

SOLUTIONS

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Serving Small Business

Governor's Small Business Forums
give owners tools to succeed

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On the cover: Small business owners in Texas are encouraged to take advantage of training funds available for their employees through TWC's Skills for Small Business program. *Photo by Comstock/Thinkstock*

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Ronny Congleton
Commissioner
Representing Labor

During the national recession, an unprecedented number of Texans have found themselves without work. The effort to find a good job has been daunting during the economic downturn, but jobs will become more plentiful as the economy recovers.

I'm committed to doing all I can to get Texans back to working good, meaningful jobs, and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and the local workforce development boards are committed to helping Texans find and return to work. Our main mission is to improve the workforce of Texas, and our goal is simple: good jobs and good wages for all Texans who need them.

Employment Services and staff at local Workforce Solutions offices are dedicated to finding innovative ways to match job seekers with work.

With our training programs, we are laying the groundwork for our economic future, ensuring that Texans have the skills and knowledge for new careers. In addition, training and skills upgrades help prevent further job loss, and a job saved is as good as a job created. There is a wide variety of training programs; I will highlight a couple of them here.

Skills for Small Business: Small businesses are an integral part of the Texas economy. TWC, in coordination with the Office of the Governor, recently implemented the Skills for Small Business program geared toward training local workers. This initiative allows small businesses to select courses provided by their local public community or technical colleges to upgrade employee skills and help small employers increase their businesses.

Apprenticeship: Last year, more than 4,100 individuals participated in the TWC Apprenticeship Training Program. Apprenticeship is an effective job-training system that combines structured on-the-job training with related classroom instruction to prepare Texas workers for occupations in high-demand skilled trades and crafts. A completed apprenticeship results in well-paying jobs with promising futures, a higher quality and variety of skills, training and certifications that meet industry and employer standards, and an opportunity to convert completed registered apprenticeship training into college credit.

I am proud of the sustained efforts TWC and the workforce system have made to secure economic prosperity for Texas. ■

NEG Grant helps dislocated aerospace workers locate jobs

By Kate Hourin

As the Space Shuttle program winds down, Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast (Gulf Coast) is boosting its efforts to help workers impacted by layoffs from companies that contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) was awarded a National Emergency Grant (NEG) by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration on behalf of Gulf Coast for \$5,367,340. Of that amount, \$2.2 million has been released. The funds provide workforce development services to affected workers at a dozen companies including job-search assistance, résumé preparation and review, and interviewing skills; occupational and vocational skills assessment, workshops, and seminars; support services; and training. Training is targeted at industries and occupations which demonstrate a strong potential for transferability of skills and knowledge to other careers in the oil and gas and chemical industries.

A majority of the training and services are provided at the Aerospace Transition Center (ATC) in Houston.

“The center’s focus is on retraining and individual counseling,” said Gulf Coast Senior Workforce Planner Trudy Ray. “The workshops that we offer are very popular with class sizes ranging from 15 to 50 people.” Between February and December 2010 the center served nearly 5,000

Serving Workers

TWC and Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast are currently serving dislocated employees from the following employers:

- Fluor Corp.
- Cimarron Software Services Inc.
- Lockheed Martin
- Jacobs Engineering and Science Contract Group (ESCG)
- REDE-Critique
- SGT Inc.
- U.S.A. Inc.
- Boeing
- SAIC Inc.
- Oceaneering International Inc.
- Barrios Technology Lt.
- Hamilton Sundstrand Corp.

“We are thankful for the grant funds that enable us to provide workforce services for this highly skilled group of workers. Our goal is to reach out to all who can take advantage of these services.”

Rodney Bradshaw
Gulf Coast Board Director

walk-in clients.

Arthur Hanzo took advantage of ATC services when budget reductions forced the elimination of his engineering position with Lockheed Martin Corp.

“My position was just one among several thousand that were eliminated from the NASA Constellation program,” said Hanzo. He considers himself fortunate to have been transferred to Lockheed Martin’s Fort Worth offices after searching for jobs and utilizing the services offered at the center for several months.

