

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page consisting of several blue hexagons of various sizes and orientations, some overlapping, creating a cluster-like pattern.

GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD

AGENDA
TUESDAY, October 3, 2023, AT 10:00 A.M.
2ND FLOOR, 3555 TIMMONS LANE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77027

This meeting will be in person only and will be open to the public but restrictions regarding masks, allowable room capacity, and seating arrangements may be in place.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Adopt Agenda**
- 4. Public Comment**
- 5. Review August 2023 Meeting Minutes**
- 6. Declare Conflicts of Interest**
- 7. Consider Reports:**
 - a. Paving the Pathway Recognition. Recognize contribution of local employers to youth with disabilities and their preparation for work (Contact: Chairman Mark Guthrie and Cheryl Guido)
 - b. Chair's Remarks: (Chairman Mark Guthrie)
 - c. Executive Director's Report: (Staff Contact: Juliet Stipeche)
 - d. H-GAC Executive Director's Report: (Staff Contact: Chuck Wemple)
 - e. Audit and Monitoring Committee: Briefing on the committee's September meeting (Chair Guy Jackson)

- f. Education Committee: Briefing on the committee's September meeting (Chair Dr. Bobbie Henderson)
- g. Strategic Planning Committee: Briefing on the committee's August and September meetings (Chair Carl Bowles)

8. Information:

- a. Performance and Production: Report on the system's performance and production (Staff Contact: Philip Garcia)
- b. Expenditures: Report on the Board's budget and expenditures (Staff Contact: AJ Dean)

9. Communications Update: A review of our media outreach activities (Staff Contact: Michelle Castrow)

10. Look at the Economy: Update on the Labor Market (Staff Contact: Ron Borski)

11. Other Business

12. Adjourn

If you wish to make a public comment you may appear in person or do so by providing your comments in writing no later than 5:00 pm on **Monday, October 2, 2023**, to Deborah Duke at deborah.duke@wrksolutions.net.

Meeting materials are available on our website at www.wrksolutions.com/about-us/meetings.

Workforce Solutions is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Please contact us at 713.627.3200 at least 48-hours in advance to request accommodations.

Deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech-impaired customers contact:
Relay Texas 1-800-735-2989 (TTY) or 1-800-735-2988 (Voice) or 711.

Equal opportunity is the law.

Gulf Coast Workforce Board – Workforce Solutions
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**MINUTES OF MEETING OF
THE GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Marie Arcos	Mark Guthrie	Adrian Ozuna
Willie Alexander	Bobbie Henderson	Paul Puente
Anne Bartlett	Guy Robert Jackson	Nasruddin Rupani
Shonda Below	Lavone Jones	Mou Sarkar
Peter Beard	Doug Karr	Valerie Segovia
Sara Bouse	Brett Kerr	Richard Shaw
Dorian Cockrell	Jeff LaBroski	Gill Staley
Melissa Gonzalez	Edward Melton	Lizandra Vazquez
Cheryl Guido	Margaret Oser	Carolyn Watson

H-GAC STAFF PRESENT

Ron Borski	Deborah Duke	Juliet Stipeche
Michelle Castrow	Philip Garcia	Aaron Sturgeon
AJ Dean	Rebecca Neudecker	

Chair Mark Guthrie called the in-person meeting of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board to order at approximately 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, August 8, 2023. Deborah Duke called roll to determine a list of members present. Chair Guthrie determined a quorum was present.

Chair Guthrie welcomed new members Marie Arcos, Shonda Below, Dorian Cockrell, Lavone Jones, Brett Kerr and Nasruddin Rupani. Each member provided a brief introduction and was warmly welcomed by the Board.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Guthrie presented the agenda and requested a motion to approve the agenda as presented. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried, and the agenda was adopted as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one signed up for public comment.

MINUTES FROM JUNE 6, 2023, MEETING

Chair Guthrie asked for approval of the minutes as presented. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DECLARE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Chair Guthrie invited Board members to disclose any conflicts of interest related to today's action items on the agenda. No conflicts were reported. Chair Guthrie reminded members that they could also declare any conflicts with items as they were taken up, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the decision-making process.

CONSIDER REPORTS

a. Chair's Report.

Chair Guthrie provided a report on recent state and national developments, activities and conferences pertinent to workforce development.

Chair Guthrie reported that the bi-partisan Fiscal Responsibility Act passed by Congress regarding the debt ceiling reportedly came with a deal that included freezing current spending levels on domestic programs like Workforce. Contrary to this reported deal, a recently proposed FY24 House budget would include significant cuts in Workforce funding. Among other things, the House budget proposal would substantially reduce Title One WIOA funding by almost 60% and completely eliminates WIOA youth funding. The National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) is trying to raise the alarm about these proposed cuts on Capitol Hill and is working with key national partners to fight them. NAWB believes that grassroots action is critical here. With members of Congress home for their scheduled August recess, this would be a good time to reach out to your representatives and let them know how you feel about this. Chair Guthrie stated that he has asked board staff to gather some information about the youth we serve with the WIOA youth funding and to provide some success stories that he can use in connection with his work with NAWB.

Chair Guthrie also reported that he recently attended the NAWB summer board of directors' meetings in Las Vegas. The board attended a number of meetings and tours set up by the Las Vegas area Workforce Board including the new NFL stadium for the Raiders, the new minor league hockey and basketball stadium and the Elon Musk underground Hyperloop. The NAWB board also met with several groups of elected officials, their Chamber of Commerce and the Visitors and Convention Bureau. The group toured a number of the locations where the Las Vegas Board

operates. While the Las Vegas Board operates in a number of physical locations, they pay rent on only one central location. The rest are co-located in the Chamber of Commerce office, various city offices, public libraries, a community college and other community locations. Operating in these locations allows them to connect to the people and businesses that they serve and is very effective. It also keeps them very accountable to their stakeholders and they save millions of dollars in rent. Chair Guthrie stated that this is something we should consider for our own operations as we move forward.

In Texas matters, Chair Guthrie and Guy Jackson attended the Texas Association of Workforce Board's (TAWB) quarterly meetings in Arlington last week. Unfortunately, TAWB is facing some turmoil because a few of the newer executive directors around the state would like TAWB to be an executive director-led organization rather than a board chair-led organization as it has been since it was formed.

Turning to local issues, the Board is undertaking a very important strategic planning effort for our next four-year cycle. Chair Guthrie encouraged all members to participate by joining the committee, attending committee meetings or signing up to attend a retreat that is scheduled to take place on October 6th from 8:00am to 1:00pm. This process will build out our strategic plan for the next four years and is a very important effort.

Lastly, Chair Guthrie reported that he, Carolyn Watson and Edward Melton had the pleasure of judging the business problem competition for the Paving the Pathways program that assists youth with disabilities with personal and job readiness skills. He congratulated Cheryl Guido and her vocational rehabilitation team as well as Board Staff Anna Kluth for another great program.

Chair Guthrie concluded his report and no action was taken.

b. Executive Director's Report.

Executive Director Juliet Stipeche delivered several important updates during the meeting. Firstly, she thanked members for their participation in the Board committee meetings and thanked them for their dedication and service.

Ms. Stipeche assured members that the team will make sure to provide success stories showing the utilization of our WIOA dollars. Ms. Stipeche also stated that a lot has happened since the June meeting until now. HCC has signed an MOU with the Dwyer workforce to be able to upscale persons in the community to help with health care facilities. Ms. Stipeche also shared photos of the Hire Houston Youth event where the mayor and other members of the team participated in a very successful event that took place at the George R. Brown Convention Center. It was conducted in collaboration with our Jobs Y'all program. We were also invited to go

to both Brazosport College and Alvin Community College in conjunction with Commissioner Trevino's visit to provide some Skills Development Fund checks and things from the investments that the workforce has made to our local community. Ms. Stipeche expressed her thanks to the board members who invited us and who prepared and arranged a wonderful meeting for us. She also stated that while she was there, she learned more about the New Beginnings program at Alvin Community College. It was extraordinarily insightful to hear participants from the program talk about the transformative opportunity of providing to and receiving educational access by persons that were incarcerated when they reenter society and providing the supports that are needed for success. This comes from a three-year investment in the Alvin community. We are looking at options to see how we can continue the support and advancement with additional grant funds and opportunities.

Ms. Stipeche was also invited to the Workforce Solutions Fuqua office for an opportunity to see the new Veterans Chamber of Commerce as well as to learn more about Combined Arms. John Smith from Combined Arms shared the portal that Combined Arms uses to provide veterans access to different resources and support. Ms. Stipeche stated that it is a creative, innovative measure that potentially we can look at to evaluate ways in which we can aggregate services and support for our customers.

Next, Ms. Stipeche thanked Paul Puente and the AFL-CIO for inviting us to an opportunity with the interim Secretary of Labor to learn more about the Apprenticeship Readiness Program and the Multicore Class 3 Program. There were participants who had successfully completed and graduated from the program who were on to their continued studies at local Joint Apprenticeship Training Centers (JATCs). The interim secretary was very excited to learn about this program and see how it connects the persons from the community to fantastic careers in the building and construction trades.

Ms. Stipeche also shared that in this year's Summer Earn and Learn program we are up to 602 young adults enrolled and working. That is a record, the highest number of young persons that we have had participate in this program thus far. We are still aspiring to reach 700 but we are extraordinarily excited that we have 602 participants. Ms. Stipeche stated that there will be a celebration, which board members are invited to attend, where we will be honor and say thanks to our employer partners and participants. That celebration will take place on September 19th.

Ms. Stipeche added that Chuck Wemple asked her to share, since he is not here today, some news from the H-GAC executive level. Mr. Wemple has implemented some changes to the reporting structure so that we can streamline and fast track our hiring practices and other types of opportunities. Further, in terms of the

strategic planning, H-GAC wants to be able to provide insight and input and help us connect the other resources that are here as well.

Ms. Stipeche concluded her report and no action was taken.

c. Strategic Planning Committee.

Committee Vice Chair, Paul Puente, provided the following Strategic Planning Committee report.

The Strategic Planning Committee met on Friday, June 30, 2023, at 2 pm via hybrid meeting. Attendees included: Carl Bowles (Chair), Peter Beard, Sara Bouse, Bobbie Henderson, Adrian Ozuna, Paul Puente, Carolyn Watson, and Mark Guthrie (Board Chair).

Board staff provided a brief history of the Workforce Board's strategic planning efforts including an overview of how Texas Workforce Commission and Gulf Coast Workforce Board performance and production measures are used to gauge progress.

An overview of the proposed process and timeline to deliver an updated strategic plan to the full Workforce Board at the February 2024 meeting was discussed.

Outreach Strategists shared preliminary observations from a national landscape analysis. It concluded its presentation with a reminder that the initial input survey would remain open through the following week.

Chair Bowles initiated discussion regarding future meeting dates. Committee members indicated a preference to continue monthly meetings on Friday afternoons with a hybrid format. After three rounds of polling, the meeting schedule is as follows:

- Friday, August 4 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
Zoom registration: Committee members will receive a personalized panelist link for this meeting.
- Friday, September 1 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, September 22 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom

- Friday, October 6, 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Retreat – Strategic Planning Committee and Workforce Board Officers
Location TBD
- Friday, October 27 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, November 17 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, December 15 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, January 12 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom

No formal action was required and the meeting concluded.

Mr. Puente concluded his report and no action was taken.

d. Audit and Monitoring Committee

Committee Chair Guy Robert Jackson and Juliet Stipeche provided the following Audit and Monitoring Committee report.

The Audit and Monitoring Committee met on August 1, 2023, at 1:00pm via a hybrid meeting. Members Guy Robert Jackson (Chair), Carl Bowles (Vice Chair), Willie Alexander, Sara Bouse, Helen Cavazos, Cheryl Guido, Bobbie Henderson, and Doug Karr attended. Also attending was Mark Guthrie (Board Chair).

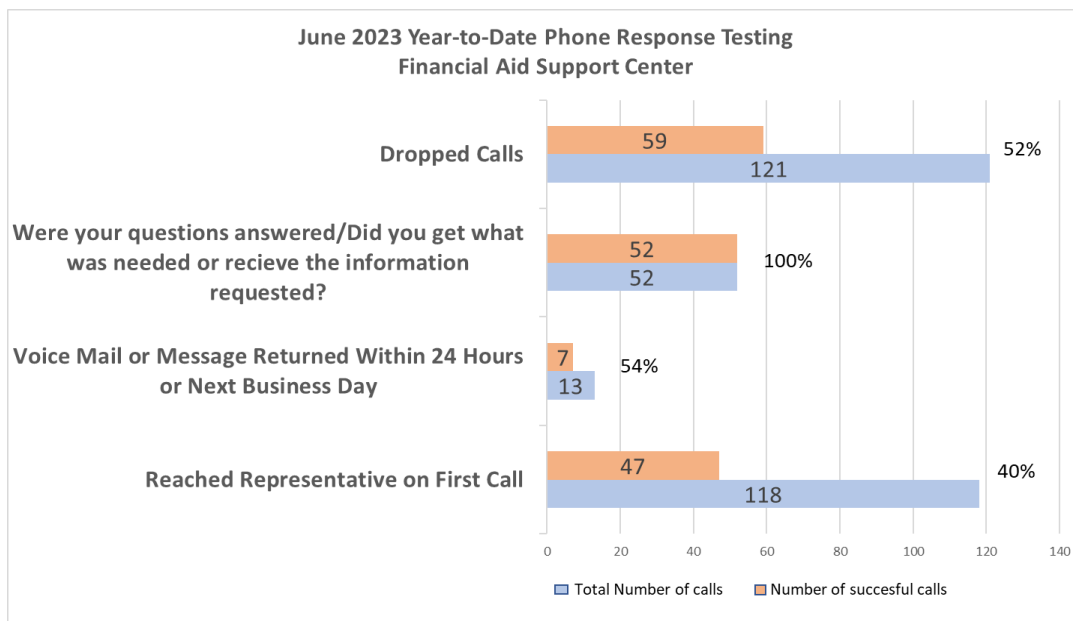
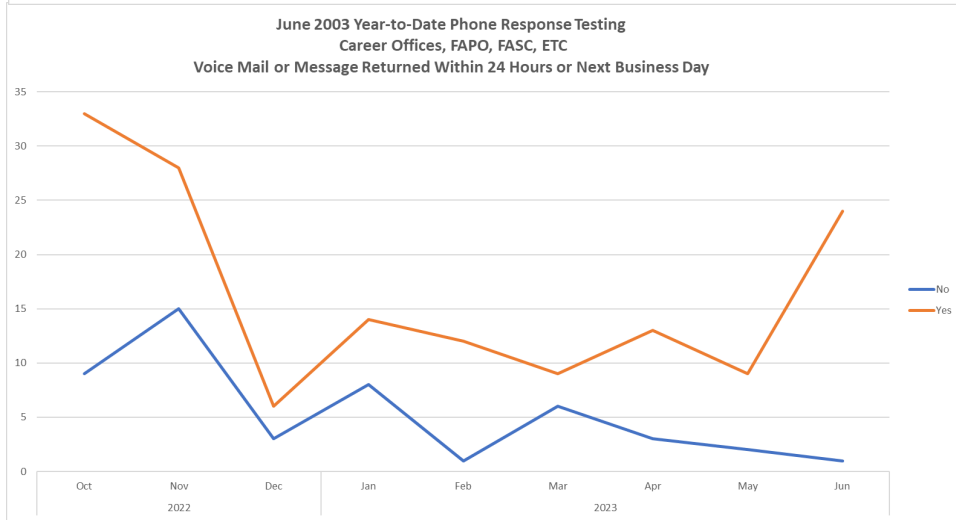
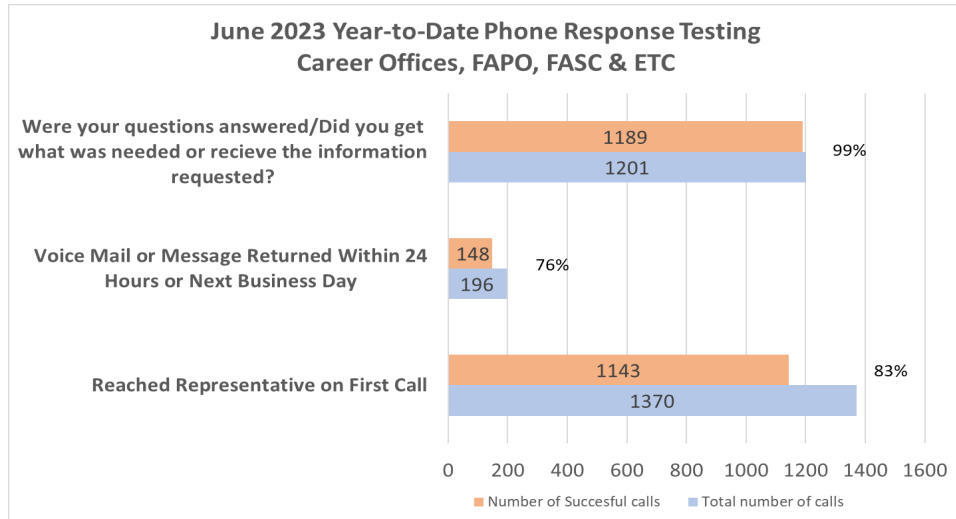
System Review

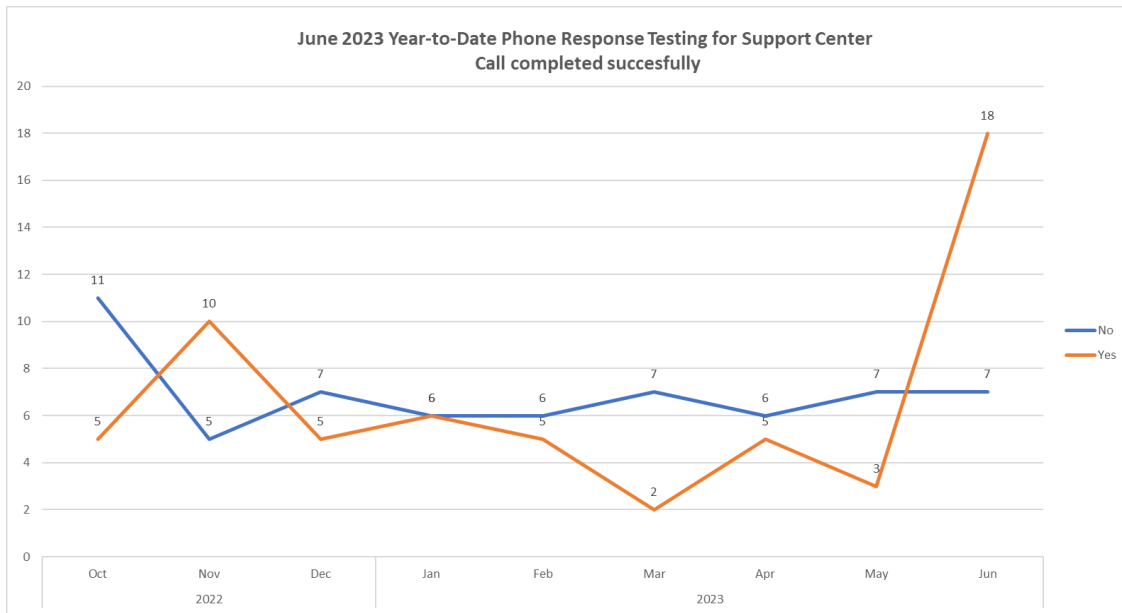
This report includes a contractor-level review of performance/production and expenditures.

Customer Experience

Phone Responsiveness

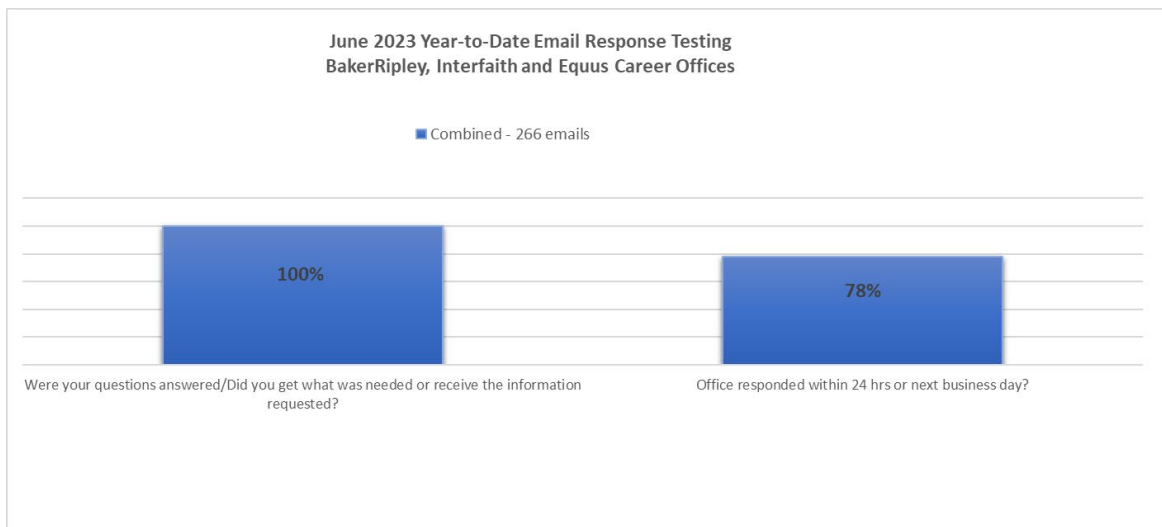
Voice mail responses within 24 hours improved in June 2023, increasing the year-to-date result to 76% from 72% in May and 71% in April.





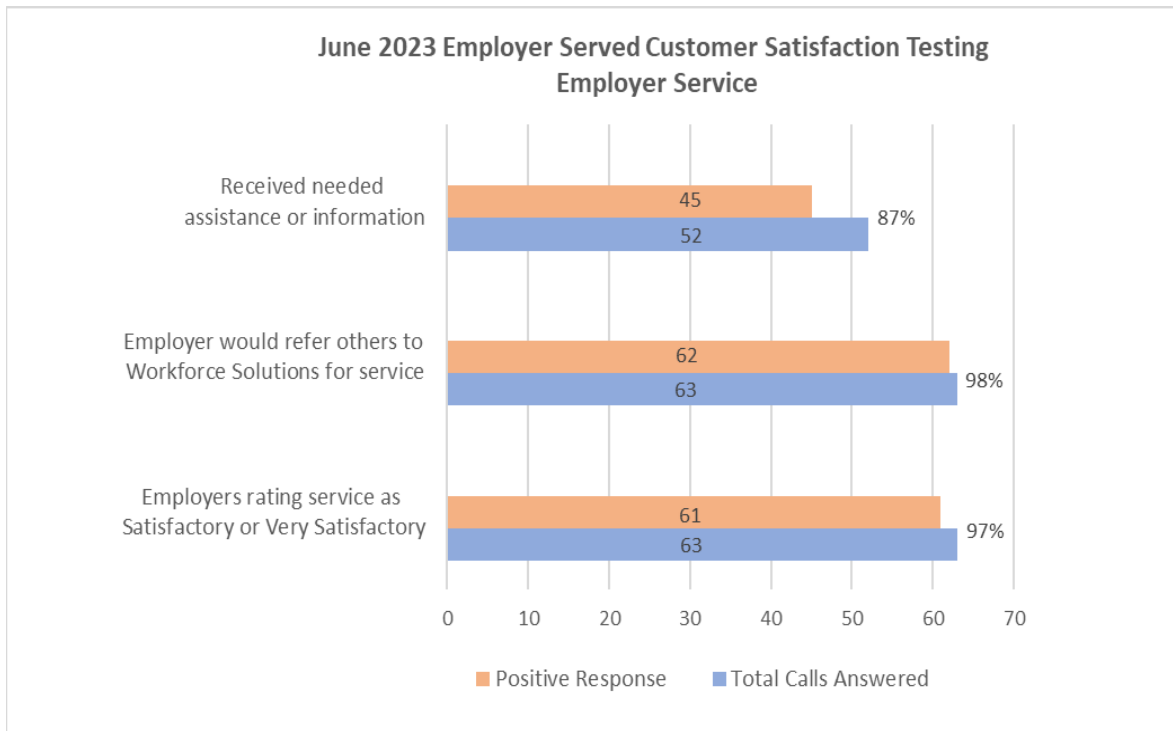
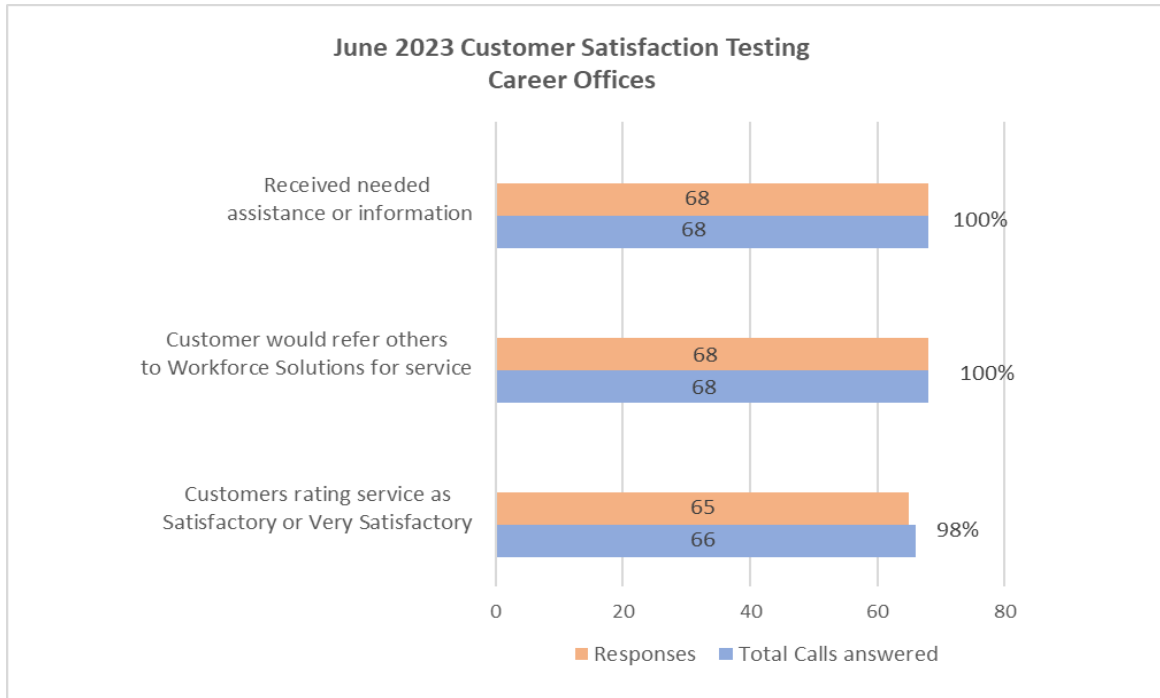
Email Responsiveness

Staff tested the responsiveness of the career offices to emails sent to the career office email address found on Wrksolutions.com. The responses were good, but improvement is needed to ensure a customer receives an email response within 24 hours. Responsiveness within 24 hours remained the same as May testing.



Customer Satisfaction

From a list of 137 customers receiving a service through a career office in May 2023, staff spoke with 66 customers. Staff called 208 employers who interacted with Employer Service in the last three months and were able to talk with 63 employers. The charts below reflect what staff heard.



Technical Program Compliance

Technical Program Compliance reviews consist of compliance testing of contract and policy requirements and customer experience testing conducted by the Quality Assurance Team. The scope of each review is determined by the terms and conditions specified in the service provider’s contract. Financial monitoring is conducted separately, which will be described later in this report.

Staff issued the draft reports for **Adaptive Construction Solution (ACS), Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM), Career Team, and SERJobs**. Staff are waiting for final responses from the service providers to issue final reports. Although the reports are not finalized, there were no findings that would prohibit the Board from considering contract renewal.

The **BakerRipley** final PY2022 Financial Aid Payment Office report showed some errors in the timely completion of data entry and document submission of required information security correspondence. All findings were addressed in the response.

Staff is reviewing **Employment & Training Centers** and beginning the career office service providers reviews. Staff is also conducting worksite visits to all Summer Earn and Learn participants. Visits have been completed for 441 participants at 223 worksites since June 15, 2023.

Financial Systems and Issues

The Board contracts with its procured CPA firms to conduct comprehensive financial monitoring of all Workforce Board service providers. The most recent finalized financial monitoring reviews include the following:

- **BakerRipley** and **Interfaith of the Woodlands** had no findings or questioned costs.
- **Equus** had multiple minor findings related to the need for improvements on existing policies and a nominal disallowed cost.
- Financial monitoring for **Career Team, ACAM, and SERJobs** had minor findings related to needed policy improvements but had no questioned costs.
- **Employment and Training Centers (ETC)** had a finding and questioned costs of \$22,751 in over-expensed administrative costs. The report is not final, pending a response from ETC.
- The Board is working with **Adaptive Construction Solutions (ACS)** to complete the reimbursement payment of \$428,298 in disallowed costs.

2022 – 2023 Service Provider Report Cards

Excellent	10
Above Average	5 to 9.9
Standard	0 to 4.9

Improvement Needed	-0.01 to -4.9
Unacceptable	- 5 to -10

The new rating scale factors any critical findings from the most recent financial monitoring report and requires a performance improvement plan for providers with a rating of -5.

The table below shows the report card rating for Program Year 2022 program monitoring for each service provider up for contract renewal:

Service Providers	Report Card Rating	Numeric Rating	Financial Monitoring
Career Office			
BakerRipley (<i>currently testing PY23</i>)	Standard	.29	PY22 – no findings
Equus	Improvement Needed	-.98	PY22 –no significant findings
Interfaith of the Woodlands	Standard	.04	PY22 – no findings
Employer Service			
Employment and Training Centers (<i>currently testing PY23</i>)	Standard	1.16	PY22 – \$22,751 in over-expensed administrative costs
Adaptive Construction Solutions (<i>PY23 draft report issued</i>)	Status Review No rating	NA	PY22 –disallowed costs of \$428,298
Next Gen			
Alliance for Community Assistance Ministries (<i>PY23 draft report issued</i>)	Status Review No rating	NA	PY22 – no significant findings
Career Team (<i>PY23 draft report issued</i>)	Status Review No rating	NA	PY22 – no significant findings
SERJobs (<i>PY23 draft report issued</i>)	Standard	.52	PY22 – no significant findings
Financial Services			
Financial Aid Payment Office	Standard	.42	PY22 – no findings
Financial Aid Support Center (Interfaith)	Improvement Needed	-1.38	PY22 – no significant findings

Accountability and Improvement Plans

The Texas Workforce Commission and the Gulf Coast Workforce Board address performance and production issues with progressive intervention strategies to

support improvement. This includes Performance Improvement Actions, formalized Technical Assistance, or Corrective Action Plans. The current interventions from the TWC and GCWB include the following:

TWC Interventions:

- **Employer Workforce Assistance (EWA)** – On June 9, 2023, the GCWB was placed on a Technical Assistance Plan (TAP) for the Employer Workforce Assistance performance measure. The Board has not met the performance target for four consecutive months. The TAP identifies six strategies the Board will implement to meet performance measures. Staff recently issued a progress report to TWC regarding this TAP and are awaiting its comments and input. TWC may lift the TAP when the Board meets its contracted performance target for four consecutive months and demonstrates the timely and effective implementation of all other elements of the TAP.
- **Measurable Skills Gain (MSG)** – In June 2023, the TWC requested a list of actions the Board is taking to improve performance documenting academic and occupational progress for customers enrolled in a WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Education or Training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment. Staff submitted the response with steps to improve Measurable Skills Gains (MSG), and on July 14, 2023, staff received notice that performance had improved and no additional response was required.

