

>> Now we want to arm you with information about the agency, the programs, the mechanics, how do you use these programs to your benefit and how you can strategically use them in your marketing strategies. NIH is the world's foremost center for biomedical and behavioral science research and the foundation that supports US efforts to fight disease. It's important to note, just about 5-6 years ago the NIH mission definition expanded to embrace the behavioral science component—the National Institutes of Mental Health, the National Institutes on Drug Abuse—and the NIH's mission is to discover new knowledge, to improve the health care and health care delivery to everyone in this country and across the globe. We are one of many, what's called, "Operating Divisions" under the Department of Health and Human Services. At another department, they might call them bureaus or agencies. Here at the HHS, we call them Operating Divisions. Here's your first acronym, OPDIV, so if you hear someone talk about "this OPDIV," we're an OPDIV at NIH, some of our sister OPDIV's are the FDA, the Food and Drug Administration—the centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, the centers for Medicare and Medicaid out there in Baltimore, and on and on. Diane mentioned, we are comprised of 27 institutes and centers. That acronym you'll hear tossed around across the campus, that's how we refer to our main facility in Bethesda, as the "campus." IC's, for example—the National Cancer Institute, the Heart, Lung & Blood Institute. We occupy 70+ buildings on the 322-acre campus in Bethesda and we also occupy numerous satellite locations around this area and the U.S. I always say we should probably rename this boulevard to NIH Boulevard because I think we're occupying almost every single commercial building up to Montrose, but we're also occupying buildings over there in Bethesda by Montgomery Mall, the Rockledge 1 and 2, Rockspring Center, Democracy 1 and 2, we have various labs and facilities across the country, and of course one of our major institutes is the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, located in Research Triangle Park in North Carolina. The number of employees—yes, it's important to note that we are near the 18,000 figure, but we're also supported by nearly 10,000 contract employees. You saw from the film, we started out in 1887 with a \$300 budget and we are at a multi-billion dollar budget, and of course the part of that you're interested in that supports extramural and intramural research activities is the contract dollars, and as she mentioned we spent nearly \$3 billion last year. We do buy products and services that were described this morning, everything from test tubes, pencils and pens, office supplies and equipment, and furniture to IT products, services, solutions, construction and architect engineering services and something interesting about that, to mention, is something you should follow if you're in that industry area, but just take this information, depending on who else you might be marketing to for your service supply area. Often times, the agency gets the appropriation, but may not be the buyer. For us the NIH, in the case of architect engineering construction—sometimes we take the money that Congress appropriates for a specific building, renovation, whatever, or management of the effort, and we may decide not to be the buyer and through inter-agency agreements we move our money over to the General Services Administration and they buy for us. So, oftentimes, and I know you certainly are always following the money, it may even be important to follow it once the appropriation actually goes to the agency; are they going to be the buyer? Do they move it over to another agency who buys on their behalf? In the service area—that's kind of a catchall because that includes everything from conferences, planning, meetings, management consulting, studies, clearinghouses,

data collections, and surveys on various kinds of support service areas. We also buy, of course, research and development. That includes the clinical trials, pharmacological studies, clinical centers and environmental research, and I know that we in the Small Business Office would say, if there were any one product service area that we believe is a challenge for small business and for us to discover those opportunities for you—it would be in the clinical research area. We don't think it is typically small business susceptible. Oftentimes those entities providing the clinical trial support and research are the Johns Hopkins, Georgetown University and the various non-profit organizations engaged in clinical trials that involve human subjects and are massive efforts that take place across the country at multi-sites. However, all of the supporting kinds of activities to clinical trials and research are typically small business susceptible, and oftentimes are set-asides, an example is a coordinating center, coordinating the activities, the collection of the data and the final reporting of results from the clinical trial. It's important to remind you why you are so important. Of course, we all recognize you are the backbone of the US economy, but look—you create 75% of the net new jobs added to the economy, you provide 67% of workers with their first jobs, you account for 35% of federal contract dollars, and that includes prime and subcontracts. You account for 51% of private sector output, 47% of all the sales in the country, 40% of the gross national products, and invent 55% of the nation's innovation. And you account for 38% of the jobs in the high-tech sectors and finally, you represent 96% of all the US