

Texas Workforce Investment Council Requirements

Local Workforce Development Board Strategic Planning

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC) is charged under Texas Government Code §§2308.101(5), 2308.302(a), and 2308.304(a)(b)(4) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Public Law 113–128) with recommending the plans of Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) to the governor for final approval. TWIC reviews each Board Plan to ensure that local goals and objectives are consistent with the statewide goals and objectives in the system strategic plan, *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*, which can be found at [www.gov.texas.gov/files/twic/Texas_Workforce_System_Strategic_Plan_\(FY2016-FY2023\).pdf/](http://www.gov.texas.gov/files/twic/Texas_Workforce_System_Strategic_Plan_(FY2016-FY2023).pdf/).

Additionally, state law charges TWIC with reporting annually to the governor and to the Texas Legislature on the implementation of the system strategic plan and monitoring the operation of the state’s workforce system to assess the degree to which the system is effective in achieving state and local goals and objectives. Therefore, TWIC also reviews Board Plans and plan modifications to determine each Board’s progress in implementing strategies that align with the strategic plan for the Texas workforce system.

A summary of Boards’ responses and strategies is provided to TWIC before TWIC considers the plans for approval and recommendation to the governor. Boards’ responses to the following planning elements are reviewed by TWIC for alignment with the strategic plan for the Texas Workforce system and are the basis for recommending approval.

Part 1—Demonstrating Alignment with Texas’ Strategic Plan for the Workforce System

The four sections below list and describe the four system goals from *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023* that identify critical, high-priority system issues. For each goal, provide a detailed description of one significant board strategy or initiative that both fulfills the intent of the goal and that could be considered a best or promising practice. Also, include the anticipated quantitative outcomes to be achieved as a result of implementation.

System Goal and Rationale
<p>Focus on Employers: By accessing critical education and labor data sets, employers can better find and plan for skilled workers to meet their needs in both the immediate timeframe and the future. Through greater engagement with employers, education and training providers can better design career and technical education content and delivery options that are more aligned with industry needs. Providers can make adjustments in program content to benefit employers and students, as well as address both state and regional economic needs.</p>

**System Goal and Rationale
Board Strategy or Initiative and Quantitative Outcomes**

The Gulf Coast Region boasts an estimated 125,000 total employers representing hundreds of public and private industries. The overwhelming majority of Gulf Coast employers are small businesses employing 100 or fewer workers. However, the largest percentages of private-sector jobs are with those companies that employ more than 100 workers. The ability to fill the workforce needs of local employers in the Gulf Coast Region has always been a high priority, and collaboration with our local workforce partners, including our local education and training providers, is key to producing the amount of skilled workers needed to meet our employers' needs.

Through its operating affiliate Workforce Solutions, the Board has established a service delivery system to deliver skilled workers for employers and help individual people get a job, keep a job or get a better job. With a region-wide Employer Service; 24 local career offices; multiple adult education providers; and a network of training, support service, and early education providers, Workforce Solutions offers a full range of workforce and career service for its customers. During the most recent year, the Board and Workforce Solutions:

- Helped more than 26,000 employers fill about 200,000 open jobs;
- Helped more than 237,000 people go to work;
- Provided basic education for more than 22,000 adults; and
- Used \$134 million in financial aid to provide training scholarships, work-based learning, work search and work entry support services, and assistance with early education/child care expenses.

Workforce Solutions has an excellent relationship with our local education partners, including our community college partners. The community colleges provide educational programs leading to degrees and technical certificates, adult education and English as second language instruction, and other training. They work with the Board in developing customized training for employers, and consult with us in developing proposals related to workforce training. The colleges in the area are valuable partners in developing industry-based initiatives to address workforce issues in the region.

The region's 76 school districts are key partners in addressing many of the long-term shortages of skilled workers in our region. The Board has an existing relationship with many school districts, many career offices work directly with middle and high schools in their communities. The career offices are charged with providing service to young people in their schools. In addition to serving individual youth, many of whom are out of school, the Board continues to work with schools broadly to provide good labor market information to schools, parents and young people. We continue to expand and improve our labor market information and career planning products which include the High Skill, High Growth Guide, Focus on Industry and Occupation profiles, When I Grow Up and Choices Planner. Our goal is to support schools in their efforts to reduce drop-out rates, target resources to prepare youth for the good jobs of the future, and provide both parents and students information they can use in selecting course work and career opportunities. The Board's Education Committee provides

System Goal and Rationale

guidance and oversight, and is fully committed to assisting schools in producing more graduates with the skills employers want.

