

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Jalisa Broussard](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)
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From: sunset.website@brightleafgroup.com <sunset.website@brightleafgroup.com>
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Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)

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Submitted by: Visitor

Submitted values are:

Choose the agency that you would like to provide input about
[Texas Workforce Commission](#)

Public Comments

1

First Name

Juliet

Last Name

Stipeche

Title

Executive Director

Organization you are affiliated with

Gulf Coast Workforce Board

City

Houston

State

Texas

Your Comments or Concerns

08/16/26

RE: Public Comment on the Sunset Staff Report on the Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Workforce Investment Council, and Purchasing from People with Disabilities Program (June 2026)

Dear Honorable Chair Kolkhorst, Vice Chair Hull, and Members of the Sunset Advisory Commission:

We thank you for the opportunity to share a few thoughts on the Sunset Advisory Commission's staff report, which evaluates the Texas Workforce Commission and the state workforce system principally through the lens of statute, governance structure, and compliance. We share these comments in an attempt to capture what the system produces for the residents, employers, and communities that depend on it every day. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) serves a thirteen-county region encompassing over 7.5 million residents, approximately 3.5 million jobs, and nearly 160,000 employers, making it the largest local workforce development board in Texas. The evidence that follows is organized around the three constituencies our statutory mission serves: the residents whose economic trajectories our services change directly, the employers whose workforce needs we help meet, and the communities we reach through embedded, place-based partnerships. A closing section documents the systems infrastructure and cross-sector coordination that make each individual outcome below repeatable.

I. System and Infrastructure Investment: The Foundation for Durable Outcomes

A Sunset review is designed to test system durability, and this section documents the infrastructure the GCWB has built and continues to build, that converts individual service transactions into a repeatable regional system.

The Texas Gulf Coast Tri-Agency Workforce Regional Convener

Texas designated the GCWB as Regional Convener under the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative to address a structural problem the region has faced for decades: education, workforce, and industry systems that operate in parallel rather than in coordination, each producing valuable outputs that fail to connect into a coherent pathway for the learner or the employer at the other end. Our work under this designation has focused

on closing that gap.

The most direct evidence of progress lies in the concrete deliverables we have built jointly with education and industry partners, rather than in principle alone. We have developed teacher apprenticeship models that create a credentialed pathway into the classroom itself, addressing workforce need on both sides of the K-12 system. We have launched a career exploration digital platform that gives students and families a single point of access to labor market and pathway information previously scattered across institutions. We have piloted youth internship models designed to convert exploration into documented work experience before graduation with our Hire Gulf Coast Youth program. Finally, we have convened regional sessions that bring K-12, higher education, and employer leadership into the same room on a recurring basis, replacing episodic coordination with a standing structure.

None of this is durable, however, without a shared evidentiary base. We have built and are actively using shared labor market intelligence and performance dashboards, so that education and workforce partners make enrollment, program design, and investment decisions from the same data rather than from institution-specific assumptions. This shared intelligence is already informing decisions on job placement and wage outcomes, the two measures that ultimately determine whether a pathway produced economic mobility or merely a credential.

Our priorities moving forward are targeted rather than diffuse. We intend to build stronger on-ramps for learners facing the greatest barriers to entry, intensify direct outreach to the populations least likely to encounter these pathways on their own, and co-develop employer-facing resources with industry partners, so that the demand side of the pathway is as well built as the supply side. The Tri-Agency Regional Convener role was designed to make the region's talent ecosystem behave as a system. This year's progress is evidence that it is beginning to do so. Learn more:

https://youtu.be/kVsa_kSdwgA?si=DM43GtC4f87xuw9-; https://youtu.be/8qb_7b-wynl?si=XmAocDHfonWSHyEs; <https://youtu.be/wVFEKQA6fSQ?si=Bc9sYFKZO-QMDvOP>.

Building the Skilled Trades Pipeline: The ARP/MC3 Program

The Gulf Coast region of Texas faces a substantial skilled labor gap at precisely the moment billions of dollars in infrastructure investment are underway, a mismatch that state and industry leaders are addressing through a coordinated set of apprenticeship strategies rather than a single program.