exporters. Isn't that amazing? Totally amazing. She mentioned that the federal contract budget is well over \$250 billion today—that's the kind of dollars that we are spending to buy the products and services to support US activity. But we know that it can be a daunting task for a small business with limited resources and I think this excerpt, from a speech that was made by Senator Bond, who was formerly the Senate Chair—the chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business—he was speaking to the First Conference of American Writers and Editors. And I thought this was just so telling, that "the view from a small business level storefront is not the same as the view from the executive suite of a large business." And because of that, we have a number of federal laws and regulations that have been put into place—and executive orders—to support small business, to find ways to insure that a fair share of the Federal procurement dollars are reserved for and awarded to small businesses. These are the laws and regulations that we and you need to understand to understand how they work in the federal acquisition program—how they work on your behalf or how you can make them work for you. I'm going to try to explain a little bit about how they work and how we consider them in the order that we review requirements, and how we make decisions that determine whether a requirement is reserved exclusively for small business competition—but I might add, that is one of the roles that we do have here at the agency. You will note that at the major Federal departments and agencies, these are called the Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. Their acronym are OSDBUs, and they're usually charged with policy and the overall program for a department and agency for small business, and then usually what you will find, if the agency is decentralized in its contracting organization, that out at those contracting organizations you will find small business offices, like ours, who are actually there to implement the small business programs, who literally work side-by-side with the contracting and program officials and get to make recommendations for small business set-asides and recommend sources of supply, etc. So this is one of the

major activities that we engage in at the small business office and, of course, we do a lot of other things to reach out and find the small business community to insure and provide maximum practicable opportunities here at our agency in the contracting arena. When we actually do our reviews that is considered in the very first stages of pre-solicitation activities. We're going to focus on this part—how we actually review a requirement, make a decision—and then you're going to hear from the contracting folks this morning about how they actually go out, from that decision point, and make buys. And one more time, the Small Business Office comes back in because if we, the Federal government, make awards to large entities—large business, universities, non-profits—and our awards are over \$500,000, then we require those large entities to award subcontracts to small businesses in all the various categories. So, we get a chance to work with the contracting officials in the review process one more time prior to an award to make sure, at that stage, if it hasn't been reserved as a small business requirement and there is a subcontracting plan to make sure that opportunities flow down to small businesses. How do we do our reviews? Congress, they appropriate money, we get a budget. That budget is divvied up among various program offices, in our case, basically the institutes, and then they're going to divvy it up among their various program activities. There is a project officer, also called an "end user," also called a program officer, these terms are used—they're synonymous, they're used interchangeably. That individual that is authorized to say, "This agency needs to buy a cup," and they have the funds to actually generate that requirement, and that's basically how it works. Here at the NIH, logistically, our program folks work with their supporting contracting office, they generate the requirement, they work with the supporting contracting officer to lay out a plan of action—it's called an acquisition strategy—and part of that strategizing is trying to determine, "Who's out there in the marketplace?" "Are there small business sources?" "Can we do set-asides?" "Can we support one of the other socioeconomic programs?" There is no formal order of precedence any longer in the Federal Acquisition Regulations, which are the regulations that govern how we do our business, but basically, here at the HHS, we do practice in order of precedence in review. We look at a new requirement to see if we can offer it into the 8(a) contract program, or conduct it under the HUBZone contracting program. Now the 8(a) contracting program—we heard firms this morning describe themselves as 8(a) firms—and what that simply means is under section 8(a) of the Small Business Act, authorization was provided to the Small Business Administration to enter into contracts with other federal agencies, and the SBA would, in turn, set up a program where firms that were meeting the statutory definition of social and economic disadvantage would apply for certification into what came to be known as the 8(a) contract program. SBA would certify these firms and if they entered into a contract with other federal agencies, then they, in turn, award a subcontract to one of these eligible firms who actually delivers the product or service to the federal agency. That program has undergone a number of changes over the past few years. One of the most significant aspects is that SBA is kind of set back now as a silent partner in this tripartite arrangement, and allows the federal agencies to actually go out and do their business directly, signing contracts with 8(a) firms, and SBA usually is involved with insuring that the firms are eligible and monitoring the firm's performance and business development through the course of their participation in the 8(a) program. This has been really important because it streamlined the 8(a) contract program, it allowed very streamlined 1-

