

Army and Air Force Veterans Challenge Small Businesses to Think Local, Not Just Federal

After training 500+ businesses and reporting \$4.2 million in attendee contract awards, GovConNOW Agency brings its local contracting summit to Atlanta.

ATLANTA, GA, UNITED STATES, October 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- While federal government contracting dominates much of the conversation about public procurement, two women military veterans are encouraging small business owners to look closer to home.

“

You do not have to go federal to go big. Start in your own backyard and find out what your city, county, and school district are buying.”

*Bridget Fields, Co-Founder,
GovConNOW Agency*

Their message: major business opportunities may be waiting in their own backyards.

Retired U.S. Army Signal Warrant Officer Sheena Parker and U.S. Air Force veteran Bridget Fields founded [GovConNOW Agency](#) to help entrepreneurs compete for State, Local, and Education (SLED) government contracts. Following an August summit at Clayton State University,

they will lead another two-day [Local Contracting Summit](#) in Atlanta on November 14 and 15, 2026.

****You do not have to go federal to go big.**** That is the message behind their approach.

An Overlooked Market

Cities, counties, school districts, and public institutions routinely purchase construction, landscaping, marketing, technology, consulting, maintenance, and professional services. Yet entrepreneurs who associate government contracting primarily with federal agencies may never investigate public buyers just miles from their businesses.

GovConNOW Agency is seeking to change that pattern. Rather than concentrating exclusively on federal registration and certifications, its instruction walks entrepreneurs through finding local buyers, reviewing actual solicitations, interpreting requirements, and assembling responsive proposals.

“Small businesses shouldn't have to look across the country to find their next big opportunity.

We want entrepreneurs to understand that their own communities are purchasing products and services every day. Our mission is to give them the knowledge and tools to compete for that business and grow right where they are,” said Sheena Parker, cofounder of GovConNOW Agency.

The founders believe stronger participation in local procurement can help small businesses expand operations, hire employees, and build a track record that positions them for future opportunities.

Military Experience, Practical Instruction

Parker founded 4SYT Industries, a facilities management business, after her service in the Army. Fields is founder and CEO of Design Show Marketing, a public sector marketing and communications firm, and is also known as The SLED Queen.

Both bring experience pursuing and performing government contracts. Their workshops emphasize working through procurement documents and identifying the next practical step, rather than treating attendance as the end goal.

From the Classroom to Contracting

According to GovConNOW Agency, its educational programs have trained more than 500 businesses, with attendees collectively securing \$4.2 million in government contract awards.

Held August 13 and 14 at Clayton State University's Innovation Center, the previous Local Contracting Summit focused on capability statements, solicitation research, proposal preparation, and understanding how local procurement works.

Attendee feedback has highlighted the accessible, practical format. Rena Jones described the summit as “phenomenal” and said it “meets you where you are,” reflecting the founders' effort to reach businesses at different stages of readiness.



Sheena Parker (U.S. Army Veteran) and Bridget Fields (U.S. Air Force Veteran), Co-Founders of GovConNOW Agency and Local Contracting Summit Instructors.

Next Stop: Morehouse College, Atlanta

The November 14 and 15 summit will take place in a classroom at Morehouse College's Walter E. Massey Leadership Building in Atlanta.

Participants will explore local agency registration, government buyer research, solicitation evaluation, capability statement development, and proposal preparation. The program will also introduce ways artificial intelligence can assist with procurement research and proposal workflows, while reinforcing the need for careful human review.

The event is designed for first-time bidders and established companies exploring a new customer base. Attendees are encouraged to bring laptops and engage directly with the exercises.

For Parker and Fields, the goal is not to dismiss federal contracting. It is to make sure entrepreneurs recognize another route to public sector business and the possibility of growing where they already live and work.

Before looking across the country for the next customer, they suggest, start by asking what your city, county, and school district are buying.

Event Details - GovConNOW Agency Local Contracting Summit

November 14-15, 2026 | 10 AM - 4PM

Morehouse College, Walter E. Massey Leadership Building, Room 240

830 Westview Drive SW, Atlanta, GA 30314

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2-day-local-contracting-summit-7-figure-dinner-tickets-2001420602900>

About GovConNOW Agency

Founded by U.S. Army veteran Sheena Parker and U.S. Air Force veteran Bridget Fields, GovConNOW Agency provides hands-on education in State, Local, and Education contracting to help entrepreneurs identify opportunities and prepare to compete.

Learn more at <https://govconnow.co>.

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