

COSTARS Connection

The Commonwealth's Cooperative Purchasing Program
Passport to Business Opportunity and Procurement Savings

Volume 15 Issue 2
Spring 2021



Tom Wolf, Governor
Curt Topper, Secretary

PA Business & Government Expo

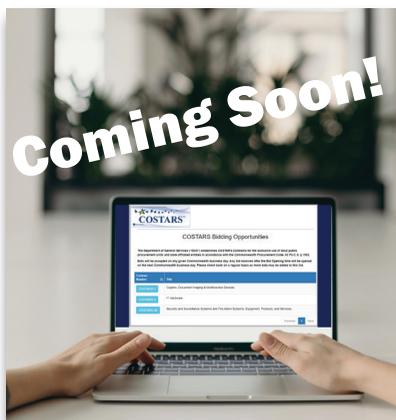
Where Supply and Demand Connect!

We are excited to announce the Department of General Services' (DGS) biennial PA Procurement Expo & Forum is going virtual in November of this year!

In addition to a new name – **PA Business & Government Expo**, this year's event aims to provide a forum for a diverse mix of businesses to network with state and local government representatives, while providing educational sessions on a variety of business and government-related topics.

Last year, the Expo Planning Committee conducted a survey of COSTARS members, suppliers, and state agencies to determine the format they prefer (e.g., a one or two-day event to be held in one week, two weeks or over an extended period, etc.) as well as the types of educational sessions that interest them. Based on this feedback, DGS will host a virtual Expo to be held over a period of two weeks. Educational sessions will be offered each week and will be recorded so participants can view them at a later date. Respondents told us they were most interested in learning about the COSTARS Program, doing business with the commonwealth, technology and the public sector, small, small diverse and veteran business enterprise opportunities, stress management, effective management practices, and procurement- and contract-specific focused sessions.

Be sure to visit the Expo website <https://www.dgs.pa.gov/expo/Pages/default.aspx> for updates as they become available regarding registration, educational sessions, sponsorship, and presenter opportunities.



COSTARS Electronic Bidding System

In the past year, the COSTARS Team has been working diligently to make the bidding process a more streamlined and user-friendly experience for our current and potential COSTARS suppliers.

To support that goal, a new electronic bidding system is currently in the works! Stay-tuned for updates in the coming months.

Also, when the new system is in place, a notification will be placed on the COSTARS Bidding Opportunities page of the COSTARS website at <https://tinyurl.com/biddingopps>

Please note that until the new system is in place, the team is still accepting mailed hard-copy bids only.



Dawn Eshenour Retirement

By Kim Bullivant, COSTARS Marketing Manager



Ahhh...1986...when shoulder pads, big hair, and leg warmers were all the rage. It was also the year when Dawn Eshenour, Chief, Supplier Development and Support Division began her career with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania!

After 35 years of dedicated service to the commonwealth, Dawn will be retiring on June 11.

Prior to beginning her career with the Department of General Services, she gained valuable administrative and procurement experience at the Department of Health and the Board of Probation and Parole.

When Dawn came to the Department of General Services (DGS) in 2004, she was assigned to a new procurement program - the COSTARS Program. A skeptic at first, because it was such a new concept to her, Dawn quickly learned the value and importance of the program for the commonwealth's local public procurement units and suppliers - large and small. From the beginning, she has been a key player in developing new COSTARS-exclusive contracts and growing the program from a mere \$150 million in 2005 to more than \$1 billion in sales in fiscal year 2020!

In 2010, she assumed the role of COSTARS Program Manager until 2015 when she transitioned to Chief, Supplier Development and Support Division. Since then, she has worked tirelessly to streamline the COSTARS system (what was once 18 separate systems and is now one), to adopt new methods to promote the program (social media and webinars), to coordinate the biennial PA Procurement Expo and Forum, and to develop a new electronic bidding system, to name a few.

"The electronic bidding system is a project that is near and dear to my heart. I am so pleased to play a part in its development and to see it is on the road to completion!" Dawn said.