page purchase orders to be cut to small 8(a) firms under the \$100,000 threshold, so it has facilitated more support and activity because it has empowered the agencies to actually work with the 8(a) contract community. If our requirement is less than \$3 million, we are able to sole-source negotiate with a particular firm. That's really important for you 8(a) firms—it's very important to factor that into your marketing strategies, because you can actually be out there, fruitfully spending time marketing to program offices and say, "I'm an 8(a) firm and you can get to me directly and we can end up sole-source negotiating," cutting off lead times for public notices and so on and so forth. It's also important because I would suggest that 85% of the time, when a contract requirement is offered into the 8(a) contract program, it's the result of successful marketing. That project officer—program officer—end user—can actually generate that requirement that he/she has funds for and say, "I'd like this requirement to be offered to the 8(a) contract program and, in fact, I'd like company 'ABC'." If the requirement is over \$3 million, the federal agency is obligated to conduct an 8(a) competition, so any firm that's eligible under that particular industry classification for that buy would be able to compete on the requirement, and the requirement would be posted on what we've now been hearing about, FedBizOpps, which is the federal publication where all government notices of contract opportunities, contract awards, and market surveys is all about. FedBizOpps—and I'm going to show you where we have links in our research library to all of the things that I'm talking about this morning. But what happened in 1997—we also had the HUBZone Contracting Program, or Empowering Contract Program, as it's also known, come into being. That was a favorite of Senator Bond, who authored that program, and that program's taken a position of equal parity to the 8(a) contract program, and what's happened is, agencies can decide if they're not doing as well as they think they should be doing towards achieving their goals or what have you, they can consider offering their requirement to the HUBZone contracting program or the 8(a) contracting program. What's ideal for us is if we can find an 8(a) contractor who's located in a HUBZone. So that's really the first thing that we're looking for—can we do 8(a) contracting in a HUBZone? If we can't, then we can look—can we do 8(a)? Can we do a HUBZone? Now, if you believe you're located in what's considered a historically underutilized business zone across the country, then you would need to apply to the SBA—the Small Business Administration—for certification into the program. We're going to show you how you go to the SBA website and click into the HUBZone program—and there's information there also in your guidebook—but basically there's a map up there and you can click on your zip code and determine whether or not you are eligible to apply for that program. It's a growing portfolio, there's nearly 9,000 firms to date that have been certified to participate in the HUBZone contracting program. If we can't go 8(a), and we can't go HUBZone—and if we were to go HUBZone, small business set-aside, we would need two or more HUBZone's that are also small business. Now, the rules provide for if we were to identify that there were only one HUBZone out there that was capable to provide the product, perform the service that we're looking for, then we do have the ability to do HUBZone sole-source contracting. Nonetheless, most of the time, typically we would be looking to see if the rule of two, and that is a term that is used for identifying two or more responsible small businesses that are located in HUBZones, and if that's the case we would do a HUBZone small business set aside. How do you know if you're small business? When the government does all of it's buying, they must decide what industry to classify that buy in. The industry classification system

is called the North American Industrial Classification System, or its acronym is the NAIC system. That system is developed by the Office of Management and Budget for lots of reasons—to assess economic activity, etc., in the country—but it was decided that we would take this NAIC system back in 2001. It replaced an older system called the SIC code system, or Standard Industrial Classification System, and what they said was, the Small Business Administration—you do a study and determine how we will decide, under each of these industries, if a business is small or large. They do that study and most of the industries, for purposes of federal procurement, are either governed by the number of employees that a company has or the average annual sales over a three year period. If a firm falls below the threshold assigned to the NAIC's code, you are a small business. If you exceed it, you're not. What's important is that, depending on how that procurement or contract opportunity is classified; you could be small under some classifications, and not small under others. Let's take an example. If you were in