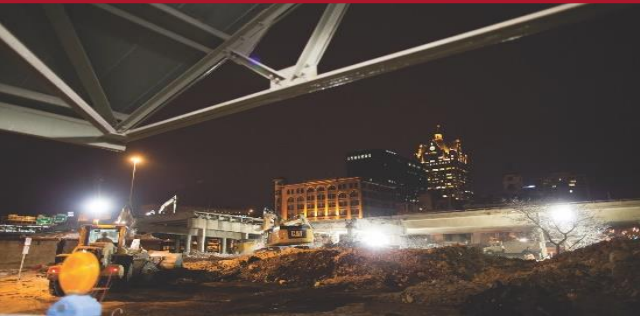


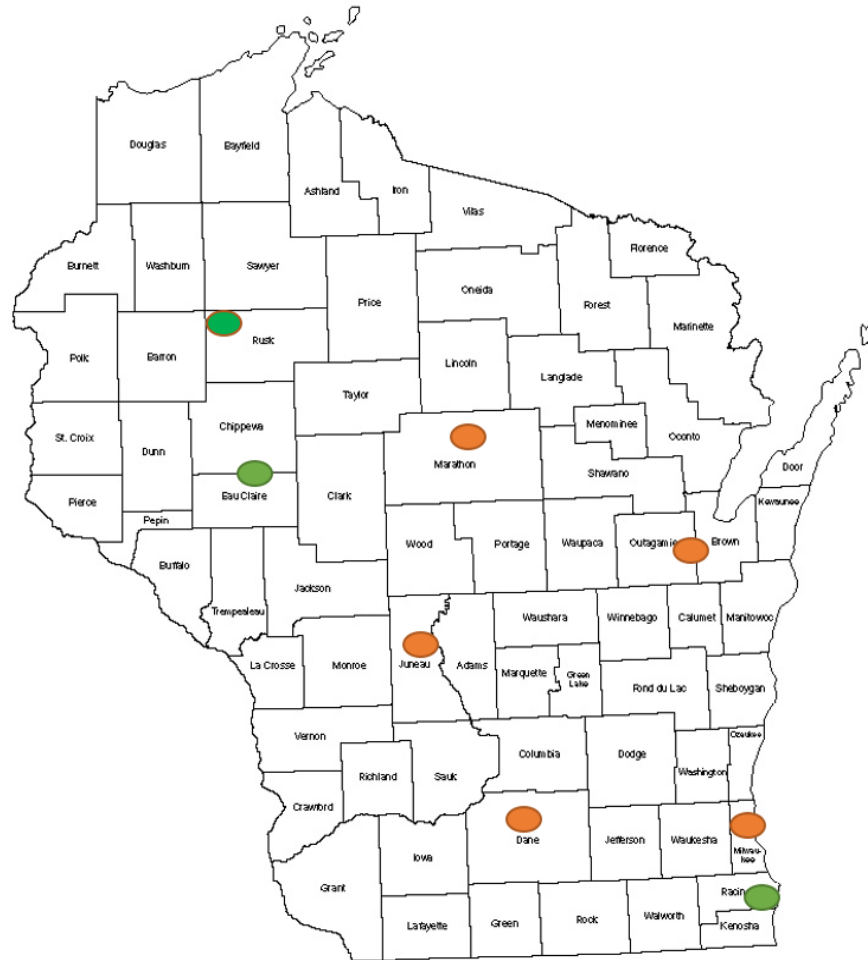


A Procurement Technical  
Assistance Center (PTAC)

# Selling to the Department of Veterans Affairs

## August, 2016





## LOCATIONS:

- **Primary office – Milwaukee** - Technology Innovation Center
- **Staffed Satellite offices**
  - Madison** (FEED – Food Enterprise & Economic Development / MEC – Madison Enterprise Center)
  - Camp Douglas** (Juneau County Economic Development Corporation)
  - Wausau** (Wausau Regional Chamber of Commerce)
  - Appleton** (Fox Valley Technical College)
- **Active Partnerships**
  - Racine** – LaunchBox
  - Eau Claire** - Western Dairyland
  - Ladysmith** – Indianhead Community Action

