

Texas Workforce Press Release

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TWC Supports Career Pathway Expansion

TWC awards \$500,000 mentoring grants to college consortium

AUSTIN – Supporting the state’s Accelerate TEXAS initiative, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is funding a career pathway expansion project through a mentoring grant to a consortium of colleges. Houston Community College (HCC) will lead the mentoring college consortium consisting of Alamo Colleges, Amarillo College, South Texas College and Tarrant County College District.

As mentors, the consortium will assist other community colleges and Adult Education providers in establishing Career Pathway programs, similar to the successful models operated by HCC and the other members of the consortium. These programs have been proven successful because they concurrently enroll learners in contextualized basic educational courses, such as reading and math, and skills training courses such as welding. Contextualized content is more relevant and meaningful to students and results in quicker learning. Using this method, students are often able to complete training programs in one semester or less which gets them into a new career more quickly and at less cost.

The expansion project will implement a mentoring model to support the development, expansion and success of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs providing Integrated Education and Training models to meet students’ workforce readiness needs. The consortium will support the expansion of career pathways aligned with the needs of local industries and employers at no less than ten eligible community colleges and AEL providers. There will be a total of \$500,000 available for the career pathway mentoring grants.

“These efficient career pathway models are able to get people the soft skills, literacy and technical skills needed to gain a place in the local workforce, strengthening the future of Texas communities,” said TWC Chairman Andres Alcantar. “Expanding the opportunity for communities to obtain or update job skills benefits present and future job seekers with employment opportunities, remaining competitive in the job market.”

When programs integrate training and Adult Education for completion within a single semester, HCC has found that it is common for students to achieve credentialing rates in the eighty to ninety percent range. Career skills, such as interpersonal, cognitive and applied workforce knowledge, deliver workforce-readiness qualities to adult students in a short timeframe and with considerable lower student cost.

“Accelerate Texas is the best thing that has ever happened to Adult Education. If you want underprepared students to complete postsecondary credentials and enter employment, integrated education and training is the best way to do it,” said HCC Director of Adult Education Dr. David Joost. “Of all the education and training initiatives that have come and gone over the years, Accelerate Texas is different, it works and it’s here to stay.”

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Career Pathway Expansion

The career pathway program expansion connects with the four goals of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) 60 x 30 initiatives. This AEL initiative expands opportunities supporting workforce training efforts and aligning occupational skills with today's high demand job market. It is one of the many steps being taken to reinforce the Accelerate TEXAS, 60 x 30 and Tri-Agency Workforce initiatives to prepare adult students with workforce-readiness skills.

Accelerate TEXAS is a shared initiative between TWC and THECB with objectives to build capacity and expand deployment of career pathway programs supporting robust employment, skills gained by job seekers, and higher education transitions for adults. TWC and THECB share common program objectives under Accelerate Texas, but each has unique program requirements.

The five consortium members were among the first Accelerate TEXAS grant recipients funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to have successful records for mentoring community colleges in the adoption of Accelerate TEXAS strategies. Individuals interested in TWC's AEL program can visit www.twc.state.tx.us/partners/adult-education-literacy.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in coordination with its network of local workforce development boards, call 512-463-8942 or visit www.texasworkforce.org. To receive notifications about TWC programs and services subscribe to our [email updates](#).