



TWC Projects Available For Younger Students (Ages 14 to 16)

Capacity Building Statewide Conference
Austin, Texas
October 24-25, 2023



Presenters

- Erin Wilder, M.Ed., CRC

Program Manager for Transition and Pre-ETS

- Kristen Davis, M.RC., CRC, LPC

Program Specialist for Transition

- Leigh Ann Godinez, M.RC., CRC, LPC

Program Specialist for Transition

Agenda

- History of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- TWC Projects Available For Younger Students (ages 14-16)
 - Explore STEM Camps
 - Explore Apprenticeship (EA)
 - Group Skills Trainings (GST)
 - iGROW
 - Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL)
 - Year-Round Work Experience (PWE)
- How To Make Referrals



The History of Pre-ETS: Pre-Employment Transition Services

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

- WIOA (July 2014) utilizes the term “Pre-Employment Transition Services” as the type of services that are most impactful for students with disabilities.
 - Job Exploration Counseling
 - Work-Based Learning
 - Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities
 - Workplace Readiness Training
 - Self-Advocacy

Available Services

At the time WIOA was passed:

- There were only a couple of services for transitioning students that would have been considered Pre-ETS.
- Right away, work began to expand these services, starting with our statewide initiatives.

Casting A Wide Net

We have reached “statewideness”:

- We have counselors assigned to all public high schools and many private and charter schools.
- Through partners like the Workforce Development Boards, we are able to provide services in multiple locations across the state.
- We now have a variety of Pre-ETS available for Younger Students (ages 14-16) including the examples of TWC Projects that will be discussed today.



TWC Projects Available For Younger Students (ages 14-16)

Explore STEM Camps

Explore Apprenticeship (EA)

Group Skills Trainings (GST)

iGROW

Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL)

Year-Round Work Experience (PWE)

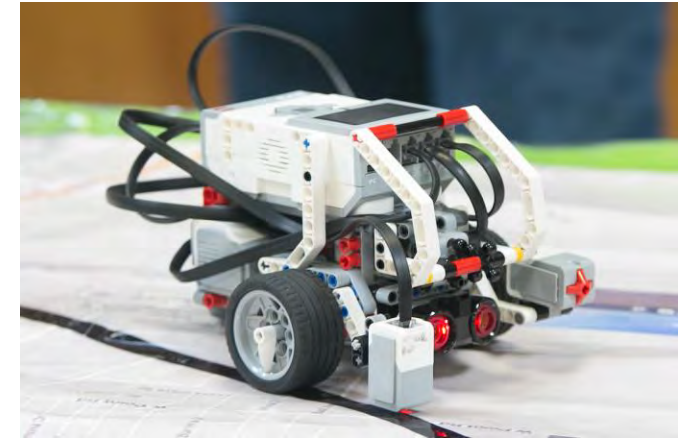
Explore STEM Camps

FY 2023:

- 7 colleges/universities
 - (i.e., UTEP, UNT, CTC, HCC, UHCL, UTSA, STC).
- 19 total camps conducted
 - 195 students participated

Summer 2018-2023:

- 14 different colleges/universities participated over the past 6 years.
- 1,266 total students have participated over the past 6 years.
- Averages to approximately 200 students each summer.



Explore Apprenticeship (EA)

EA Currently Available:

Dallas College Region 2

San Jacinto College Region 5

Started: Spring 2022

Semester-long program designed to provide in-depth career exploration in various in-demand occupations.

Students learn about apprenticeship programs and program requirements.

Expansion Opportunities underway with Texas A&M Rellis.



Explore Apprenticeship (EA) - Continued

Programs:

Construction/Building Trades

Hospitality and Healthcare

Telecom and Transportation

Agriculture and Food Services

Information Technology

Manufacturing and Banking

Education and Energy



Explore Apprenticeship

Expectations:

- 12-13 weeks long per semester
 - 8-10 hours a week
 - 2-4 hrs. virtual weekday &
 - 6 hrs. in-person (Saturdays)
 - VR Eligible in Active Status between ages 14-22, enrolled in education setting
 - Minimum 6-8th grade reading/cognitive level
 - Access to laptop/iPad and transportation
 - Highly committed to participate in all classes
- Students participate in hands-on activities as well as trips to apprenticeship related sites.
 - (e.g., Scavenger Hunt, Team Building, Guided Practice, Online Games, Site Visits, Collages/Vision Boards, Guests Speakers, Campus Tours, Employer Site Visits etc.)