Dawn mentioned how she has always felt a sense of community not only within the Bureau of Procurement, but also with Pennsylvania's local governments, eligible educational and non-profit organizations, legislators, and suppliers. She is grateful for the support from Deputy Secretary Ken Hess, Chief Procurement Officer Janice Pistor and the BOP team throughout the years that contributed to the continued growth and success of the program. Additionally, she attributes program improvements to the guidance provided by Assistant Chief Counsel, Erin Verano. Her support was instrumental to the COSTARS team as they initiated the monumental task of adding construction, installation, and assembly ancillary services back into many contracts, as well as the addition of stand-alone services to some COSTARS-exclusive contracts. These improvements resulted in a more efficient procurement experience for COSTARS members and suppliers.

For the past 11 years, Dawn has devoted her time and expertise

as leader of the COSTARS team. "I am proud of the many accomplishments made throughout the years by this 'small but mighty' group of dedicated individuals," Dawn said.

Undoubtedly, her passion for the success of the program has been an inspiration to the entire team. Under Dawn's steadfast leadership, the COSTARS team of eight successfully manages 36 exclusive contracts, and provides support and education to its ever-growing membership of more than 9,000 local public procurement units and over 2,000 suppliers! "I will miss the fellowship, good food, and laughs we had during our team meetings," she said. "Throughout the years, we developed a strong family dynamic - we know and understand so much about each other and of course, our furry children! I believe we grew even stronger by supporting one another through the pandemic and I will miss the relationships I have formed with this team."

In addition to the COSTARS Program, Dawn has directed the activity of the UniqueSource section, managed by Betty Goodling-Weimer, an established program related to supplies manufactured and services performed by persons with disabilities, and the Supplier Services section, managed by Scott Bowers, charged with interfacing with the supplier community. She expressed her appreciation for the hard work and success of these equally small but mighty teams!

So, what are Dawn's plans for retired life? As a native to central PA, Dawn plans to stay put in the area; however, she is looking forward to traveling with her husband Bryan and Cooper the dog (AKA furry child), especially where a lake is within view! She's hoping to spend winters somewhere in Tennessee and also plans to check off other locations on her bucket list including Hawaii, the Grand Canyon, Florida, and when the time is right, you just might find her on a flight to Italy, and perhaps making a second excursion to Mexico!

Until then, she will be taking some time to simplify and clean out the extra "stuff" she has accumulated in her house throughout the years. Hopefully, she will hold onto the leg warmers just in case they come back in style!

We appreciate all that Dawn has done for our team throughout the years, and wish her a wonderful, fun, and relaxing retirement!



Meet the Department of General Services Bureau of Procurement's IT Procurement Team

By Kim Bullivant, COSTARS Marketing Manager

The IT Procurement Team manages a variety of information technology-related contracts that provide products and services to meet COSTARS members' computer, communication, networking, and audio-visual needs. Members are experiencing significant savings by purchasing through COSTARS-authorized suppliers on these contracts, spending more than \$36 million during the first 10 months of FY20.

If you are interested in learning more about these contracts, you will find detailed information on the Search Contracts page of eMarketplace at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/BidContracts.aspx>. For contract-specific questions, please contact the respective commodity specialist listed below.

Amy Layman

Commodity Specialist

alayman@pa.gov

Wireless Communication Services- Voice and Data, Professional Broadcast, Audio Visual and Multimedia Equipment, Digital Production Equipment, Photo Imaging Equipment and Related Services, PBX & Key Telephone Systems, Digital Multifunctional Devices - MFD's

Janis Brown

Commodity Specialist

janibrown@pa.gov

IT Staff Augmentation Services, Master Information Technology (IT) Services Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) Contract

Christopher Price

Commodity Specialist

chrisprice@pa.gov

Premier Support Services, Software and Related Services (IBM), Enterprise Contact Center Services, GIS Software & Services, Enterprise Software & Related Services, Comprehensive Time/Data Collection Solution

Raymond Jaime

Commodity Specialist

rjaime@pa.gov

Third Party IT Hardware Maintenance, Microfilm Equipment, Supplies & Services, Mainframe and Midrange Server and Storage Devices, Drafting and Engineering Equipment, Supplies and Services, Passenger Vehicle Telematics, Desktops, Laptops, Ultra-Portable Laptops, Tablets, Rugged Devices, Nontraditional Desktops (Thin Clients), Apple Devices, CADD Workstation Devices, Options and Services, IT Subscription Services