The Houston Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council (HGCBCTC) and the GCWB are actively expanding registered apprenticeship programs across the region.

Entry into that pipeline runs through the Apprenticeship Readiness Program and Multi-Craft Core Curriculum, known as ARP/MC3. This program prepares candidates for the trades before they ever reach a job site, covering tool identification, safety, and workplace discipline, and it delivers credentials employers recognize on day one, including OSHA-10 and CPR certification.

The GCWB's role in this pipeline is direct and substantial: the Board funds ninety-five percent of enrolled students and has developed specialized math curricula in collaboration with the HGCBCTC to help candidates pass the aptitude testing that gates entry into apprenticeship programs. This investment has produced a measurable increase in candidate success rates.

A parallel track, Veterans in Piping, addresses a distinct population: service members transitioning out of the military. The program is structured to recognize foundational skills veterans already possess, allowing them to enter trade apprenticeships at an advanced level rather than starting from the beginning. The shared objective across all four elements, apprenticeship expansion, ARP/MC3 preparation, Board funding and curriculum support, and the veterans' pathway, is connecting local talent to career pathways offering long-term stability and benefits, positioned as direct fuel for the region's continued economic growth.

Learn more: https://youtu.be/gR1pGum_pVs?si=Lc9uYfxKL7nOD2au

Paving the Pathways to Success: An Eleven-Year Partnership With Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The GCWB has partnered with the Texas Workforce Commission's Vocational Rehabilitation Services division for eleven years on the Paving the Pathways to Success program, the only program of its kind in the State of Texas. The partnership connects Vocational Rehabilitation clients, Texans with disabilities preparing for competitive employment, directly with Workforce Solutions services and staff, a sustained collaboration that has operated continuously across more than a decade of changing state priorities. Students that successfully complete the Paving program also have an opportunity to continue their journey with a paid summer internship through the Summer Earn and Learn program as well. Learn more: <https://youtu.be/XTnUJYYcs3s?si=YKCeZwmJ-aD0Q0Kb>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjWj4ir-nQ4>.

Building Confidence Through the Summer Earn and Learn Program: Christopher Maldonado and Christian Thibodeaux

The Summer Earn and Learn program, known as SEAL, is a partnership between Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast and Vocational Rehabilitation Services that places

students in a five-week summer internship. Its purpose extends beyond the paycheck: the program is designed to build confidence, provide hands-on training, and develop practical workplace skills in students who might not otherwise have access to that experience.

Two interns, Christopher Maldonado and Christian Thibodeaux, completed their placements at Fueling Brains. Both described the internship as teaching them responsibility, independent task management, and teamwork, skills that translate directly regardless of the industry they ultimately enter.

The employer side of the placement was equally engaged. Jason Emmy, an assistant engineer at Fueling Brains, said the interns helped the company manage its workload during a busy season, and he spoke directly to the professional growth he observed in the students over the course of the placement.

Video: <https://youtu.be/DDuTh7ymc2o?si=XlteWpbCSppnG1f6>

Additional SEAL participants: https://youtu.be/XOJJTkbGy-k?si=iz2dVwl_zGwzl6zU

II. Resident Impact: Individual Economic Mobility

The system infrastructure documented above exists to produce outcomes for individual residents. The stories below are representative, not exhaustive, examples of Gulf Coast residents whose economic trajectory changed through direct engagement with Workforce Solutions.

From Childcare Barrier to Sworn Deputy: Erica Ramirez, Harris County

Erica Ramirez is a thirty-one-year-old single mother of two in Houston. Before connecting with Workforce Solutions, she paid nearly eight hundred dollars a month for childcare, a cost that determined which jobs she could accept and whether she could accept work at all. She learned of Workforce Solutions from signage at a local mall, enrolled, and within days received approval for childcare financial assistance that reduced her monthly cost to two hundred fifty dollars. "I remember crying," she said. "I was paying almost \$800 for daycare... it meant a lot to me." That reduction made stable employment possible; she began driving for Uber to support her family while working around her children's schedule.

