

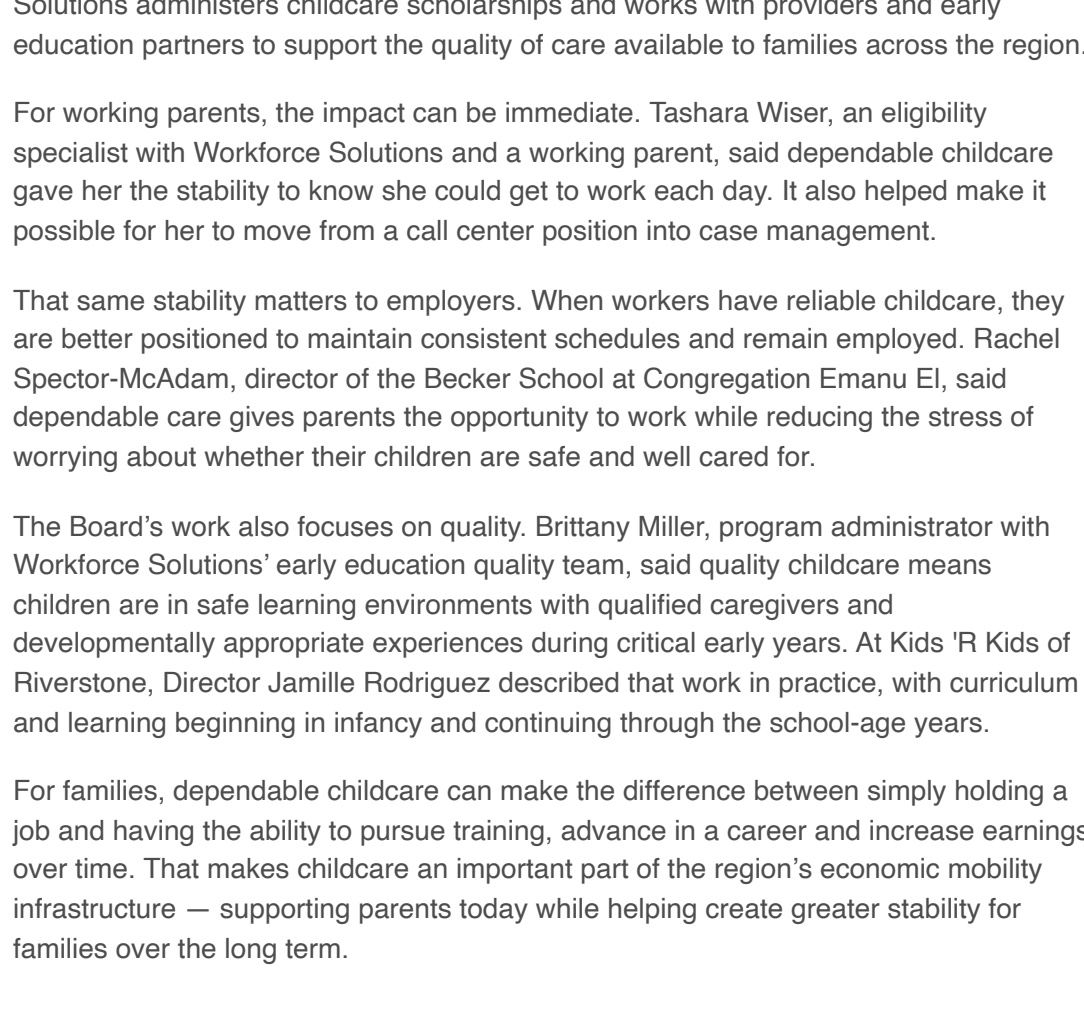
Gulf Coast Workforce Board Newsletter August

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GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD NEWSLETTER



Child Care Is Essential to a Strong Workforce

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board invests approximately \$370 million each year in childcare assistance, helping thousands of families across the 13-county region access dependable care while parents work, attend school or complete training.

