

An Inventory of Apprenticeship and Internship Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

As required by Senate Bill 1, Article VII, TWC, Rider 48

Texas Workforce Commission

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Introduction

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) prepared this report in response to Senate Bill 1 (SB 1), Article VII, Rider 48, Apprenticeship and Internship Opportunities for People with Disabilities, 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2021). Rider 48 directs TWC to conduct an inventory of all current apprenticeship and internship opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The inventory must be made available to the Rehabilitation Council of Texas and the Texas legislature by October 1, 2022.

As outlined in SB 1, the inventory must include the following:

- The number and type of apprenticeship opportunities currently available
- The number and type of internship opportunities currently available
- The length of the internship and apprenticeship programs
- The age ranges of program participants
- Whether participating employers are public or private entities
- The geographic distribution of the programs
- How the programs are funded
- How the opportunities are publicized
- The number of individuals with disabilities that obtained full-time employment as a result of internship or apprenticeship programs

Overview

This inventory provides information on apprenticeship and internship opportunities available to all job seekers, including those with disabilities, as well as opportunities offered to Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation (TWC-VR) customers that are specifically for individuals with disabilities. It is organized into the following main sections:

- Apprenticeship Overview
- Internship Overview
- Promoting Apprenticeship and Internship Opportunities

The data reported in this inventory was obtained from multiple sources, including TWC and the US Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship (DOL OA), and reflects the best available information to fulfill the Rider 48 requirement. The first two sections provide apprenticeship and internship

program descriptions, as well as information on funding. The concluding section illustrates how TWC promotes apprenticeships and internships to ensure that all Texas job seekers are aware of available opportunities and how to access them. An appendix is included at the end of the report that provides a list of opportunities specifically for students and adults with disabilities. These opportunities are cohort based and are a subset of all opportunities available to individuals with disabilities.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Apprenticeship	Meaning or Definition
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
LBB	Legislative Budget Board
OA	Office of Apprenticeship
Q2	Quarter 2
RAP	Registered Apprenticeship Program
RAPIDS	Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Management Data System
TWC	Texas Workforce Commission
US DOL	The United States Department of Labor
USMAP	United Services Military Apprenticeship Program
WDA	Workforce Development Area

Internship	Meaning or Definition
FY	Fiscal Year
SFY	State Fiscal Year
TIC	Texas Internship Challenge
TWC	Texas Workforce Commission
TWC-VR	Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

SECTION ONE: APPRENTICESHIP OVERVIEW

As defined by DOL, apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway in which employers can develop and prepare their future workforce and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally recognized credential.¹

Individuals seeking apprenticeship opportunities are typically looking for opportunities to fast-track their career goals, avoid debt, and earn competitive wages. An apprentice is a full-time, paid employee who is compensated while he or she learns. Currently, Texas apprentices typically range in age from 18 to 52. Formal apprenticeship programs usually last about four years, depending on the employer or occupation, although they may last as little as 12 months or as many as five years. The length of apprenticeship programs may vary depending on the employer, complexity of the occupation, industry, and type of program.

High-quality apprenticeship programs include the following five core components²:

1. Paid Jobs—Provide apprentices with paid positions as they produce high-quality work while learning skills that enhance their employers' needs
2. On-the-Job Learning—Develops skilled workers through structured learning in a work setting
3. Classroom Learning—Improves job-related skills through education in a classroom setting (virtual or in-person)
4. Mentorship—Provides apprentices with the support of a skilled worker to assist and enhance critical hands-on learning
5. Credentials—Offers a portable, nationally recognized credential to be issued at the completion of the program

Employers with high-demand occupations have integrated industry-driven apprenticeship programs into their workforce development strategies to raise skill levels, prepare workers, and meet hiring needs. DOL OA recognizes leading industries that are adopting and adapting apprenticeship programs, including the following³:

¹ ["Apprenticeship," US DOL Office of Disability Employment Policy](#)

² ["Program Comparison," Apprenticeship.gov](#)

³ ["Apprenticeship Occupations," Apprenticeship.gov](#)

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Construction
- Energy
- Financial Services
- Health Care
- Hospitality
- Information Technology
- Telecommunications
- Transportation

DOL OA collects deidentified individual data from 48 states and the United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP) in the Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Management Data System (RAPIDS) and posts the collected data on its Data and Statistics web page.⁴ The Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Apprenticeship Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities sections of this inventory contain DOL OA data specific to Texas.⁵

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

A Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) is a type of apprenticeship program that enhances apprenticeships with high-quality standards and additional benefits. It is a proven model of apprenticeship that has been validated by DOL OA. Employers that successfully complete the DOL OA registration process earn the RAP distinction designating that their programs meet the national standards for quality and rigor and include the five core components. RAPs enable participating employers to create pipelines of skilled workers who have been trained for entry-level to management positions. RAPs also provide additional incentives for employers, including technical assistance, tax credits, access to federal funding and other resources, and recruiting incentives.⁶

