Workforce Development

FY 2018 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.

Table of Contents

Introduction 5

Investment Overview 7

American YouthWorks: YouthBuild Workforce Development 17

Capital IDEA: Long-Term Training 19

LifeWorks: Workforce Development. 22

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Literacy Illuminates 25

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Workforce Infusion. 27

Skillpoint Alliance: Gateway 30

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board: Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum – Travis County 32

Appendix. 35

Endnotes 36

Introduction

The Travis County Commissioners Court, through the Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHS), annually invests over $19.5 million in community-based social service programs. 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 2018 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 a pilot project under Holistic Family Services. The Investment Overview summarizes information from all nine issue areas and the pilot project. 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, 2017 through September 30, 2018) 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

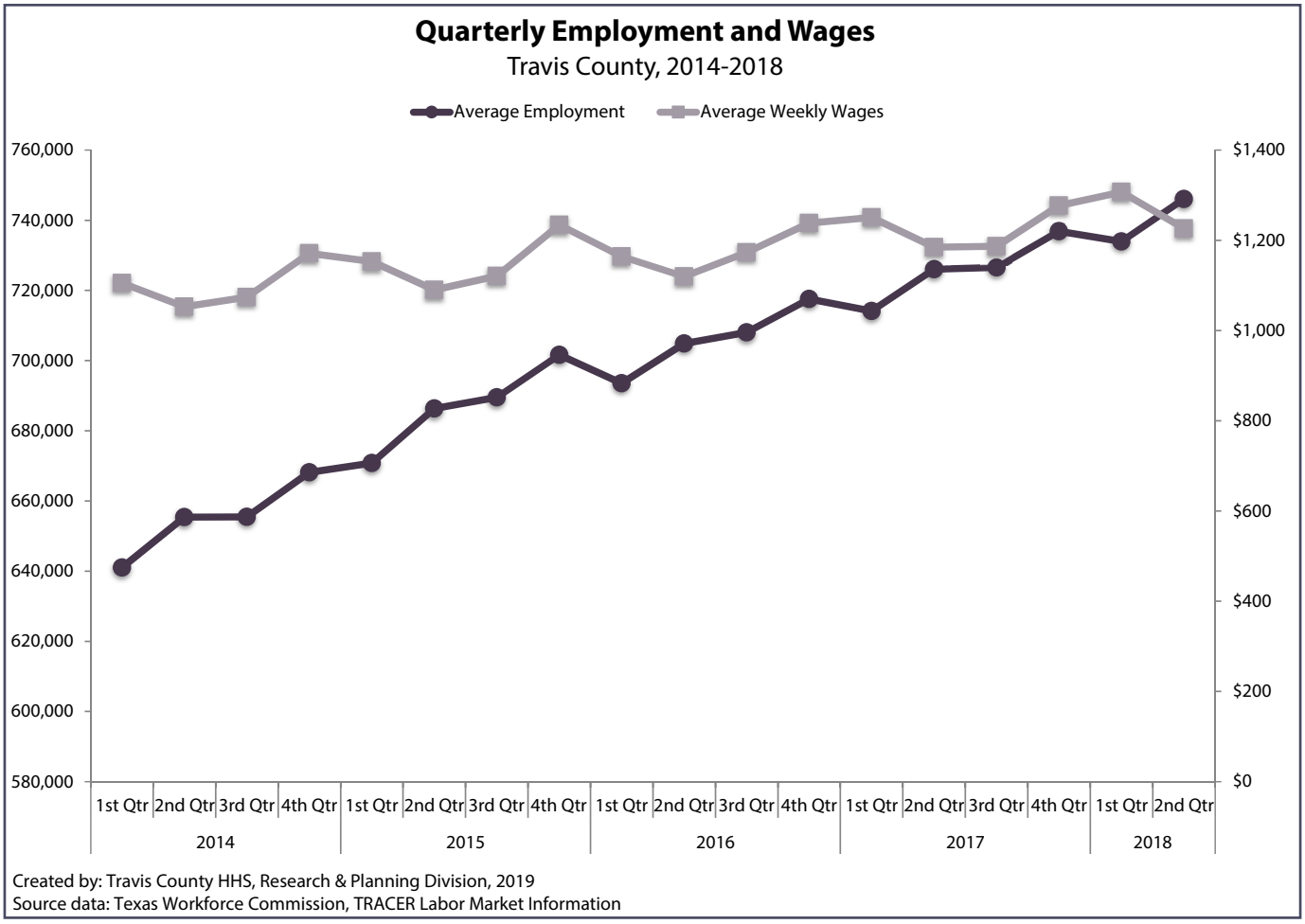
Community Context

Workforce development services and programs play an integral role in growing the state's workforce capacity. It is estimated that by 2020, 62% of jobs in Texas will require postsecondary education.[1] In 2017, 37% of Texas residents age 25 and older had an Associate's degree or higher level of educational attainment.[2] In Travis County, 55% of residents had an Associate's degree or higher.[3] Workforce development and training programs provide an opportunity for residents to build their skills and improve their employment prospects.