ship repair, the ship repair threshold for that industry is 1,000 employees. So, if you employed less than 1,000 people, you would be a small business if you did ship repair or you were engaged in ship repair services. But if you also did—provided engineering services, and that threshold is at 6 million in average annual sales, and your average annual sales as a company was 20 million, then you would not be small if we were buying the engineering services. So, that's how it works and it's very important for you to see how the contracting officer classifies the procurement. You do have a right to appeal the classification or question it. If it is questioned by any interested party, then the contracting officer is obligated to send that inquiry or protest to the Small Business Administration, who does a study—makes a final determination on the proper classification—and it becomes binding on the contracting officer, agency, and the procurement. So, this is something you want to pay attention to. It could impact, if something more were set aside, whether you would be eligible. Or, it would determine who might be out there or be eligible as your competition. So, we know now how you know if you're a small business and we, basically—the contracting officer—is obligated to say, "If they have a requirement, do we have two or more responsible small businesses that can provide the products manufactured by small business—in the case of a product buy—or in the case of services, do we have two or more responsible small businesses who can meet what's called a 'limitation on subcontracting'—therefore, do the primary part of the work, maintain technical management and employee number control?" And if we can satisfy that as a "yes", then federal requirements shall be set aside exclusively for small business competition. It's not discretionary language, it's really quite mandatory. You'll hear from Cole this morning when he talks about all the smaller purchasing that we do out here, that everything between \$2,500 and \$100,000 is, by law, reserved by statute for a small business unless we can't satisfy that rule of two. He'll explain to you that all of our buys under \$2,500, which are referred to as "micro-purchasing", are not reserved for any type size business. It is considered full and open, and the folks that are out there with the authority to buy—and we know there are more than just contracting officers and purchasing agents doing the buying on behalf of the government. Through the credit card program alone we see a lot of—even program type folks are empowered with purchasing authority, so everyone under \$2,500 can buy from any size type business. Over \$2,500—between \$2,500 and \$100,000—is reserved for small business, unless we can't satisfy the rule of two. And everything over \$100,000 or the simplified

acquisition, or in the case of commercial buying, that threshold is \$5 million. Then we need to do an investigation study to see if we can meet the rule of two. If not, things go out on an unrestricted basis and they're not set aside. That's kind of, mechanically, how it all works. We're very much involved with this because when they're not reserved here at the agency, the requirements are sent to the Small Business Office, we get a chance to review to decide if the rule of two can be met to make set-aside recommendations, we also get a chance to make recommendations that a requirement can be considered to be offered to the 8(a) program, or HUBZone program. So we have an opportunity to do that as well. But again, under the 8(a) program, your marketing efforts can—you can enjoy fruitful return on your marketing efforts for that if our requirement is less than \$3 million. If it's over \$3 million, it's going to be publicized in FedBizOpps—you're going to get a chance to compete on it. Everything else over \$25,000 that we're doing out here is published in FedBizOpps. You will see notes that tell you if something is set aside or not set aside or what have you. We, in our office also have an opportunity to recommend sources to be included, bidder's lists, solicitation mailing lists, etc. for procurement. And also, the Department of Health and Human Services enjoys the relationship with the Small Business Administration, who assigns what's called a "Procurement Center Representative" to our department agencies, and that lovely individual, Malda Brown, is what's called the PCR to HHS. She, on a weekly basis, comes in and she has an opportunity to sit down with our office and also review all the requirements not reserved as set-asides for one of the programs and she gets a chance to make a recommendation. So the SBA, also, oftentimes is part of the procurement review process and part of the process to make recommendations for one of the programs. If we haven't set a requirement aside—oh, and by the way, in the requirement, in the notice you will see the next code assigned, and of course, for the most part, most of the certifications are based on your self-certification—that you meet a certain size standard, type of ownership, that you're eligible and certified in programs that require certification, etc. And unless the contracting officer or another interested party challenges that, your self-certification is accepted. If it is challenged, once again, there are procedures where these kinds of protests are referred to the SBA, who's the final rule-making, decision making agency on eligibility and those sort of things. If we haven't set the requirement aside and it goes out on an unrestricted basis, there are a couple of things we do. If we make an award that's over \$500,000 to an entity that is not