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**WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS  
EAST TEXAS BOARD**



# PRESS RELEASE

## Texas Workforce Commission Awards Workforce Solutions East Texas for Exemplary Performance and Service to Community

*\$150,000 partnered with awards*

**Kilgore, TX, December 11, 2008:** The Workforce Solutions East Texas Board was honored by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) with a \$100,000 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Exemplary Award for exemplary performance in serving those who qualify for assistance under WIA. WIA funds programs for dislocated workers, and disadvantaged adults and youth. Core services including job-search and placement assistance, access to labor market information and eligibility determination for additional WIA-funded services, are available to all Texans under WIA. The TWC exemplary performance award recognizes boards that display increased accountability and improved efficiencies.

Workforce Solutions East Texas also received the Service to Community Award and \$50,000 for its workforce efforts with the Alternative Incarceration Center (AIC) of Smith County. The award recognizes a local workforce development board that has demonstrated a commitment to its community through local coordination and collaboration efforts that have significantly improved services through the Texas Workforce System.

The AIC of Smith County is a day reporting center which focuses on nonviolent offenders who would have been sentenced to a prison or jail term. These individuals are given the opportunity to be released from jail with the mandatory requirement to participate in activities which create a career path. Once enrolled into the AIC program, they must report to the County courthouse and complete a daily itinerary by attending job skills training and job referrals through Job Club, a program administered by Workforce Solutions East Texas on a fee for service basis two days per week to assist these individuals with job readiness skills. Through the program, individuals who would be in jail that meet pre-determined qualifications are able to return to society by providing income to their families, and paying child support and fines that they owe. The AIC is a joint effort between the Smith County Council of District Judges, Council of County at Law Judges, Smith County Commissioners Court, the local business community, and Workforce Solutions East Texas office in Tyler.

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The program has served 746 individuals since its inception in 2007. This has saved approximately \$1.8 million in inmate housing costs, which are estimated to be \$43 per day per inmate. Follow-ups conducted for those who have completed the AIC program, show an 82 percent success rate after six months.

For more information contact Workforce Solutions East Texas staff director, Wendell Holcombe at (903)984-8641 ext. 254 or (903)742-3270.

**About the Workforce Solutions East Texas Board**

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. Rusty Basham serves as the Workforce Solutions East Texas Board chair and Tony Cain serves as vice chair. 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.

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