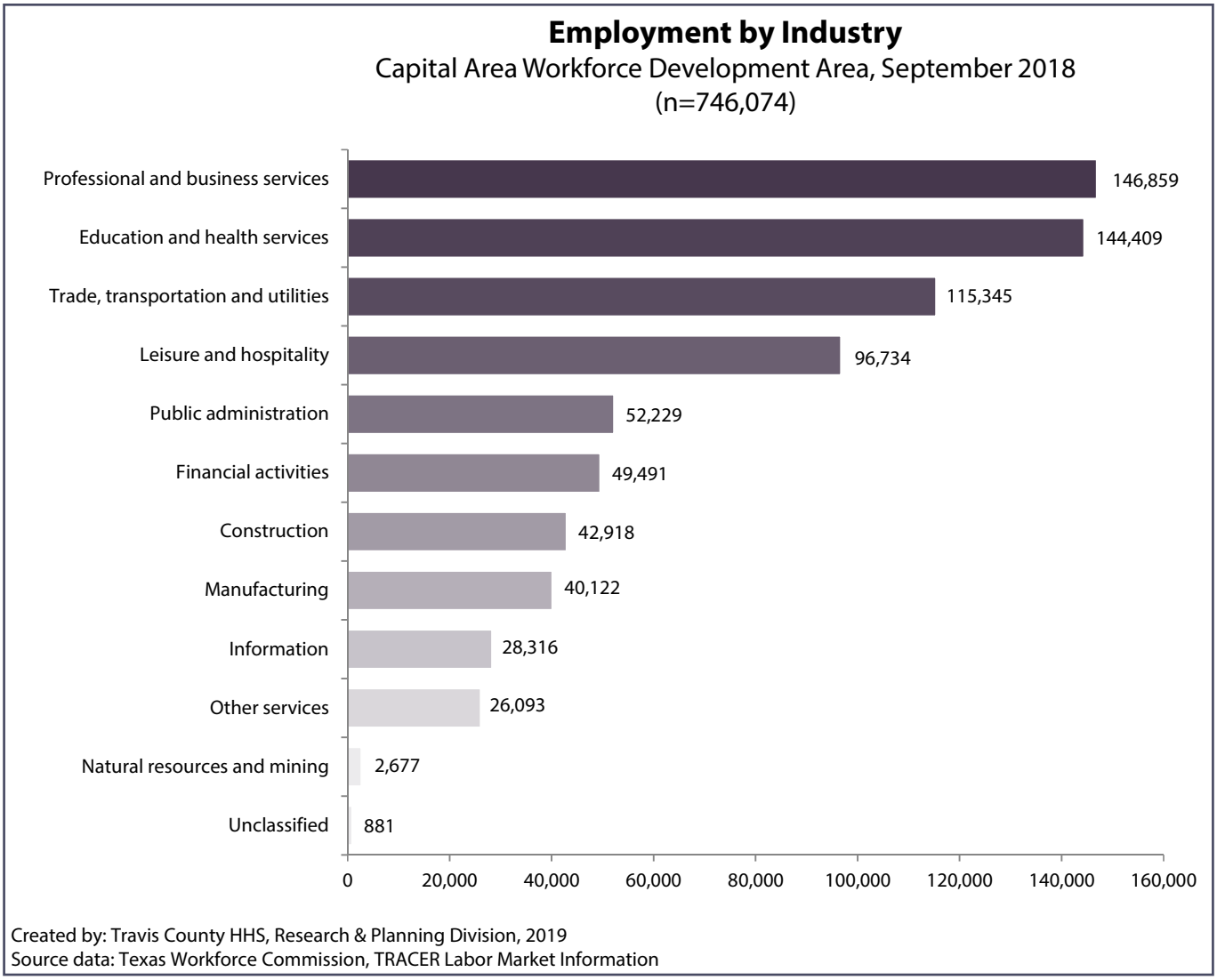
Current State of the Local Economy: Employment and Unemployment

In Travis County, an average of 746,073 individuals were employed in the second quarter of 2018 with average weekly wages of $1,226.[a,4] The overall number of individuals employed increased 3% between the second quarter of 2017 and the second quarter of 2018.[5] Between the second quarter of 2014 and 2018, the average number of individuals employed increased 14% and the average weekly wages increased 16% in Travis County.

a At the time of this research, only second-quarter data was available for 2018.