Through Federal Fiscal Year 2022 (FFY'22) quarter two (Q2), there were 639 RAPs in Texas covering 108 target occupations. From 2016–2021, 65 new RAPs were developed in Texas because of collaboration between TWC's Office of Apprenticeship and employers, increasing the number of both RAP

⁴ ["FY 2020 Data and Statistics," US DOL Employment and Training Administration](#)

⁵ Complete data extract through FY 2022 Q1 may be downloaded at ["Apprenticeship Data Files," FY 2020 Data and Statistics, US DOL Employment and Training Administration](#)

⁶ ["Registered Apprenticeship Program," Apprenticeship.gov](#)

industries and high-demand occupational titles. Leading RAP industries in Texas align to DOL OA leading industries and are specific to our state's economic needs.

RAP industries include the following⁷:

- Accommodation and Food Services
- Administrative and Support Services
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- Construction
- Educational Services
- Finance and Insurance
- Government
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Information
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Manufacturing
- Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
- Other Services (except Public Administration)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
- Retail Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Utilities
- Wholesale Trade

A RAP sponsor is any employer, association, committee, or organization that operates a RAP. This entity assumes the full responsibility for administration and operation of the apprenticeship program. Sponsors may be a single business or a consortium of businesses. Community colleges and community-based organizations may also serve as RAP sponsors. Alternatively, the sponsor may be a workforce intermediary, such as an industry association, labor-management organization, or Local Workforce Development Board (Board).⁸

Through FFY'22 Q2, 26 of the 28 local workforce development areas (WDAs) across Texas had one or more RAPs based within their boundaries.

⁷ ["Explore Approved Occupations for Registered Apprenticeship," Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/explore-approved-occupations-for-registered-apprenticeship)

⁸ ["What is an apprenticeship program sponsor?," Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/what-is-an-apprenticeship-program-sponsor?)

Additionally, a RAP based in one WDA may work with individuals located in another WDA.

At registration, a RAP sponsor is not required to indicate whether it is a public or private entity. However, the sponsor does indicate its entity type as described above. The table below represents the types of RAP sponsors in Texas.

Sponsor Type	Count
Business Association	22
City/County Agency	6
Community Based Organization	22
Community College/University	32
Employer	254
Federal Agency	3
Foundation	4
Intermediary	21
State Agency	3
Union/Labor	19
Other	27
Unspecified	226
TOTAL CURRENT RAPs	639

APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Qualified individuals, including those with disabilities, may seek apprenticeship opportunities by applying directly with the employer or RAP sponsor. Apprentices with disabilities must meet the same qualifications and performance expectations as apprentices without disabilities. Reasonable accommodations may be provided to help an apprentice or applicant to meet the apprenticeship requirements, and RAP sponsors are prohibited from discriminating based on disability.

RAP sponsors with five or more apprentices are required to develop Affirmative Action programs and must invite applicants for apprenticeships, as well as current apprentices, to self-identify whether they have a

disability.⁹ If an apprentice has an obvious visible physical disability (that is, someone is blind or missing a limb) or if an apprentice requests a reasonable accommodation, a sponsor may include that person as an individual with a disability within its workforce analysis. Otherwise, a sponsor relies on self-identification to record disability status within its apprenticeship workforce. Sponsors are required to invite apprentices to update their disability status annually, as their statuses may change over time. Apprentices and applicants may choose not to identify their disability, and sponsors must not require individuals to do so.

Through FFY'22 Q2, DOL OA reported 24,207 active apprentices in Texas. Of these active apprentices, 264 indicated the presence of a disability. Because disclosure of a disability is completely voluntary, data representing apprentices identified as having a disability is likely underrepresented.

TWC Apprenticeships

For each fiscal year, TWC establishes performance targets with the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). One such target is the number of apprentices served through RAPs supported by TWC. LBB targets and final numbers for fiscal years 2019, 2020, and 2021 follow.

Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021
LBB Target	6,111	7,150	7,685
Number of Apprentices	6,393	6,810	6,625

While numbers of apprentices served dipped during the pandemic, it is expected that numbers will continue to increase as RAPs, businesses, and employers return to pre-pandemic operations. Early performance numbers for FY'22 and projections for FY'23 support this expectation.

