Workforce Development

FY 2019 Community Impact Report

Travis County Health and Human Services

Research & Planning Division

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TRAVIS COUNTY
HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES

PURPOSE

Who we are:

A Department of Travis County that serves the community under the guidance of the Commissioner's Court

What we do:

Address community needs through internal and external investments and services

What we strive to accomplish:

Maximize quality of life for all people in Travis County

- Protect vulnerable populations
- Invest in social and economic well-being
- Promote healthy living: physical, behavioral, and environmental
- Build a shared understanding of our community

VALUES

We value helping people.

- We provide accessible, person-centered services with respect and care.
- We work to empower people through our service to them, always honoring the strengths and differences of the individuals and families of Travis County.

We value the accountability and integrity of our staff.

- We value the diversity of our staff and the experience each of us brings to HHS.
- We honor our collective service to the public, including the careful stewardship of public funds.
- We value the quality services we provide to the community in a spirit of shared responsibility.

We value cooperation and collaboration in the community at large and within HHS.

- We are interdependent and connected.
- We treat one another with respect and value effective communication and teamwork.
- We honor our partners in the community and engage with them to more efficiently and effectively serve our clients.

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Introduction

The Travis County Commissioners Court, through the Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHS), annually invests nearly $22 million in community-based social service programs using one-time and ongoing funding structures. These Department investments align with and supplement our direct services to meet the needs of local residents. Community-based organizations are frequently geographically and culturally embedded in the communities they serve and are often best positioned to provide needed services.

Purpose of Report

The annual Community Impact Report provides an overview of HHS investments in health and human services. The *FY 2019 Community Impact Report* offers community context most pertinent to the services purchased, and details investment, programmatic, and performance information on the Department's social service contracts. This information allows policy makers, program managers, and others to better understand these investments, recognize accomplishments, identify areas for improvement, disseminate lessons learned, and highlight areas warranting further research.

Organization of Report

This report addresses nine issue areas—Access to Basic Supports, Behavioral Health, Child and Youth Development, Housing Continuum, Planning and Evaluation, Public Health, Safety Intervention Services, Supportive Services for Community Living, and Workforce Development—as well as pilot and one-time investments under Family Services. The Executive Summary aggregates financial, demographic, and geographic information for all issue areas, and offers a discussion of poverty as a framework for HHS investments. Each issue area section begins with community context and then provides performance highlights. Each program is classified into the issue area most closely aligned to its goals and objectives.

Although this report provides community context for individual issue areas separately, each issue area must be considered in a broader context. Community conditions related to a single issue area may have similar or related root causes and broad-level consequences. Current economic conditions also have a global impact on the community.

This report provides detailed information about each program covered by an issue area, including an overview of program goals, services provided, eligibility criteria, and funding. Also captured are each program's performance results, compared to its contractual performance goals, and explanations of notable variance (+/- 10%) between the performance results and goals.

Notes on Methodology

Community context discussed in this report reflects the most recent information available at the time of writing. The majority of the social service contracts included in the report followed a fiscal year calendar (October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019) unless otherwise noted. Program and performance highlights are drawn from contracts and reports provided by contracted service providers. Estimates from the American Community Survey have been tested at a 90% confidence level for reliability. In some cases, all noted, estimates were unreliable due to small sample sizes.

Considerations When Reading This Report

Performance results provide only a starting point for understanding the impact of these programs. These summary statistics are not necessarily an indication of the programs' overall performance, but rather a snapshot of their performance over a one-year period. Within these reports, service providers offer explanations for variance in performance, which provides context and meaning to summary results.

Performance results do not reflect programs' full value to and impact on the community. Therefore, it is important to keep the following considerations in mind when reviewing program performance.

Readers should use caution when comparing output and outcome results across programs, as participant characteristics can significantly influence a given program's performance goals and results. For example, performance results may be lower for programs with clients who face considerable challenges (e.g., serious mental illness or addiction issues) and have little social support.

Factors beyond the program's control may also impact the program's performance. For example, the relative scarcity or abundance of jobs in the local economy will impact client employment rates for a workforce development program, regardless of the quality of training and support provided. Without controlling for these factors, the true impact or efficacy of the program on outcomes cannot be discerned.

Readers should also use caution when examining outcome results for programs with less than 30 clients, in which the outcome of just a few clients can greatly affect the program's total outcome result. In these instances, examining percentages may be less helpful than examining raw numbers.

Finally, this report captures a selection of performance measures, which may not reflect the program's full impact on participants and their families, peers, and neighborhood. Performance measures may not all be equal in importance or value to the community.