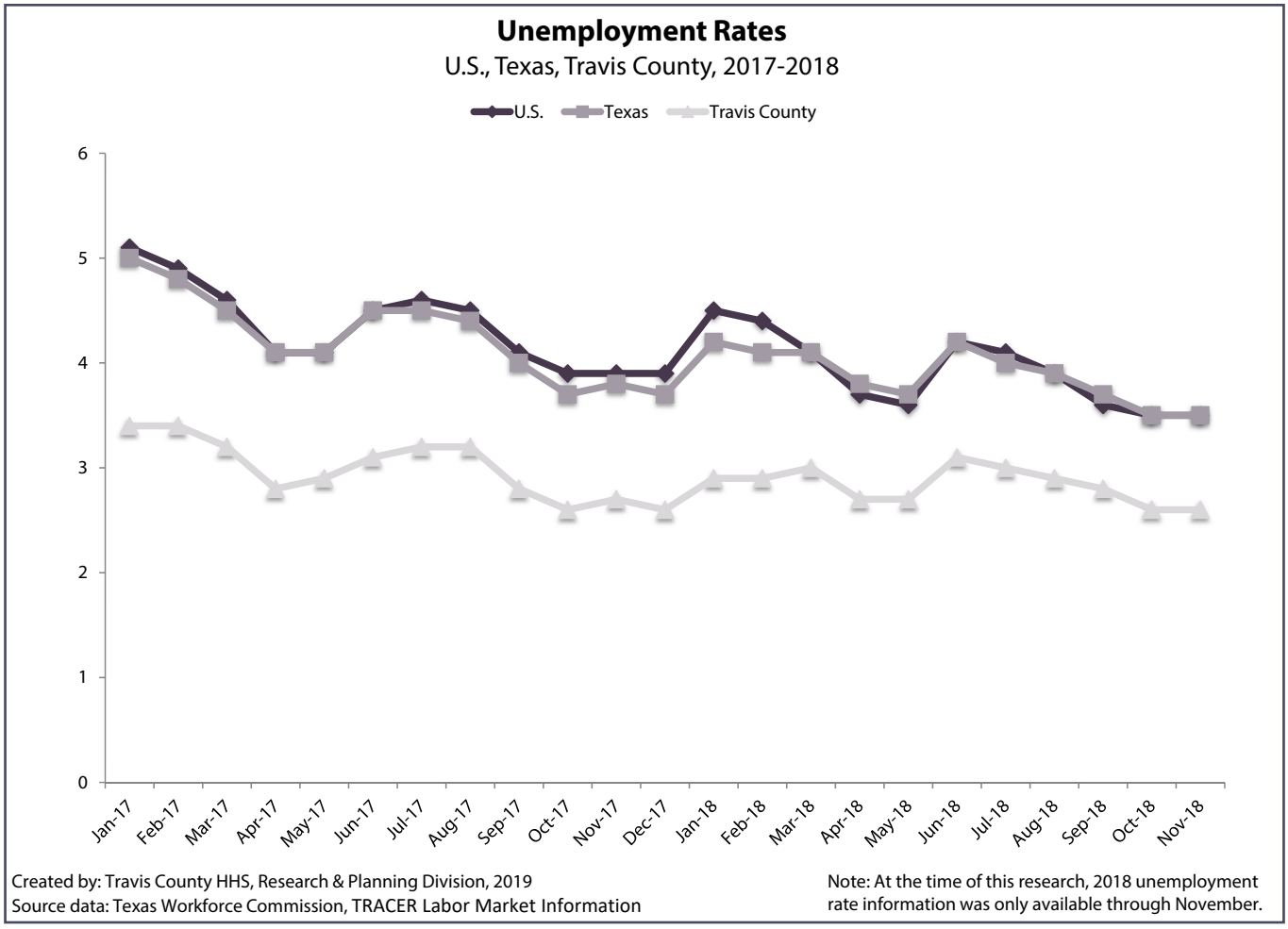
According to 2018 second-quarter data, the industries employing the largest number of individuals in Travis County are Professional and business services (146,859) and Education and health services (144,409).[6] With the exception of "Other Services," every industry classification experienced some growth in employment in the second quarter of 2018 over the second quarter of 2017.[7] Among the identified industries, the Professional and business services and Leisure and hospitality industries had the largest growth in the number employed year to year, up 7,909 and 2,532, respectively.[8] The majority of employees in Travis County work for private employers (82.9%), while the remaining employees are divided between State (7.8%), Local (7.7%), and Federal government (1.6%).[9]



Unemployment is a measure of individuals 16 and older, who have no job but are available for and actively seeking work.[b,10] The 2018 unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted[c]) in Travis County began at 2.9% in January and decreased to 2.6% in November (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. When comparing November unemployment rates over the past two decades, 2018 had the lowest unemployment rate (2.6%) for Travis County since 1999 when the unemployment rate was 2.2%.[12] From November 2017 to November 2018, the number of unemployed individuals in the county decreased by 1.5%, from 19,165 to 18,879 individuals.[13]

b Actively seeking work during the reference week, which is the week including the 12th of the month (see http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedPublications/330_acronyms.pdf, page 17).

c 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 (see http://www.tracer2.com/admin/uploadedPublications/330_acronyms.pdf).