TWC-VR and Apprenticeships

TWC-VR funding provides support for VR customers participating in apprenticeship training programs as part of a broad array of training and other services available to help VR customers meet their employment goals. VR services are guided by a customer's employment goal, consistent with

⁹ ["Which sponsors are required to have an Affirmative Action Program?," Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/which-sponsors-are-required-to-have-an-affirmative-action-program/)

the customer's strengths, resources, interests, and capabilities. If an eligible VR customer is interested in apprenticeship, the VR counselor will explore apprenticeship opportunities and requirements with the customer. The VR counselor will help the customer review those requirements to determine basic eligibility for the specific apprenticeship of interest.¹⁰

Explore Apprenticeships 2.0

In addition to supporting participation in apprenticeship training for adults with disabilities, TWC-VR offers Explore Apprenticeships 2.0 (EA 2.0), a semester-long pre-apprenticeship program launched in 2022. EA 2.0 provides in-depth career exploration to students with disabilities, ages 14-22, in various industries accessed through RAPs available at Dallas College and San Jacinto College. Students in the program receive industry-specific instruction, participate in workshops and hands-on activities, experience live demonstrations, visit work sites, and interact with professionals in the field. At the end of the semester, students have an opportunity to participate in paid work experience if they would like to further explore one of the industries they learned about.

In EA 2.0's first year, 22 students completed the program. Dallas College emphasized the industries of Construction and Trades, Information Technology and Robotics, Hospitality, Food Services, and Health Care. Ten students completed the program and were offered paid work experience in the industry in which they were most interested. San Jacinto College emphasized Information Technology, Health Care, Construction and Trades, Transportation, Aerospace, Petrochemical Engineering, and Maritime. Twelve students completed the program and were offered paid work experience opportunities. TWC-VR is identifying opportunities to expand the EA 2.0 model to other locations around the state.

APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING

TWC's apprenticeship work focuses primarily on the following two programs in the support of RAPs:

1. Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 133¹¹
2. DOL Expansion Grants

¹⁰ [Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Texas Workforce Commission](#)

¹¹ ["Chapter 133, Apprenticeship System of Adult Career and Technology Education," Texas Education Code](#)

TEC Chapter 133 Program

As authorized in TEC Chapter 133, TWC grants funds to local public educational institutions and apprenticeship committees to support the costs of related classroom instruction in registered apprenticeship training programs. Local education agencies (LEAs)—public school districts or state postsecondary institutions—and apprenticeship committees act as fiscal agents for registered apprenticeship training programs. To qualify for funds, apprenticeship training programs and apprentices must be registered with DOL OA.

The Texas legislature appropriates General Revenue funds for the support of apprenticeship training programs authorized under TEC Chapter 133. TWC allocates funds to sponsoring LEAs and independent apprenticeship committees that operate apprenticeship training programs.

Additionally, since Fiscal Year 2010 (FY'10), TWC has contributed more than \$1 million in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds each year to support the increasing number of apprentices receiving training. TWC also leverages other funding, such as Noncustodial Parent Choices funds, to maximize the funds available to support apprenticeship training.

Apprenticeship Operating Budget

Method of Funding Summary	2020 Budgeted	2021 Budgeted	2022 Budgeted
General Revenue Fund	\$3,347,784	\$3,732,785	\$3,732,785
TANF	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
WIA/WIOA	\$1,650,000	\$1,650,000	\$1,650,000
Total Apprenticeship Operating Budget	\$5,147,784	\$5,532,785	\$5,532,785

DOL Expansion Grants¹²

Since 2016, TWC has been awarded grants from DOL for the purposes of expanding existing RAPs, creating new RAPs, and serving underrepresented populations. In turn, TWC issues requests for applications (RFAs) to subgrant the funds to various applicants, including Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) and public community and technical colleges in Texas. Currently, TWC manages three expansion grants as follows:

- Apprenticeship State Expansion (2019–2023)
 - \$5.4 million awarded to TWC
 - Purpose: To increase the number of apprentices in RAPs; to ensure that apprenticeship is a viable career path for youth, adults, and career seekers and a valuable workforce development strategy for businesses; and to support and encourage RAP diversification
- State Apprenticeship Expansion (2020–2023)
 - \$9.45 million awarded to TWC
 - Purpose: To support activities that improve the state’s ability to serve, improve, and expand the RAP model by strengthening the national apprenticeship system, promoting system alignment and partnership, and improving data sharing and data integrity
- State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation (SAEEI) (2021–2025)
 - \$10 million awarded to TWC
 - Purpose: To bolster the state’s efforts to expand programming and inclusive recruitment strategies in order to attract a diverse workforce; to develop partnerships with new industries and nontraditional occupations, including industry sectors hardest hit by the pandemic; and to align Registered Apprenticeships with other work-based learning opportunities within state education and workforce systems
 - The majority of SAEEI funds have been dedicated to the statewide health care and critical skills apprenticeship initiatives

¹² ["Active Grants and Contracts," Apprenticeship.gov](#)

SECTION TWO: INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW

According to WIOA Guidelines,¹³ internships and work experience opportunities are planned, structured learning experiences that take place in a workplace for a limited period. An internship or work experience may be arranged within the private for-profit sector, the nonprofit sector, or the public sector. Internships and work experience may be paid or unpaid and are offered to students or youth and adult workers. Interns may range from high school and postsecondary students and recent graduates to veterans and adult learners who are transitioning into the workforce.