GCWB Interventions:

- **Adult Education and Literacy** – In April 2022, Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) was placed on a corrective action plan to address data integrity and accuracy issues. The Board staff continues to work with HCDE, and it continues to show a greater effort to enhance our working relationship and is focusing on improvement.
- **Equus Support Center Corrective Action Plan** – On March 29, 2023, the TWC offered technical assistance to the GCWB, given the increased number of complaints concerning the Support Center. On April 6, 2023, Equus was placed under a corrective action plan by the GCWB to address growing customer complaints and a lack of progress in meeting contractual customer service standards. Board staff continues to meet with TWC for Technical Assistance related to the Support Center. TWC has reported receiving fewer complaints and approves of the many interventions made by the GCWB to foster a better customer experience. Board staff will continue working closely with the Support Center to ensure changes are implemented and evaluated regularly.
- **Equus Career Office Corrective Action Plan** – On July 17, 2023, Equus Career Office was placed on a Corrective Action Plan to address deficiencies within the

WIOA performance measures for WIOA Youth and continued programmatic and operational concerns. It was also made aware of issues concerning staff professional development, career office systems and processes, and effective community engagement. Effective August 2, 2023, Equus will attend bi-weekly meetings for the next six months with board staff to address the concerns of the corrective action plan to ensure performance measures and staff development aligns more with the GCWB's vision.

- **Employer Engagement** – Last month, staff stated that Adaptive Construction Solutions would be placed on a corrective action plan, but staff reached an agreement to modify ACS's contract to ensure that they would be focused on achieving market share. At present, ACS, ETC, and our Career Offices are supporting our Market Share Taskforce to achieve this year's market share requirement.

Next Meeting

Staff proposes to schedule the next committee meeting for 1:00 PM on Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

Chair Jackson and Ms. Stipeche concluded this report and no action was taken at this time.

RECEIVE INFORMATION

a. Performance and Production.

Philip Garcia presented Performance and Production measures October 2022 through June 2023. Mr. Garcia stated that we are identifying areas in need of improvement and working with service providers to increase productivity. Mr. Garcia presented a view of all twenty-six contracted measures with Workforce and Adult Education. At the time of our last meeting, we met twenty of the contracted measures with twelve of those measures exceeding 100% of the goal. Currently we are meeting twenty-three of the contracted measures with fifteen of those exceeding 100%. We do have three measures that are not being met. We are reviewing these measures and identifying strategies for improvement. We are working with service providers to identify areas of weakness and additional data that needs to be entered. Mr. Garcia also presented an overview of our current market share as of July 31, 2023. Board staff created a Market Share Task Force in July to assist with efforts to meet our target. As a result, we already see an increase in the monthly total compared to previous months. Also included in Mr. Garcia's report was a breakdown of measures by service provider in the meeting handout.

Mr. Garcia concluded his report and no action was taken.

b. Expenditures.

AJ Dean, Manager of Finance, reviewed the Financial Status Report representing expenses for the six months ending in June 2023. He reported that we are 41% expended overall and 50% through the year. We are lagging in some categories. Regarding our System IT category, Mr. Dean reported that we have paused rolling out our own childcare portal due to the State's implementation of Texas Childcare Connections System. As we monitor that progress, we will assess next year whether we would like to pursue anything on our own. Overall, our revenue for the first six months is \$185.6 million. Total Financial Aid is just over three quarters of our overall expenses for the system with 70% going towards Early Education and 6% going to Financial Aid Training.

Mr. Dean concluded his report and no action was taken.

TAKE ACTION

1. Procurement Committee Report: Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action.

Dr. Bobbie Henderson, Committee Chair, presented the following report.

a. Approval of Service Provider for Employer Engagement.

Background

Last year, Board staff issued a procurement for an Employer Service Provider. The Board chose to contract with the two incumbent providers, Employment & Training Centers, Inc, and Adaptive Construction Solutions, Inc. for FY23. The Board further decided to issue a procurement for single service providers to employers for FY24.

In the year since the last procurement, staff have revisited the model for delivery of services for employers. We have created a new Employer and Community Engagement Division. Within this division at the Board staff level, we have created an Employer Engagement and Partnership team that will include industry specialists and subject matter experts who will spearhead our work with key industry sectors and economic development organizations. Our procured service provider for employer engagement will collaborate closely with our in-house team to ensure that employers receive quality services to attract and grow their workforces.

On June 9, 2023, Board staff released an RFP for employer engagement services to advance the following core principles:

- Supporting employers to build a skilled and dependable workforce by using customized talent development service strategies including:
 - Education and technical skills training, essential workplace skills, adult education and literacy, and sector partnership development; and
 - Work-based learning, including paid work experience, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeship programs.
- Helping employers fill jobs by recruiting, screening, and referring qualified job seekers who meet job requirements.
- Helping job seekers find employment for which they are qualified to help establish long-term employment stability and earning potential.
- Facilitating job matching between employers and job seekers.
- Participating in clearing labor between states, including the use of a standardized classification system.
- Ensuring that unemployment claimants meet the work-test requirement by registering with the state Employment Service system.
- Providing high quality information on labor market conditions to employers and community partners.
- Addressing labor issues regarding state and federal laws; and
- Assisting with the development of partnership building with educational institutions, economic development councils, chambers of commerce, government entities, employers, public and private partners, and community-based organizations.

The maximum funding budgeted for the RFP was \$9,000,000.

Board staff received five (5) proposals from the following entities:

- SERCO of Texas, Inc.
- Employment and Training Centers
- DB Grant Associates, Inc.
- Intelligent Partnerships, Inc.
- 2 BD Enterprises, LLC

The top three candidates from the scoring of the project design and capacity, financial stability, and past performance and references participated in interviews, which were also scored. Board staff and Procurement Committee members developed questions, and Procurement Committee members were invited to observe the interviews.

Current Situation

The final ranking of the proposers was as follows, and at its August 1, 2023 the Procurement Committee voted to recommend to the full Board that it authorize staff to negotiate a contract with the highest scorer, SERCO of Texas, Inc.

Vendor	Final	Point Spread
SERCO of Texas, Inc.	141.23	0
Employment & Training Centers, Inc.	135.62	5.61
DB Grant Associates Inc.	121.73	13.89
Intelligent Partnerships, Inc.	46.74	
2 BD Enterprises LLC	37.13	

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate with SERCO of Texas, Inc. for a contract for employer engagement services renewable for up to three additional years in an amount not to exceed \$9,000,000.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. Approval of Renewal Contracts for FY24.

1. Financial Aid Support Center.

Background

In 2022, Equus was contracted to manage the Financial Aid Support Center (FASC or Support Center). This centralized support center was to process customers' applications for all types of financial aid, review and resolve financial aid inquiries, assist customers in arranging childcare, review and resolve financial aid appeals, and review and resolve potential exceptions to on-going eligibility. Equus works with a broad population including customers, career offices, the Financial Aid Payment Office, and Board staff.

FASC was created to be a comprehensive service provider for training and child care scholarships, streamlining services into a single point of access. Over the past five years, there has been a 65% increase in child care financial aid funding to the GCWB, amounting to over \$81 million to FASC, but despite the dramatic increase, FASC has experienced a capacity growth of less than 10%. In 2019, approximately \$25,000 in Child Care Development Funds (CCDF) went unexpended, but by 2022, this amount surged to \$18.5 million.

Due to staffing limitations and antiquated technology, the Support Center struggled to address the overwhelming workload of processing over 7,000 applications and

17,000 calls a month, and it was unable to address more than 50% of the incoming calls. This issue has been found in multiple quality assurance audits.

In response, in 2023, Board staff launched a comprehensive review and analysis, re-imagining and restructuring the Support Center to enhance operations and customer service. Presently, the Support Center functions as a unified entity encompassing two distinct areas: 1) eligibility processing and 2) call center services. Recognizing the unique skill sets required for each function, Board staff restructured the Support Center into these two separate divisions to enhance performance and outcomes. Additionally, new processes and supports were initiated to increase child care enrollments and improve the Support Center's call response capabilities.

During this review and in consultation with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the Support Center's inability to handle the higher volume of incoming calls was identified as a significant deficiency. To address this issue, Equus successfully recruited a director with over 10 years of call center experience. Collaborating closely with the new director and the management team, Board staff is focused on staffing and technology improvements. Scheduling changes have been made to accommodate peak call times, and the Board approved an amendment to add funding to hire more staff members and purchase Ring Central, a new phone system. In June 2023, the Support Center launched Ring Central as the new phone system, and our management team is ensuring that the new system supplies comprehensive reporting capabilities and the necessary functionality to seamlessly support our program's operations.

By restructuring the Support Center, recruiting qualified staff, and leveraging advanced technology in this first year of the contract, we are committed to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Support Center's operations. These strategic measures were developed to enhance child enrollments, provide prompt call responses, and deliver a higher level of customer service to our valued residents.

In the 2022-2023 year, a process was developed to restructure and redesign the Support Center to address the many challenges compromising its effectiveness and efficiency, and to prepare for 2023-2024, the Board staff is modifying the Support Center's scope of work. First, the Board will incorporate the increased staffing and technological enhancements, and it also recommends that financial aid for training and scholarships move to the Career Offices.

Earlier this year, Board staff were made aware of numerous complaints made by customers to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) regarding delayed and/or inaccurate updates on outstanding applications. As a result, Board staff placed Equus, who operates the Financial Aid Support Center, on a Corrective Action Plan to address the issues raised by Texas Workforce Commission's Technical

Assistance Team. In response, Equus replaced the leadership team at the FASC and tasked them with managing the increased funding approved by the Board to hire additional staff to ensure that customer applications are processed more efficiently, and customers are better able to receive prompt updates regarding their application over the phone, by text message, or through chat. To assist these efforts, the FASC is hiring additional staff for the quality assurance and training teams. Board staff have noted improvement in general management, communication, and planning by the new leadership team at the FASC. Additionally, Board staff advised Equus that the additional funding and staff will include additional oversight to ensure that funds are used to improve operations and better serve our customers.

Equus has been attentive and responsive to the necessary changes and improvements, and we recommend renewing the contract for APM Equus Holdings Corporation to continue operating the FASC for Fiscal Year 2 beginning on October 1, 2023. The Fiscal Year 2, 2023-2024 contract will be the second of four (4) possible contracts, which was authorized by the Board last year, and the first of three (3) possible renewals. We propose a funding range with minimum and maximum amounts as described in the action item below.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with APM Equus to continue operating the Financial Aid Support Center.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with APM Equus Holdings Corporation not to exceed \$10,000,000. This is the first proposed renewal, and we will have the option to renew this contract for two (2) additional years subject to satisfactory performance and approval from the Board.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. After a brief discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

2. Financial Aid Payment Office.

Background

Workforce Solutions has a central Financial Aid Payment Office (FAPO or Payment Office) that is responsible for handling vendor billing and payments for customer financial aid. The Payment Office collaborates with vendors by initiating vendor agreements and making billing and payment arrangements. This includes payments to childcare vendors, training providers, and support service vendors and to employers for on-the-job training and custom training projects. We procured this service in 2022 and can renew for three more years. One service provider, BakerRipley, manages our Payment Office operations.

Staff are satisfied with BakerRipley's performance of the Financial Aid Payment Office, which processes approximately 10,000 payments per month with over 2,300 active vendors. A sizable portion of financial aid supports early childhood education, and BakerRipley has made payments to support over 44,500 children this program year. (For context, this exceeds the overall seating capacity of Minute Maid Park which is 40,963 persons.) BakerRipley is currently working towards operational improvements including transitioning our reloadable support service cards to a new vendor and rolling out a new financial aid management system.

In the upcoming contract year, BakerRipley will assist NextGen service providers with accessing our financial aid vendor network. In 2022-2023, Board staff determined that the NextGen program and service providers were not fully integrated into FAPO, used a different payroll vendor for work-based learning services, and manage their entire budget independently. The lack of integration into the Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast system created a siloing effect, creating challenges in serving youth and employers and complicating access to child care scholarships, adult education and literacy services, and other training opportunities to participants.

Staff propose integrating NextGen funding at the Financial Aid Payment Office and creating universal worksite agreements with employers and training providers to streamline coordination. This change will create greater uniformity, enhance coordination, and will better position us to serve our youth and employers.

Further, as part of TWC's implementation of a new statewide Child Care Case Management system, Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C), BakerRipley is additionally tasked with adjusting the billing processes to align with the new system.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with BakerRipley to continue operating the Financial Aid Payment Office.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with BakerRipley not to exceed \$364,500,000. This is the first proposed renewal, and we will have the option to renew this contract for two (2) additional years subject to satisfactory performance and approval from the Board.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Career Office Operations.

Background

Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast has 28 career offices and 10 informational centers strategically located throughout the 13-county region. Our intention is for residents to go to a career office to talk to a workforce expert to find a job, keep a job, or find a better job. Every office has professional staff who offer practical advice on jobs, careers, and work, and for qualified candidates, referrals to open jobs listed with Workforce Solutions. Modeled after the public library system, career offices have resource areas with staff, personal computers, copiers, telephones, and fax machines. Customers can use resource materials on their own or with staff assistance. Career offices empower residents with information about jobs, hiring events, supportive services, and financial aid.

In 2021, we procured service providers for the Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast system, and the Board authorized up to four years of annual contracts with those responsible for operating our Career Offices including BakerRipley, Interfaith of the Woodlands, and APM Equus Holdings Corporation.

Our Career Office service providers are presently performing as follows:

- **BakerRipley** is on track to meet most of their targets for the current year. BakerRipley's staff is also participating in the Board-led Market Share Taskforce created to improve the efforts to increase production for the State's Employer Workforce Assistance metric, also known as Market Share.
- **Interfaith of the Woodlands** is on track to meet most of their performance targets for the current year.
- **APM Equus Holdings Corporation** is on track to meet most of their performance targets for the current year but lags on current State required Youth measures and has fallen behind in placing youth in work-based learning. In July 2023, Equus Career Office was placed on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address deficiencies within the WIOA performance measures for WIOA Youth and continued programmatic and operational concerns.

2023-2024 Modifications

In 2023, Board staff conducted a thorough review and analysis to determine whether financial aid determinations for training and scholarships should be moved from the Financial Aid Support Center to the Career Offices, and our analysis leads to this recommendation for the upcoming contractual year. We also recommend adding capacity to capable Career Offices to achieve the TWC's Employer Workforce Assistance measure as we transition to a singular employer engagement service provider.

Board staff will further analyze the impact and return on investment of our 28 Career Offices and 10 part-time locations across the region as we analyze service delivery methods, which can be in-person or virtual, and community utilization. The traditional career office model centered on finding strategic locations throughout the region primarily focused on attracting walk-in traffic, but as Parker Harvey explained in our May 2023 Strategic Planning meeting, “[W]e have a unique opportunity to reimagine not only the physical configurations of the offices as well as the functional roles of the offices as locations from which to deliver services in-person but increasingly virtually as time passes.” Board staff will continue to review and analyze the impact of our Career Offices’ in-person delivery of services to determine whether we can find more efficient, effective, and economical ways to deliver services to customers across our region.

In anticipation of the new Strategic Plan and recognizing that the Board places importance on community collaboration, staff will develop a pilot to work with community colleges and/or community-based organizations as strategic areas to offer career services to our area residents. Staff proposes a limited pilot with our Career Offices and Lone Star College, Houston Community College and Alvin Community College to determine whether this new method of delivering career services, sharing resources, collaborating, and coordinating will enhance our outreach and outcomes with area residents who may benefit from our services this upcoming year.

Further, Board staff plans to work with our Career Office service providers to enhance customer service and meet performance measures with the intent of doing a better job of ensuring that we are meeting the educational and training needs of our area residents while creating a strong talent pipeline to meet the workforce needs of our employers.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate contract renewals with each of our current Career Office service providers.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate contracts for the following Career Office service providers as described in the chart below with a range for each contract with the minimum and maximum stated amount. The fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023, will be the third year of four, authorized by the Board in 2021, and this contract will be the second of three possible renewals.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Early Education Quality.

Background

In March 2023, the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, Children's Learning Institute (CLI) became the Early Education Quality service provider for the GCWB. CLI provides specific technical assistance, consulting, professional training, and best practice support for the largest group of our network vendors – early education and child care providers. CLI focuses on recruiting, assessing, reviewing, and supporting vendors in the Texas Rising Star quality rating system, laying the foundation for a better-educated workforce for the Gulf Coast area.

The Children's Learning Institute is a new service provider for the Board, and since the contract negotiation process was prolonged and did not end until March 2023, there was a delay in service delivery and expenditures. However, CLI leadership and Board staff have been working hard to catch up, meeting weekly to discuss and implement the specified and planned early childhood education priorities for the Gulf Coast region.

This year, CLI leadership and Board staff are strategizing and developing a work plan for PY24 to ensure quicker delivery of quality child care services to vendors, families, and the community. Most of the work for the remainder of this year and planned work in PY24 is to onboard and certify 1585+ current Workforce Solutions child care vendors into the Texas Rising Star quality rating system by September 2024 as mandated by the Texas Workforce Commission. This is because as of October 2022, any child care provider accepting our scholarship must be a part of the Texas Rising Star quality rating system.

Additionally, CLI will continue to recruit new child care providers for Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast, facilitate new Pre-K partnerships between Texas Rising Star providers and School districts/charter schools, and provide child care referrals, consumer education, and support to vendors serving families and children with disabilities.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, Children's Learning Institute (CLI) to continue early education quality services.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a second-year contract with the University of Texas Health Science Center – Houston Children's Learning Institute for up to \$11,000,000.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Next Generation Youth Service Provider.

Background

In 2021 we procured service providers for the Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast system, including providers for the Next Generation Youth initiative (NextGen). The primary responsibility of these selected providers is to engage with youth between the ages of 16 and 24, who are presently classified as opportunity youth due to their disengagement from both employment and educational pursuits.

The establishment of NextGen was motivated by the imperative to address critical gaps in effectively reaching out to out-of-school, opportunity, and at-risk youth, aiming to provide them with meaningful opportunities for personal and professional growth. To this end, NextGen service providers are to actively immerse themselves in the community, adopting a purposeful approach to connect with this target population at their convenience and preferred locations. This personalized outreach is contemplated to allow the seamless delivery of services and opportunities. Another unique feature of NextGen is the flexibility in selecting high demand, short-term training providers that allow young adults to quickly upskill and enter sustainable career pathways.

This initiative is funded with WIOA Youth funds from the TWC and underlines the GCWB's shared commitment to uplift disconnected youth in our community, empowering them with the necessary tools and resources to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the workforce and broader society.

The NextGen service providers are making significant progress towards achieving the PY23 enrollment target, and the Board staff is actively collaborating with them to ensure the performance targets are met. This year, the program has successfully enrolled over 1,200 customers, and it is anticipated to serve 1,320 youth by the end of the current program year.

In the upcoming contract year, the Board staff will continue their concerted efforts to enhance NextGen's impact by facilitating youth connections to a more diverse range of work-based and immersive learning opportunities. Additionally, a key focus will be on successfully integrating the mandated 14 WIOA Title I Youth program service elements into the NextGen program. (These elements include intake, eligibility, objective assessment, and the development of individual service strategies for youth ages 14 to 24. It is important to note that youth enrollment is considered to occur when the participant receives one of the required elements for the first time.)

Throughout this process, the Board staff has been actively engaged with NextGen providers, providing technical assistance and support to ensure the program's success. An example of this collaboration includes a summit that provided

comprehensive training on branding and communication, production and performance, as well as effective collaboration with other system providers and programs, such as Adult Education and Literacy and Early Childhood Education, to enhance overall customer service.

For the past two years, Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast has maintained a surplus of WIOA Youth funds, which has generously funded NextGen service providers. Although the surplus has been depleted this year, we are committed to continuing our support by allocating resources from the current year's funds. Considering this situation, staff proposes that NextGen service providers access financial aid funds through the Financial Aid Payment Office moving forward, instead of directly paying for goods and services provided to customers. This change will offer better oversight and accountability for tracking the use of financial aid, further integrating NextGen into our Workforce Solutions' system. As part of this transition, NextGen service providers will experience a 20% reduction in contracts since they will no longer be directly responsible for covering these goods and services costs.

By implementing these measures and continuing our collaboration with NextGen service providers, staff are confident in the ability to enhance the program's effectiveness and positively impact the lives of the youth we serve.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate contracts with our current NextGen providers to continue services for youth.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate contracts for service providers not to exceed the amounts specified in the table below. The fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023, will be the third year of four years authorized by the Board in 2021.

Next Generation Youth (Next Gen)	2023	2024 Proposed
Total	\$6,300,000	\$5,040,000
SER-Jobs	\$2,300,000	\$1,840,000
Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM)	\$2,500,000	\$2,000,000
Career Team	\$1,500,000	\$1,200,000

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. Carolyn Watson declared a conflict of interest and abstained from the vote. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Public Information and Outreach Service Provider.

Background

The Board currently contracts with two public engagement consultants delivering strategic expertise and materials supporting our regional workforce system. The contract with Outreach Strategists supports the Board's efforts to strengthen stakeholder understanding of Workforce Solutions and enhance service to the region through strategic planning. The contracts were procured in 2020 for up to four (4) years beginning with FY 21. This upcoming contractual year will be the fourth and final year of our contracts with Outreach Strategists and Savage Brands.

Outreach Strategists has focused its capacity on establishing a preliminary process for the development of an updated four-year strategic plan that is inclusive of Board members, Board staff, service provider staff, and external stakeholders including employers and individuals living in the Gulf Coast region. Surveys and a national landscape analysis are already underway. Additionally, Outreach Strategists has repurposed and catalogued content developed for "Your Career Your Choice" to make it suitable for use in social media, on our career office monitors and in conjunction with career exploration, job search and job readiness seminars.

In their FY24 contract, which will be the fourth and final contract year from the 2020 procurement, Outreach Strategists will continue developing, socializing, and refining the 2024-2028 strategic plan. This process will include stakeholder engagement, data analysis and alignment, and a review cycle with Board members and senior Board staff personnel. Remaining contract dollars will support ongoing efforts to expand distribution of "Your Career Your Choice" content by securing additional programming outlets, including municipal and education channels.

Savage Brands provides a wide range of strategic expertise aimed at supporting the efforts of the new employer and community engagement division and improving market share, including evaluating perceptions of Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast in the marketplace and implementing solutions to address deficiencies. The dynamics between Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast and its customers, particularly employers, shifted during this contractual period, and Savage is helping us adjust to new ways of doing business and to leverage existing resources to better serve the region.

In their FY24 contract, which will be the fourth and final contract year under the 2020 procurement, we propose to have Savage leverage its business-to-business marketing expertise to build on work to strengthen market share and overall development of the employer and community engagement strategy. This will include efforts to support sector-based talent pipeline initiatives. The funds in this contract will also be used to continue website improvements and support for the 2024-2028 strategic plan.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate contracts with Outreach Strategists and Savage Brands to continue strategic planning, public information, and outreach activities for the final year authorized by the 2020 procurement.

Actions

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with Outreach Strategists not to exceed \$500,000 and a contract with Savage not to exceed \$400,000.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

c. Approval of Service Provider for Vocational Rehabilitation Services Payroll

Background

In 2019 ProSource Solutions III, Inc. (ProSource) began serving as the payrolling service provider supporting Vocational Rehabilitation Services' (VR) young customers in year-round part-time jobs. VR staff find opportunities for customers, and ProSource serves as the employer of record for the duration of the customer's work experience. Our current contract with ProSource is set to expire September 30, 2023, and in February 2023, a Request for Proposal was released to reprocur this service.

Staff received seven responses to our solicitation, and organizations were evaluated based on their qualifications and experience, demonstrated model to deliver services, proposed costs, and financial declarations. Evaluator scores were compiled resulting in ProSource having the highest scoring proposal.

<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Score</u>
ProSource Solutions III, Inc.	95.25
G&A Partners	87.25
Acumen Fiscal Agent	79.25
MMC Group, LP	79.00
Crews Ferrell and Associates Inc	66.75
BuzzClan LLC	66.25
Tesseon	44.25

ProSource is currently meeting expectations as the employer of record for the VR program. From October 2022 through June of 2023 ProSource received approximately 354 referrals from VR. Individuals receive timely payments, and we continue to see increases in the number of customers served each year.

ProSource proposes charging a percentage mark-up rate associated with payroll wages charge to this contract. The proposed range is 21% to 16%. This rate is inclusive of payroll taxes. Staff recommends continuing our partnership with ProSource to deliver this service.

Current Situation

At its August 1 meeting, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend that staff negotiate a contract with ProSource Solutions to provide payroll/employer of record services for VR young customers in year-round part-time jobs.

Action

Authorize staff to negotiate a contract with ProSource Solutions III, Inc. for payroll/employer of record service for VR young customers in year-round part-time jobs through Workforce Solutions in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000 to serve approximately 400 individuals.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

d. Approval of Service Provider Contract Performance Measures

Background

Each year, our contracts include performance targets for our service providers. These targets include both Board measures contained in its strategic plan and the contractual production measures included in the Board's contract with the Texas Workforce Commission.

In the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, the Board including the following measures, baselines, and targets:

For the Regional Workforce System:

- Education Credentials
 - 84 percent of the region's population 25 years and older will hold an education credential
 - 39 percent of the region's population 25 years and older will hold a post-secondary degree
 - 24 percent of those pursuing an education credential will earn one
- Job Creation
 - 3.23 million individuals will be employed in the region, reflecting the addition of 254,202 jobs created since 2018

For Workforce Solutions:

- Market Share
 - 31,500 region's employers will use Workforce Solutions
- Customer Loyalty
 - 65 percent of employers using Workforce Solutions will be repeat customers
- Education Credentials
 - 76 percent of individual customers pursuing an education credential will earn one
- Job Creation
 - 3,500 new jobs will be created as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnering with other business organizations
 - 78 percent of individual customers will be employed after leaving Workforce Solutions
- Earnings
 - 37 percent of individual customers leaving Workforce Solutions will have earnings gains of at least 20 percent

In addition to these Board measures, baselines, and targets, the TWC requires the GCWB to meet the state's performance measures which have increased over time to a total of 26 unique measures, including 22 workforce measures and 4 adult education measures. They include:

Workforce Measures:

1. Employed Q2 Post Exit – Adult
2. Employed Q4 Post Exit – Adult
3. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Adult
4. Credential Rate – Adult
5. Measurable Skills Gains – Adult
6. Employed Q2 Post Exit – DW
7. Employed Q4 Post Exit – DW
8. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – DW
9. Credential Rate – DW
10. Measurable Skills Gains – DW
11. Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – Youth
12. Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit – Youth
13. Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Youth
14. Credential Rate – Youth
15. Measurable Skills Gains – Youth
16. Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit–C&T
17. Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post Exit C&T
18. Credential Rate – C&T Participants
19. Claimant Reemployment within 10 Weeks
20. Employer Receiving Workforce Assistance
21. Choices Full Engagement Rate – All Family

22. Average # Children Served Per Day

Adult Education Measures:

23. Total enrollments
24. 12+ hour enrollments
25. Integrated Education and Training (IET)
26. Intensive Services

The TWC's increased production measures necessitate a stronger focus from the Board staff on holding service providers accountable. This entails providing them with comprehensive training, technical guidance, and support to ensure compliance with the state's standards. Moreover, the Board must prioritize meeting its unique targets, some of which overlap, as demonstrated by the Board's market share of 31,500, while the state's employer workforce assistance measure stands at 32,270. During the June 2023 Strategic Planning Committee meeting, the Board staff extensively discussed these changes and challenges as they initiated the current strategic planning cycle.

At present, the Board staff is thoroughly reviewing and analyzing the existing strategic plan measures, many of which trace back to the Board's initial planning efforts in the strategic planning process. While certain current Board measures, like employment rates after service conclusion in the 1st quarter, effectively support meeting the related TWC measure, others demonstrate consistency but lack full alignment.

With this analysis underway, staff is proposing that we suspend the following measures from the FY 24 contracts:

- Market share – this measure is very similar to the Employer Workforce Assistance (EWA) state measure.
- Loyalty – loyalty is a subset of the Market Share but has no analogous TWC measure.
- New Jobs Created and New Jobs Created in Targeted Industries and Occupations– these measures are intended to measure our work with economic development organizations to create jobs but are difficult to track as they are self-reported. There are no similar TWC measures. In addition, much of the work needed to meet these measures will be transitioning to Board staff in the next year.
- Customers, Unemployed at Entrance, employed by the 1st Qtr. After Exit – This measure is closely related to the board measure, Employed in the 1st Quarter After Exit, which we are recommending keeping.

- Customers Employed in the Entrance Quarter is a measure not related to any TWC measure and has not provided additional insight as wage information may not be accurate if previous employment was included in the same quarter.

Current Situation

At its meeting on August 1, 2023, the Procurement Committee voted to recommend to the full Board that FY 24 contracts contain only the Board measures suggested by staff, with additional measures possibly being added after the Strategic Plan is completed.

Action

Authorize staff to include TWC performance measures and only the Board measures included in the table below in FY 24 contracts beginning October 1, 2023.

Category	Current Measure	Recommendation to Include in Contracts
Workforce Board Measures	Market Share	
	Loyalty	
	New Jobs Created	
	New jobs Created with Employers in Targeted Industries	
	New jobs Created in Targeted High-skill Occupations	
	Employed in the 1st Quarter After Exit	X
	Employed in 2nd and 3rd Quarters After Exit	X
	Exiters with Earnings Gains	X
	Exiters with Earnings Gains of at least 20%	X
	Achieve Education Credential	X
	Achieve Post-Secondary Certificate or Degree	X
	Customers, Unemployed at Entrance, Employed by the 1st Quarter After Exit	
	Customers employed in the entrance quarter	

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Henderson concluded her report and no further action was taken at this time.

II. Ratification of Items from Previous Meetings.

Aaron Sturgeon, Assistant Director, presented the following report.

Background

Members are appointed by chief elected officials to serve on the GCWB. Once selected, the nominees are sent to the TWC, which must approve new Board members and ensure that all Board composition requirements continue to be met as members are appointed.

Prior to recent revisions of the GCWB by-laws, members would serve two-year terms which were not staggered. While awaiting formal nomination and confirmation by the TWC, expiring members continued to participate in Board meetings and committees.

In April 2023, we were informed by TWC that our Board was out of compliance with its membership.

Current Situation

All required documentation and process has since been completed, and at its July 18th meeting, the TWC confirmed reappointments and new members totaling 20 in all. TWC has confirmed that we now have an official quorum to conduct business, however, all action items from the Board's April and June meetings must be ratified. Items which the Board approved at its April and June 2023 meetings are attached. The June Board meeting minutes are available at the front of the August Board packet, and the April Board meeting minutes are attached to this item.

Furthermore, approved amendments to the Board's by-laws state that Board members will serve until successors are duly appointed and qualified, thus reducing the likelihood that a similar situation will occur in the future.

Action

We request for the Board to ratify actions taken at the April and June 2023 meetings.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the action as requested. Members Anne Bartlett and Dorian Cockrell abstained from the vote. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Sturgeon concluded his report and no further action was taken at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Michelle Castrow, Senior Manager of Employer and Community Engagement, presented an update on increased social media activity as well as continuing increases in earned media coverage. Our social media channels currently have just over 23,000 followers collectively. As of June 30, 2023, our cumulative earned-media value since the onset of the pandemic now exceeds \$48 million.

LOOK AT THE ECONOMY

Board staff Ron Borski presented a look at rate of unemployment through June 2023 which shows which shows our region up slightly to 4.5%. Rates at the State and National level are also up slightly at 4.2% and 3.8% respectively. Total job growth is up slightly for the month of June at a rate of 0.2% with year over year growth up at a rate of 3.8%.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Bobbie Henderson welcomed new board members and invited them to join Board Committees.

