

PRESS RELEASE

Layoffs for Approximately 50 Workforce Center Employees Due to Funding Cuts

Kilgore, TX, October 22, 2009: Workforce Solutions East Texas (WSET) will be laying off approximately 50 staff members in the fourteen county East Texas region due to funding cuts. The agency's state and federal funding has been reduced over the past two years (see below). WSET was able to temporarily delay layoffs with additional resources and requirements that had to be met with the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (AARA) in order to serve the immediate need of clients with the downturn of the economy. AARA funding is exclusively short term and the agency is now experiencing the realities of the budget shortfall.

This shortfall will affect approximately 50 of 125 employees of WSET's sub-contractor Arbor E&T, LLC which operates the Workforce Center offices in East Texas. Employees experiencing layoffs will be offered up to 2 hours of release time during work each day for job search. They will also be offered rapid response services, training on building resumes and interviewing, job referrals and job training if eligible.

Workforce Solutions Operating Budget (Arbor E&T, LLC)		
FY 2010	\$6,792,962	Reduction of \$826,560
FY 2009	\$7,619,522	
FY 2009	\$7,619,522	Reduction of \$1,009,225
FY 2008	\$8,628,747	

"The best thing we can do is offer exceptional service knowing we understand what an individual is going through who may lose their job," said Workforce Center System Director, Sandra Taylor. "Although we will lose valuable team members, we intend to provide residents of the East Texas Area the same high quality of service as we have in the past."

For more information you may contact Randy Fowler in the Tyler WSET office at 903.561.8131, Sandra Taylor in the Longview WSET office at 903.758.1783, or ETCOG Executive Director David Cleveland at 903.808.7559.

About Workforce Solutions East Texas

It is the mission of the Workforce Solutions East Texas Board to improve the quality of life in this area through economic development by providing a first-class workforce for present and future businesses. The Board works in partnership with chief elected officials of the region and is the primary source of local workforce policy. The Workforce Solutions East Texas Board is one of 28 local Workforce Solutions Boards located throughout the state. The board serves Henderson, Van Zandt, Rains, Wood, Upshur, Camp, Marion, Harrison, Panola, Gregg, Rusk, Cherokee, Anderson and Smith counties. The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) serves as the administrating agency of the Workforce Solutions East Texas Board.