Investment Overview

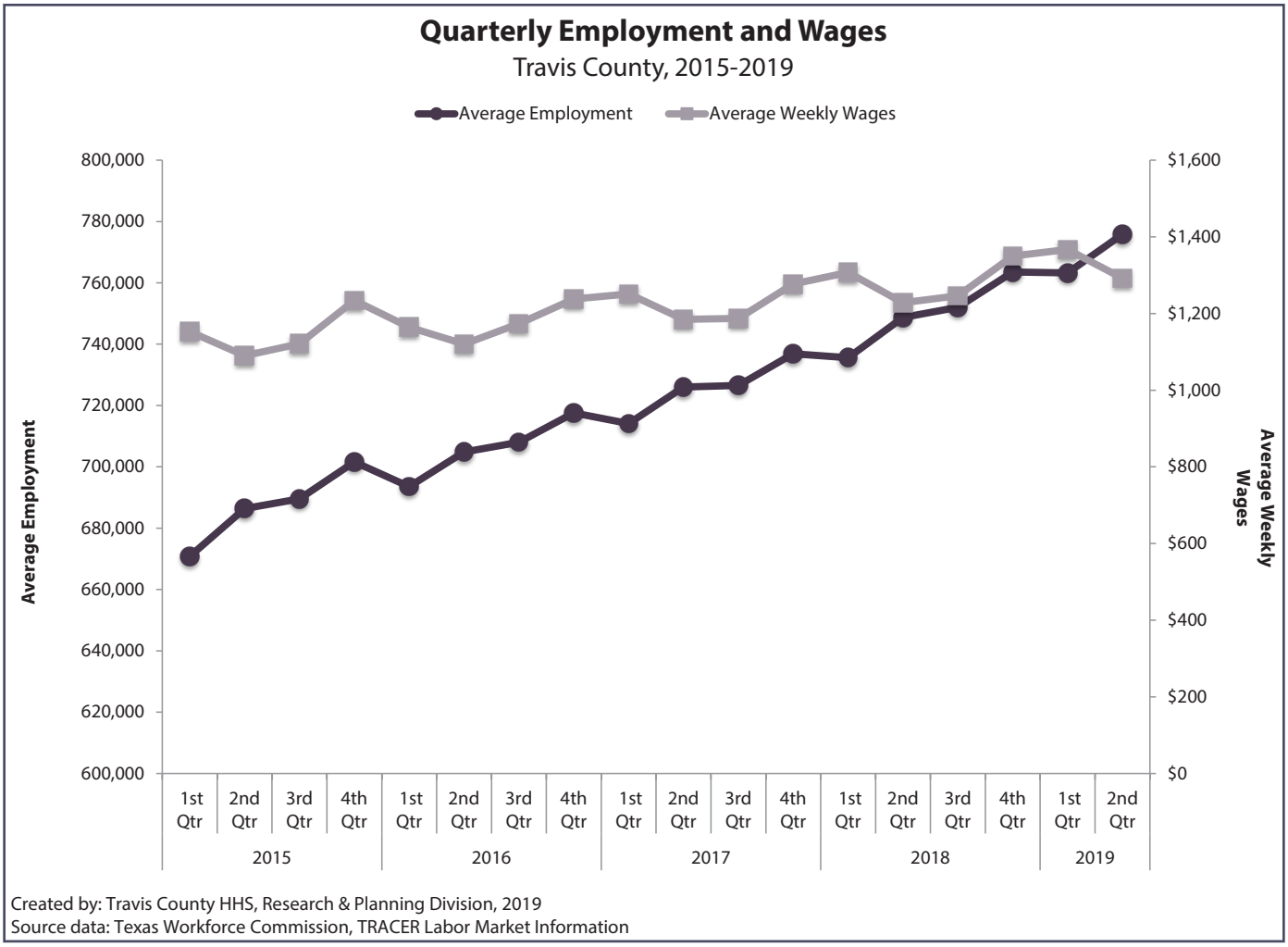
Community Context

Workforce development services and programs play an integral role in growing the state's workforce capacity. In 2020 it is estimated that 62% of jobs in Texas will require postsecondary education.[1] In 2018, 38% of Texas residents age 25 and older had an Associate's degree or higher level of educational attainment.[2] In Travis County, 57% of residents had an Associate's degree or higher.[3] Workforce development and training programs provide an opportunity for residents to build their skills, improve their employment prospects and increase their income.

Current State of the Local Economy: Employment and Unemployment

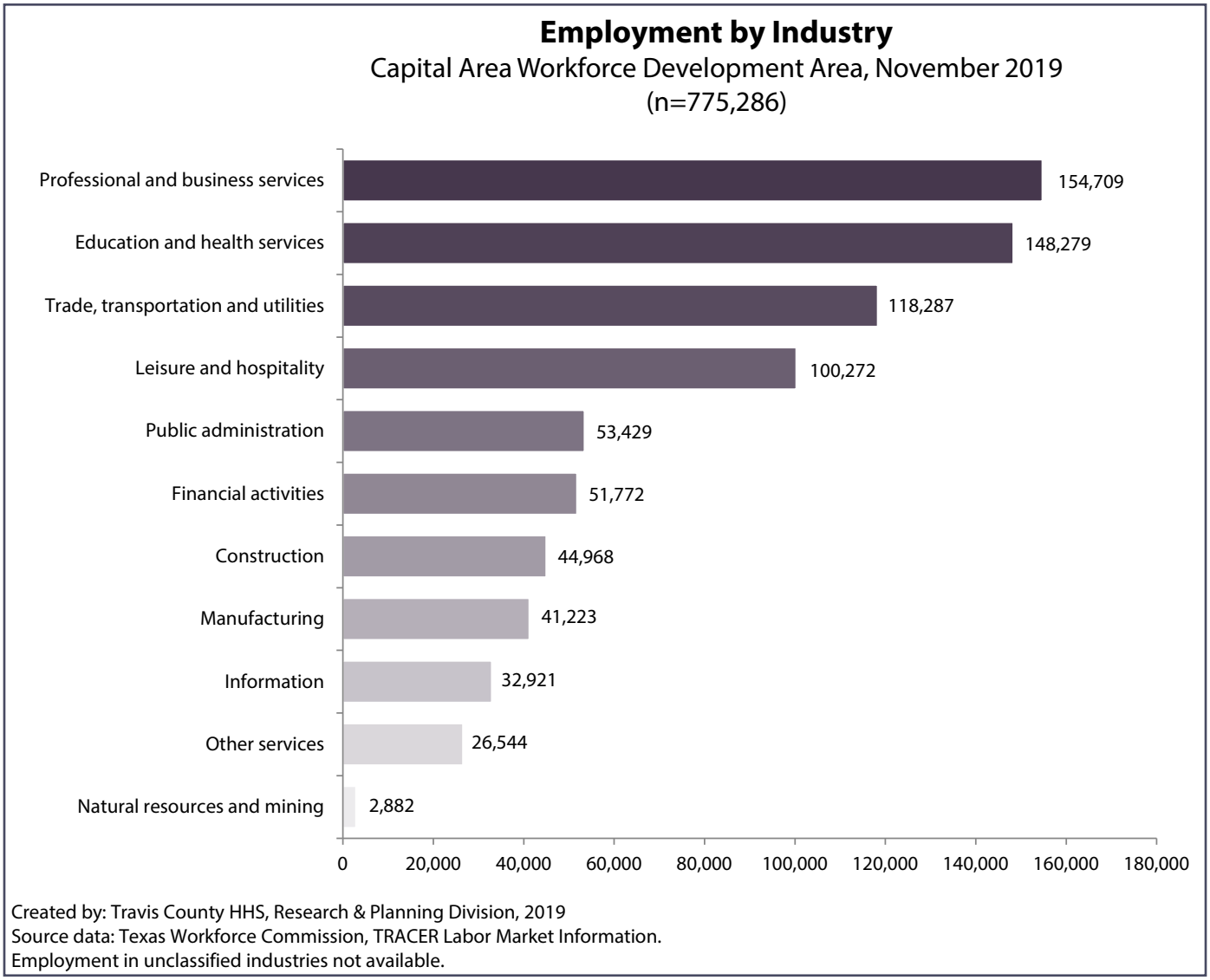
In Travis County, an average of 775,827 individuals were employed in the second quarter of 2019 with average weekly wages of $1,292.[a,4] The overall number of individuals employed increased 4% between the second quarter of 2018 and the second quarter of 2019.[5] Between the second quarter of 2015 and 2019, the average number of individuals employed increased 13% and the average weekly wages increased 19% in Travis County.

a At the time of this research, only first quarter data was available for 2019.



Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2019
Source data: Texas Workforce Commission, TRACER Labor Market Information

According to second quarter data from 2019, the industries employing the largest number of individuals in Travis County are professional and business services (154,709) and education and health services (148,279).[6] Every industry classification experienced growth in employment in the second quarter of 2019 over the second quarter of 2018.[7] Among the identified industries, the professional and business services and information industries had the largest growth in the number employed year to year, up 7,850 and 4,605, respectively.[8] The majority of employees in Travis County work for private employers (83.4%), while the remaining employees are divided between State (7.6%), Local (7.4%), and Federal government (1.6%).[9]