Sara Bouse invited members to consider attending the GRACE conference organized by employers to help other employers understand how to hire employees with background challenges. The conference takes place in Arlington in September. Ms. Stipeche informed members that, since this is a TWC conference, expense reimbursement is available for board members attending.

Peter Beard requested that the October meeting provide a brief look at performance measures related to education credentials achieved.

Ms. Stipeche thanked participants of the Market Share Task Force. ETC, ACS and BakerRipley provided flexibility in assisting us in transitioning.

Mou Sarkar announced a September 19th community job fair in collaboration with the local Workforce Solutions Office in Pearland, the Pearland Chamber of Commerce and the EDC. Ms. Sarkar extended an invitation to all business represented inviting participation.

ADJOURN

Chair Guthrie adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:45 p.m.

GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD

ABEDI, SUZANE

HCA Healthcare
211 Litchfield Lane
Houston, TX 77024
(202) 517-3824

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

suzane.abedi@hcahealthcare.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

ALEXANDER, WILLIE

W J Alexander Associates P.C.
1770 St. James Place, Suite 407
Houston, TX 77056
(713) 802-0900, ext. 12
Fax: (713) 802-1188

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

walex@wjalexander.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

ARCOS, MARIE

YMCA of Greater Houston
318 Sydnor St
Houston, TX 77020
(713) 557-6575

Category: CBO

County: Harris

mariea@ymcahouston.org

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

BARTLETT, ANNE

Brazosport College
69 S Calla Lily Court
Lake Jackson, TX 77566
(979) 480-7574

Category: Education

County: Brazoria

anne.g.bartlett@gmail.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

BEARD, PETER

Greater Houston Partnership
701 Avenida de las Americas, Suite 900
Houston, TX 77010
(713) 844-3602 – office

Fax: (713) 844-0200

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

pbeard@houston.org

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

BELOW, SHONDA

Texas Gulf Coast Area Labor Federation
5310 E Sam Houston Pkwy N, Ste M
Houston, TX 7701
(713) 598-7144

Category: Labor

County: Harris

sbelow@nohouaft.org

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

BOUSE, SARA

Alvin Community College
3110 Mustang Road
Alvin, TX 77511
(281) 732-8389 – cell

Category: Education

County: Brazoria

sbouse@alvincollege.edu

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

BOWLES, CARL

Bowles, Womack & Company, P.C.
24 Greenway Plaza, Suite 970
Houston, TX 77046
(713) 621-0050

Fax: (713) 621-0046

Category: Business

County: Waller

carl@bowleswomack.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

CAVAZOS, MARY HELEN

M.H. Cavazos & Associates
1124 W. Clay Street
Houston, TX 77019
(713) 807-1115

Category: Business

County: Harris

mhcavazos@aol.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

COCKRELL, DORIAN

JPMorgan Chase
712 Main St.
Houston, TX 77002
(817) 707--5957

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

Dorian.cockrell@jpmchase.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

GAY, ANTHONY

FET
12735 Dairy Ashford
Stafford, TX 77477
(713) 478-8504

Category: Business

County: Harris

anthonymg@gmail.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

GONZALEZ, MELISSA

Lone Star College
20000 Kingwood Drive
Kingwood, TX 77339
(281) 312-1644

Category: Education

County: Harris

melissa.gonzalez@lonestar.edu

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

GUIDO, CHERYL

Texas Workforce Solutions-VR Services
4424 North Freeway, Suite A
Houston, TX 77022
(713) 458-8593

Fax: (713) 697-0485

Category: State Agency

cheryl.guido@twc.texas.gov

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

GUTHRIE, MARK

Winstead PC
600 Travis Street, Suite 5200
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 650-2730

Fax: (713) 650-2400

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

mguthrie@winstead.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

HALL, DARRIN

United Airlines
3759 Handel Drive
Arcola, TX 77583
(713) 516-1033

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

darrinmhall@outlook.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

HENDERSON, BOBBIE ALLEN

Texas Southern University
4203 Charleston Street
Houston, TX 77021-1415
(713) 313-7588/(713) 748-6508(h)
Fax: (713) 741-6196

Category: ABE

County: City of Houston

bobbie.henderson@att.net

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

HESKAMP, ALAN

Heskamp & Associates LLC
311 Hoskins Broadway
El Campo, TX 77437
(979) 758-4521

Category: Business

County: Wharton

aheskamp@sbcglobal.net

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

JACKSON, GUY ROBERT

Chambers County Abstract Co. Inc.
P.O. Box 640
Anahuac, TX 77514
(409) 267-6262, ext. 35
Fax: (409) 267-6355

Category: Business

County: Chambers

grj@ccac.net

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

JONES, LAVONE

Comcast
8590 Tidwell Road
Houston, TX 77040
(346) 306-4770

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

Lavone_jones@comcast.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

KARR, DOUG

Pro Staff/Atterro
27 Canoe Birch Place
The Woodlands, TX 77382
832-967-7684

Category: Business

County: Montgomery

raiderkarr@aol.com

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

KERR, BRETT

Calpine
23915 Travis Trail
Katy, TX 77494
(713) 858-1036

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

bkerr@calpine.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

LaBROSKI, JEFFREY

Plumbers Local Union No. 68
502 Link Road
P.O. Box 8746
Houston, TX 77249
(713) 869-3592

Fax: (713) 869-3671

Category: Labor

County: City of Houston

ski@plu68.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

LARMOND, SHAREEN

West Gulf Maritime Association
1717 Turning Basin Drive, Suite 200
Houston, TX 77029

Category: Business

County: Harris

shareen@wgma.org

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

LOVE, MICHAEL

Houston Independent School District
4400 West 18th Street
Houston, TX 77092
(713) 556-6715

Category: Education

County: Harris

mlove@houstonisd.org

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

LOWE, JONATHAN

International Alliance of Theatrical
Stage Employees
3030 North Freeway
Houston, TX 77009
(713) 697-3999

Category: Labor

County: City of Houston

jonrlowe@yahoo.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

MAHAGAOKAR, RAJEN

Grid United
Chief Financial Officer
(281) 300-3926

Category: Business

County: Harris

rajenmahagaokar@gmail.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

MELTON, EDWARD

Texas Library Association
5749 South Loop East
Houston, TX 77033
(713) 274-6600

Category: Literacy

County: Harris County

edward.melton@hcpl.net

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

OSER, MARGARET

United Way of Greater Houston
50 Waugh Drive
Houston, TX 77007
(713) 685-2788

Category: CBO

County: City of Houston

moser@unitedwayhouston.org

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

OZUNA, ADRIAN

Prosperity Bank
80 Sugar Creek Center Blvd
Sugar Land, TX 77478
(832) 259-7692

Category: Business

County: Harris

adrian.ozuna@prosperitybankusa.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

PUENTE, PAUL J.

Houston Gulf Coast Building and
Construction
Trades Council
1301 West 13th St, Suite D
Deer Park, TX 77536
(713) 926-4433

Fax: (713) 926-4918

Category: Labor

County: City of Houston

paul@hgcbctc.org

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

RODRIGUEZ, MELANIE

Elevate Latinas, LLC
444 N Everton St
Houston, TX 77033
(713) 899-6559

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

melanie@elevatelatinas.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

RUPANI, NASRUDDIN

Worlds Gold & Diamonds, Inc.
7500 Bellaire Blvd #900
Houston, TX 77036
(713) 995-7033

Category: Business

County: City of Houston

rupani@locostleader.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

SARKAR, MOU

Pearland Economic Development Corporation

3519 Liberty Drive, Suite 350

Pearland, TX 77581

(281) 997-3007

Category: Economic Development

County: Brazoria

msarkar@pearlandedc.com

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

SCHEINER, DANIELLE

Conroe Economic Development Council

300 W Davis Street

Conroe, TX 77301

(936) 522-3529

Category: Economic Development

County: Montgomery

scheiner@conroeedc.org

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

SCHMIDT, KERI

Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce

445 Commerce Green Boulevard

Sugar Land, TX 77478

(281) 491-0216

Fax: (281) 491-0112

Category: Business

County: Fort Bend

keri@fortbendcc.org

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

SEGOVIA, VALERIE GARCIA

Director, Outreach & Education, TEES

Nuclear Engineering & Science Center

1095 Nuclear Science Road

College Station, TX 77843

979-240-5005

Category: Education

County: Matagorda

vsegovia@tamu.edu

valeriegsegovia@gmail.com

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

SHAW, RICHARD

Harris County Labor Assembly,

AFL-CIO Council

1707 Prism Lane

Houston, TX 77043-3344

(713) 240-2472

Category: Labor

County: City of Houston

shawtrek@aol.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

STALEY, GIL

The Woodlands Area Economic Development Partnership

2107 Research Forest Drive, Suite 150

The Woodlands, TX 77380

(281) 363-8130

Fax: (281) 298-6874

Category: Business

County: Montgomery

gil.staley@edpartnership.net

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

TAYLOR, KATHERINE

Genesys Works - Houston

3100 Main Street, Suite 702

Houston, TX 77002

(713) 341-5777

Category: Public Assistance

County: City of Houston

ktaylor@genesysworks.org

Term: January 1, 2022 thru December 31, 2023

VAZQUEZ, LIZANDRA

Texas Workforce Commission

3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120

Houston, TX 77027

(713) 688-6890

Category: State Agency

lizandra.vazquez@wrksolutions.com

Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

WATSON, CAROLYN

William Stamps Farish Fund
1100 Louisiana, Suite 2200
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 757-7313
Category: CBO
County: City of Houston
carolyn17968@gmail.com
Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

WEBSTER, MICHAEL

Houston Community College
3100 Main Street
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 718-8030
Fax: (713) 718-5018
Category: Education
County: City of Houston
michael.webster@hccs.edu
Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

YU, BIN

MedxSunshine LLC
6501 Wesline
Houston, TX 77036
(713) 818-9687
Fax: (713) 718-5018
Category: Business
County: City of Houston
bin.yu@medxsunshine.com
Term: January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2024

WORKFORCE BOARD KEY STAFF:

Juliet Stipeche, Director
Aaron Sturgeon, Assistant Director
Michelle Castrow, Program Manager
Jenny Johnson, Quality Assurance Manager
Deborah Duke, Administrative Coordinator

Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120
P.O. Box 22777
Houston, TX 77227-2777
(713) 627-3200
Fax: (713) 993-4578
<http://www.wrksolutions.com>

Paving the Pathway to Success

Recognition

Background

Paving the Pathway to Success helps students with disabilities who are transitioning from high school or post-secondary education into work. Pathway to Success activities bridge the gap between school and work through professional workshops, mentoring, and work experience – helping students with disabilities obtain skills necessary to compete in today’s workforce. This program provides the intensive long-term support needed for students to gain confidence, broaden their view of the business world, and gain real world experience with a local employer.

Current Situation

Paving the Pathway to Success served 33 young people this year in a seven-month project that included three phases:

- In March through May 2023, participants learned employability, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills through a series of workshops.
- At the beginning of May, participants worked with a business mentor for up to six weeks on projects to develop products, services, marketing, or other ways to enhance the partner’s business.
 - At the end of the mentorship, there was a 2-day symposium, each team presented their final projects to an esteemed panel of judges. One team, Whataburger, was chosen as the winner.
- Following the business projects, Pathway participants worked in paid summer jobs for up to 5 weeks, 20 hours per week.

We want to offer our sincere gratitude and thanks to the participating businesses who made this year’s Pathway to Success possible for our local students:

- Space Center Houston
- Houston Museum of Natural Science
- DLZP Group
- The Harris Center
- Lt. Col. Rawn Wilson
- Moody Gardens

Audit and Monitoring Committee

Update for September 2023

The Audit and Monitoring Committee met on September 26, 2023, at 1:00 PM. Members - Guy Robert Jackson (Chair), Carl Bowles (Vice Chair), Willie Alexander, Cheryl Guido, Bobbie Henderson, and Doug Karr attended. Also attending was Mark Guthrie (Board Chair).

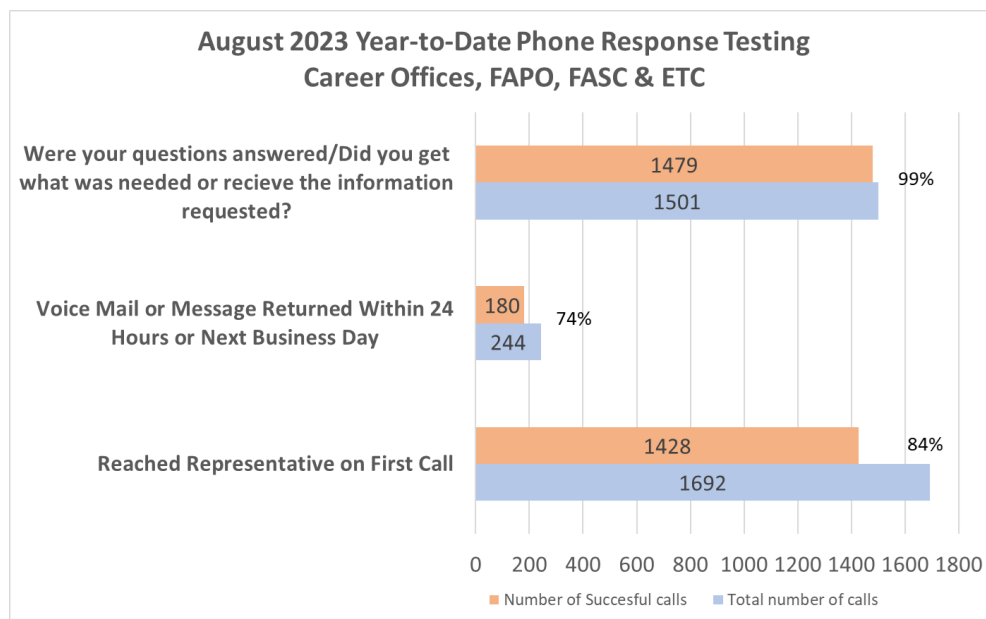
System Review

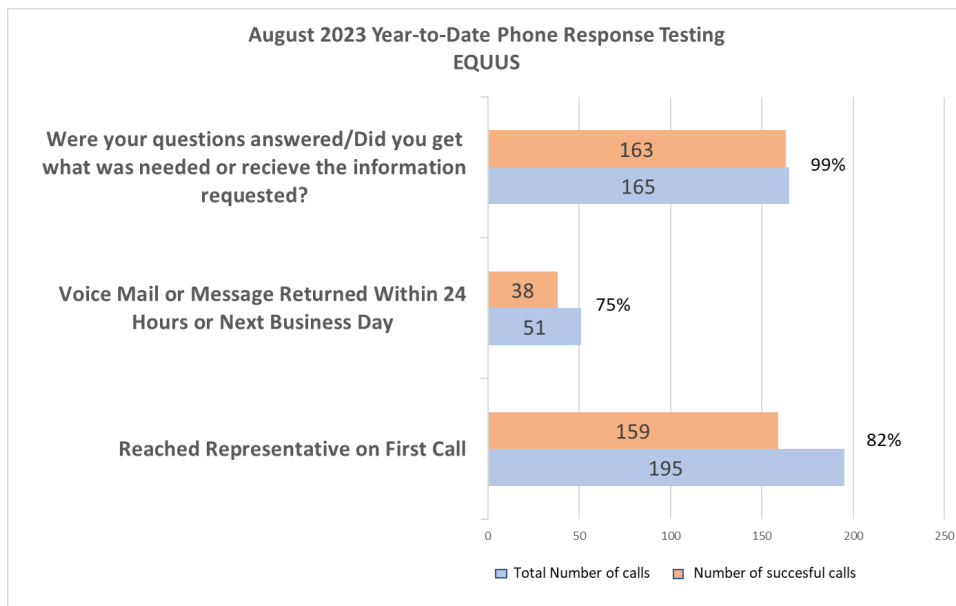
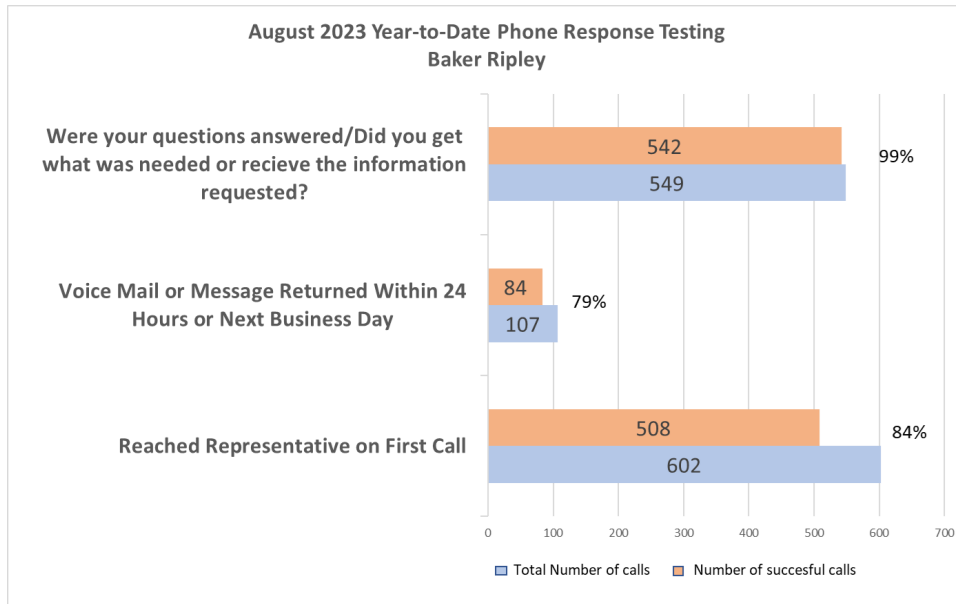
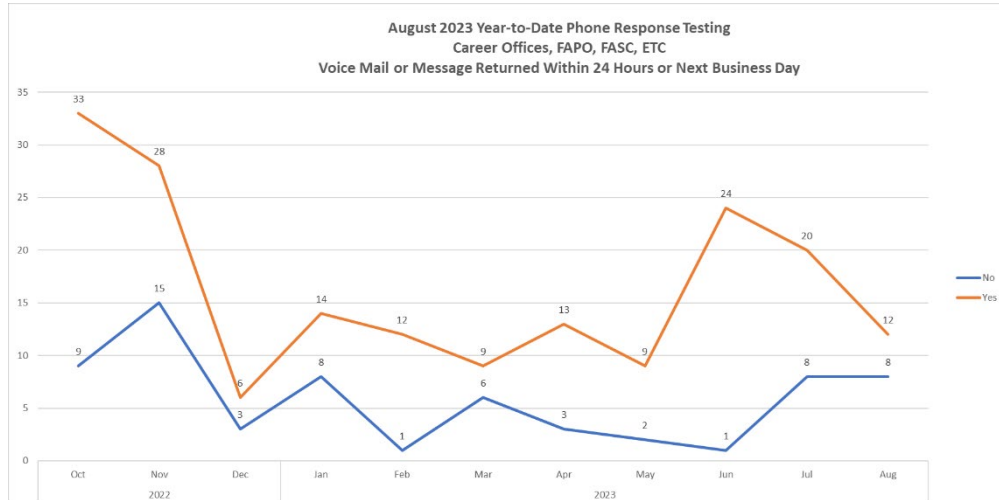
This report includes a contractor-level review of performance/production and expenditures.

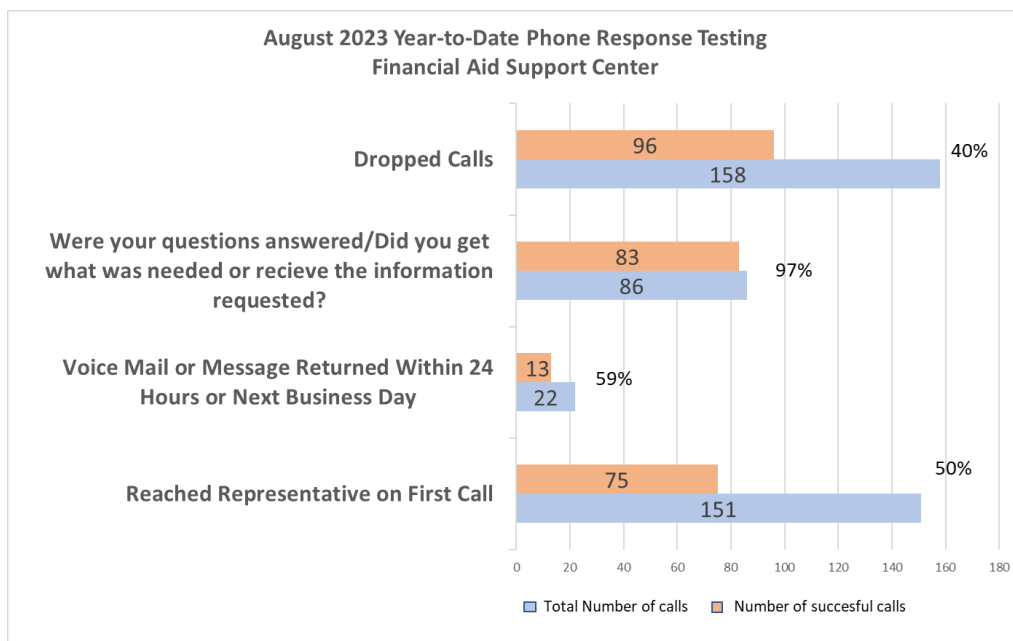
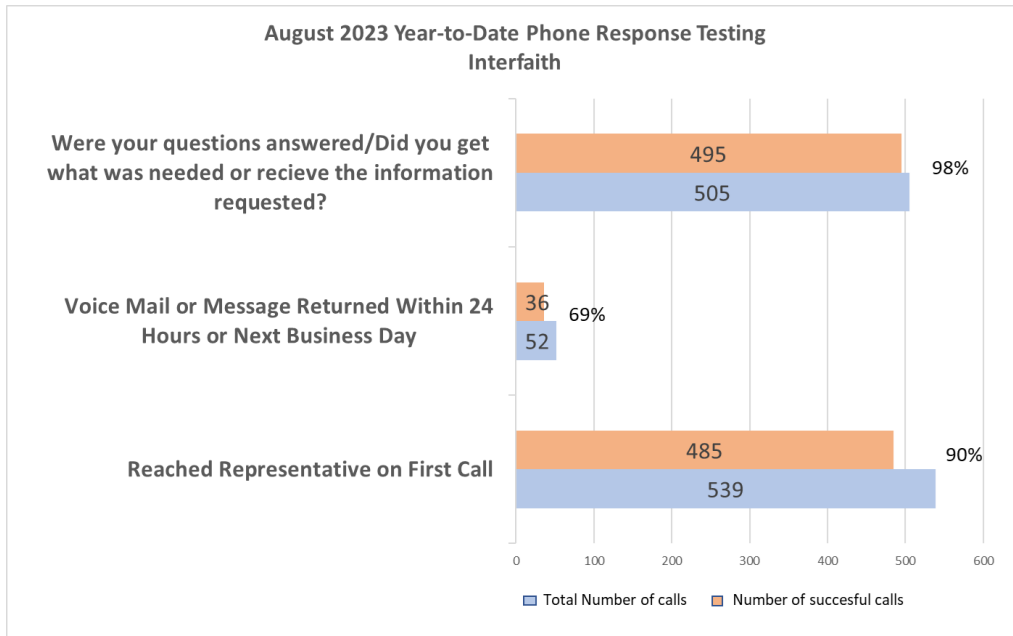
Customer Experience

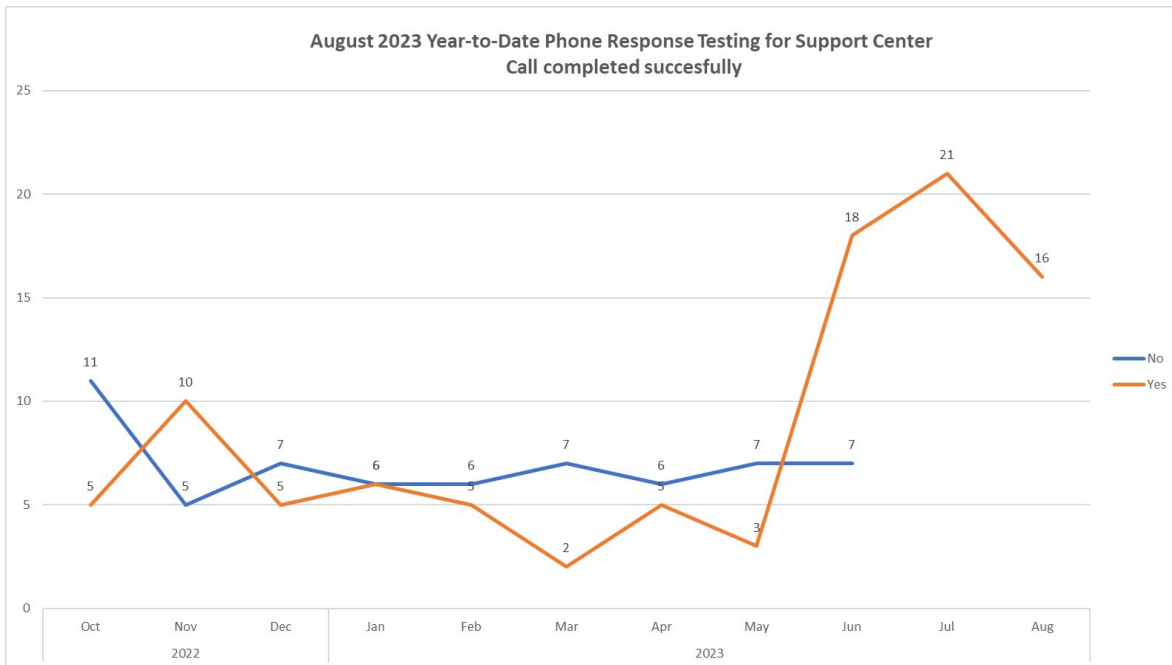
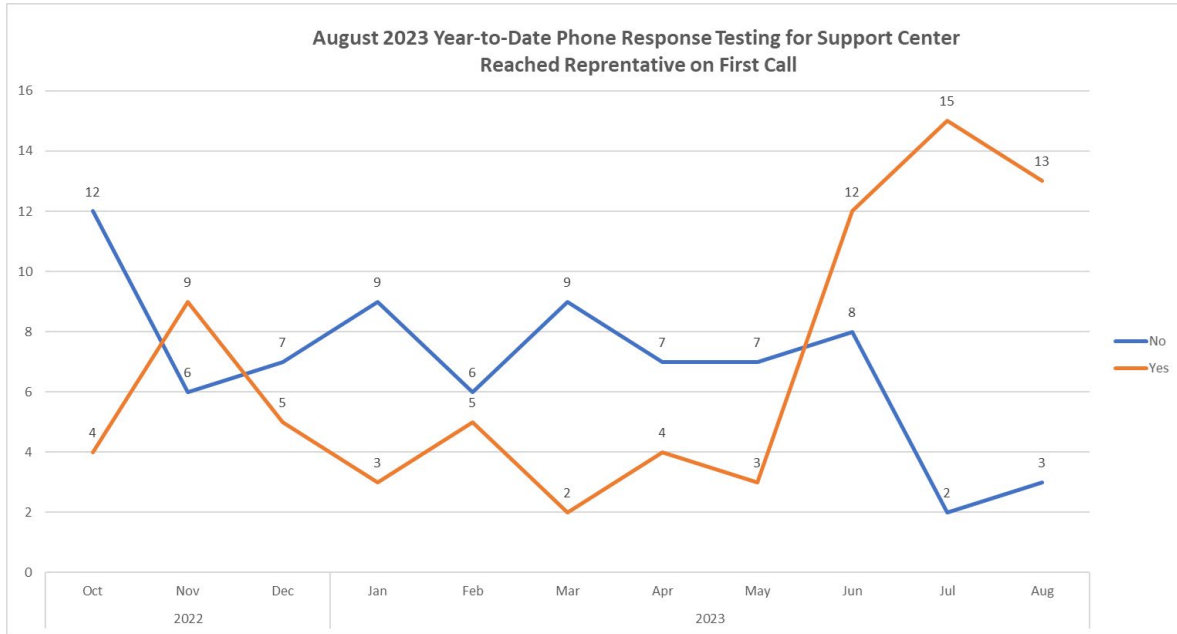
Phone Responsiveness

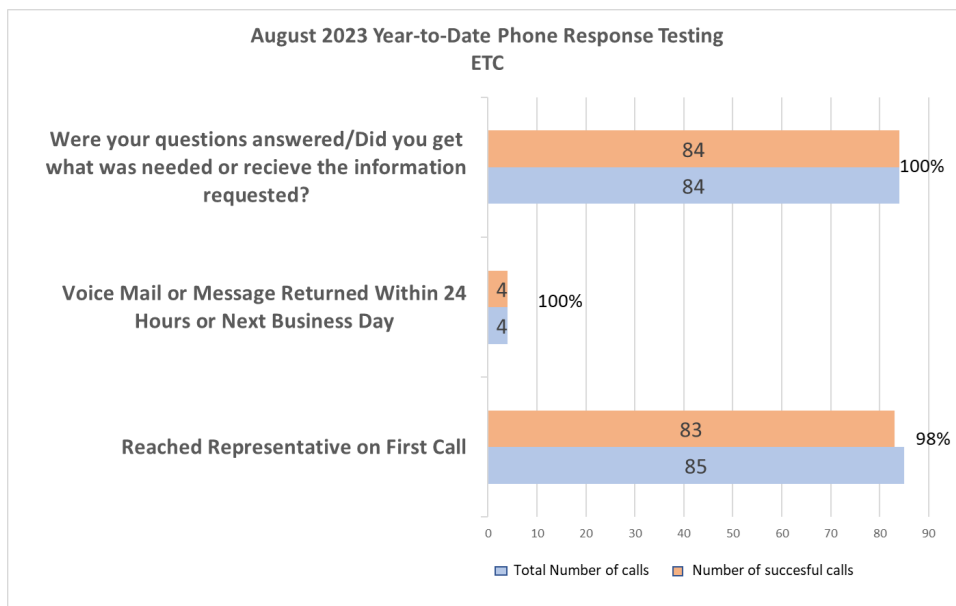
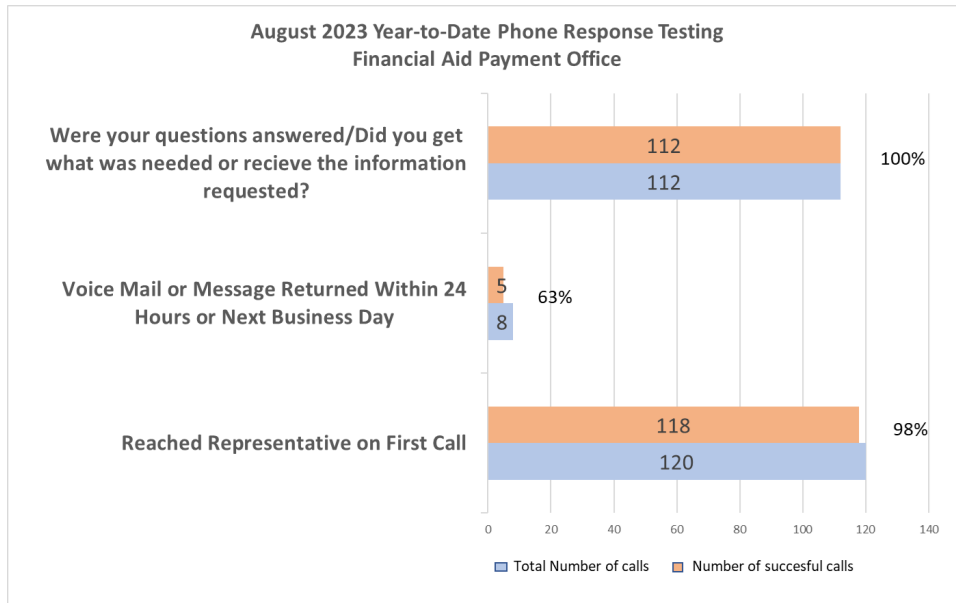
Voice mail responses within 24 hours in August 2023 decreased slightly to 74% from 75% in July and 76% in June.