small business, then we will require the large entity—which could be a large business, a university, a non-profit—to establish what is called a sub-contracting plan. That results from one of the laws we saw on the list—Public Law 95507—and that, really, is flowing down—this federal intent, federal public policy to insure that a fair share of federal dollars are being awarded to small business—and what happens is, the larger entity is required to establish a sub-contracting plan with goals to make awards to small business and those goals should be consistent with the entity's proposal—technical, cost proposal—and all of this should be consistent with efficient contract performance, but the bottom line is they should be making maximum, practicable opportunities available at the sub-contract level. Other parts and pieces of that plan include the company to let us know who is their liaison—key person—that interfaces with small business and manages that program for the company. They agree to submit periodic reports and agree to comply with any federal special studies, they agree to maintain records, they agree to have an outreach program. So basically, we're

then looking to them to insure that small business opportunities are made available. If they, in turn, make a subcontracting award to another large entity and that threshold of \$500,000 or \$1 million for construction is once again met, then they will require the same thing of their lower tier subcontractors. So, this is another area where small business that, if the requirement is such that it can't be set aside, you can look for subcontracting opportunities. I'm going to remind myself to show you on our website the subcontracting directory that we do put together. We did a major survey of all of our major prime contractors that have these plans and we asked them not only to identify their contracts, titles, their liaison person at their company, but we also asked them to identify for us—and it is in this directory—the major area of their contract, but also the major product service areas that they subcontract out to all businesses. So you, as a small business, can take a look and search out this directory to find the key major primes that are buying your products or services or making them available as subcontracting opportunities etc. So, it is another wonderful way to sometimes get your foot in the door to a federal agency. It's also another wonderful way to think about—it's all about relationships—strategic relationships. And oftentimes, if you can forge that relationship with a major, large entity/player at a federal agency, that's good for you but it's also good for them because when we are setting requirements aside for one of the small business programs, they're not eligible to compete as a prime, but maybe they will team with you in some fashion to complement your capability or to insure that they're able to also participate in that acquisition program—so it's also really important to consider that. The other thing we do, in the case when we're awarding those contracts over 500K, is that we require the large entities and small businesses to establish what is called a Small Disadvantaged Business Participation Plan. They're required to target, based on federal designated NAICs industries, where small disadvantaged businesses have been underrepresented or utilized—they're required to target a plan of action to afford opportunities to small disadvantaged businesses in this area. That Small Disadvantaged Business Participation Plan is usually a strategic part of the overall evaluation plan, it can certainly heavily weight in who gets the award, and it can also benefit an SDB because part of the law that enabled this also enabled the ability to set up for price evaluation adjustment, which an SDB could elect to gain pricing advantage or waive it and get extra benefits and points for a strategic SDB participation plan, which they get to count themselves for. I also might add that under the HUBZone contracting program, there is also an opportunity for the contracting folks to enable, under unrestricted competition, for a HUBZone price evaluation adjustment. Now for women, and also for veterans, there is a goal to do business at the prime and sub-contract level. Another program that we oversee in the Small Business Program Office is the Competitive Demonstration Program. What that's about—it started out as a pilot about a dozen years ago in four major NAICs industries where small businesses were getting more than their fair share—more than 40% of the dollars in the particular industry. The agency must, annually now, measure how many dollars that they award to small business in these NAICS industries and we do that. Actually, for the first year—in architect, engineering and construction—for the first year, HHS, because it is measured at the department level, fell below the 40% mark, and we just reinstated set-asides. What this means is we can now do small business set-asides again for the next year. It never precluded us from doing 8(a) contracting or HUBZone contracting, but we were not able to do small business set-asides because we were