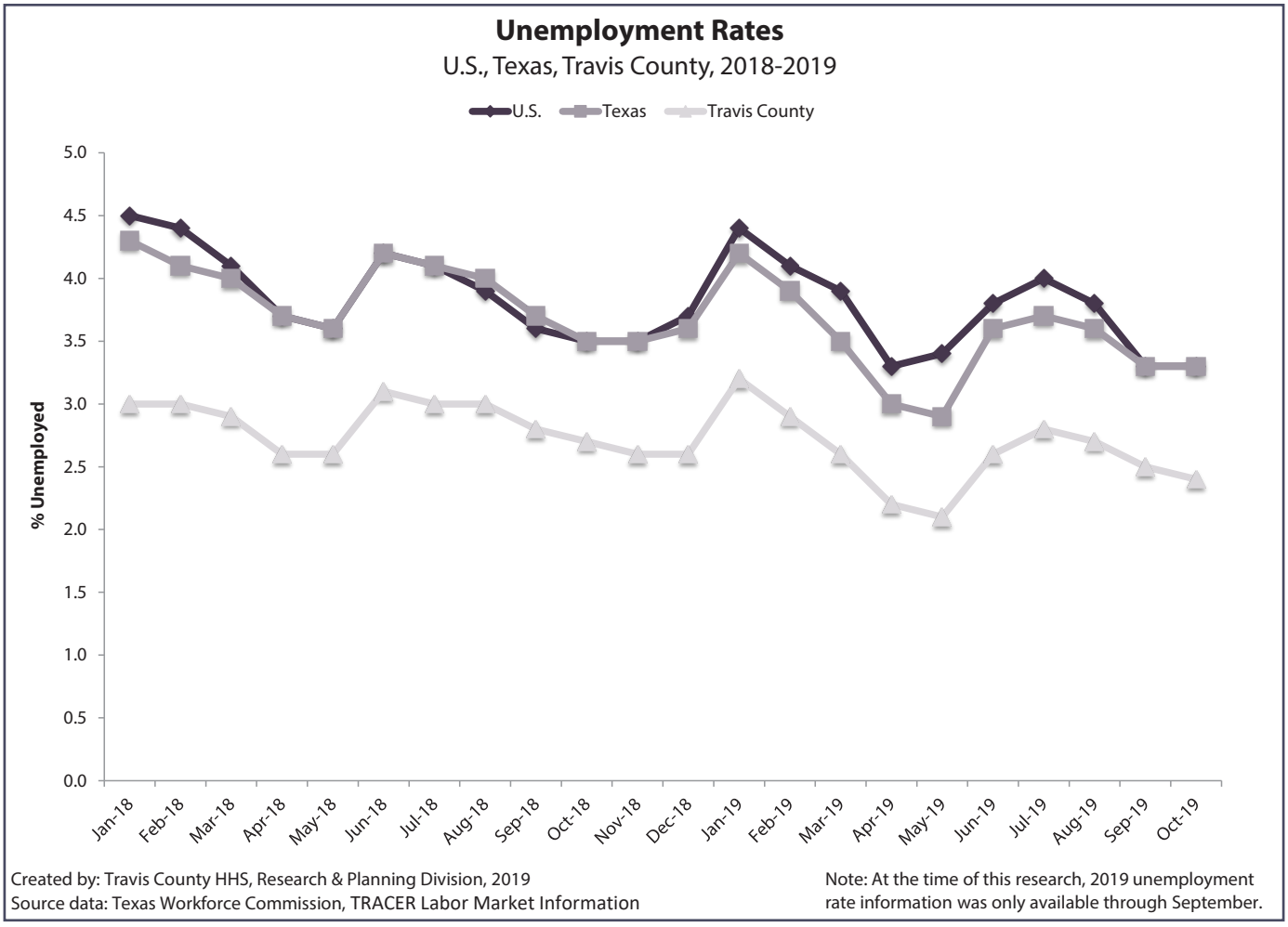


Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2019
Source data: Texas Workforce Commission, TRACER Labor Market Information.
Employment in unclassified industries not available.

Unemployment

Unemployment is a measure of individuals 16 and older, who are unemployed as a percentage of the labor force, which is the sum of the employed and unemployed.[10] The 2019 unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted[b]) in Travis County began at 3.2% in January and decreased to 2.4% in October (the most recent month of unemployment data at the time of this research).[11] Over the past two years, Travis County's unemployment rate has been consistently lower than that of Texas and the United States.[12]

b No adjustment of the time-series data to eliminate the effect of seasonal variations. This data is the actual data with no seasonal adjustments made. (http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedPublications/330_acronyms.pdf)

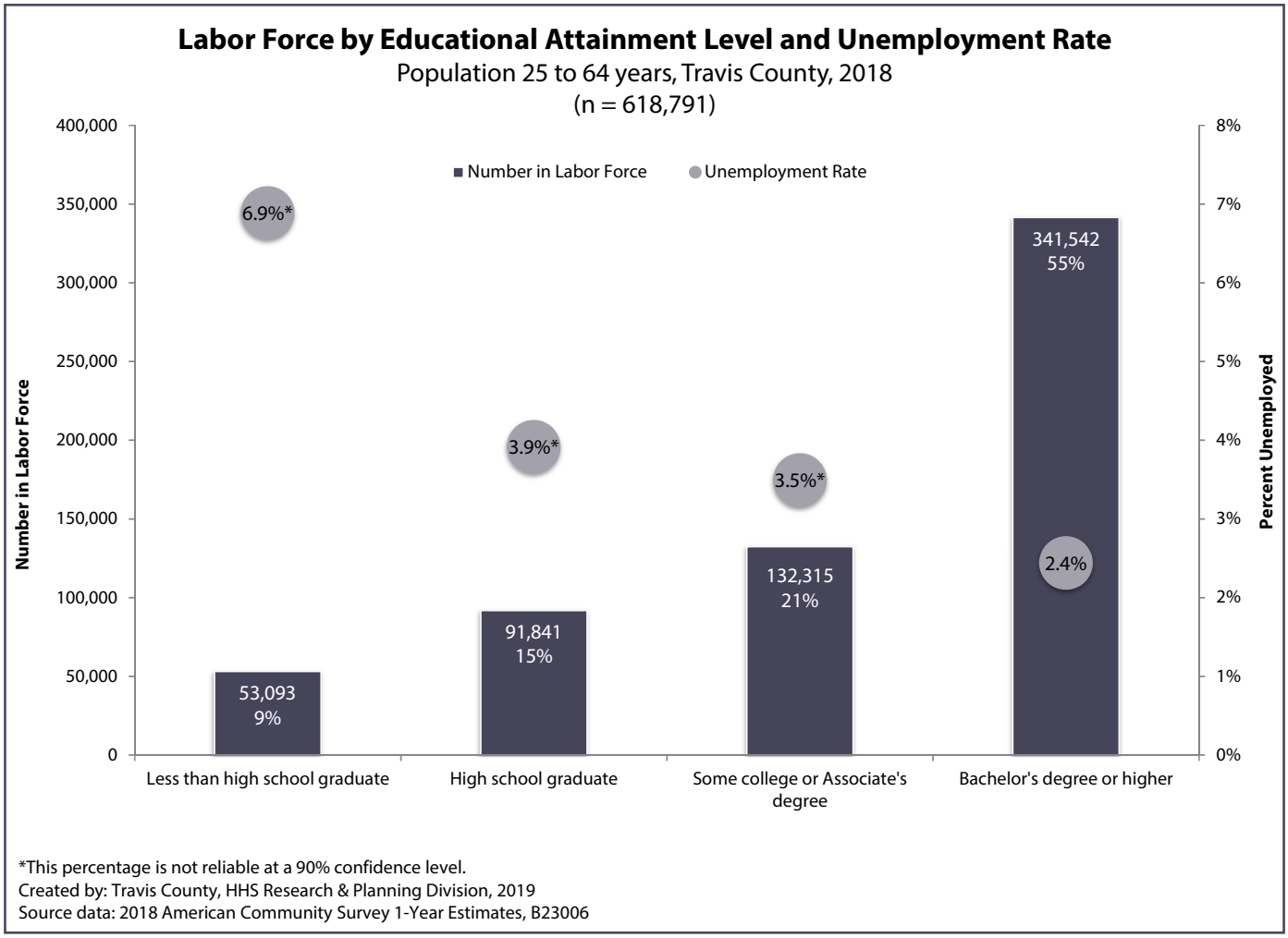


Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2019
Source data: Texas Workforce Commission, TRACER Labor Market Information

Note: At the time of this research, 2019 unemployment rate information was only available through September.