In FY'21, the ages of those who participated in internships and work experience ranged from 14 to 77; however, some opportunities may require a minimum age higher than 16. Internships and work experience are typically seasonal and often aligned with postsecondary education semesters—spring, summer, and fall—and may range from several weeks to several months.

Internship and work experience opportunities include the following:

- Internships or Employment Opportunities Not Limited to Summer Months
- Summer Employment or Summer Internship
- Pre-Apprenticeship
- Other Work Experience Opportunities

Internships can be mutually beneficial to employers and interns in several ways. Internships offer employers a workforce development strategy to recruit staff that possesses relevant interest and experience, explore talent, teach target occupation skill sets, and train candidates for full-time employment. Internships provide interns the opportunity to explore career pathways, gain professional work experience, develop target occupation skill sets, and become more competitive in the labor market in order to increase employability.

¹³ ["Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Guidelines for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth," Texas Workforce Commission](#)

INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Qualified individuals, including those with disabilities, may seek internship opportunities by applying directly with employers. Interns with disabilities must meet the same qualifications and performance expectations as interns without disabilities. Reasonable accommodations may be provided to help an intern or applicant to meet internship requirements. Employers are prohibited from discriminating based on disability. Like RAP sponsors, employers who offer internships rely on self-identification as the method for documenting disability status within its internship workforce. Although interns are not required to disclose their disability status, they may choose to disclose their status at any point in the employment process.

Individuals with disabilities may participate in internship opportunities available through all WIOA programs as well as those specifically available to individuals with disabilities through TWC-VR, which is funded under WIOA Title IV. Boards and their contractors provide employment and training programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth, as funded under WIOA Title I. In FY'21, 2,650 participants were provided TWC-funded services with internships and work experience opportunities. Of these, 553 participants indicated the presence of a disability. Of the 553 individuals with a disability, 208 of them obtained employment upon completion of the internship program and/or work experience.¹⁴

TWC-VR customers have a wide array of paid or unpaid internship and work experience opportunities. Work experience services are available for students or youth with disabilities and adult customers who would benefit from work experience to gain employment skills and develop their work history and are intended to be short-term (12 or fewer weeks) and part-time activities. Work experience services allow a customer to be placed at a business or agency within the community to learn skills for long-term competitive integrated employment (CIE).

A VR customer may participate in several work experience placements if multiple placements are deemed necessary to help the customer achieve his or her employment goals.¹⁵ In FY'21, VR internship and work experience placements took place across 344 for-profit and 78 nonprofit employers,

¹⁴ Accessed from The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) for all 28 WDAs

¹⁵ ["C-421: Work Experience Services," Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual, Texas Workforce Commission](#)

with an additional 69 employers who did not identify their status. Additionally, 4,437 VR customers in FY'21 participated in work experiences, and 1,178 of those participants obtained employment upon completion of their work experiences. VR internship and work experience placements are ongoing and occur in coordination with other VR services needed by the participant in order to achieve their employment goal. In addition, some internship opportunities are provided in the form of work-based learning in cohorts, such as Summer Earn and Learn, Project SEARCH, and group skills training programs for students, and Skills to Employment Projects for adults.

Summer Earn and Learn and Project SEARCH

Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL) and Project SEARCH are examples of VR-funded programs that provide internship and work-based learning opportunities to students with disabilities. Known as Pre-Employment Transition Services, or Pre-ETS, these programs are designed to support students with disabilities, ages 14-22, with career exploration counseling, work readiness training, counseling on post-secondary (college) opportunities, work-based learning experiences, and self-advocacy instruction. Students who participate in SEAL exit high school and/or college with a foundation of knowledge related to career pathways and occupations aligned to their strengths, resources, interests, and capabilities.

The SEAL program provides students with disabilities work-readiness training and paid work experience during the summer months. The program is a partnership between TWC-VR and TWC's 28 WDAs. In 2021, more than 2,000 students participated in SEAL, where they connected with employers including Texas Tech University's Lubbock Lake Landmark, the Humane Society of Central Texas, and Bedford Movie Tavern. More specifically, 2,462 students completed work readiness training. Of those, 2,147 students were placed on a worksite and 1,631 students completed the 5-week site work experience.

Project SEARCH is a well-established and nationally recognized internship model that consistently achieves successful outcomes for VR customers who are 5th year high school students or students enrolled in the ISD's 18+ Special Education Program, ages 18-22. Project SEARCH is an innovative, business-led, one-year school to work international model that features partnerships among businesses (employers), local independent school districts (ISDs), employment service providers, and other entities that serve individuals with disabilities. Project SEARCH promotes the successful long-

term employment of students with disabilities in jobs that are stable, meaningful, integrated, and competitively compensated. TWC-VR, along with its ISD and employer partners, has 30 active Project SEARCH sites across Texas.

