awarded approximately \$2 billion in subcontracts to Small Businesses in FY11.

When you add that all up, NASA awarded approximately \$4.5 billion to Small Businesses in FY11.

This clearly shows how committed we are to the small business community and how important they are to our success.

But this is just a start.

There will be new opportunities to work together with all sizes of partners as NASA takes its next big leap into deep space exploration.

It's easy to forget that all of the dollars we spend to get to space are spent here on Earth. That may seem obvious, but when you're talking about spacecraft hurtling millions of miles away into the solar system or even 400 miles above us like the Hubble Space Telescope, we must remember that it's people who designed, built, and operate them – people on projects in which small businesses very often play a major role.

Our Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs help facilitate innovative research and technology development among America's most creative small businesses. The awards serve as seed funds for transformative research and technology projects that have the potential to mature new products and services of great benefit to NASA and the nation.

Collaborating with small businesses on the development of innovations to meet our current and future mission needs is paramount for NASA's continued success. SBIR and STTR awards help small businesses across the country to continue employing and developing the high-tech workforce America needs for the future while providing new knowledge and capabilities to NASA.

Through partnership with small businesses NASA's Space Technology Program, which manages the SBIR and STTR programs, has helped address specific technology gaps in NASA missions while striving to complement other agency research investments.

Entech[®] Solar, for instance, in partnership with NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, has produced a high-performance, ultra-light solar concentrator for space and ground applications.

Sunpower, Inc., also in partnership with Glenn, has helped develop the Advanced Stirling Converter, an 80 watt free-piston Stirling power converter that produces electric power from any source of heat. The high efficiency will offer a 4-fold reduction in fuel or radioisotope material usage, reducing costs. Smaller size and lower mass will provide more options for physical location of a spacecraft's power system, allow room for larger payloads, and in terrestrial applications enable portable power systems that soldiers can wear.

Last year we awarded more than \$165 million through SBIR and STTR -- engaging hundreds of small businesses around the country in technology development to enable our future missions. Many of these awardees partner with other federal agencies, universities, and research institutions that in turn generate secondary economic impact in communities around the nation.

These competitive programs encourage U.S. small businesses and research institutions to engage in federal research, development, and commercialization. And they enable teams to explore technological potential while providing the incentive to profit from new commercial products and services.

Our Chief Technologist Mason Peck has been visiting companies from coast to coast and there are many success stories with roots in these programs.

Honeybee Robotics, for instance, started as a one person shop above a bakery in New York, and is now one of the world's leading makers of robots that will explore the surface of Mars and apply their excavation and drilling tools to efforts here on Earth.

Stottler Henke in San Mateo, Calif., through the SBIR program created the software for scheduling the astronauts' activities aboard the International Space Station.

That same software is used by The Boeing Company to schedule all production for their new *Dreamliner* aircraft -- coordinating tens of thousands of parts and people.

In Dayton, Ohio, Cornerstone Research Group has made everything from inflatable structures for radio antennas to composite materials that can be used for space vehicles. Those same materials are now commercially available for repairing and patching your car, your camper, or your tent.

The challenges of future NASA missions will require the best ideas and innovations of academia, industry, government labs, and our small business partners. These new technology investments will create a more vital and productive aerospace industry and address broader national needs, such as energy, health and wellness, and national security.

An overarching goal of President Obama's strategy for NASA is to reposition the agency on the cutting-edge. Small businesses are going to help us keep our edge sharp. The capabilities we are developing for those bigger missions with both humans and robots, the expanded commercial access to space – all of this will only strengthen our position as the world's space exploration leader.

Small businesses represent the best of the American spirit of innovation – the drive to solve problems and create capabilities that has led us to the moon, to great observatories, and to humans living and working in space, possibly indefinitely. They're an essential part of our economic engine.

During this week and throughout the year, I want to thank you in the small business community for your continued hard work.

Your contributions are one of NASA's most valued assets, and each day, you are helping us to create the world's strongest space program. I'm quite optimistic about our future and I hope you share my optimism. Together, there is no limit to our future exploration achievements.

Thank you.