Education, Employment, and Earnings

There are strong correlations between educational attainment and employment, and educational attainment and earnings. In 2018, the unemployment rate among those with a Bachelor's degree or higher was 2.4%, compared to those with less education.[13]



*This percentage is not reliable at a 90% confidence level.
Created by: Travis County, HHS Research & Planning Division, 2019
Source data: 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, B23006

Earnings increase with each additional level of education. Among Travis County residents age 25 and over, high school graduates earned 20% more compared to those who did not graduate high school. Those with some college or an Associate's degree earned 24% more than those with only a high school degree, while those with a bachelor's degree earned 38% more than those with some college or an associate's degree; finally, those with a graduate or professional degree earned 30% more than those with a bachelor's degree.[14]

Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months by Educational Attainment by Sex Population 25 years and over with earnings, Travis County, 2018			
Educational Attainment	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Less than high school graduate	25,387	30,423	17,062
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	30,978	32,562	27,745
Some college or associate's degree	39,479	46,006	34,866
Bachelor's degree	58,055	70,421	50,529
Graduate or professional degree	78,912	99,813	66,250

Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2019
Source data: 2018 American Community Survey 1–Year Estimates, B20004

Regardless of educational attainment, disparities in median wages between males and females exist at every education level. In Travis County, males with less than a high school diploma or GED earn 56% more than their female counterparts; male high school graduates earn 16% more than female graduates; males with some college or an associate's degree earn 28% more than females with the same education level; males with a bachelor's degree earn 33% more than their female counterparts; and males with a graduate or professional degree earn 40% more than females with the same educational attainment.[15]

Impacted Populations

Some individuals face additional barriers to accessing educational attainment, workforce development, and employment opportunities:

- Formerly Incarcerated Individuals: In fiscal year 2018, nearly 2,000 individuals convicted in Travis County were released from prison or state jail.[16] Employment significantly reduces the risk of recidivism for formerly incarcerated individuals,[17] although obtaining employment with a criminal record can be extremely difficult.
- Opportunity Youth: There are an estimated 12,565 Opportunity Youth[c] in Travis County (comprising 8.9% of 16-24 year olds in the county).[18] These young people often miss out on key educational and employment experiences and are at an increased risk for negative outcomes including long-term unemployment, poverty, and involvement with the criminal justice system.[19]
- Foreign Born Individuals: Over 220,000 individuals (18%) in Travis County are foreign born.[20] While the employment rates for native- and foreign-born residents in the county are similar, the educational attainment differs significantly. Of the overall population 25 years and older, 11% did not graduate high school. Within the native-born population, 6% did not graduate high school while 28% of the foreign-born population did not graduate high school.[21]

c Youth age 16-24 disconnected from work and education.

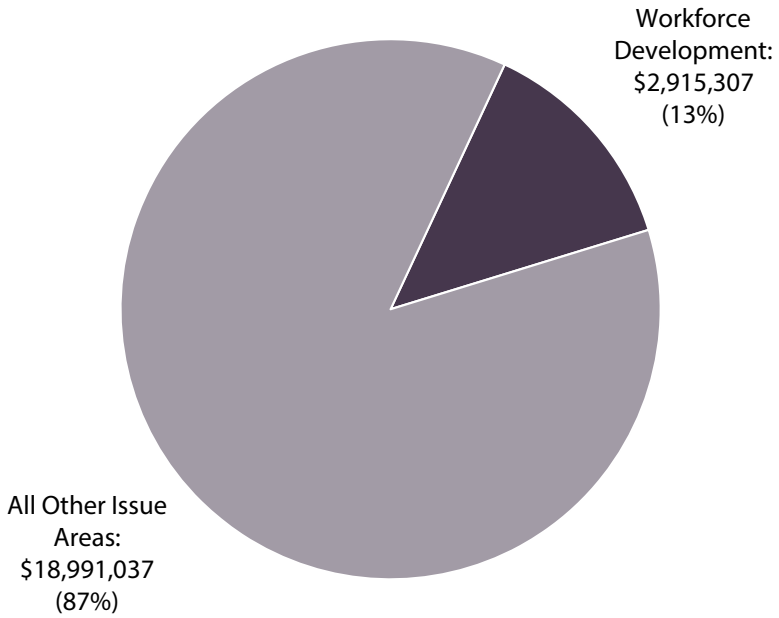
Master Community Workforce Plan

In May 2017, city, county and local business officials unveiled a regional workforce training plan that lays out a common agenda and established a framework for collaboration to coordinate the region's workforce development organizations and educational institutions. Led by the local workforce board, Workforce Solutions Capital Area, the plan aims to align education and training providers' training programs with employers' needs. The workforce plan will help 10,000 economically disadvantaged individuals secure middle-skill jobs by 2021.[22]

Goals and Services

Programs and services within this issue area provide a continuum of employment, training, and adult education services to help individuals improve workplace skills, obtain employment, succeed in the workplace, and help employers secure a skilled workforce. Services may include: literacy, High School Equivalency (HSE), and adult basic education; English as a Second Language (ESL) classes; job readiness and occupation-specific training (including, but not limited to, vocational certification and formal higher education opportunities); job search and job placement assistance; and related instruction, coaching, or counseling leading to employment and earnings gain.

Investment in Workforce Development and Other Issue Areas, FY 2019



Funding Summary

The FY 2019 Funding Amount reflects 12–month funding (October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019) unless otherwise noted.

Agency Name	Program Name	FY 2019 Funding Amount
American YouthWorks	Travis County Metro Parks Program	$100,000
American YouthWorks	YouthBuild Workforce Development	$145,000
Capital IDEA	Long-Term Training	$760,800
LifeWorks	Workforce Development	$241,196
Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	Career Development	$241,196
Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	Literacy Illuminates	$30,000*
Skillpoint Alliance	Gateway	$270,800
Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board	Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum – Travis County	$1,126,315

*Funding from January 17 through September 30, 2019

Client Demographics

The table below summarizes the demographics for clients served across Workforce Development service providers. Client demographics are not included for the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas' Literacy Illuminates program, given its program design of a public awareness campaign. Note that clients participating in more than one program are counted multiple times.

Gender	Num.	Pct.
Female	2,342	61%
Male	1,489	39%
Other	14	0.4%
Unknown	8	0.2%
Total	*3,853*	*100%*

Ethnicity		
Hispanic or Latino	2,016	52%
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,762	46%
Unknown	75	2%
Total	*3,853*	*100%*

Race		
American Indian and Alaska Native	51	1%
Asian	138	4%
Black or African American	893	23%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	13	0.3%
White	2,183	57%
Some other race	368	10%
Two or more races	91	2%
Unknown	116	3%
Total	*3,853*	*100%*

Age	Num.	Pct.
5 to 11	1	0.03%
12 to 14	1	0.03%
15 to 17	134	3%
18 to 24	1,339	35%
25 to 39	1,490	39%
40 to 54	629	16%
55 to 64	163	4%
65 to 74	40	1%
75 and over	4	0.1%
Unknown	52	1%
Total	*3,853*	*100%*

Income		
<50% of FPIG	1,739	45%
50% to 100%	635	16%
101% to 150%	628	16%
151% to 200%	541	14%
>200%	104	3%
Unknown	206	5%
Total	*3,853*	*100%*

Note: Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding.