Project SEARCH programs take place in a business setting where total immersion in the workplace facilitates teaching and learning and enables enrolled students with disabilities to develop competitive, marketable, and transferable skills that increase their employability. Each VR customer may participate in three internships during the academic year to explore a variety of career pathways. Employment planning meetings are held twice per internship for each VR customer to discuss employment goals and progress on skill development. The customer's team, which includes family and partnering agencies, helps the customer create an employment goal and supports the customer's transition from school to work. For the 2020–2021 school year, 174 VR participants completed the Project SEARCH program statewide, and 138 of those obtained employment upon completion of the program.

Skills to Employment Projects

Skills Training to Employment Projects (STEP) is a newly developed VR-funded program that develops employer partnerships to provide work-based learning opportunities leading to employment for adults with disabilities. Launched in FY'22, TWC VR is collaborating with employers and VR-contracted employment service providers (ESPs) to provide work skills training and employment opportunities to cohorts of 3-6 adult VR customers who are interested in obtaining employment in positions available with a host employer. STEP participants receive vocational adjustment training and paid work experience for up to 12 weeks, after which they may be hired by the host employer. Current STEP sites include McLane Corporation, Walgreens Distribution Center, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, University of Texas Health in Tyler, Caterpillar, Enterprise Holdings, and Harris Health Systems. Additional STEP sites are being developed with the City of San Antonio and Bed Bath & Beyond Distribution Center. To date, 33 VR customers have completed a STEP assignment and 7 are currently participating at a STEP site assignment.

INTERNSHIP FUNDING

Providing valuable work experience, internships are one example of the numerous services available through WIOA-funded programs. Funding for programs authorized under WIOA Titles I–III is provided in part through grants received from the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA). These funds are designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and also help match employers with the skilled workers that they need in order to compete in the global economy. TWC administers WIOA funding in Texas and provides services through its 28 Boards, their contractors, and community partners. The funding for various WIOA services provided by Boards comes from a combination of state and federal funding distributed through various TWC programs.¹⁶

TWC’s VR program, authorized under WIOA Title IV, is funded through a grant from the US Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration. VR funding helps eligible individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in CIE. VR services include physical and mental restoration services, postsecondary education and training, rehabilitation technology and assistive technology, employment, and self-employment services, and preemployment transition services for students with disabilities.

Texas Talent Connection Internship Grants

The Texas Talent Connection Internship Grants program is funded by Wagner-Peyser 7(b) federal funds.¹⁷ These funds are allocated to each state’s Office of the Governor on July 1 of each year for grants to fund workforce training and job placement services. In collaboration with the Office of the Governor and the Texas Workforce Investment Council, TWC awards program grants to Boards so that Boards can create opportunities for high school or community and technical college students to earn class credit, industry-based certifications, and on-the-job experience through work-based internships in middle-skill Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) occupations across a range of industries. Grant recipients offer internships that provide training for in-demand positions that pay a living wage, such as medical technicians, network support specialists, engineering

¹⁶ ["Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)," Texas Workforce Commission](#)

¹⁷ ["Texas Talent Connection Grant Program," Office of the Governor](#)

technicians, quality control technicians, welders, and more. In SFY'22, there are four Boards and Foster Youth Transition centers participating in the program.

SECTION THREE: PROMOTING APPRENTICESHIP AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

TWC remains strategic and forward thinking in its commitment to promoting and expanding apprenticeship and internship opportunities that provide a pipeline of skilled talent to meet employer needs. In promoting these opportunities, TWC focuses on creating programs and platforms to connect talented young people and adults with industry-leading employers around the state. These valuable connections give employers the opportunity to recruit work-ready job seekers they can train to enter a pipeline of skilled workers in target occupations. Job seekers are able to explore career pathways, gain skill sets and credentials in target occupations, and increase their labor market value and ability to earn higher wages.

Specifically, the TWC and its Texas workforce system partners promote apprenticeship and internship opportunities through various means such as TWC and Board social media channels (for example, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram), press releases to media outlets, Commissioner and program-initiated events and presentations, and Education Outreach team specialists. One such partner, the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC), through its Apprenticeship and Training Advisory Committee (ATAC), promotes apprenticeship programs by producing an apprenticeship brochure for students, employers, and local education agencies to increase program awareness. A representative of TWC VR also serves on the ATAC, providing information on the VR program and opportunities to connect VR participants to registered apprenticeship.

Additionally, Disability Transition Navigators work directly with ISDs to present programs and services to students via in-person and virtual presentations and career exploration opportunities; print and electronic posters and flyers disseminated to schools, students, and parents; and youth career exploration events hosted by Boards in conjunction with ISDs and colleges, community colleges, and universities. TWC also focuses on reaching employers through social media outlets, events, and outreach initiatives designed to encourage more employers to offer apprenticeship and paid internship programs.

