

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWC Announces Six Finalists for 2016 Texas Workforce Solutions Small and Large Employers of the Year

AUSTIN –The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) announced today that Falls Community Hospital and Clinic of Marlin, Klein Tools Inc. of Mansfield and State Farm[®] Agent Samuel Garcia of Abilene are the finalists for the 2016 Texas Workforce Solutions Small Employer of the Year Award. Lockheed Martin Corp. of Fort Worth, Emerson of Sherman and James Avery Craftsman Inc. of Kerrville are the finalists for the 2016 Texas Workforce Solutions Large Employer of the Year Award.

“I am proud to recognize these finalists and their contributions to the Texas workforce,” said TWC Chairman Andres Alcantar. “The dedication and leadership shown by these employers, large and small, creates value for the Texas economy and we honor their outstanding contributions through this year’s Employer of the Year Award nominations.”

The six finalists were chosen from among 44 private-sector employers nominated by local workforce partners for their contributions to the Texas workforce through innovation and collaboration with their local Workforce Solutions board and their local community. This will mark the first time TWC will recognize two employers with the distinction between large and small employers of the year.

“We are proud of these Texas employers for the value they place in their communities by promoting strong economic growth and stability,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Ruth R. Hughs. “These finalists are leading the way for all employers and TWC is honored to recognize their outstanding efforts and achievements.”

These six outstanding employers exemplify TWC’s mission to promote and support a workforce system that creates value and offers employers, individuals and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity.

“These companies exhibit great dedication to their employees and local communities, helping to provide positive working environments,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Julian Alvarez. “These finalists represent a commitment to the Texas workforce through their ongoing development and training efforts.”

The 2016 Small and Large Employer of the Year winners will be announced at the 20th Annual Texas Workforce Conference Employer Award luncheon, which will take place at the Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel on Thursday, Dec. 8.

Also being honored at the luncheon are 28 Local Employer of Excellence award recipients who will be recognized for their involvement with the Texas workforce system and the positive contributions they have made to employers, workers and their communities.

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*2016 Texas Workforce Solutions Employer of the Year Nominees***Large Employer of the Year Finalists****Lockheed Martin****Nominated by Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County**

Lockheed Martin Corp. (Lockheed Martin) of Fort Worth has been integral in shaping and growing the local aerospace industry and leads the Dallas/Fort Worth Aerospace Consortium of industry representatives. Lockheed Martin employs more than 14,100 people, contributes billions of dollars annually to the Dallas/Fort Worth economy, and promotes aerospace and aviation careers in partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County (Tarrant County) and local educational institutions.

Lockheed Martin works closely with Tarrant County to hire new employees, support aerospace and aviation career pathways, engage industry representatives, and support the Tarrant County Workforce Development Board's veterans hiring events and initiatives. TWC recently awarded a \$1.5 million Skills Development Fund grant to Lockheed Martin to develop a cutting-edge aerospace industry training curriculum. Lockheed Martin placed 405 unemployed or underemployed engineers in competitive jobs locally and hired and trained 222 new engineers. It has also offered aerospace and aviation training in partnership with Tarrant County Community College and Tarrant County Community Learning Center, in addition to adapting this training for local secondary schools.

To encourage postsecondary students to prepare for aerospace careers, Lockheed Martin helped create the "Gotta Jet?" career awareness campaign and partnered with The University of Texas at Arlington and the North Central Texas Council of Governments for an aerospace gaming application.

Lockheed Martin also granted \$1 million to the Fort Worth Independent School District to implement Project Lead the Way—the nation's foremost science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program—and encourages interest in engineering careers through internship opportunities, the Engineers in the Classroom employee volunteer program and annual participation in National Engineering Week.

Emerson Process Management**Nominated by Workforce Solutions Texoma**

Emerson Process Management (Emerson) has been a premier employer in Sherman since opening in 1976. Emerson recently invested \$8.8 million in a plant expansion that will result in 20 new jobs. Since 1976, the plant has grown from 35 employees to 360, with an annual payroll of \$24.4 million. Emerson staff has worked closely with Workforce Solutions Texoma (Texoma) to fill job openings, conduct preemployment assessments and serve on the Texoma Workforce Development Board.

Most recently, Emerson plant manager Mark Anderson, chaired the Texoma Workforce Initiative, which was founded to create programs that lead to an increase in middle-skill workers in the manufacturing and health care industries. Through industry tours of manufacturing and health care facilities for youth and parents, Emerson helped Texoma promote an awareness campaign for local industries to educate students, parents and teachers about viable careers. Emerson led the way in engaging other companies to participate in this initiative.

After a study of local employer needs indicated a shortage of middle-skill workers, Emerson offered to serve on the task force to implement programs to increase the labor force for these in-demand industries. Emerson hosted 240 students for Texoma's Career Fair in 2015, 15 parents for the parent tours in early 2016 and 100 students in the spring of 2016. Emerson hosted the tours and allowed students to have lunch with employees so that students could learn more about manufacturing.

Through the Texoma Middle Skills Project, two local high schools will offer a manufacturing career pathway this fall. Students will be able to complete a Level I Manufacturing Technology Certificate before they graduate. Emerson also made a commitment to raise funds for tuition and books for the youth who participate in the new program so that no student will be left out due to lack of funding.

James Avery Craftsman, Inc.