See Appendix for specific income guideline levels.

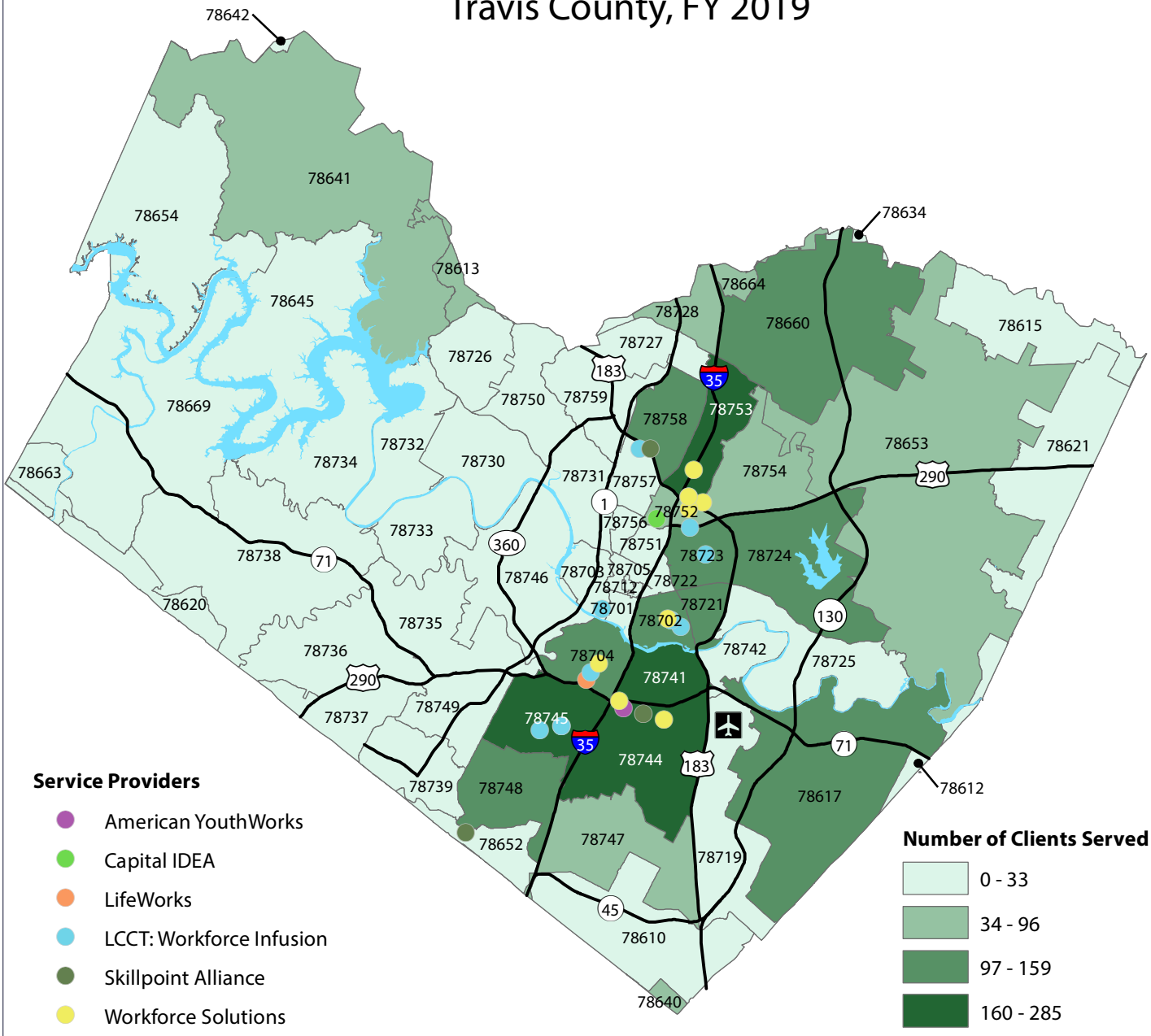
Performance Summary

The table below aggregates performance into roll-up measures that draw from programs in this issue area. These roll-up measures align with the goals for the issue area and are intended to provide a more global picture of the Department's progress towards these goals. Readers should note two considerations regarding methodology: 1) most roll-up measures do not reflect all programs in the issue area, but rather a subset of programs that apply to that measure, and 2) roll-up measures, individually and as a whole, may not reflect the entire service continuum of the issue area.

Roll-up Performance Measures	Issue Area Performance
Outputs	
Number of clients served	3,853
Outcomes	
Percent of individuals obtaining employment	61%
Percent of individuals maintaining employment for 6 months	69%
Percent of individuals earning a wage of at least $12/hour	87%

Workforce Development

Service Provision Locations and Clients Served by ZIP Code
Travis County, FY 2019



Service Providers

- American YouthWorks
- Capital IDEA
- LifeWorks
- LCCT: Workforce Infusion
- Skillpoint Alliance
- Workforce Solutions

Number of Clients Served

- 0 - 33
- 34 - 96
- 97 - 159
- 160 - 285

Service provision locations are not included for LCCT Literacy Illuminates as services can be accessed anywhere the client is located.

Notes: This map shows 3,345 clients by ZIP code. 508 clients (13% of the total) from all service providers were not included because their ZIP codes were unknown or outside of Travis County boundaries or they were homeless.

Source data: Contracted service providers, FY 2019.
This map was created using ArcGIS Online shapefiles.
Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2019.

N
0 5 10 Miles

American YouthWorks

YouthBuild Workforce Development

Program Description

The goal of the YouthBuild Workforce Development program is to connect Opportunity Youth to employment and education. Participants gain hands-on experience while earning industry-recognized certificates, college credits, and college scholarships in addition to a high school diploma or GED.

As a full-time program, students attending academic classes spend 16-20 hours/week in vocational training, while participants who have completed their GED or Diploma spend up to 40 hours per week in vocational training programs. Training includes some classroom instruction, but mainly features hands-on practice on real-world projects that prepare students for the work environment. Vocational training tracks include: Construction; Media Corps: Computer Refurbishing, Media, & Design; Texas Conservation Corps: Natural Resource Management; and Medical Careers.

In addition, HHS invests in the Travis County Metro Parks Program, which trains and engages young people to complete park infrastructure and conservation projects on Travis County parkland through the American YouthWorks' Texas Conservation Corps program. These projects are hands-on service learning laboratories for participants in the YouthBuild Workforce Development program described above.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the YouthBuild Workforce Development program from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 was $145,000. This investment comprised 7.2% of their total program budget. The additional HHS investment towards the Travis County Metro Parks Program was $100,000.

Eligibility Criteria

The target population for this program is young people ages 16-28 who are disconnected from education and employment; most have family incomes at or below 80% of Median Family Income (MFI) or 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG) and face a variety of barriers to reconnecting, including homelessness, pregnant or parenting, LGBT youth, involvement in the criminal justice or foster care systems, mental health issues, and persons with disabilities. One-half of enrollees have not completed high school; no more than 10% fall outside the target population for age or income.

