

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TWC Targets \$200,000 in DOL Funds for Job Training Initiatives to Serve Hurricane Victims in Texas

AUSTIN – On the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) earmarked \$200,000 in U.S. Department of Labor funds to help hurricane evacuees still in need of job training. The initiative targets job development and placement in areas with either high densities of Hurricane Katrina evacuees or those directly impacted by Hurricane Rita.

“Texas offers a world-class workforce system that has provided training and employment solutions to thousands still struggling to rebuild their lives,” said TWC Chair Diane Rath. “With these continued training initiatives and outreach of local workforce development boards, even greater numbers will be served and better prepared to join the workforce.”

In the past 12 months, TWC has distributed more than \$139 million for hurricane assistance, including \$88.4 million in National Emergency Grants, \$30.7 million in Child Care funds, and \$12.9 million to individuals eligible for Food Stamp and Employment Training.

More than 61,600 Hurricane Katrina evacuees have utilized TWC’s online job-matching system, WorkInTexas.com, or visited workforce centers across Texas. Of these, 40 percent or 24,677 are now reemployed. The Hurricane Rita numbers are even higher – more than 75 percent or 16,536 of the 22,206 Hurricane Rita registrants are now reemployed.

WorkInTexas.com currently has more than 54,000 job openings listed. Job matches in the system include virtually all occupations and industries: office jobs, professional jobs, nurses and nursing assistants, information technology, retail, truck drivers, accountants, electricians, managers and supervisors, paralegals and legal assistants, medical secretaries and teachers, among others. The additional funding for job training will help those eager to move into a variety of professions.

“Targeted training initiatives help fuel the state’s job growth by supplying employers with a skilled and ready workforce,” said Commissioner Representing Employers Ron Lehman. “We’re eager to help employers in high-demand industries strengthen their workforce capacities.”

Evacuees currently are receiving training in a variety of occupations, including clerical, computers, accounting, health and dental care, mechanic engineering, construction, equipment operators and truck driving, among others. Through the state’s local workforce centers, evacuees continue to tap many essential resources such as crisis counseling, financial aid, child care and career support services, including help with résumé preparation and honing skills for job interviews.

“The Texas Workforce System has helped a tremendous number of workers get back on solid footing in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita,” said Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton. “It’s a great tribute to the health of the Texas labor market.”

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.

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