

# The Inside Scoop

THE WORKSOURCE STAFF NEWSLETTER

Winter 2003

## Governor Perry Pays Visit to H-GAC

Gov. Rick Perry paid a visit to the Houston-Galveston Area Council on October 22 to announce his new Houston economic development office will be based at H-GAC.

The new office is one of six in Texas created on Sept. 1, when the state's economic development functions were merged into the governor's office. Its purpose is to assist public and private efforts in promoting the state's business climate, skilled workforce, education system and convenient access to emerging markets. It will focus on helping local leaders and companies create more jobs and business opportunities for the region, and it will market Texas and its regions, like the Gulf Coast, to foreign and domestic companies that are looking for great places to relocate and build facilities.



# Happy Holidays

**Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season!**

## Market Research Shows Level of Awareness

Each year of the marketing campaign, surveys have been conducted to determine awareness levels of The WorkSource with employers and those seeking employment. Here is what has been found to date:

### AWARENESS SURVEY RESULTS

When a baseline research survey was conducted in 2001, The WorkSource name was new and there was only limited awareness of the former Gulf Coast Careers name. Six months after the new campaign was in full swing, another survey was conducted with residents and employers and indicated The WorkSource-Gulf Coast Careers awareness needle had moved to 2 percent—the same level of awareness of well-established area placement agencies.

### Residents

- In a recent 2003 market survey, awareness of The WorkSource had risen among residents from 1 percent to an impressive, unprompted recall of 5 percent.

- With a prompted recall, resident awareness rose from 35 percent to 53 percent.
- Resident recognition of The WorkSource name alone has gone up from 12 percent in 2002 to 18 percent in 2003.

### Employers

- Among employers, unprompted recall was 3 percent — the same in 2003 as it was in 2002. However, prompted response rose in this group from 46 percent to 62 percent.
- Of those companies that recognized The WorkSource name, two-thirds have never used its services.
- The number of hiring managers that have used The WorkSource has risen considerably over the past year, from 15 percent in 2002 to 36 percent in 2003.

# From The WorkSource Communications Office...

Welcome to our second issue of the Inside Scoop. The feedback that we have received so far about the first issue is positive and everyone seems to like having this new way to share our news. Our next issue will be out in about three months. Looks like we will be on a quarterly schedule in the future. In the meantime, keep the stories and pictures coming!

Here is the latest on our marketing campaign:

## Marketing Materials

- The office location panels listing all of our offices have been updated and should be in your offices by now. You will no longer need to print out the information on shell sheets.
- You will notice that the new service sheet has been revised and is smaller. The paper is also lighter weight, so that the piece can be folded lengthwise. It can now fit into a pocket or into the general information brochure along with the location panel. (English on one side, Spanish on the other).
- The new referral postcard should be in full use by now. For those who have not seen it, it serves two functions. The customer takes it to the prospective employer as a personal introduction from The WorkSource, and the employer returns it and lets us know if that person was hired or not.
- A new brochure for our TANF customers has been designed and printed. The brochure is a four-page, eight-sided foldout

piece containing all the required information for these customers, a removable job search log, and removable appointment card. Two pages that include customer signatures are identical. One of the pages is removable and kept for staff records. The theme of the piece is "Finding a job can be a challenge, getting a job can change your life."

- Two variations of this brochure are being developed – one for food stamp customers and one for parolees.

## Advertising

- If any of you ride METRO buses, you will notice that we have an ad inside. A total of 1,100 METRO buses started carrying these ads on Nov. 1 and will continue to do so through the holiday season until Jan.31, 2004. In Hispanic neighborhoods the signs are in Spanish.
- If you plan to go to the movies over the holidays at AMC Theaters, there is a good chance you will see The WorkSource ad before some of the shows. The ads will run through Jan. 8.
- Billboards are still up on major Houston area freeways and will be rotating to different locations through mid-January.
- Newspaper ads are appearing in community newspapers.