Moving forward, the Board remains committed to working closely with employers, Adult Education providers, and community partners to develop robust, customized training curriculum and courses that are aligned with high-demand industries and occupations, meet the specific needs of employers, and lead to nationally- and/or industry-recognized credentials. The Board considers it a best practice to engage in these types of collaborations, and is currently involved in several projects that reflect our commitment to this strategy. An example of one of these collaborations is our work with local employer S&B Engineers and Constructors, Ltd in 2016.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board worked with S&B Engineers and Constructors, Ltd, on targeted recruiting, screening, and selection campaign to incentivize women to enter the construction industry, “Women in Construction”. The program consisted of several partners including the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, United Way THRIVE, Workforce Solutions Astrodome Career Office, Family Houston, and Harris County Dept. of Education. Over 4,000 women were originally emailed and invited to a phone screening phase. During the phone screening, the candidates were asked a pre-qualifying questionnaire and invited to a face-to-face event. At the event, the human resource managers of S&B Engineers and Constructors along with Workforce Solutions and United Way presented and offered them a way to get trained that would result in an industry-recognized certification and direct employment.

Over 80 women attended a face-to-face event at our Astrodome Workforce Career Office on December 19, 2015. The event was very successful and 69 women decided to move forward with the program and elected to take a TABE screening. Of which, 24 women passed all three modules with scores above 80%. S&B Engineers and Constructors selected 19 women as direct hires and started a training program on January 18, 2016. The training ended on April 15, 2016. We had a completion rate of 84% with 16 graduates from the 19 women who originally started with the program. Of the 3 women who didn’t complete the training, one moved to Florida to care for family, one resigned due to her spouse’s illness, and the last woman was let go due to poor attendance rate. All of the graduates earned NCCER CORE credentials and full-time employment with S&B, Inc.

System Goal and Rationale

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Engage in Partnerships:

Through collaborative and transparent processes, workforce system partners focus on outcomes that improve the employability of all program participants—from across a wide spectrum of capabilities and experiences—to meet employer needs. The leveraging of partnerships to enhance system alignment and outcomes depends on trust, a culture of collaboration both within and external to the workforce system, deep working relationships, and technical capacity to communicate to share needs, data, and information. Partnerships can provide for common planning, intake, and reporting on outcomes, as well as ensuring a “no wrong door” approach to the provision of workforce programs and services.

Board Strategy or Initiative and Quantitative Outcomes

The Gulf Coast region has a prolific number of workforce development partners. We have ten community colleges systems, more than a dozen university campuses, numerous economic development and business organizations, a host of state and local agencies, and a wide variety of community and faith-based organizations. Together, these institutions represent a rich infrastructure for the Gulf Coast workforce system.

With our partners, we provide a wide range of service to employer and individual customers. On the resident side, community and faith based organizations provide mentoring, life skills training, adult basic education, English as a second language, child care, transportation, and other work support service. Some of these organizations are paid vendors for our system while many others work informally with Workforce Solutions jointly assisting customers.

In addition to working with our core partners, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board outreaches to local community partners to seek their input and collaboration on special projects in order to enhance our administration of the core programs. Over the past year the GCWB has seen success across a broad range of community based projects. One example is our collaboration with the Homeless Coalition and the Income Now Project.

The Board partnered with the Coalition for the Homeless and other homeless service providers to help individuals experiencing homelessness find employment. Homeless provider employment counselors are stationed at the Workforce Solutions offices that have a higher volume of customers who experience homelessness. Similarly, Workforce Solutions employment counselors are also working at homeless shelter locations and provider sites.

The Board expects the integration of the workforce and homeless service systems to lead to an improved service experience for people experiencing homelessness. By learning from our partner agencies, Workforce Solutions staff will be better prepared to provide employment assistance to those experiencing homelessness and partner agencies will better understand Workforce Solutions services and resources.

From the implementation date in 2015 to November 2016 the integrated approach has served over 700 customers experiencing homelessness with more than 200 finding employment.

The Board has engaged in multiple partnerships – with industry associations, economic

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development organizations such as the Greater Houston Partnership, the United Way and its member agencies, the Homeless Coalition for Houston/Harris County, the Houston Food Bank, the Houston Housing Authority, and local governments – to leverage the resources available through Workforce Solutions for as many employers and individuals as possible.

