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PRESS RELEASE

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PATHS for Texas Program Drives Economic Growth in Key Sectors Across Texas *Customized Training Increased Quarterly Earnings for North Texas Residents by 14% on Average*

WICHITA FALLS, Texas – Workforce Solutions North Texas is proud to reveal results of the Pursuit of Advanced Training in High-Demand Skills (PATHS) for Texas program, an innovative workforce development initiative designed to address critical skills gaps in key industries through public, private, and philanthropic collaboration, which was made possible with a \$5.4 million grant from Walmart.

PATHS for Texas reached over 2,500 Texans, helping build skills, boost confidence, and, in many cases, secure promotions. Over the five years the program ran from 2020 to 2025, 92% (2,329 workers) of participants completed training and earned one or more certificates. Certificate earners increased quarterly earnings by 21% (\$8,501 to \$10,277) and increased employment by 5.5% (from 73.3% to 77.3%).

Workforce Solutions North Texas enrolled a total of 179 participants in the Wichita Falls area, which resulted in 117 certificates earned in top industries, including Healthcare, IT, and Truck Driving. PATHS had a significant impact on our region with an increase of quarterly earnings from \$8,004 to \$9,140.

“The PATHS program significantly benefited North Texas thanks to funding from the Walmart Foundation. This investment allowed us to support the training needs of individuals ineligible for our other programs, broadening our reach to those who earn too much to qualify for government assistance but too little to invest in career development. For instance, Wichita County workers avoided job loss by receiving essential training to meet new licensing requirements for CDL holders. Even for someone who is working, training costs - like a \$4,000 CDL course - can still be a huge barrier to career progress. Programs like this can be life changing,” said Kendra Ball, Business and Outreach Manager for WSNT.

With prior experience managing privately funded initiatives, Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas facilitated planning, promoted effective data collection, and ensured accountability while the Texas Workforce Investment Council served as strategic partner from the state level. Four Texas workforce boards implemented the PATHS for Texas program in their areas, reaching both rural and urban communities across the state: Workforce Solutions Coastal Bend, Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast, Workforce Solutions North Texas, and Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area.

PATHS for Texas enrolled and trained more than two times the program’s original goal for participant numbers and more than three times for certificate completions, resulting in an average cost per learner of \$1,697 and extending the funds to serve more people.

“The PATHS program has been instrumental for improving employment outcomes in communities across Texas and has created a sustainable model for collaboration across regions to improve workforce development that benefits individuals, employers, and the state’s economy,” said Kaki Leyens, Executive Director of the Texas Workforce Investment Council.

PATHS for Texas stands out for funding workforce training in key sectors essential to the economy but not traditionally covered by federal workforce programs, including hospitality, skilled trades, and retail. By equipping job seekers with industry-recognized credentials that align with employer needs in these high-demand industries, PATHS made a positive impact on earnings and employment, skills progression and career advancement, and, ultimately, economic growth and prosperity in each workforce board area.

Visit <https://ntxworksolutions.org/paths-for-texas-program> watch a video and view the full report and white paper on the program.

About Philanthropy at Walmart

Walmart.org represents the philanthropic efforts of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation. By focusing where the business has unique strengths, Walmart.org works to tackle key social and environmental issues and collaborate with others to spark long-lasting systemic change. To learn more, visit www.walmart.org or connect on X @Walmartorg.

About Texas Workforce Investment Council

The Texas Workforce Investment Council assists the Governor and the Texas Legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce system to promote the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce for Texas. The Council’s appointed members represent business and industry, organized labor, education, and community-based organizations. Ex officio members include the Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Education Agency, Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Governor’s Texas Economic Development & Tourism Office.

About Workforce Solutions North Texas

Workforce Solutions is led by a local board consisting of volunteer members, a majority of which come from private industry. It is part of a statewide system of local boards which set policy and oversee expenditures of funds in their individual areas. These boards are non-profit and receive funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and U.S. Department of Agriculture through the Texas Workforce Commission.

Dedicated to helping Texas employers and job seekers succeed, Workforce Solutions North Texas provides services to employers and job seekers in the following counties: Archer, Baylor, Clay, Cottle, Foard, Hardeman, Jack, Montague, Wichita, Wilbarger and Young. Its mission is to place North Texans in jobs and to equip workers with skills that foster economic development.

For details on Workforce Solutions North Texas and the services offered in coordination with its network of other local workforce development boards across Texas, call 940-767-1432 or visit www.ntxworksolutions.org.

Workforce Solutions North Texas is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Relay Texas: (800)735-2989 (TDD) or (800)735-2988(Voice) or 711.

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