## Welcome to The WorkSource



SER–Jobs for Progress welcomed **Nory Angel** as its workforce director and newest employee on August 25. Her new home is 6615 Rookin. She will be responsible for the operations at both Denver Harbor and Northeast offices. Nory formerly served as the WIA supervisor for 18 months at The WorkSource – Hobby office.



Northline welcomes **Omar Fortune**. Omar joins us from a staffing agency working with JP Morgan Chase. He likes working with people. His favorite pastime is watching sporting events or playing video games. He attended Trinity College in Connecticut, where he majored in English and minored in Political Science. He is married with two handsome sons.



Also new to the Northline office is **LaShonda Petteway**. LaShonda joins us from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. She likes helping people. Her favorite pastime is spending time with her family. She attended the University of Houston where she majored in psychology. She has a cat, Tigger, whom she loves very much.

# Thanksgiving at FORT BLISS

bay city  
news

## The Challenge Letter:

October 5, 2003

GREEN BEANS! Yes, I said GREEN BEANS! And this is why:

First of all, I'd like to introduce myself. I am the proud wife of Specialist James X, active duty member of the United States Army, 3-2 ADA, 13th Maintenance Company at Fort Bliss Air Defense Artillery Center in El Paso..

As they do each year at Fort Bliss, they have started to collect food for their Thanksgiving Food Drive. Each Unit on post has been designated to collect a particular food item for this drive. My husband's unit has been assigned to 'GREEN BEAN DUTY!' The food that is collected through this drive will be distributed, but not limited to, active duty, reserve and retired military families at Fort Bliss in need of assistance this holiday season through their Family Assistance Center, Junior Enlisted League on post, and the El Paso Food Bank.

Here's where we need your help. As an incentive to collect as much as possible, my husband's commander has put each of the four platoons in his unit to a challenge among themselves. Whichever unit collects the most cans of green beans will receive a four-day pass, mileage included, to use during November. So, basically what I'm trying to say is, "get my husband home for Thanksgiving!"

I will personally be making the trip to bring the donations to Fort Bliss on Nov. 1, 2003. If his unit doesn't win, then that's fine too. If each unit goes to this extent to collect, then I'll know that we have helped military families have a better Thanksgiving and holiday season.

If you would like to donate, I would be more than happy to pick them up from you personally. Also, I'd like to note that the VFW Post 4395 of Pasadena has already donated nearly 100 cans to get us started!

Thank you for your support of our troops!

## The Response:

The Greenspoint office was able to collect 110 cans of green beans and send them on to El Paso.



Alee Tolden, PSR, (pictured above) has received her LPC intern license. The flowers are from a local business which hires many TANF customers from us. Alee developed the relationship a couple of years ago and the employer has taken an interest in Alee and all of her professional accomplishments.

Barbara Silverthorne, TWC, has celebrated her 20th year of service.

Susan Phillips, manager, fixed all center staff a pancake and sausage breakfast for exceeding their direct placement goal for PY03.

The South Texas Nuclear Operating Company has listed openings for 10 operators and one safety supervisor.

Debbie Kana, business consultant, just celebrated her oldest daughter's wedding.

Cynthia Cruz was hired as the Youth PSR for Bay City and Wharton County.



# WEDDING BELLS



CONGRATULATIONS to **Sharron Benson**, senior workforce planner for The WorkSource, and Eddie Powell on their marriage September 20, 2003. Friends and co-workers held a bridal shower for Sharron at H-GAC just before the happy day.



# applause!!!

## **CONGRATULATIONS to Irma Diaz-Gonzalez and her staff...**

In its third year of recognizing “Best Places To Work” in Houston, the *Houston Business Journal* this year ranked The WorkSource employer contractor, Employment and Training Centers (ETC), No. 6 in the 101-500 employee category of nominated companies.