System Goal and Rationale

Align System Elements:

By improving transitions, aligning programs, and ensuring portability and transferability, Texas improves access and the ability of all participants to complete programs of study, earn credentials, transition to further education, and gain critical employability skills. Texas employers are better positioned to find and hire the employees they need through an enhanced education and training pipeline.

Board Strategy or Initiative and Quantitative Outcomes

The Board is dedicated to maximizing the region's resources by aligning core programs with additional funding opportunities to insure that all employers and job search and training customers receive the maximum amount of support available through our workforce system.

The Board has no difficulty in identifying organizations interested in providing education and training service to meet employer needs. The region's ten community colleges, universities, and numerous private career schools are valuable partners.

The Board uses the Workforce Commission's online application and review process to maintain its list of approved vendors and educational programs. We provide information to organizations interested in becoming vendors at <http://www.wrksolutions.com/about/vendorapplications.html>. Workforce Solutions financial aid payment office assists organizations who want to become part of our network of providers. Staff answer provider questions and assist them in completing the process.

One example of the Board's practice of aligning system elements is of our management of the Adult Education and Literacy program in the region. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is one of three boards in the state to serve as the grant recipient and administrator of the Adult Education and Literacy grant. Since being awarded the grant, the Board has worked to ensure that adult education and literacy services are wholly integrated into the other core services provided through the workforce system. Moving forward, the Board remains committed to working closely with employers, Adult Education providers, and community partners to develop robust, customized training curriculum and courses that are aligned with

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high-demand industries and occupations, meet the specific needs of employers, and lead to nationally- and/or industry-recognized credentials.

The Board is also committed to connecting customers to wrap-around support services and resources, provided either directly through the workforce system or through strategic partnerships with community-based organizations, to eliminate as many barriers as possible that may keep customers from successfully completing their course and transitioning into employment and/or postsecondary education.

The Gulf Coast Adult Education Consortium served a total of 26,674 customers in ESL, Adult Basic and Secondary Education, Career Pathways and Transitions courses during the period beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016. Notably, 890 customers were enrolled in a Career Pathways course. Career Pathways courses are uniquely designed to meet the workforce needs of employers and to enable customers to secure industry relevant certification and obtain or retain employment in in-demand occupations. These courses may involve integrated education and training (IET), which is concurrent enrollment of customers in Adult Education and workforce training, workplace literacy, or work-based training in collaboration with employers.

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Improve and Integrate Programs:

Accelerate employment and improve efficiencies through shared resources that can be leveraged to create new, relevant, and innovative opportunities that serve the needs of all stakeholders. By addressing high-priority programmatic needs through an integrated strategy, decision-making at the system, partner, and participant levels is improved and system service delivery is enhanced. The changing economic and educational landscapes provide opportunities to share relevant data through appropriate “push” mechanisms in an organized manner to key stakeholders who rely on information generated by system partners.

Board Strategy or Initiative and Quantitative Outcomes

Through the integrated workforce system in Texas, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board manages the WIOA core programs along with several additional programs administered by TWC. The Board will work with our partners carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs in the region to continue to support the strategy identified in the State Plan. In developing the local plan, the Board took into account the regional economy, employers’ current and projected human resource needs, and the current and future workforce. All of this information plays a part in shaping how we target investments to meet the needs of the labor market and its industries, employers and individuals.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board recognizes the importance of using data to drive decision-making and has made availability and evaluation of data a key part of its strategic development and oversight processes and consumer education efforts.

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The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has access to a number of state provided Labor Market Information and Career Exploration Services such as:

- Texas Rapid Access to Career and Economic Resources (TRACER) website
- Wage Information Network (WIN)
- Standard Occupational Components for Research and Analysis of Trends in Employment System (SOCRATES)
- Reality Check – TexasRealityCheck.com (<http://www.texasrealitycheck.com>)
- Texas Career Alternatives Resource Evaluation System (Texas CARES)
- Texas Consumer Resource on Education and Workforce Statistics (Texas CREWS) – TexasCREWS at <http://www.txcrews.org>

The Board has worked to identify the workforce needs of businesses, job candidates, and workers in the workforce region using a combination of labor market intelligence (using the services listed above) and active participation of various partners and stakeholders. These needs are identified in three lists: 1) Targeted Industries, 2) Where the Jobs Are, and 3) High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations. The three lists are used to guide not only the Board's strategic investments, but also to help our residents build careers in industries and occupations with good prospects and higher wages. We use the High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations list to decide which occupations we will support with our education scholarship dollars.