Self-employment, however, carried no benefits and no healthcare, and Ramirez wanted a career, not a stopgap. "I didn't want to be that Uber driver," she said. "I wanted to be something better. That was never my dream." A visit to a Workforce Solutions job fair led her to Houston Community College Northeast, where she originally intended to enroll in

truck driving school. Instead, she found herself in the law enforcement building among cadets in uniform, and the visit reignited a childhood ambition. "I want to make a difference in my community," she said. "I want to serve my community. I want to be there for people the way I wanted people to be there for me."

She entered the police academy in May 2023 and did not pass the physical training requirement on her first attempt. She credits a classmate, Brittany Loya, who she says repeatedly told her she would make it the next time, and her instructor, Gilbert Palacios, who she says encouraged her to reenroll after seeing how hard she had worked. During her second attempt, fellow cadet Joseph Milhouse checked on her at the track and, by her account, reported her progress and confidence in her to instructor Elizabeth Crane. Ramirez passed every subsequent test and graduated. "I finally made it," she said. "I'm officially a deputy." She was hired by the Harris County Constable's Office, Precinct 4.

New deputies must purchase their own duty equipment, a cost Ramirez could not absorb alone. Instructor Elizabeth Crane, by her account, sent her a Workforce Solutions financial aid flyer, and Ramirez applied. Approval came within two days, coordinated by Workforce Solutions staff member Leroy Tobias. "I'm extremely thankful for the Workforce Solutions for helping me in my time of need," she said, "for making my journey possible."

Video: https://youtu.be/IJwi_FFhXOM?si=13ElKSIO9JvMmOul

From High School Dropout to Building Hardware for NASA: Marcos Rodriguez

Marcos Rodriguez entered adulthood as a high school dropout, uncertain about his future. The turning point came through his sister, who encouraged him to connect with Workforce Solutions. What followed, in Rodriguez's own description, was "a very easy, seamless transition": within ten days, he had earned his GED and secured employment.

This entry point led to a career with KBR, where Rodriguez now builds training hardware used to prepare astronauts for NASA missions. He describes the work in terms of creation and consequence rather than task completion. "I get to take an idea, or even just a drawing," he said, "and I get to bring it to life."

Rodriguez frames the outcome in terms that extend well beyond employment. "I have become a better father, a better provider, a better husband," he said, "and ultimately I'm happier in life." Video: <https://youtu.be/fBb4is2Hvm8?si=chWDVio0JcCNCb7U>

From Financial Barrier to Nursing Support Specialist: Rachel Hohman

Rachel Hohman was twenty-two years old and preparing to begin nursing school when the financial reality of continuing her education became clear. She did not qualify for

financial aid through FAFSA and fell short on available scholarships, facing the uncertainty many students confront when trying to take the next step in their education. During an orientation at Alvin Community College, Workforce Solutions representatives spoke to students about available training programs. Hohman applied, and about a week later received the call that changed her trajectory.

Workforce Solutions approved Hohman for assistance and covered the full cost of her tuition, along with uniforms, fees, and transportation. "They paid for every cent of my tuition," she said. "I remember just bawling my eyes out. It was the coolest experience in the world."

The support extended beyond the financial. Hohman credits the consistent encouragement she received throughout the program with easing the stress that comes from balancing school, finances, and the demands of a rigorous course of study. "They were always there for me in any way, shape, or form that I needed," she said. "They were checking in on you and making sure you felt good within your program and about your experience." Staff who worked with Hohman recall the same qualities from their side of the relationship. "One thing I admired a lot about Rachel was her enthusiasm, her energy, her professionalism, and her drive," said a Workforce Solutions team member. "I knew she was ready for the next step."

Hohman now works as a Nursing Support Specialist at Alvin Community College, where she supports students pursuing the same career path she once worked toward herself.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efCBJM01J0o>

Building Durable Capacity, Not Just Placing a Job: Ms. Price, Conroe

Workforce systems are often evaluated by placement counts and wage outcomes at a single point in time. Ms. Price's case illustrates a different and, for public investment purposes, more durable form of return: the transfer of a skill that outlasts the transaction that prompted it.

Ms. Price came to Workforce Solutions roughly two years ago while working part time and searching for full-time work in the security field. Her barrier was not a lack of effort or a lack of job openings; it was a digital literacy gap. Many employer applications, including those from school districts, required uploading formatted documents and completing file conversions that were unfamiliar to her. "It was making sure colored documents were uploaded, things were converted," said career advisor Nikita. "Just a lot of really complex digital literacy things."