American YouthWorks: YouthBuild Workforce Development

The YouthBuild Workforce Development program met or exceeded the targeted range of performance across all measures. Staff reported that their program enrollment numbers were higher than expected due to a large number of carry-over participants as well as increases in capacity throughout the year (see the first through third outputs).

Staff noted that a number of the successfully exiting participants in the fourth quarter of the year had yet to find employment (see the second outcome). It can take several months for participants to find a job or for staff to verify their employment. Staff will continue to track these participants into the next year to report their outcomes.

The program exceeded goals for participants obtaining employment at $10.00 per hour or more (see the third outcome). Staff explained that this result was due to employers offering higher minimum wages as well as the program's Employment Coordinator focusing on registered apprenticeship programs and training-related placements. The average hourly wage for the year was approximately $12.60.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	252	225	112%
Number of participants enrolled in vocational training	252	225	112%
Number of participants enrolled in academic classes	122	95	128%
Outcomes			
Percentage of successfully exiting participants	77% (112/146)	80% (100/125)	96%
Percentage of successfully exiting participants receiving job placement services who obtained employment, post secondary education, apprenticeship training, the military, or other national service	72% (81/112)	75% (75/100)	96%
Percentage of successfully exiting participants who obtained employment at $10.00/hr. or more	73% (55/75)	53% (28/53)	139%
Percentage of successfully exiting participants who obtained employment, post secondary education, apprenticeship training, the military, or other national service and retained placement for 6 months or longer	75% (69/92)	75% (56/75)	100%

Capital IDEA

Long-Term Training

Program Description

Capital IDEA's goal is to lift low-income adults out of poverty by providing financial and wrap-around support through multiple-year, certificate and degree-level education for in-demand, living wage occupations identified by area employers in need of highly skilled workers. Program components include developmental education, job training, and career placement services. In addition to having all tuition, fees, and books paid for by Capital IDEA, participants receive individualized case management and wrap-around support services.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Long-Term Training program from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 was $760,800. This investment comprised 14.5% of their total program budget.

Eligibility Criteria

Capital IDEA's target population is low-income adults in Austin and Travis County who are unemployed, underemployed, or hard to employ and who are willing to commit to long-term training but face multiple barriers to completing a long-term education program, such as an inability to pay for childcare, lack of funds for tuition, books, and fees, and poor academic preparation. To be eligible for services, a client must have an income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG), be a resident of Central Texas (10–County region), be at least 18 years or older and a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and have a high school diploma or GED but have not already completed a college degree.

Capital IDEA: Long-Term Training

The Long-Term Training program met or exceeded the targeted range of performance for all but one measure. Staff reported that the number of unduplicated clients served was higher than anticipated due to additional funding to expand their work in Hays County as well as some additional funding from the City of Austin (see the first output). With the increased number of overall clients served, the number of College Prep Academy eligible students increased as well, thus surpassing the goal (see the second output).

Although the program had an increase in the number of graduates, it fell short of goals for the percentage of students obtaining employment (see the first outcome). Staff explained that many graduates actively seeking employment are Registered Nurses (RNs) who are awaiting licensure, so staff expect these numbers to increase as students pass licensing exams and report back on their placement information. Staff noted that the number of graduates earning $20 an hour or more has grown due to the increased number of RN graduates who are earning an average of $26 an hour (see the third outcome).

Finally, staff noted that they report on the total number of placement confirmations they receive when tracking employment retention. The results have been largely positive, suggesting that graduates are finding good fits with their job placements (see the fifth outcome).

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	1,259	1,000	126%
Number of students entering College Prep Academy	85	50	170%
Outcomes			
Percentage of students seeking employment who obtained employment	59% (122/207)	90% (73/81)	65%
Percentage of students obtaining employment at a wage of $12/hr or higher	88% (107/122)	90% (66/73)	97%
Percentage of students obtaining employment at a wage of $20/hr or higher	67% (82/122)	55% (40/73)	123%
Percentage of students who complete the College Prep Academy	94% (64/68)	90% (45/50)	105%
Percentage of students who obtained employment two quarters prior and retained employment for six months	94% (101/107)	90% (72/80)	110%

LifeWorks

Workforce Development

Program Description

LifeWorks provides underserved youth and young adults with the opportunity to enhance their skills and education to become work-ready. Educational services aim to increase the number of clients progressing to a higher academic level and completing their High School Equivalency Certification. Job placement and occupational support services work to increase the number of clients entering and then retaining employment.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Workforce Development program from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 was $241,196. This investment comprised 34.0% of their total program budget. HHS also funds the LifeWorks Youth and Adult Counseling and Community-Based Peer Support and Counseling program, which is described in the Behavioral Health report.

Eligibility Criteria

Services are designed to meet the unique skill set and needs of youth and young adults (ages 16 to 26) who have had high barriers to educational success and workforce experience. To be eligible for services, clients who are 18 years old or older must show proof of income. Most families have incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG), but the program does not exclude someone from participating based on income. Clients must be residents of Travis, Williamson, Hays, or Bastrop counties and be able to show proof of identity and eligibility for employment. For the Education services component of the program, clients must provide evidence of an ability to read at a level sufficient to effectively engage in services, must not be currently enrolled in an education program, and must not have received a high school credential.

LifeWorks: Workforce Development

The Workforce Development program met or exceeded the targeted range of performance for all but two measures. Staff noted that they served a higher than expected number of clients with Workforce services, which impacted the total number of clients served; this result was attributed to an increase in staff, which led to an increase in program capacity (see the first and third outputs).

The percentage of LiteracyTrack clients progressing to the next academic level was lower than anticipated due to a lack of consistent attendance (see the first outcome). Staff reported that the program plans to begin progress testing before students complete 40 hours of instruction, and in only one subject area, rather than in three. With this change, staff expect to see an increase in the amount of progress testing completed as well as an increase in the number of students who progress to the next academic level.

While the number of clients who took a GED Ready subject-specific exam was lower than anticipated, the percentage of clients who passed an exam was higher than expected due to the individualized instruction that students received to help them prepare (see the second outcome). Volunteer tutors work individually and in small groups with students on a weekly basis. A new group of 20 volunteer tutors from the University of Texas Dell Medical School started working with students in the last quarter of the year; with the addition of this group, there are at least three tutors available during each class session.

Fewer clients obtained employment than projected (see the third outcome). Staff explained that the rate of success was lower than anticipated due to many youth opting to pursue higher education or career apprenticeships to gain the skills needed in order to become more marketable for competitive, high-demand employment opportunities.

Conversely, job retention was higher than expected due to program's model of supported employment, whereby Employment Specialists match clients with employment opportunities that are aligned with their strengths, goals and preferences and then provide these clients with individualized follow along supports (see the fifth outcome). Follow along supports are tailored to meet each client's unique needs as they enter the workforce, and minimize reasons for job loss.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served in workforce and education services	246	210	117%
Number of client served in Education services	121	125	97%
Number of clients served in Workforce services	140	100	140%

LifeWorks: Workforce Development

Performance Goals and Results

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outcomes			
Percentage of Literacy Track clients who progress to the next academic level	53% (10/19)	72% (54/75)	73%
Percentage of clients who pass at least one GED Ready or HiSET Official Practice subject-specific exam	90% (19/21)	76% (38/50)	119%
Percentage of clients who obtained employment	58% (43/74)	66% (33/50)	88%
Average starting hourly wage	$11.32/hr	$12/hr	94%
Percentage of clients who obtained a job for at least 6 months	54% (39/72)	39% (13/33)	138%

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas

Career Development

Program Description

The Career Development initiative aims to provide work readiness services through an innovative model that builds upon Travis County's existing network of community-based adult education providers. This program strives to increase employment, career advancement and job retention rates by overlaying workforce development programming on the existing adult literacy programs and vocational training providers. Specialized workforce curriculum builds career awareness, increases employability skills, and empowers clients to make more informed decisions about future education and training needs, while simultaneously improving language comprehension.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Career Development program from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 was $241,196. This investment comprised 27.5% of their total program budget. HHS also funds the Literacy Illuminates program, which is described later in this report.