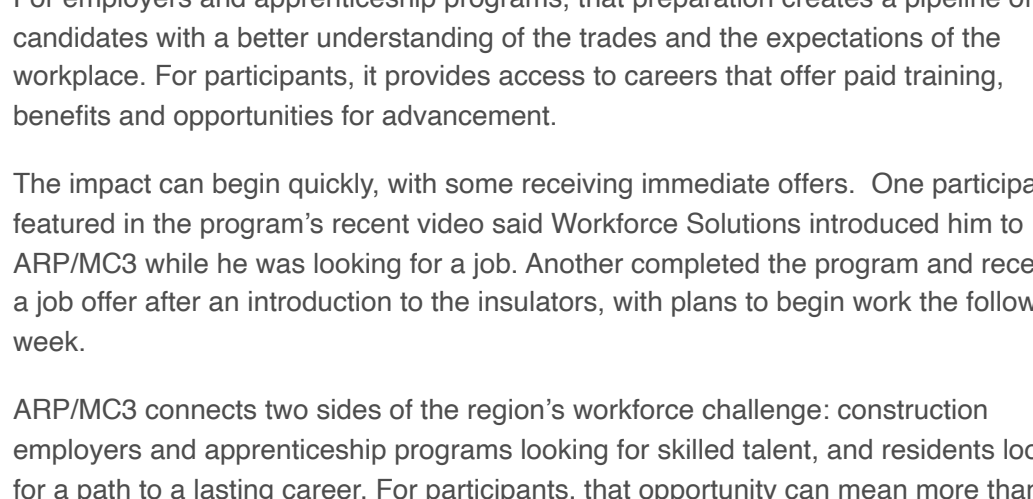
The investment is a significant part of the Board's workforce strategy. Workforce Solutions administers childcare scholarships and works with providers and early education partners to support the quality of care available to families across the region.

For working parents, the impact can be immediate. Tashara Wiser, an eligibility specialist with Workforce Solutions and a working parent, said dependable childcare gave her the stability to know she could get to work each day. It also helped make it possible for her to move from a call center position into case management.

That same stability matters to employers. When workers have reliable childcare, they are better positioned to maintain consistent schedules and remain employed. Rachel Spector-McAdam, director of the Becker School at Congregation Emanu El, said dependable care gives parents the opportunity to work while reducing the stress of worrying about whether their children are safe and well cared for.

The Board's work also focuses on quality. Brittany Miller, program administrator with Workforce Solutions' early education quality team, said quality childcare means children are in safe learning environments with qualified caregivers and developmentally appropriate experiences during critical early years. At Kids 'R Kids of Riverstone, Director Jamille Rodriguez described that work in practice, with curriculum and learning beginning in infancy and continuing through the school-age years.

For families, dependable childcare can make the difference between simply holding a job and having the ability to pursue training, advance in a career and increase earnings over time. That makes childcare an important part of the region's economic mobility infrastructure — supporting parents today while helping create greater stability for families over the long term.



Free Pre-Apprenticeship Program Builds Gulf Coast Talent Pipeline

Major infrastructure and construction projects are creating strong demand for skilled workers across the Gulf Coast region, with industry leaders pointing to tens of billions of dollars in upcoming work and an increasing need for trained talent.

One program helping prepare that workforce is the Apprenticeship Readiness Program/Multi-Craft Core Curriculum, or ARP/MC3. Offered by the Houston Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council and Gulf Coast Built-Rite Partnership, the free program introduces participants to the building trades and prepares them to pursue registered apprenticeships and long-term careers in construction. The three-week MC3 curriculum provides exposure to 14 trades and training in areas including construction safety, tools and materials, basic math, CPR and OSHA 10.

After completing ARP/MC3, participants can pursue registered apprenticeships in trades ranging from electrical and pipefitting to elevator construction, operating engineering, bricklaying and other occupations. Apprentices combine paid, on-the-job training with classroom instruction, creating a pathway that can lead from apprentice to journeyman, foreman and other leadership opportunities.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is a key partner in expanding access to the program. The Board provides funding for approximately 95% of ARP/MC3 participants, along with outreach and recruitment support that helps connect local residents with the opportunity. Workforce Solutions staff can also refer job seekers to the program, giving individuals who may not have considered the skilled trades another pathway to employment.

The partnership has also helped address one of the barriers participants may face when applying to apprenticeship programs: math aptitude testing. The Board helped develop a curriculum to strengthen participants' math skills, and ARP/MC3 dedicates a week to preparing students for apprenticeship entrance exams. Program leaders report that participants who complete the math preparation achieve a 98% pass rate on those tests.

For employers and apprenticeship programs, that preparation creates a pipeline of candidates with a better understanding of the trades and the expectations of the workplace. For participants, it provides access to careers that offer paid training, benefits and opportunities for advancement.

The impact can begin quickly, with some receiving immediate offers. One participant featured in the program's recent video said Workforce Solutions introduced him to ARP/MC3 while he was looking for a job. Another completed the program and received a job offer after an introduction to the insulators, with plans to begin work the following week.

ARP/MC3 connects two sides of the region's workforce challenge: construction employers and apprenticeship programs looking for skilled talent, and residents looking for a path to a lasting career. For participants, that opportunity can mean more than a first job. It can create a pathway to higher earnings, advancement and long-term economic mobility for their families.

