

COSTARS Connection

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

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Tom Wolf, Governor
Curt Topper, Secretary



PA Procurement Expo Highlights “A Government That Works!”

By Bruce Beardsley, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Approximately 1,700 COSTARS members, state employees, and suppliers attended the premiere PA Procurement Expo and Forum held Sept. 6 and 7 at the Harrisburg Farm Show Complex. The event kicked off with a packed-house General Session where Governor Tom Wolf, via video message, welcomed the attendees and emphasized that “Government that Works” is more than a phrase. It’s a way that government does business. Working together and getting results that better the lives of our citizens. Your role in public procurement puts you in a prime position to deliver high quality goods and services ...while ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used wisely.”

Department of General Services Secretary Curt Topper provided opening remarks that highlighted what the Bureau of Procurement has been able to accomplish in times of diminishing resources and increasing demands for quality. He also encouraged attendees to make the most of the Expo. “To all the procurement professionals in the room: Be bold! Seize the opportunity you have before you to drive the operations of your organizations to ever greater levels of performance,” Secretary Topper said. “And to the suppliers in the room, I encourage you to seize this opportunity as well. If you’ve got a better mousetrap, we want to hear about it. If there’s something about the way we’re doing business that’s standing in the way of innovation, we want to hear about that too. That’s why we’re here!”

Keynote speaker, former Air Force fighter pilot and motivational speaker Waldo Waldman shared the message that “none of us can successfully achieve our mission without our ‘wingmen’. The most important fuel of performance is appreciation. Don’t lose sight of the people in the trenches every day. Your most dangerous zone is your comfort zone!” Waldo obviously connected with the audience and received a rousing standing ovation.

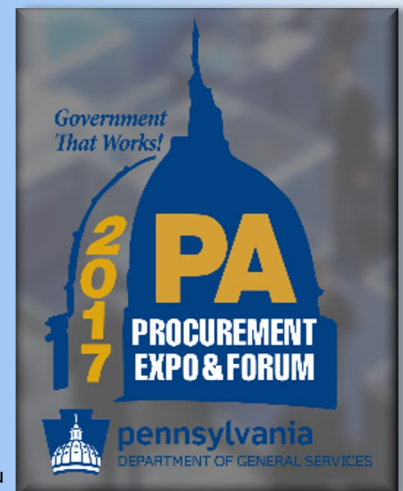
After the opening session, attendees participated in more than 40 workshops as speakers shared information on small and diverse business opportunities, online auctions, bidding on state and COSTARS contracts, minimizing protests, managing contractor performance, local purchasing for police, recreation and public works, negotiation, best procurement practices, marketing to COSTARS members, plus many others.

More than 80 attendees participated in one of four 45-minute guided tours of the commonwealth’s surplus warehouse gaining a first-hand look at the variety of supplies and equipment available to most COSTARS members at “pennies on the dollar.” Several large COSTARS members hosted “speed-networking sessions”, meeting one-on-one with interested suppliers including the City of Philadelphia, Bloomsburg University, Allegheny County, Brandywine Heights Area School District, PA Turnpike Commission, City of Harrisburg, and Lancaster Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13.

In addition to attending breakout sessions, COSTARS members and suppliers had the opportunity to visit the Online Support Hub where they could receive personalized hands-on assistance in navigating the COSTARS website and finding and completing supplier registration forms and small business certification.

Of course, the vast exhibit hall provided opportunities for members and 247 exhibitors to interact and learn about each other and experience the innovative products and services available (such as a grand piano and an interactive customer-service avatar) through COSTARS. Special thanks to our Champion sponsors, noted on page 5.

If you weren’t able to attend the conference, get a taste of what you missed by reviewing the comments and photos on page 4, and make your plans now to attend the next PA Procurement Expo and Forum in autumn, 2019!



New Service Available to COSTARS Members



Rita Spicher, Contract Manager, Unisys and Michael Root, Director, Bureau of Administrative and Program Services, PA Office of Administration – Office for Information Technologies contributed to this article

Although not new to the commonwealth or to the COSTARS program, Unisys has recently made its Data Center Pennsylvania Compute Services contract, commonly referred to as the PACS program (statewide contract #4400014635), available to COSTARS Members.