Explore Apprenticeship (con't)

Opportunities @ Dallas College Region 2:

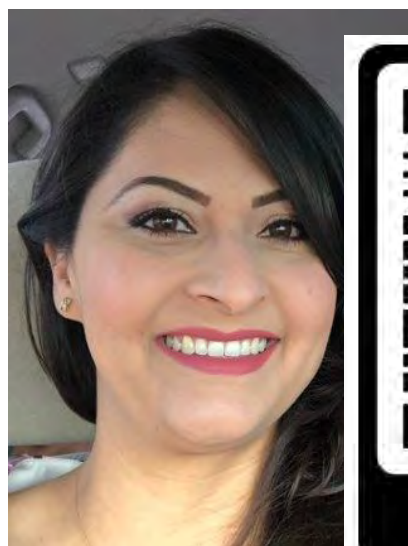
- OSHA 10/Forklift (10 hrs.)
- CPR/First Aid (6 hrs.)
- Food Service (6 hrs.)
- Intro Computers (6 hrs.)

How to get started:

- Contact your Regional Transition Program Specialist for Region 2 and 5
 - Get dates on upcoming EA program,
 - Get due dates,
 - Staff referral,
 - Obtain referral packet from RTPS, and
 - Meet with Customer/Parent to share information and obtain commitment to participate in program.

Expand Explore Apprenticeship in Your Area

GABRIELA MARTINEZ



KRISTEN DAVIS



Group Skills Trainings (GST)

- A GST is an avenue for providing essential pre-vocational and independent living skills training to groups of students with disabilities, including those who are potentially eligible with VR.
- A GST must focus on one or more of the required Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) categories.
- A GST typically involves designing more than one service for the target audience, and it is ideal for younger students.
- Planning and conducting GSTs can also involve other partners serving students with disabilities (e.g., LEA or The Blind Children's Program at HHSC).

Examples of GSTs Across Texas

Name of GST	Description	Location
UNT WISE	2-week residential program to develop vocational, independent living and social skills	UNT Denton
WACO Project – Work and College Opportunities	5-week residential summer and work training program	Texas A&M
Dollars and Sense	Financial Literacy Training from students 14-18 over two Saturdays.	Austin
JOBS – Job Opportunities for Blind Students	3-week residential summer program for students who are blind or visually impaired	Austin
Project SOAR – Successful Occupational Accountability and Responsibility	5-week program available after school to prepare for post-secondary education and employment	Texarkana College

Create Your Own GST – Together!



Tips!

- Identify needs in your area
 - Talk to teachers, families, students
- Identify and develop your team
- Brainstorming sessions
- Clear, consistent, and honest communication
- Realistic goals and expectations

iGROW – I Generate Rural Opportunities For Work

- iGROW is a four-year pre-employment and leadership training program in partnership with Texas A&M Center on Disability and Development, for rural county students with disabilities. Each year, 20 transition students are selected to participate in the 4-year program. Program contents are provided in the high school they attend, during school hours, by the teachers from their district. During the summer, the students participate in Paid Work Experience to gain on-the-job work-related skills and further career exploration.