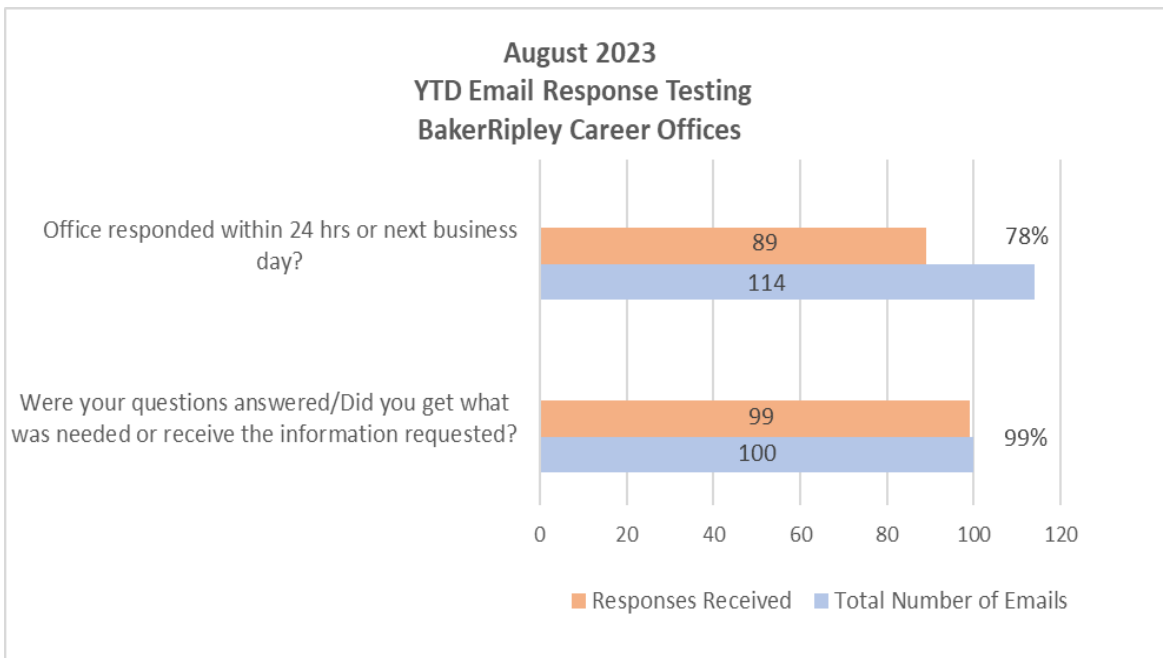
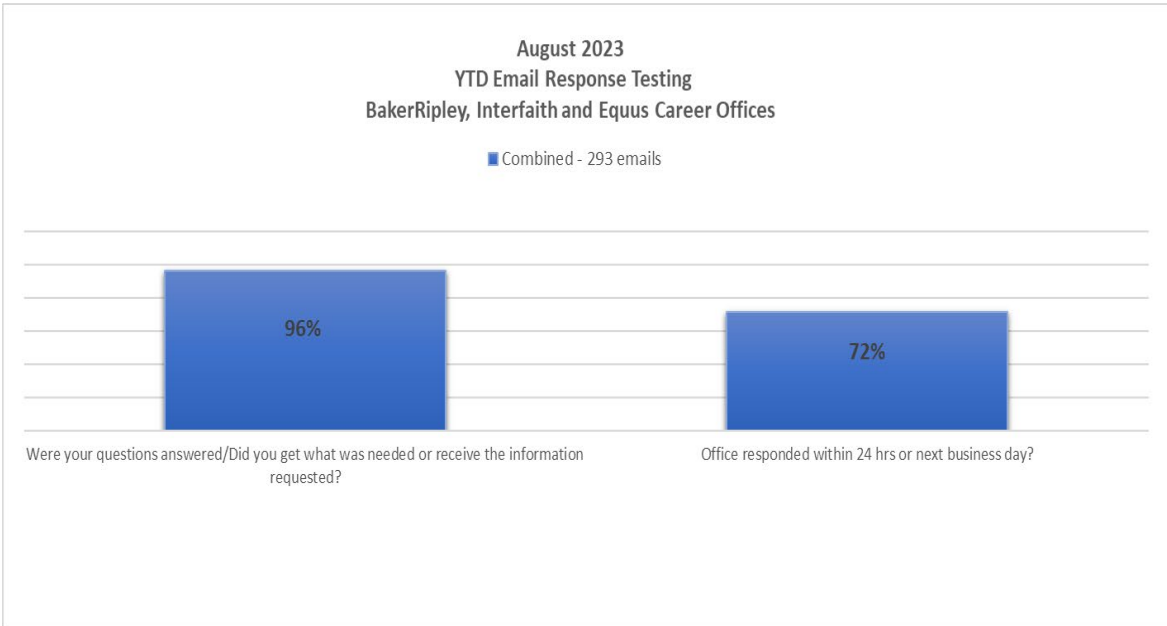


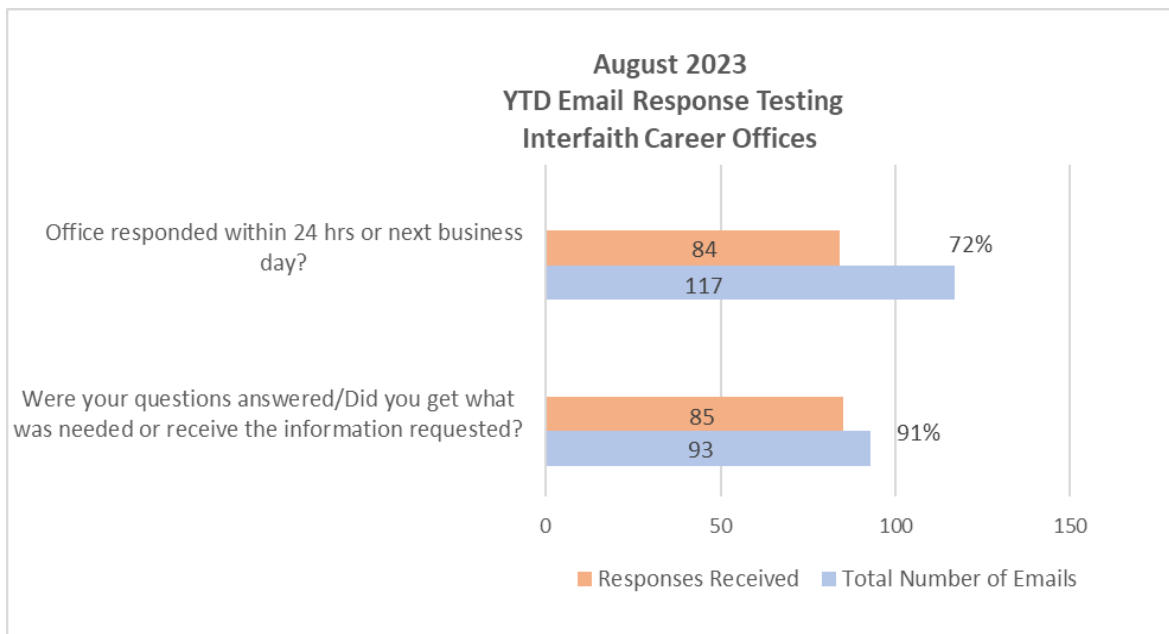
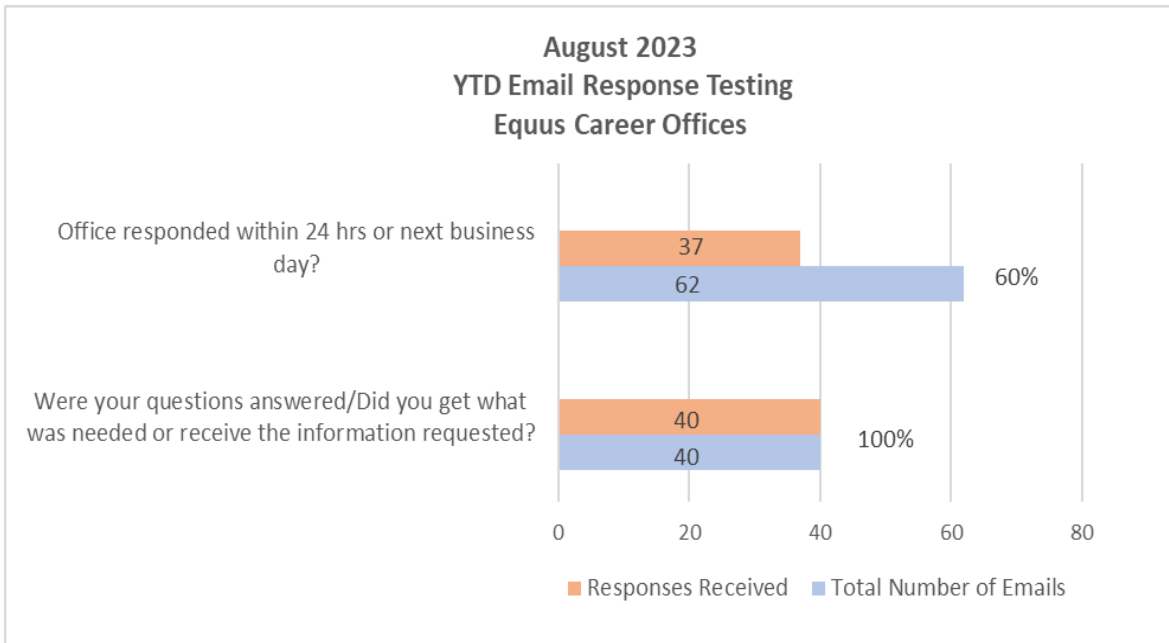




Email Responsiveness

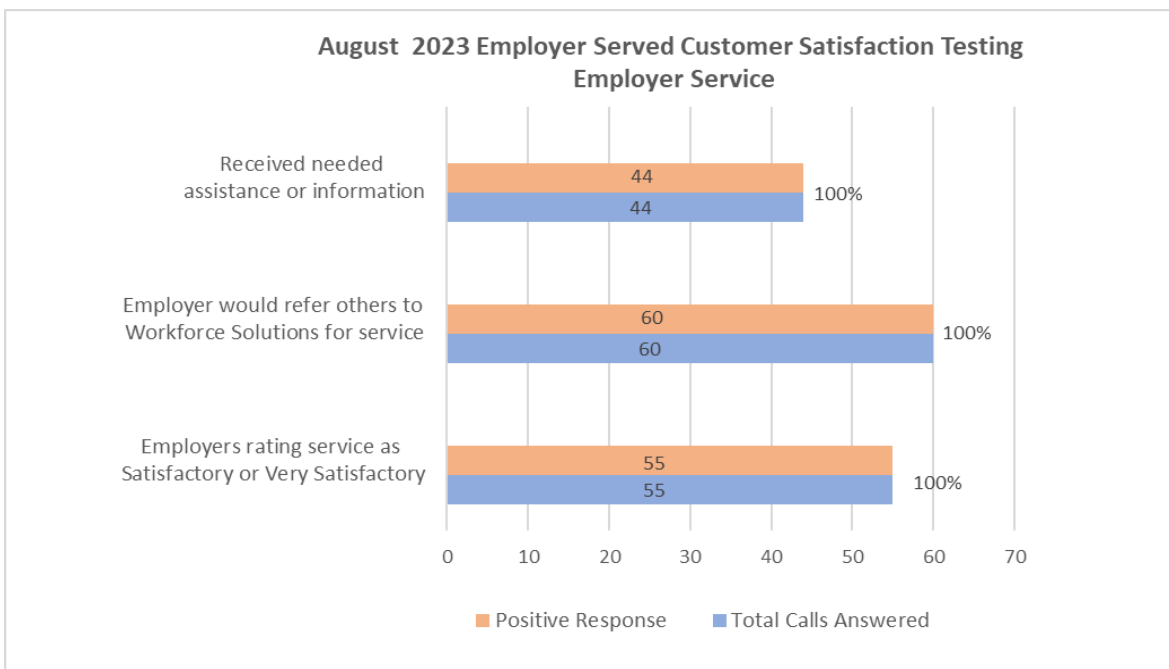
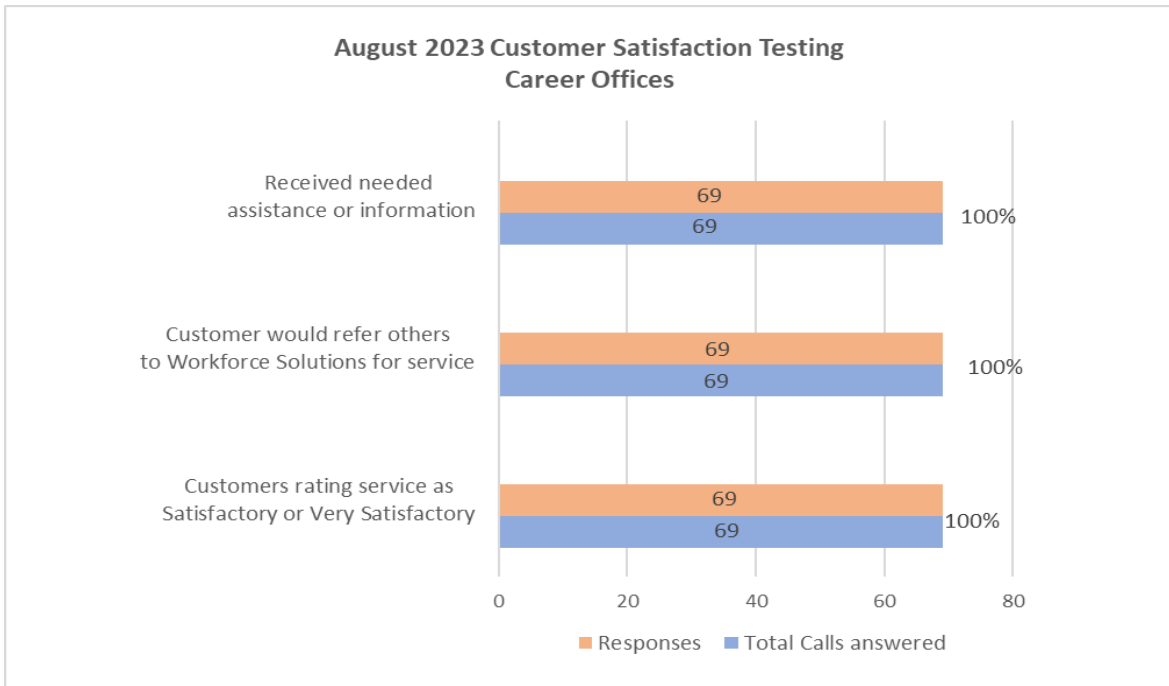
We tested the responsiveness of the career offices to emails sent to the career office email address found on Wrksolutions.com. Responsiveness within 24 hours dropped from 78% in June to 72% in July and August.





Customer Satisfaction

From a list of 143 customers receiving a service through a career office in August 2023, we spoke with 67 customers. We called 158 employers who interacted with Employer Service in the last three months and were able to talk with 55 employers. The charts below reflect what we heard.



Technical Program Compliance

Technical Program Compliance reviews consist of compliance testing of contract and policy requirements and customer experience testing conducted by the Quality Assurance Team. The scope of each review is determined by the terms and conditions specified in the service provider’s contract. Financial monitoring is conducted separately, which will be described later in this report.

We issued the final reports for **Adaptive Construction Solution (ACS), Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM), Career Team, and SERJobs**. All findings were addressed in the service provider responses.

We also issued the status report for the **Children's Learning Institute**. The report showed some errors in completing information security training and submitting required information security correspondence within the required timeframe. These deficiencies are often noted in the first-year service provider reviews.

We submitted documentation to TWC for completed worksite visits for 530 Summer Earn and Learn participants.

Currently, we are conducting childcare vendor testing for the Financial Aid Payment Office, completing testing for the career office service providers, and wrapping up fourth-quarter testing for the annual Financial Aid Support Center report. The Employment & Training Center draft report will go out this week, and we have started the 2024 monitoring reviews for adult education providers.

Financial Systems and Issues

The Board contracts with its procured CPA firms to conduct comprehensive financial monitoring of all Workforce Board service providers. The most recent finalized financial monitoring reviews include the following:

- The 2023 – 2024 financial monitoring schedule is finalized, and we have received one draft report for the Chinese Community Center. The November committee meeting will have an update on the final report.

Status update 2022-2023 cycle:

- Four final reports completed.
- Eight monitoring complete with pending responses.
- Nine monitoring completed with final report pending.

We changed our practice to ensure new contracts are monitored at the first available date within the first six months of the contract year. Our new contracts with Children's Learning Institute and SERCO will have a financial monitoring review completed and reported within the first year.

Accountability and Improvement Plans

The Texas Workforce Commission and the Gulf Coast Workforce Board address performance and production issues with progressive intervention strategies to support improvement. This includes Performance Improvement Actions,

formalized Technical Assistance, or Corrective Action Plans. The current interventions from the TWC and GCWB include the following:

TWC Interventions:

- **Employer Workforce Assistance (EWA)** – The TWC requires the GCWB to reach 95% of an EWA target of 32,270. We have been keeping the TWC updated on the six strategies that the Board implemented to meet performance measures as described in our TAP. While there have been challenges, the Market Share Taskforce has been working hard to keep us on track to achieve the TWC's annual goal. SERCO of Texas has also onboarded with us early to support the effort. Our reports show that we are at 30,692 as of September 25, 2023, reaching 95.1% of the TWC's EWA goal, but we will work diligently until the deadline of 9/30/23. TWC may lift the TAP when the Board meets its contracted performance target for four months and demonstrates the timely and effective implementation of all other elements of the TAP.
- **Measurable Skills Gain (MSG)** – In June 2023, the TWC requested a list of actions the Board is taking to improve performance documenting academic and occupational progress for customers enrolled in a WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Education or Training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment. We submitted our response with the steps taken to improve Measurable Skills Gains (MSG) and have since participated in formal monthly calls and bi-weekly informal calls with the TWC to discuss progress and strategies. We are currently projected to meet these measures.

GCWB Interventions:

- **Adult Education and Literacy** – At the end of the 2021-2022 program year, Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) was placed on a Corrective Action Plan to address data integrity, accuracy, and programmatic and operational anomalies. Since March of 2023, HCDE has received intense technical assistance from Region 6 ESC and the Workforce AEL team.

HCDE has increased their data entry team to assist in improving the timeliness of data entry. Within the Corrective Action Plan, it was recommended to HCDE to assess students in more than one content area other than Math. HCDE continues to struggle with getting students assessed in multiple content areas. As a result, we continue to provide technical assistance and guidance on the benefits of multiple content assessments.

HCDE has undergone a program responsibility restructure that divides the region into sectors. The goal of this structural shift is to strengthen HCDE's process with identifying students' needs and connecting to appropriate resources. Within our efforts to better align HCDE workforce literacy training courses to the consortium, the Workforce AEL manager participated in a workforce training planning session to build career pathways in education, construction, and medical occupations.

HCDE has been making improvements with timeliness of data entry, validation, and accuracy, but they have more work to do before their program is sustainable.

- **Equus Support Center Corrective Action Plan** – The Corrective Action Plan given to the Support Center in April 2023 is approaching the six-month mark. Although the Support Center has made progress, we will not end the CAP at the six-month mark. We will amend the CAP to remove areas Board staff identified as making sufficient progress. Board staff will continue bi-weekly meetings for a minimum of an additional three (3) months.

Board staff continues to meet with TWC for Technical Assistance related to the Support Center. TWC informed Board staff during the August meeting they continue to receive a decrease in complaints. The monthly meetings will now change from monthly to quarterly. The first quarterly meeting is scheduled for November 2023.

- **Equus Career Office Corrective Action Plan** – Equus has made significant strides in meeting its performance targets since being placed on a Corrective Action Plan. They have surpassed Universal Youth, WIOA Youth, and Work-based Learning targets. Youth Services emphasizes the importance of accountability and uniformity of practices across all three career offices. Equus's national and regional leadership have been actively involved throughout the process, providing much-needed support to the local team. The staff and leaders have participated in relevant training and self-development, resulting in an improved knowledge base and awareness.

Youth Services will continue to meet with Equus to monitor progress and improvements while addressing areas for further enhancement. Equus has been informed of the expectations to meet targets and deliver quality outcomes for young adults, including upskilling through training and work-based learning, leading to long-term employment with sustainable wages. Youth Services is currently reviewing performance outcomes to ensure the rapid growth did not adversely affect the quality of services. A thoughtful strategic plan for employee retention and scaling of processes is needed for

EQUUS to maintain and meet all board and TWC deliverables and performance outcomes going forward.

Next Meeting

We propose to schedule the next committee meeting for 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 16, 2023.

Education Committee

Update for October 2023

The Education Committee met on September 27, at 2:30 p.m. to receive updates on several key education initiatives.

Members present included Bobbie Henderson (committee chair), Doug Karr (committee vice chair), Helen Cavazos, Cheryl Guido, Mark Guthrie, Margaret Oser, and Valerie Segovia.

Tri-Agency Regional Convener Grant

By way of background, the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative was created in March 2016 by Governor Greg Abbott. It tasks the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Workforce Commission to work collaboratively to develop strong links between education and industry with the goal of helping Texas grow in economic prosperity. The Texas Regional Pathways Network supports the mission, vision, and work of the Tri-Agency Initiative to build regional talent pipelines through high-quality career and educational pathways into high-wage, in-demand industries. Earlier this year, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board was awarded a \$600,000 Tri-Agency Regional Convener grant, which is now well underway.

The Tri-Agency Regional Convener Pathways Leadership Team has been assembled and has already engaged in two meetings. The initiative's timeline and deliverables include:

1) Phase 1: By September 30, 2023, we shall create:

- Pathways Map,
- Sustainability Plan, and
- Leadership Roster.

2) Phase 2: By January 31, 2024, we shall create:

- Gap Analysis,
- Partner Intake/Interviews, and
- Data Analysis.

3) Phase 3: By Spring 2024/Fall 2024, we shall create:

- Regional Strategic Plan,
- 2-Year Implementation Plan, and
- Regional Dashboard.

4) Phase 4: By Summer 2024, we shall create:

- “Learn About Work” (immersive learning experiences in healthcare, education and building and construction) and “Learn at Work” (work-based learning opportunities in the targeted industries).

By February 2024, the Board will also host a collaborative conference at the Ion to begin aligning regional resources to better prepare youth for the opportunities of their future. Stakeholders from the region will convene to discuss the alignment of key partners in our region from workforce, higher education, public education, and employers.

Work is also underway on a gap analysis, and we will soon be conducting key participant interviews throughout the region. Plans are also underway for two summer experiences for youth that will target students in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in the region. Older students will participate in a six-week summer earn and learn opportunity in the targeted industries of health care, education, and building and construction. Plans are to include 11 students in each industry. Students who complete the program will be eligible for a \$3,600 stipend.

Younger students who are 14-16 will be the primary audience for a one-week immersive program at Rice University focused on the same industries. Seventy-five (75) students from the region will be selected to have the opportunity to explore the targeted occupations both at Rice University and on field trips related to the targeted industries. They will have the opportunity to learn job readiness skills, meet and interact with academic and industry leaders, and engage in a project-based learning opportunity. Participants will be able to reside on campus for a week and will receive a stipend upon successful completion of the program.

Financial Aid Support Center

Over the last four (4) months, the Support Center has been undergoing a restructuring. The restructuring includes implementing a new tiered pay system for existing staff, hiring needed permanent staff, and purchasing furniture, equipment, and software licenses.

Since the August Board meeting Equus Support Center has:

- Created two specialized units - one dedicated to production and the second dedicated to the call center.
- Hired a production manager.
- Increased staffing to 110.
- Restructured the onboarding and training.
- Transitioned voucher and training cases to career offices.

The Support Center will continue to fill all positions, purchase needed furniture, technology, and equipment.

The Corrective Action Plan given to the Support Center in April 2023 is approaching the six-month mark. Although the Support Center has made progress during this time, Board staff will continue the CAP, amending it to remove the areas in which the Board staff has identified sufficient progress. Board staff will continue bi-weekly meetings for an additional three (3) month minimum.

TWC has postponed the launch of the new state child care system, Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C), originally scheduled to launch on October 1, 2023, until February 2024.

Early Childhood Quality

The Board provides a variety of services to improve quality in early childhood education throughout the region. To continuously address the needs of providers and families, we have identified two areas for targeted support: a) early education teacher recruitment and preparation; and b) families and home-based child care support.

Child care providers in our region and across the state continue to struggle to fill essential early education teacher positions to support children, families, and the child care industry. The shortage of child care teachers significantly impacts the workforce, child care program stability, children's learning and development, and working families. With fewer teachers available to care for and educate our children, many parents struggle to find quality child care options that meet their needs. For families, this often leads to missed workdays, decreased productivity, and even lost job opportunities. We have the unique opportunity to support our child care industry by investing in teacher preparation activities to increase the pool of qualified entry-level teachers through training, in-class mentoring, and paid work experience.

Many families with young children depend on home-based child care, which includes family child care (FCC) and relatives to care for their children while they work. These forms of home-based care and learning are essential to meet the needs of families who need flexible child care options to meet the needs of their families, including infant and toddler care and families who work non-traditional hours. In addition, there is strong evidence that families play an essential role in their children's development and learning. We realize that all families want the best for their children. Still, not all families have the tools, resources, and support they need to help their children reach their full potential successfully.

To address these issues, we plan to issue two separate requests for proposals (RFPs) to solicit qualified contractors to work with us to

- 1) Train and upskill individuals willing to become entry-level early childhood teachers.
 - a) recruit eligible young adults, adult education, and literacy participants.
 - b) provide professional development resulting in Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.
 - c) provide in-classroom paid skills development and mentoring.
 - d) develop career roadmap to upskill individuals to higher paying jobs in early education or other related fields.
 - e) connect individuals with child care programs for employment post training.

- 2) Provide supportive resources to engage families and home-based child care providers.
 - a) facilitate training events and activities to support home-based providers and the children in their care.
 - b) create opportunities for home-based providers to enhance and develop sustainable business practices.
 - c) collaborate and partner with existing entities that provide a variety of family engagement services.
 - d) connect families to community resources needed to strengthen the families' ability to support their children.

We anticipate launching these two early education quality initiatives in January 2024.

Child Care Expansion Grant

In late August, we contracted with the University of Houston to develop the Child Care Provider Bootcamp to expand early child care by examining barriers, internal

operations, and services that will lead to an effective ecosystem, innovative partnerships, and better outcomes. The University of Houston staff is currently going through required onboarding orientation, logistical activities, and trainings required prior to launching work activities.

The Board staff, along with H-GAC’s Communications team, has launched Phase I of the Early Child Care Expansion website.

The Board staff has identified opportunities for following up on customers' needs based on the results of a survey of customers by PMF, a Harris County contractor. The results will provide Board staff with perspective and insight to use in its ongoing work with the University of Houston and recommendations and enhancements to the workforce system’s operations. Customers with critical needs identified through the survey were connected to community resources.

PFM Survey Follow-Up

Impact without Childcare	Ideas for Potential Expansion Strategy to Support Barriers
Missed work/lost hours	Creation of supportive services and resource portal, Front end navigation to handle potential issues early, Develop strategic partners for assistance to families Develop flexible funding/safety net resources
Dependent on family for care and financial support	Potential opportunity to outreach with families to: Consider being a register home provider, Connect educational resources (i.e. Children’s Museum).
Distanced traveled for family support	Development of flexible funding/safety net resources
Unsure of application status	Application assistance, Education about the process, Connection to other services – CHW/Navigator
Missed calls/emails regarding application status	New systems should address some of this; however, creation of a job task that focuses on follow-ups
Cannot attend classes w/o childcare	Work with U of H to explore the idea of mobile and other non traditional childcare opportunity, Align flexible funding/safety net resources for those with critical situations
Upskilling and increased income created financial barriers	Career Center guidance and counseling Connection opportunities for financial counseling -
Credit Repair – using credit card to pay for care	Connection opportunities to AEL – Financial Literacy

Next steps in grant activities include:

- Establishing an overall workplan and Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed (RACI) chart that will facilitate project monitoring and tracking of project tasks to ensure a successful outcome;

- Interviewing and hiring additional Board staff to work with the University of Houston, including a Senior Planner for curriculum development and research, a planner for marketing and community outreach, and a planner for data analysis;
- Building alliances with internal programs, strategic partners, and stakeholders to enhance resources;
- Engaging Employer Services to identify their partners and how they can be advocates for this work;
- Observing internal program and workflow development to determine gaps and then creating a process for effective customer reciprocity from other programs to child care programs;
- Continuing the buildout of the Early Child Care Expansion webpage in collaboration with University of Houston; and
- Providing community engagement and outreach to garner information and perspectives and provide resources as needed.

Youth Services

Youth Services continues to work towards more strategic collaboration, communication, and coordination of services for young adults aged 16-24 to improve relevancy and impact in our 13-county region. As part of our service delivery, we connect young adults to WIOA Title I Youth program services where they gain meaningful knowledge of and access to critical labor market information, including high-growth, high-demand career paths. Additionally, we connect young adults to WorkInTexas.com to connect with employers with immediate job opportunities.

In efforts to improve the quality of services offered to young adults, Youth Services implemented a monthly youth meeting dedicated to discussing best practices, performance, opportunities, and successes. Through this meeting we have identified the need for youth focused trainings including:

- How to conduct a motivational interview
- Working with youth with lived experiences
- Implicit Bias
- Youth engagement

Through exploration of these training offerings, we met with Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS), which provides such trainings and offers technical assistance to its member organizations. We are reviewing organizational membership offerings for our system to supplement our current trainings with those critical and specific to working with youth.