awarding more than 40% of our dollars to small business. So, we just did a switch on that; in the waste removal and the other environmental area we still are awarding more than 40%, so we don't do set-asides. But this is something that's important for you to follow at an agency you might be looking at as a target market, as what's happening under the competitive demonstration program with them. We post a notice up on our website—again, I'm going to show you under program notes where information about all of these programs are. And contract bundling—probably one of the most controversial areas—my goodness; we heard Diane allude to the ever-changing, dynamically changing acquisition landscape in environment. We see the government downsizing. We see limited resources. We see the need to—want to experience administrative and cost efficiencies for the taxpayer. What we've seen is a lot of consolidation. We've seen bundling of requirement—we've seen repackaging of smaller requirements into larger requirements, or we've seen the packaging of requirements—instead of doing new procurements, that they're now being set up as task orders against existing large contract vehicles, or the GSA scheduled programs. This is a reality, but there are some obligations for the agency. If they are going to bundle over certain thresholds, they have to do a study. They have to literally justify—demonstrate—the administrative and cost-efficiencies. They do make public notice of this in the findings in the federal register and you will, as the public, have an opportunity to review that and challenge it. There are those that say bundling is not hurting small business. We know that there's probably some truth to the fact that the bigger packaging is having a major impact on a smaller entity, which is why I would just go back and invite you to look at each other—not as competition, but as strategic partners to each other. What SBA has done in response to bundling is change the size rules so that you can team up with another small business, create joint ventures and still be considered small under the size standards. This is really important. Maybe you need to team up to complement—supplement your capability to take on a new project. The Simplified Acquisition Threshold Pilot Program we also oversee. It looks like that one has been extended and may continue to be extended. If the requirement is less than \$100,000, and we if go out and solicit quotes from small business only, then we don't have to publicize anything in the FedBizOpps and we can just compete among the five and make an award. So, once again, remember: you're not always going to know about the micro-purchase under \$2,500—that's going to require marketing. You're not going to always know about the requirements between \$2,500 and \$25,000 because they don't have to be posted in FedBizOpps. Everything over \$25,000 will be posted in FedBizOpps, and remind yourself that over \$25,000, the notice of award—who got it for how much—is also posted; very valuable information. And while I'm on FedBizOpps, let me just note for you that in order to make these decisions, I'm delighted to say that NIH aggressively does market research—market survey—and they do that by conducting what's called source synopses or market surveys through FedBizOpps. We are always out there and you can be sure that when you're reading them—and even if it says we're looking to identify 8(a) and small business; we haven't made a decision about which program—if we're just saying small business or whatever, then start reading that synopsis. When you start reading 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or a, b, c, d, e, f, g—trust me, that's reflecting evaluation criteria. Those notices will tell you any mandatory qualifying criteria, it will reflect the statement of work, and evaluation criteria, and what we're looking for is the current market information to support a recommendation for a

set-aside. So we aggressively do that here at the NIH in the Small Business Office, including the SBA PCR. We're pretty much in agreement that we'll live and die with the results of these surveys because it tells us more than just about your potential technical capability—it's also telling us you're interested and available for the procurement and we need that to make a determination about a set-aside program. So, again, the FedBizOpps is important, the Federal Register is important, notices are out there. You can see that, as a small business, should you be spending lots and lots of time worrying about this? Well, if you see a requirement that hasn't been set aside and you think it should have been, you have the right to write to the contracting officer and ask that it be reserved. There are two or more small businesses out there, you can try to market it in advance if you know the requirements coming down the pipe to make sure everybody's working and make it a set-aside, you can be sure to respond to the market surveys so we have the fuel and the case to support a set-aside recommendation. So there are a number of things that you can do that is really important. I'm going to say it several times throughout, but your 37-cent voice is very, very powerful and important. You really need to know your market. We heard that from Diane this morning, you've heard it from myself; you're probably going to hear it from each and every one of the speakers—know us as a customer. I always like to think about when you have to sit down and think about what strategies and tools to develop. Put that hat on. I know, probably every other day, businesses are marketing to you. They're trying to sell you their pencils and pens, their services, they want to team with you, they want to join with you, what is that you want to know from them—and I'll bet, first and foremost, if you give just a few minutes of your time to another business, you would want them to know who you are, what your company is about, where you're going, and you need them to show you how their products and services can help you get there. The federal official is pretty much the same. So again, in this day and age, I think, the way we can do our