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**www.wispro.org**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 13 2016

ACQUISITION HOUR: MARKET RESEARCH – USING THE  
FEDERAL PROCUREMENT DATA SYSTEMS (FPDS) –  
PART 1

JULY 20 2016

DOING BUSINESS WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
MUNISING, MI »

JULY 27 2016

ACQUISITION HOUR: MARKET RESEARCH – USING THE  
FEDERAL PROCUREMENT DATA SYSTEMS (FPDS) –  
PART 2

AUGUST 3 2016

HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS  
IRON MOUNTAIN, MI »

AUGUST 4 2016

HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS  
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN »

## CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES (3)

### GET STARTED WITH THE BASICS

Questions & answers on how to get started.

GET STARTED

### SIGN-UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

Stay up-to-date with the latest WPI news.

SIGN UP

### HAVE A QUESTION? WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

One of our staff of experts is available to answer your  
questions.

GET HELP

# What we will Cover Today

- How VA is Organized
- Products and Services VA purchases
- How VA makes purchases
- Veterans First Contracting Program
- VA Federal Supply Schedule Contracts
- Additional Tips

# Department of Veterans Affairs

*Divided into three branches*

- **Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)**

- 5 regions – includes Benefits offices and Loan offices

- Milwaukee Regional Office is located on the VA Milwaukee Campus

- **National Cemetery Administration (NCA)**

- 5 Service Networks operates 133 national cemeteries

- Wood National Cemetery is located on the VA Milwaukee Campus

- **Veterans Health Administration (VHA)**

- Operates 1,700 hospitals, clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, and readjustment counseling centers serving 8.76 million veterans each year