“The staff assisted me in every aspect of my job search, including updating my résumé, conducting mock interviews, and offering one-on-one financial counseling,” he said. “I have learned much in the process and have much to be

thankful for.”

Job fairs also are part of the services provided to dislocated workers. ATC hosted two virtual job fairs and one on-site fair in 2010 with another scheduled for February.

TWC and Gulf Coast are in the process of identifying more companies that hold subcontracts with NASA’s primary contractors for the Space Shuttle program that may benefit from future grant money.

“We are thankful for the grant funds that enable us to provide workforce services for this highly skilled group of workers,” said Gulf Coast Board Director Rodney Bradshaw. “Our goal is to reach out to all who can take advantage of these services.” ■

Board efforts help disabled

Roadblocks to employment addressed at forum

By Shannon Thomas

Statistics show that nearly 3.6 million Texans are living with a disability and often face barriers to employment. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), in partnership with other state agencies and organizations, helps disabled workers overcome these obstacles.

Workforce Solutions Cameron partnered with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to sponsor the third annual Employers and Rehabilitative Network Forum held in October in conjunction with National Disability Employment Month in Edinburg. The forum provided local employers with the most relevant information regarding hiring qualified individuals with disabilities and safely returning employees who have been injured back to work.

“It’s really about informing and increasing employers’ knowledge base about disability issues,” said Laura Villarreal, DARS Harlingen area manager. “In South Texas, there is a large disabled population so we tried to target issues and topics that interest and benefit employers.”

Workforce Solutions Cameron Disability Program Navigator Maria Roussett said some of that disabled population includes discharged soldiers with physical and mental disabilities, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

“There’s a lot of information coming out about PTSD and employment that we addressed,” Roussett said. “Our main emphasis with this forum was to inform human resource staff and business personnel about the different accommodations that can be made for a disabled person.”



Dr. Bruce Reed, dean of College of Health Sciences and Human Services at the University of Texas Pan American, (left) speaks with Jim Hanopy, assistant commissioner at the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) at the third annual Employers and Rehabilitative Network Forum in Edinburg. *Photo courtesy DARS*

The forum covered topics like employment and training for people with autism, deafness, and mental illnesses, and also touched on best practices in interviewing, hiring, and etiquette with individuals and employees with disabilities.

More than 200 people attended the forum, which, according to Roussett, also focused on addressing mental and emotional disabilities that may not be physically apparent to employers.

“We want to connect employers with qualified candidates with disabilities and help them implement good business practices when hiring a disabled individual,” she said. “We also want to increase awareness among local employers about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.”

East Texas Board addresses disabled adolescents

To help address the needs of disabled children and the special

employment circumstances they might face as they transition into adulthood, Workforce Solutions East Texas Center for Independent Living to help sponsor the second annual “Door to the Future” Parent Education Workshop, also held in October.

The event included representatives from various East Texas organizations that provide vital information and assistance for children with disabilities as they finish school and begin the next chapter of their lives. Several speakers covered topics including guardianship, financial planning for a child with special needs, and assistive technology. Participants also were advised on how WorkInTexas.com, TWC’s job-matching site, could assist with a job search.

“It really takes a village to help these kids and their parents,” said Amy Harrison, disability program navigator for Workforce Solutions East Texas. “We are making a difference in a child’s future.” ■

Texas Back to Work lauded at Workforce conference

By Joe Anna Haydon

Getting Texans back to work, job training, the economy, and outstanding customer service were among the themes and workshops at the 14th Annual Texas Workforce Conference hosted by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Nov. 17-19, 2010 in Dallas. The conference was attended by at least 1,350 Texas employers, educators, and workforce professionals.

Opening the conference, Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst discussed the collaboration between TWC and the state legislature to help private sector employers in Texas retain, attract, and employ qualified Texas professionals through the *Texas Back to Work* initiative. More than 10,000 out-of-work Texans have been hired through this program.

The annual conference showcased a number of nationally recognized speakers. Jane Oates, assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, presented her thoughts on how the lessons learned from the recession can help accelerate the nation's economic recovery. Doug Lipp, a consultant and former head of training at Walt Disney University, stated that the right combination of skills, attitudes, and behaviors contribute to exceptional performance that will help companies build, win, and keep market share.

