

PRESS RELEASE

53 Early Childhood Educators Graduate, Receive Accreditation Next Week

Tyler, TX, July 10, 2015: Workforce Solutions East Texas (WSET) in partnership with Champions for Children will host a graduation for 53 child care professionals receiving their Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential next week. The CDA Credential is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education and is a key stepping stone on the path of career advancement in early childhood education. The graduation will be held Tuesday, July 14, from 6:30 PM -8:30 PM at Wise Auditorium on the main campus of Tyler Junior College.

The CDA Credential is based on a core set of competency standards, which guide early care professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children. CDA Credentials are issued by the national agency, The Council for Professional Recognition, and works to ensure that the nationally-transferable CDA is a credible and valid credential, recognized by the profession as a vital part of professional development.

To receive their CDA Credential, early childhood professionals must complete a professional resource portfolio, testing and a verification (observation) visit from a CDA Professional Development Specialist. The CDA Credential is based upon ensuring the following competencies of those who obtain certification:

- Establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment
- Advance physical and intellectual competence
- Support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance
- Establish positive and productive relationships with families
- Ensure a well-run, purposeful program that is responsive to participants needs
- Maintain a commitment to professionalism

'Most individuals receiving CDA instructions receive instructions on-line or in a classroom setting and complete the portfolio on their own,' said ETCOG Director of Workforce & Economic Development, Doug Shryock. 'This class sponsored by the Workforce Solutions East Texas Board not only included classroom instruction but also assistance in the creation of their portfolio, mentoring and the issuance of homework for any class not attended. The high percentage of those credentialed is a direct result of the holistic approach to CDA training Workforce Solutions East Texas provided.'

This graduating class consisted of students ranging from 20 to 88 years old, who are responsible for serving over 1200 children in the East Texas area. Some students traveled over an hour each way, a night each week, and every other Saturday to receive training. The students are from the following counties in East Texas:

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| Gregg | 11 |
| Harrison | 3 |
| Smith | 28 |
| Upshur | 6 |
| Van Zandt | 5 |

Workforce Solutions East Texas sponsored each of the 53 graduates through Texas Workforce Commission Child Care Quality Funds, offering the CDA training to staff of existing Texas Rising Star (TRS) Providers. The revised TRS

guidelines emphasize the importance of professional growth and development. Child care providers receive a numerical evaluation for staff who have Bachelors or Associate degrees related to childcare, as well as Child Development Associate credentials and education related to child care. Therefore, WSET elected to sponsor the CDA training in an effort to assist existing TRS Providers achieve certification under the new guidelines. The goal of the Board is to have 60% of all subsidized child care providers certified as TRS Providers in 5 years. For more information, contact ETCOG's Workforce & Economic Development Director, Doug Shryock, at (903) 218-6425.

History of Child Development Associate Credentialing Program

In the early 1970s, a group of innovative early childhood educators gathered together to think about how to improve the quality of early care and education. The concept for the CDA credential was born out of those meetings and was initially funded by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF). After several years of development, the first CDA was awarded in 1975. Over the years the Credentialing Program has expanded to serve early childhood teachers in all types of settings. To date, over 300,000 CDA credentials have been awarded, with approximately 18,000 early childhood professionals becoming new CDAs annually.

About Texas Rising Star

The Texas Rising Star program is a voluntary, quality-based child care rating system of child care providers participating in the Texas Workforce Commission's subsidized child care program. A Texas Rising Star provider is a child care provider that has an agreement to serve Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)-subsidized children and that voluntarily meets requirements that exceed the State's Minimum Child Care Licensing Standards.

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.