Staff could have simply completed the applications on her behalf. Instead, service coordinator Jim Adams and Nikita worked alongside her, application by application, until she could execute the process independently. The immediate outcome was strong: Ms. Price secured a full-time security position at twenty dollars an hour with benefits, a substantial improvement over the contract work she had relied on, and one that positioned her to begin moving off government housing assistance.

The more instructive outcome, from a systems perspective, is what happened after the placement. Ms. Price no longer requires staff assistance to navigate an online application. "It's helping me more that I can come and get on the computer without saying, hey, Mr. Jim, can you come over here and help me," she said. "I just come in and go straight to what I need to do." Adams described the intent behind that shift explicitly: "It's just nice to be able to provide tools, teach them how to utilize the tools, and then watch them apply the tools. It's teaching a man to fish, and it's really rewarding to watch."

This distinction matters to a body evaluating system design rather than a single case. A placement secures one job. A transferred skill reduces the likelihood that the same person returns to the system requiring the same intervention for the next job, the next promotion, or the next economic disruption. It is the difference between a service rendered and a capacity built, and it is the latter that compounds in value over time without additional public expenditure.

Video: <https://youtu.be/reb9sKzl2pY?si=7LK7Pd2V62a6ruVi>

From Housing Instability to Permanent Employment: Ariana Martin

Ariana Martin is twenty-two years old and came to Houston from North Carolina. She arrived at Workforce Solutions during a period of acute instability: she and her partner were living without a working stove or hot water, and neither had employment. "It was hard for us to try and figure out what we were going to eat and how we were going to eat for the week," she said. She had no prior experience with a workforce agency and decided, in her words, to "call around and ask and see what they could do for me."

An assessment at the Workforce Solutions' East End office identified her as a fit for the agency's youth internship program, an eight-week, 240-hour work-based learning placement for young adults aged sixteen to twenty-four with limited or no prior job experience. "We are able to place them with the internship program" regardless of prior challenges, her career advisor explained, noting the goal is to help participants "obtain skills that will enhance and boost your resume." Because Martin was also navigating housing instability, staff worked to match her placement to her transportation and

scheduling constraints. "She was really amenable to coaching," her work-based learning coordinator said, "and helping work through that."

She was placed at a nearby CVS and received support services, including transit assistance, to sustain the placement. "This CVS actually was the closest to me," Martin said, noting Workforce Solutions later provided bus cards so she could take the Metro rail rather than walk. From the outset, she communicated a clear goal: converting the temporary internship into permanent employment. Her supervisor, by her account, responded to her performance, "he loved my drive... he loved the way that I portrayed customer service," and at the internship's conclusion she applied for and was hired into a permanent position. "It meant that I didn't necessarily have to struggle anymore," she said, "and it meant that I didn't have to start over."

Martin has been candid that the period surrounding her job search took a toll on her wellbeing, and she credits the agency's intervention directly with changing her trajectory. "Without them, I don't think I would have been able to get as far as I would have gotten," she said. Her coordinator added a broader observation about the population the program serves: "Entering our facility is the first step. We let them know that we have all these opportunities for them that they don't know that we have." Video: <https://youtu.be/wNWk-qMvqhk?si=e1QfGRmYyicOCxG1>.

Building a Skilled Trade Career: Melanie Reyes and the NABTU Apprenticeship Readiness Cohort

Melanie Reyes visited Workforce Solutions looking for employment opportunities and did not expect to discover an entirely new career path. Staff introduced her to the North America's Building Trades Unions, or NABTU, Apprenticeship Readiness Program, and she applied after learning she could use the program to explore a skilled trade. "It changed my life," she said. "I didn't know how I was going to get through school. To Workforce Solutions, I will be eternally grateful."