Raeden Hosler

Commodity Specialist

rhosler@pa.gov

Two-Way Radio Equipment and Services, Networking Equipment & Related Services, Radio Maintenance and Related Services

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Allison Frank

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Federal Funding FAQ

Recently, many of our members have asked about the use of federal funds when purchasing from COSTARS-exclusive contracts. Whenever a member is using federal funds, in whole or in part, to pay for a purchase, the member must ensure compliance with any federal requirements for such purchase. One of the main requirements is that the member obtain three quotes for the goods or services.

All three quotes can come from COSTARS contracted suppliers or some of the quotes could come from contractors from other cooperative purchasing programs. It does not matter if the federal funds may come directly from a federal agency or come through a commonwealth agency; members must obtain three quotes to utilize cooperative purchasing programs like COSTARS.

Recipients of federal funds for purchases should consult with appropriate legal counsel and refer to the grant documentation and/or the source of the federal funding to ensure compliance with the federal requirements.

Destination: Mainstreet

By Felicia Campbell, COSTARS Marketing Manager

When you think of “the perfect main street,” what comes to mind? My vision is a charming row of family-run storefronts and restaurants, tree-lined streets, and plenty of seating areas for conversation and reflection. For me, these kinds of towns provide lasting memories and are fantastic places to take home unique treasures.



Streetscape plays a major role in a town’s economic development. A well-planned town is welcoming to visitors, therefore providing more opportunity for engagement with the town’s businesses. The design of main street in our towns should reflect the culture and personality of the residents. A coastal town will have a very different image than an old colonial town. No matter the setting, the application of streetscape techniques can enhance not only the look of the town but also how citizens interact with it.

Waterfront towns would want to include inviting benches and tree cover so visitors can enjoy the view in a comfortable shady spot. Waterfronts also deliver a fantastic setting for fitness courses appealing to people looking for outdoor physical activity and fun with the family. Modern towns may focus more on the use of concrete, metal furniture, unique lighting, art installations, charging stations and possibly a bike lane. A historical town may have more interest in incorporating cobblestone or brick into sidewalks and adding ornate clocks and quaint lighting fixtures into their streetscape plan.

Streetscape planning can also improve safety as well as inclusivity for guests. The addition of textured curb ramps will allow simple and secure mobility throughout the town for those with physical challenges.

Tree lined streets are beautiful and act as effective speeding deterrents which is extremely helpful as main streets are typically heavily trafficked with cars navigating parking spots around the traffic. Additional safety for both drivers and pedestrians is offered in the form of easily visible street and directional signage so drivers don’t have to make split second turning decisions because they aren’t sure where they are going.

Lastly, a good streetscape design also takes into account new stormwater management concepts that reduce runoff to avoid debris, chemicals, bacteria, eroded soil, and other pollutants from compromising our streams, lakes, rivers and wetlands.

COSTARS members exploring a redesign of their town, look to COSTARS! Authorized suppliers offer a wide range of streetscape solutions through COSTARS-exclusive and program participating contracts:

- **COSTARS-14** Recreational and Fitness Equipment
- **COSTARS-33** Street Lighting, Parking Meters and Street Furniture (AKA Streetscape)
- **COSTARS-24** Traffic Signs
- **COSTARS-41** Stormwater Management Products and Services
- **COSTARS-29** Grounds Keeping Services and Supplies
- **COSTARS-32** Signage
- **4400020042** - Ag/Grounds Keeping Type Power Equipment

IDEMIA Seeking IdentoGo Partner Sites

Contract #4400016516

Digital Fingerprinting and Federal Criminal Background Check Services

IdentoGO by Idemia is seeking additional Partner sites in Pennsylvania. IdentoGO Enrollment Centers are found in a variety of businesses and organizations including: *Home Health Care, Insurance Agencies, Title and Tag, and Family Service.*

As an IdentoGO Enrollment Center partner, you will provide simplicity, security, and protection to the lives of fellow Pennsylvanians in your area.

IDEMIA has identified the following geographic areas in Pennsylvania (by county) in which the need for partners is greatest.