Breakout sessions and a number of interactive workshops focused on issues affecting the growth of the Texas economy and its workforce. Workshops gave participants ample opportunities to expand their own knowledge on workforce matters and share their experiences and best practices with



(From Left) Ronny Congleton, Texas Workforce Commissioner Representing Labor, Chairman Tom Pauken, Commissioner Representing Employers, and Andres Alcantar, Commissioner Representing the Public attend the 14th Annual Texas Workforce Conference in Dallas. Photo by Joe Anna Haydon

other workforce professionals.

"The next three days will give us the opportunity to reflect on what we have accomplished so far and consider how we can do better going forward," said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton.

There was high praise for the 28 local workforce development boards that implement grants and provide workforce services to business owners, job seekers, and youth.

"We three Commissioners along with the agency's Executive Director often are the public faces of TWC, but the real work in the trenches is done by a group of professionals at the state and local levels," said TWC Chairman Tom Pauken.

"Often times it is your clarity of vision, your push to action, and your

demand for accountability that leads to the success you achieve," said TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Andres Alcantar. "Through your promotion and support we have an effective workforce system that understands and responds to the needs of our employers, individuals, and communities."

Highlighting the conference were awards recognizing employers and workforce boards for outstanding service over the last year. Monetary awards presented at the ceremonies will be used to enhance board service programs during the next year.

The 15th Annual Texas Workforce Conference is set to be held Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 2011 at the Westin Galleria Houston hotel. ■

Serving those who served

Military veterans have a variety of options to search for employment after discharge

By *Kate Hourin*

With the large number of military bases in Texas it is no surprise that the state has more than its share of veterans living here. Many of these vets look for jobs once they are discharged from their respective service, and the state and municipalities are helping them through a variety of resources including job fairs and hiring preference programs.

"Texas is a military state," said Sherman Weeks, the Workforce Solutions Capital Area veterans resource and referral specialist (VRRS). "There is no shortage of talented and skilled vets that can fill a variety of jobs." The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) established these specialists in local workforce board areas through the Texas Veterans Leadership Program to aid Iraq and Afghanistan vets in their transition to civilian life.

Weeks said there are 60,000 veterans living in Travis County alone.

"That's not surprising considering 500 vets are discharged from Fort Hood (in Killeen) almost every week," according to Weeks.

RecruitMilitary LLC, based in Loveland, Ohio, conducts job fairs for military veterans quarterly in Texas to try to connect vets like Ryan Rowley with companies and federal agencies such as Boeing, Bell Helicopter, New York Life

Insurance Co., the Transportation Security Administration, and the Internal Revenue Service. On average more than 100 vets show up to these events.

"I have spent eight years in the military," said Rowley, twice deployed to Iran as an airborne infantryman, as he distributed his resume to several employers' booths. "It may be time to try something else." Rowley is currently employed with the Texas National Guard.

TWC's job-matching system, WorkInTexas.com, gives veterans a priority in finding jobs via a "Vet Only" indicator.

"We do that for the first two days on all job postings, and we have some that are posted strictly for veterans," said Scott Eychner, WorkInTexas.com program manager. "We do that to ensure vets get the first shot at applying for jobs, as a matter of compliance, but also because it's the right thing to do in light of their service to our country."

The Texas Veterans Commission helped more than 47,500 veterans find employment in 2009. They have 75 locations throughout the state to assist vets with job searches, including résumé preparation and job applications. They also hold job fairs around the state, including two last year in Waco.