PACS is a secure hybrid cloud service with production IT provided at a Tier 4, CJIS certified Datacenter from Ashburn, Virginia, with Disaster Recovery and High Availability services provided from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Services are provided on x86/Open Systems (Windows and Linux), Unisys ClearPath®, IBM® mainframe and AIX platforms.

Services which include 24x7 monitoring are delivered on a consumption based model ordered from a service catalog. This model provides cost savings through elimination of capital expenditures on equipment, savings on equipment and facility maintenance, with the ability to scale up or down as needed, just to name a few.

Unisys adheres to strict governance with delivery built on ITIL processes that comply with PCI, CJIS, HIPAA, IRS and other security and privacy policies. Fully managed services include:

- 🖥️ Hardware and Operating Systems including Provisioning, Support, and Management
- 🖥️ Storage including Provisioning, Support, and Management
- 🖥️ Auto Discovery and Configuration Management
- 🖥️ Availability Monitoring
- 🖥️ Performance Monitoring
- 🖥️ Capacity Monitoring
- 🖥️ Incident, Problem and Change Management
- 🖥️ Knowledge Management Portal for Reporting
- 🖥️ Backup and Restore Services
- 🖥️ 24 X 7 Service Desk
- 🖥️ Patching
- 🖥️ User Account Management
- 🖥️ Service Level Agreements
- 🖥️ Network and Firewall Support and Management
- 🖥️ Security Services – Antivirus, IDP, DLP, Vulnerability Testing
- 🖥️ Disaster Recovery Services including Annual Testing

“Unisys is an industry leader providing IT services and technologies for governments around the globe as well as the world’s top banks and other financial services companies,” said Rita Spicher, Contract Manager, US&C Enterprise Solutions. “At the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, we have more than 40 years of demonstrated successful delivery on mission-critical systems and programs.”

To learn more about the PACS contract or to discuss how Unisys can assist you with innovative IT solutions that will enable you to better serve your customers, you may contact Unisys at pa.gov@unisys.com.

You may also view the contract online via eMarketplace at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/>. Select the **Search Contracts** tab, then select Contract Number in the **Search by** dropdown box, then enter contract #4400014635, and select **Search**.

Members Receive Fuel Card Rebate

By Bruce Beardsley, COSTARS Marketing Manager

Based on their purchases of fuel through the Commonwealth Fleet Card Program, 937 COSTARS members will receive their share of a \$393,399 rebate. The program is available to COSTARS members by “piggy-backing” off statewide contract #4400009775 awarded to Wright Express (WEX) Financial Services Corp.

This year’s rebate will be credited to COSTARS members on their next invoice and represents an increase of more than 16 percent compared to last year. The rebate is based upon the purchase of 8.6 million gallons of fuel using the program’s credit card at participating dealers, which includes virtually every fuel location in the state. The rebate percentage to a specific member is based on the speed in which a member pays their bill, with the average rebate being about 1.75 percent.

So far in 2017, more than 90 additional COSTARS members have applied to participate in the fuel card program. In addition to the rebate, other program benefits include tighter purchase controls, reports by vehicles which may highlight fuel efficiency problems requiring maintenance service, free enrollment and no service charges. Most importantly, tax exemptions (totaling more than \$4 million in FY 2016-17) are deducted immediately, improving cash flow and eliminating the need for the member to file for reimbursement. When establishing your account, you can customize how your cards are used by your employees. For example, you can restrict what time of day the card(s) can be used. Each card is secure and safe from getting in the wrong hands, and is assigned a special code known only by the participating member.

WEX has also developed a “WEX Connect” application for your smartphone that shows your location as well as the participating stations near you listing the most recent price per gallon.

COSTARS members are encouraged to address questions and request an application from the WEX Government Sales Team of Tanya Watson and Phil Kent, either by phone at 866-527-8870 or by email to governmentmailbox@wexinc.com.



Spotlight on COSTARS-16 Water & Wastewater Components/Equipment

By Bruce Beardsley, COSTARS Marketing Manager

One of the largest and fastest growing COSTARS-exclusive contracts is COSTARS-16 Water & Wastewater Treatment Components/Equipment. It's the fourth largest COSTARS contract in spend (\$28,106,180 in FY 2016), with an increase of 28 percent compared to FY 2015. The number of authorized suppliers on the contract grew from 59 to 75 during the last year!

