



Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Schedule	Description	Location
1:00–1:15 p.m.	Opening Ceremony and Welcome	Exhibit Hall B
1:15–2:15 p.m.	Opening Keynote Address Purpose or Perish Presented by Joshua M. Evans In today's world, uncertainty is at an all-time high, leaving many people overwhelmed, burned out, and unfulfilled. But it doesn't have to be this way. This session equips individuals with tools to break free from the day-to-day minutia that can cloud our sense of purpose. We'll reconnect to what doing great work truly means for the people who depend on us, so participants leave inspired and reengaged.	Exhibit Hall B
2:15–2:30 p.m.	Break	
2:30–3:30 p.m.	Workshops	
	Attract Staff with Employer Child Care Solutions Presented by Catherine Arwood and Stacy Day Employers need workers. Workers need child care. With our innovative Employer Child Care Solutions (ECCS) initiative, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is helping employers attract and retain staff with child care solutions. Texas employers of any size can receive free technical assistance to assess the child care needs of their employees, learn about starting an employer-supported child care program, and work with child care providers to offer site-based child care. Join us to learn more about ECCS!	Water Garden, Room A
	New Board Member Orientation Presented by Elisa Spry and Les Trobman	Water Garden, Room B

To be a Board member, you must finish the New Board Member Orientation within the first 90 days of certification. If you do not, you cannot serve on the Board. This training meets that requirement. It shows how a high-quality workforce leads to better economies in local communities. The training also includes topics like working toward successful workforce development programs.

Solving Farm Labor Shortage: Strategies & Insights

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom A

Presented by Russell Hunter, David Mauch, and Horacio Lopez Montes

Discover how the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) can help you solve farm labor challenges. This session provides practical strategies and valuable insights for employment service staff, employers, and farmworker organizations. You will learn the ARS recruitment process, its vital link to the H-2A visa program, tools to enhance ARS effectiveness, and have common misconceptions clarified. Ultimately, you will leave equipped to better connect employers with qualified farmworkers.

Making Your Case: Best Practices for TWC Grant Applications

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom B

Presented by Chris Caballero, Jeremy Geske, and James Golsan

This presentation will feature guidance and best practices for Boards and other TWC grant applicants regarding grant application completion. The goal is for all audience members to leave with strategies to strengthen their future RFA and noncompetitive TWC grant application responses and improve their chances of receiving TWC support for local programs and services.

Attack the Gremlins in Your Gears: Use Interference Diagramming to Diagnose What's Really Going on Under the Hood

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom C-D

Presented by Jeremy Cervantes, Terry Everett, and Anita Smith

Frustrated by team gridlock and slow progress? Is your team working hard but spinning their wheels? Have new ideas stalled out for your team? Are hidden "potholes" causing inefficiency and loss of traction? Use interference diagramming to help your team get laser-focused on high-impact activities, build momentum, and create win-win solutions that drive results!

In this hands-on workshop, you will participate in an interactive interference diagramming exercise to identify your “blue light” and what you should be focused on, brainstorm solutions and align on a common goal, identify the challenges that prevent you from reaching your goal, and leave with a practical action plan to implement immediately.

3:30–4:00
p.m.

Break
Refreshments will be served.

Exhibit Hall A

3:30–6:30
p.m.

Exhibitor Hours

Exhibit Hall A

4:00–4:15
p.m.

Workforce Innovation Fund

Exhibit Hall B

4:15–5:00
p.m.

**Commissioner Super Session: Chairman and Commissioner Representing Employers
The Nexus of Teacher Externship + Internship
+ Employment = Success**
Presented by Chairman Joe Esparza, Mario Lozoya, Valeria Vega, Nayle Cantu, Michael Rodriguez

Exhibit Hall B

Learn how a successful Teacher Externship Program and a successful Internship Program intersect powerfully for one Texas employer. This employer developed a blueprint to build a pipeline of future workers and leaders, creating a transformative impact on not only students, parents, and communities, but also on the economy of Texas. Take notes as you gather best practices on how teachers and students alike benefit from the innovative way Noble Leadership Academy is making the Teacher Externship and Student Internship work!

5:00–6:30
p.m.