Eligibility Criteria

This program serves low-skilled, working age adults who are currently enrolled in adult literacy programming, including Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, and English as a Second Language, at a community-based organization in Travis County and have goals to improve their job status and/or career trajectory, as well as adults enrolled in vocational training designed to bring low-income earners to middle skill employment. Clients must have gross family income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG), be at least 18 years of age, and be a current resident of Travis County in order to be eligible for services.

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Career Development

The Career Development program met or exceeded most performance goals. Staff reported that enrollment was high at their partner sites. Many sites are drop-in centers, which means AmeriCorps members meet with students once for a particular service like resume building. This allows the program's members to serve more students (see the first output). Vocational training provides individuals with job skills and certifications, higher pay, as well as job security. For these reasons, more students were interested in pursuing vocational training (see the fourth output).

Staff noted that partner sites saw decreased enrollment for summer classes, as well as an increased number of students dropping classes before they hit 12 hours of classroom instruction (see the second output). Staff explained that all of their instructors teach from a curriculum that emphasizes job skills. Previously, staff had been counting every student who receives instruction using this curriculum as having received work readiness skill-building services. Staff identified that their program delivery model had changed enough to instead count only those students working directly with job coaches or enrolled in Workforce Preparation classes; this change in methodology accounted for lower performance for this year (see the third output).

Staff reported that testing for learning gains changed this year. The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) test changed their testing policy to increase the hours of instruction needed for progress/post-testing to every 50 to 60 hours, but the program's partner sites often lose students around 35 hours of classroom instruction. Although fewer clients were tested than originally projected, a majority showed a learning gain (see the first outcome).

Two Job Coaches resigned in the first quarter of the year and could not be replaced, reducing capacity to serve and track student performance. Staff also noted that when clients get a job, they tend to focus on their employment and often leave the adult education program they are enrolled with to do so. This makes it difficult to get clients to document their employment (see the fourth outcome). Staff are actively training AmeriCorps members, continuing their expanded distribution of gift cards, and adding a Quality Assurance Assistant to the team to better facilitate data collection and tracking. Further, once clients are employed, it is challenging to remain in contact with them. Staff call workplaces to confirm job retentions, but employers are often nonresponsive, and online databases with this information often have missing data. Staff are working on a number of new processes and procedures to improve their ability to capture these outcomes (see the fifth outcome).

Finally, the clients counted in the average wage at initial report of employment status are those who receive a certification for their training. A certification results in higher pay, which is why the average wage is higher than anticipated (see the sixth outcome).

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Career Development

Performance Goals and Results

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	1,119	1,000	112%
Number of unduplicated clients receiving all literacy instruction (ESL, ABE, GED, and Digital Literacy)	789	900	88%
Number of unduplicated clients receiving work readiness skill-building services	249	500	50%
Number of unduplicated clients enrolled in vocational training in order to earn an industry-recognized certificate	189	80	236%
Outcomes			
Percentage of clients showing a learning gain on a standardized test	87% (209/240)	62% (400/650)	142%
Percentage of clients successfully completing a work-readiness credential	76% (183/240)	70% (350/500)	109%
Percentage of clients successfully completing vocational training and earning an industry-recognized certificate	91% (158/174)	88% (57/65)	104%
Percentage of clients with an improved employment status	35% (88/249)	25% (125/500)	141%
Percentage of clients reporting improved employment status who maintained their improved employment status at 6 months	25% (24/76)	50% (50/100)	63%
Average wage at initial report of employment status	$14.25/hr.	$11/hr.	130%

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas

Literacy Illuminates

Program Description

The Literacy Illuminates program aims to improve outreach to adults in need of literacy programs, such as basic reading, writing, English as Second Language (ESL), workplace skills and more; raise awareness of literacy programs and literacy services; and increase the number of individuals reached through outreach efforts for accessing literacy-related services across Travis County. The outreach campaign includes distribution of Family Literacy Brochures and Resource Guides, containing vital, easy-to-read information and resources for vulnerable families, as well as social media campaigns using Facebook.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Literacy Illuminates program from January 17 through September 30, 2019 was $30,000. This investment comprised 73.0% of their total program budget. HHS also funds the Career Development program, which is described earlier in this report.

Eligibility Criteria

The program serves adults and families in Travis County who experience low literacy. Adult literacy learners are generally newly immigrated adults from various countries of origin and/or citizens who dropped out of high school and now seek to improve their education and job skills. Most adult literacy students are working-age, low-income adults with young children. There are no eligibility requirements for this program.

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Literacy Illuminates

The Literacy Illuminates program decided to trend down from broadcast towards more interactive media. Therefore, no radio ad spots were run this year (see the second output and third outcome). Staff are now going out into the community more, and because all of their program areas have been co-located, they are hosting more small events at their offices as well (see the first output).

Staff reported that they have seen great feedback and results from social media engagement/reach and printed outreach efforts in FY 2019 and plan to continue that trend in FY 2020. When staff began their annual planning for Facebook outreach, they decided to first focus on reaching more people (see the second outcome). Once staff have reached an even bigger audience, they plan to build relationships that will result in more engagement in the next year (see the first outcome).

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of community outreach events and efforts LCCT participates in	72	50	144%
Number of radio ad spots run during campaign months	0	30	0%
Number of people reached through Facebook during campaign months	37,450	6,500	576%
Outcomes			
Percentage of people who were reached on Facebook and who subsequently became engaged	6% (2,104/37,450)	13% (850/6,500)	43%
Percentage change in social media engagement from campaign months in 2018 to campaign months in 2019	140% increase	6% increase	2243%
Percentage change in radio ad spots from campaign months in 2018 to campaign months in 2019	N/A	50% increase	N/A

Skillpoint Alliance

Gateway

Program Description

The Gateway program strives to improve the work-preparedness and employment status of residents with economic and social barriers. This is achieved through industry-recognized, entry-level rapid employment training, preparation for relevant certifications and/or licensure exams, and close employer partnerships so that program staff can support participants in obtaining employment. All services are provided at zero cost to participants.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Gateway program from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 was $270,800. This investment comprised 32.2% of their total program budget.

Eligibility Criteria

The program targets individuals who are former offenders, veterans, homeless, currently incarcerated youth, and opportunity youth. To be eligible for services, clients must reside in the Central Texas 35 corridor counties: Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop, Guadalupe, Comal, Bell, Coryell, McClennan, and Falls Counties; have incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG), except in extenuating circumstances; be eligible to work in the United States; be able to read in the language of instruction at a 9th grade reading level; demonstrate mathematical skills at a 9th grade level based on United States standards; and provide Skillpoint Alliance with permission to request criminal background histories.

Skillpoint Alliance: Gateway

The Gateway program met or exceeded the targeted range of performance across all measures. Of note, staff reported that they have included mentor visits into their classes and they believe this is having a positive effect on starting wages for program graduates (see the fourth outcome).