The multi-week training builds the foundational skills participants need for careers in construction and the building trades while introducing them to the range of apprenticeship opportunities available across the region. For Reyes, one of the biggest surprises was how much the program taught her. "I learned a lot about math," she said. "I've been out of school for a little bit, so it actually taught me a lot of math. It also taught me about different trades that I didn't even know were available." She said she is especially interested in working with heavy machinery and values the community she found in the program. "We're all like a big family and a group," she said. "If I ever need help, I can call on them and they can guide me if I don't understand something or don't have the knowledge."

Reyes graduated alongside a full cohort on June 19, 2026, and several graduates secured employment before completing the program, including Brandon Binder and fellow graduate Tyler, who both began work on June 22. Binder described the exposure the program gave him to career paths he had not previously considered. "We got to talk to 13 different trades, their pay scale, their retirements, and what their benefits are," he said. "There were trades I didn't even know about." Paul Puente, Executive Secretary of the Houston Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council, framed the stakes of that exposure directly. "This is a way to change their livelihood," he said. "We're talking about generational wealth. We're talking about an opportunity to join an apprenticeship program and start a career path."

Returning to Stable Employment: Glenn Spitz, Conroe

Glenn Spitz first came to the Conroe Workforce Solutions office after being incarcerated for two years. He was referred to career advisor Matt Hoffman, who has worked in the Conroe office for over nine years. Hoffman identified the barriers standing between Spitz and employment and built a rapport with him rooted in shared military service; Spitz served in the Army and Hoffman in the Air Force. "We were able to share collaboratively through our shared experiences," Hoffman said, "which really helped develop that rapport." Given the urgency of his situation, Hoffman gave Spitz several employer referrals, including one to Cavender's. Spitz pursued them directly. "Within two days he was hired," Hoffman said.

Spitz credits the office's speed and attentiveness as much as the referral itself. "These guys helped me within like two weeks and I already had a job," he said, naming several staff members, Matt, Jim Adams, Sue Lynn, and Tristan, who he said each contributed to his outcome. "The moment you walk in, they're like, hey, you know, is your resume up to date? Do you need help with anything?" he said. "They walk you through step by step on everything. Everyone is here to help you."

Hoffman frames Spitz's outcome as evidence of what a structured employment plan can accomplish. "Glenn took the advice that I gave him," he said. "Having an employment plan and a structural starting point allowed him to formulate where he needed to go and what he needed to do." Hoffman added that the result reflects the office's broader approach: "Glenn's success is a direct reflection upon this office and showcases everything we try to do on a regular basis to help our customers." Video:

https://youtu.be/hmAuNDdKJck?si=XMVvQmjSP_0CxPKr.

III. Employer Impact: Meeting Workforce Demand

A local workforce board's value is measured as much by employer outcomes as by

resident outcomes. The partnerships below illustrate how the Gulf Coast Workforce Board meets employer demand directly, from a single municipal work site to one of the largest manufacturing campuses in North America.

Meeting Manufacturing Demand: Daikin Comfort Technologies, Waller

Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast partnered with ABC13 Houston for a special “Who’s Hiring” segment filmed at Daikin Comfort Technologies’ North American headquarters in Waller, offering viewers an inside look at one of the largest manufacturing facilities in North America and the workforce that keeps it running. The campus, known to many Houstonians as the site behind Daikin Park, home of the Houston Astros, spans approximately five hundred acres and more than four million square feet under one roof, employing thousands across manufacturing, engineering, logistics, maintenance, technical training, and skilled trades.

The segment addressed a challenge common to manufacturers across the region: meeting growing demand for skilled workers as operations expand and experienced employees retire. GCWB Executive Director Juliet Stipeche discussed the range of career opportunities available at Daikin during the visit. "Whether it's production, maintenance, skilled trades, engineering, logistics, or technical training, there are opportunities here for people with different backgrounds, experience levels, and career goals," she said.

A central theme of the segment was employer-led training. Daikin representatives described the company's investment in in-house learning programs designed to help employees build skills, advance their careers, and move into leadership and technical positions, creating pathways from entry-level roles into careers many employees had not expected to pursue.

