



AMERICA250PA 2024
**DIRECT EFFECT™ INNOVATION
CHALLENGE**
Powering the Future



Presented in partnership with
**THE PENNSYLVANIA
TURNPIKE COMMISSION**

Supported by
UGI UTILITIES, INC.



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**AMERICA250PA ANNOUNCES THE WINNER OF STATEWIDE
2024 DIRECT EFFECT™ INNOVATION CHALLENGE**
Annual Competition Highlights Marketing Skills of PA College Students

HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA – America250PA announces Point Park University as the winner of its sixth annual 2024 Direct Effect™ Innovation Challenge (DEIC), a multi-round competition that challenges students from postsecondary institutions across the Commonwealth to design and develop integrated marketing campaigns that explore solutions to real-life challenges and questions. Point Park University competed against four other postsecondary institutions—Rosemont College, Westmoreland County Community College, Pennsylvania College of Art & Design, and Penn State Altoona—and received the highest score from a judging panel of industry professionals.

The 2024 DEIC consisted of three rounds: a campus round, a virtual second round, and today’s in-person final round at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Complex in Harrisburg, PA. This year’s theme—“Powering the Future”—challenged students to design and pitch original integrated marketing campaigns promoting the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission’s adoption of solar energy, raising awareness about the benefits of solar power and encouraging interest in sustainable transportation solutions. With a 30-year commitment to sustainable best practices, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission aims to become America’s First Sustainable Superhighway by 2040. The student teams have the opportunity to make a significant impact and be a part of its 85-year history.

Today's event featured remarks from Cassandra Coleman, America250PA Executive Director; Andre Castillo, America250PA Engagement & Volunteer Coordinator and former DEIC participant; Keith Jack, Director of Facilities Operations, Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission; and Donald Brominski, Director of Business Development at UGI Utilities Inc.

"Watching bright young Pennsylvanians participate in the Direct Effect™ Innovation Challenge each year is beyond inspiring," said Cassandra Coleman, Executive Director of America250PA. "This next generation of Pennsylvanians holds the keys to our future, and ensuring their involvement in the 250th anniversary is crucial to our work. This year, we were thrilled to have a theme supporting the work of our presenting sponsor, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission. All of the student teams presented EPIC ideas, and we can't wait to see where their ideas lead." she continued.

The 2024 DEIC was generously presented in partnership with The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and supported by UGI Utilities, Inc.

"Congratulations to this year's winners and to all of the students and schools who participated in this challenge and demonstrated their creativity, innovation and critical thinking skills," said Pennsylvania Turnpike CEO Mark Compton. "Building a learning culture that delivers on innovation and modernization starts with hearing new ideas and this year's competition did just that. We are proud to support our youth through opportunities that engage them in real-world challenges, which is why we are a proud partner in America250PA's Direct Effect™ Innovation Challenge."

"UGI Utilities Inc., is proud to continue supporting America250PA's DEIC, which engages the next generation of Pennsylvanians," said Donald Brominski, Director of Business Development at UGI Utilities, Inc. "The DEIC provides an opportunity for PA students to get creative and showcase some of the amazing things happening in our Commonwealth, while also having a hand in shaping the future by coming up with concepts they want to see developed/implemented . . . UGI understands the importance of connecting PA students to PA businesses, because strong communities are critical to the future success of Pennsylvania."

America250PA's DEIC was also endorsed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges, and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

America250PA looks forward to hosting the Direct Effect™ Innovation Challenges every fall leading up to 2026.

To learn more about America250PA and the Direct Effect™ Innovation Challenge, please visit www.America250PA.org.

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About America250PA

The Pennsylvania Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial (America250PA) was established by the legislature and Governor in 2018 to plan, encourage, develop and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of the founding of the United States, Pennsylvania's integral role in that event, and the impact of its people on the nation's past, present, and future. The Commission is made up of current and past Pennsylvania leaders, celebrating the rich history and diversity of the state.

America250PA hopes to engage all citizens of the Commonwealth, from each of its 67 counties, to participate in creating a statewide celebration and bringing the Commonwealth's history into the conversation. Together, we hope that as Pennsylvanians, we can better understand the origins and multiple perspectives of issues facing our Commonwealth and nation today. The Commission's ability to communicate its vision, engage various audiences, and encourage inclusive and cohesive participation is key to a successful America250PA. The visionary framework – especially our E.P.I.C. theme of Educate, Preserve, Innovate, and Celebrate, contains the essential messaging to bring the Semiquincentennial to life across the Commonwealth.

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