In the HBJ competition, companies throughout the Houston area were nominated by their management and employees. Winners were determined from company and employee surveys. The rankings were statistically based, with the opinion expressed by employees given more weight than the reports provided by management. Some of the answers from employees that helped determine why they liked their employer were “I enjoy coming to work each day,” “I have a good relationship with my immediate supervisor” and “I have developed close friends at work.”

In a recent poll taken by HBJ, it was found that “while salary may be the leading motivator in attracting top talent to a company, non-monetary perks can be just as effective...such as flexible hours and telecommuting options.”

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Otha Rice and Marilyn Edwards on their appointments to the basic services supervisor positions at Denver Harbor and Northeast, respectively. They were chosen from a number of excellent interviewed candidates.

## **MILESTONES noted at Bay City & Wharton**

- Cynthia Cruz is now the Youth PSR for Bay City and Wharton
- Congratulations go to Lucille Hart on her TWC retirement after 20 years
- Luz Lopez was promoted to seminar facilitator for Bay City.
- Jeanie Fields was promoted to testing and assessment for Bay City and Wharton
- Congratulations go to Alea Tolden, who has started her Professional Licensed Counselor internship.
- Congratulations also go to Carol Franklin, who just found out she will be a grandmother for the first time.

## Mayor Visits The WorkSource–Downtown



Left to right: Ron Rodriguez, deputy director of operations; Priscilla Smith, center manager for The WorkSource–Downtown; Mayor Brown; and Terry Hudson, executive director.

Mayor Lee P. Brown received a personal tour of The WorkSource from Priscilla Smith, office manager for the downtown location. The mayor paid a recent visit to The WorkSource–Downtown to see how the employment services office helps thousands of Houstonians develop their careers. He spent half an hour visiting with customers and observing the daily services offered at The WorkSource.

# The WorkSource – Denver Harbor

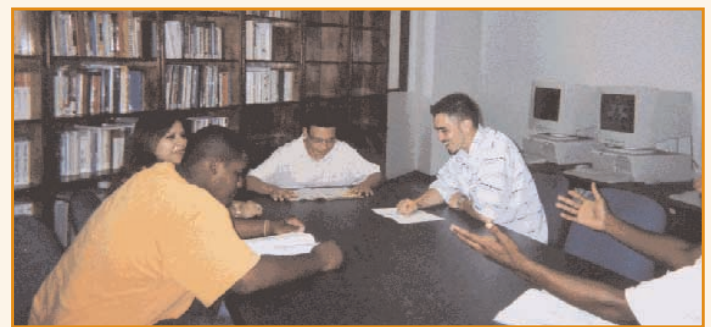
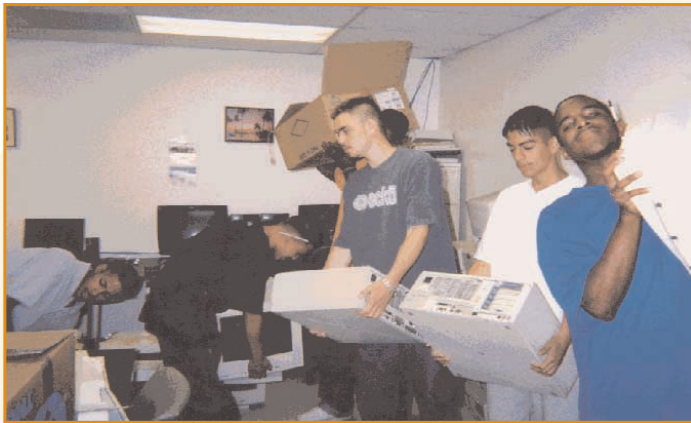
## The WorkSource Summer 2003 Youth Program a Big Success

Special thanks go to Executive Director Jesse Castaneda, Denver Harbor Manager Margarita Flores, and Youth Council Secretary Neomi Singson from SER-Jobs for Progress for a wonderful job in making this summer youth program a success. Our gratitude to Ms. Helga Mattei from Houston Community College for getting the computers necessary for our library. Ms. Mattei notified The Read Commission about our needs. They were able to help us with some computers donated by Chase Bank. Lowe's Home Improvement on Woodridge gave us a discount on the bookshelves and donated the paint.