Read more: <https://abc13.com/post/companies-are-creating-courses-train-own-skilled-trade-workers/19318234/>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEipmEZjJ-c>

A Municipal Partnership Model: Workforce Solutions and the City of Ames

Mayor Barbara Doma’s connection to Workforce Solutions predates her time in office. In 2019, while operating her own business, Barbara’s Burgers, she was introduced to the paid work experience program. "Somebody came to me and said, hey, there’s a program out there that would help you with employing people in the community for jobs," she said. "So I signed my business up." After joining the city council in 2020, she extended the same partnership to the municipality itself. "It is really great for our community," she said. "A lot of the people that work here actually come from this community, and it gives

them an opportunity as youth and younger people to get some hands on work experience."

The program, coordinated by staff including Monica of the Northeast office and Ivani Hesway, a paid work experience coordinator based in Willowbrook, serves youth and young adults ages sixteen to twenty-four. "We kind of meet with them, figure out what their career goals are," Monica said, "and partner with different work sites around the North Houston area." The City of Ames has functioned as one such site since the relationship began.

Drakari Harris is among the young adults placed there. He came to Workforce Solutions while searching for information technology jobs and was connected to the paid work program instead. "They found the place that was a mile from my house," he said. "I've been wanting to work here for a good minute, and they reached out and they helped me get to where I was trying to go." At the site, Harris has gained hands-on municipal trade experience.

Since 2023, the City of Ames has hired three participants from the program into permanent municipal positions. Mayor Doma frames the arrangement as mutual. "It gives them an opportunity to get this paid work experience program," she said, "but also giving the interns an opportunity to gain that work experience to meet their career goals. It's kind of like a win, win opportunity." Video: <https://youtu.be/t44pfpbo3Ww?si=vz-CBW7MVK1xoQ9J>.

Reviving an Industry: The Galveston College Shipfitting Apprenticeship Program
Shipbuilding is returning to the Gulf Coast for the first time in more than eighty years, creating new opportunities for workers and increasing demand for skilled trades across the region. To help meet that demand, Galveston College launched a Shipfitting Apprenticeship Program in partnership with Gulf Copper and Davie Defense. The twenty-two-month program combines classroom instruction with paid, hands-on training, providing students a direct pathway into careers in shipbuilding and maritime manufacturing.

Students in the program work approximately thirty-six hours per week while completing classroom instruction. Apprentices earn between fifteen and nineteen dollars per hour and gain industry-recognized training while building the skills needed for a long-term maritime career. Graduates who complete the program successfully are offered full-time employment with Gulf Copper as shipfitters. "The workforce demand is there, and the opportunities are there," Galveston College representatives said at the program's

launch. State leaders estimate the initiative could support nearly two thousand five hundred jobs in the region as shipbuilding activity continues to expand along the Gulf Coast.

Learn more: <https://gc.edu/academic-career-programs/ce/career-training/craft-trades.php>; <http://wrksolutions.com/>; <https://www.wrksolutions.com/news/galveston-college-shipfitting-program-creates-new-career-pathways-along-the-gulf-coast>; <https://abc13.com/post/new-galveston-college-shipfitting-program-allows-students-learn-free-get-paid/19139381/>.

Additional employer testimony: https://youtu.be/nSxpDeK-zRE?si=bD-i_y4TaBFe6WPx; <https://youtu.be/Qg2G6AlFm50?si=kYieMbBVzPKrBYeD>; https://youtu.be/_JcObrGtOTY?si=6sQK3zNGT0o4Tysc; <https://youtu.be/DBqC6sKf6h0?si=9EaWh33miZCN-nFA>

IV. Community Impact: Embedded, Place-Based Service Delivery

Local workforce boards do not wait for residents and community partners to find them. This section documents how the GCWB embeds services directly within the community organizations, employers, and public spaces where residents already are, a design choice that matters because, as the record below demonstrates repeatedly, awareness of available services is often the first and most significant barrier standing between a resident and the help our system is funded to provide.

A Community Partnership Model: Workforce Solutions and Angel Reach, Conroe
Angel Reach is a nonprofit based in Conroe serving young adults ages eighteen to twenty-four who are at risk of homelessness, either because of life circumstances or because they have aged out of the foster care system. "When I talk about at risk," said Evelyn Clark, Angel Reach's program manager for career services and education, "they're either getting in trouble, they're on probation, they're homeless...they dropped out of school, they're trying to get their GED or just don't know what's next."