Skillpoint Alliance also provided additional industry-specific training outcomes: The Pre-Apprentice Electrical program currently has an average hourly wage of $14.24 for those employed in the industry, and approximately 97% of graduate respondents report working in the industry. In the Nurse Aide Training program, 82% of graduated students reported employment in the industry at an average hourly wage of $13.95. Of the pilot Pre-Apprentice Plumbing program graduates, 67% secured jobs at an average hourly wage of $16.50. The HVAC Technician program still meets labor market needs based on labor market data from Workforce Solutions Capital Area, but a new partnership for upskilling through additional instruction had mixed results; the majority of program graduates chose not to pursue additional education because they were able to secure employment upon graduation.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	199	200	100%
Outcomes			
Percentage of participants who graduate job training	90% (169/187)	85% (170/200)	106%
Percentage of unduplicated clients who report working or continuing their education at the 90 day employment review	70% (111/159)	75% (128/170)	91%
Percentage of employed graduates who are employed continuously or enrolled in continuing education for 180 days	57% (57/100)	60% (77/128)	95%
Percentage of employed graduates with a starting wage of at least $12/hr.	87% (95/109)	60% (72/120)	145%

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board

Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum–Travis County

Program Description

The Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum–Travis County (WERC TC) is a component of the larger WERC program, which is a collaboration of eight community partners who provide assessment, targeted education services, occupational training, GED training, work readiness education, and support services to help clients obtain employment and transition out of poverty. Four WERC partners make up WERC TC: Goodwill, Austin Area Urban League, American YouthWorks, and Workforce Solutions Career Centers. These partners coordinate to ensure clients receive the specific services they need by developing an Individual Employment Plan with clients and, depending on the need, provide training preparation for High School Diploma or GED; Work Readiness Instruction; Vocational Certification Programs; Training-related Paid Work Experiences/Internships; Resume, Interviewing, and Job Search Workshops; and Customized Job Search and Placement Assistance. Partners also assist clients in transitioning into the next appropriate job readiness phase.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum–Travis County (WERC TC) program from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 was $1,126,315. This investment comprised 29.3% of their total program budget. This investment includes ongoing funding ($630,315) as well as one-time funding ($496,000). HHS also funds the Continuity of Child Care System Services and the Quality Child Care Collaborative programs, which are described in the Child and Youth Development issue area report.

Eligibility Criteria

Clients must have incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG); be residents of Travis County; be at least 16 years old; and either be United States citizens, have "Right-to-Work" status, or be in the process of gaining this status. Clients have barriers to enrollment, such as: school dropout; limited English proficiency low-income; young women; teen parents; incarcerated/re-entry; homeless; and those with drug/alcohol issues. In particular, staff target formerly incarcerated persons, recipients of other public assistance, Opportunity Youth, and clients living in rural areas.

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board: WERC TC

The WERC program met or exceeded goals for most performance measures. The program fell slightly short of expectations for overall clients served (see the first output). Staff noted that although one of the partners had an aggressive outreach and enrollment plan that resulted in a very strong fourth quarter enrollment performance, it was not sufficient to reach the annual goal. Various factors, such as rising labor and training costs, as well as the incredibly low unemployment rate in the region, contributed to the gap between actual and goal performance.

The partner driving the enrollment in High School (HS) and GED programs exceeded goals due to the high demand for HS/HS equivalency services (see the second output). However, this partner decided to exit students in the fourth quarter of the year who were unresponsive to numerous re-engagement efforts rather than carrying them over into a new program year, thus decreasing the percentage who obtained a GED or HS diploma (see the first outcome). Staff plan to discuss and implement strategies to improve this rate.

Staff explained that due to higher training costs (especially in truck driving, which continues to be a popular program with WERC clients), the program was unable to meet the occupational training enrollment goal; however, the clients connected to training had a very high success rate (see the third output and second outcome).

Partners were able to exceed the demand for paid work experience, especially the partner specializing in serving opportunity youth (see the fourth output). Partners also ensured that the majority of clients connected to a paid work experience persisted and were successful in completing their work assignment (see the third outcome).

Finally, partners were successful in connecting clients who successfully completed a training program with employment opportunities that paid above $12/hr. (see the sixth outcome).

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	778	925	84%
Number of unduplicated clients enrolled in a High School or GED program	48	30	160%
Number of unduplicated clients enrolled in an occupational training program	230	275	84%

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board: WERC TC

Performance Goals and Results

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Number of unduplicated clients enrolled in an Internship	76	60	127%
Outcomes			
Percentage of clients who obtained a GED or High School diploma	68% (26/38)	80% (24/30)	86%
Percentage of clients who successfully complete an Occupational Training program	92% (175/190)	85% (234/275)	108%
Percentage of clients who successfully complete an Internship program	97% (56/58)	80% (48/60)	121%
Percentage of clients who obtain or improve employment or enter post-secondary education/ training/national service	69% (402/583)	70% (431/616)	99%
Percentage of clients who obtain or improve employment or enter post-secondary education/ training/national service and retain employment or continue post-exit pathway after 6 months	75% (247/330)	50% (216/431)	149%
Average wage at entry for clients who obtain or improve employment	$16.22/hr.	$12/hr.	135%

Appendix

2019 Federal Poverty Income Guidelines

Most HHS contracts require programs to serve participants with household incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guideline (FPIG) level. Some programs have chosen to follow a more stringent threshold. The following table presents the federal poverty thresholds by household size and income.

Household Size	Income Limits by Household Size				
	50%	100%	125%	150%	200%
1 person	$6,245	$12,490	$15,613	$18,735	$24,980
2 persons	$8,455	$16,910	$21,138	$25,365	$33,820
3 persons	$10,665	$21,330	$26,663	$31,995	$42,660
4 persons	$12,875	$25,750	$32,188	$38,625	$51,500
5 persons	$15,085	$30,170	$37,713	$45,255	$60,340
6 persons	$17,295	$34,590	$43,238	$51,885	$69,180
7 persons	$19,505	$39,010	$48,763	$58,515	$78,020
8 persons	$21,715	$43,430	$54,288	$65,145	$86,860
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add $4,420 for each additional person.					

Data source: "2019 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia," Office of The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, January 11, 2019, https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines.

2019 Austin Median Family Income Guidelines

Some programs may also use Austin MFI guidelines when measuring client incomes. The following table presents the median family income limits established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Austin-Round Rock, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Household Size	Income Limits by Household Size		
	Extremely Low*	Very Low (50%)	Low (80%)
1 person	$19,900	$33,150	$52,850
2 persons	$22,750	$37,850	$60,400
3 persons	$25,600	$42,600	$67,950
4 persons	$28,400	$47,300	$75,500
5 persons	$30,700	$51,100	$81,550
6 persons	$34,590	$54,900	$87,600
7 persons	$39,010	$58,700	$93,650
8 persons	$43,430	$62,450	$99,700

*The FY 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act changed the definition of extremely low-income to be the greater of 30/50^{ths} (60%) of the Section 8 very low-income limit or the poverty guideline as established by the Department of Health and Human Services, provided that this amount is not greater than the Section 8 50% very low-income limit.

Data source: "Austin-Round Rock, TX MSA FY 2019 Income Limits Summary," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2019/2019summary.odn.

Endnotes

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