iGROW

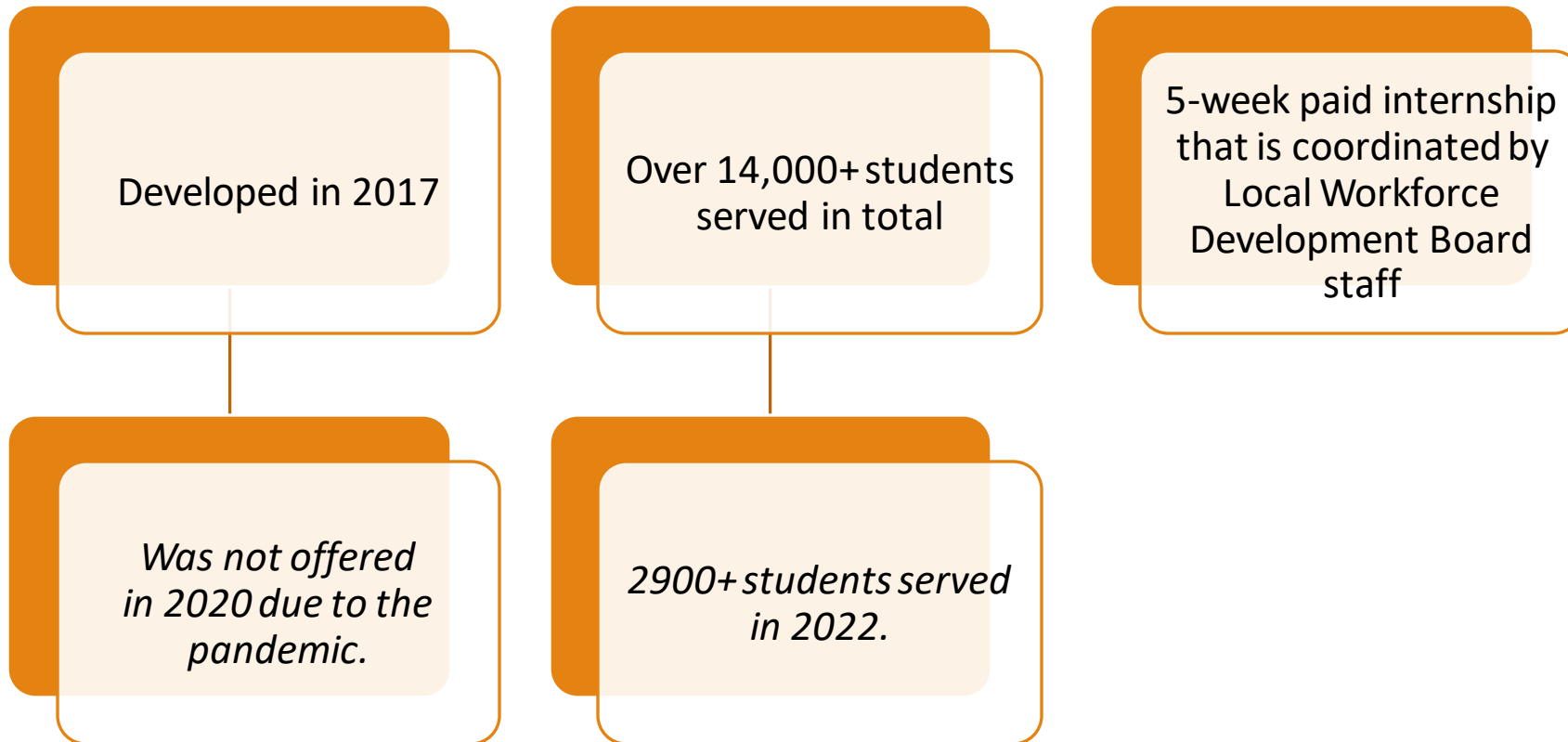
- The purpose of the program is to provide a training environment to help students with career exploration, Person Centered Employment Planning, and paid work experience as they prepare to transition into postsecondary education and/or competitive integrated employment. This program serves students ages 14-22.
- Video: [iGROW](#)



Summer Earn and Learn (SEAL)

- SEAL provides the following to students with disabilities:
 - Pre-employment work readiness training and preparation for the work experience placement;
 - Work experience to gain familiarity with the workplace environment and develop transferable job skills; and
 - Paid compensation for time worked on the job.
- SEAL's objective is to increase work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities and provide them with foundational employment skills and better prepare them for successful transition to postsecondary education and employment.

SEAL



SEAL Success Stories – Workforce Solutions Tarrant County

Highlight Videos:

Sensational Cakes Bakery:

<https://youtu.be/piWxILpsvuw>

CVS: <https://youtu.be/WoRW4MXIU4Y>

Movie Tavern:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y361RdCjRVM>

Four employers (Six Flags, Hurricane Harbor, Taco Cabana, and Neighbor House Grocery) extended an employment opportunity to SEAL participants.