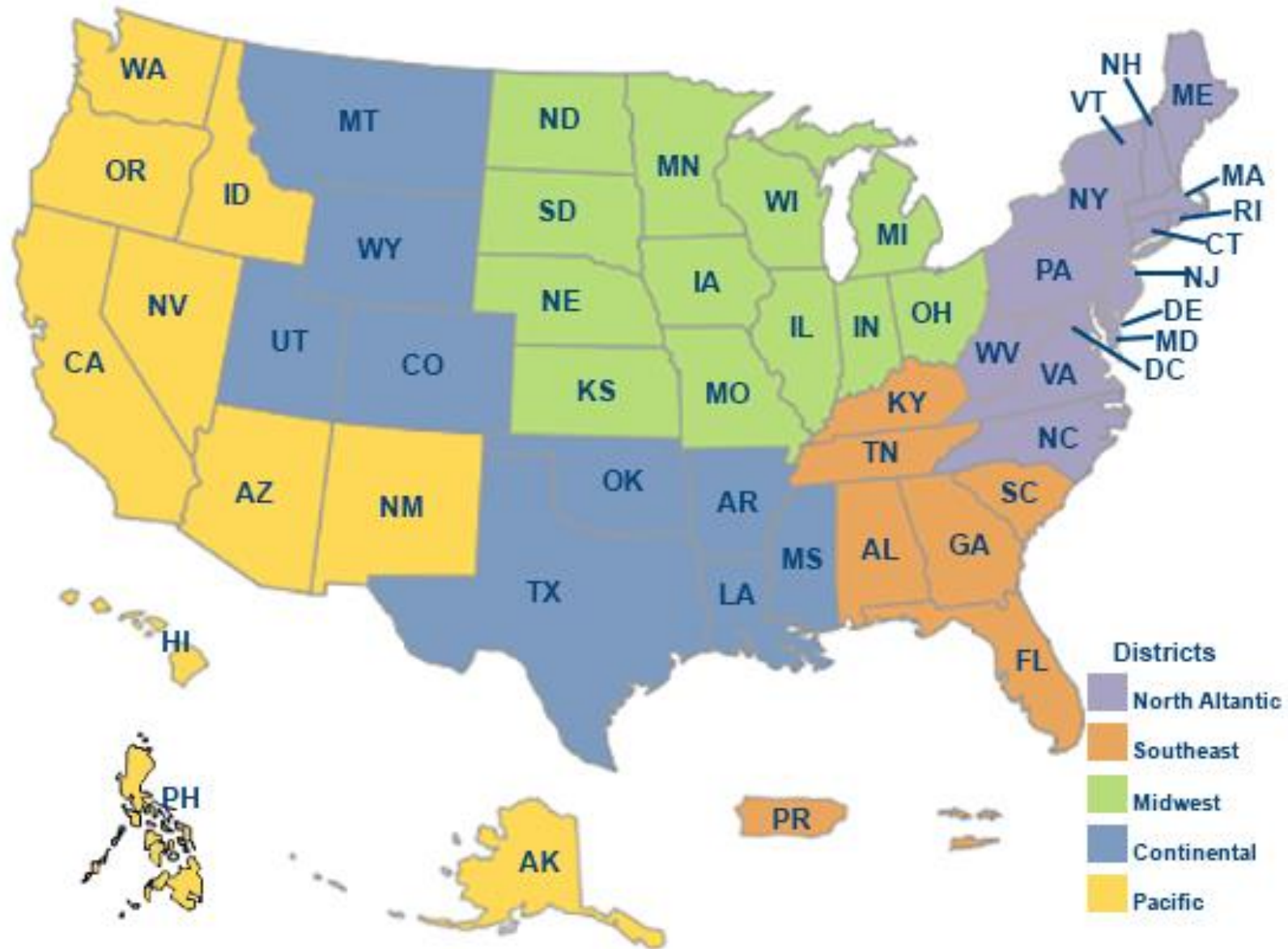
- Divided into 21 Regions called VISNs



# VHA VISN Map



# VBA and NCA Districts



# VA Budget



- VA spent more than \$20 Billion on goods and services last year, roughly \$14 Billion was spent by VHA.
- 30% or more than \$6 Billion went to Small Businesses
- VA requires a broad spectrum of goods and services. They purchase these goods and services on a national, regional, and local level. Regardless of how large or small a business is, VA is a potential customer.

# FY 2016 VA Small Business Program Goals

## *Prime Contracting Goals*

- Small Business 32.5%
- Veteran-Owned Small Business 12.0%
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business 10.0%
- Small Disadvantaged Businesses (including Section 8(a)) 5.0%
- Women-Owned Small Business 5.0%
- Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) Small Business 3.0%

## *Subcontracting Goals*

- Small Business 17.0%
- Veteran-Owned Small Business 5.0%
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business 3.0%
- Small Disadvantaged Businesses (including Section 8(a)) 5.0%
- Women-Owned Small Business 5.0%
- Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) Small Business 3.0%

# VISN 12 Budget

In Fiscal Year 2015, VISN 12 spent over \$395 million including about \$100 million in prime vendor and pharmaceutical purchases.

(Prime Vendor contractor manages inventory and provides delivery of products in a more efficient and effective manner for a distribution fee which is a markup to the product price.)

# VISN 12 - FY 15 Budget

*Breakdown of \$395,000,000*

Small Business – 32%	\$126,400,000
Veteran-Owned Small Business – 16%	\$ 63,200,000
Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business – 15%	\$ 59,250,000
Small Disadvantaged Businesses (including Section 8(a)) - 5%	\$ 19,750,000
Women-Owned Small Business - 3%	\$ 11,850,000
Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) Small Business – 1%	\$ 3,950,000

