

Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce and Northwest Louisiana APEX Accelerator Enable Innovation for Local Businesses

Ingalls utilized NWLA APEX Accelerator's resources to further the development of CSAR Prepare, an automation tool that streamlines the path to ATO approval.

WOODWORTH, LA, UNITED STATES, June 29, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For the past 36 years,

“

It is always exciting to watch a company such as Ingalls put in the effort and succeed. It's been a pleasure working with Brandi Pickett and watching the company grow to this level.”

Jennifer Whittington, Senior Contract Specialist at APEX Accelerators

the [Northwest Louisiana \(NWLA\) APEX Accelerator](#) has been serving as an invaluable resource for existing and new businesses to strengthen the defense industrial base by accelerating innovation, fostering ingenuity, and establishing resilient and diverse supply chains. Through an initial partnership with the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, [Ingalls Information Security](#) tapped into NWLA APEX Accelerator's expert guidance and free procurement assistance, which helped enable the development and official launch of [Cybersecurity Assurance Readiness \(CSAR\) Prepare](#), a software automation tool that streamlines and simplifies the path to Authorization to Operate (ATO) approval.

“As a small business trying to market our technology to the federal government, my first stop on the journey began with APEX (formerly Procurement Technical Agency Center),” said Brandi Pickett, Director of Government Programs at Ingalls. “Nestled within the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, the local APEX provided free procurement assistance and talked me through registering for dynamic small business search that matches Ingalls' capabilities with government organizations looking for service providers. The “Doing Business with Barksdale AFB” has been invaluable as it gives us a chance to network and learn who to contact for business opportunities.”

Launched in May, CSAR Prepare is the first prototype and Minimum Viable Product (MVP) available for use and it supports the Prepare and Categorize System steps of the Risk Management Framework (RMF). Lowering the barrier to Assessment & Authorization (A&A) entry and acting as a precursor to eMASS, CSAR Prepare accelerates the RMF Prepare Step, automating

AF mandatory ATO forms, and enabling users to keep pace with RMF requirements. Ingalls took the most frustrating and difficult part of the RMF process and automated it. In CSAR, AF mandatory forms such as the ITCSC, PIA, and PCIL are mapped so that you answer once, and it maps to many.

NWLA APEX Accelerator helps drive innovation by assisting local businesses in selling products and services to all branches in the government, which further reinforces the local economy and strengthens the job market. The resources and assistance provided by NWLA APEX Accelerator include:

- How to sell to school board, parish, city, state, and federal agencies
- Identification of markets for goods and services
- Certifications for small, minority, woman, veteran, and service-disabled women
- Required registrations
- Daily notification of opportunities
- Marketing assistance
- Invoicing and payment systems
- Bid documents review and proposal preparation
- Research and development grants
- Cybersecurity and technology transfer

Today, APEX Accelerators are placing an emphasis on helping underserved businesses that are eligible for certain government solicitations designed for the promotion of diversity, inclusion, and equity, and guiding them throughout the entire process. APEX Accelerators will continue increasing the number of Defense Industrial Base (DIB)-ready and Government Industrial Base (GIB, including local and state governments)-ready businesses.

"In my 17 years working as a Contract Specialist for APEX, I've seen hundreds of businesses come and go through my office," said Jennifer Whittington, Senior Contract Specialist at APEX Accelerators. "In 2022, our clients were awarded \$72M in federal contracts alone. Barksdale AFB



CSAR focuses on supporting users through the Risk Management Framework (RMF) Prepare Step and empowers users to make smart, timely decisions, allowing applications to be adaptive and keep pace with cybersecurity threats and vulnerabilities.

spent \$65.8M, and 90% of that went to small businesses! That's just one example of what our local agencies are buying. So the money is out there. It is always exciting to watch a company such as Ingalls put in the effort and succeed. It's been a pleasure working with Brandi Pickett and watching the company grow to this level. I can't wait to see where the future takes them."

To learn more about CSAR and join our interest list for product updates, visit www.iinfosec.com.

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ABOUT INGALLS INFORMATION SECURITY

Since 2010, Ingalls Information Security has provided technology-enabled, integrated cybersecurity risk management services. Ingalls' diverse experience across military/defense intelligence, network security, information technology, and cybersecurity solutions has honed a powerful edge in preventing and responding to cyberattacks. Ingalls' expertise focuses on four business lines of service: Managed Extended Detection and Response, Incident Response, Professional Services, and Government Programs. In 2021, Ingalls formally launched the Government Programs Department to specialize in DoD cybersecurity solutions, including CMMC preparation and assessment, DFARS Compliance expertise, and ATO/RMF support. The company's core focus is to establish Louisiana as a cybersecurity center of excellence, and bring 5,000 industry jobs into the state.

ABOUT NWLA APEX ACCELERATOR

The mission of the NWLA APEX Accelerator is to serve as the axis for existing and new business to strengthen the defense industrial base by accelerating innovation, fostering ingenuity, and establishing resilient and diverse supply chains. To this end, we assist local, small businesses in selling their products and services to all branches and levels of the government, creating and retaining jobs and strengthening the local economy in Northwest Louisiana.

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