Using these tools, we set the below goals for Workforce Solutions:

By 2018,

- 2,000 new jobs will be created as a direct result of Workforce Solutions partnering with other business organizations (Target represents the same number of jobs created as in 2012.)
- 75 percent of the new jobs created, as a result of Workforce Solutions partnering with business organizations, will be with employers in industries targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board (Target represents an increase of 15.4 percent over 2012, or an increase of 407 jobs created in our key industries in 2018.)
- 45 percent of the new jobs created, as a result of Workforce Solutions partnering efforts, will be with employers in high-skill, high-growth occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board

As our system becomes more complex and fully integrated, we have become creative with how we share our data to our stakeholders, system partners, and customers. Some examples:

- Our employer and resident service staff have ongoing relationships with both our partners and customers. On the employer service side, business consultants, industry liaisons, and administrative staff maintain relationships with employers, economic

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development organizations staff, and schools. On the resident side, career office staff, particularly our greeters, resource room specialists, personal service representatives, financial aid specialist and employment counselors, work with residents to ensure they have access to all the services they want and need.

- The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has a Regional Team made up of Navigators and Facilitators that go out in to the community to reach populations that might not be served in a local career office. The Regional Team works with our partners to conduct community-based job search seminars and workshops. These presentations are conducted outside the career office in schools, libraries, and a wide range of community based organizations.
- Staff work with our vendor network to provide information about our service and system. Grants management staff work with many of partners to ensure our system is working to maximize resources in the region and provide coordinated service to employers and individuals. Board staff provide support to partners in developing new projects and grant proposals. Staff work with partners to develop meaningful memoranda of understanding (MOU) by providing high quality labor market information and guiding partners in the development of programs that are the best fit for the Region.
- Marketing - The Board's marketing plan is designed to share information about workforce service throughout the region. Our marketing plan includes the use of our website, www.wrksolutions.com, email blasts, targeted mailings, and special events.

Part 2—Identifying Industries of Significance to the Regional Economy

Texas has continued to exhibit economic success over the past decade, and local Workforce Boards have contributed to regional economic success through the establishment of industry sector or cluster strategies in partnership with employers. These strategies help to drive job creation and stimulate economic growth by providing job candidates with the skills and knowledge that employers require to be competitive. Texas' targeted industry cluster initiative supported this work. WIOA continues that support by encouraging sector partnerships and strategies to ensure that the skills of the workforce meet the needs of local industries. The questions below focus on industry clusters and sectors within the region.

Describe the top three industry clusters/sectors and occupations.

1. Identify the three key industry clusters or sectors within your local workforce development area and provide an explanation as to why those clusters or sectors are important to your region and the regional economy. Please indicate for each whether it is an industry cluster or sector.

Board response:

Our top three industry clusters or sectors are provided below. While projected job-growth remains positive for the Health Care Sector and the Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products Cluster, the Energy Sector is projected to decline. Employment in the Gulf Coast Region has shown weak growth since the recent oil bust and is currently waiting for oil markets to make a consistent and steady recovery. In particular, the total number of jobs lost related to weak oil prices reached 78,600 in May 2016 as the total U.S. active rig count reached its lowest level of 404. By the second week of December 2016, after moderate rises in the price of oil, the total number of active rigs in the U.S. has risen to 624 and oil related losses have slowed to a trickle. While employment projections indicate long-term losses in industries related to the Energy Cluster, the worse is over and the question is not if but when and to what degree will job-growth return. Due to the economic importance of the Energy Cluster in our region the board has kept it on our list of top three key industry clusters to remain poised to react quickly to the needs of employers as it begins to recover.

Energy Cluster – The Gulf Coast Region is the leading center of the oil and gas industry when it comes to exploration, production, servicing, transmission, and supply. As of October 2016 an estimated 28.6 percent of the nation’s jobs in oil and gas extraction were in the region. Many of the nation’s top energy-related establishments call the region home whether it comes to oil and gas exploration and production, support activities for mining, or manufacturing of mining machinery: ExxonMobil Corp., National Oilwell Varco Inc., BP Corporation North America Inc., Schlumberger Ltd, CenterPoint Energy, and Halliburton Co. to name a few. Fifteen of the nation’s top pipeline companies operate in the region controlling some 44 percent of all U.S. oil pipeline capacity. Thirteen of the nation’s top natural gas transmission companies operate some 52 percent of the total U.S. gas pipeline capacity.

Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products Cluster – There were some 85,000 manufacturing jobs related to the Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products Cluster in the region as of October 2016. Chemicals and petroleum products dominate the region’s east and southeast end with a large number of jobs required to fully support the necessary upkeep and maintenance of manufacturing facilities in the cluster. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration the Gulf Coast has a refinery capacity of some 225 percent of the U.S. total. The region also represents roughly 42 percent of the nation’s base petrochemical manufacturing capacity. Finally, some of the world’s largest manufacturers of oil and gas exploration and production equipment are home to the Gulf Coast Region.

Health Care Sector- The Gulf Coast Region is home of the Texas Medical Center, the world’s largest medical complex that boasts some impressive figures: More than 7.2 million visits per year from all over the world, one baby delivered about every 20 minutes, 7,000 patient beds, 106,000 employees and growing. With a population of more than six million that is growing at a pace that more than doubles the nation’s, the health care industry is a great source of jobs and will continue to be in the future. Increasing demand is not only driving growth at the Texas Medical Center but also in the suburbs as providers reach out to population demand for more convenient access to hospitals, health clinics, urgent care centers, and specialized medical facilities.

2. For each cluster or sector identified in Question 1, identify the top five occupations for which employer-demand exceeds the number of available workforce or education-program graduates or skilled applicants. Provide labor-market-information data, including the number of jobs, wages, the education required, and projected growth.

Board response:

Employment in the Gulf Coast Region has shown weak growth since the recent oil bust and is currently waiting for oil markets to make a consistent and steady recovery. Despite recent declines in industries related to the Energy Cluster, the worst is over and the question is not if but when and to what degree will job-growth return. Due to the economic importance of the Energy Cluster in our region the board has kept it on our list of top three key industry clusters, even though for the short term, the job growth for the top five occupations is not currently expected to exceed the number of available workforce or education-program graduates and skilled applicants.

Energy Cluster –

SOC 51-4041 Machinists

Employment 2014 – 13,620

Employment 2024 – 13,720

Average Annual Openings - 405

Education – High school or equivalent

Median Hourly Wage – \$19.81

SOC 17-2171 Petroleum Engineers

Employment 2014 – 10,700

Employment 2024 – 11,400

Average Annual Openings - 360

Education – Bachelor’s degree

Median Hourly Wage – \$74.24

SOC 47-5013 Service Unit Operators, oil and gas

Employment 2014 – 7,860

Employment 2024 – 6,540

Average Annual Openings - 270

Education – No formal education

Median Hourly Wage – \$21.48

SOC 19-2042 Geoscientists, except hydrologists & geographers

Employment 2014 – 6,150

Employment 2024 – 6,740

Average Annual Openings - 250

Education – Bachelor’s degree

Median Hourly Wage – \$66.66

SOC 19-4041 Geological & Petroleum Technicians
Employment 2014 – 3,380
Employment 2024 – 3,280
Average Annual Openings - 125
Education – Associate’s degree
Median Hourly Wage – \$33.66

Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products Cluster –

SOC 51-8091 Chemical Plant and Systems Operators
Employment 2014 – 3,370
Employment 2024 – 4,000
Average Annual Openings - 185
Education – Associate’s degree
Median Hourly Wage – \$33.14

SOC 51-8093 Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, & Gaugers
Employment 2014 – 4,310
Employment 2024 – 4,850
Average Annual Openings - 220
Education – High school or equivalent
Median Hourly Wage – \$32.85

SOC 17-2041 Chemical Engineers
Employment 2014 – 4,270
Employment 2024 – 5,130
Average Annual Openings - 200
Education – Bachelor’s degree
Median Hourly Wage – \$55.85

SOC 47-2152 Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters
Employment 2014 – 13,570
Employment 2024 – 17,390
Average Annual Openings - 560
Education – High school or equivalent
Median Hourly Wage – \$23.60

SOC 47-2111 Electricians
Employment 2014 – 18,450
Employment 2024 – 24,130
Average Annual Openings - 850
Education – High School or equivalent
Median Hourly Wage – \$22.13

Health Care-

SOC 29-1141 Registered Nurse
Employment 2014 – 46,340
Employment 2024 – 61,920
Average Annual Openings – 2,655
Education – Bachelor’s Degree
Median Hourly Wage – \$36.73

SOC 29-2064 Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses
Employment 2014 – 13,280
Employment 2024 – 17,620
Average Annual Openings - 815
Education – Post-secondary non-degree award
Median Hourly Wage – \$36.73