SEAL Success Stories – Workforce Solutions South Plains

- KCBD Lubbock: Summer Earn and Learn Program prepares students with disabilities for independent work
- Everything Lubbock: ‘Earn and Learn’ program aims to help young adults with disabilities get summer jobs
- South Plains: 4 students offered permanent positions (July Progress Report).
 - Amigos Grocery, United Supermarkets (2 locations), and Texas Tech University Lake Landmark

Note: United Supermarkets owns Amigos Grocery stores. They have supported SEAL since the first year in 2017 and the same goes for TTU Lubbock Lake Landmark.

Year-Round Work Experience (PWE)

- Increases work-based learning opportunities through Texas' integrated workforce system for VR participants who are students with disabilities. Also develops work skills that improve student career preparation and increase employability.
- Available throughout the year and authorized by VR counselors on an individual basis. Assignments are a maximum of 12 weeks and 20 hours per week.
- Students are placed at the work site by TWS-VRS, which is responsible for:
 - monitoring each work site,
 - providing case management, and
 - providing counseling and guidance, as needed.
- FY 2021: 1595 Customers Served; FY 2022: 1680 Customers Served



PWE: 19 out of 28 WF Boards Pay Student Wages for Time Worked

Region 1: Panhandle, South Plains, North Texas, West Central Texas, Borderplex, Permian Basin, Concho Valley

Region 2: Tarrant County and Texoma

Region 3: None

Region 4: Southeast, East Texas, Northeast Texas, Deep East Texas

Region 5: Gulf Coast

Region 6: Golden Crescent, Alamo, Coastal Bend, Lower Rio Grande Valley, Cameron County

Referrals - How to get started



- Work with your assigned VR Counselor to refer students for services.
- The counselor will discuss the VR process with students and parents, which includes discussing their options for services (Potentially Eligible or VR Application), determining eligibility and, if eligible, assessment and planning for services.
- The counselor will schedule appointments at the school, in the Workforce Solutions office, or at other locations to initiate the VR process.

How To Get In Contact with TWS-VRS

- If you aren't sure who the counselor is, call your nearest Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation (TWS-VRS) office or your area's Regional Transition Specialist (contact info at the end of the presentation).
- For a list of TWS-VRS offices, visit: texasworkforce.org/offices/vr-general-services.html
- For assistance in locating a VR office for vocational rehabilitation services, you can email vr.office.locator@twc.texas.gov or **call (512) 936-6400** to be connected to VR staff.

Regional Transition Specialists

Region 1 – West Texas

Andrew Castillo

915-834-7701

Andrew.Castillo@twc.texas.gov

Region 3 – Central Texas

Vacant

Vr.pre-ets@twc.texas.gov

Region 5 – Houston

Janeen Gordon

832-681-2643

Janeen.Gordon@twc.texas.gov

Region 2 – Dallas/Ft Worth

Rosla Hocker

817-436-4127

Rosla.Hocker@twc.texas.gov

Region 4 – East Texas

Kirstin Johnson

903-504-9531

Kirstin.Johnson@twc.texas.gov

Region 6 – South Texas

Rebecca Quintero

210-238-3592

Rebecca.Quintero@twc.texas.gov

State Office Transition Team

**Erin Wilder,
Program Manager**

512-936-370

Erin.Wilder@twc.texas.gov

**Kevin Markel,
Program Specialist**

817-759-3514

Kevin.Markel@twc.texas.gov

**Alyssa Kee,
Program Specialist**

915-217-8188

Alyssa.Kee@twc.texas.gov

**Kristen Davis,
Program Specialist**

512-221-9071

Kristen.Davis@twc.texas.gov

**Laura Villarreal,
Neurodevelopmental
Specialist**

512-541-643

Laura.Villarreal@twc.texas.gov

**Leigh Ann Godinez,
Program Specialist**

512-720-8347

Leighann.Godinez@twc.texas.gov

**Gabriela Martinez,
Program Specialist**

Phone: 956-566-1228

Gabriela.Martinez@twc.texas.gov

Team Mailbox

VR.Pre-ETS@twc.texas.gov

Questions?

TWC Projects Available For Younger Students (Ages 14 to 16)

Capacity Building Statewide Conference
Austin, Texas
October 24-25, 2023