Butler County	Zelienople
Carbon County	Lehighton
Cumberland County	Camp Hill New Cumberland
Dauphin County	Middletown
Fayette County	Uniontown
Franklin County	Chambersburg Shippensburg
Fulton County	McConnellsburg
Lancaster County	Ephrata
McKean County	Eldred
Montgomery County	Limerick Souderton
Potter County	Coudersport
Snyder County	Selinsgrove
Westmoreland County	Monessen

Pennsylvania agencies requiring fingerprinting services through the IDEMIA contract are the Departments of Education, Human Services, Transportation, PA State Police, Banking and Securities, and Aging. This contract’s services help to protect our loved ones, information, and finances.

If interested in partnering, increasing traffic in your core business, and growing your revenue opportunities visit www.IdentoGo.com/Partners. Check out the [Partner Criteria](#) section which outlines facility, staffing, and partner requirements.

Review the [Partner Benefits](#) you will receive by becoming a partner. When you are ready to become an IdentoGO Enrollment Center, complete the [Partner Inquiry Form](#).

Contract 4400016516 is not available to COSTARS members for the purchase of services.



May

Tribune-Review - A new pump track in Oakmont will be purchased from American Ramp Co., an approved vendor through the state Department of General Services' COSTARS program.

Tribune-Democrat - The City of Johnstown will be purchasing and installing new turf for Sargent's Stadium at the Point through the COSTARS Program, that will cost about 40 percent less than originally budgeted.

March

Yardley News - The Pennsbury School Board approved the purchase of two Scraper Systems from Stokes Equipment under a COSTARS contract. The system will provide the district with a safer way of removing snow and ice from the tops of its buses.

LNP Lancaster Online- At Palmer Park, the Brandywine Hill Foundation has obtained a grant to purchase an outdoor pavilion for the park. The city has found a structure through the COSTARS cooperative purchasing program.

Courier Express - The Clearfield-Jefferson Counties Airport Authority, approved the purchase of a front-end loader for the DuBois Regional Airport. Through the COSTARS program, the airport has had an opportunity to look at American-made equipment and try to determine the best piece that would be the most reasonable for the authority.

The Progress - Curwensville Area School Board approved buying a van for use by small groups of students and staff. Directors authorized the purchase of a 2020 Ford Transit 10-passenger van from Lake Auto, Lewistown, through COSTARS. The purchase will allow the van to be used by spring sports teams, students participating in music programs and eventually field trips.

The Mercury - The Montgomery County District Attorney's office used a contract from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's cooperative purchasing program to procure five vehicles from Apple Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of Hanover, Pennsylvania, Apple Chevrolet of York, Pennsylvania, and Whitmoyer Ford of Mount Joy, Pennsylvania, according to the contract award.

The Times Herald - The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services entered into an agreement with CDW Government, of Chicago that provides for computer equipment necessary to assist county constituents visiting the county's vaccination sites to move through the registration process quickly and efficiently. The equipment was purchased through the COSTARS Program.

Williamsport Sun-Gazette - Lycoming county commissioners approved the purchase of a 2021 Caterpillar D4 dozer through the COSTARS Program.

February

Meadville Tribune - Cambridge Springs Borough Council members agreed to look into purchasing a 2021 Ford F-350 through COSTARS, which is the state's cooperative purchasing program that allows member municipalities to purchase items, such as vehicles, through competitive pricing.

Williamsport Sun Gazette - Commissioners approved the purchase and installation of security doors from Lezzer Commercial Doors, Williamsport to be installed at District Judge William Solomon's new office site in Old Lycoming Township. The purchase is expected to be made through COSTARS.

Newtown Advance - Newtown Township Board of Supervisors approved the purchase and retrofit of two police vehicles from Chapman Ford through the COSTARS Program. They also voted to purchase a Ford F-350 truck for public works, along with a plow through Chapman Ford and the COSTARS program.



COSTARS In the News

Beauty and the Beasts

By Felicia Campbell,
COSTARS Marketing Manager

Spring has sprung. What a lovely time of the year. Rejuvenation is everywhere – in the blossoms and buds on the trees, in the emergence of bunnies and birds, and a surge in our energy levels due to increased sunlight. We can don lighter clothing, even the occasional pair of shorts on the sunniest of days. It is wonderful. Ahhhh...CHOO!!!!