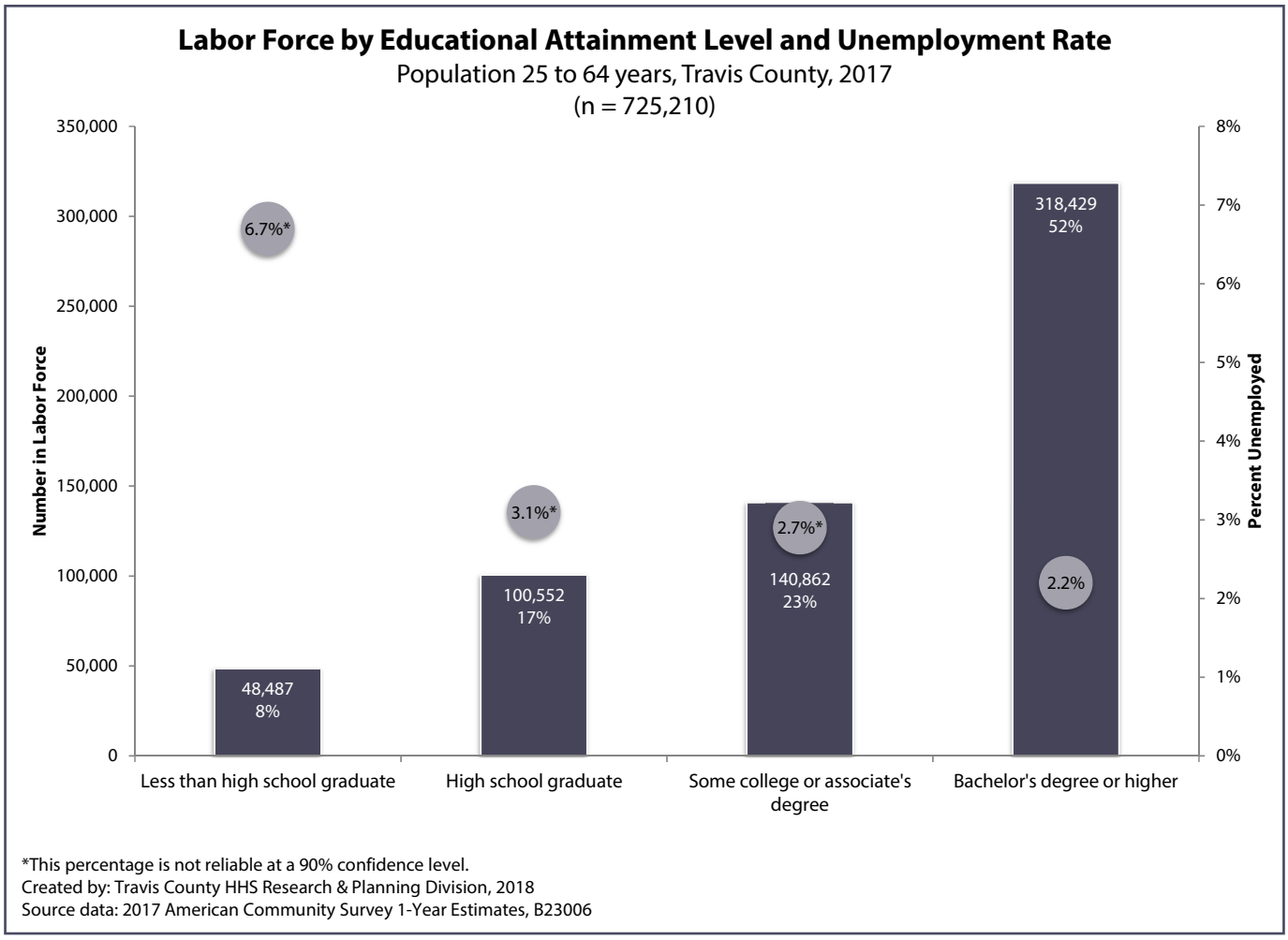


Not included in the unemployment rate are individuals who are "discouraged workers" or "marginally attached to the labor force." Discouraged workers are those that are "not in the labor force, want and are available for work, and had looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months" but had not searched for employment in the prior 4 weeks specifically because they believed no jobs were available for them, while marginally attached includes discouraged workers "with the exception that any reason could have been cited for the lack of a job search in the prior 4 weeks."[14]

Education, Employment, and Earnings

There are strong correlations between educational attainment and employment, and educational attainment and earnings. In 2017, the unemployment rate among college graduates was 2.2%.[15] For those with some college or an associate's degree the unemployment rate was 2.7%; for high school graduates

3.1% were unemployed, and for those without a high school diploma the rate was 6.7%.[d,16]



Earnings increase with each additional level of education. Among Travis County residents age 25 and over with earnings, high school graduates earned 21% more than those who did not graduate high school. Those with some college or an associate's degree earned 18% more than those with only a high school degree, while those with a bachelor's degree earned 39% more than those with some college or an associate's degree; finally, those with a graduate or professional degree earned 31% more than those with a bachelor's degree.[17]

d Estimates for unemployment rates for those with less than high school graduates, high school graduates, and some college or associate's degree are not reliable at a 90% confidence level for the one-year sample.

Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months by Educational Attainment by Sex Population 25 years and over with earnings, Travis County, 2017			
Educational Attainment	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Less than high school graduate	25,092	28,447	19,271
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	31,116	35,447	26,909
Some college or associate's degree	37,397	42,412	33,067
Bachelor's degree	55,261	66,876	48,722
Graduate or professional degree	75,512	93,537	60,565

Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2018
Source data: 2017 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 38% more than their female counterparts; male high school graduates earn 27% more than female graduates; males with some college or an associate's degree earn 25% more than females with the same education level; males with a bachelor's degree earn 31% more than their female counterparts; and males with a graduate or professional degree earn 43% more than females with the same educational attainment.[18]

Impacted Populations

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

- *Rural Area Residents:* The unemployment rate in the outskirts of Travis County is 3.7% compared to 2.7% in the City of Austin.[19]
- *Formerly Incarcerated Individuals:* In fiscal year 2017, nearly 2,000 individuals convicted in Travis County were released from prison or state jail.[20] Employment significantly reduces the risk of recidivism for formerly incarcerated individuals,[21] although obtaining employment with a criminal record can be extremely difficult.
- *Opportunity Youth:* There are an estimated 13,880 Opportunity Youth[e] in Travis County (comprising 9.7% of 16-24 year olds in the county).[22] 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.[23]
- *Foreign Born Individuals:* Nearly 219,000 individuals (18%) in Travis County are foreign born.[24] While the employment rates for native- and foreign-born residents in the county are similar, the educational attainment differs significantly. Of the population 25 years and older, 10% did not graduate high school. Within the native-born population, 6% did not graduate high school while 23% of the foreign-born population did not graduate high school.[25]

e Youth ages 16-24 disconnected from work and education.

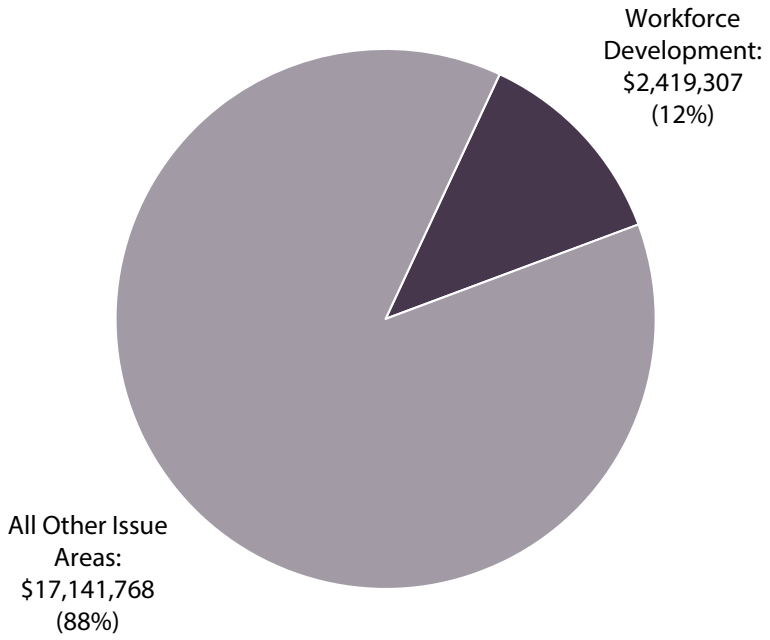
Master Community Workforce Plan

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.[26]

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, GED, 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 2018



Funding Summary

The FY 2018 Funding Amount reflects 12–month funding (October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018) unless otherwise noted.

