A STATEWIDE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE

At least 60% of jobs in Texas will require a career certificate or college degree by 2020. Yet, many indicators suggest that Texas is not well positioned to meet this demand:

> 44% of Texans over age 25 have never attended college;
> 23% qualify for adult education (basic skills needed to succeed in college);
> 19% do not have a high school diploma or GED.

Despite the fact that Texas is expanding resources for Adult Basic Education, enrollee numbers are falling, highlighting the need for a more efficient delivery of ABE. According to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), state and federal funding for ABE programs in Texas has increased 26 percent over the past five years ($53.4 million up to $67.3 million) while enrollment has dropped nearly 20 percent (124,297 down to 99,802). Furthermore, just 5 percent of GED recipients actually transition to college.

AN AMBITIOUS STATE RESPONSE

To respond to these pressing needs, the Texas State legislature took bold steps to invest in three programs administered by the THECB to help lower-skilled adults access and succeed in community colleges:

1. The Intensive College Readiness Programs for Adult Education Students are providing a bridge to college for more than 2,100 GED recipients and high school graduates.
2. The Developmental Education Demonstration Projects are implementing best practices that increase college readiness for developmental education students.
3. Accelerate Texas programs are integrating basic skills with career and technical pathways to help adult students acquire skills and certificates in high-demand occupations.

ACCELERATE TEXAS COLLEGES

Capitalizing on the importance of community colleges in helping the state achieve its Closing the Gaps goals, Accelerate Texas has awarded grants to 19 community colleges across Texas. Together, these grantees have already engaged over 2,000 adults in programs leading to certificates in the key industry sectors of health care, manufacturing, construction, and transportation.
THE 4 KEY COMPONENTS OF ACCELERATE TEXAS

SUPPORTING ADULT BASIC EDUCATION INNOVATION

The THECB is investing in new college programs through its Adult Basic Education Innovation Grants that bridge ABE programs with college. These programs prepare educationally disadvantaged, unemployed, and underemployed adults for postsecondary education, credential attainment, and subsequent employment. Programs overcome basic skills and language deficiencies by aligning and contextualizing ABE, English as a Second Language, and GED preparation to particular career and technical training programs.

BUILDING COLLEGE CAPACITY FOR RESULTS

Jobs for the Future provides capacity building assistance to grantee institutions. Activities include developing a customized technical assistance plan and coaching for each grantee to address implementation issues, as well as sustained professional development efforts on the use of real-time and traditional labor market information to determine which career pathways to develop and strategies to relate curricula material to real-world occupations.

DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

Accountability for outcomes is an important feature of Accelerate TEXAS. Texas State University-San Marcos is conducting an independent evaluation of the innovation grantees. The evaluation will capture the process for implementation as well as the outcomes that are achieved in credential attainment, employment, or further post-secondary education.

INFORMING POLICY

A key element in implementing effective ABE-to-college innovations is the development of supportive policies to sustain and expand these programs—and the removal of policies that restrict them. Jobs for the Future assists the THECB in developing policy recommendations to promote the success of lower-skilled adult students. Policy changes are being explored at institutional, college consortium, and state levels. Policy efforts build on existing state postsecondary policy initiatives, including Achieving the Dream and the Developmental Education Initiative.

PARTNERS

WWW.THECB.STATE.TX.US

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board provides leadership and coordination for the Texas higher education system and funds Accelerate TEXAS.

WWW.JFF.ORG

Jobs for the Future provides technical assistance, policy support, and strategic advice and communications for Accelerate TEXAS.

WWW.TXSTATE.EDU

Texas State University-San Marcos supports Accelerate TEXAS by providing statewide program evaluation (ABE-IG Evaluation Team) and peer learning support for grantees (The Transitions Project).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Dr. Linda Muñoz
Senior Program Director,
Developmental and Adult Education
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Linda.Munoz@THECB.state.tx.us
512.427.6525

Gloria Cross Mwase
Program Director,
Building Economic Opportunity
Jobs for the Future
gmwase@jff.org
617.728.4446