

Small Business Success Story: AST

AST is an 8(a)-certified, economically disadvantaged women-owned small business (EDWOSB) serving as the prime contractor on the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Mission Oriented Technical Support (MOTS) contract. As the 2014 DOE Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) of the Year, AST has also made the Inc. 500/5000 and Washington Technology Fast 50 lists for the past two consecutive years, even ranking as the number one engineering firm for the Washington Technology Fast 50. AST is also a recipient of the 2014 U.S. Department of Defense Mentor-Protégé Program distinguished Nunn-Perry Award. DOE's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) recently featured AST's success story video on the OSDBU site: energy.gov/osdbu/ast.

In addition to AST's recent accolades, DOE's EERE Small Business Program would like to recognize AST as a small business success story for the exceptional work it has provided to EERE. To further highlight its successes, AST recently discussed its achievements with the Small Business Program:

- 1) **In a sentence or two, please summarize your organization in the context of your work with EERE.**
 - A. AST brings senior-level program/project management consulting support to DOE-EERE in the form of strategy and planning, analysis, problem/issue resolution, and more. In the capability area of applied science and technology, AST assists EERE with advanced energy technology research and development, emerging technology assessments, and technology transfer support through its experienced staff and subject matter experts.

- 2) **How did your organization become involved with EERE?**
 - A. We began supporting DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy in 2011, providing a broad range of offerings including portfolio and program management and systems engineering, and then attaining additional work, including with the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration, over the years. In 2014, AST was awarded the MOTS Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) to provide professional and engineering services across EERE.

3) What specifically do you believe makes your organization a success story?

A. Whether it's a contract with a single full-time equivalent or the MOTS BPA valued at more than \$80 million, we have consistently delivered high quality and performance with a focus on the unique needs of DOE. As a management and technology solutions company focused on the energy sector, AST is committed to DOE's mission. We believe through sound program management and deep technical expertise, our collective body of work supporting DOE is indicative of exceptional performance. We consistently strive to contribute to core mission accomplishments through innovative solutions and extraordinary customer support, focusing on delivering significant value to DOE.

4) In your opinion, what has been the best or most unique part of your organization's experience with EERE?

A. The best part has been our ability to work with the individual stakeholders across EERE. We pride ourselves on listening attentively and understanding the unique needs of our customers. This typically results in quality work performance, delivered on time, and establishes our track record of success as a trusted provider.

5) What advice do you have for an aspiring small business looking to partner with EERE?

A. Deliver. As small businesses, we must deliver. As an example of our commitment to customer service and delivery, AST submitted more than 20 BPA task order call responses in a one-month period resulting in more than \$20 million of task order awards under the MOTS contract. The average turnaround time was less than 10 days with multiple BPA calls being released simultaneously. Even under these circumstances, AST was able to successfully transition all task orders from the predecessor contract without interruption in service.

6) Is there anything else you would like to share with newly formed small businesses or individuals looking to start a small business?

- A. Build your company to grow. It can be a difficult balance, a juggling act, to successfully manage growth. It really is about having an ever-evolving strategic plan and reinvesting in the company and its infrastructure. As AST brings people in, we bring them into the plan, making them part of what we are doing and making every effort to maintain that family feel you generally get from a small business. Lastly, as your business grows, grow your brand. AST recently developed a new **brand strategy** illustrating the **energy, growth, and evolution** of the company, honoring its **heritage** with a **focus** on its **future**. For more information about AST and to learn more about its recent branding campaign, please visit its website: <http://www.alleghenyst.com/>

Pictured below, AST staff members display the DOE's 8(a)/Small Disadvantaged Business of the Year Award, which was presented to AST at the 2015 14th Annual DOE Small Business Forum and Expo.



Front row (L-R): Wendy Jue, John Mason, Matt Brainard, Dean Groetzing, Jennifer Wachter, Jamie Rose, Dominick Gerard

Back Row (L-R): Diann Devart, Michele Enders, Laura Kemp, Jihad Aljayoushi (DOE), Jared Fryar (DOE)