Jobs Y'all

In 2018, TWC launched the youth-oriented career exploration site [Jobs Y'all](#), which offers information about high-demand industries and occupations in Texas. Jobs Y'all connects users to TWC career tools such as Texas Reality Check, Texas Career Check, and Texas Internship Challenge (TIC), as well as to other initiatives happening around the state. In FY'23, more landing pages will be added to the site to provide more opportunities and specific information about the following topics:

- Apprenticeships
- Internships
- Internships for Students with Disabilities
- Foster Youth
- Military Youth

ApprenticeshipTexas Conference

TWC will host the 6th annual [ApprenticeshipTexas Conference](#) this fall. This conference supports a diverse group of employers, workforce development partners, and educational institutions to learn how apprenticeships can strengthen their business, industry, and the Texas workforce. Those in attendance have the opportunity to engage in sessions that will support their goals of creating or expanding registered apprenticeship programs. Increasing the availability and innovation of RAPs in Texas will increase the apprenticeship opportunities students have to develop a career in an industry leading, high-demand occupation.

Healthcare Apprenticeship Initiative

TWC has dedicated \$15 million in funding to support the high-demand healthcare industry develop and expand registered apprenticeship program opportunities for registered nurses and healthcare professionals. This initiative is designed to offer employers an innovative approach to hiring and training future nurses and healthcare staff by expanding opportunities for students who wish to pursue career pathways to RN certification and other healthcare fields.

Critical Skills Apprenticeship Initiative

TWC has dedicated \$4 million in funding to support the development and expansion of registered apprenticeship program opportunities in industry leading, high-demand occupations that require individuals with specific middle skills. This initiative is designed to meet the increasing employment demand in the following key industry areas:

- automotive service technicians and mechanics
- production machinists, assemblers, and fabricators
- logistics management and supply chain analysts

Texas Internship Challenge

As part of the Tri-Agency Initiative challenging industry and employer partners to offer more paid internships for Texas students, TIC was established following a recommendation from TWC, the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to the Office of the Governor. TIC allows TWC, TEA, and THECB, in conjunction with workforce partners, to raise awareness of internship programs and encourage registration and participation by employers and our state's young workforce. TIC's [website](#) lists employer internship positions and provides information on the internship application process. In 2021, 223 opportunities were listed on TIC's site. In addition to offering free access to internship postings available throughout the state, the site meets accessibility guidelines, offers preference hiring for veterans, and supports both technical and nontechnical positions. TIC also provides a supportive employer registration process for employers interested in posting internships and hiring Texas students.¹⁸ Internship information and resources for students and employers can also be found on [TWC's TIC page](#).

Texas Interns Unite!

TWC's [Texas Interns Unite!](#) was launched during an outreach event to celebrate National Intern Day in summer 2022. This initiative is linked to the Texas Internship Challenge and was created in partnership with THECB and the Texas Working Off-Campus: Reinforcing Knowledge and Skills Internship Program (TXWORKS). Texas Interns Unite! connects interns across the state with Texas employers and each other. Employers and interns can network

¹⁸ ["Texas Internship Challenge," Texas Workforce Commission](#)

and connect on this digital platform by joining Texas Interns Unite! on LinkedIn to receive updates, news, and possible internship opportunities.

Tri-Agency Partner Promotion of Apprenticeships and Internships

In April 2022, the THECB awarded \$4.8 million in grant funding to 23 Texas higher education institutions. The grants are designed to help Texas college students access apprenticeship and internship opportunities to strengthen the education to workforce pipeline, drive student opportunity, and advance the state's economic competitiveness. The awards are part of two programs: the Work-based Learning Opportunity Grants –Internships and Work-based Learning Opportunity Grants –Apprenticeships.

Conclusion

Apprenticeship and internship programs provide valuable opportunities for job seekers and employers in leading industries with high-demand occupations across Texas. While some opportunities are specific to individuals with disabilities, individuals with disabilities can participate in any apprenticeship or internship opportunity for which they qualify. TWC is committed to providing apprenticeship and internship opportunities to all job seekers, including those with disabilities, and offers VR customers with services specifically for individuals with disabilities.

Profiles

VR has identified a registered apprenticeship program that is strongly inclusive of individuals with disabilities and an internship program that highlights employer commitment to inclusion of individuals with disabilities. Adaptive Construction Solutions, in the Gulf Coast WDA, and The Arc of Capital Area - Autism Assets @ Work, in the Capital Area WDA, are profiled below.

Adaptive Construction Solutions (ACS)

ACS¹⁹ is a service-connected, disabled veteran-owned and -staffed company in Houston, Texas, that strives to recruit, train, and place military veterans into skilled trade professions across Texas. ACS uses the DOL RAP model to help employers recruit, train, and retain veterans and other underrepresented populations such as individuals with disabilities. Founded by veterans with disabilities, ACS has worked to include individuals with disabilities in its apprenticeship programs. The ACS RAP, which includes 34 signatory employers hiring in multiple occupations in several industries, hired 551 apprentices in Texas from October 1, 2017, to September 30, 2021. Signatory employers represent a broad cross section of construction, manufacturing, energy, transportation, telecommunications, and other industries. Of the 551 apprentices enrolled by ACS, 110 self-identified as having a disability.