homework—homework that even Diane alluded to—on the Internet is just wonderful. The NIH should be applauded for just a vast and wonderful website. It's organized by funding institutions, it's organized by institutes and centers—there's just a wealth of information up there about each and every one of the little pockets of this agency which is vast, it's organizationally and geographically dispersed, decentralized, and I know that in itself poses a problem for marketing—you can't just go to one building and find the project folks and the contracting folk and the small business office sitting in one place like you could at some agencies. So, there's a lot of things that you can do to just discover who we are and target your marketing. I think Diane, very pointedly, described the best way to approach the NIH is target marketing. Picking an institute or two. Focusing on that institute and getting in the door and delivering, performing, moving across the agency in a horizontal kind of way. I would attest that most of the firms that we see, that are new that have experienced success have employed that kind of marketing strategy. Again, I know you can do a lot of your homework back there at your computer. That's not to say that relational marketing is not important—it is important. But, strategically-so—strategically using your resources and certainly, knowing your customer, if you get that few minutes of time with the contracting officer or the program official. The tools that you would develop should be tailored accordingly. A couple of things you should know, and I'm sure you're getting notices from most federal agencies—all of you should be registering in what was DOD-developed as the Central Contractor Registration System. It is going to be the wonder vendor information

place. It's going to be essential that you be in there if you win federal contracts and you want to get paid. We certainly hope it becomes a great resource for vendor information from a marketing perspective. We here at the NIH—we do not collect hard copy capability information, we also designed and developed—five years ago—our own web-based source library, E-portals in Commerce, where you can register information about your company and, through hyperlinks back to your website, into your capability statement, your catalogs or other promotional information pieces, you can have a presence here with us and maintain the content, security, and accuracy of your information. And of course, I would certainly say, know the rules. We all have mentioned the Federal Acquisition Regulations, but you also might want to note that supplementing the FAR—usually a department has their own. The HHS is called the HHSSR—the Health and Human Services Supplemental Regulation. It doesn't change what the FAR says, but it might take something in the FAR that says—and the agency will tell you how they will process unsolicited proposals. We may articulate in there exactly how we do that here at the HHS. And of course, market, market, market, but there's plenty of resources to help you. The Small Business Administration—throughout the country, in every single state there's a district office. In the district offices there are offices called SCORE, Senior Corps of Retired Executives, available to assist firms for no cost or very nominal cost—one-on-one counseling provided, plus seminars and training sessions. Small Business Development Centers throughout the country—we have what's called PTACs, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers that were funded and initiated by the Department of Defense, then we have ways in which you can link over to them through our website library. There's a vast amount of resources available to firms and, outside of this area—if you would look at your local major university, if you would look at your local SBA district office, you will find resources to help you in your business development. Business formation. If you're not ready with the right tools to go out there and do marketing—if you don't have a business plan, if you don't have a marketing plan, if you don't have a strategy, if you don't have a tailored strategy to this target customer you're selecting, you need those—you need those to sort of hit the ground running in the federal contracting arena—but these resources are out there to help you prepare for that. The Chambers of Commerce—certainly, as a business, you should belong to those organizations in your communities. It's a place to network; it's a place to gather lots of business resource help in your local community. Your trade associations—sometimes the trade associations have publications and they post notices—federal procurement opportunities. Business incubators—there's one right here in the District of Columbia and one out there in Maryland, and all across the country co-located at some of the major universities. And, of course, the Internet—a great way to do your research and to access help. At our website—well, first of all we have listings of points of contact, frequently asked questions, getting started—everything we talked about this morning is in this guidebook. Overviews of the acquisitions and small business programs and there's a little section with recommendations on marketing. Our commitment was to develop a good resource of a website for you so that you can go back there and help yourself in the future. Our commitment to you is to try and keep that information up-to-date. I would like to entertain any last minute questions. You were a great group, hanging in there until the end with us. Any other final questions that I can address? Well, you were terrific. Thank you very much. (applause)