

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Ann Hatchitt

PHONE: (512) 463-8556

TWC Announces \$2 Million Awarded for the Governor's Cluster Initiative

AUSTIN – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), in conjunction with the Office of the Governor, today announced the recipients of \$2 million in funding for the *Meeting Industries' Critical Workforce Needs* grant program. Endorsed by Gov. Rick Perry, this initiative targets the six industry clusters.

“Through these grants, we are investing in programs related to critical industry sectors that offer the best promise for future job growth,” said Gov. Rick Perry. “Education programs in these core industries strengthen the future of our workforce, and enhance Texas’ economic leadership and competitive edge in a rapidly changing global economy.”

Four programs selected to receive funds include:

- **A South Plains Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC)** training initiative will be established as a result of the \$499,999 grant award to support the Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing Industry Cluster in the South Plains region. The partnership includes WorkSource of the South Plains, West Texas Manufacturing Association, Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center, South Plains Community College, Vertical Turbine Systems Inc., Byron Martin Advanced Technology Center and Lubbock Economic Development Alliance. The MSSC Training Program will offer production technician certification to Lubbock and Frenship Independent School Districts’ high school and South Plains Community College students to meet the needs of the region’s manufacturers.
- **Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM)** modules will be incorporated in required courses in East Texas as a result of the \$500,000 grant awarded to support the Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing Industry Cluster in that region. The partnership consists of the University of Texas, Texas State Technical College Marshall and five area high schools including Marshall, Hallsville, Jefferson, Waskom and Harrison County Early College and Regions VII and VIII Education Service Centers. Participating organizations include Dana Corp., LeTourneau Technologies, Trinity Rail, East Texas Workforce Board and the Marshall Economic Development Corp. The program will target Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education for students and workers to embed integrated computer skills into their coursework.
- **The Texas Institute for Education Robotics (TIER)** will be established as a result of \$474,345 grant awarded to support the Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing Industry Cluster in the Alamo region. The partnership includes Numedeon Inc., Alamo Community College District, Northwest Vista College, and Alamo Workforce Development Board. TIER will develop the theory and practice of competitive robotics in STEM education and will connect robotics students to career pathways to further support regional economic development.

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- **The Petroleum Refining and Chemical Manufacturing** industry partnership received \$374,164 to create a comprehensive communication network to support the Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products Industry Cluster in the Gulf Coast and Southeast Texas regions. The partnership includes East Harris County Manufacturers Association, the Economic Alliance Houston Port Region, the Center for the Advancement of Process Technology, San Jacinto College, Brazosport College, Lee College, College of the Mainland and Houston Galveston Area Council. Its goal is to align partners in a long-term strategy, by implementing a “Youth to Energy” summer camp program for middle and high school students, develop a hiring forecast survey, design a model program to “fast track” dislocated workers and persons seeking career change, and develop curriculum components for emerging, next generation occupations in the petrochemical industry.

TWC provides U.S. Department of Labor WIA funds to support the *Meeting Industries’ Critical Workforce Needs* grant opportunities. The initiatives outlined in the winning proposals help build on existing partnerships in business and education, engage youth in science and math specific to advanced technology and manufacturing to meet the needs of target industries.

For more information on the *Meeting Industries’ Critical Workforce Needs* Request for Proposals, visit the TWC web site at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/ticluster.html>

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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.