SOC 29-2071 Medical Records & Health Information Technicians
Employment 2014 – 3,960
Employment 2024 – 5,220
Average Annual Openings - 215
Education – Post-secondary non-degree award
Median Hourly Wage – \$18.47

SOC 29-2034 Radiologic Technologists & Technicians
Employment 2014 – 3,850
Employment 2024 – 4,890
Average Annual Openings - 180
Education – Associate’s degree
Median Hourly Wage – \$27.54

SOC 29-2011 Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technologists
Employment 2014 – 3,240
Employment 2024 – 4,250
Average Annual Openings - 175
Education – Bachelor’s degree
Median Hourly Wage – \$29.30

3. Identify the planned strategies to address the worker shortages in the occupations identified in Statement 2.

Board response:

The Gulf Coast region has always been known for its strength in energy. Energy and the associated businesses make up a large portion of employment. The recent shale boom had a

profound impact on the region over the last several years until the more recent crash in oil prices. The energy industry in the Gulf Coast region is currently undergoing what is the largest oil bust in history with drilling activity falling to an all-time low according to available data. The job toll peaked in May 2016 at 78,600 jobs.

We recognize that the Energy Industry Cluster is a key industry to our region as well as to the state; however, with the current oil and gas downturn, most of the Board's efforts in this industry has revolved around helping employers and individuals laid off from these industries weather the current downturn.

When the price of oil plunged below \$30 per barrel, our region's workforce felt the effects. Thousands of highly-trained individuals have been laid off and are struggling to find employment as more and more companies announce workforce reductions. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board launched Gulf Coast Oil & Gas Initiative aimed specifically at those individuals. The goal of the program is to find employers in other industries that are looking for highly-trained individuals to meet their needs and match them with job-seekers from the state's database, WorkInTexas.com.

The Gulf Coast Oil & Gas Initiative will assist 500 jobseekers displaced from the oil and gas industry through a virtual office. The services offered include resume critique, transitional occupation analysis, tools and seminars designed to help with their search, as well as specialized training and OJT opportunities.

Workforce Solutions will find employers in other industries that are looking for highly-trained individuals to meet their needs and match them with job-seekers from the state's database, WorkinTexas.com. In addition to having access to the largest database of job seekers, this initiative will also assist companies with recruitment, pre-screening applicants, hiring events and specialized training. The team provides matches to those businesses with the appropriate Oil and Gas customers based on their previous experience. They also work with WIT and attend job fairs.

As the Oil and Gas Initiative continues to expand its connection to displaced oil and gas workers and introduce Workforce Solutions services to them, we see two areas that need attention for the unit to increase its success helping workers transition to new industries;

- Employer outreach and education about the talent available to them from the displaced oil and gas worker pools.
- Add recruiting services specializing in transitioning displaced oil and gas workers to new industries, similar to what we did at the Aerospace Transition Unit and the Sealy Transition Center.

In addition, the Board's Employer Services Division provides service to all employers in the region. We believe that helping employers find skilled workers results in the region's economic development and benefits individual workers. During the last year we helped more than 26,000 Gulf Coast employers identify qualified candidates for job openings. Business

Service Representatives visit employers to offer services and learn firsthand a business's specific need. They offer the full system resources to help businesses by:

- Recruiting, screening, referring and testing applicants for jobs
- Providing information about state and federal labor laws
- Providing economic and labor market information including occupation-specific wage and salary data
- Outplacement services for employees who have been laid off due to a plant closure, downsizing or a reduction-in-force
- Subsidizing a portion of a qualified employee's wage for a short time while the employer provides on the job training.

Employers can use the Workforce Solutions website to list jobs with WorkInTexas.com, find labor market information, and access information about employment laws.

The Board also plans to focus on other industry sectors in the region that will be undergoing substantial growth in the coming years, and who will need help employing and retaining workers. In addition to the Health Care Sector and Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products Cluster, the Board will focus efforts on the Education and Industrial Crafts and Construction Sectors. The Board currently has several ongoing projects with employers within these sectors.

The Board employs full time staff as liaisons to the education, industrial crafts/construction and advanced manufacturing/supply logistics industries. Their goal is to partner with high skill, high growth industry sectors in the Gulf Coast region and specific employers within those sectors, so workforce, training and education reflect these employers' current and future skill needs and lead to a more stable workforce. Liaisons also work to support changes in structures and policies so workforce development, education and economic development programs more closely align and/or integrate programs to better serve Gulf Coast employers. They help ensure the Board is represented in and provide expertise to economic development and industry-led initiatives