

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Employ Older Workers Week September 23-29

Mature Workers Valuable to Texas Employers

AUSTIN – Texas joins the rest of the nation promoting the hiring of older workers during Employ Older Workers Week September 23 through 29. Established by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), this special week recognizes the contributions that older Americans continue to make to our nation’s economy and to acknowledge employers who establish age-friendly work environments by training and recruiting qualified older workers.

With the growing population of older people and the anticipated shortages of skilled workers, many seniors are choosing to remain in the workplace well past retirement age. Data released earlier this month by the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that 23.2 percent of people between ages 65 and 74 were either working or job hunting in 2006, an increase of nearly 20 percent compared to 2000 statistics.

“Employers recognize that mature workers contribute strong work ethic and valuable experience to their businesses,” said Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Chair Diane Rath. “Older workers benefit from the opportunity to acquire newer skills necessary to meet the demands of today’s changing workforce needs.”

Census bureau statistics suggest that the number of Texans age 55 and older is expected to increase from its current 4.6 million to more than 5.1 million by 2010 and 10.3 million by 2040. The Texas economy is expected to mirror the rest of the nation’s efforts in relying significantly on the contributions of workers in this talent pool.

In Program Year 2006, DOL allocated more than \$23 million to Texas for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which provided on-the-job training and employment opportunities to more than 6,500 qualified older Texans. SCSEP was established more than 40 years ago to serve the employment needs of people age 55 or older with limited financial resources.

Participants provide community services for public entities and nonprofit organizations such as libraries, workforce centers, museums, hospitals, recreation centers, social service agencies, school districts and public housing agencies while they prepare to transition into full- or part-time employment in the public and private sectors. Federal grants are issued to states and a broad network of organizations to operate the program nationwide.

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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.