Welcome Reception and Exhibitor Displays

Exhibit Hall A

Thursday, December 4, 2025

Schedule	Description	Location
7:30–8:30 a.m.	Breakfast	Exhibit Hall A
7:30 a.m.–6:30 p.m.	Exhibitor Hours	Exhibit Hall A
8:30–8:45 a.m.	All-Star College Award	Exhibit Hall B
8:45–9:30 a.m.	Commissioner Super Session: Commissioner Representing Labor Reemployment Services in a Changing Workforce Landscape Presented by Commissioner Alberto Treviño III, Diana Harris, Sally Perez, Suzette Robinson, Juliet Stipeche This Super Session will provide an overview of the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program (RESEA) and how it benefits unemployed workers. Staff will provide an overview of the program and share program success stories. A Panel of RESEA professionals will provide an insightful discussion addressing Career Shifters, professionals leaving long-term employment and those transitioning to new careers because of technology changes in their jobs/industries. The panel will discuss the impact of Artificial Intelligence on employment and reemployment as well as service delivery strategies to enhance the customer experience. The panel will also discuss the relationship between RESEA and UI, connecting the dots, and lastly the panel will discuss the future of RESEA and where the program is headed.	Exhibit Hall B
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Break Refreshments will be served.	Exhibit Hall A
10:00–11:00 a.m.	Workshops	
	Leveraging Labor Market Information for Economic Development Presented by Gabriel Guzman and William Lutz Economic development professionals frequently rely on the workforce system to provide timely and actionable	Water Garden, Room B

data on the economy and labor force. Hear about key datasets for economic development. Learn quick-reference dashboards and other tools to find data quickly. Discuss how labor market data is used in economic incentive programs and where to find prevailing wage data.

Reimagining K–12 Education: Accelerating Healthcare’s Future Workforce

Presented by Garrett Groves and Ashley King

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom A

The Central Texas Healthcare Academy is a new comprehensive dual-enrollment model for independent school districts (ISDs) to provide pathways for students with health sciences interests. Students will select a pathway, seamlessly transition to college, and engage throughout their pathway with local employers to facilitate career exposure, clinical access, and, ultimately, employment. This session will outline how Local Workforce Development Boards can create systematic change for education and impact severe shortage careers.

A Stronger Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship: A Powerful Resource for Employers

Presented by Desi Holmes

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom B

Texas employers are the backbone of our economy, and they need tools that help build a high-quality workforce while staying competitive. That’s why the Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship (TIRA) program is evolving. Thanks to the 89th Texas Legislature, TIRA is being enhanced to give employers greater flexibility in designing apprenticeship programs tailored to their specific needs. These updates are aimed at strengthening the skilled workforce across the state and will be implemented in early 2026.

Join us in this session for one of the first opportunities to explore what’s changing with TIRA and how these improvements can benefit your organization.

The Power of Partnership: How Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Programs Work Together

Presented by Dezeree Fraga, Melinda Paninski, Bertha Torres

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom C-D

This session will explore how the core programs of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) collaborate to provide comprehensive services to both job seekers and employers. Through real-world examples,

	participants will learn how integrated service delivery can lead to better outcomes for individuals, businesses, and communities. We will explore successful strategies for coordination and collaboration across WIOA programs.	
11:00–11:15 a.m.	Break	
11:15–12:45 p.m.	Employer Awards Luncheon Luncheon is for all conference attendees. There will be official photo opportunities with agency leadership to recognize this year’s award winners.	Exhibit Hall B
12:45–1:30 p.m.	Meet and Sweets with Exhibitors Networking opportunity for award winners and attendees. Coffee and dessert will be served.	Exhibit Hall A
1:30–2:30 p.m.	Workshops	
	Camp V—A Place for Veterans Presented by Travis Gladhill, Gene Keenon, Doug Shryock, and Angelia Snow Discover how Camp V in Tyler serves as a one-stop resource for veterans seeking support and stability as they reenter the civilian economy. Learn about its founding, the unique challenges veterans and their families face, and how Workforce Solutions East Texas collaborates with Camp V and community partners to build brighter futures. This session highlights a shared mission to empower veterans through career development and comprehensive care.	Water Garden, Room A
	Child Care Service’s Journey Ahead—What to Expect in the Coming Year Presented by Rachelle Daniel, Jonathan Wells, and Allison Wilson TWC’s Child Care & Early Learning staff will provide an overview of upcoming policy changes as a result of the 89th Legislative Session and TWC rules and policy changes. TWC’s Customer Care team will also join the discussion and highlight TWC’s plans to examine customers’ experiences and support continuous quality improvement for Child Care Services families and child care providers.	Water Garden, Room B