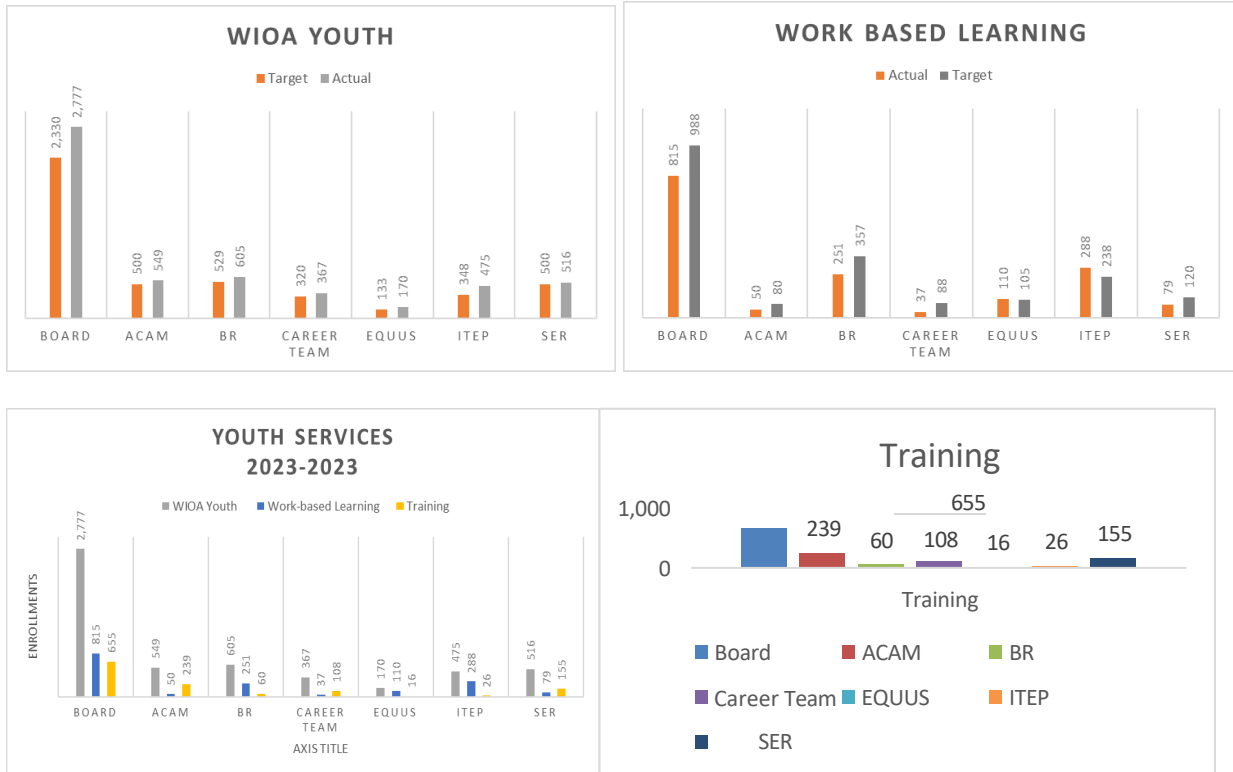
Youth Services has also revamped our youth landing page on the Workforce Solutions website. The page now includes services available to youth (14 Youth Elements), career exploration tools and resources, and a connection to WorkInTexas.com to connect to employment opportunities. The contract for a dedicated youth portal is being executed. We anticipate the launch of the portal in late winter/early spring. Young adults will be able to access the portal from the youth landing page following its launch.

As a result of a Department of Labor (DOL) visit earlier this year, we have addressed the following areas of opportunity:

- 14 Youth Program Elements – Youth customers were not made aware of the fourteen youth program elements available through Workforce Solutions. To address this concern, these youth elements have been added to our website. A one-pager with these service offerings has been created and will be provided to all youth customers. As required by DOL, youth will attest to receipt of this information. This will be recorded in the data management system. The Youth Guidebook is being revised to include this new requirement. The revised version will be disseminated to the system upon completion.
- Youth Self-Attestation Policy and Procedures – Our system policies and procedures on youth eligibility were updated to allow additional flexibilities and remove barriers to service. The policy was updated and Youth Services met with service provider leadership and staff to stress the use of self-attestation where applicable. This issue is also being addressed in the current revisions to the Youth Guidebook.
- Youth Entrepreneurship Training Reporting – Staff had improperly documented youth entrepreneurship training in TWIST. The current revisions to the Youth Guidebook include a matrix with TWIST service codes and definitions for clarity on proper use of service codes.

Youth Services has exceeded targets for Universal Youth and WIOA Youth Customers, and Work-based learning enrollments. For Work-based learning, ACAM, Baker Ripley, Career Team, and SER Jobs have not yet met their target but

continue to show progress daily. As we move into the next program year, we are focusing on outcomes for customers placed into services. The goal would be that training and work-based learning are stacked to increase the chance for the customer obtaining employment in the field of study.



Summer Earn and Learn

This was the sixth year of our Summer Earn and Learn Program (SEAL). This program is a partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) to place young adults into paid work experience opportunities. VRS set a goal of 525 placements, and we exceeded this goal by 86 placements. This was the first year we have met our SEAL placement goal. Youth Services worked with VRS leadership to launch this project earlier this year than in past years. Workflows and processes were also improved in response to addressing opportunities for improvement from last year. The improved workflows allowed for better and more timely communication which was a great contributor to this year's success.

Overview

Count

Total number of VR customers who registered for SEAL program	897
Total number of VR participants who completed the Work Readiness Training	163
Total number of VR participants who were placed in Paid Work Experience	611
Total number of VR participants that completed at least five weeks of the Paid Work Experience	550
Total number of worksites that participated in the SEAL program	256

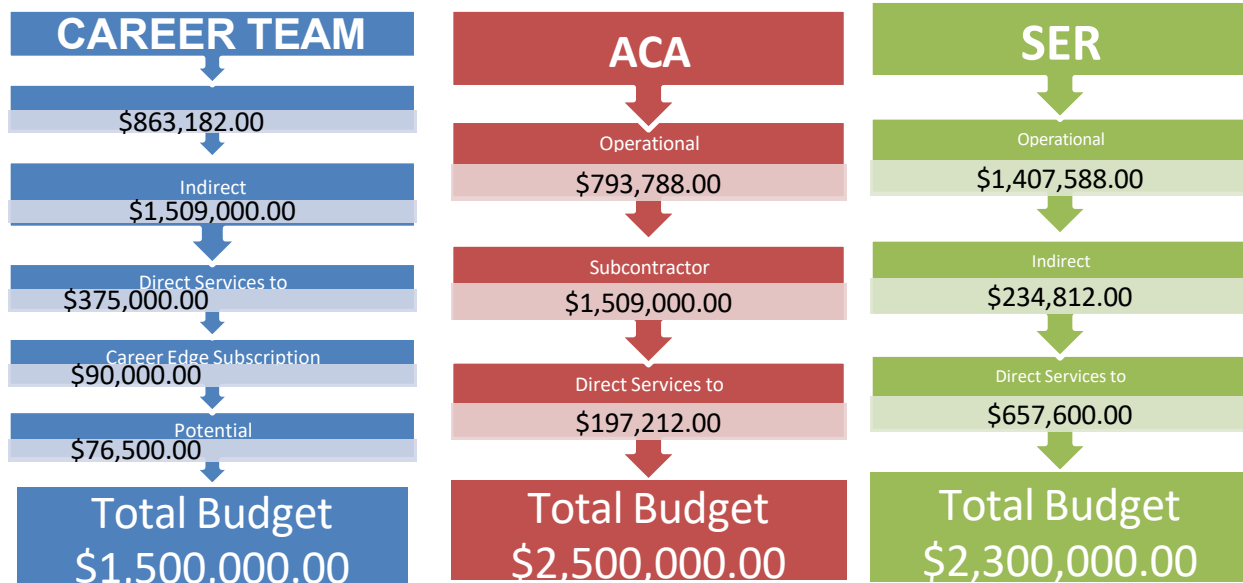
Next Gen Contract Updates

Next Gen launched in 2021 as GCWB innovative response to address a previous gap of connecting with out-of-school and opportunity/at risk youth. Our Next Gen staff are out in the community with an intentional focus of connecting with this population. Next Gen staff work with customers to create a comprehensive plan to meet the young adult's employment goals by connecting them to WIOA 14 Youth Elements. Eligible customers are placed in work-based learning and/or training programs to gain the necessary skills and certifications needed to successfully obtain employment with a sustainable wage in high-growth, high-demand occupations. One unique feature of Next Gen is their flexibility in selecting high-demand, short-term training providers which allow young adults to quickly upskill and enter sustainable career pathways.

Youth Services conducted a comprehensive review of the NextGen service providers, ACAM, Career Team, and SER Jobs to better understand their work and in response to concerns raised by customers, training providers, and community-based organizations. Youth Services and contract management staff reviewed budgets, system outcome data, reports compiled by service providers, and TWIST cases.

This review revealed egregious practices, including reverse referrals, violation of WIOA Youth participant requirements for participation, excessive costs for training services, poor representation of Workforce Solutions branding, low/no expectations for opportunity youth, proprietary software creating barriers to services for young adults, and the exhaustion of funds with poor employment outcomes.

Career Team was awarded \$1,500,000.00, ACAM awarded \$2,500,000.00, and SER \$2,300,000.00. The following is an overview of each service provider's budget allocation and outcomes.



WORK BASED LEARNING, TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT								
Service Provider	Youth Targets	Youth Actuals	WBL Targets	WBL Actuals	Enrolled in Training	Obtained Credential/ Certification of Completion	Employed Outside Industry	Employed in Industry
ACAM	500	549	80	50	138	110	50	24
SER	500	516	120	79	167	122	105	60
Career Team	320	367	88	37	117	98	33	14

As a result of the poor outcomes and findings for the NextGen service providers, the contract language is being amended to clearly outline expectations and to mandate use of Workforce Solutions system partners FAPO for all funding tied to customers. Additionally, Next Gen will be required to utilize G&A Partners as the employer of record for work-based learning experiences. These changes will align all service providers within the system and allow for more consistent reporting, yielding better oversight and management of contracts. Several changes will also be incorporated in the roles, responsibilities, and deliverables to clarify service delivery and outcomes. Youth Services will create a uniform reporting template which aligns with the contracts. Service providers will be held accountable for all deliverables, with corrective action warranted after three months of not meeting requirements and with the ability to terminate contracts at any time during the contract period as deemed appropriate.

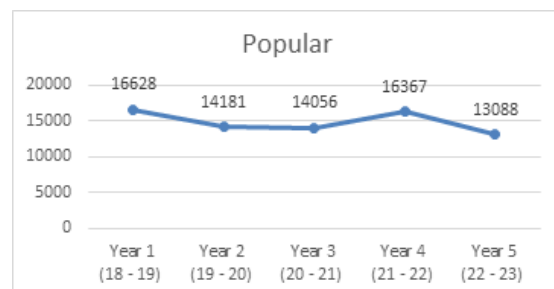
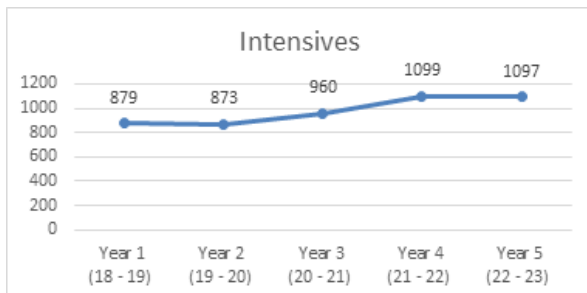
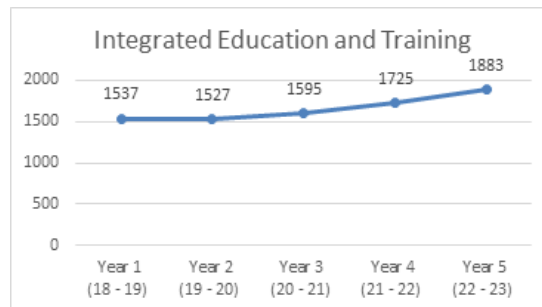
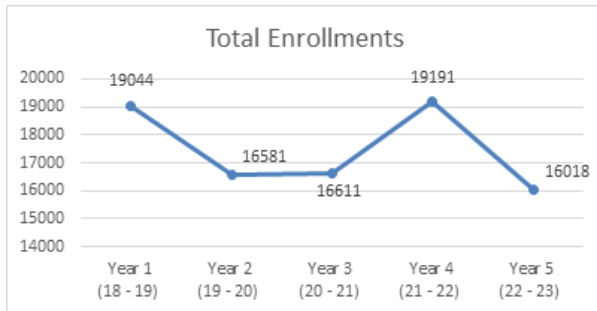
Adult Education & Literacy (AEL)

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act – which authorizes the activities for publicly funded adult education – is part of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (Title II of the Act). The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is the grantee

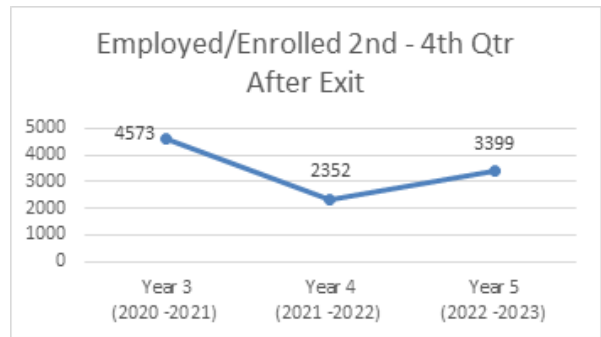
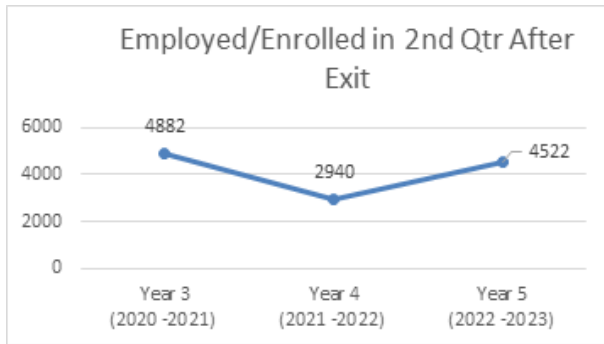
and fiscal agent for the Gulf Coast Adult Education Consortium. This consortium comprises eight community-based organizations, six community colleges, and one education service center that operates as the lead agency providing technical assistance and support to our fourteen subrecipient contractors.

We provide adult education and literacy instruction at more than 300 sites throughout the 13-county region. Adult education and literacy services are offered face-to-face, remotely, or through hybrid instruction. Service includes English language instruction, literacy classes, adult basic education, adult secondary education, integrated education, GED preparation and joint basic education-skills training classes, college and career readiness, employability skills, services for internationally trained professionals, job search assistance, training, workplace literacy, and digital literacy.

Over the past five years, enrollment has not been stable. Year 1 remains our strongest total enrollment year. In Years 2 and 3 we experienced a decrease in enrollment due to the pandemic. Within Year 4, we saw the impact of government financial relief; this support provided financial stability for individuals to pursue upskilling opportunities. Upon completion of the program the individuals exited AEL and rejoined the workforce. Over the course of Year 5 we saw the results of the impact that we made in Year 4 - we were successful in upskilling individuals, but then we had to face the challenge of building trust and gaining the interest of new individuals to want to enroll in our adult education and literacy services.

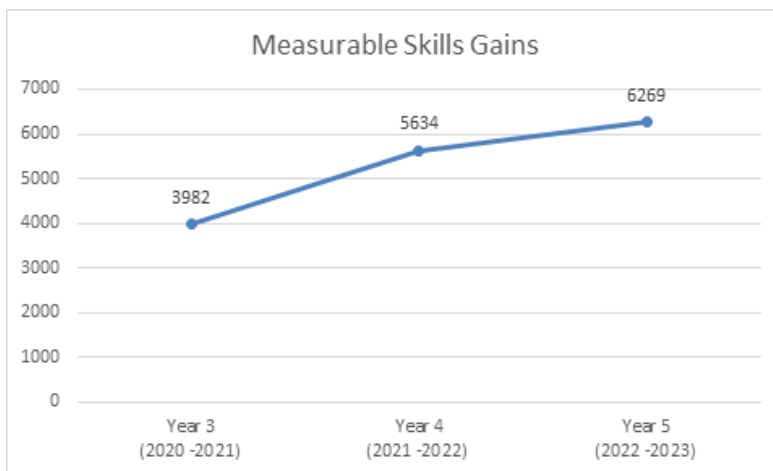


Similar to data in our production numbers, within Year 4, with the increase in enrollment in adult education, we show a decrease in employment and enrollment in post-secondary, and then upon completion and exit the employment and post-secondary enrollment shows an instant increase in Year 5.



Through federal guidance, we track participants' progress in AEL activities, performance criteria are selected based on the most appropriate program plan to measure activities related to participants' goals and programs.

Measurable outcomes for AEL recently expanded to two broad Measurable Skills Gain (MSG) categories, measuring basic education activities and those designed primarily to measure workforce training in IET. The expanded MSG options now provides opportunities to focus efforts on measuring progress of IET and workplace literacy participants with the most appropriate and suitable MSG option.



The expanded measures aided in our increase of MSG obtainment.

MSG Type	Name	Criteria
Type 1a	Achievement on an NRS-approved pretest or posttest	Any AEL participant who achieves at least one education function level on an approved NRS test.
Type 1b	Postsecondary enrollment	Any AEL participant with documented enrollment in postsecondary education or training during the same program year.
Type 2	HSE achievement	Any AEL participant with attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.
Type 3	Transcript or report card	Participants with documented secondary transcript or report card with at least 12 hours per semester or a total of at least 12 hours over 2 completed consecutive semesters.
Type 4	Progress toward milestones	Participants in workplace literacy or IET who show satisfactory or better progress report toward established milestones from an employer or training vendor.
Type 5	Passing an occupational exam or progress toward attaining occupational skills identified by trade-related benchmarks for specific occupations	Participants enrolled in IET Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as knowledge-based exams.

The Adult Education and Literacy program year runs from June 1st – July 30th and we are currently in the first quarter of program Year 6.

Our board staff has increased from a team of one to a team of three. We have added a Senior Planner and Program Administrator. The new additions to the team come to us with specialized backgrounds that will help develop and advance our Gulf Coast AEL Consortium to greater heights. This year some of our key focus areas are program service quality, distance learning and career pathway development.

Our Senior Planner comes to us with a background in quality assurance and monitoring. The Senior Planner role and responsibilities will be focused on researching and analyzing historical quality assurance ratings of our individual programs. The role will also be charged with identifying and managing existing and emerging risk that stem from programmatic activities and subrecipients' job roles and responsibilities.

Our Program Administrator comes to the team with experience in data analytics, professional development coordination, and oversight of workforce integrated education and training programs. The program administrator is charged with overseeing the distance learning curriculum implementation across the consortium, including oversight of the progress of our Burlington English initiative. Another key focus area for the program administrator is career pathways and lattices development, encompassing multiple components. Adult education has always offered workforce training courses, with little alignment to the occupational offerings with the workforce system. The program administrator will work on aligning the current approved trainings offered through the career offices to the trainings that are offered through adult education and literacy programs. This work will be completed in cohorts that will start with the medical, construction and education industries. Groupings will be developed to closely align with the work that will take place within the workforce tri-agency convener grant.

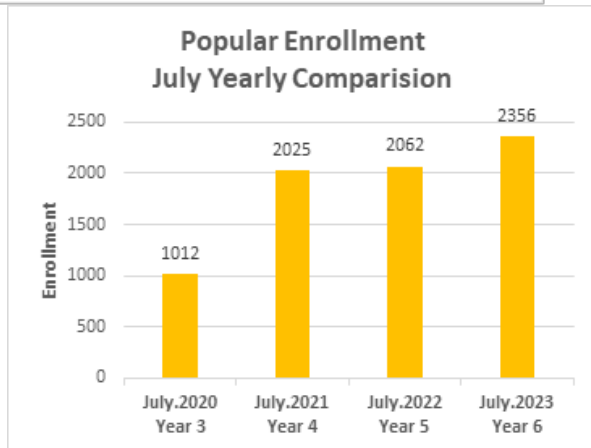
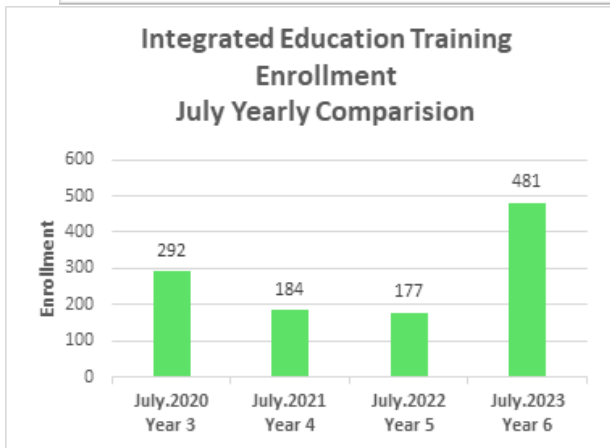
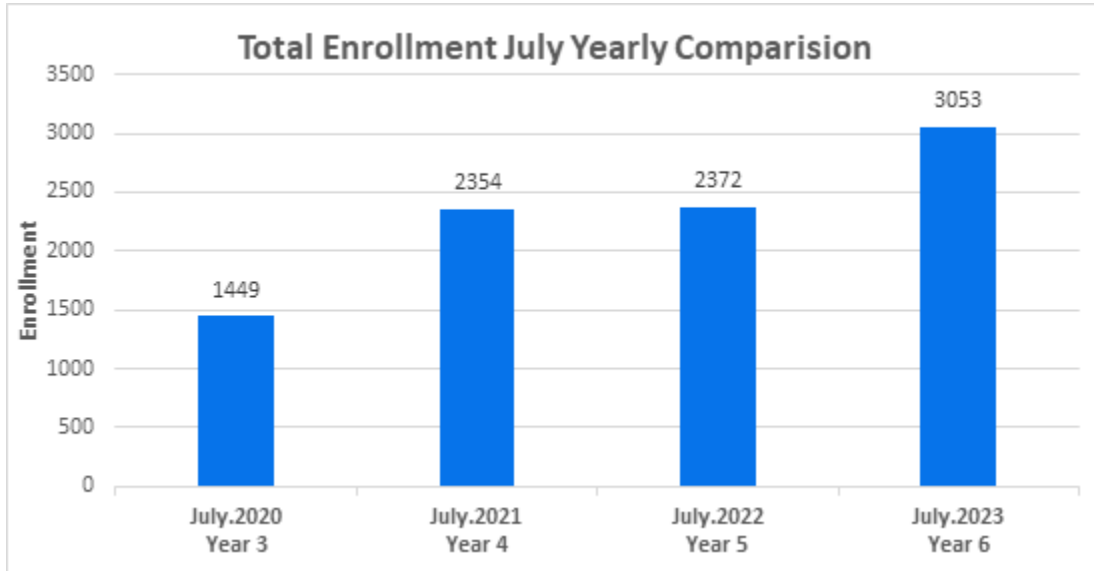
We review performance for our service providers in four different areas:

12+ Hour Students: Includes individuals in adult education classes with 12 or more clock hours completed.

Integrated Education and Training (IET): Includes individuals enrolled in Adult Education and Literacy classes concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for specific in-demand or targeted occupations for educational and career advancement.

Intensive Services: Includes individuals who receive various college and career-focused adult education options, including workplace Adult Education and Literacy activities, services for internationally trained English language learner professionals and transition assistance to offenders for re-entry and post-release services.

EL Civics (English Literacy and Civics): Includes individuals who are English Language Learners and, professionals with degrees or credentials in their native countries to enable them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. This also includes those who are co-enrolled in civics classes which were formally classified as integrated English language/ civics/training.



With month one completed, and data entered and validated we are on track with meeting our goals for this program year. We are continuing to see an increase in interest for service from community partners and employers. Compared to previous years' data we have exceeded the historic enrollment trend for total enrollment, integrated education and training and popular service enrollment.

This year we have Incorporated the Burlington English (BE) Curriculum across the fourteen subrecipients ESL programs of study. Burlington English Core curriculum is a comprehensive, web-based, fully blended series of courses developed especially for adults learning English. In the past years only select students had access to this resource. Over the past three years an average of 3000 students have had an active BE account for a program year. Since implementation of July 1, we have upskilled and trained over 350 members of our staff and have successfully enrolled and trained over 2500 students in Burlington English with the month of August. With our new curriculum scope, we expect to see an increase in level gains from students receiving English language instruction.

We are currently in the process of publishing an RFQ for a third-party consultant to review the current adult education and literacy consortium. Key focus areas are training expansion and outreach, upskilling and career pathways, system wide sustainability, business development and stabilization, and accountability and monitoring. We expect to have the RFQ published in the coming weeks

Next Meeting

The Education Committee Chair, Dr. Bobbie Henderson, proposed scheduling future committee meetings as needed.

Strategic Planning Committee

Update for October 2023

The Strategic Planning Committee continues to work through the planning process and has gathered for three meetings in the last two months.

- August 4, 2023 – Attendance included: Committee Chair Carl Bowles, Willie Alexander, Peter Beard, Bobbie Henderson, Adrian Ozuna, Paul Puente, and Workforce Board Chair Mark Guthrie.
- September 1, 2023 – Participants included: Committee Chair Carl Bowles (Committee Chair), Peter Beard, Sara Bouse, Melissa Gonzalez, Cheryl Guido, Bobbie Henderson, Adrian Ozuna, Paul Puente, Carolyn Watson and Workforce Board Chair Mark Guthrie.
- September 22, 2023 – Participants included: Committee Chair Carl Bowles (Committee Chair), Peter Beard, Cheryl Guido, Bobbie Henderson, Adrian Ozuna, Carolyn Watson and Workforce Board Chair Mark Guthrie.

Over the course of the last three meetings, the Committee Members have reviewed and discussed:

- Board Survey results
- Stakeholder engagement
- Landscape analysis
- Plan measures
- Project timeline

Through these discussions, the Committee has emphasized its desire to focus on big-picture, future-focused issues of the local labor market over program tactics.

To continue refining the strategic priority areas, the committee engaged two speakers at its September 22 meeting – Jason Saving from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas provided insight into the state and regional economy, and Josh Copus from Jobs for the Future provided insights on board best practices. Slides for both presentations are attached.

The participants and Workforce Board officers will meet for a full-day retreat on Friday, October 6, 2023, and a collection of reading materials to prepare for the retreat have been made available. Additionally, Executive Director Juliet Stipeche recommended an online data tool that explores social capital and how it connects to children's chances of rising out of poverty: www.SocialCaptial.org.

Below are upcoming scheduled meetings. Committee Members are open to adding additional meetings as needed to provide the Workforce Board with a thoughtful Strategic Plan that can move the organization forward productively.

- Friday, October 6, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm
Retreat – Strategic Planning Committee and Workforce Board Officers
Workforce Solutions – Northline, 4424 North Freeway, Houston, TX 77022
- Friday, October 27 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, November 17 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, December 15 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom
- Friday, January 12 at 1:00pm
Hybrid at 3555 Timmons, room 2-D and on Zoom

No formal actions requiring votes were taken during these three meetings.



Federal Reserve
Bank of Dallas

Regional Economic Update: Where Have We Been and Where Are We Heading?

Views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas or the Federal Reserve System.

Jason Saving
Communications and Outreach Senior Economist
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas

Setting the Stage

- Pre-COVID, the Texas economy was growing at a solid pace
 - Unemployment rate at or near its record low
 - State job growth in line with long run average
 - Personal income at an all time high
- Shockingly rapid decline in April and May of 2020
 - UR shot up to 13.5 percent, 1.4 million jobs lost

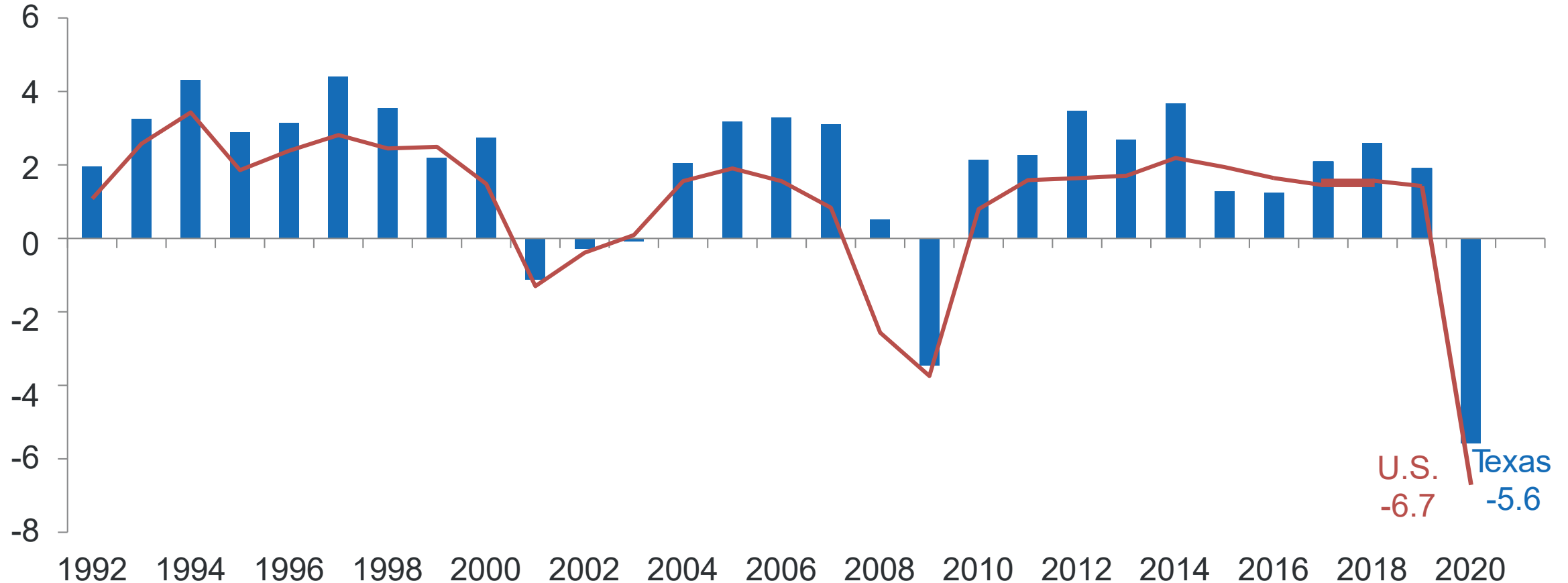
Questions We'll Discuss Today

- How rapidly have we grown since that time?
- Have we surpassed pre-COVID employment levels?
- In recent months, has the state economy downshifted?
- If so, has the downshift been significant?
- Are there longer-term challenges to the Texas economy about which we should be concerned?

The Labor Market

Job Growth Fell At Its Fastest Ever Pace in 2020...

Job growth (percent), Dec./Dec.*



*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.

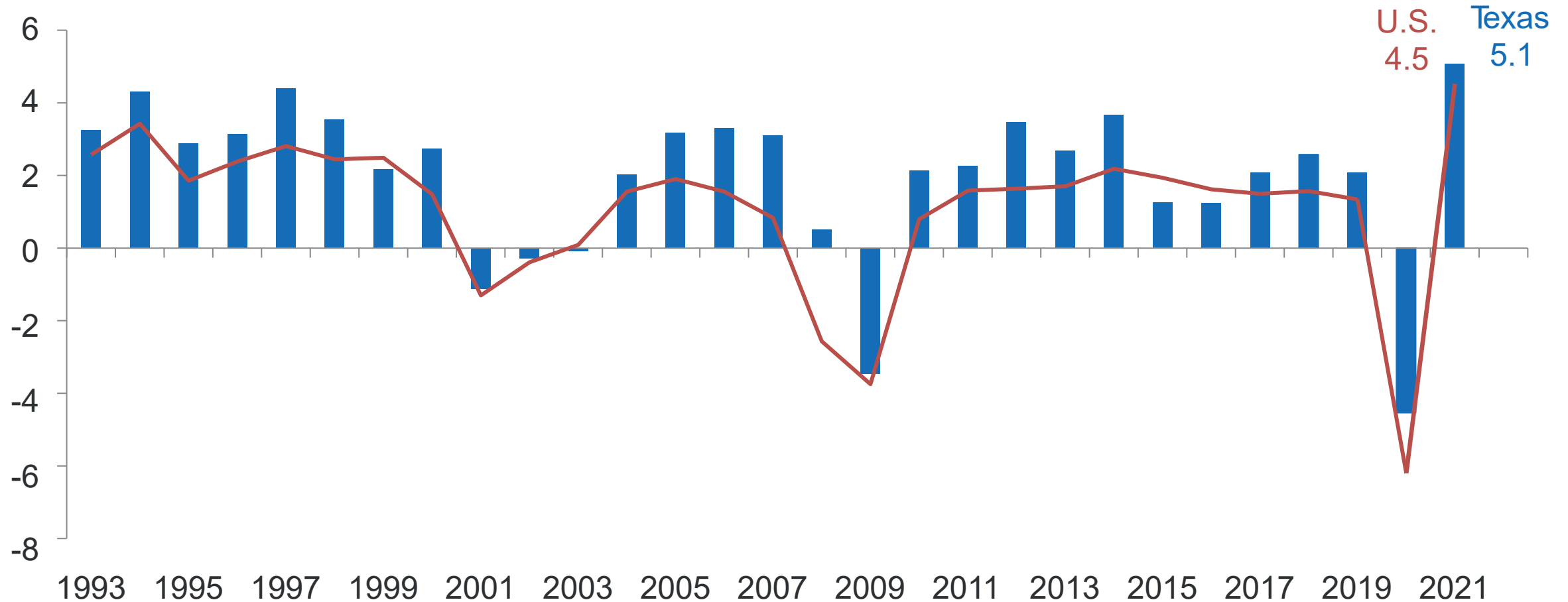
NOTE: Last data points are annualized job growth for Texas (Nov. 2020/Dec. 2019) and U.S. (Nov. 2020/Dec. 2019).

