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Promising Practice Brief **Texas Workforce Commission**

Program Background

- The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is the state government agency charged with overseeing and providing workforce development services to employers and job seekers of Texas. For employers, TWC offers recruiting, retention, training and retraining, and outplacement services as well as valuable information on labor law and labor market statistics. For job seekers, TWC offers career development information, job search resources, training programs, and, as appropriate, unemployment benefits.
- The Texas Workforce Commission is part of a local/state network comprised of the statewide efforts of the Commission coupled with regional planning and services provided by 28 local workforce boards.
- Primary services are funded by federal tax revenue and are generally free to all Texans.
- Texas Workforce Commission vision, mission, and philosophy statements are available at: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/twcinfo/misvis.html>

Career Development Activity Highlights

- *WorkInTexas.com* – An extensive, award-winning, internet-based employment access system, for both employers and job seekers. The system features numerous career exploration tools, employer resources, and live assistance from local workforce professionals. Since its launch in June 2004, nearly 146,000 Texas employers (40% of the state's total) have registered, nearly 35 million people have visited the site, and 4 million job seekers have created personal files. The site recorded its 500,000th new hire in August 2006.
- *Texas Industry Profiles* – A database of employment and worker availability by occupation and wages that provides staffing patterns within local industries. Local planners use the database to identify skill sets required for occupations. State and local workforce board staff use the database to understand labor market hiring patterns so they may better target employer outreach and job-training activities.
- *Job-A-Thon* – One local workforce board, in a joint venture with the local business community, holds an annual televised Job-A-Thon. In nine hours, more than half of the 900

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featured job vacancies were filled, welcoming 459 previously unemployed job seekers into the workforce.

- *Statewide Science and Engineering Fair* - The Texas Science Careers Consortium (TSCC), supported by TWC, conducts an annual science fair, which is a statewide competition for Texas high-school and middle-school students who qualify at regional competitions. In 2006, more than 1,000 students competed at the fair for scholarships and other special awards.
- *Regional Skills Development Fund Grants* – Funding is awarded to local partnerships of educators and employers to increase skill development in targeted industries.
- *TWC Apprenticeship Training Program* – The TWC provides job training for skilled trade and journeyworkers, where participants are supervised by experienced journeyworkers and receive related classroom instruction. In FY 2006, 3,483 apprentices were trained for as many as 947 employers in Texas.
- *Texas Early Education Model (TEEM)* – Initiated in July 2006, this is a state-mandated effort to improve child care development and school readiness of children to enter kindergarten.

Evidence of Success

Some notable statistics provided in the 2006 Annual Report, which marked the 10th anniversary of the TWC, include:

- Initial claims for unemployment compensation have dropped 27.6% over the last two years.
- The statewide unemployment rate stood at 5.1% at the close of Fiscal Year 2006, down from 6.8% three years earlier.
- The unemployment rates in more than two-thirds of Texas' 25 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) remained stable or declined over the year. Most of the MSAs that saw increases have unemployment rates below the national average.
- Texas employers created 234,800 jobs in FY 2006 and 651,100 jobs since July 2003. Job growth in Texas over the fiscal year stood at 2.4%, nearly double the U.S. rate of 1.3%.

(See <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/ar06.pdf> for more information.)

More Information

Additional information regarding the TWC can be found online at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/>

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Reference

Texas Workforce Commission website: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/>

Texas Workforce Commission Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2007-2011:

http://www.twc.state.tx.us/twcinfo/stratplan/twc07_11plan.pdf

Texas Workforce Commission Annual Report 2006: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/ar06.pdf>