RESEA Live

Presented by Angelica Armendariz, Bennett Burke, Dennis Jones, Douglas Laxson, Byron Moore, and Suzette Robinson

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom A

RESEA Live will provide attendees with exclusive insight into what customers and frontline service providers experience during a Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) appointment. Watch as our team of seasoned professionals acts out appointments on stage, working through different scenarios that real-world customers face in the journey to reemployment. This session bridges the gap in understanding RESEA and brings the intricacies of policy guidance to life.

Build Collaborative Partnerships with the Skills Development Fund

Presented by Kristie Caviness, Kiley Justis, and Nestor Lopez

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom B

Navigating the success of Skills Development Fund (SDF) grants can be complex, but the rewards for employers and employees are immense. This session provides a practical guide to building collaborative partnerships that maximize the impact of SDF. Participants will learn how to forge strategic partnerships, align training with industry needs, and build a skilled workforce that drives economic growth. By leveraging these resources, we can collectively realize "The Journey Ahead: A Shared Vision" for a thriving Texas workforce. This session is full of practical, actionable takeaways for workforce professionals.

Beyond Hiring: Customized Employer Services That Work

Presented by Benigno Aceves, Melinda Paninski, and Ricardo Rendon

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom C-D

One-size-fits-all solutions don't work. This session explores how Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides customized services to meet the unique needs for the business community. From identifying qualified candidates with disabilities to providing ongoing support for employees and employers, VR offers a comprehensive suite of services designed to help build a stronger, more-inclusive workforce with partners that deliver solutions to meet real business needs. Learn about how you can put these services to work for your organization.

2:30–3:00 p.m.	Break Refreshments will be served.	Exhibit Hall A
3:00–4:00 p.m.	Workshops	
	Third-Party Partnerships: Success from Start to Finish Presented by Daniel Gaskin, Melissa Hayman, Lisa Medina, Jennifer Miano, and Allyson Riojas This interactive workshop will educate Boards on expanding Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) services through the Third-Party Partnership Initiative (TPPI), guiding them from Letter of Intent to service delivery. Presentations from a Board, TWC, and Texas Health and Human Services Commission will demystify the TPPI implementation process, address concerns, and highlight TWC’s technical assistance. Increased TPPI participation will empower more SNAP recipients toward self-sufficiency.	Water Garden, Room A
	Healthcare Sector Partnership: Solving Workforce Shortage Presented by Ashley King Do you have healthcare shortages? Let’s solve them! Central Texas Healthcare Partnership (CTHP) is using the sector partnership model to solve healthcare shortages through collaborations between industry and education. In the past five years, CTHP has more than doubled the number of its nursing graduates and has certified more than 300 healthcare apprentices. Come learn how Boards can grow local talent and use rotation-to-hire practices to fill job shortages.	Water Garden, Room B
	College, Career Connections: One Journey, Many Hands, Limitless Futures Presented by Heather Clark, Stacy Duncan, Lori Haltom, and Mike Mills As workforce demands grow more complex, the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) initiative addresses the critical loss of student potential due to dropout rates and low postsecondary completion. This session offers a collective impact strategy, aligning K–12, college, community, and industry. Through the ACCESS platform, the Star Tech Group, Midland College, and Midland ISD are building a seamless, guided roadmap from 6th grade to career,	Henry Garrett, Ballroom A

empowering students to thrive and meet 21st-century workforce needs.

Stronger Together: Rethinking How We Support Employers

Presented by Crosby Brito, Alma Aranda, Molly Thompson, and Richard Perez

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom B

Workforce success depends on how well we serve employers, and we are stronger together. This session will highlight how Texas Boards are rethinking employer engagement in light of shifting needs, changing policies, and evolving industries. Panelists will share practical solutions and collaboration models that demonstrate the power of a unified approach. Attendees will walk away with ideas and strategies to create consistency, relevance, and real impact for employers across the state.