Agency Name	Program Name	FY 2018 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	Literacy Illuminates	$30,000*
Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	Workforce Infusion	$241,196
Skillpoint Alliance	Gateway	$270,800
Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board	Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum – Travis County	$630,315

*Funding from December 22, 2017 through September 30, 2018

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	2,339	60%
Male	1,477	38%
Transgender	11	0.3%
Unknown	80	2%
Total	*3,907*	*100%*

Ethnicity		
Hispanic or Latino	1,959	50%
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,684	43%
Unknown	264	7%
Total	*3,907*	*100%*

Race		
American Indian and Alaska Native	44	1%
Asian	133	3%
Black or African American	909	23%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	6	0.2%
White	2,069	53%
Some other race	389	10%
Two or more races	72	2%
Unknown	285	7%
Total	*3,907*	*100%*

Age	Num.	Pct.
15 to 17	167	4%
18 to 24	1,278	33%
25 to 39	1,417	36%
40 to 54	546	14%
55 to 64	162	4%
65 to 74	56	1%
75 and over	9	0.2%
Unknown	270	7%
Total	*3,907*	*100%*

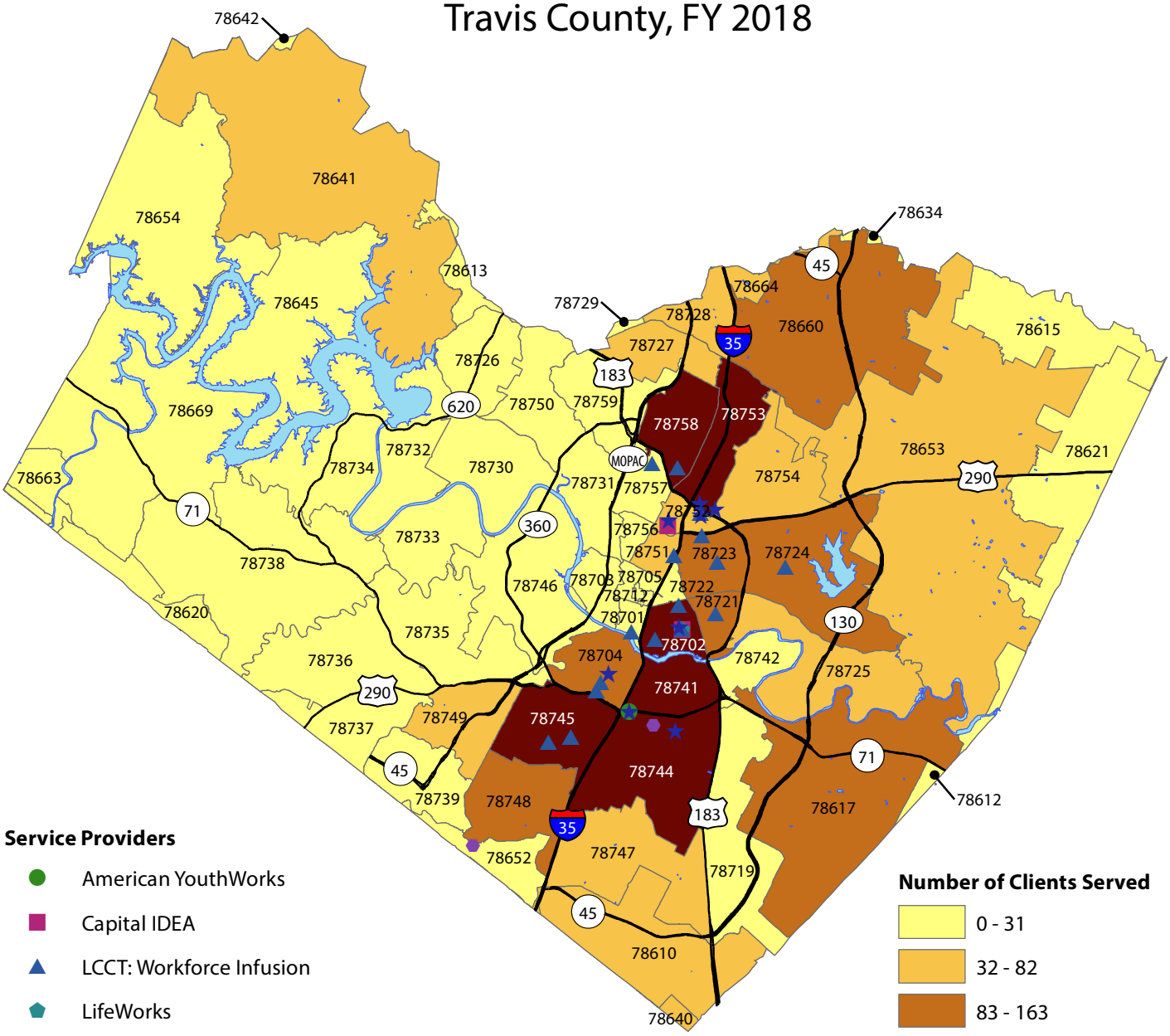
Income		
<50% of FPIG	1,503	38%
50% to 100%	707	18%
101% to 150%	584	15%
151% to 200%	512	13%
>200%	102	3%
Unknown	499	13%
Total	*3,907*	*100%*

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

See Appendix for specific income guideline levels.