# Examples of items purchased by VISN 12 include:

- Pharmaceuticals, medical and surgical supplies (Prime Vendor Contracts)
- Perishable subsistence (Prime Vendor Contract)
- Equipment, supplies, and materials for facility operation
- Maintenance and repair of medical and scientific equipment
- Building construction, maintenance, and repair
- Prosthetic and orthopedic aids
- Medical gases
- Janitorial, Trash, and Transportation Services
- Office Supplies (GSA National BPAs-23 of 24 awarded to SB)
- IT Equipment (NASA SEWP V Contracts – 145 contract holders)

# Recent Items VISN 12 Purchased

- Valet Parking Services
- FAA Warning Light for top of Water Tower
- Monthly Pinsetter Maintenance for Bowling Alley
- Armored Car Services
- Emergency Housing Services
- 1000 Gallon Water Wagon
- Duct Cleaning
- Tree Removal
- Truck Lease – 24 foot diesel engine box trucks

# How Does VA Buy

Acquisitions are accomplished by:

- Sealed Bidding
- Negotiation
- Simplified Acquisition Procedures
- Mandatory sources, i.e. Ability One, Federal Supply Schedules

Solicitations may be located on:

- Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) <https://www.fbo.gov/>
- GSA eBuy [https://www.ebuy.gsa.gov/advantage/ebuy/start\\_page.do](https://www.ebuy.gsa.gov/advantage/ebuy/start_page.do)

Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI) can provide FREE Bid Matching Services that will search for opportunities for your company.

# Specific to VA

- All procurements are considered commercial items, with the exception of construction and some very complex research and development items. Almost all procurements are completed using FAR Part 12 – Acquisition of Commercial Items  
[https://acquisition.gov/far/current/html/Subpart%2012\\_1.html#wp1085203](https://acquisition.gov/far/current/html/Subpart%2012_1.html#wp1085203)
- VA only has the authority to do Fixed Price Contracts and Fixed Price with Economic Price Adjustment Contracts. These types of contracts generally puts more risk on the contractor.

# Procurement Regulations

VA procurements are completed in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR), Department of Veterans Affairs Acquisition Regulations (VAAR), and VA policies and procedures.

Websites:

FAR: <https://www.acquisition.gov/?q=browsefar>

VAAR: <http://www.va.gov/oal/library/vaar/>

# Veterans First Contracting Program

Public Law (P.L.) 109-461, Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006 provides VA with unique authority for contracting with Service–Disabled Veteran– Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) and Veteran–Owned Small Business (VOSB). In order to qualify for participation in the VA Veterans First Contracting Program, eligible business owners must first be verified through the Center for Verification and Evaluation (CVE). Firms are eligible for two years from their last verified date.

*SDVOSB and VOSB must be verified in order to participate in SDVOSB and VOSB set-asides. <http://www.va.gov/osdbu/verification/>*

# VA Construction Buys

- Generally completed as sealed bidding with award going to the lowest priced, responsive, responsible bidder.
- First consideration given to Service–Disabled Veteran– Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) set aside. (CVE verified)
- Announced on the Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) website - <https://www.fbo.gov/>



# General Services Administration (GSA)

- The Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) program also known as the GSA Schedules Program or the Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) Program offers speed, selection, flexibility, transparency, efficiency, value, and procurement management.
- Schedules are Multiple Award Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts providing an indefinite quantity of supplies and services at stated prices during a fixed period of time.
- Each GSA Schedule is composed of Special Item Numbers (SINs) that groups similar products and services together.

# General Services Administration (GSA)

- Any federal agency can use these contracts and many prefer to use the schedule over other procurement options because of pre-negotiated terms and pricing, transparency, and ease of use. Agencies place orders instead of writing new contracts by competing among schedule holders.
- Awarded for a base period of five years with potential for 3 five-year option periods, resulting in a 20 year contract.
- Sales are only limited to minimum and maximum quantities defined by the contract holder.

