



Workforce News Around the State

WorkInTexas.com get a whole new look

The Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) job-matching resource, WorkInTexas.com, recently received a makeover that has updated its appearance, and also streamlined its functionality for a more user-friendly experience. Originally launched in 2004, WorkInTexas.com has grown to be one of the largest job-matching networks available to Texas employers and job seekers. The site records an average of 100,000 available job listings each day and contains more than 600,000 job seekers' résumés.

"This is the first re-release of our system since we launched," said Scott Eychner, TWC's manager of employment services and unemployment insurance policy. "We plan to continue to roll out new features and upgrades to keep the site relevant and easy to use." The upgraded site features an easier login, real-time website statistics, a scrolling news bar, and easier navigation.

TWC recently partnered with DirectEmployers Association and the National Labor Exchange to create WorkInTexas.jobs, which allows job postings on WorkInTexas.com to appear in online searches, thus increasing the visibility of each posted job opening. The site can be viewed easily on most mobile devices.

"Jobs featured on WorkInTexas.com now have nearly a 400 percent better chance of being found since we added the dot jobs (.jobs) site," Eychner said. "So the employers we serve receive significantly more exposure for their job postings, giving them a greater pool from which to find qualified job candidates."

Heart of Texas hosts Annual Awards of Excellence Banquet

Workforce Solutions Heart of Texas hosted its Annual Awards of Excellence Banquet in January, which honored businesses, contributors, and program participants of the Heart of Texas region. The banquet was attended by 150 guests who add value to their communities and who have partnered with or benefitted from the services provided by the Workforce Solutions Centers, workforce development board, and partners throughout the region.

Texas Workforce Commissioner Representing the Public Andres Alcantar was the keynote speaker at the event, which was sponsored by NRG Energy Inc., Falls Community Hospital and Clinic, Experience Works, Insurance Licensing Services of America Inc., and the Cen-Tex Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

The following individuals and businesses were honored for their outstanding service:

Employer of the Year: Associated Hygienic Products

Employer of Excellence Awards: Double B Foods (Bosque County); Falls Community Hospital & Clinic (Falls County); CEFCO Convenience Store (Freestone County); Family Medical Diagnostic Center (Hill County); Community Education Centers / Limestone Detention Center (Limestone County); and Cargill Foods (McLennan County)

Outstanding Child Care Service Provider: Oak Lawn Baptist Day Care Center

Outstanding Program Participant: Deawatheia Manson

Outstanding Youth Participant: Shameka Mays

Outstanding Workforce Professional: Candy Morgan

Honorable Elenor Holmes Service to Community: Honorable Cole Word

San Jacinto College receives grant for truck-driving students

San Jacinto College was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to address a nationwide demand for truck drivers. The grant will fund tuition for 48 San Jacinto College enrollees in the Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) program in 2012. The program had an increase in applications after being awarded the grant in November.

“The first thing people ask when they call about our program is whether there is financial aid available,” said John Stephens, San Jacinto College’s CMV program director. “The fact that we can offer them this grant has encouraged more students to enroll. So far 20 people have applied for it.”

As Stephens proudly notes, the CMV program has a 100 percent job placement rate for its graduates.

“Not only are there jobs out there for truck drivers, but they offer great pay and benefits,” Stephens said. “Most of my students graduate from the program and earn about \$40,000 per year, with opportunities to grow with the company.”

U.S. Department of Labor awards BRAC grant increment

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) recently awarded a \$3,058,366 National Emergency Grant (NEG) increment to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to continue providing reemployment services to about 1,450 individuals affected by the realignments and closures of military facilities throughout Texas. These facilities include Fort Bliss in El Paso, Fort Hood in Killeen, the Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant and the Red River Army Depot in Texarkana, and multiple bases in San Antonio.

On March 1, 2011, \$6,116,896 in NEG funds were approved by DOL. A total of \$3,058,530 was released initially to TWC to serve military personnel and their spouses who were impacted by the decisions of the 2005 Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission, as well as local dislocated workers needed to fill critical labor shortages in communities experiencing growth due to base realignment and closure actions. This increment completes the total grant amount.

Lower Rio Grande Valley hosts resource fair for veterans

Workforce Solutions Lower Rio Grande Valley (Lower Rio Grande) hosted a resource fair for veterans in February at the Greater Mission Chamber of Commerce (Mission Chamber). Together with its partners—the Mission Chamber and U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar—Lower Rio Grande used the fair as an opportunity to bring the veteran community, including spouses and family members, together to provide them with access to information about many veteran resources. Approximately 100 veterans attended the fair.

In the exhibit hall, vendors and partners showcased their services specifically geared towards veterans and their families. Among the 26 exhibitors were the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Texas Veterans Commission, and South Texas College. Job opportunities, benefits enrollment, and educational opportunities were among the topics discussed at the fair.

A barbecue cook-off and live entertainment kept attendees entertained and made it a family event.