Jim Clark, President of Mr. Rehab, a small business and COSTARS-authorized supplier since 2011, endorses the COSTARS program wholeheartedly. "The program continues to grow for us as more and more municipalities get to know the program and township managers recognize the usefulness of the system and its ability to save money and remove complexities from the procurement process," said Clark. "It's a win/win proposition that's a great fit for us and for our customers."

The Schuylkill County Municipal Authority recently replaced more than 11,000 residential water meters, a process that takes place only every two decades. According to Executive Director Patrick Caulfield, the \$1.1 million purchase from COSTARS-authorized supplier L/B Water Service resulted in "significantly consequential" savings. Caulfield says the authority also used COSTARS recently to purchase vehicles and audio-visual equipment.

Like most COSTARS-exclusive contracts, the scope of the contract is broad. Some categories under COSTARS-16 include: pumps; tanks; valves; safety equipment and more. Although COSTARS-16 is a materials contract, suppliers may also choose to offer and COSTARS members may purchase certain ancillary services which are integral to the purchase of the equipment or components, such as installation, customization, extended warranty, post warranty maintenance service, special delivery arrangements, and training.

A variety of COSTARS members use COSTARS-16, including county governments, hospitals, townships, boroughs, sanitary, water and municipal authorities, school districts, and colleges. However, the bulk of the spend comes from public authorities (70 percent of total spend on the contract), townships (15 percent), and boroughs (11 percent). Purchasing through COSTARS negates the need to go through the time-consuming and expensive public bidding process, since suppliers are awarded a COSTARS contract through the state's multi-award public bidding process.

Commodity Specialist Kathy Lewis, who administers the contract, attests to the growing popularity of the contract. "I hear from members that it is very easy to get what they want through the contract and its suppliers."

COSTARS Members Save Money With Surplus!

By Claire Osborne, COSTARS Marketing Manager

A great resource for qualified COSTARS members is the Bureau of Supplies and Surplus Operations. A huge variety of state and federal surplus equipment and supplies are available at exceptional savings! The bureau also administers the Law Enforcement Property and Fixed Vehicle Programs that offer enormous value and tremendous savings to our Members.

The State Surplus Property Program re-utilizes commonwealth property by offering qualified COSTARS members office furniture, equipment, and supplies which are available at the Harrisburg Distribution Center or online. In addition, they hold two heavy equipment auctions for municipalities, prior to offering the equipment to the general public.

The Federal Surplus Property Program saves taxpayer money by offering a huge variety of products to municipalities, school districts, fire and police departments, and certain non-profit organizations. The property is donated to a qualified COSTARS member from the federal government, charging only a minimal service charge. For convenience, an online inventory includes items such as kitchen equipment, vehicles, computers, office supplies, furniture, and much more. Bureau staff will also search the nation for specific item requests.

The Law Enforcement Excess Property Program helps COSTARS members that are eligible law enforcement entities save on everyday needs by offering law enforcement equipment directly from the Department of Defense. Equipment offered includes body armor, vehicles, computers, weapons, boats, aircraft, night vision equipment and much more.

The Law Enforcement New Property Program is accessible by counterdrug, emergency response, and homeland security law enforcement agencies to use the federal government contract pricing to attain new equipment and supplies. The program researches contracts including police and security devices, computers, pursuit vehicles, command centers, back-up generators, uniforms and much more. They then provide pricing and availability and a letter of concurrence for a minimal service fee.

The Federal Fixed Price Vehicle Program offers low-cost vehicle alternatives to qualified COSTARS members. These alternatives include low mileage, late-model General Service Administration (GSA) fleet vehicles including cars, trucks, vans, alternative fuel vehicles, dump trucks, ambulances and fire trucks. This program will accept requests to inquire about specific vehicles.

McCandless Township Sanitary Authority, a COSTARS member, shared "...the Authority has acquired in the neighborhood of \$2.8 million in assets through this program. During our involvement in this program, the Authority has gone from a struggling organization to a true leader in our area and our involvement in the Pennsylvania Federal Surplus Property Program has been a key to our success."