ACS reports that its success is due to the combination of an effective strategy to gain employer commitment, a well-organized team of workforce development professionals, and engaged system partners. By communicating a clear business case for apprenticeship expansion, ACS's employer engagement strategy resulted in employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, veterans, individuals experiencing homelessness, foster youth, and other underrepresented populations. ACS received the HIRE Vets Platinum Medallion from DOL in 2019, 2020, and 2021 for employing, training, and retaining veterans. In 2021, ACS was recognized by TWC as a We Hire Ability employer for hiring individuals with disabilities and creating an inclusive workforce.

¹⁹ [Adaptive Construction Solutions](#)

The Arc of the Capital Area—Autism Assets @ Work

The Arc's Autism Assets @ Work program is a two-week training program that prepares individuals on the autism spectrum to work in the IT industry. At the end of the training, some participants are offered paid internships that could lead to full-time employment. The Arc of the Capital Area²⁰ partners with TWC-VR and Dell Technologies on the Autism Assets @ Work program. The purpose of the program is to enhance participants' skills and networks and help them build résumés. Participants are trained in soft skills, including social communication, collaboration, and managing emotions. They also engage in team projects that will be presented to staff and executives at Dell Computer Technology in Round Rock, Texas. In SFY'21, 13 VR participants participated, and six participants were hired by Dell. For more information about the program, visit [Autism Assets @ Work](#).

²⁰ [The Arc of the Capital Area](#)

Appendix: List of Apprenticeship and Internship Programs for Individuals with Disabilities

The table beginning on the following page provides a list of opportunities specifically for students and adults with disabilities. These opportunities are cohort based and are a subset of all opportunities available to individuals with disabilities, as described in the narrative section of the report.

Program Name ²¹	Program Type	Population Served	Employers/Host Sites	Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA)	Age Range	Funding Source	Program Length	Entity Type	Completed Program
Apprenticeship 2.0	Pre-apprenticeship	Students	Dallas College	Greater Dallas	14-22	TWC-VR	Semester	Public	10
Apprenticeship 2.0	Pre-apprenticeship	Students	San Jacinto College	Gulf Coast	14-22	TWC-VR	Semester	Public	12
Extended Pre-Transition Camp at Texas School for the Deaf	Internship	Students	9 Employer Sites	Capital Area	18-22	TWC-VR	4 weeks	Both	10
Job Opportunities for Blind Students (JOBS)	Internship	Students	9 Employer Sites	Capital Area	14-22	TWC-VR	3 weeks	Private	12
Project Search	Internship	Students	Ascension Seton Hays	Rural Capital Area	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	5
Project Search	Internship	Students	Ascension Seton Northwest	Capital Area	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	5
Project Search	Internship	Students	Ascension Seton Williamson	Rural Capital Area	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	8
Project Search	Internship	Students	Baylor Scott and White Medical Center Lakeway	Capital Area	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	2
Project Search	Internship	Students	Baylor Scott and White Healthcare	Brazos Valley	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	1
Project Search	Internship	Students	Baylor Scott and White Healthcare - College Station	Brazos Valley	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	9
Project Search	Internship	Students	Children's Hospital of San Antonio	Alamo	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	8
Project Search	Internship	Students	CHRISTUS Trinity Mother Frances Health System	Deep East Texas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	8
Project Search	Internship	Students	Cintas	Tarrant County	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	10
Project Search	Internship	Students	City of Garland	Greater Dallas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Public	9
Project Search	Internship	Students	Dell Seton Medical Center at the UT of Austin	Capital Area	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	3
Project Search	Internship	Students	Dow Chemical	Gulf Coast	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	10
Project Search	Internship	Students	Dow Chemical	Golden Crescent	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	New Site

²¹ Program information reflects the 21-22 academic school year and 2021 summer program events