With the arrival of spring, projects are to be done before we can fully appreciate the splendor of spring. Allergy pills are a must especially for the gardener prepping landscaping beds to create the beautiful splash of color enjoyable throughout the sunny seasons.

The National Association of Landscape Professionals' website, www.loveyourlandscape.org, recommends the following steps to include in your springtime landscaping path:

- Inspect your trees and shrubs for broken or damaged branches.
- Test your soil's pH and nutrient levels.
- Fertilize your lawn, trees and shrubs with a slow-release or controlled-release fertilizer. Research your grass type to determine the best time of year to fertilize that kind of grass.
- Control weeds.
- Remove dead leaves and debris from plant beds.
- Mulch around plant beds and trees. Mulch should be approximately one-inch thick and not directly touching the tree trunks.

We must also turn our attention to the beasts. Spring's warm and wet weather is inviting to pests of all kinds. Common spring pests include ants, ticks, fleas, centipedes and millipedes, termites, mosquitoes, flies, spiders, bees, wasps, hornets, bed bugs and rodents. Some of these pests can be detrimental to both humans and facilities, while others are just pesky. No matter the variety of beast, we want to eradicate them from our safe havens.

Being living creatures, pests have the same basic needs as humans...water, food, and shelter. The first step to mitigating pest intrusions is to focus on eliminating their access to each basic need within and around your facility. The National Pest Management Association's official website <https://npmapestworld.org/> provides helpful tips for preventing access:

- Caulk around windows, doors and utility piping entering into the facility.
- Trim plantings so they are not directly touching the facility.
- Areas such as attics, basements and crawl spaces should be well ventilated and dry.
- All food and garbage containers in and around the facility should be kept in sealed containers.
- Repair rot around roofing, structure, and foundation.

Whether landscaping and pest control are DIY projects, or you require a professional's skills, COSTARS members can rest assured that landscaping and pest control products and services are available at competitive pricing through COSTARS-authorized suppliers.

- COSTARS-5 Janitorial Supplies
- COSTARS-19 Medical Supplies
- COSTARS-21 Pest Control
- 4400018825 - Integrated Pest Management
- COSTARS-29 Grounds Keeping Services and Supplies
- 4400020042 - Ag/Grounds Keeping Type Power Equipment

COSTARS On The Road (Virtually!)

COSTARS Marketing Managers make it their mission to spread the message about the COSTARS Program, recruit new members and suppliers, and provide training about the program.

Recent Events

- March 16 Energize Your Budget with COSTARS and Penn State Facilities Engineering Institute (PSFEI) Webinar
- March 26 New Legislator Orientation - Procurement Webinar
- April 14 Procurated Case Studies: Capitalizing on the Experiences of Your Procurement Community Webinar
- April 27 PSATS Virtual Workshop
- May 11 In the Minds of COSTARS Members: A Supplier Guide to a Successful COSTARS Member Experience Webinar
- May 13 Senator Yaw Virtual COSTARS Workshop

Upcoming Events

- June 9 Technology Roadmap: What Technology Upgrades will be Keys to Your Success? Webinar
- July 13 Going Green: COSTARS Contracts That Save Your Green Webinar
- Aug. 11 COSTARS Communications Solutions Webinar

To submit a request for a COSTARS representative to speak or conduct a training session for members or suppliers at an upcoming event, please contact Kim or Felicia at toll free telephone number 1-866-768-7827 or email to GS-PaCostars@pa.gov. The COSTARS Marketing Team's Calendar of Events is also available on the COSTARS website on the COSTARS Program Resources page.



Visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/PAGenServices/>



Visit our Twitter page at: <https://twitter.com/PAGenServices/>



Visit our LinkedIn page at: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/pagenservices/>

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Further information on the COSTARS program is available by phone at 1-866-768-7827 or by visiting the COSTARS website at www.dgs.pa.gov/COSTARS.

At DGS, our mission is to help government operate more efficiently, effectively, and safely - delivering exceptional value for all Pennsylvanians.

