

## **Press Release: Hawk Enterprises, LLC Completes Department of Defense (DoD) Mentor-Protégé Program with Bell Helicopter Textron**

Huntsville, Alabama.

Hawk Enterprises, LLC, a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business based in Huntsville, was recognized in a ceremony on September 10, 2009 to mark the formal completion of a Department of Defense Mentor-Protégé Program with Bell Helicopter Textron. In March of 2008, Hawk Enterprises was selected as a Protégé to Bell Helicopter under the DoD Mentor Protégé Program. Under this agreement, the Mentor (Bell Helicopter) provided training and its resources to the Protégé (Hawk) to build or strengthen areas of weakness in order to provide a larger supplier base to the Department of Defense. Specific areas Bell assisted as a Mentor were improvements in Contract Estimating and Proposal Writing, Business Plan Development and Lean Six-Sigma through the training and certification of two Hawk employees as Green Belts.

Hawk Enterprises founder and president, Bill Tripp, says he is looking forward to the next step in the Bell Helicopter relationship, the award of subcontracts to Hawk Enterprises from Bell to enhance the business relationship, while providing quality work for the customer. “Focus on the Warfighter” is Hawk’s motto Tripp stated. Working with Bell will allow us to provide support to our nation’s military.

The DoD Mentor-Protégé Program is the pre-eminent program within the Federal government for the transformation of a small business firm with high potential to a firm of substance, that is, one able to perform well as a prime contractor and/or a subcontractor. In the event that the small business firm possesses commercial capabilities with a domestic or global orientation, the firm’s potential becomes stronger yet. The process assumes all stakeholders (Mentor, Protégé, and DoD) enter an Agreement with a positive outlook and a need to succeed in a documented way by improving revenues, employment levels, and other key indicators of success such as technology enhancement or technology transfer. Increasingly, we need to address technology transfer and other forward-looking growth activities.

The DoD Mentor-Protégé Program is not merely a process of teaming and building acumen in the use of improved business systems and strengthening infrastructure, it is ultimately the means for a Protégé to become a valued business partner, an innovator within a relationship that fosters technical progress.

For the hundreds of Mentors and Protégés that have participated in the program, the consensus is that the program has been positive, constructive, and useful in building stronger business relationships, elevating small business firms to a higher level, transferring technology, and fulfilling the supply needs of the DoD.