Typical companies that

Texas Military Bases

Air Force Bases

Brooks City-Base San Antonio
 Dyess AFB- Abilene
 Goodfellow AFB-San Angelo
 Lackland AFB- San Antonio
 Laughlin AFB- Del Rio
 Randolph AFB- Universal City
 Sheppard AFB- Wichita Falls

Army Bases

Fort Bliss-El Paso
 Fort Hood-Killeen
 Fort Sam Houston-San Antonio
 Red River Army Depot-Bowie County

Navy Bases

JRB Fort Worth-Fort Worth
 NAS Corpus Christi-Flour Bluff
 NAS Kingsville-Kingsville
 NS Ingleside-Ingleside

National Guard

Camp Mabry - Austin
 Camp Bullis - San Antonio
 Camp Swift - Bastrop

Air National Guard

Carswell Field - Ft Worth
 Ellington Field - Houston
 Kelly Field - San Antonio

United States Coast Guard

USCG Station Galveston
 USCG Air Station Corpus Christi
 USCG Air Station Houston

participate in job fairs include law enforcement and fire departments because of the physical fitness, lifesaving skills and “go-getter attitude” requirements necessary for the job, said Weeks.

“Department of Defense contractors also come to the fairs because the vets already have military clearance,” added Weeks. “Bell Helicopter/Textron wants to hire vets who have worked on helicopters for four or five years.”

Vets also have job skills that certain private-sector companies need, said Lawrence Denton Jr., local veterans’



William L. “Larry” Bolden works for Topflite Environmental Services processing hazardous materials at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene. The U.S. Air Force retiree found his job with the help of the Texas Veterans Commission office at Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas. *Photo courtesy Texas Veterans Commission*

employment representative for the Texas Veterans Commission office located at Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas.

“I was able to secure a job for William “Larry” Bolden, a retired U.S. Air Force officer, with contractor Topflite Environmental Services one month after he retired last March because of the skills he brought from the military,” said Denton. “Mr. Bolden’s experience as a Logistics Readiness Squadron senior noncommissioned officer easily transitioned into management of the Hazardous Material Pharmacy on Dyess AFB. His current duties include processing hazardous materials requests, receipt, and storage, and delivery of hazardous materials base-wide.

E. A. “Buddy” Grantham, director of the City of Houston’s Office of Veterans’ Affairs, said there are 197,000 veterans in Harris County, close to 300,000 in the greater Houston area. Mayor Annise Parker, the daughter of an Army veteran, signed the Veteran’s Employment Preference executive

order on Veteran’s Day 2010 giving hiring preferences to vets.

“There’s an over 20 percent unemployment rate among returning veterans,” said Grantham, a retired Army officer. “That’s why if all things are equal, if one of the candidates is a vet, he or she will get the job.”

That’s similar to the way the newly enacted Veterans Preference in Hiring program in Wichita County works. Sheppard Air Force Base is located in Wichita Falls. County Judge Woodrow W. “Woody” Gossom Jr., an Army veteran who also spent 25 years in the Texas National Guard, is proud that the county adopted the program that went into effect January 1, 2011.

“I remember what it was like when I got out of the service in ’73,” said Gossom. “It’s a scary thing when you have a wife and two kids and no job. We are lucky in a county with a workforce of 100,000 to be able to draw from such qualified candidates as veterans.” The program also encourages the county to have a minimum of 20 percent of all job applicant interviews to be veterans. ■

Governor's forums reach out to small businesses

By Debbie Pitts

The majority of businesses in Texas employ fewer than 100 workers. To reach out to these employers, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and the Office of the Governor partnered with local economic development organizations and other local entities to present a series of Governor's Small Business Forums.

"Small businesses are an integral part of the engine that drives Texas jobs and our state economy," Gov. Rick Perry said. "These forums give small business owners essential tools to help their businesses succeed, provide jobs for Texans, and strengthen the economies in their communities."

The forums provide Texas small business owners access to valuable information on workforce development, training grants, expanding markets, and other business growth opportunities.

"These forums provide us with an opportunity to inform small businesses about services that TWC and the local workforce development boards can provide," said Dale Robertson, TWC's manager of business outreach and support. "Smaller employers are busy running their businesses and don't often know where to turn for the help. This is a good way to reach out to them."