The work base program allows the student to be employed and supervised in a real work environment. The goal was for the summer youth participants to build a library including shelves, books, and computers with Internet connections at the Latino Learning Center site. Using their math, reading and writing abilities they planned and implemented the project. The project supervisor was Ray Palomarez.

After careful planning and hard work, the students were able to enjoy the library. Francisco Munoz was awarded a computer for the top TABE test results, and David Guillen was awarded a computer for being the hardest working employee.

Featured at left and below are some before and after pictures of the students at work.



Another program of The WorkSource Summer Youth Program was also conducted by Heights Training & Educational Center in our center. More than 60 youth participated in a film documentary on Houston's high drop-out rate. Thanks to Mr. John Gonzales, the project was a big success.

Pictured at right are some of the film documentary participants and their parents.

# Two Offices Acquire New Managers

## The WorkSource – Pasadena

The WorkSource recently added new members to its dynamic team of career services professionals. Paul Van Ast will serve as office manager for the Pasadena location.

Van Ast graduated from Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, and was previously employed as center manager at The WorkSource-Hobby. He has worked as director of employment and training at Goodwill Industries in Phoenix, Ariz., and as the training program manager for Rubicon programs in Richmond, Calif. Van Ast received additional experience as a vocational training manager at Phoenix Job Corps.

Working with staff to serve area job seekers in their search for employment, Van Ast will manage federal funds allotted related to supportive and training services.

An Iowa native, Van Ast now resides in Seabrook.

## The WorkSource – Hobby

Rae Zamarippa will serve as office manager for the Hobby location.

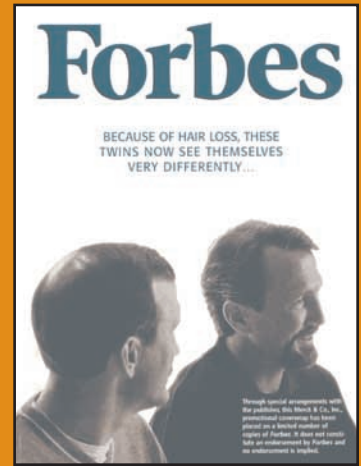
Zamarippa graduated from Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas, and was previously employed at The WorkSource-Astrodome as center services coordinator.

Working with staff to serve area job seekers in their search for employment, Zamarippa will manage federal funds related to supportive and training services at the center.

“We are very pleased to promote Rae to the officer manager position,” said Ron Rodriguez, deputy director of operations for The WorkSource. “Rae’s leadership, experience and diverse expertise in career services will certainly be an advantage to job seekers in Houston’s thriving Hobby community.”

A native of Fort Stockton, Texas, Zamarippa is a Houston resident and active volunteer for First Tee, an organization sponsored by Tiger Woods, where she teaches golf to inner-city youth. She has also volunteered for the National AIDS Foundation and the Museum of Fine Arts-Houston.

“We are very pleased to have Paul assume the position of office manager at Pasadena and to promote Rae to the officer manager position,” said T.W. Hudson, executive director of HoustonWorks USA. “Both Paul and Rae’s leadership, experience and diverse expertise in career services will certainly be an advantage to job seekers in Houston’s thriving Pasadena and Hobby communities.”



## new employee is national poster boy

Terry Carlile joined staff in the Lake Jackson office on Oct. 30. His background includes children and youth coalition experience, state-wide initiatives with Raising Arkansas Youth and directing a high risk/low income community center in Texarkana, Arkansas during the last four years. He served as a Navy journalist for eight years and in ministry for 16 years.