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tae000000.aspx>

...But Rose at a Rapid Pace in 2021...

Job growth (percent)



*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate. Partial year data is represented with a shaded bar/dashed line.

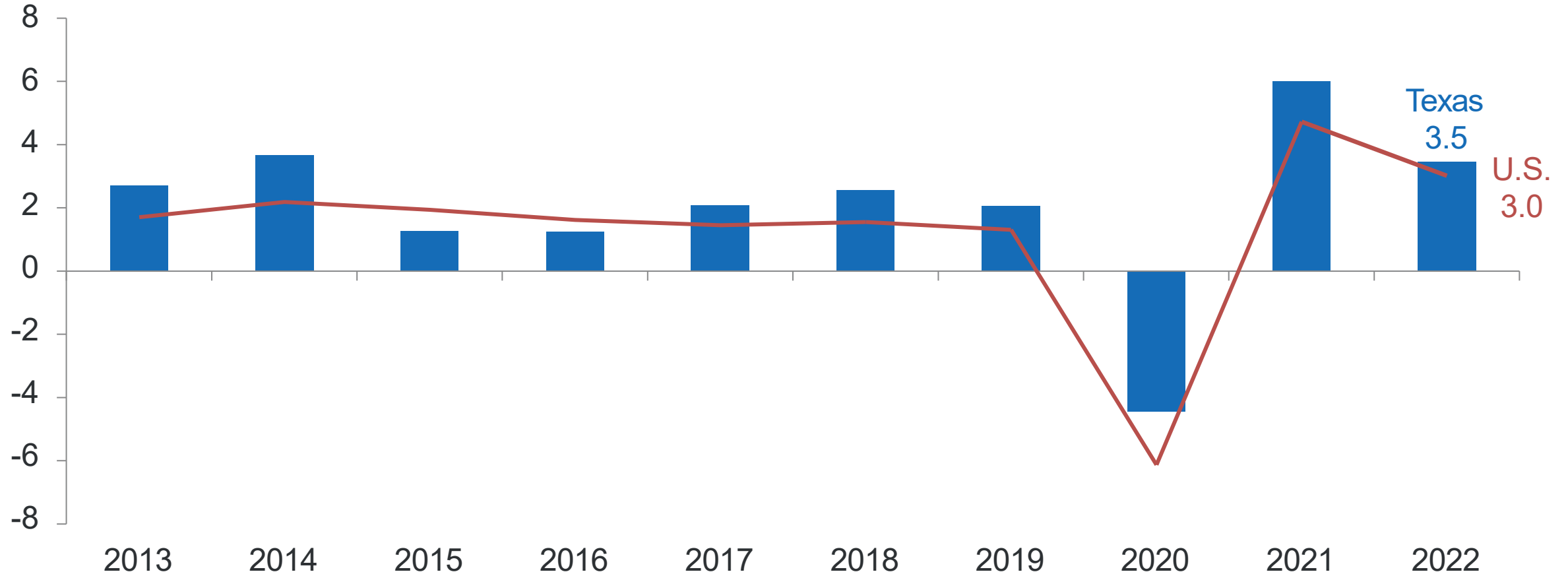
NOTE: Last data points are annualized job growth for Texas (Dec. 2021/Dec. 2020) and U.S. (Dec. 2021/Dec. 2020).

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tae000000.aspx>

...And Downshifted to a Still-Above-Normal Pace in 2022

Job growth (percent)*



*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.

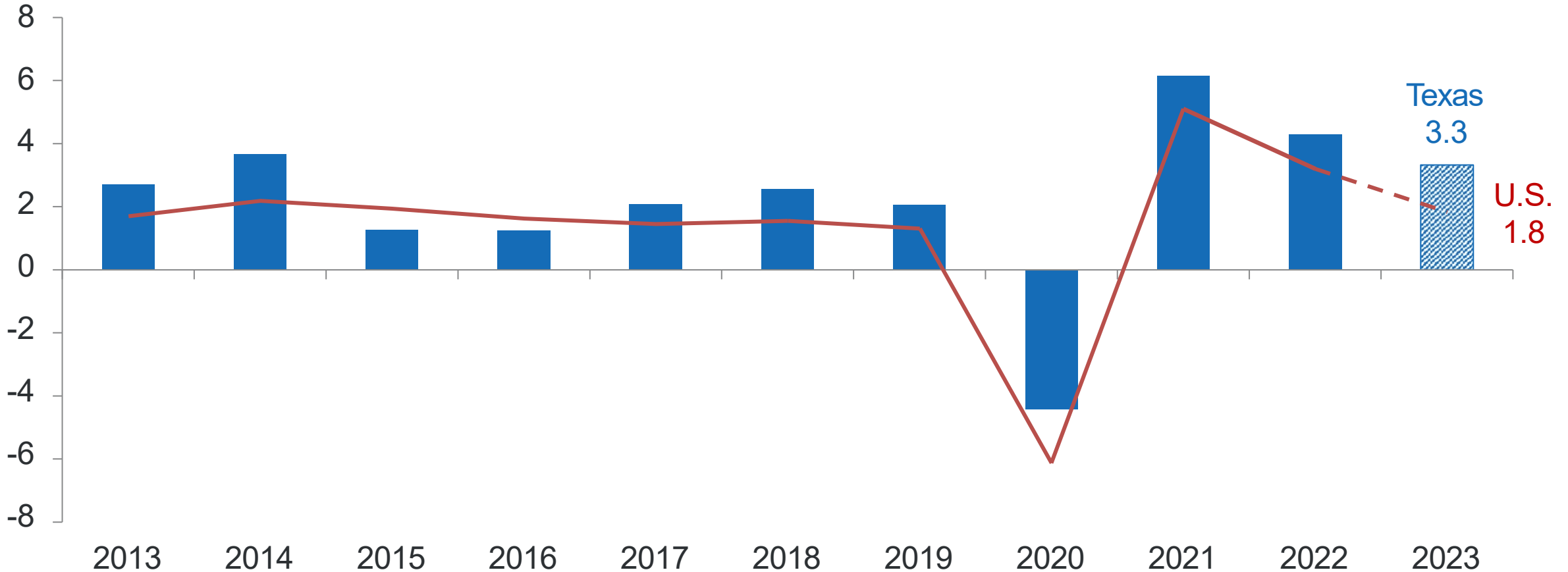
NOTE: Last data points are annualized job growth for Texas (Dec. 2022/Dec. 2021) and U.S. (Dec. 2022/Dec. 2021).

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tae000000.aspx>

Texas Job Growth Slows Slightly Through August

Job growth (percent)*



*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.

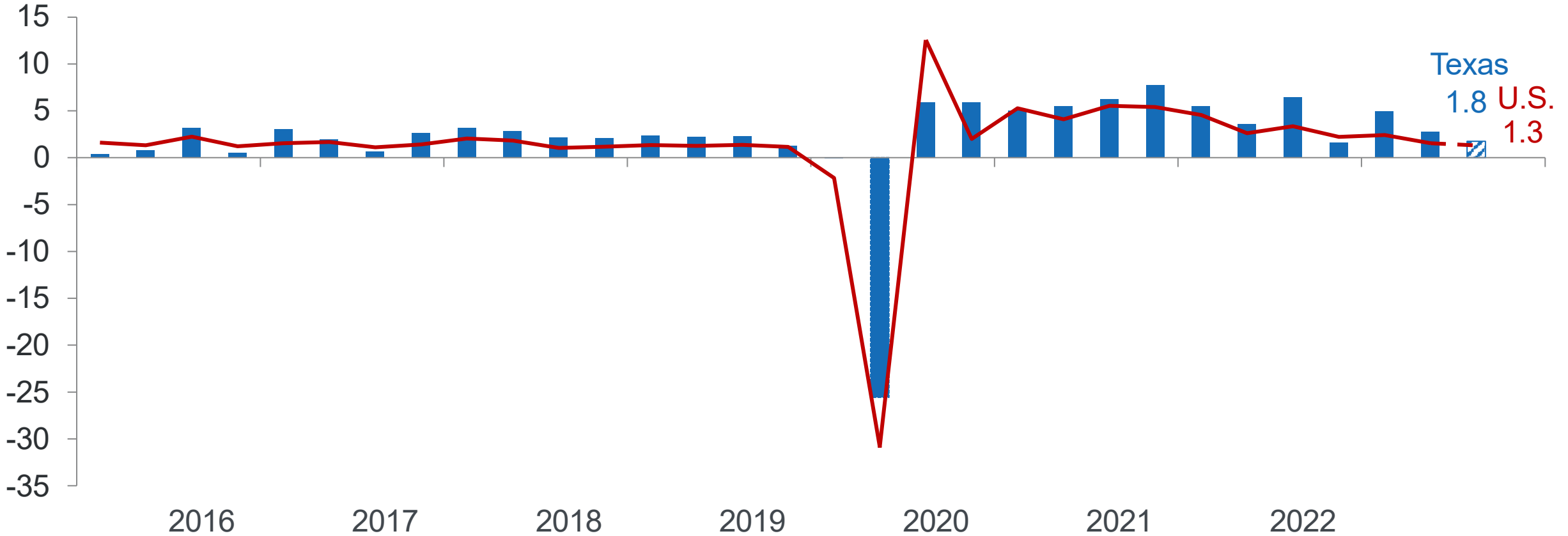
NOTE: Last data points are annualized job growth for Aug. 2023/Dec. 2022.

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tae000000.aspx>

Zooming In to Look at Quarterly Job Growth, 2020Q2 Stands Out

Job growth (percent)*



*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.

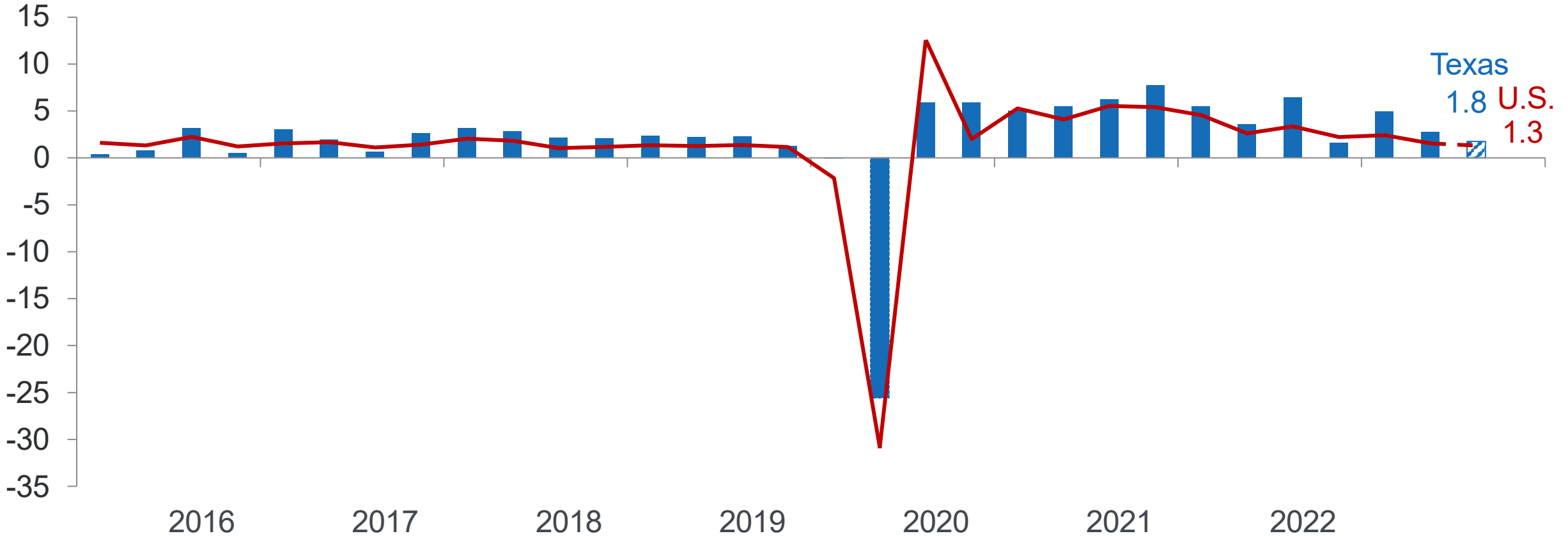
NOTE: Last data points are annualized job growth for Aug. 2023/Jun. 2023.

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tae000000.aspx>

This Year, Q3 Job Growth Stays Positive but Falls Below Long-Run Average

Job growth (percent)*



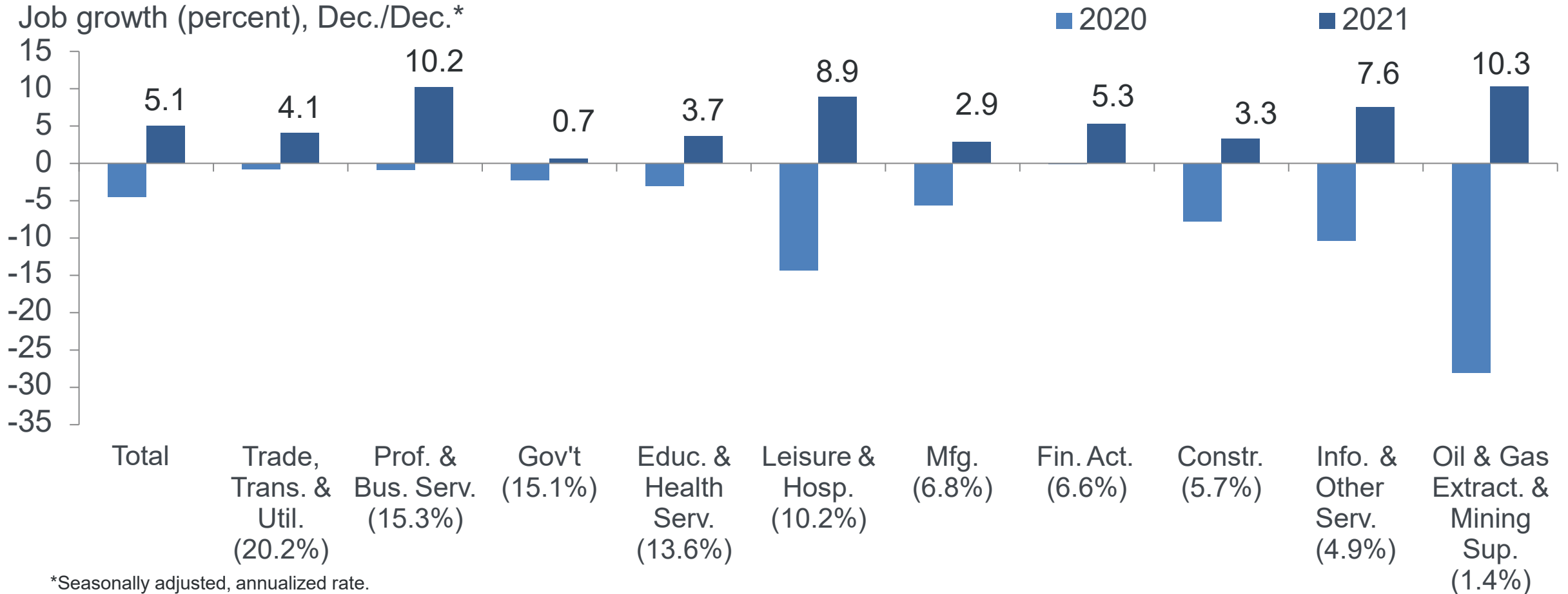
*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.

NOTE: Last data points are annualized job growth for Aug. 2023/Jun. 2023.

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tae000000.aspx>

Leisure/Hospitality and Energy Employment Fell Markedly in 2020, Didn't Fully Recover in 2021



*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.

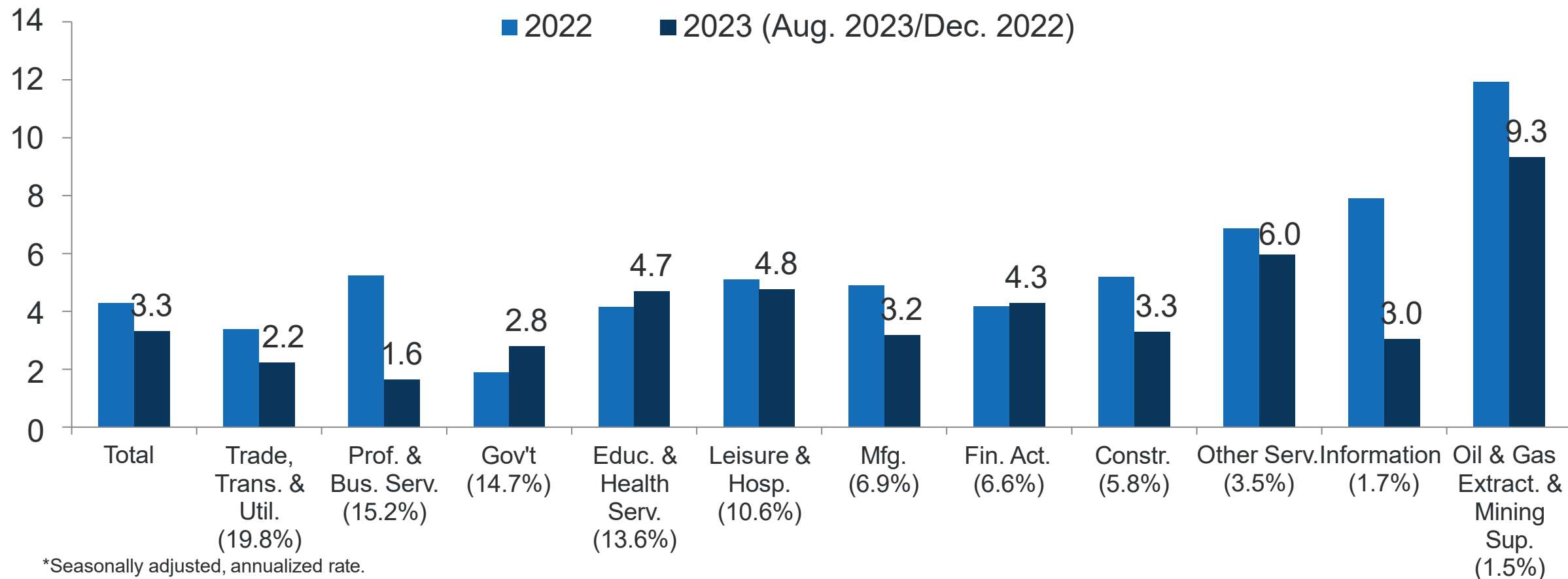
NOTE: Numbers in parenthesis indicate share of total state employment for most recent monthly data.

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tx-emp-ind.aspx>

This Year: Especially Strong Growth for Oil and Gas

Job growth (percent), Dec./Dec.*



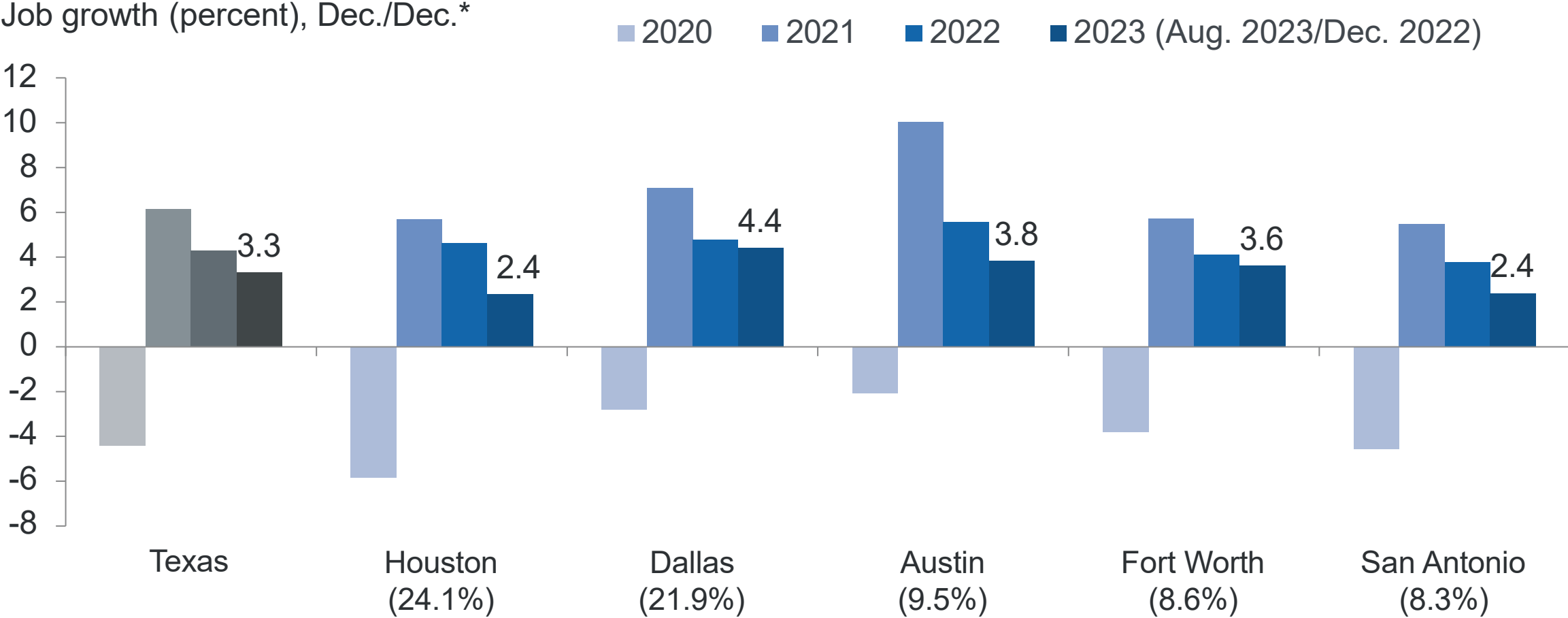
*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.

NOTE: Numbers in parenthesis indicate share of total state employment for most recent monthly data.

SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tx-emp-ind.aspx>

Dallas Leading Metro Job Growth in 2023



*Seasonally adjusted, annualized rate.
 NOTE: Numbers in parenthesis indicate share of state employment for most recent monthly data.
 SOURCES: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by FRB Dallas.
 DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tx-emp.aspx#tab3>

Sectors of Interest

ENERGY

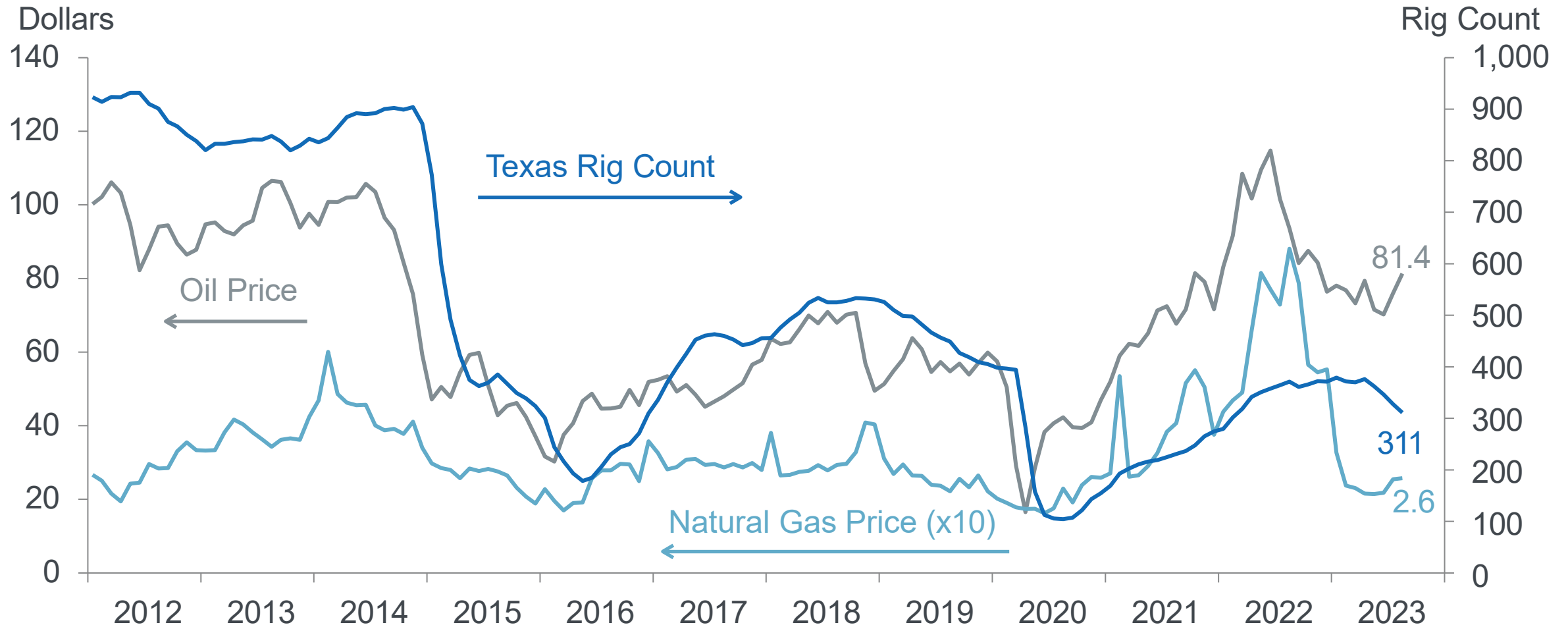


Texas is #1 producer of oil and natural gas in nation

Approximately 30% of U.S. refinery capacity and 75% of U.S. petrochemical production is in Texas

Low energy prices hurt Texas economy on net

Rig Count Falls, Oil Prices Increase and Natural Gas Prices Stabilize



*Latest labeled natural gas price is dollars per million Btu, while the series is dollars per million Btu multiplied by 10.

NOTES: Oil price is dollars per barrel. Data through August 2023.

SOURCES: *Wall Street Journal*; Baker Hughes; U.S. Energy Information Administration.

SERVICES



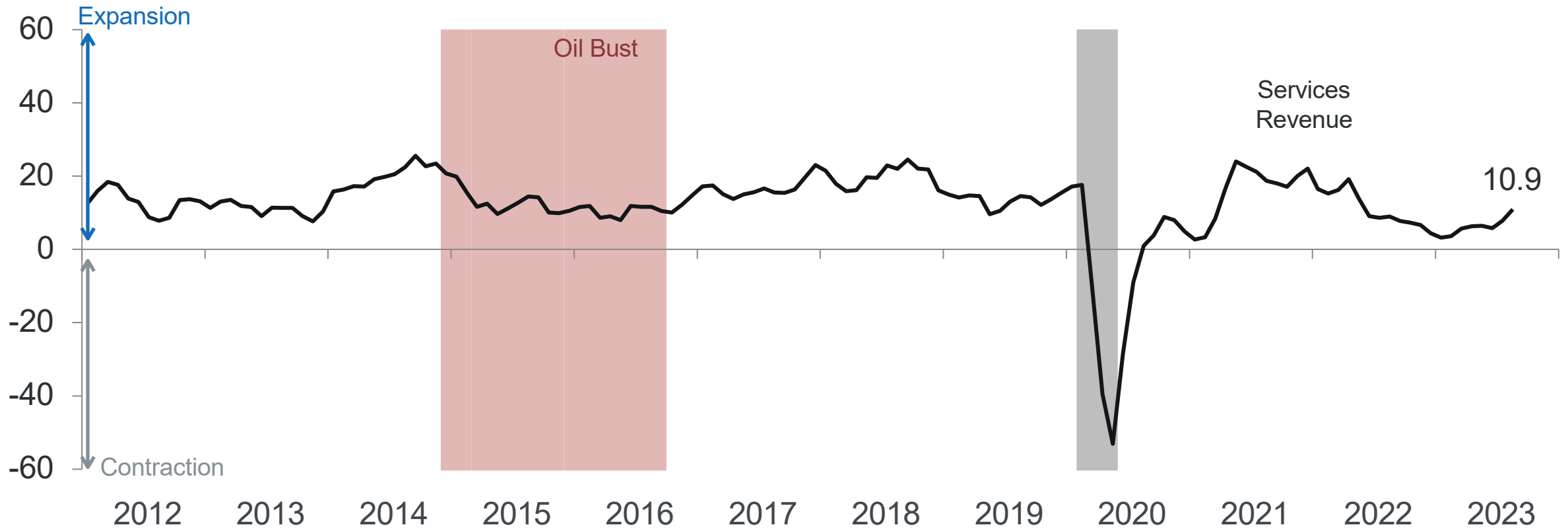
Service industry makes up the bulk of the Texas economy

Accounts for 72% of private-sector output in Texas

Dallas Fed's Texas Service Sector Outlook Survey provides timely insight into this key sector

Texas Service Sector Revenue Growth Continues

Index, 3-month moving average*



*Seasonally adjusted.

NOTES: Data through August 2023. Grey bar represents Texas recession.

SOURCE: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas Texas Service Sector Outlook Survey (TSSOS).

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/surveys/tssos>

MANUFACTURING



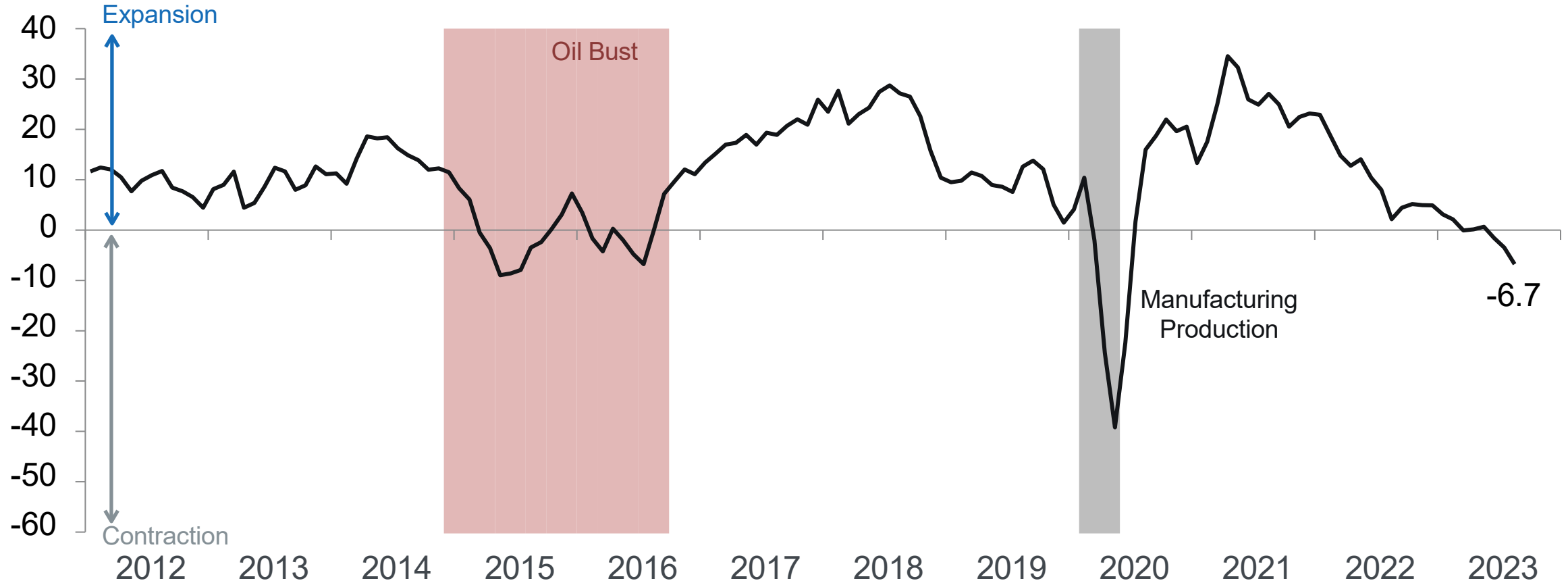
Texas produces 10% of U.S. manufactured goods

Manufacturing sector leading indicator of business cycle

Dallas Fed's Texas Manufacturing Outlook Survey offers early look at turning points and insight on trends

Texas Manufacturing Production Continues to Contract

Index, 3-month moving average*



*Seasonally adjusted.