Each forum included presentations on the new Skills for Small Business employee training program, the *Texas Back to Work* wage subsidy hiring program, the federal Work Opportunity



TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Andres Alcantar (center) discusses workforce issues with Congressman Ruben Hinojosa (left) and Workforce Solutions Lower Rio Grande Valley Chief Executive Officer Bonnie Gonzales (right) at the Rio South Texas Small Business Summit in McAllen—one of the forums. Alcantar delivered the keynote address at the forum's luncheon. Photo courtesy Workforce Solutions Lower Rio Grande Valley

Tax Credit, the Texas Veterans Leadership Program, WorkInTexas.com, TWC's no-cost recruitment tool, and the many business services provided by local Workforce Solutions offices.

"I learned that there is a lot of funding available for employers like me," said Sherry Green, president of Technology Team LLC, who attended the Fort Worth forum.

In particular, Green said she became more familiar with how the *Texas Back to Work* program could help with her hiring needs and learned about Skills for Small Business training opportunities. She said that her company, which employs 25 people, will most likely take advantage of both programs in the coming year.

"I was somewhat familiar with

these programs," Green said.

"But once I heard the details, I understood how our business could benefit."

A total of 21 forums were held throughout the state between August 2010 and January 2011 and hundreds of businesses attended the events.

"I think the most beneficial thing about our event was being able to network with city and government agencies," said Cathy Colomo Riojas, owner of Outside the Box Marketing and Promotional Specialty Co. LLC, who served as event chair for the inaugural event in Corpus Christi. "We had about 380 participants and having all those resources under one roof was very helpful for smaller companies as well as potential startup companies." ■

Big news for small business

Skills for Small Business focuses on training needs

By Kate Hourin

There are more than 433,000 Texas businesses that employ fewer than 100 employees, creating a diverse industry base with more than 10 million jobs in sectors such as energy, information technology, and aerospace. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) recognizes that supporting these entrepreneurs means supporting the Texas economy. That's where Skills for Small Business comes in.

TWC's \$2 million Skills for Small Business program is designed to focus Skills Development Funds on the training needs of small businesses. Skills for Small Business provides tuition and fees for employees who participate in an existing course offered by two-year public community or technical colleges, or the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX).

Skills for Small Business provides up to \$1,450 for each newly hired full-time employee trained and up to \$725 for each incumbent employee. An employee can participate once during a 12-month period. Businesses apply directly to TWC for training at a local college. TWC will evaluate applications and, upon approval, fund the college for the requested training.

"More than 80 percent of the state's businesses are small employers who need workers with the most current, in-demand industry skills," said TWC Chairman Tom Pauken. "We are pleased to offer a specific program that will meet the needs of these small businesses."

Corpus Christi businessman Jerry Hunt of Dykema Architects recognizes the value of TWC's Skills



Skills for Small Business provides up to \$1,450 for each newly hired full-time employee trained and up to \$725 for each incumbent employee. Photo by Adam Crowley/Photodisc/Thinkstock



for Small Business program. Several of his employees took classes at the local community college, including a course on Revit, a modeling software program used for computer-aided design applications.

"Upgrading my employees' skills makes my company more successful," he said. "I know that skilled employees are my company's most valuable assets."

Other courses small business employees are taking through this TWC program include QuickBooks, Business Communications, Microsoft

Excel, and Project Management.

"Most of these classes are online which allow the employees to work on them at their own pace," said Olivia de la Rosa, continuing education coordinator at South Texas College in McAllen. "Skills for Small Business is a good program and I would encourage companies to take advantage of it."

Alpha Care Home Health in Edinburg is one of the companies participating in the program at South Texas College.

"It's a very good program," said Chief Financial Officer Elvira Lopez. "Taking an accounting course and a QuickBooks class has helped me tremendously in my job. I hope to expand participation in our company."

Skills for Small Business is in partnership with the Office of the Governor, which is conducting the Governor's Small Business Forums around the state that are designed to educate the Texas entrepreneur and small business community on workforce development, start-up essentials, marketing, hiring and managing employees, and training and growth opportunities. Representatives from TWC, local workforce boards, community colleges, economic development groups, and chambers of commerce are available at the Small Business Forums to help answer questions and businesses complete an application.