Workforce Development

Service Provision Locations and Clients Served by ZIP Code
Travis County, FY 2018



Service Providers

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

Number of Clients Served

- 0 - 31
- 32 - 82
- 83 - 163
- 164 - 321

Service provision locations are not included for LCCT Literacy Illuminates, given its program design of a community-wide public awareness campaign.

Notes: This map shows 3,438 clients by ZIP code. 469 clients (12% 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. Client ZIP codes were not collected for LCCT Literacy Illuminates, as this program was a public awareness campaign.

Source data: Contracted service providers, FY 2018.
This map was created using ArcGIS Online shapefiles.
Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2018.

N
0 2.5 5 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, 2017 through September 30, 2018 was $145,000. This investment comprised 7.4% 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 all but one performance goal. Staff noted that the number of clients served and the number of participants enrolled in both vocational training and academic classes were all higher than expected due to a large number of incoming participants in the fourth quarter of the year, which is not a normal occurrence (see the three outputs).

Staff reported that increasing wages in the Austin area contributed to the higher than projected number of participants obtaining employment at a minimum of $10.00/hour (see the third outcome). The average wage for all those placed into employment in the past contract year was $12.58.

The number of participants successfully retaining employment, education, training, the military or other national service did not meet expectations (see the fourth outcome). Staff explained that the low retention rate reported in the first quarter negatively impacted the overall rate for the year. In the next contract year, case managers and program staff will have the list of alumni in need of retention follow-up at the start of the quarter to give them more time to contact and hear back about current placements.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	268	225	119%
Number of participants enrolled in vocational training	268	225	119%
Number of participants enrolled in academic classes	107	95	113%
Outcomes			
Percentage of successfully exiting participants	80% (120/150)	80% (100/125)	100%
Percentage of successfully exiting participants receiving job placement services who obtained employment, post secondary education, apprenticeship training, the military, or other national service	83% (100/120)	78% (75/96)	107%
Percentage of successfully exiting participants who obtained employment at $10.00/hr. or more	70% (62/88)	53% (28/53)	133%
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	66% (67/102)	75% (56/75)	88%

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, 2017 through September 30, 2018 was $760,800. This investment comprised 16.4% 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 exceeded goals for both output measures but fell short of targets on two outcome measures. Staff reported that the number of clients served was higher than anticipated due to private funding received to expand the number of students in Hays County, as well as additional state funding received through the Texas Innovative Adult Career Education grant (see the first output). Due to the increase in clients served, the number of students eligible for the College Prep Academy also increased (see the second output).

Staff explained that the percentage of participants obtaining employment was lower than expected due to the majority of health sciences graduates that are required to pass board exams before obtaining employment (see the first outcome). Staff are currently working with Austin Community College to offer a review of the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) a few days after graduation, with the hope that this review, along with encouragement to take the exam soon after, will lead to more graduates passing the exam as well as earlier employment placement.

The percentage of clients retaining employment for six months also did not meet the anticipated goal due to the challenges that program staff face in verifying employment (see the fifth outcome). Staff try to verify employment through several methods, but if staff are unable to verify employment, clients must be counted as "not retaining employment."

Finally, the program focuses on higher paying, middle skill jobs. Overall, Capital IDEA graduates have an average starting salary of more than $20 per hour, which was seen in the second and third outcomes.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	1,330	1,000	133%
Number of participants entering College Prep Academy	63	50	126%
Outcomes			
Percentage of participants seeking employment who obtained employment	73% (88/120)	90% (73/81)	81%
Percentage of participants obtaining employment at a wage of $12/hr or higher	100% (88/88)	90% (66/73)	111%
Percentage of participants obtaining employment at a wage of $20/hr or higher	65% (57/88)	55% (40/73)	118%

CAPITAL IDEA: LONG-TERM TRAINING

Performance Goals and Results

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Percentage of participants who complete the College Prep Academy	84% (78/93)	90% (45/50)	93%
Percentage of clients who obtained employment two quarters prior and retained employment for six months	77% (73/95)	90% (72/80)	85%

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 GED. 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, 2017 through September 30, 2018 was $241,196. This investment comprised 31.1% of their total program budget. HHS also funds the 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, be able to show proof of identity and eligibility for employment, and provide evidence of an ability to read at a level sufficient to effectively engage in services. For the GED and Literacy Services component of the program, clients 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 goals for all but two performance measures. Staff explained that although the goal for clients served in GED and Literacy services was not achieved, the number of clients served grew over the course of the year (see the second output). Staff attributed this result to a program redesign that began in July, and included gathering feedback from students (present and graduates) on ways to enhance programming to better meet the needs of youth in the program. Enhancements included making the initial contact with clients more welcoming, increasing focus on building relationships between students and instructors, and having breakfast foods or snacks available for students at the start of classes. Enrollment in Workforce services was higher than anticipated due to an increase in funding for the program, which was used to increase staffing capacity and expand the program to reach more youth (see the third output).

Staff reported students continue to struggle with passing the GED exam due to the new format and increased difficulty in the exam, and the program has seen an increase in the number of Literacy Track students who require more individualized support. Volunteer resources have been limited and were focused on assisting those students preparing to take the GED exam. The program plans to recruit additional tutors to work with Literacy Track students during FY 2019 and hopes to have additional AmeriCorps members as well. Staff expect to see higher amounts of progress testing and more youth progressing to the next academic level in the future (see the first outcome). However, the percentage of clients who passed a GED Ready subject-specific exam exceeded goals, which staff attributed to the individualized instruction that students received to help them prepare and pass these tests (see the second outcome). Volunteer tutors offered their services three times weekly to work with students both individually and in small groups.