Terry’s 15 seconds of fame is with his twin brother, Perry, who lives in Colorado. Their bald spots are world famous as they are Merck’s Propecia poster boys. “A guy gave me an ad as a joke since a doctor doing clinical studies was looking for twins with hair loss,” Terry states. “We had no idea when we started that they’d pick us. So now we’re seen on infomercials, magazines, major newspapers and the Propecia Web site.”

## Russian Exchange Students Visit The WorkSource – Astrodome

Three Russian exchange students; Ivana Frniakova, Zuzana Kubova and Agata Bogusz came to The WorkSource – Astrodome for some urgent help. Their employer had cut their hours down to only 15 per week. The money earned was not enough to cover rent, food and other living expenses. Their situation was desperate. Mario Bañuelos, our Russian-speaking counselor was able to communicate with them well. After assessing the situation, Mario got to work looking for entry-level jobs throughout the Astrodome Area. After being referred to Marshall’s store, all three clients had

interviews the next day and were hired on the spot. “We love our work. The people and atmosphere are great,” says Agata. Yet again, when people are in desperate need, the Astrodome staff produces great results.



# Letters of Customer Satisfaction

---

## **Corey Aeck, The WorkSource – Greenspoint**

Dear Diana (Gunnels):

There are many instances where people make complaints about services rendered, but I would like to make a comment about the excellent service I received from Corey Aeck.

Corey helped me receive a grant for the Alternative Certification Program through Region IV to obtain a teaching certificate. I would have not been able to afford the program without the assistance of Corey and The WorkSource.

Corey had to work with strict deadlines in order to meet the requirements for the grant. Corey made himself available for question and concerns and conferenced with me about employment issues. He returned my phone calls quickly to alleviate the stress related to deadlines and money.

I want to express my gratitude for the effort Corey made to help me fulfill a lifetime dream.

Thank you Corey Aeck,

Sarah Nance



## **Odie Johnson, The WorkSource – Northeast**

Top of the Afternoon Mr. Johnson,

It was a pleasure meeting you yesterday at the Greenspoint Mall (job fair). I must commend you on your work ethic. You really care about helping those of us unemployed. Thanks for going the extra mile! Please convey to your supervisor that you are making a difference, even if the system is a large one...smile!

Please find my attached resumes, I look forward to hearing from you soon. It's a beautiful day. Enjoy it!

Regards,

Susan Myrick-Jones



## **Chrystal Broussard, The WorkSource – Outplacement**

Hello Chrystal,

Just a note to tell you how much The Worksource services meant to Bryce and me as well as to our people. We were truly blessed by your sincere interest in helping our displaced staff. You and the team exceeded all our expectations.

If you should ever need a reference, please do not hesitate to call me or to have prospective clients contact me directly.

Thank you again,

Mike Macari  
Auto-Chlor System



## **Nikki Laurent, The WorkSource – Hobby Business Consultant**

Dear Administrator,

We are pleased to have the opportunity to work with The WorkSource-Hobby and put several candidates to work for Bayou City Wings Restaurant & Sports Bar. The restaurant management team would like to congratulate and thank Nikki Laurent for providing outstanding service and hospitality. She was very professional and resourceful in helping me to recruit for my new restaurant. She provided me with talented individuals to interview after she conducted the pre-screening interviews. She was also productive in conducting our orientations at The WorkSource while the new building was under construction.

Johnathan Blair  
Area Manager



## **Nikki Laurent, The WorkSource – Hobby Business Consultant**

Mr. Franklyn Lee:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Nikki Laurent for providing such outstanding service and hospitality to Dollar Rent-A-Car. She has exemplified such professionalism and courtesy while helping me to fulfill my human resource needs. She provided me with talented candidates whom I was very pleased to interview. We have also used The WorkSource meeting rooms for our employee orientations, staff meetings and interviews. Ms. Laurent has been a tremendous help and became an intricate extension of our human resources department. We have a great working relationship and always contact her when we need a position filled immediately. Again, I would like to thank Ms. Laurent and The WorkSource for assisting our company.