For more information, visit the Skills for Small Business website at www.ssb.texasworkforce.org or contact Workforce Business Services Project Development at (877) 463-1777. ■

2010 Annual Workforce Conference Award Winners

Employer of the Year

Dow Chemical Company

Nominated by Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast

Dow Chemical Company (Dow) has been a vital presence in the Texas Gulf Coast region for decades.



Dow collaborates with the Brazoria County Petrochemical Council and with Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast on strategic workforce planning, which has led to several workforce development and community improvement efforts. In 2008, Dow funded a pilot project at Brazosport College to introduce the Applied Instrumentation program for instrument and electrical technicians. Dow received additional funding through a Skills Development Fund grant to develop and deliver 13 Applied Instrumentation modules used by five collaborating companies. Dow also hires 500 people a year who attend orientation classes at Brazosport College. Dow is building new plants for biofuels and styrenes that will bring hundreds of jobs to the region, and is working with NASA's Johnson Space Center to assist in the training and placement of aerospace workers facing layoffs and to help with future NASA research missions. Dow has dedicated resources to a Texas Workforce Commission project matching industry jobs to military job descriptions to help returning veterans secure employment. The company employed 40 youth in the Summer Jobs for Youth and Energy Venture Camp programs and works with local communities and Brazosport College to address science, technology, engineering, and math workforce educational goals.

Summer Youth Employment Award Winner

Workforce Solutions Panhandle

Rural Community Internship and Job Opportunities

Workforce Solutions Panhandle (Panhandle) provided 359 youth with opportunities to gain valuable workplace knowledge through work experiences, volunteer opportunities, and career exploration. Panhandle partnered with a nonprofit community development network to provide 30 summer community internships. Private resources supported the activities of these students, which included mentoring, community development projects, two educational field days, and a four-community tour. These efforts were designed to encourage retention of youth in rural communities and give them an understanding of potential career options. In addition, 329 youth were placed in summer jobs with employers in a variety of industries. Most rotated through businesses such as a newspaper, hospital, and rural electric cooperative.



Industry Sector Outreach Award Winner

Workforce Solutions Texoma

Advancing Nursing Training

Workforce Solutions Texoma is a founding member of Texoma Regional Consortium (TRC) created to provide opportunities to serve the region's employers. TRC, founded in 2006, includes 25 area health care employers, associations, and health care training providers. The consortium has leveraged more than \$1.3 million in local, state, and federal funds to increase workforce and



local economic development. One issue TRC has focused on is the Nursing Advancement and Leadership Project to support and strengthen the nursing profession and provide high-quality training.

Service to Business Award Winner

Workforce Solutions of

Central Texas

Support for Call Center Openings

By attracting and supporting the opening of two new large businesses, Presidium Inc. and Aegis Communications Group Inc., Workforce Solutions of Central Texas (Central Texas) addressed the potential



economic impact from losing 650 jobs soon after two other Killeen call centers closed.

Central Texas provided labor market information, offered its workforce center as the company's initial operation site, held industry-specific job fairs, screened applicants, and referred skilled candidates who have filled more than 200 jobs to date.