NOTE: Data through August 2023. Grey bar represents recession.

SOURCE: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas Texas Manufacturing Outlook Survey (TMOS).

DATA: <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/surveys/tmos>

Four Facts on Texas Exports

- Texas exports more goods and services than any other state, even though California's economy is 40% larger
- At last count, Texas accounted for 23% of US exports
- Mexico is Texas' largest trading partner and the nation's second-largest, receiving about 30% of Texas exports
- Gulf Coast ports are major exporters of petrochemicals as well as oil and gas

And While We're Discussing the Gulf Coast...

- Energy and durable goods exports continue to grow as coastal ports expand capacity
- The scale of the construction has many wondering if the heavy construction workforce is sufficient to the task of getting everything done on schedule
- Corpus is becoming increasingly capital intensive as industries like crude, and LNG trade rise
- Region is also preparing for its first lithium refinery, supplementing (or at odds with, depending on who you ask) its historical concentration in tourism

Conclusion

Summary

- The number of jobs in Texas has now surpassed pre-COVID levels
 - Haven't caught up to where we would have been
- Texas economy currently growing at a moderate pace, with several indicators downshifting slightly in recent months
- Little evidence the state is in or near recession at present
- What challenges could potentially erode Texas' traditional growth advantage over the nation?

Longer-Term Challenges for the Texas Economy

- K-12 test scores, funding at or below the national average
- Infrastructure receives an average grade from civil engineering assessments
- Largest share of uninsured residents in the nation
- Important to note that each of these challenges disproportionately affect underserved communities
- How to maintain relatively low per capita tax burden and favorable business climate while addressing these issues?

Thank you!

**(For more information about the regional economy,
please visit dallasfed.org)**



Creating a Future-Focused Workforce System Together

A Strategy to Accelerate Modernization of the Nation's
Public Workforce System

Gulf Coast Workforce Board
September 22nd, 2023



JOSH COPUS

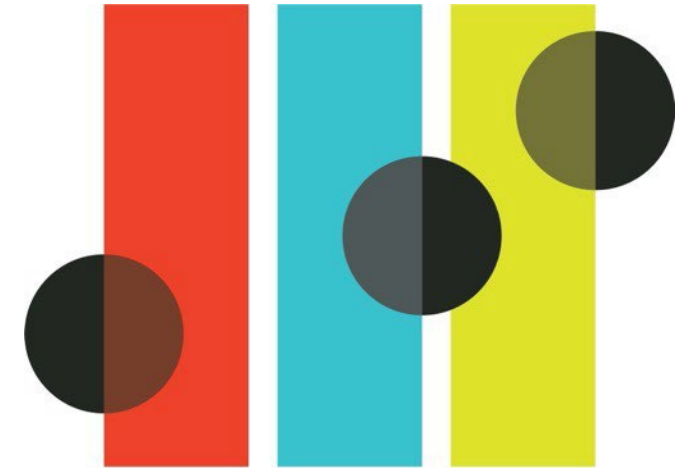
- Senior Director, Workforce and Regional Economies
- 5 years at JFF and 12 years in workforce development
- Prior experience:
 - **JFFLabs**
 - **National Association of Workforce Boards**
 - **Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board**
 - **Pittsburgh Technology Council**



CONTACT

Email jcopus@jff.org

Phone 202-695-0010 (cell)



JFF

VISIT US TODAY AT JFF.ORG



Brief Introduction to JFF

Mission

JFF drives transformation of the American workforce and education systems to achieve equitable economic advancement for all.

Five Focus Areas



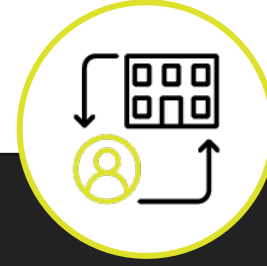
**Create worker
& learner
opportunity**



**Reimagine
education
& career
navigation**



**Ensure program
quality &
efficacy**



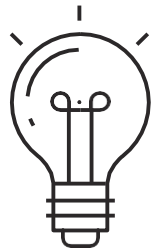
**Integrate work
& learning**



**Build strong
regional
economies**



What We Do



Design

We bring evidence-based models and innovative solutions to life



Scale

We leverage national networks and advanced technologies to drive change in systems.



Influence

We shape policy and drive the national conversation among workforce, education, government, and corporate leaders.



Invest

We invest capital to incubate new solutions, accelerate innovation, and generate impact.

A high-angle, warm-toned photograph of two women sitting at a wooden desk in a collaborative workspace. The woman on the left, with long dark braids and glasses, is wearing a mustard yellow top and is writing on a notepad. The woman on the right, with long wavy brown hair, is wearing a light blue top and is looking towards the laptop. The desk is cluttered with various items: a laptop with a white screen, a white mouse, a green folder, a white mouse, a yellow and white coffee cup, a keyboard, a pen, and several sheets of paper. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a professional yet inviting atmosphere.

A Public Workforce System Transformation Strategy

How we'll know we've made a difference...

PRESENT STATE

FUTURE STATE

Workforce boards act as insular entities hyper focused on providing employment and skills training services to job seekers and employers



Workforce boards are community assets working to grow the health and strength of their local economies through a variety of strategic partnerships and change initiatives

Disparate funding sources and competing agendas drive the design of cumbersome policies, procedures, and products



Policies, procedures, and products are designed *for* members of the community *by* members of the community and align to a unified strategic vision

AJCs fulfill job demand by connecting job seekers to high-value, in-demand training and credentials that can land them a job quickly



Employers, workforce boards, and community partners collectively equip workers with the skills and resources needed to achieve long-term career growth and stability

Public funding streams discourage risk and innovation while rewarding the greatest number of people served for the lowest cost



Public funding streams encourage calculated risk and innovation while rewarding the greatest impact for the greatest number of people served

The public workforce system is bureaucratic, reactive, and slow to respond to shifting localized market needs



The public workforce system is a critical asset in helping to predict, interpret, and prepare local markets for sudden changes in the future of work

Our Critical Lenses: As we strive to support local workforce boards in adopting the future-focused behaviors, JFF has a moral imperative to keep three **foundational principles** at the center of our efforts to transform the public workforce system at the local and national levels. These principles are pivotal to ensuring that any systemic change we help produce is grounded in JFF's core mission of helping everyone achieve economic advancement.



**Looking
back...**



**Identifying
Workforce
Boards'
Future-
Focused
Behaviors**



Four Future-Focused Behaviors

These are the [four future-focused behaviors](#) found to be most common among “allies of innovation” leading the field. These behaviors enable workforce boards to more effectively anticipate and adapt to changing markets and make a meaningful impact on their communities:



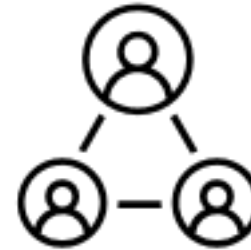
Opportunity-Oriented

Does Not Accept What Is, But Imagines What Could Be



Data-Obsessed

Analyzes, Understands, and Prepares for Change



Human-Centered

Puts People Before Policy and Procedure



Tech-Enabled

Uses New Tools to Build Better, More Effective Organizations

Four Future-Focused Behaviors

Behaviors and Characteristics

Opportunity-Oriented

Imagining What Could Be, Not Accepting What Is

Future-focused workforce boards have expansive visions of what they can achieve, and they pursue the resources and talent necessary to meet ambitious goals. They are aware of strategic opportunities to expand their influence at all levels across a diverse set of stakeholders.



Data-Obsessed

Analyzing, Understanding, and Preparing for Change

Future-focused workforce boards collect and analyze vast amounts of data to stay in front of emerging developments throughout their organizations, among their partners and training providers, and within their communities.



Human-Centered

Putting People Before Procedures

Future-focused workforce boards promote policies, programs, and products that are designed and delivered in ways that prioritize positive user experiences. They are intent on meeting the needs of customers and strive to eradicate system limitations that hinder responsiveness.



Tech-Enabled

Using New Tools to Build Better Organizations

Future-focused workforce boards continually identify and embrace new technologies. They adopt and adapt new tools and techniques to ensure that their operations are efficient and effective.



Examples from the Field



Opportunity-Oriented

W.E. UPJOHN
INSTITUTE
FOR EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH

work.
s y s t e m s

 San Diego
Workforce
Partnership

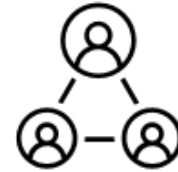


Data-Obsessed

Arapahoe/Douglas
WORKS
Workforce Center
A proud partner of the americanjobcenter network

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
GREATER DALLAS

CENTER OF
WORKFORCE
INNOVATIONS



Human-Centered

 SPOKANE
WORKFORCE
COUNCIL

 workforce **CONNECTIONS**
PEOPLE. PARTNERSHIPS. POSSIBILITIES.

Pacific  Gateway



Tech-Enabled

 CareerSource
CENTRAL FLORIDA

West
MICHIGAN
WORKS!

 kinexus group

A high-angle, warm-toned photograph of two women sitting at a wooden desk in a workspace. The woman on the left, with long dark braids and glasses, is wearing a mustard yellow top and is writing on a notepad. The woman on the right, with long wavy brown hair, is wearing a light blue top and is looking towards the laptop. The desk is cluttered with a laptop, a coffee cup, a mouse, a green folder, and various papers. A bright yellow vertical bar is on the left side of the image.

**Try Answering These
Questions...**



Opportunity- Oriented

**Does Not
Accept What
Is, But
Imagines What
Could Be**

Questions to consider:

- What types of programs or activities do you see other local areas engaging in that you wish you could implement in your community?
- If money and resources were not a constraint, what is your vision for the role your organization would play in your community?
- What impacts could your organization potentially have that have not been possible in the past?
- What is one partnership or asset you wish your workforce board or AJCs could leverage that you currently cannot?

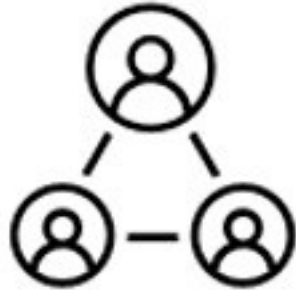


Data- Obsessed

Analyzes,
Understands,
and Prepares
for Change

Questions to consider:

- What data do you wish you had access to but currently do not?
- What is the capacity of your organization to become more data-driven?
- What would becoming data-driven enable your organization to do more effectively?
- What would need to occur (access, partnerships, funding, training) to enable your organization to become more data-driven? Be specific.



Human-Centered

Puts People
Before Policy
and Procedure

Questions to consider:

- How could we begin to gather more customer and community feedback about our services?
- In what ways could the customer feedback we do gather be used more effectively?
- In what ways do we use customer feedback to ensure our programs, policies, and procedures are customer-led?
- Have we ever done a self-assessment of our human-centeredness?
- Are any of our staff formally trained in customer-led design thinking?



Tech-Enabled

Uses New
Tools to Build
Better, More
Effective
Organizations

Questions to consider:

- How has our technology adoption in the past two years changed the way we work and deliver services?
- Do we have a formal and transparent process for testing and vetting new types of technology we seek to adopt?
- What organizational processes and structures have we put in place to enable more agile adoption of technologies?
- What is our organization's long-term vision for digital transformation as the work and learn environment continues to evolve?
- How do we balance becoming tech-enabled with being human-centered?

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE OUR EMAIL UPDATES:

[CO-CREATING A FUTURE-FOCUSED WORKFORCE SYSTEM \(JFF.ORG\)](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

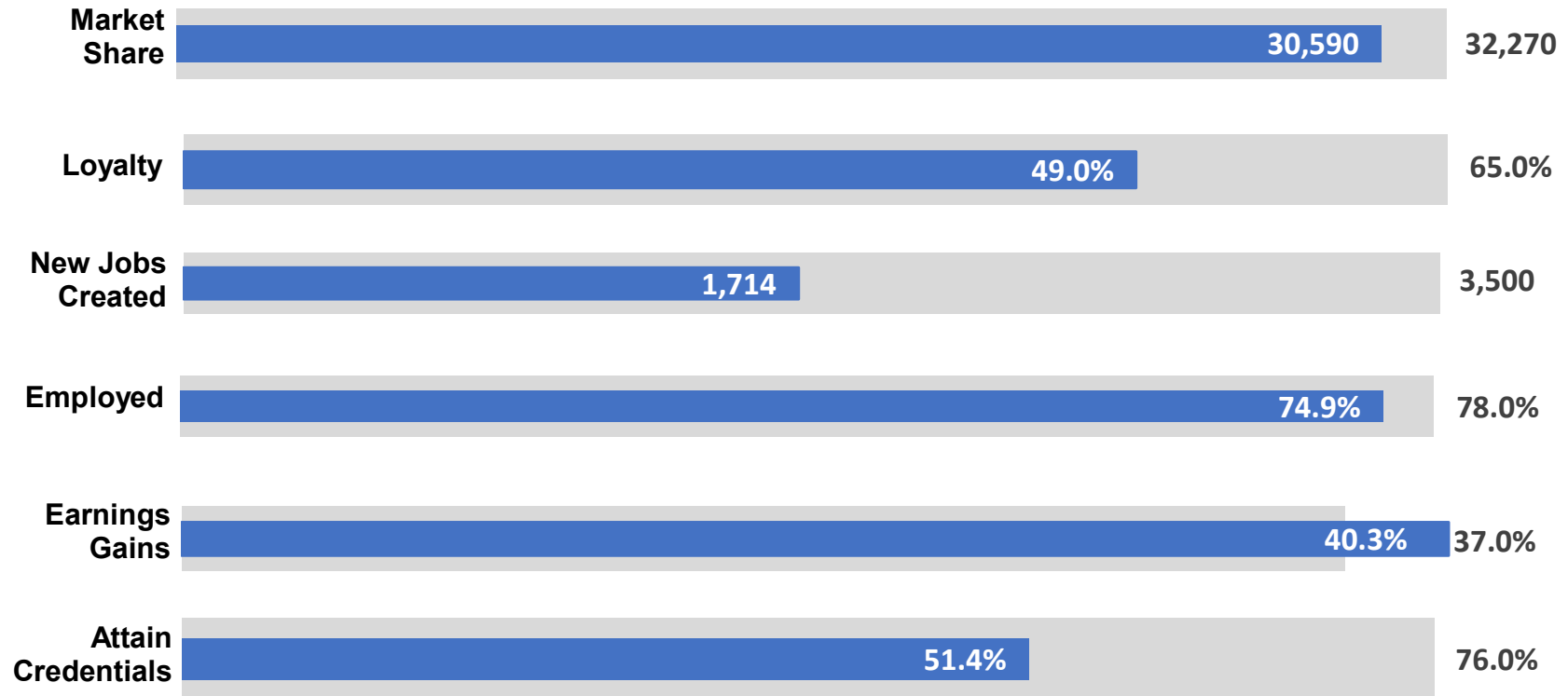
- **[HOW WORKFORCE BOARDS SHOW THE WAY TOWARD THE FUTURE OF WORK](#)**
- **[OUTCOMES FOR OPPORTUNITY](#)**
- **[FUTURE OF WORK GRAND CHALLENGE](#)**
- **[HUMAN-CENTERED MATURITY MODEL FOR WORKFORCE BOARDS](#)**
- **[FIELD GUIDE FOR WORKFORCE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS](#)**



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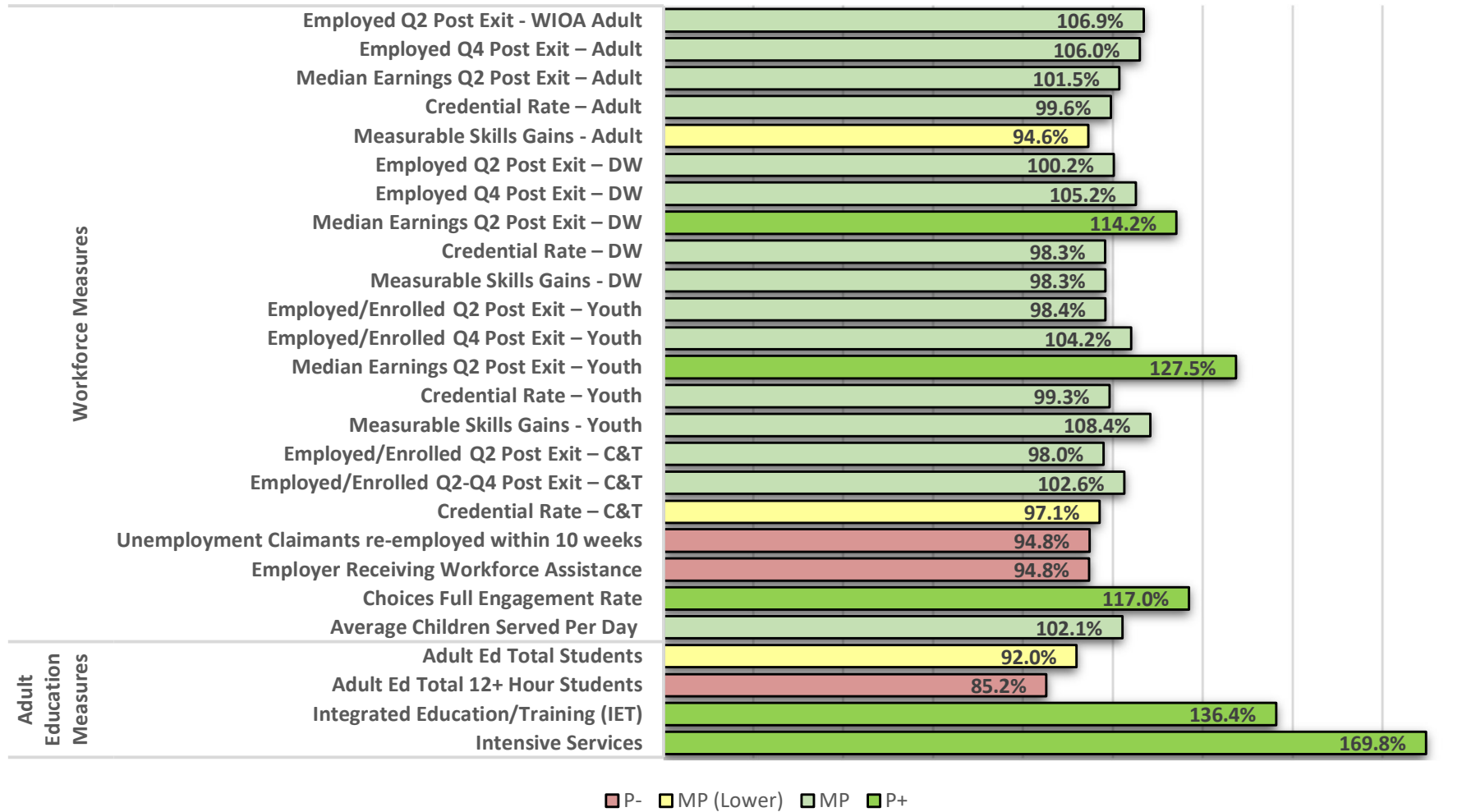
Performance Measures

October 2022 to September 2023



Production Measures

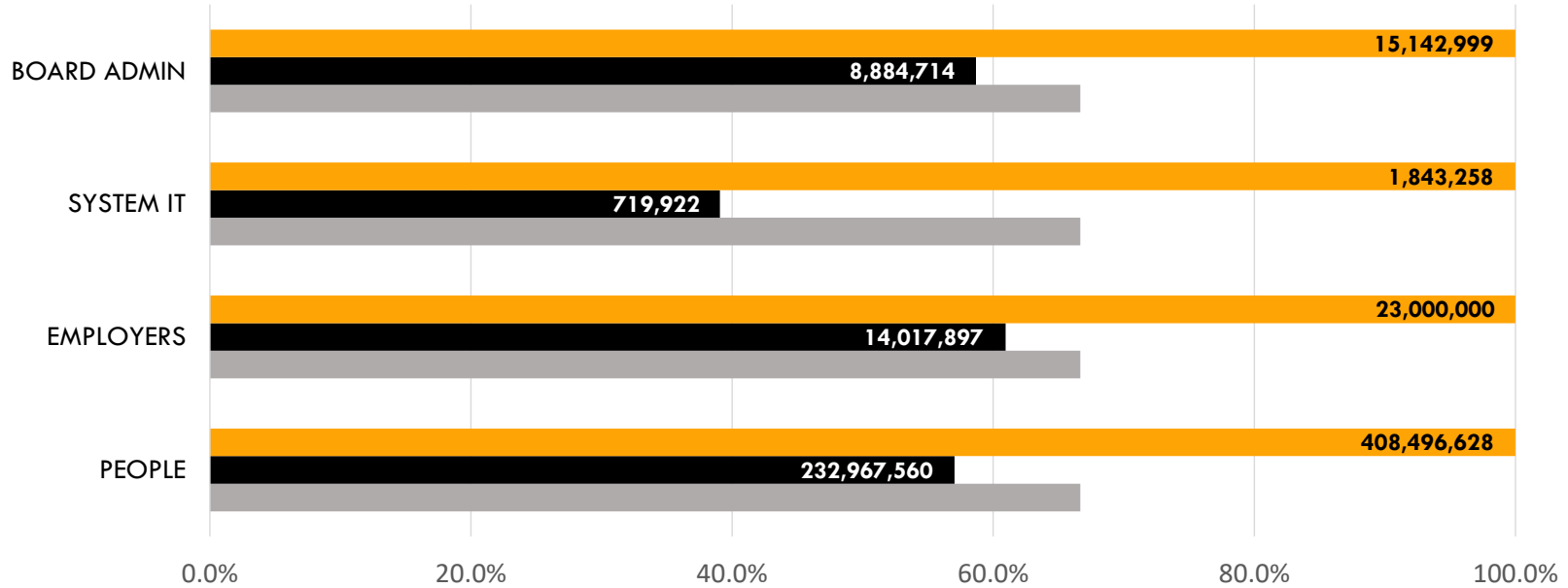
October 2022 to September 2023



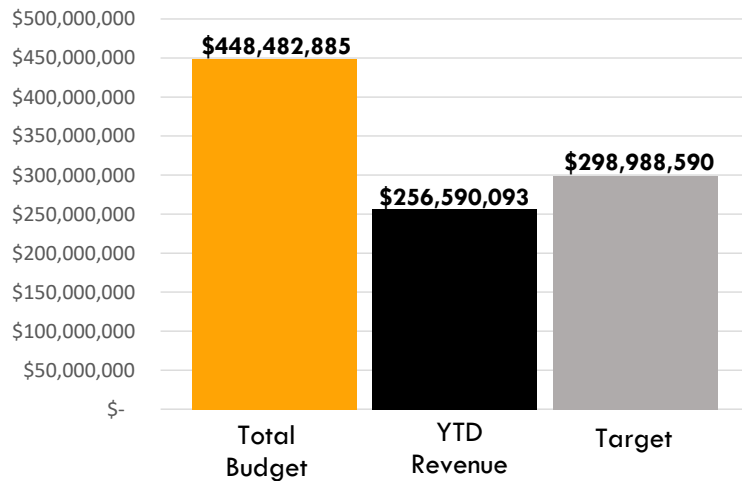
Gulf Coast Workforce Financial Status Report

For the 8 months ending August 31, 2023

■ Budget
 ■ Expenses
 ■ Target

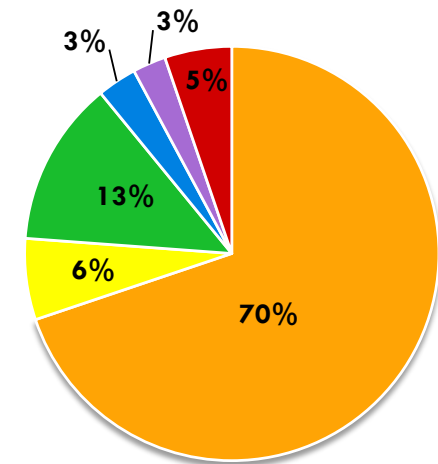


Workforce Revenue



System Expenses

- FINANCIAL AID - EARLY EDUCATION
 \$172,462,554
- FINANCIAL AID - TRAINING & SUPPORT
 \$15,668,353
- CAREER OFFICE NETWORK
 \$31,901,433
- EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT
 \$7,617,966
- QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
 \$6,399,931
- ADULT EDUCATION
 \$12,935,219



Communications: Media Outreach

October 2023 Update

This report provides an update on Workforce Solutions’ media outreach efforts for August and September 2023. Topics for this period included back-to-school, job fairs, JET Grant presentations and workforce development month.

Social Media

Our social media channels currently have 24,480 followers collectively. The table below shows the breakdowns and year-over-year changes.

Followers	August 2023	August 2022	August 2021	One Year Change	Two Year Change
Facebook	10,709	10,175	9,125	5.9%	17.4%
Instagram	3,896	2,797	2,490	39.3%	56.5%
Twitter	1,784	1,760	1,657	1.4%	7.6%
LinkedIn	8,091	4,978	4,179	62.5%	93.6%

You can find us on social media at:

- <https://www.facebook.com/advancemycareer/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/workforcesolutions/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/advancemycareer>
- <https://twitter.com/GulfCoastWFS>
- <https://www.youtube.com/c/WorkforceSolutionsgulfcoast>

Earned Media Value

As of September 1, 2023, our cumulative earned-media value since the onset of the pandemic now exceeds \$50 million. Below is year-over-year comparison of August monthly values from 2020 to 2023.

Media Month	Items	Views	Value
August 2023	19	1,289,577	\$1,511,039
August 2022	56	17,844,058	\$809,519
August 2021	82	11,123,967	\$2,539,305
August 2020	74	12,941,889	\$2,022,925

Media Partnerships

As a reminder, our partnerships include:

- KXLN Univision 45 – The bi-weekly interview is on hold while we train a new Spanish-language spokesperson.
- KTRK ABC 13 – Weekly Who’s Hiring program each Thursday’s at 10 a.m., live stream as well as broadcast news features
- KRIV Fox 26 – Interview semi-monthly Friday at 6:15 a.m. on morning TV news

The following table contains highlights of Workforce Solutions in the media since August 1, 2023.

Date	Outlet	Story	Link
08/03/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Back to School – Education Jobs	https://abc13.co/45a0liG
08/04/2023	KRIV Fox 26	SMART goals for job search	https://youtu.be/NDgQyTU4CIA?si=o8MuEL8btR_bcXyg
08/07/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Job Search Technology	https://youtu.be/CikXlhaDNho
08/10/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Houston Police Academy	https://abc13.co/443sjSf
08/14/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Non-Profit Careers	https://youtu.be/gHpn3Ftv8NU
08/17/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Non-Profit Careers	https://abc13.co/45xRfIT
08/18/2023	KRIV Fox 26	Using AI for Job Search	https://youtu.be/sbqsn3qKj0o?si=B4gDEv1kNcNp-d-5
08/21/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Women’s Equity Day	https://youtu.be/9T9WBTDk4PY
08/22/2023	Houston Chronicle	July Jobs Report	https://www.houstonchronicle.com/business/article/houston-hisd-job-cuts-economic-impact-18306682.php
08/22/2023	Houston Business Journal	July Jobs Report	https://www.bizjournals.com/houston/news/2023/08/21/july-employment-workforce-solutions.html
08/22/2023	The Katy News	July Jobs Report	https://thekatynews.com/2022/08/22/july-hiring-exceeds-expectations/
08/24/2023	KIAH CW 39	Jobs Y’all at Children’s Museum	https://youtu.be/8fh4t1j-tCc?si=RnEtfFCoyfGp2mO4
08/24/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who’s Hiring: Children’s Museum, Jobs Y’all	https://abc13.co/3qJsaG0

Date	Outlet	Story	Link
08/28/2023	KXLN Univision 45	Back-to-School, Back-to-Work	https://youtu.be/S4_oMnx3wPA
08/31/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who's Hiring: Labor Day	https://abc13.co/3srhZ9p
08/31/2023	KTRK ABC 13	AFLCIO interview	https://youtu.be/hiBcT347Rb4?si=GvYVSLstFc9Svqv3
09/01/2023	KRIV Fox 26	Labor Day History	https://youtu.be/X4pU3Dfb1qA?si=A_inotgGdgl1wcGi
09/05/2023	KRIV Fox 26	Isiah Factor Uncensored	https://www.fox26houston.com/video/1274919
09/07/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who's Hiring: JET Grants	https://abc13.co/45H9LsC
09/07/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Alvin Community College interview	https://youtu.be/4D1aoRXT3OY?si=xWKzsUpp1A-m9Ebd
09/12/2023	KRIV Fox 26	More Companies are Using AI to Review Applications	https://www.fox26houston.com/news/job-applicants-must-write-resume-that-can-compete-with-artificial-intelligence
09/13/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Adult Education & Literacy: Memorial Assistance Ministries	https://abc13.co/3RjdxnH
09/14/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who's Hiring: Job Creation	https://abc13.co/3sTDNei
09/22/2023	KRIV Fox 26	Holiday Hiring	KRIV_09-22-2023_HolidayHiring.mp4
09/27/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Agricultural Tech Education	
09/28/2023	KTRK ABC 13	Who's Hiring: Fort Bend	

HOUSTON-THE WOODLANDS-SUGAR LAND METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA Visit our website at www.wrksolutions.com

Labor Market Information

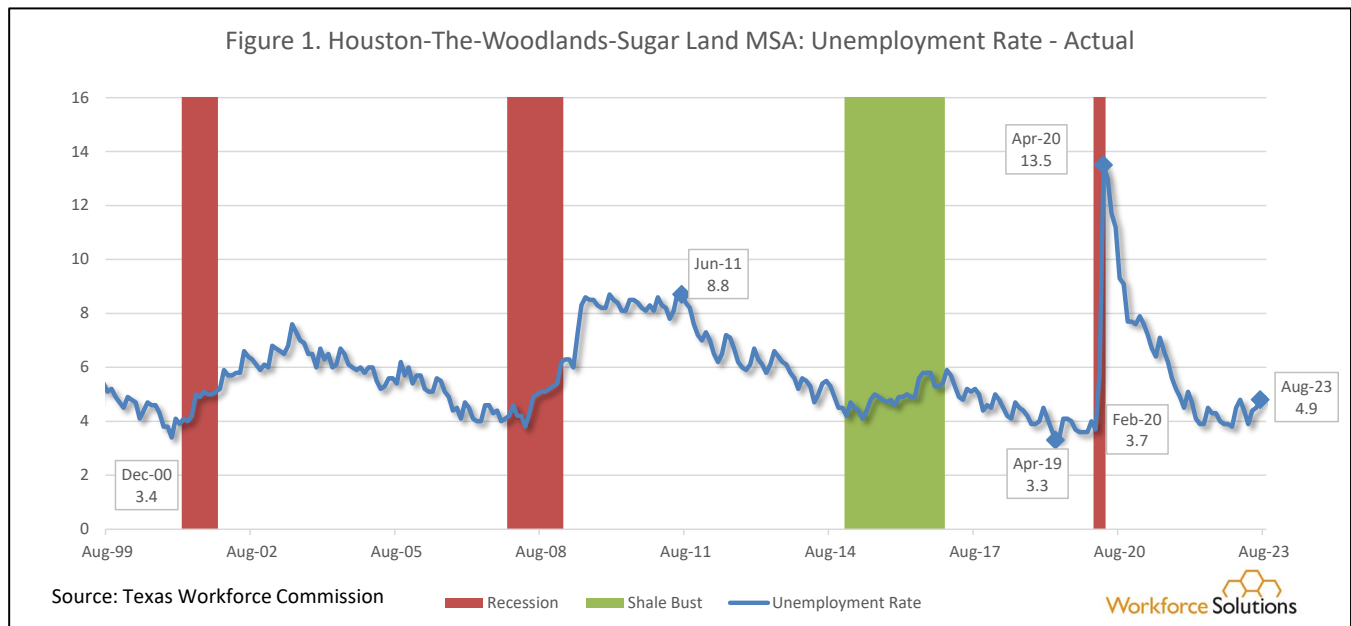
August 2023 data was released September 15, 2023.