The partnership between Angel Reach and Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast began three years ago. "A lot of our clients didn't have work experience," Clark said, "so we utilized the work based learning program so that they could have that first experience," an approach that has helped participants move into permanent positions at their placement sites. Since December, Angel Reach reports six or seven youth approved for services through the partnership, with five or six more in the pipeline.

Rather than requiring clients to travel to a Workforce Solutions office, the partnership

brings services directly to Angel Reach's site. Jonathan, a youth engagement and success coach with the Hire Gulf Coast Youth department based in Conroe, and Julie Fariza, a youth ambassador working out of the Acres Home location, conduct on-site resume and interview workshops. "Being able to receive that on site has been great," said Genesis, Angel Reach's employment coordinator, noting that many clients face transportation barriers. Clark added that the model reflects a broader commitment: "Angel Reach is thinking a little outside the box, not just career wise, but making sure that these kids get everything that they need."

Both organizations describe the relationship as one they intend to deepen. "I definitely want to continue this partnership," Genesis said. "I want to work on growing our partnership together and seeing where we can end up." For Clark, the value extends beyond job placement itself: "Having someone to help usher them through that first step of getting out into the world as an adult and being a successful member of society, who gives back, who pays taxes... is important for them in order to feel like they can tackle other challenges in their life as well." Learn more: https://youtu.be/SMS9GI9YztM?si=e-4u-EBCj5dD_aYs.

Reaching the Underserved: Workforce Solutions and Compassion United
Compassion United has operated in Montgomery County for twenty years, serving individuals across the poverty landscape. "We serve in all aspects of the poverty landscape to help people transition out of where they are into where they want to be," said Luke Reedus, the organization's CEO. Carla Reedus, the organization's Director of Empowerment, described the Day Center's function in similar terms: providing services that meet immediate needs while moving people toward more stable circumstances. The organization has partnered with Workforce Solutions for an extended period specifically to help transitional residents secure employment as a pathway from homelessness to independence.

The relationship originated through community outreach rather than a formal referral. Nikita Salcedo, a career advisor in the Conroe office, learned of Compassion United's work while speaking at area middle schools. "It was shared with me that Compassion United does really amazing things for the homeless community," she said. This connection led to Workforce on Wheels, a mobile outreach model in which Workforce Solutions brings seminars, workshops, and job fair preparation directly to Compassion United's site rather than requiring clients to travel to a Workforce Solutions office. "We take it to them," Salcedo said, "and give the community the seminars or workshops that are necessary to prepare them for a custom job fair."

Carolyn Jones, a community engagement coordinator at the Willowbrook office, framed her participation as consistent with a regional mission. "I think it was very important to be a part of the aspect to make all of our Gulf Coast region a place to thrive," she said. For Compassion United's leadership, the value of the partnership is measured in the outcomes they observe directly. "One of the best parts of my day," Carla Reedus said, "is when people come up and tell me celebrations or strides that they have made because they have had a safe place to connect to the resources that they need." Luke Reedus was direct about the partnership's momentum: "The enthusiasm with which Workforce Solutions has started pouring into this endeavor is inspiring and encouraging, and I would highly recommend supporting that endeavor." Learn more:

<https://youtu.be/YQnrPqeRxY8?si=TT8VkiyiXGclISky>.

Heat Wave Heroes: Direct Relief for Families and Veterans

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board partners with Pipefitters Local 211, the Houston Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council, the Texas Veterans Commission, and Combined Arms on Heat Wave Heroes, an initiative providing portable air conditioning units, generators, and gift cards to families in need and veterans across the region during the summer months. The program held its inaugural year in 2025 and returned in 2026, together reaching fifteen families and veterans. The Board also engages regularly in collaborative service to veterans across the region beyond this single initiative.

Video, 2025: <https://youtu.be/eGN-5rZ97hQ?si=UwRGLN6yTXZoK7EA>. Coverage, 2026:

<https://www.fox26houston.com/video/fmc-w4sgn9ruaynr8mxj>;

<https://www.fox26houston.com/video/fmc-phymr4nqyjt1oohd>. Additional veteran

engagement: <https://youtu.be/l6O6qDf3NjY?si=PyNtuEAbakOrir0p>;

<https://abc13.com/post/jobs-hiring-houston-thousands-job-seeking-houstonians-attended-networking-event-help-veterans-looking-employment/15497594/>;

<https://abc13.com/post/600-veterans-turn-abc-hiring-job-fair-geared/15068979/>.