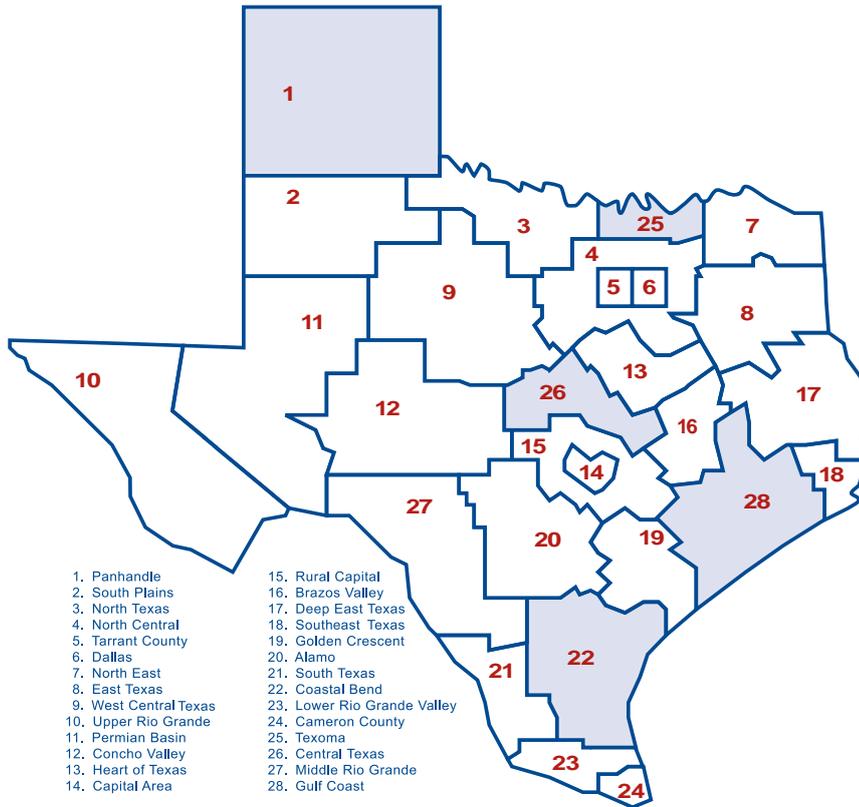
Service to Community Award Winner

Workforce Solutions Texoma

Real Life Math

In an effort to inform high school students about the importance of math in the workplace, Workforce Solutions Texoma coordinated the Real Life Math program, where local employers made presentations to students to illustrate how specific math concepts are applied at their companies. Employers in the health care, surveying, and sales industries all participated in the program during the 2009-2010 school year. Due to its success, the program is expanding

Conference Awards



during the 2010-2011 school year to include approximately 1,500 students from eight local high schools.

Service to Workers Award Winner

Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend

Mobility Options Project

The lack of accessible transportation is a barrier to employment for all workers especially those with disabilities. To study and plan improvements to transportation options in the area, Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend (Coastal Bend) in collaboration with the Coastal Bend Center for Independent Living launched the



Mobility Options Project for disabled workers in all 12 counties of the board area. Coastal Bend will provide office space and staff for the project to develop mobility planning, conduct outreach and surveys of consumers, businesses, schools, training sites, transportation providers, and others instrumental entities.

Partnership Awards

The Partnership Awards highlight the important work of community colleges and other entities that are integral in providing a skilled workforce for employers in the global economy. These partners play a critical role in serving the workforce needs of employers that require workers with specific skills to meet the demands of a global economy, and of workers whose skills no longer align with those needed for today's jobs. The entities selected for recognition are colleges and organizations that have shown innovation in meeting the needs of local employers and have performed well under the contract provisions for implementation of the programs.

Alvin Community College *Small College Award*

Alvin Community College serves more than 4,000 students and responds to the needs of its community by providing a wide variety of career

programs. As an outstanding example of success partnering with the Texas Workforce Commission on a variety of Skills Development Fund grants, Alvin Community College addresses the workforce training challenges resulting from advancing technologies in the petrochemical industry. The college develops training on new manufacturing equipment and in advanced technical skills to prepare workers for national certifications. These programs ensure that workers are prepared to keep petrochemical plants and refineries operating at optimal levels of safety and productivity. The college provides courses to support the development of employees moving into supervisory and leadership positions. Alvin Community College also collaborates with Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast and the City of Alvin Economic Development Department.

San Jacinto College

Large College Award

As the recipient of numerous Skills Development Fund grants over the past decade, San Jacinto College implements training projects to meet the needs of the diverse industries in its service area, including the aerospace, manufacturing, maritime, utilities, mining, transportation, and service industries. With an enrollment of more than 27,000 at its three campuses and its location at the Johnson Space Center, San Jacinto College shares its goals for workforce skills training with Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast and local economic development organizations. San Jacinto College established its Aerospace and Biotechnology Academy to increase the number of graduates and educators in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The college will invest more than \$10 million to build its Maritime Academy to help prepare workers for the rapid expansion of the Port of Houston. Other recent grants have addressed the needs of the petrochemical and energy industries.



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The Texas Workforce Commission, in partnership with 28 local workforce development boards, forms Texas Workforce Solutions.



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