# VA National Acquisition Center (NAC) – Hines, Illinois

The NAC solicits, awards, and administers VA's Federal Supply Schedule and National Contract Programs including the acquisition and direct delivery of pharmaceuticals, medical/surgical/dental supplies, high technology medical equipment and just-in-time distribution programs (also known as Prime Vendor Distribution Programs). With over 2,000 contracts, the NAC's programs realize annual sales of over \$16 billion.

All Federal agencies are able to purchase from the VA Schedules.

# VA Schedules

Like GSA Schedule contracts, the VA Schedules are indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity type contracts awarded to pre-approved vendors using full and open competition. Additionally, the Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) program negotiates firm-fixed pricing based on a commercial “most favored customer” pricing concept, including an option for economic price adjustments. All products and services are state-of-the-art and provide national/worldwide coverage.

# VA Schedules

65 I B – Drugs, Pharmaceuticals, & Hematology Related Products

65 II A – Medical Equipment & Supplies

65 II F – Patient Mobility Devices

65 VII – Invitro Diagnostics Reagents, Test Kits, & Test Sets

65 II C – Dental Equipment & Supplies

65 VA – X-Ray Equipment & Supplies

66 III – Cost-Per-Test, Clinical Laboratory Analyzer

621 I – Professional & Allied Healthcare Staffing Services

621 II – Medical Laboratory Testing & Analysis Services

# Important Dollar Thresholds

- Procurements under \$3,500 are completed at the department level with use of a Government purchase card (credit card). Usually completed without or with limited competition.
- Procurements between \$3,500 and \$25,000 are completed competitively by small purchase staff.
- Open Market Procurements over \$25,000 are announced and available on the Federal Business Opportunities Website.

# Get your firm ready to do business with VA

- Obtain a DUNS number
- Register in SAM and the Dynamic Small Business Search – Your Federal Business Resume
- SDVOSB and VOSB go through the verification process
- Develop company website – have email addresses for staff
- Capable of electronic invoicing and payment
- File VETS 4212 <http://www.dol.gov/vets/vets4212.htm> (Not mandatory for commercial item purchases)
- Locate Opportunities through WPI Bid Matching Services
- Attend Pre-Solicitation Conferences
- Respond to Sources Sought Announcements

# Solicitation Tips

- Read the document – what type of solicitation is it
- Understand what the VA is looking to purchase
- Respond to all elements of the document
- Do not promise anything you are unable to do
- Offer a fair price - Sign all offers
- Understand how award will be made, i.e. “Best Value”,  
Lowest Price Technically Acceptable
- Know what is required for Brand Name or Equal
- Understand Performance Requirements for the contract

# Additional Tips

- Introduce yourself to procurement staff – by phone or email
  - Polish your “Elevator Speech”
    - Who you are
    - What you do
    - Have you done any work with the government before
    - What makes you special
    - Be able to answer, “Why hire my company”
- Study certain sections of the FAR and VAAR for greater understanding of government contracts
  - FAR 8.4 - FSS
  - FAR 12 - Commercial Items
  - FAR 13 – Simplified Acquisitions
  - FAR 14 – Sealed Bidding
  - FAR 15 – Negotiated Contracts

# Construction

SDVOSB capable of working as the prime contractor, bid directly to VA. Locate bid on FBO, attend all site visits, and submit bid on time.

Non-SDVOSB locate bid on FBO and SDVOSB primes to determine sub contracting opportunities.

Have appropriate bonding levels ready and available

# How to find Prime Contractors

- Register on FBO as an Interested Vendor for the solicitation
- Check USA Spending - <http://www.usaspending.gov/>
- Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) – ad hoc reports
- Check GSA eLibrary for FSS Primes - <http://www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov/ElibMain/home.do>
- SBA Subcontracting Opportunities Directory SUB-Net - [www.sba.gov/subnet](http://www.sba.gov/subnet)
- GSA Subcontracting Directory for Small Businesses - <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/service/SubContractDir/category/102831/hostUri/portal>
- Contact WPI or Northwest Michigan PTAC for assistance in locating Primes