V. Public Visibility and Ongoing Engagement

Beyond individual case outcomes, the GCWB maintains an active public engagement presence that extends the reach and accountability of the work documented above.

ABC13 collaboration: <https://youtu.be/RP-ph5u65lc?si=WL923vZlg74heBlc>;

<https://youtu.be/iJCNOsCjukl?si=HdtGUVyfTWOOLA8>

2025 Year in Review: <https://youtu.be/mgm9q4gd0cg?si=-7wrJoK16qLIG0DK>

GCWB podcast: https://youtu.be/GqMWdjHebTY?si=hZ_Kt4vWL99o1YCT;

https://youtu.be/lwKgLQRtbiE?si=tHVcEpZmiqlz8L_F

Conclusion

The record above represents a sample, not an exhaustive account, of the outcomes the GCWB and the local workforce development board system produce across Texas each year with its operating affiliate Workforce Solutions. We welcome the opportunity to provide additional documentation, data, or testimony as the Commission's review proceeds. We thank you for your time, attention, and leadership.

Respectfully,
Juliet Stipeche

Your Proposed Solution

We attached the GCWB's Complete Guide to Services for your file and review to provide additional insight into the services and supports that we provide to the community.

Attachment

[WFS-GC-Complete-Guide-to-Services-9.15.25 \(4\).pdf](#) (4.37 MB)

**My Comments Will Be Made Public**

Yes

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Jalisa Broussard](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)
Date: Friday, August 14, 2026 1:55:15 PM

From: sunset.website@brightleafgroup.com <sunset.website@brightleafgroup.com>
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2026 1:07 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <sunset@sunset.texas.gov>
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)

Submitted on Fri, 08/14/2026 - 12:03

Submitted by: Visitor

Submitted values are:

Choose the agency that you would like to provide input about
[Texas Workforce Commission](#)

Public Comments

1

First Name

Juliet

Last Name

Stipeche

Title

Executive Director

Organization you are affiliated with

Gulf Coast Workforce Board

City

Houston

State

Texas

Your Comments or Concerns

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is proud to partner with TWC's Vocational Rehabilitation to deliver the Summer Earn and Learn program for disabled youth. Here is a testimonial from Ms. LaToria Moore Bryce Turner. She is the mother of Bryce Turner, a SEAL scholar. She states: "Good Evening, It was a pleasure attending The Seal Celebration. Thank you all for a wonderful celebration. Bryce attends Huston Tillotson University In Austin, TX. It is the only HBCU in Austin, TX. Bryce is a W E B Dubois Scholar and a 5 Strong Scholar. He's a computer science major with a 3.4 cumulative GPA. He's earned dean's list and honor roll since attending college. In the Fall 24, Bryce was initiated as a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. He was the first openly autistic member of his chapter. His probate video went viral on Tik Tok with over 2 million views. He's scheduled to graduate in December 2026. He will be a 3.5 yr college graduate. He was diagnosed with autism at 1 yrs old and was nonverbal until age 4. Bryce has been a participant in the VR Program since age 14. This is his third time participating in the SEAL Program. This summer, he was employed as a data entry/ data processing intern at First Source Adjusters School in Houston, TX. He thoroughly enjoyed his internship. He was able to learn sooo much. Some of his job assignments consisted of sending out company emails, texts alerts, utilizing spreadsheets, and tracking data by assessing systems leads. He was able to gain more analytical and tech skills while completing his internship. We sincerely appreciate all that TWC has done for Bryce. It's truly a Blessing. Thanks again. LaToria Moore Bryce Turner"

Your Proposed Solution

The GCWB is proud to partner with TWC's VR to deliver the Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) program and the Paving the Pathway to Success program for disabled youth.

Attachment

[Bryce Turner.SEAL_.2026_0.docx](#) (1.48 MB)

**My Comments Will Be Made Public**

Yes