Nominated by Workforce Solutions Alamo

Since 1954, the James Avery Craftsman (James Avery) team has grown to nearly 3,000 designers, craftsmen, sales associates and support staff offering unique jewelry designs to customers throughout the nation. Since its inception, Kerrville-based James Avery, a successful manufacturer of handcrafted jewelry with more than 70 stores in six states, has seen steady growth in its product line and market share. Along with growth came a need for expansion of its manufacturing facilities.

In April 2015, James Avery announced a \$15-million expansion plan, including building a 47,000-square-foot facility, with an expectation of nearly 360 new jobs. By partnering with Workforce Solutions Alamo, James Avery began to educate the local workforce about opportunities by posting jobs on WorkInTexas.com and promoting seasonal hiring events in which computers, staff and promotion is supported through the Kerrville Workforce Solutions Office.

Each year, James Avery hires more than 2,000 seasonal employees for the holidays, making a significant economic impact to the workforce system across Texas. James Avery has connected with local high school leadership to develop and cultivate relationships and tailor curriculum in support of a successful career with James Avery.

James Avery contributes to the local community by providing products for silent auctions and nearly every other fundraiser imaginable between the Pecos River and the Red River and beyond the borders of our state to encompass each community the retail stores inhabit. Additionally, James Avery commits financial support to community arts, educational, environmental, faith-based and health care organizations.

Small Employer of the Year Finalists

Falls Community Hospital and Clinic

Nominated by Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas

Falls Community Hospital and Clinic (FCHC), located in Marlin, is actively defining what it means to provide high-quality rural health care. This 36-bed, nonprofit primary and emergency health care facility employs 175 people who care for more than 18,000 citizens from Falls County, Robertson County and surrounding rural areas.

FCHC's success is due to its commitment to hiring and retaining highly trained and qualified employees in partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas (Heart of Texas) and local educational institutions.

FCHC works closely with Heart of Texas and has hired all of its new employees through the WorkInTexas.com application, job fairs and direct referrals. In 2015, TWC awarded over \$1 million in Skills Development Fund grants to FCHC, and its health care consortium creates or upgrades 2,295 jobs. FCHC used its funding to partner with McLennan Community College to train 150 new and existing employees serving in roles as department managers, radiology technicians, X-ray technicians, medical assistants and nurses. FCHC also partnered with McLennan Community College to upgrade the skills of 63 of its employees—one-third of its total workforce—and will hire and train an additional six employees.

In addition to being one of the area's top employers, a driving force in rural health care excellence and a significant contributor to the local economy, FCHC promotes a healthier community by offering free CPR training opportunities and health fairs staffed by employee volunteers and local partners.

Klein Tools, Inc.

Nominated by Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County

Klein Tools, Inc. (Klein) is the global leader among hand tool manufacturers. The company's USA Manufacturing Headquarters, located in Mansfield, began operating in 2010. The center currently has almost 400 employees. That number is expected to increase to 600 by 2018.

Before Klein broke ground in Mansfield, the company contacted Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County (Tarrant) to develop a partnership. Klein works with Tarrant to recruit and hire candidates through WorkInTexas.com, hiring fairs, and Workforce Solutions Offices in Tarrant County.

Klein recently expended its first Skills Development Fund grant with Tarrant County College (TCC) in March 2016. Klein and TCC trained 130 new workers for manufacturing jobs. Klein also provided industry tours at the company center for the trainees and other young adults who are interested in manufacturing careers.

Klein is a member of the Mansfield Manufacturing Partnership with Tarrant, Mansfield Economic Development Corporation, and Mansfield Independent School District. The partnership provides a training program that develops skilled manufacturing employees. Additionally, the partnership offers internships with local manufacturing companies to address the shortage of computer numeric controlled machinists. Klein led the charge among its industry partners to address this workforce shortage while helping local students develop a career pathway into manufacturing.

State Farm[®] Agent Samuel Garcia

Nominated by Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas

State Farm[®] Agent Samuel Garcia (Garcia)—run by three employees—is located in Abilene. For the past 20 years, the business has helped Texans manage their finances and risks by offering banking, retirement and insurance services.

Garcia champions the workforce system. Guided by its namesake owner-agent, the company partners with Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas (West Central) to conduct workforce and educational initiatives.

In 2008, the company helped West Central launch career pathways within the Abilene Independent School District. Career pathways help high school students transition to employment after graduation. The program received a Service to Community Award at the 2009 Texas Workforce Conference and the Texas Workforce

Commission currently provides funding to all Local Workforce Development Boards to support similar career programs.

In addition to career pathways, Garcia is engaged in other community initiatives. The company contributes hundreds of hours annually to help business and educational organizations achieve their workforce missions. Organizations that receive support from Garcia include the Abilene Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Leadership Council, Communities in Schools, the Family and Consumer Sciences/Better Living for Texans Task Force sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, and LULAC Council 605.

Known as a leader within its community, Garcia contributes funds to assist local organizations. The business has sponsored youth little league teams and several community events and nonprofit organizations that provide services, including child care services and meals for homebound individuals. During the past 20 years, Garcia has contributed more than \$130,000 to assist community organizations, give scholarships to local schools, and support business and community events.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in coordination with its network of local workforce development boards, call 512-463-8942 or visit www.texasworkforce.org. To receive notifications about TWC programs and services subscribe to our [email updates](#).