For more information on each of these programs contact The Bureau of Supplies and Surplus at:

State Surplus Property Program

717.787.9068

ra-statesurplus@pa.gov

Federal Surplus Property Program

717.787.9724

ra-pasurplusproperty@pa.gov

Law Enforcement Excess Property Program

(1033)717.787.6197

ra-pasurplusproperty@pa.gov

Law Enforcement New Property Program (1122)

717.787.6197

ra-pasurplusproperty@pa.gov

Federal Fixed Price Vehicle Program

717.525.5805

ra-pasurplusproperty@pa.gov



PA Procurement Expo & Forum - Highlights and Reviews



“Overall, the event was really helpful to us as a COSTARS member. The educational offerings were the most beneficial to us. Learning about what our Commonwealth is doing to improve public purchasing is critical for us to inform our own procurement modernization efforts.”

Nicholas Susi, Deputy Commissioner, Procurement Department, City of Philadelphia

“The speed networking events were a great opportunity for us to explain how the County does business. Overall, I was pleased with the entire Expo. I believe we expanded our vendor pool as well.”

Andy De Lancey S.P.S.M., Purchasing Agent, Allegheny County

“The Expo gave me a great opportunity to network with other Members and to hear how COSTARS contracts are leveraged at their organizations. Overall, it was a well-organized event with lots of opportunities to learn.”

Karen Ruch, Strategic Sourcing Supervisor, PA Turnpike Commission

“I thought it was great. I would have loved to give our Department Directors a pass to the Expo so they could stop by to visit with potential vendors. As far as me being a procurement professional, the sessions were very helpful.”

Hillary Greene, Procurement Services & Compliance Manager, City of Harrisburg

“I definitely thought we came away with very good leads and plenty of education and information regarding selling in Pennsylvania. While I realize the first of anything takes time to develop, I personally was very happy with our investment in this event.”

Patrick A. Sutton, President, Howard Industries

“The event turned out great from my perspective – especially for the first one. I believe your attendees had a wide array of possible vendors to interact with and meet. We appreciated the opportunity to build new business relationships with PA agencies and COSTARS members.”

John Elicker Jr., Technology Account Manager, Communications Electronics

“I came to the show to get info on registering to be a COSTARS supplier and the info provided was very helpful.”

Dorothy Alexander, Alpha Professional Solutions

“Very helpful info and presented in a real-world, easy to understand manner.”

Lori Balog, UniqueSource

“Learned when to use COSTARS-12 and when to use COSTARS-13. Very interested in seeing what is available through Surplus.”

South Lebanon Township

“Very pertinent. Excellent duo presentation with breakdown of specifics and plan of action concepts.”

L/B Water

“Great presentation! Encouraging COSTARS members/vendors to have honest discussions with each other on price, etc.”

Rick Martin, Hondru Fleet



PA Procurement Expo & Forum Champion Sponsors

We would like to say a special thank you to all the Champion Sponsors who helped to make the Expo a huge success!

Platinum Champions

CDW-G
Genesys
Innovative Coaches
Pierson Computing
Connection

Gold Champions

84 Lumber Company
AT&T
M&M Displays, Inc.
RICOH USA, Inc.
St. Moritz Security Services
Veritiv Corp.

Silver Champions

Dell Technologies
Howard Industries
IEH Auto Parts/Auto
Plus/Pep Boys
Latino Connection
NWN
Perfect Commerce
Santander Bank N.A.
Unisys Corporation
Visual Sound

Bronze Champions

Bortek Industries
Dejana Truck & Utility
Equipment
Equipment Depot
Fastenal Company
Ford Business Machines
GapVax, Inc.
Hondru Fleet
IPC Global
JVCKENWOOD
LowV Systems
MHM Solutions
Nova Solutions, Inc.
Penn Jersey Paper
Terminix
VWR International

COSTARS Releases New Commercial

COSTARS Marketing Managers Bruce Beardsley, Kim Bullivant and Claire Osborne along with other willing participants from the Bureau of Procurement put their acting skills to work in COSTARS latest marketing effort - The COSTARS Commercial! This special project was made possible through the expertise of the talented individuals from DGS Commonwealth Media Services.

