

## Contact

[www.linkedin.com/in/dilawarsyed](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dilawarsyed)  
(LinkedIn)

## Top Skills

Entrepreneurship

Product Management

Start-ups

# Dilawar Syed

Deputy Administrator at U.S. Small Business Administration  
United States

## Summary

Dilawar was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in a bipartisan vote to be the Deputy Administrator, Small Business Administration in June, 2023. Prior to SBA, Dilawar championed American businesses as Special Representative for Commercial & Business Affairs at the State Department. As State Department's top commercial diplomat, Dilawar advocated for U.S. companies to compete and win abroad to help ensure U.S. strategic competitiveness. He mobilized U.S. private sector to support Ukraine in the wake of Russia's invasion, advocated for commercial deals in strategic sectors such as energy, aviation and defense, and advanced tech, and pushed for better business environments in 24 bilateral visits across the globe.

Before joining the Biden Administration, Dilawar was CEO at Lumiata, an AI healthcare company focused on reducing healthcare costs and improving patient outcomes. Previously, Dilawar was President at Freshworks. He founded the company's North America business overseeing sales and marketing, customer success, and partnerships. Freshworks went public in September 2021. Earlier in his career, Dilawar oversaw business operations at Yahoo!'s Platform & Infrastructure Division and was a product manager at Siebel Systems and SAP.

Throughout his career, Dilawar has driven civic efforts at the federal, state, and local level focusing on economic growth and entrepreneurship. As the founding Chair of the California Entrepreneurship Task Force with the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, Dilawar promoted inclusive entrepreneurship bridging coastal regions with the state's rural heartland. He served on President Obama's White House Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) and chaired the White House Initiative on AAPIs' Economic Growth Committee. In that role, Dilawar led the administration's engagement with small businesses across the U.S. after the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

In 2020, Dilawar was tapped by San Jose, Calif. Mayor Sam Liccardo to help lead Silicon Valley's COVID-19 economic recovery as a member of the Silicon Valley Recovery Roundtable.

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## Experience

### U.S. Small Business Administration

Deputy Administrator

July 2023 - Present (4 months)

Washington, District of Columbia, United States

### U.S. Department of State

Special Representative for Commercial & Business Affairs

February 2022 - July 2023 (1 year 6 months)

Washington DC

As Special Representative, I champion and advocate for American companies and entrepreneurs to ensure U.S. continues to lead the world in business, innovation, and transformational change in areas such as inclusive economic growth and climate action. My team and I advance trade, commercial, and economic policies to ensure U.S. companies have a level-playing field to compete and win globally.

Our mission is to democratize access to commercial diplomacy and support. We are engaging with, and driving awareness of our many programs, to businesses in under-served regions and communities who have historically not been engaged before.

### Lumiata

President & CEO

April 2018 - August 2021 (3 years 5 months)

San Francisco Bay Area

As CEO at Lumiata, Dilawar led the company's growth as a leader in AI for healthcare. Backed by leading healthcare and technology investors, Lumiata provides predictive analytics for managing health costs and risk. At the intersection of clinical knowledge, data science, and machine learning, Lumiata delivers cost and risk insights to health plans and health systems.

### California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

Founder & Chairman, California Entrepreneurship Task Force  
May 2019 - May 2021 (2 years 1 month)

California Entrepreneurship Task Force is a historic effort to promote and drive inclusive entrepreneurship across rural California and in communities of color. The Task Force is supported by the Governor's office and serves as a bridge to small businesses and entrepreneurs to help the state maintain its entrepreneurial and innovation leadership globally. Dilawar has led engagement with Main Street businesses across the state during the COVID-19 pandemic by hosting rapid response sessions. Dilawar guided Silicon Valley's COVID-19 economic recovery as a member of San Jose Mayor Liccardo's Silicon Valley Recovery Task Force.

## Freshworks

President

January 2014 - April 2018 (4 years 4 months)

San Francisco Bay Area

Freshworks is a market leader in customer engagement software with 200K + customers worldwide. Backed by Tiger Global, Accel, Google Capital and Sequoia, the company has raised \$400MM in funding.

Dilawar founded Freshworks operations in North America and architected the company's up-market business managing sales, customer success, marketing, and partnerships. Under his leadership, Freshworks built a global customer engagement model that has powered its phenomenal growth, struck strategic partnerships with Google, AWS, Microsoft, and Box amongst others, and guided the multi-geo company's culture in its formative years.

## Yonja

President & CEO

March 2009 - April 2014 (5 years 2 months)

Menlo Park, CA

Emerging markets social media company. Backed by Tiger Global, the company operated social networking, e-commerce, and online recruiting brands in Turkey.

Splitting time between Silicon Valley and Istanbul, Dilawar re-engineered the company in his tenure as C.E.O, driving expansion into new products while maintaining the company's core social business.

Dilawar expanded Yonja's product focus with a host of new product launches (social, ad products, gaming), and re-positioned existing social network.

## The White House

Commissioner, President Obama's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans

September 2010 - March 2014 (3 years 7 months)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

Appointed by President Barack Obama to advise the White House on policies and initiatives affecting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The commission engaged the AAPI community across the country on behalf of the President and federal agencies.

As chair of the Economic Growth Committee, Dilawar led White House's engagement with entrepreneurs and innovators. Dilawar liaised with Small Business Administration and Department of Commerce and held convenings with entrepreneurs promoting federal resources for access to capital and initiatives such as the President's Exports Council.

## Yahoo

Senior Director, Platform Strategy & Operations

August 2006 - December 2008 (2 years 5 months)

San Francisco Bay Area

Yahoo! Platform Division developed and scaled shared technologies and web services for Yahoo! properties globally. In this divisional business role reporting to Yahoo! EVP of Products, Dilawar managed strategy, business operations and partnerships for Yahoo!'s platform products. Dilawar drove platforms adoption across the Yahoo! network, with partners and third-party developers. Developed commercial models for Yahoo! open platforms, and helped build ecosystem of developers and partners.

## Oracle

Senior Product Manager [Siebel Systems]

October 2002 - October 2005 (3 years 1 month)

San Francisco Bay Area

Launched Universal Application Network (UAN), Siebel's first integration platform for Telco, Media and Utilities. Grew UAN to \$25MM in license revenues for the Telco & Media vertical. As a member of the founding team for UAN, drove multiple product releases from inception to GA; drove product marketing; and enabled sales and services teams worldwide. Member, Siebel's Chairman's Circle.

Deloitte

Senior Consultant

June 1998 - June 2000 (2 years 1 month)

Houston, Texas, United States

Ernst & Young Global Consulting Services

Senior Consultant

January 1996 - June 1998 (2 years 6 months)

San Jose, California, United States

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## Education

University of Pennsylvania - The Wharton School

MBA · (2000 - 2002)

The University of Texas at Austin

BA, Economics, Computer Science · (1995)