[Watch the Program Overview](#)

Guy Robert Jackson



For the past 26 years, Guy Robert Jackson has played an important role in shaping workforce development across the Gulf Coast as a dedicated member of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. As president of Chambers County Abstract, a family-owned title insurance company serving the community since 1875, Jackson brings both professional expertise and a lifelong passion for public service.

During more than two decades of service, Jackson has watched Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast expand its reach and impact for employers, job seekers and communities throughout the region. "I think this Board has a great ability to impact the region when it comes to employment, both on the employer and the employee side," he said. "The level of services that we are providing now is far greater than it was when I first started 26 years ago."

Jackson believes the organization's success comes from responding to the changing needs of the communities it serves. "As long as we are reactive to the needs of the community at the time they need our services, we're going to be able to continue to grow and help Houston become the place for employment and employers."

Outside of his Board service, Jackson has dedicated decades to giving back through organizations such as the Galveston Bay Foundation, serving as the announcer for Anahuac High School football games for 33 years, and helping establish several nonprofit organizations. "I like public service. I like giving back to my communities. I'm very fortunate... and I like to give back."

[Watch the Spotlight Video](#)

Houston's Job Market Continues to Gain Momentum

More jobs. More opportunities. Continued growth across key industries. Houston's latest labor market report shows positive signs for the region's economy.

Employers added 14,400 jobs in June, marking the second consecutive month of stronger-than-average hiring. Over the past year, Houston has gained 39,700 jobs, with seven of the region's 11 major industries adding jobs. Although Houston's unemployment rate increased to 5.2% in June, the increase does not necessarily point to a weakening labor market. Seasonal factors can contribute to higher unemployment during the summer months as more people, including recent graduates, enter the workforce and begin looking for jobs.

What Does This Mean for You?

For job seekers, continued job growth means more opportunities across a range of industries. For employers, the latest numbers point to continued demand for talent throughout the region. Professional and Business Services, Leisure and Hospitality, Trade, Transportation and Utilities, and Manufacturing all posted gains, showing that hiring is not concentrated in just one part of Houston's economy.

Why Workforce Data Matters

At Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast, labor market data does more than track employment trends—it helps inform decisions that benefit employers and job seekers. Understanding where jobs are growing, which industries are hiring and where employers need skilled workers helps Workforce Solutions target training programs, employer services and career resources to meet the region's evolving workforce needs.



Heatwave Heroes

For the second consecutive year the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast joined the Houston Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council, Pipefitters Local 211, the Texas Veterans Commission and FOX 26 Houston for the Heatwave Heroes initiative, helping veterans and military families stay safe during the summer's extreme heat.

The Texas Veterans Commission helped identify veterans and military families facing the greatest need, including those households experiencing serious health challenges, financial hardship and limited access to reliable cooling. Together, the partners provided five families across the region with portable air-conditioning units, generators, extension cords and \$100 Kroger gift cards to help them prepare for extreme temperatures and potential power outages.

Heatwave Heroes was more than a heat relief campaign—it demonstrated what can be accomplished when workforce leaders, organized labor, veterans' organizations, local media and community partners work together. The initiative reflects the Board's ongoing dedication to serving veterans while helping strengthen communities across the Gulf Coast.