Training Texans for Water and Broadband

Presented by Kelty Garbee and Evan Wolstencroft

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom C-D

Texans rely on water to live and broadband to work and learn, yet formal career pathways in these fields remain limited, especially in rural areas. A new report by Texas Rural Funders and Texas Water Foundation examines critical workforce shortages and opportunities to strengthen the talent pipeline. This session will explore current labor market conditions, tools and programs preparing Texans for infrastructure jobs, and strategies to align education with workforce needs in rural communities.

4:00–4:15
p.m.

Break

4:15–5:00
p.m.

**Commissioner Super Session: Commissioner Representing the Public
Innovate and Collaborate: Expanding Texas' Child Care Capacity**

Presented by Commissioner Brent Connett, Dana Perez, Gary Romano, Jeanette Ward, and Allison Wilson

Exhibit Hall B

Join TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Brent Connett and a panel of child care experts to discuss new innovations and resources aimed at increasing child care availability across Texas.

Friday, December 5, 2025

Schedule	Description	Location
7:30–8:30 a.m.	Breakfast	Exhibit Hall A
7:30–9:00 a.m.	Exhibitor Hours	Exhibit Hall A
8:30–9:30 a.m.	Workshops	
	Local Workforce Development Board Child Care Committees—Sharing Best Practices to Maximize Shareholder Engagement Presented by Allison Wilson Boards are required to have local Child Care Committees to help them partner with child care stakeholders and ensure the services that they are designing and delivering address the needs of their community. Boards have broad flexibility in determining who serves on their committees, how often the committees meet, and what the committee reviews, discusses, and provides input on. This session will highlight several Board committees to share best practices that may be replicated as we continue our efforts to maximize stakeholder engagement.	Water Garden, Room A
	The Customers Behind the Numbers: Performance Measurement and Reporting Updates from TWC’s Information Innovation & Insight Division Presented by Jennifer Colehower, J.D. Tired of just seeing numbers? Discover the people behind the performance metrics. Get the latest from TWC’s Information Innovation & Insight Division on reporting and visual platforms for Local Workforce Development Boards to bring your customers and performance outcomes into focus. The session will also cover recent updates to performance measures and discussion of future changes in development.	Water Garden, Room B
	Shift Your Marketing and Own Your Brand Presented by Jameson Cardenas, Berenice Lopez, Kelly Moreno, and David Olson	Henry Garrett, Ballroom A-B

Give yourself permission to be a better marketer... and steal our ideas. We have resources to share that we made open source on purpose, so help yourself! Join us for an insightful discussion on topics that are top of mind for many Board marketers, including what your marketing playbook for staff and contractors can look like, Canva account creation and design compliance, and growing your Board member and Board staff engagement.

Open Meetings Act Basic Training

Presented by Debra Simpson

Henry Garrett,
Ballroom C-D

The Open Meetings Act requires new members of governmental bodies that are subject to the Act—including new Board members—to participate in education training sessions within 90 days of taking the oath (or otherwise assuming the responsibilities) of office. This training session has been approved by the Office of the Attorney General to meet this requirement, and Board members attending this session will obtain the required certificate of completion, thus allowing both Board members and their Boards to meet the Open Meetings Act training requirements.

9:30–9:45
a.m.

Break

9:45–10:45
a.m.

**Closing Keynote Address
StandOUT Communication... Life Would Be Easy
If It Weren't for Other People**

Presented by Connie Podesta

Exhibit Hall B

Imagine what you could accomplish if you could decode the mystery of human behavior and truly understand what makes people do what they do and say what they say (including yourself!). Research shows that the number one key to success in any industry or organization is the ability to get along with other people, personally and professionally. Now that's something to really think about. With a deeper understanding of human behavior, you could lead better, communicate better, sell better, parent better, live better, and negotiate better. The list goes on and on. With laugh-out-loud humor, killer takeaway strategies, powerful pops of psychology, and her amazing insights into others (including a few who "drive you crazy") Connie Podesta, an expert in the psychology of human behavior, will take you right inside the minds and personalities of the people you connect with every day both at work and home (bosses, colleagues, partners, customers, significant others, friends, and family). So you can act, rather than react, to whatever situations people

throw your way. In other words, you will be able to read between the lines, making navigating conversations and negotiating your needs a thousand times easier.

10:45–11:00
a.m.

Closing Remarks

Exhibit Hall B