Program Name ²¹	Program Type	Population Served	Employers/Host Sites	Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA)	Age Range	Funding Source	Program Length	Entity Type	Completed Program
Project Search	Internship	Students	Embassy Suites Dallas - Frisco Hotel	North Central Texas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	9
Project Search	Internship	Students	Epiroc	Greater Dallas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	7
Project Search	Internship	Students	Gaylord Texas Resort and Convention Center	Tarrant County	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	7
Project Search	Internship	Students	Highland Springs Retirement Community Center	Greater Dallas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	8
Project Search	Internship	Students	Houston Dow Center	Gulf Coast	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	7
Project Search	Internship	Students	Kalahari Resorts	Rural Capital Area	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	New Site
Project Search	Internship	Students	Northwest Texas Hospital	Panhandle	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	7
Project Search	Internship	Students	Providence Hospital East	Borderplex	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	7
Project Search	Internship	Students	Renaissance Dallas Richardson	Greater Dallas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	New Site
Project Search	Internship	Students	SanMar Corporation	Greater Dallas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	7
Project Search	Internship	Students	Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center	Brazos Valley	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	New Site
Project Search	Internship	Students	Texas Children's Health Plan	Gulf Coast	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	12
Project Search	Internship	Students	Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas	Greater Dallas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	10
Project Search	Internship	Students	Texas Health Resources	North Central Texas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	6
Project Search	Internship	Students	The City of Lewisville	North Central Texas	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Public	9
Project Search	Internship	Students	The Hospitals of Providence	Borderplex	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	0
Project Search	Internship	Students	United Healthcare	Gulf Coast	18-22	TWC-VR	9 months	Private	New Site
SEAL	Internship	Students	33 Employer Sites	Panhandle	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	35
SEAL	Internship	Students	37 Employer Sites	South Plains	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	64
SEAL	Internship	Students	20 Employer Sites	North Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	22
SEAL	Internship	Students	96 Employer Sites	North Central Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	163
SEAL	Internship	Students	42 Employer Sites	Tarrant County	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	70
SEAL	Internship	Students	12 Employer Sites	Greater Dallas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Private	45
SEAL	Internship	Students	25 Employer Sites	Northeast Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	28
SEAL	Internship	Students	34 Employer Sites	East Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	41

Program Name ²¹	Program Type	Population Served	Employers/Host Sites	Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA)	Age Range	Funding Source	Program Length	Entity Type	Completed Program
SEAL	Internship	Students	12 Employer Sites	West Central Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	17
SEAL	Internship	Students	51 Employer Sites	Borderplex	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	89
SEAL	Internship	Students	23 Employer Sites	Permian Basin	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	35
SEAL	Internship	Students	11 Employer Sites	Concho Valley	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	14
SEAL	Internship	Students	16 Employer Sites	Heart of Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	29
SEAL	Internship	Students	26 Employer Sites	Capital Area	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Private	107
SEAL	Internship	Students	60 Employer Sites	Rural Capital	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	109
SEAL	Internship	Students	23 Employer Sites	Brazos Valley	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	29
SEAL	Internship	Students	19 Employer Sites	Deep East Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	21
SEAL	Internship	Students	39 Employer Sites	Southeast Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	43
SEAL	Internship	Students	20 Employer Sites	Golden Crescent	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	29
SEAL	Internship	Students	64 Employer Sites	Alamo	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	165
SEAL	Internship	Students	14 Employer Sites	South Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	32
SEAL	Internship	Students	19 Employer Sites	Coastal Bend	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	39
SEAL	Internship	Students	78 Employer Sites	Lower Rio Grande Valley	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	99
SEAL	Internship	Students	23 Employer Sites	Cameron County	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	47
SEAL	Internship	Students	25 Employer Sites	Texoma	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	26
SEAL	Internship	Students	35 Employer Sites	Central Texas	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	48
SEAL	Internship	Students	21 Employer Sites	Middle Rio Grande	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	28
SEAL	Internship	Students	217 Employer Sites	Gulf Coast	14-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Both	157
STEP	Internship	Adults	Bed Bath & Beyond Distribution Center	North Central	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Public	New Site
STEP	Internship	Adults	Caterpillar	Heart of Texas	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Public	7 ²²
STEP	Internship	Adults	City of San Antonio	Alamo	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Public	New Site
STEP	Internship	Adults	Enterprise Holdings, Inc. IAH	Gulf Coast	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Private	2 ²³

²² 3 customers completed the program, and 4 customers are participating in the current cohort

²³ 2 customers are participating in the current cohort

Program Name ²¹	Program Type	Population Served	Employers/Host Sites	Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA)	Age Range	Funding Source	Program Length	Entity Type	Completed Program
STEP	Internship	Adults	Harris Health Systems	Gulf Coast	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Public	12
STEP	Internship	Adults	McLane Distribution Center	South Plains	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Private	1 ²⁴
STEP	Internship	Adults	University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	Lower Rio Grande Valley	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Public	4
STEP	Internship	Adults	University of Texas Tyler Medical Center	East Texas	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Public	2
STEP	Internship	Adults	Walgreens Distribution Center	North Central	18 and up	TWC-VR	12 weeks	Public	5
Summer Work Experience in Austin, TX (SWEAT)	Internship	Students with VI	Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI)	Capital Area	16-22	TWC-VR	4 weeks	Public	7
Work-Based Learning Initiative (A&M)	Internship	Students	25 School Sites	Multiple LWDAs	14-22	TWC-VR	School year	Public	New Sites
Work and College Opportunities (WACO) Program at Texas A&M	Internship	Students	10 Employer Sites	Brazos Valley ²⁵	18-22	TWC-VR	5 weeks	Private	28
Work and Living in the Community (WALIC)	Internship	Students with VI	Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI)	Capital Area	16-22	TWC-VR	4 weeks	Public	7

²⁴ 1 customer is participating in the current cohort

²⁵ Referrals are submitted from across the state



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