Finally, staff noted that the number of clients who obtained a job and received services for at least 6 months is high due to the individualized follow-along supports that clients receive from their assigned Employment Specialist (see the fifth outcome). Follow-along supports are tailored to meet the needs of each newly employed client so he or she can effectively navigate situations that arise in the workplace 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	199	210	95%
Number of youth served in GED and Literacy services	115	140	82%

LifeWorks: Workforce Development

Performance Goals and Results

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Number of clients served in Workforce services	97	85	114%
Outcomes			
Percentage of Literacy Track clients who progress to the next academic level	50% (11/22)	75% (89/119)	67%
Percentage of clients who pass a GED Ready subject-specific exam	86% (30/35)	75% (16/21)	113%
Percentage of clients who obtained employment	61% (33/54)	66% (33/50)	93%
Average starting hourly wage	$11/hr	$12/hr	91%
Percentage of clients who obtained a job for at least 6 months	46% (24/52)	39% (13/33)	117%

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas

Literacy Illuminates

Program Description

The Literacy Illuminates program is a thoughtfully designed outreach campaign to promote the Coalition Partners' enrollment periods though radio advertising and community events. The 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 navigation system (2-1-1); and increase the number of individuals who access services from a wide network of service providers across Travis County.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Literacy Illuminates program from December 22, 2017 through September 30, 2018 was $30,000. This investment comprised 73.0% of their total program budget. HHS also funds the Workforce Infusion program, which is described later in this report.

Eligibility Criteria

The program targets 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 met or exceeded all output goals but fell short of targets on one outcome measure. Staff explained that United Way's 2-1-1 call volume in August and September 2017 was significantly impacted by their Hurricane Harvey response, which impacted the comparison between the number of calls in 2018 versus those in 2017 (see the third outcome). Staff reported that they used Facebook for more than their Literacy Coalition of Central Texas (LCCT) programs and included their literacy partners in the community. As an intermediary organization, LCCT deploys AmeriCorps and VISTA members as well as providing professional development and convening activities for literacy providers. This boosted the program's social media numbers (see the third output and first and second outcomes).

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of people reached at Literacy Coalition of Central Texas community event	2,000	2,000	100%
Number of times (impressions) radio commercials will be heard by all listeners during campaign months	1,000,000	1,000,000	100%
Number of people reached through Facebook during campaign months	8,564	3,000	285%
Number of literacy-related phone calls to 2-1-1 during campaign months	439	300	146%
Outcomes			
Percentage of people who were reached on Facebook and who subsequently became engaged	25% (2,134/8,564)	10% (650/6,500)	249%
Percentage change in social media engagement from campaign months in 2017 to campaign months in 2018	52% increase	15% increase	Met Goal
Percentage change in literacy-related phone calls from campaign months in 2017 to campaign months in 2018	27% decrease	No change	Did Not Meet Goal

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas

Workforce Infusion

Program Description

The Workforce Infusion initiative works to increase employment, career advancement and job retention rates by overlaying workforce development programming on existing adult literacy programs. 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 Workforce Infusion program from October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018 was $241,196. This investment comprised 27.8% of their total program budget. HHS also funds the Literacy Illuminates program, which is described previously in this report.

Eligibility Criteria

This program targets low-skilled, working age adults who are currently enrolled in adult literacy programming at a community-based organization in Travis County, and have goals to improve their job status and/or career trajectory. 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: Workforce Infusion

The Workforce Infusion program met or exceeded goals for all outputs but fell short of targets for two outcomes. Staff noted that new partnerships with vocational training sites were more successful than previously forecasted, which led to high numbers of clients in both work readiness skill-building services and vocational training (see the third and fourth outputs).

Although the number of students being tested was low because of high drop rates at partner sites and longer than average enrollment in the program prior to testing, the program saw successful learning gains from a higher percentage of students tested than originally forecasted (see the first outcome). The Integrated Education and Training Program and partnerships with vocational training sites was also highly successful, resulting in a 100% on-time completion rate (see the third outcome).

The program is supported by AmeriCorps service members and staff reported that FY 2018 showed unusual recruitment trends. The program began the fiscal year at 66% staff capacity due to decreased recruitment and ended the year at 25% because of members leaving service. If a member leaves service, they cannot be replaced. Lack of capacity made it difficult to provide intensive services and track client job gains. Clients would oftentimes report job gains, but would not return documentation proving employment. This situation led to a much lower rate of improved employment status than projected (see the fourth outcome).

Employment retention was lower than expected, and the staffing issues noted above were a contributing factor (see the fifth outcome). Staff also explained that students typically stop attending classes and leave services when they get new employment. The student population is transient, and staff have a difficult time tracking them down after six months has passed. Staff are using new job gain incentive sign out sheets that request social security numbers in an attempt to increase the chances of tracking retention via a workforce verification program going forward.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	1,138	1,150	99%
Number of unduplicated clients receiving all literacy instruction (ESL, ABE, GED, and Digital Literacy)	974	1,014	96%
Number of unduplicated clients receiving work readiness skill-building services	482	435	111%

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Workforce Infusion

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 vocational training in order to earn an industry-recognized certificate	81	45	180%
Outcomes			
Percentage of clients showing a learning gain on a standardized test	74% (294/398)	60% (529/882)	123%
Percentage of clients successfully completing a work-readiness credential	66% (214/324)	70% (304/435)	95%
Percentage of clients successfully completing vocational training and earning an industry-recognized certificate	100% (43/43)	69% (31/45)	145%
Percentage of clients with an improved employment status	6% (21/324)	25% (120/480)	26%
Percentage of clients reporting improved employment status who maintained their improved employment status at 6 months	25% (9/36)	50% (50/100)	50%
Average wage at initial report of employment status	$11/hr	$11/hr	102%