Unemployment Rates

The rate of unemployment in The Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA rose one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.9 percent in August, see figure 1. The rate of unemployment typically remains stable or falls during the month of August except during economic slowdowns or other uncommon events. The last August increase was back in 2017 near the end of the shale bust when Mining lost some 37,300 jobs over 24 months, down 33.0 percent. Some of this month’s increase may be associated with the state takeover of Houston Independent School District and the related reductions in staff. The state’s rate of unemployment also was unchanged in August at 4.5 percent while the national rate also rose one-tenth of a percentage point but at a lower rate of 3.9 percent. The rate of unemployment at the local, state, and national level were all above what they were one year earlier.

Unemployment Rate (Actual)

	AUG 2023	JUL 2023	AUG 2022
Civilian Labor Force	3,634,817	3,624,944	3,512,045
Total Employed	3,458,161	3,450,514	3,361,145
Unemployed	176,656	174,430	150,900
Unemployment Rate	4.9%	4.8%	4.3%
Texas	4.5%	4.5%	3.9%
U.S.	3.9%	3.8%	3.8%

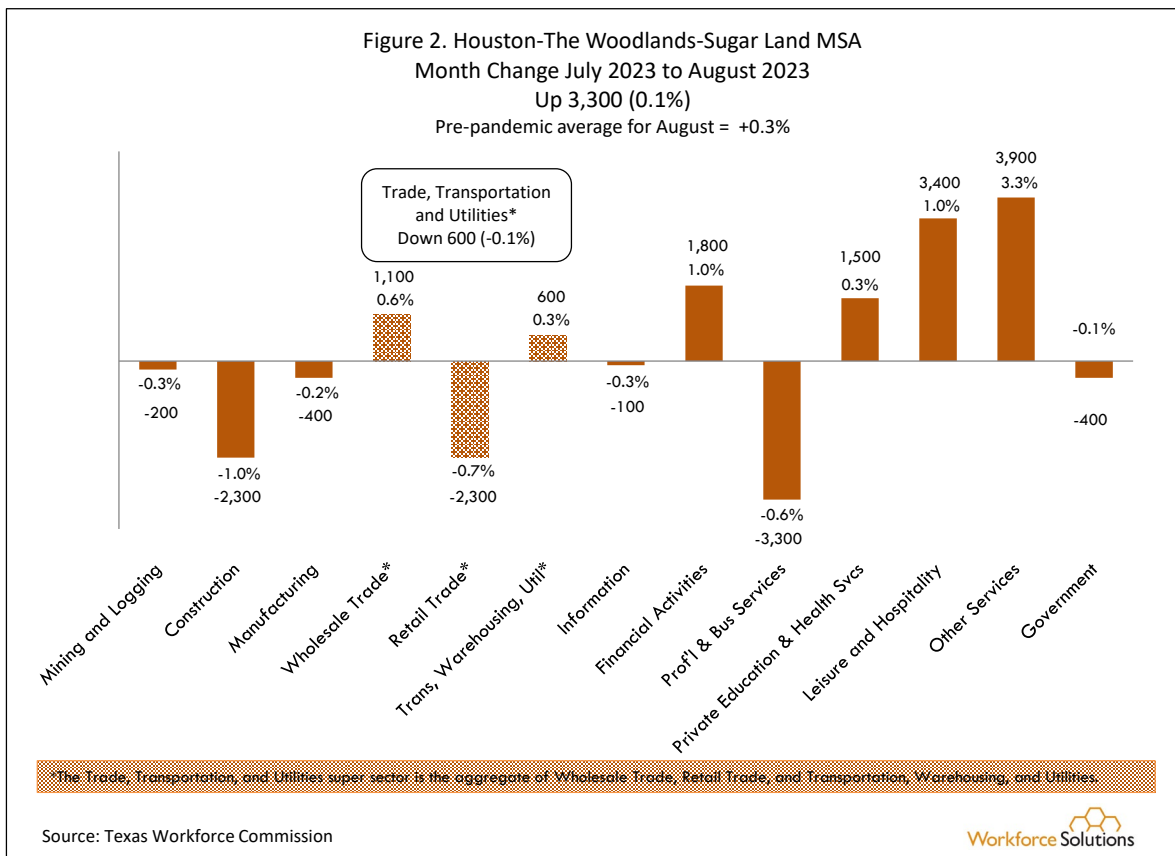


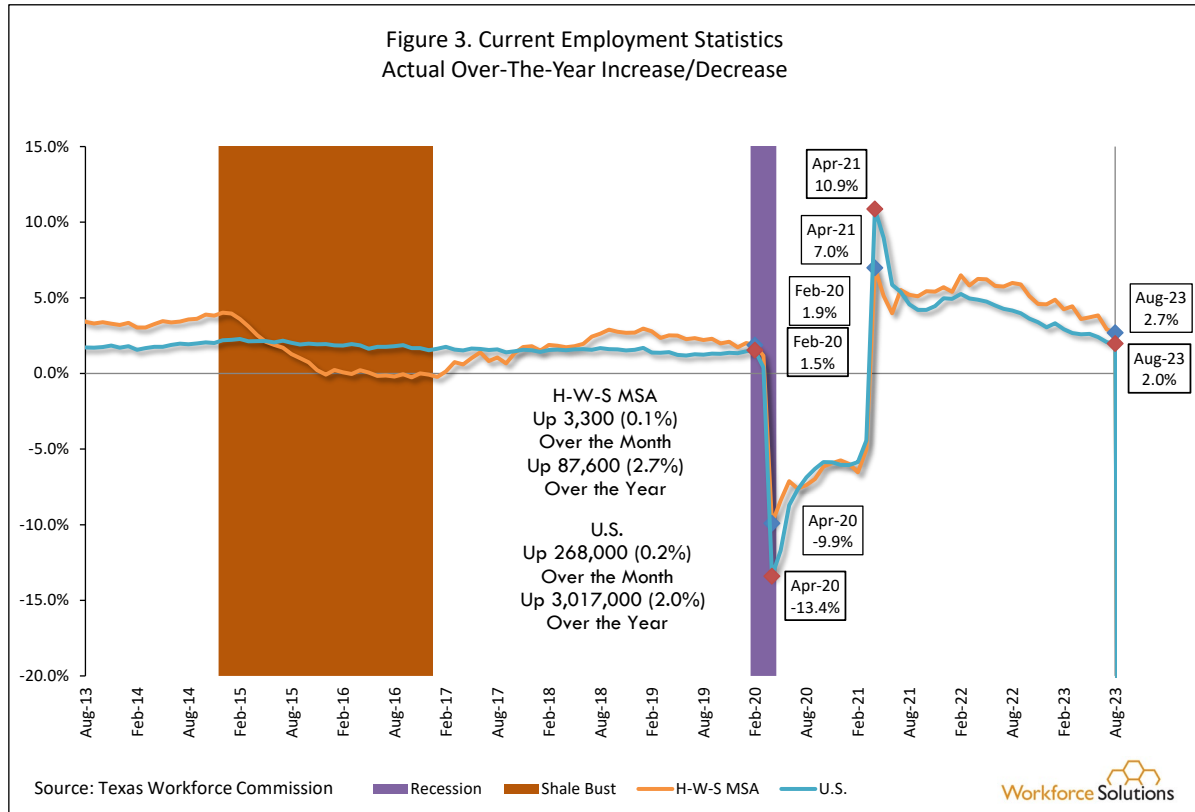
September data is scheduled to be released October 20, 2023.

Nonagricultural Employment

Over the Month

Total Nonfarm Employment in the H-W-S MSA was up 3,300 jobs over the month. The 0.1 percent increase was much weaker than the pre-pandemic historical average of 0.3 percent for the month of August. Only four industry super sectors experienced gains driving this month's increase, Other Services, Leisure and Hospitality, Financial Activities, and Private Education and Health Services. Losses were found in seven different sectors with most substantial declines in Professional and Business Services, Construction, and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities. Other Services' increase of 3,900 jobs was an outlier in the sense it was way beyond the highest August increase on record of only 400 jobs. Other Services is a category that contains a wide variety of service establishments not captured elsewhere in the NAICS classification system and includes anything from machinery repair, religious activities, drycleaning, laundry services, personal care services, and more. Leisure and Hospitality also reported a record August increase that comes in addition to a large revision made to July estimates placing the industry sector in a stronger position than it was over the last two months.



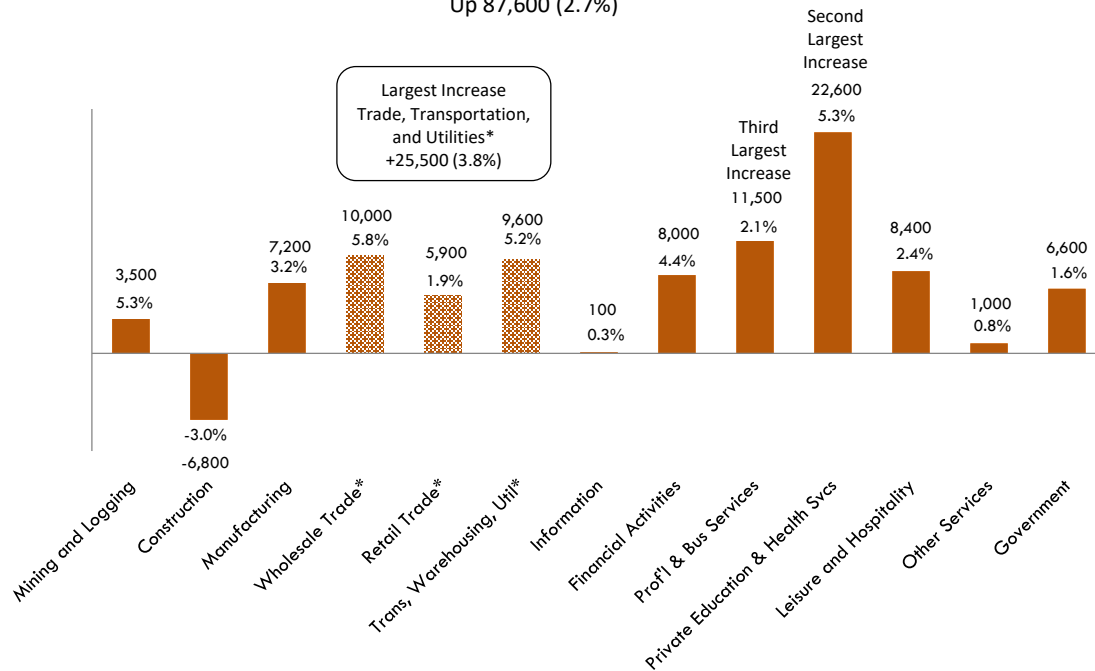


Over the Year

Total Nonfarm Employment in the H-W-S MSA was up 87,600 jobs over the year in August. The pace of job growth has fallen sharply throughout the year from a high of 4.9 percent in January to the current pace of 2.7 percent. The pace of growth in the Houston MSA continues to be stronger than the nation’s which also fell in August but by only one-tenth of a percentage point to 2.0 percent, see figure 3 above. The gap between the pace of job growth in Houston and the national pace has been narrowing throughout the year from 1.6 percentage points in January to only 0.7 percent in August.

All but one industry super sector was reporting over-the-year increases, see figure 4. While ten of the eleven industry super sectors were reporting over-the-year increases, six saw declines in the pace of job growth. The top three contributors to the increase were Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, up 25,500 jobs or 3.8 percent, Private Education and Health Services up 22,600 jobs or 5.3 percent, and Professional and Business Services, up 11,500 jobs or 2.1 percent. Construction experienced the largest slowdown with the pace of job growth now negative at -3.0 percent. Payrolls in Construction peaked in October 2022 and have since been on the decline, see figure 5. Professional and Business Services saw the second largest decline in the pace of job growth where it fell from 3.2 percent to 2.1 percent. Parker Harvey, Manager for Regional Economic Analysis here at Workforce Solutions, stated “Total Nonfarm employment continues its steady march towards a year-end target of roughly 70,000 jobs”. For a complete list of current, month-ago, and year-ago employment estimates see pages 6 & 7.

Figure 4. Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA
Annual Change August 2022 to August 2023
Up 87,600 (2.7%)

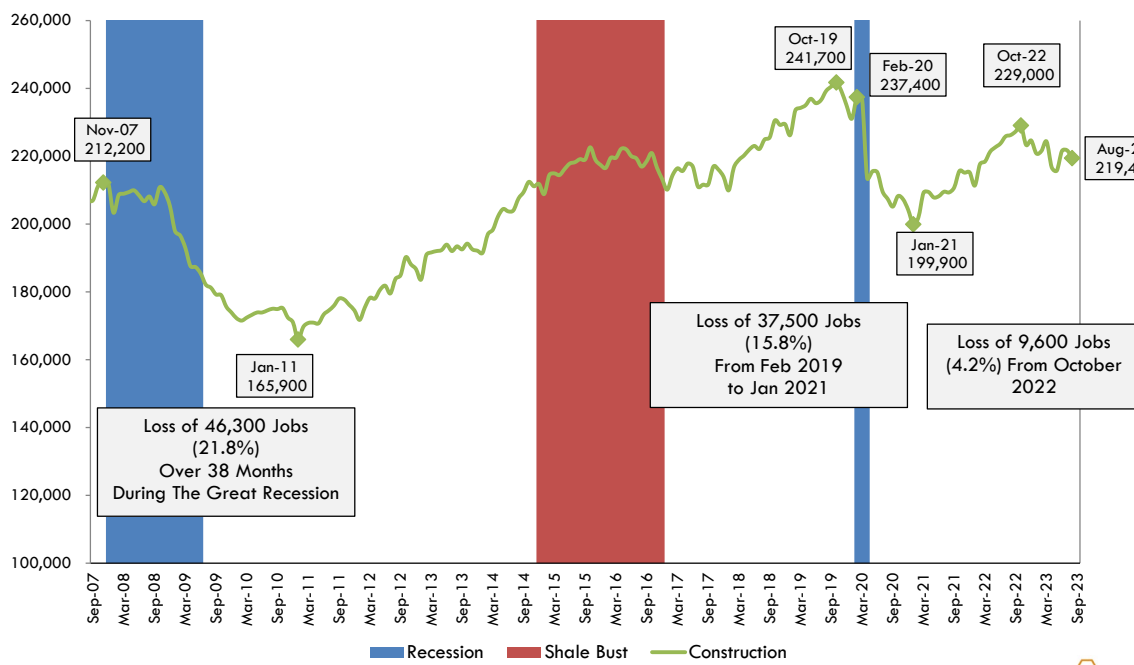


*The Trade, Transportation, and Utilities super sector is the aggregate of Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, and Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities.

Source: Texas Workforce Commission



Figure 5. Construction
Current Employment Statistics
Houston MSA



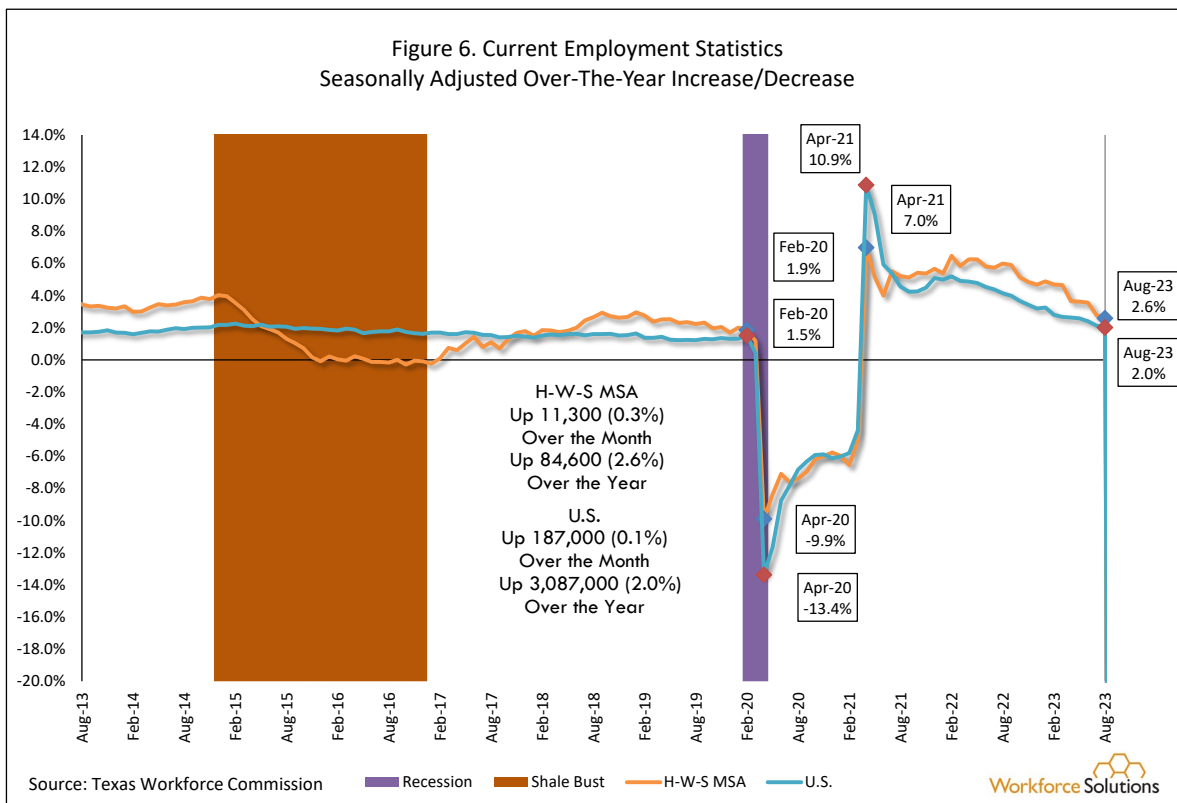
Source: Texas Workforce Commission

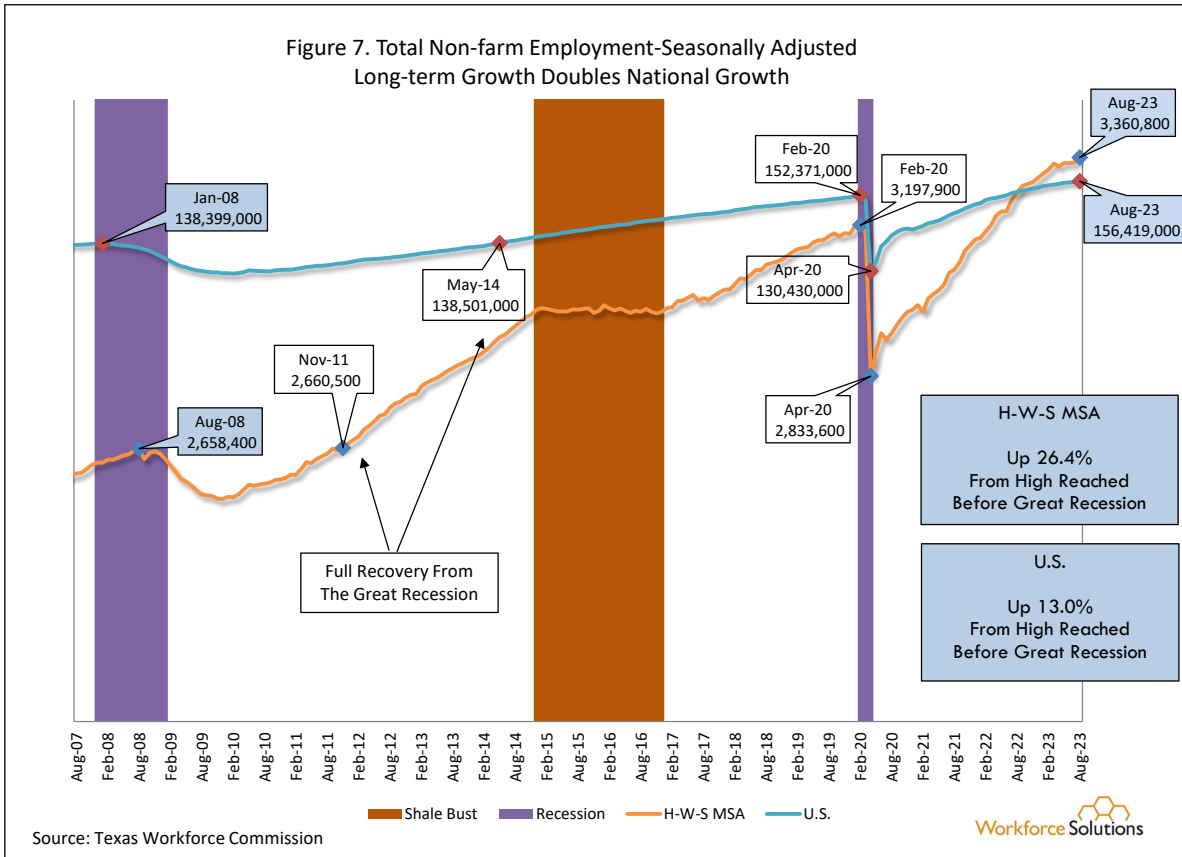


Total Nonfarm Employment – Seasonally Adjusted

Seasonally adjusted estimates for the H-W-S MSA and U.S. seen in figures 6 and 7 provide an additional view of growth trends removing the erratic month-to-month seasonal patterns. On a seasonally adjusted basis, Total Nonfarm Employment reported an increase of 11,300 jobs over the month, up 0.3 percent. The pace of job growth fell another two-tenths of a percentage point to 2.6 percent, down considerably from 4.9 percent at the beginning of the year. Total Nonfarm Employment at the national level added 187,000 jobs in August, up 0.1 percent, with the pace of growth also falling, down one-tenth of a percentage point to 2.0 percent.

Looking at growth over a more long-term basis, Houston has been among the fastest-growing cities in the U.S. and as a result long-term job growth has historically outpaced that of the nation. Payrolls in the H-W-S MSA are currently up 26.4 percent above their peak prior to The Great Recession while payrolls at the national level are only up 13.0 percent.





NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA	AUG 2023	JUL 2023	AUG 2022	Month Change		Year Change	
				Net	Percent	Net	Percent
Total Nonfarm	3,348,400	3,345,100	3,260,800	3,300	0.1%	87,600	2.7%
.Total Private	2,927,100	2,923,400	2,846,100	3,700	0.1%	81,000	2.8%
.Goods Producing	522,900	525,800	519,000	-2,900	-0.6%	3,900	0.8%
..Mining, Logging and Construction	289,300	291,800	292,600	-2,500	-0.9%	-3,300	-1.1%
...Mining and Logging	69,900	70,100	66,400	-200	-0.3%	3,500	5.3%
.....Oil and Gas Extraction	29,700	29,700	29,100	0	0.0%	600	2.1%
.....Support Activities for Mining	38,500	38,600	35,800	-100	-0.3%	2,700	7.5%
...Construction	219,400	221,700	226,200	-2,300	-1.0%	-6,800	-3.0%
.....Construction of Buildings	55,600	56,100	54,800	-500	-0.9%	800	1.5%
.....Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	53,700	54,100	53,600	-400	-0.7%	100	0.2%
.....Specialty Trade Contractors	110,100	111,500	117,800	-1,400	-1.3%	-7,700	-6.5%
..Manufacturing	233,600	234,000	226,400	-400	-0.2%	7,200	3.2%
...Durable Goods	144,700	144,100	139,100	600	0.4%	5,600	4.0%
....Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	49,700	50,100	47,500	-400	-0.8%	2,200	4.6%
....Machinery Manufacturing	42,200	42,200	41,100	0	0.0%	1,100	2.7%
.....Agriculture, Construction, and Mining Machinery Manufacturing	22,200	22,300	21,200	-100	-0.4%	1,000	4.7%
.....Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	14,500	14,600	14,200	-100	-0.7%	300	2.1%
...Non-Durable Goods	88,900	89,900	87,300	-1,000	-1.1%	1,600	1.8%
....Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	8,000	8,100	7,800	-100	-1.2%	200	2.6%
....Chemical Manufacturing	42,600	42,700	41,300	-100	-0.2%	1,300	3.1%
.Service-Providing	2,825,500	2,819,300	2,741,800	6,200	0.2%	83,700	3.1%
.Private Service Providing	2,404,200	2,397,600	2,327,100	6,600	0.3%	77,100	3.3%
..Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	695,000	695,600	669,500	-600	-0.1%	25,500	3.8%
...Wholesale Trade	181,000	179,900	171,000	1,100	0.6%	10,000	5.8%
....Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	111,500	111,200	106,100	300	0.3%	5,400	5.1%
.....Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	17,600	17,700	17,400	-100	-0.6%	200	1.1%
....Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	55,000	54,800	53,000	200	0.4%	2,000	3.8%
...Retail Trade	319,400	321,700	313,500	-2,300	-0.7%	5,900	1.9%
....Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	44,400	44,400	43,500	0	0.0%	900	2.1%
....Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	24,000	24,400	24,400	-400	-1.6%	-400	-1.6%
....Food and Beverage Retailers	74,200	74,400	71,600	-200	-0.3%	2,600	3.6%
....General Merchandise Retailers	61,800	62,300	61,300	-500	-0.8%	500	0.8%
.....Department Stores	20,000	20,100	19,700	-100	-0.5%	300	1.5%
.....Warehouse Clubs, Supercenters, and Other General Merchandise Retailers	41,800	42,200	41,600	-400	-0.9%	200	0.5%
....Health and Personal Care Retailers	20,400	20,500	20,100	-100	-0.5%	300	1.5%
....Clothing, Clothing Accessories, Shoe, and Jewelry Retailers	25,700	25,600	26,300	100	0.4%	-600	-2.3%
...Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	194,600	194,000	185,000	600	0.3%	9,600	5.2%
....Utilities	20,400	20,400	19,800	0	0.0%	600	3.0%
.....Air Transportation	20,500	20,600	20,100	-100	-0.5%	400	2.0%
.....Truck Transportation	31,300	31,200	30,700	100	0.3%	600	2.0%
.....Pipeline Transportation	13,100	13,000	12,500	100	0.8%	600	4.8%
..Information	33,200	33,300	33,100	-100	-0.3%	100	0.3%
....Telecommunications	11,800	11,800	11,800	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
..Financial Activities	189,000	187,200	181,000	1,800	1.0%	8,000	4.4%
...Finance and Insurance	116,700	116,300	114,700	400	0.3%	2,000	1.7%
....Credit Intermediation and Related Activities including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank	46,400	46,200	45,900	200	0.4%	500	1.1%
.....Depository Credit Intermediation including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank	30,100	30,000	29,500	100	0.3%	600	2.0%
....Financial Investments and Related Activities including Financial Vehicles	23,500	23,500	23,000	0	0.0%	500	2.2%
.....Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	46,800	46,600	45,800	200	0.4%	1,000	2.2%
...Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	72,300	70,900	66,300	1,400	2.0%	6,000	9.0%

NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT				Month Change		Year Change	
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA	AUG 2023	JUL 2023	AUG 2022	Net	Percent	Net	Percent
..Professional and Business Services	558,900	562,200	547,400	-3,300	-0.6%	11,500	2.1%
...Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	273,700	276,200	263,800	-2,500	-0.9%	9,900	3.8%
.....Legal Services	32,800	33,200	31,000	-400	-1.2%	1,800	5.8%
.....Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services	28,800	28,900	27,300	-100	-0.3%	1,500	5.5%
.....Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	76,900	76,900	69,900	0	0.0%	7,000	10.0%
.....Computer Systems Design and Related Services	43,900	44,000	42,500	-100	-0.2%	1,400	3.3%
...Management of Companies and Enterprises	46,900	47,400	45,600	-500	-1.1%	1,300	2.9%
...Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	238,300	238,600	238,000	-300	-0.1%	300	0.1%
.....Administrative and Support Services	224,000	224,500	225,200	-500	-0.2%	-1,200	-0.5%
.....Employment Services	84,700	85,100	88,400	-400	-0.5%	-3,700	-4.2%
.....Services to Buildings and Dwellings	56,400	56,800	56,300	-400	-0.7%	100	0.2%
..Private Education and Health Services	451,200	449,700	428,600	1,500	0.3%	22,600	5.3%
...Private Educational Services	71,000	70,000	68,900	1,000	1.4%	2,100	3.0%
...Health Care and Social Assistance	380,200	379,700	359,700	500	0.1%	20,500	5.7%
.....Ambulatory Health Care Services	192,800	192,000	181,600	800	0.4%	11,200	6.2%
.....Hospitals	95,800	95,400	89,700	400	0.4%	6,100	6.8%
..Leisure and Hospitality	355,600	352,200	347,200	3,400	1.0%	8,400	2.4%
...Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	42,300	42,200	39,300	100	0.2%	3,000	7.6%
...Accommodation and Food Services	313,300	310,000	307,900	3,300	1.1%	5,400	1.8%
.....Accommodation	26,900	27,300	25,900	-400	-1.5%	1,000	3.9%
.....Food Services and Drinking Places	286,400	282,700	282,000	3,700	1.3%	4,400	1.6%
..Other Services	121,300	117,400	120,300	3,900	3.3%	1,000	0.8%
..Government	421,300	421,700	414,700	-400	-0.1%	6,600	1.6%
...Federal Government	33,400	33,400	32,200	0	0.0%	1,200	3.7%
...State Government	94,800	94,500	92,500	300	0.3%	2,300	2.5%
.....State Government Educational Services	53,100	52,900	51,800	200	0.4%	1,300	2.5%
...Local Government	293,100	293,800	290,000	-700	-0.2%	3,100	1.1%
.....Local Government Educational Services	196,800	197,500	195,000	-700	-0.4%	1,800	0.9%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	AUG 2023	JUL 2023	AUG 2022				
H-W-S MSA	4.5	4.5	3.9				
Texas (Actual)	4.9	4.8	4.3				
U.S.	3.9	3.8	3.8				

Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA: Includes Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller Counties. All Data is Subject to Revision.

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, BLS, Texas Workforce Commission, Institute for Supply Management, Baker Hughes, and The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.