Check out the commercial at the link below or on the COSTARS website. We are always looking for ways to spread the word about the many benefits of the COSTARS Program!

Do you know someone who is interested in learning more about the COSTARS Program? Feel free to send them the link!

http://www.pacast.com/players/cmsplayerHD.asp?e=15022_DGS_COSTARS_MASTER.m4v



Member Survey

The COSTARS team is currently developing its bi-annual COSTARS Members Survey. We value our members' participation in this survey as it provides us with a better idea of what types of contracts, products and services our membership requires. In addition, it allows members to let us know what they think about the COSTARS Program, and their level of satisfaction with the service they are receiving from our team.

Be sure to check your inbox for an email from COSTARS with a link to the survey in the coming weeks.

Road Salt Contract

The Sodium Chloride (Road Salt) Contract 2018-2019 registration period will begin Jan. 3, 2018.

Look for email reminders from COSTARS, or check the Members area page of the COSTARS website for the orange registration bar at the top of the page to access your membership profile where you will be able to submit the road salt participation agreement form.



COSTARS Member and Supplier Webinars Virtual Learning Simplifies COSTAR Website Processes

In August, the COSTARS team hosted a Member Webinar highlighting statewide COSTARS-participating IT contracts. Associate Commodity Manager Tom Teprovich provided an overview of all statewide IT contracts available to COSTARS members including: digital multifunction printing devices; wireless communication services; two-way radio equipment and services; and GIS software and services, to name a few.

Additionally, participants learned about the difference between a COSTARS-exclusive contract and a statewide COSTARS-participating contract and how to search and compare pricing on both types of contracts.

Be sure to check your COSTARS emails regularly for information about upcoming Webinars!



COSTARS On The Road

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. Marketing Managers Bruce Beardsley, Kim Bullivant and Claire Osborne travel throughout the commonwealth speaking at conferences, workshops and seminars sponsored by associations, suppliers, universities, legislators, chambers of commerce and others.

Recent Events

- Sept. 6-7** PA Procurement Expo & Forum Harrisburg
- Sept. 10** PA Municipal Authorities Conference Hershey
- Sept. 20** Susquehanna River Basin Commission's Public Water Supply Assistance Program's Fall 2017 Workshop Williamsport
- Sept. 27-28** Aviation Council of Pennsylvania Workshop Greensburg

- Oct. 13-15** PA Boroughs Association Fall Leadership Conference Pocono Manor
- Oct. 18** 2017 Lehigh Valley Meet the Buyers Expo/Reverse Trade Show Bethlehem
- Oct. 25** Members' Workshop Veritiv Green Tag Show Manheim
- Oct. 30** Diverse & Minority Business Forum York

Upcoming Events

- Nov. 14** Becoming a COSTARS Supplier and/or Selling to the Commonwealth of PA Seminar Sponsored by Lehigh SBDC PTAC - Bethlehem

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 Bruce, Kim or Claire 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.

COSTARS QR Codes Coming Soon

Look for new COSTARS QR codes on all of your COSTARS marketing pieces for quick and easy access to the COSTARS website from your mobile device!



Scan this code to access the COSTARS Resources page/Calendar of Events on the COSTARS website.



Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to begin receiving COSTARS updates! Remember, this does not replace important updates we send to you via email, so please be sure to maintain your member and supplier information in the COSTARS system.

Visit our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Costars-PA-Department-of-General-Services/904261462952351?ref=hl>

Visit our Twitter page at:

<https://twitter.com/COSTARSNews>.

COSTARS Connection

- Curt Topper - Secretary, Department of General Services
- Ken Hess - Deputy Secretary for Procurement
- Jenny Doherty - Chief Procurement Officer
- Dawn Eshenour - Chief, Supplier Dev. & Support Div.
- Bruce Beardsley - Marketing Manager
- Kim Bullivant - Marketing Manager
- Claire Osborne - Marketing Manager

Further information on the COSTARS program is available by phone at 1-866-768-7827 or by visiting the [COSTARS](#) website at www.costars.state.pa.us.

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