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 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, 2017 through September 30, 2018 was $270,800. This investment comprised 33.7% 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 exceeded all but one performance goal, falling slightly short of expectations for graduates finding work within 45 days (see the second outcome). Staff explained that the program's Waco team transitioned out of the organization in July, and Waco programming is on hold indefinitely. Due to this change, the Austin staff assumed follow-up responsibilities for the graduates of the Waco classes. Connecting with Waco graduates was challenging, and staff were only able to reach a small number to obtain employment information. The inability to get in touch with Waco graduates lowered the employment rate. Additionally, the Austin office piloted a plumbing course this year. Although the content of the course was high quality and many local employers were engaged in the program, several students had their Plumbing License applications denied by the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE), citing recent criminal history as a reason for the denials. The Local UA 286 Plumbers & Pipefitters Union advocated on behalf of the students, but the TSBPE maintained their decision to deny. This caused several program graduates to have difficulty obtaining employment within 45 days of graduating.

Skillpoint staff made a number of programmatic enhancements during the year to better align their Pre-Apprentice Electrical and Nurse Aide Training programs to local labor market needs. Staff also began building a mentorship program, utilizing industry professionals. Other program improvements include creation of an improved employer database for housing employer information and provision of all tools, equipment, and uniforms needed for entry-level employment to its program graduates in the form of employment incentives.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	209	200	105%
Outcomes			
Percentage of participants who graduate job training	86% (164/191)	85% (170/200)	101%
Percentage of graduates who find work within 45 days	64% (96/150)	75% (128/170)	85%
Percentage of employed graduates who are employed continuously for 180 days	70% (81/116)	60% (77/128)	116%
Percentage of employed graduates with a starting wage of at least $12/hr.	66% (63/96)	60% (77/128)	109%

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board

Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum–Travis County (WERC TC)

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. 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, 2017 through September 30, 2018 was $630,315. This investment comprised 24.2% of their total program budget. HHS also funds the Continuity of Child Care Services System 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 are promising candidates with barriers to enrollment, such as: school dropout; limited English proficiency; young women; teen parents; incarcerated/re-entry; homeless; and/or individuals 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 all outcome measures but fell slightly short of performance targets for two output measures. Staff explained that the number of clients served was lower than expected because two of the WERC partners had to implement wait lists due to the demand for occupational training (see the first output). Further, the number of clients enrolled in an occupational training program did not meet projections because one partner over-enrolled in the first two quarters and had to slow down/stop enrollment in the fourth quarter to maintain staff capacity (see the third output).

The program saw higher than projected enrollments in both the High School/GED program and the Internship program (see the second and fourth outputs). Staff attributed the higher than expected rate of clients obtaining a GED or High School diploma to the WERC partner's efforts to ensure that clients are prepared to test before they are signed up for the last exam (see the first outcome). The rate of clients completing an Internship program also exceeded targets, and staff noted that clients who enroll in this type of work training are generally dedicated to finishing the program and obtaining employment (see the third outcome).

The rate of clients continuing education/training/service or retaining employment after 6 months exceeded expectations; staff reported that the partners set communication/milestone meetings with their clients to check in on their job and school status (see the fifth outcome). Finally, the average wage at entry exceeded goals (see the sixth outcome). Staff explained that a few clients completing occupational training in project management or IT training had starting wages that were higher than expected.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	763	925	82%
Number of unduplicated clients enrolled in a High School or GED program	36	20	180%
Number of unduplicated clients enrolled in an occupational training program	318	375	85%
Number of unduplicated clients enrolled in an Internship	71	60	118%
Outcomes			
Percentage of clients who obtained a GED or High School diploma	94% (29/31)	80% (16/20)	117%
Percentage of clients who successfully complete an Occupational Training program	88% (246/280)	85% (319/375)	103%

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board: WERC TC

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Percentage of clients who successfully complete an Internship program	90% (53/59)	80% (48/60)	112%
Percentage of clients who obtain or improve employment or enter post-secondary education/ training/national service	69% (390/568)	70% (431/616)	98%
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	69% (251/363)	50% (216/431)	138%
Average wage at entry for clients who obtain or improve employment	$14/hr	$12/hr	117%

Appendix

2018 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	$6,070	$12,140	$15,175	$18,210	$24,280
2 persons	$8,230	$16,460	$20,575	$24,690	$32,920
3 persons	$10,390	$20,780	$25,975	$31,170	$41,560
4 persons	$12,550	$25,100	$31,375	$37,650	$50,200
5 persons	$14,710	$29,420	$36,775	$44,130	$58,840
6 persons	$16,870	$33,740	$42,175	$50,610	$67,480
7 persons	$19,030	$38,060	$47,575	$57,090	$76,120
8 persons	$21,190	$42,380	$52,975	$63,570	$84,760
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add $4,320 for each additional person.					

Data source: "2018 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 13, 2018, https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines.

2018 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	$18,100	$30,100	$48,200
2 persons	$20,650	$34,400	$55,050
3 persons	$23,250	$38,700	$61,950
4 persons	$25,800	$43,000	$68,800
5 persons	$29,420	$46,450	$74,350
6 persons	$33,740	$49,900	$79,850
7 persons	$38,060	$53,350	$85,350
8 persons	$42,380	$56,800	$90,850

*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 2018 Income Limits Summary," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2018/2018summary.odn.

Endnotes

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