Faisal Mustafa  
City Manager

# Approved Employer Applications

As a service to businesses, The WorkSource career offices occasionally distribute employer applications to qualified customers. All employer applications given out by The WorkSource staff must be approved prior to distribution. Cally Graves, in the Employer Services Division, reviews all applications for EEO compliance. Her e-mail is cally.graves@theworksource.org and her fax number is 832-681-2500. Please fax a copy of the application to her and she will e-mail an approval. The list below is a compilation of all approved applications as of Dec. 1.

ACADEMY SPORTS AND OUTDOORS  
 ADVANCE AMERICA  
 AHS – AMERICAN HABILITATION SERVICES, INC.  
 ALLIANCE PERSONNEL  
 AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS  
 AMERICAN WATER WORKS  
 AMPCO SYSTEM PARKING  
 ANDES CORP.  
 BORDEN  
 THE CHILDREN’S PLACE  
 CITY OF DICKENSON  
 CITY OF PASADENA  
 CONTRACT CONSULTANTS INC.  
 CONSTRUCTORS INTERNATIONAL  
 CONTECH CONTROL SERVICES, INC.  
 DAY & ZIMMERMANN  
 DICKINSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
 FAMILY DOLLAR  
 FOLEY’S

GUNDERSON, INC.  
 HORIZON OFFSHORE CONT., INC.  
 HOUSTON SOUTHWEST AIRPORT (TEJAS AVCO, INC.)  
 INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS  
 JIFFY LUBE INTERNATIONAL, INC.  
 KELLY SERVICES  
 KROGER  
 LERNER NEW YORK (NEW YORK & COMPANY)  
 LINDE BOC PROCESS PLANTS LLC  
 LORAM MAINTENANCE OF WAY, INC.  
 LOWE’S  
 MASCO CONTRACTOR SERVICES, INC.  
 MAYFIELD DAIRY FARMS, INC.  
 MCDONALD’S MINI APPLICATION  
 MENNINGER  
 99 CENT ONLY STORES  
 OCHIBA CO.  
 ONSITE COMPANIES  
 P.F. CHANG’S CHINA BISTRO  
 PANERA BREAD  
 PAYLESS SHOESOURCE  
 PILGRIM CLEANERS  
 PRITCHARD SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT GROUP  
 PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS, INC.  
 RHINO PACK  
 SARPINO’S PIZZERIA  
 SCHWAN FOOD COMPANY  
 SEAPAC, INC.  
 SODEXHO  
 SUNMART  
 TARGET  
 TECHNICAL ENVIRONMENTAL SVCS, INC.  
 TEXAS COUNTRY COOKING  
 TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY  
 TIMEC INTERNATIONAL

## NOT APPROVED

CAROL CHILDERS CO.  
 COVENANT HOUSE  
 PACESETTER CORP.  
 TEXAS HOME HEALTH OF AMERICA L.P.



## Summer Interns Present Interviewing Skills

The summer interns are now gone, but the impact they had is still being felt and missed here at Northline. They were a great asset to the center in all aspects, from helping with IJR Classes, in the Resource Center, or overall organization within the center. In the IJR class, the interns presented a PowerPoint presentation on interviewing skills. Each intern, Lamar Burns, Rayford Bradley, and Dennis Villa presented a different part on the art and skill of preparing for an interview. They talked about resume preparation, dress, arriving on time and how to overcome nervousness. Great Job, Guys!

## Things are “Pickin’ Up” at Northwest

The WorkSource – Northwest is coming around and year-to-date results are “cooking.” In the first three months we have achieved 107 percent of all of last year’s

|                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| September Hires | 55         |
| October Hires   | 115        |
| November Hires  | 196        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>366</b> |

results! We are working together and the entire office staff is “making it happen.” We’ve met these numbers by a combination of job fairs, individual referrals, job development, and having the entire office working as a team. December is forecasted to be another great month and we are really going to enjoy the Holidays!