

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Lisa Givens

DATE: June 21, 2013

PHONE: 512-463-8556

TWC's College Credit for Heroes expands, six new partner schools join

Program offers returning veterans a pathway to civilian careers

AUSTIN – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) today announced an award of \$1.5 million to support College Credit for Heroes workforce development grants at 10 colleges and universities, including six new partner schools, to expand the program's reach and better meet the needs of veteran students. Launched in 2011, College Credit for Heroes is designed to recognize the knowledge and skills gained by military service members and to award college credits for their military experience, allowing these veterans to more easily re-enter the workforce.

"I am proud of the progress the College Credit for Heroes initiative has made in the effort to tap into the skills of Texas' veterans and translate their experience into college credits," Gov. Rick Perry said. "The expansion of this program to new colleges and industries will help veterans and military service members more quickly obtain degrees and certifications, and put their skills to work."

The colleges and universities selected will further expand the College Credit for Heroes initiative to more locations throughout Texas and increase the number of veterans and service members who can benefit.

"Texas service members and veterans have bravely answered the call to serve our nation," said TWC Chairman Andres Alcantar. "We have made it one of our primary goals to support veteran workforce programs to help ease veterans' transition to civilian life. The addition of new partner colleges and universities to College Credit for Heroes will enhance academic and employment opportunities for our Texas heroes."

Central Texas College, an early program partner, was integral to the development of the robust College Credit for Heroes web portal, CollegeCreditforHeroes.org, and also has been awarded an additional \$350,000 for its continuation and expansion to standardize evaluation of college credit for military training and experience across Texas institutions. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) also supports program expansion through advisement and consultation on various military and higher education related issues and coordination of program partnerships with higher education entities throughout the state.

"Service men and women are highly skilled, experienced individuals who have a tremendous amount to offer their communities when they return home after serving their country," said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton. "The expansion of College Credit for Heroes will give veterans greater employment opportunities and help fulfill the workforce needs of Texas."

"Texas is home to nearly 450,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who possess the skills and experience needed by Texas employers," said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Hope Andrade. "By expanding the College Credit for Heroes program, Texas employers can more easily connect to this highly qualified group of individuals."

College Credit for Heroes welcomes six new schools to the second phase of the program:

- **Angelo State University**, San Angelo: \$110,810 is dedicated to establishing five articulation agreements with select community colleges to create accelerated pathways to bachelor's degrees and master's degrees and fast track certificates in academic areas such as: border security, cyber security, intelligence, and security studies and analysis. The Veterans Educational and Transitional Services (VETS) Center will help veterans and service members transition to university campus by providing academic, social and financial aid support.

-more-

- **Austin Community College District (ACC)**, Austin: \$91,421 is dedicated to streamline four of the school's certification programs in energy, information technology, manufacturing and advanced technologies and computer technology. ACC also will standardize and streamline the evaluation of military training for all veteran students.
- **Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD)**, Dallas area: \$150,000 is dedicated to create accelerated career paths for industry certification in information technology and an optional internet marketing specialist certificate, reducing the time to complete an associate's degree to 18 months and 10 months for certifications throughout all seven DCCCD colleges in the Greater Dallas area.
- **Grayson College**, Denison: \$140,755 is dedicated to create a cross-matching system to award course credit for military training to accelerate degree and certification programs for veteran students in high-demand areas, such as advanced technologies and manufacturing.
- **Tarrant County College District**, Fort Worth area: \$54,522 is dedicated to create streamlined basic firefighter and advanced firefighter certifications and associate's degree programs for fire investigation technology and fire production technology.
- **Texas State Technical College-Harlingen**, Harlingen: \$100,287 is dedicated to provide streamlined Level II certification and an associate's degree in wind energy technology. A Veterans Resource Center will be created to help transition veterans and service members to college campus and civilian workforce.

Four colleges from the College Credit for Heroes inaugural phase have been awarded additional funding to expand their offerings to veteran students:

- **Alamo Community College District (ACCD)**, San Antonio: \$105,922 is dedicated to develop a new accelerated associate's degree in respiration technology, certificates in information security and assurance. ACCD will continue implementation of health information technology specialty tracks in occupation therapy, radiology and medical laboratory and accelerated registered nurse career mobility track training.
- **Lee College**, Baytown: \$86,400 is dedicated to develop new associate's degree and certification programs in accelerated manufacturing skills standards for council logistics and supply chain management.
- **Lone Star College System**, Greater Houston area: \$150,000 is dedicated to implement a fast track engineering technician marketable skills award certification program to prepare veterans for jobs in the oil and natural gas industry.
- **San Jacinto Community College District (SJCCD)**, Pasadena: \$150,000 is dedicated to implement the Veteran's Information Technology Fast Track to Employment project to provide credentials supporting the information technology career cluster. SJCCD will seek an articulation agreement with Western Governor's University to accept credits awarded to participants to continue their studies toward a bachelor's degree.

College Credit for Heroes Background

College Credit for Heroes was launched in 2011 using \$3 million in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds. The program was authorized during the 82nd legislative session under Sen. Leticia Van de Putte's Senate Bill 1736. The program's first phase organized the Texas Inter-College Council on Veterans, consisting of representatives from seven community colleges serving areas with large veteran populations, including Alamo Colleges, Central Texas College, Houston Community College, Lee College, Lone Star College, San Jacinto College and Temple College. Each participating college researched and identified barriers to education faced by veterans, and created models to address these challenges. To view the results of College Credit for Heroes Phase I, visit www.texasworkforce.org/ccfh.

For more information on workforce programs available for Texas veterans, visit vets.texasworkforce.org.

###mcl

The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in coordination with its network of local workforce development boards, call 512-463-8942 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.