Choice Partners honors top-performing vendors

Companies with an awarded government contract available through Choice Partners were honored at a vendor appreciation luncheon in early January at Harris County Department of Education.

James Colbert, Jr., superintendent of Harris County Department of Education, thanked the vendors for upholding high standards of quality and helping HCDE serve all learners. He noted that the vendors are no different from HCDE in being dedicated to customer service.

“Our goal is to provide impeccable service to you, and in turn, we want to provide impeccable service to client school districts,” Colbert said.

Choice Partners Director Jeff Drury recognized more than 70 companies for their contract use, and 32 were called out for leading in vendor contract usage. Jeremy Morgan, Millennium Project Solutions, spoke to the crowd, encouraging vendors to rely on the expertise of Choice Partners to guide them through the procurement process.

Attention technology users: Don’t be fooled by false ‘sole source’ claims

Purchasing technology hardware and software takes special knowledge, so it is not uncommon to rely on technology salespeople for inside info on how to get the items needed. Frequently, technology companies have a “sole source” letter at the ready for customized software so they can provide the requested items. But “sole source” can be easily misused.

That’s why Choice Partners cooperative has multiple technology contracts with vendors who, as dealers and distributors, represent a multitude of manufacturers. See all the technology contracts available at www.choicepartners.org.

Contracts for technology, facilities services and more renewed

Contracts for technology, facilities services and electrical vehicle charging stations and more were renewed at recent board meetings of Harris County Department of Education and are accessible through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative. Renewed contracts for technology products and services include:

- Accudata Systems; ARC Government Solutions; AVES Audio Visual Systems;
- Barnes & Noble Booksellers; Bass Computers; Best Buy for Business;
- Carahsoft Technology Corp.; CDW

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Updates to supply catalog

Members who have a favorite quality construction or maintenance trades vendor they choose Partners has redesigned the Supply Catalog webpages to be more user-friendly and to include an option for members to place orders online, which are sent via email directly to vendors.

To take advantage of this option, organizations must designate an approving user(s). If you choose not to appoint an approving user, then you would continue using the Supply Catalog as you have in the past, submitting the order on your own PO form or printing the draft order and forwarding to the vendor when you are ready.

There is an option to upload your own terms and conditions with the online order. If you wish to designate an approving user, please contact Arlita Kyles, arlita@choicepartners.org. As soon as the change has been made in our system, we will send an email to each member to confirm the change in their shopping status.

NOTE: The 2017-18 supply catalog hard bids have been reviewed by the committee of users and is scheduled to go to the board of trustees for award in February; these contracts will become effective April 1, 2017.

CSP for athletic surfaces due Feb. 21

Spread the word: A CSP for JOC for IDIQ services to Furnish and Install Athletic Surfaces, due Feb. 21 at 2 p.m., is posted on the Choice Partners website. Interested vendors should register as a supplier in the eBid system, then respond without delay to the appropriate bid or proposal request.

Welcome new members

Organizations and governmental entities that became members when contracts were approved recently by the HCDE Board of Trustees include Burleson County, Burleson; Celina ISD, Celina; Cisco College, Cisco; Denison ISD, Denison; Generations Community Federal Credit Union, San Antonio; Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas, San Antonio; city of Keene; Pawnee ISD, Pawnee; city of Prairie View; city of Seguin; and Wylie ISD, Wylie.

New out-of-state members include ASGHSMO Assembly Christian School, Frostproof, Fla.; Clay County, Liberty, Mo.; Loudon Water, Ashburn, Virg.; Muscogee County School District, Columbus, Ga.; Somerton School District #11, Somerton, Ariz.; South Miami, Fla; and University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.

CSP for athletic surfaces due Feb. 21
Vendors appreciated for high business standards

“Sixty percent of our business today is through our Choice Partners contract,” Jeremy Morgan, Millennium Project Solutions, said, later referring to the assistance his business received from Choice Partners as “astronomical.”

Masters, Millennium Project Solutions, Inc., Hi-Mark Roofing & Waterproofing, Tandus Centiva US, SAK Construction, American Contracting USA Inc. and Library Interiors of Texas.

Supplies/commodities vendors


The 32 vendors are:

Food vendors

JOC – Construction and trades vendors
Brown and Root, Vaughn Construction, E Contractors USA, Horizon International Group, Facilities Sources, Construction

For more information about competing to become an awarded vendor partner, go to http://www.choicepartners.org/become-a-vendor.

“Sharing resources is what cooperative purchasing is all about,” Jeff Drury, director, Choice Partners, said.
VENDOR NEWS

Vendors showcase variety at San Antonio meeting

More than 30 members attended our Member Training and Vendor Showcase in San Antonio on Jan. 11. Those in attendance, including school districts, colleges and charter schools, earned CEUs while learning about what makes a purchasing co-op legal and how to distinguish between construction and maintenance. Members also had a chance to meet with 14 vendors, chosen from a wide variety of industries including technology, finance, facilities and more. Local, statewide and national vendors participated in the showcase, representing the depth of contracts and other purchasing solutions that Choice Partners provides.

Next up, we will roll out our JOC Trades contract on March 8, followed by another member meeting in the Dallas-Fort Worth area on April 5. See more details and sign up at www.choicepartners.org/member-workshop-in-dallas-ft-worth-area.◆

SAVE THESE DATES

FEB. 8 - 9
VG Young School for County Commissioners Courts and Educational Exposition, AUSTIN

FEB. 27 - MARCH 3
TASBO Annual Conference, AUSTIN

MARCH 8
Choice Partners JOC Trades Rollout, HOUSTON

MARCH 21
2017 PPANCT Supplier Showcase, GRAPEVINE

APRIL 5
Choice Partners Member Workshop, GRAPEVINE

APRIL 13
Choice Partners Supply Catalog Rollout, HOUSTON

APRIL 19
Texas Library Association 2017 Conference, SAN ANTONIO

MAY 3
Texas Tech University Small Business Expo, LUBBOCK

Technology contracts (continued from front)

Government; Critical Infrastructure Solutions; Enhanced Laser Products; Exebridge; FireFly Computers; Gaggle.net; HiEd Inc.; Houston Communications; Houston Information Team; ImageNet Office Systems; Insight Investments; Insource Technology Direct; IonWave Technologies; iTech Solutions; JADE Distributing; JANGA Technology LLC; K12 Alerts;; LyncVerse Technologies; Mark III Systems; Micro Integration; NWN Corporation; Netsync Network Solutions; PC Care; PCMG/Global Gov/Ed; PCPC Direct Ltd.; Phonoscope Enterprise Group; Phonoscope LightWave; Pinnacle Office Group; Presidio Networked Solutions; Prime Systems; Rugged Protection; Set Solutions; SHI/Government Solutions; Total Technologies; Troxell Communications; True North Consulting Group; Unified Communications; and Unique Digital.◆

Host a Member Meeting

Want to network with our vendors and members while learning essential procurement info? Would you like Choice Partners to hold a public training in your area? Do you have a space large enough to hold 50-75 people? If you answered yes to all three questions, send an email to Joann Nichols at joann@choicepartners.org with the subject line “Member Meeting” or call 877-696-2122. We’ll work with you to bring colleagues from nearby governmental entities together in one place.