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**Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP)**  
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Mitha A. Farooq  
Director, DoD OSBP

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*Kasey*

Ms. Kasey Diaz  
Associate Director  
Mentor-Protégé Program



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## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### FAROOQ A. MITHA

*Director, Office of Small Business Programs*

Farooq A. Mitha currently serves in the Biden administration as the Director of the Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP). As Director, Mr. Mitha oversees more than \$140 billion dollars of annual awards to small business. Mr. Mitha also served in the Obama administration as the Senior Advisor to the Director of the DoD Office of Small Business Programs.

In his previous time at the Department of Defense, Mr. Mitha led several programs and initiatives that have increased the visibility of small business within DoD, modernized programs to infuse small business capability into major defense acquisition programs and increased effective dialogue with industry. In a dual role, Mr. Mitha also served as the Senior Advisor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manufacturing and Industrial Base Policy.

Mr. Mitha has a strong background in international policy and national security. He is fluent in Arabic and published opinion-editorials offering commentary on issues concerning the Middle East and the American political system. In 2009, Mr. Mitha was a Fulbright Fellow in Amman, Jordan where he coordinated a Track II diplomacy conference and conducted research on economic reform in the Middle East. Mr. Mitha has also lectured at domestic and international universities on economic reform in the Middle East, U.S. policy in the Middle East, and civic engagement. Mr. Mitha obtained his law degree from the University of Florida Levin College of Law and holds a B.S. degree in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences from the University of South Florida.

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MS KASEY DIAZ  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
**MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM**

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS**

Ms. Diaz has more than 17 years of experience in technical, programmatic, administrative and management assistance in support of DOD as a subject-matter expert on small business and acquisition policies, procedures and related matters at the major command level. She has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Prior to joining Department of Defense Office of Small Business Mentor-Protégé Program, Ms. Diaz worked in the private sector where she provided direct program management support for federal government small business policies and programs with the objective of maximizing utilization of small and disadvantaged small businesses. She currently serves as the Director of the DoD Mentor-Protégé Program.

Prior to providing programmatic and management support to the federal government, Ms. Diaz was instrumental in enhancing membership recruitment, retention and outreach and influential in all membership-level activities as the Assistant Director for Non-Profit Associations.

Recruitment entailed a much-needed influx of new members that were needed to sustain the longevity of the associations so that as older members fell off the rosters, it is continuously being refilled through the energy of motivated and excited new members who are also involved in various outreach programs to keep Non-Profits thriving. Through Ms. Diaz' recommendations to the Director for Non-Profit Associations, several programs were enhanced and the level of managerial support to its members flourished as indicated through numerous feed-back received from several mediums of data retrieval systems. Leaving this position to join the DoD OSBMP was heart-felt throughout the organization(s) she worked so diligently with and fellow members. She was wished the best in her new endeavors knowing she would be a vital asset to the Mentor-Protégé Program.

## Message from the Secretary

Small businesses occupy a central position in the American economy and way of life. They account for over ninety-nine percent of all employer firms and generate over forty-four percent of our Nation's economic activity. Small businesses keep our military forces combat ready with critical parts, cutting edge technology, and top-notch services, and fortify our Defense supply chains in times of crisis. Small businesses help ensure that our military has the very best capabilities to keep us safe. Some of the most innovative minds in the country come from smaller companies, and in an era of strategic competition small businesses are one of our greatest tools.

Despite their significance to the defense mission, the Department of Defense has yet to utilize the full potential of small businesses. Although the Department has met its small business prime-contracting goals for the past eight years and has increased spending on small business prime contracting, participation of small business in the defense industrial base has declined by over forty percent in the past decade. Small businesses comprise more than seventy percent of the companies that do business with the Department. If the Department does not work to reverse the decline of small business contracting, then the industrial base that equips our military will weaken. Unfortunately, small businesses encounter many challenges in working with the Department. A complex web of entry points and intricate regulations, as well as a trend of fewer opportunities, are pushing firms away from us at a time when we need them urgently. The Department is determined to reduce these barriers. If we do not take action, we risk losing mission critical domestic capabilities, stifling competition and innovation, and potentially weakening our supply chains.

This Small Business Strategy outlines a Department-wide plan to harness the power of America's small, innovative, and agile companies and grow their contributions to the defense mission. These initiatives will streamline efforts across DoD in order to make it easier for small businesses to work with DoD, align small business activities to sustain and expand the Department's diverse and modernized capabilities, and reduce barriers for small businesses to help reverse the declining trend in small business suppliers. Small businesses provide our most creative entrepreneurs and most driven workers, and it is imperative that we extend them an open hand. Through implementing this strategy, we will ensure that small businesses continue to serve as indispensable partners in the mission to protect our national security.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Lloyd J. Austin III".

**Lloyd J. Austin III**  
Secretary of Defense