# How to find Prime Contractors

## Construction

- Attend site walks, prime contractors and other sub-contractors will attend.
- Look for the Amendment to the solicitation that contains the site walk sign in sheets - it will contain all contractors that attended the site walk

# Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)

- Located in Washington, DC - OSDBU's goal is to help Veteran-Owned and Small businesses contribute to the mission of VA.
- All federal agencies must forecast their contracting opportunities. VA uses an electronic contract management system to generate their forecast.
- VA Forecast of Contracting Opportunities:  
<https://www.vendorportal.ecms.va.gov/eVP/fco/StateMap.aspx>

# Veterans Canteen Service (VCS)

Make direct contact with VCS Divisional Merchandise Managers. New merchandise selections and vendor sources are reviewed at Merchandise Committee meetings. Approved vendors have selected items with established terms, costs and Retail Sell Prices placed in VCS automated Purchase Order Management System (POMS). Items are then available for each Canteen to order thru POMS. Canteen Chiefs select merchandise for their canteen from POMS. This system offers a personalized selection process allowing local and regional needs to be met. VCS has no national warehousing facilities; all shipments ordered by canteens are to be shipped directly from the manufacturer to the ordering canteen. FAR and VAAR are not applicable.

<http://www.vacanteen.va.gov/DoingBusinessWithVCS.php>

# NCO 12 VA Contact

## Small Business Liaison

Steve Maier

Great Lakes Acquisition Center

Department of Veterans Affairs

115 S 84<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 101

Milwaukee, WI 53214

[Steven.Maier2@va.gov](mailto:Steven.Maier2@va.gov)

414-844-4824

# Resources:



- VA Forecast of Contracting Opportunities:  
<https://www.vendorportal.ecms.va.gov/eVP/fco/StateMap.aspx>
- FAR: <https://www.acquisition.gov/?q=browsefar>
- VAAR: <http://www.va.gov/oal/library/vaar/>
- VA National Acquisition Center: <http://www.va.gov/oal/about/nac.asp>  
Phone: 708-786-5157
- VA OSDBU: <http://www.va.gov/osdbu/>
- VA Vendor Information Pages: <http://www.va.gov/osdbu/verification/>  
Phone: 866-584-2344
- Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) website - <https://www.fbo.gov/>

# Resources (cont)

- Veterans Canteen Service Central Office, St Louis, MO  
Phone: 314-845-1200 – [vcscanteen.com@med.va.gov](mailto:vcscanteen.com@med.va.gov)  
<http://www.vacanteen.va.gov/DoingBusinessWithVCS.php>
- VA Website - <http://www.va.gov/oal/business/dbwva.asp>
- Air Force FAR: <http://farsite.hill.af.mil/>
- Acquisition.gov is: <https://www.acquisition.gov/>
- Wisconsin Procurement Institute - 414-270-3600  
[www.wispro.org](http://www.wispro.org)
- Northwest Michigan PTAC - 906-789-0558

# Upcoming Events

## WPI EVENTS

- ***Acquisition Hour Live Webinar Series - Tuesdays and Wednesdays***
- ***Small Business Contracting Series – October 13, 2016, and December 15, 2016 – Milwaukee, WI***
- ***Fort McCoy Acquisition Open House – October 18, 2016 – Fort McCoy, WI***
- ***Winning Approach to Contract Award: Preparation, Lead Generation, Follow-Up and Closing the Deal – October 27, 2016 – Green Bay, WI with additional dates and locations throughout state***
- ***Marketplace 2016 – November 16 - 17, 2016 – Milwaukee, WI***

## MAJOR VA EVENT

- ***National Veterans Small Business Engagement (NVSBE) – November 1 – 3, 2016 – Minneapolis, MN***

# For Assistance or Additional Information - Contact

Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI)

Carol Murphy

10437 Innovation Drive, Suite 320

Milwaukee, WI 53226

414-270-3600 or [carolm@wispro.org](mailto:carolm@wispro.org)