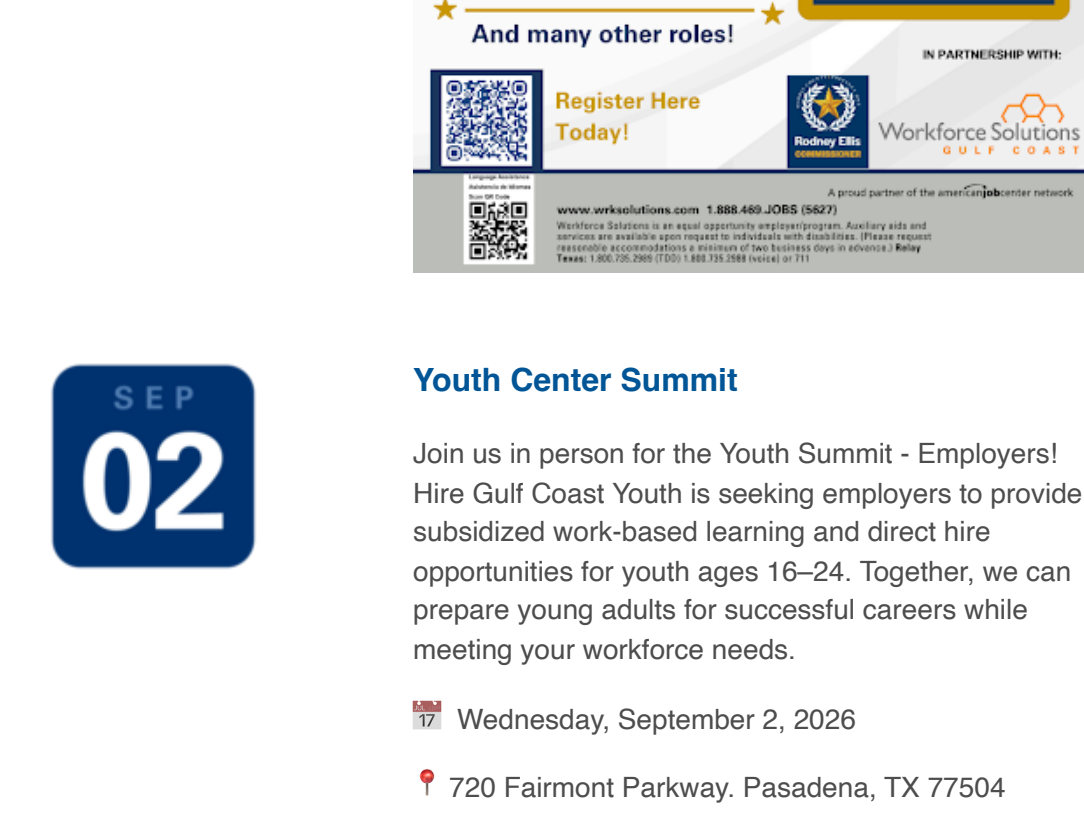


NASA ORBIT Challenge Summit

Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast partnered with Workforce Solutions East Texas, NASA and aerospace industry leaders to support the NASA ORBIT Challenge Summit by providing career readiness workshops, résumé reviews, interview coaching and professional headshots for more than 70 participating students.

The national program brings together high school and college students from across the country to develop innovative solutions to real-world aerospace challenges while exploring careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Connecting students with workforce professionals and industry experts, the summit gave participants practical skills, greater confidence and valuable insight into careers in the aerospace industry. Initiatives like the NASA ORBIT Challenge Summit help build the future workforce while preparing students for careers in one of the region's fastest-growing industries.



Regional Workforce Summits Bring Industry Leaders Together

This summer, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board hosted three regional workforce summits focused on the workforce needs of the region's fastest-growing industries. Held in June and July, the events brought together employers, educators and workforce partners to discuss emerging trends, address hiring challenges and strengthen collaboration.

The series included a construction summit at Wharton County Junior College in Wharton, a life sciences and healthcare summit at the San Jacinto College Center for Petrochemical, Energy and Technology in Pasadena, and an education summit at the Lone Star College System Office in The Woodlands.

To learn more about Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast's partnerships, workforce initiatives, and upcoming events, visit [Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast](#). Together, these collaborations are helping build a stronger workforce and a more competitive regional economy.



Upcoming Events:

AUG 20

Power of One Youth Employment and Work-Based Learning Summit

Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast and Hire Gulf Coast Youth will host a youth-focused employment and work-based learning summit connecting young adults with employers, internship opportunities, training providers, and career pathways. Attendees will have the opportunity to explore employment opportunities, learn about paid work-based learning programs, and connect with training resources designed to support long-term career success. Explore youth employment, internships, and work-based learning opportunities at wrksolutions.com/hgcy.

Thursday, August 20, 2026

BakerRipley Community Center | Pasadena, TX
720 Fairmont Pkwy, Pasadena, TX 77504

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Learn More](#)



GULF COAST Workforce Solutions

AUG 22

Career Expo - Your Next Chapter Starts Here

Join the Harris County Office of Commissioner Rodney Ellis for an exciting Career Expo designed to connect job seekers with meaningful career opportunities across a wide range of industries. Whether you're exploring a new path or ready to take the next step in your professional journey, this event offers direct access to employers, resources, and on-site guidance to help you succeed.

Saturday, August 22, 2026

Office of Commissioner Rodney Ellis
Administrative Building & Community Center
2787 El Camino Street, Houston, TX 77054

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

[Register Here](#)



SEP 02

Youth Center Summit

Join us in person for the Youth Summit - Employers! Hire Gulf Coast Youth is seeking employers to provide subsidized work-based learning and direct hire opportunities for youth ages 16–24. Together, we can prepare young adults for successful careers while meeting your workforce needs.

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

720 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, TX 77504

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

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Contact Information

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Email: jobs@wrksolutions.com

WorkInTexas Job Matching: WorkInTexas.com

