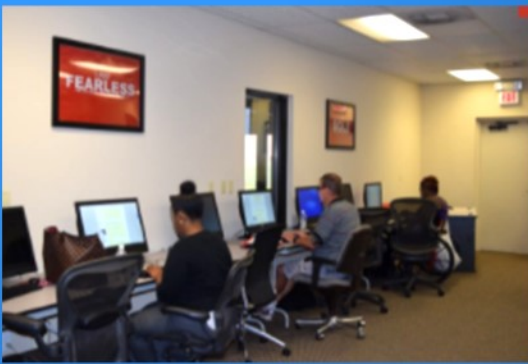


INVESTING IN PEOPLE

An Evaluation of Travis County Investments in Workforce Development



EVALUATION OF TRAVIS COUNTY INVESTMENTS IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

2018 UPDATE

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INTRODUCTION

In FY 2016 – FY 2017, Travis County invested approximately \$5,032,472 through contracts with workforce development programs for low-income residents who tend to face challenges to steady employment with sufficient earnings to support themselves and their families.¹ Several of the programs provide short-term occupational training leading to certifications in a variety of fields, including health care professions, basic computer technologies, construction trades and “green building”, and other occupational areas with promising entry-level prospects. In addition, funds support the provision of or referral to education services ranging from adult basic education, English language classes, GED or high school diploma programs, to long-term skills training leading to certifications and associate degrees in areas such as nursing and allied health professions, information and electronic technologies, skilled trades, and other better-paying, demand occupations in growth industries with good prospects for career pathway advancement.

Four of the Travis County workforce development grantees receive county-funded assistance as a consortium: the Workforce Education and Readiness Continuum – Travis County (WERC-TC). WERC-TC providers are: Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers, Goodwill of Central Texas, Austin Area Urban League, and American YouthWorks. Four additional organizations maintaining workforce development contracts with Travis County are also included in this report: Literacy Coalition of Central Texas, Capital IDEA, LifeWorks, and Skillpoint Alliance. In addition, WERC-TC provider American YouthWorks also delivers services to participants through Travis County funding that is not WERC-TC (Table 1).

¹ FY 2016 – FY 2017 represent the first two years of renewable five year contracts totaling approximately \$2.5 million.

Table 1. Travis County Funded Workforce Development Programs

Workforce Education and Readiness Continuum – Travis County (WERC-TC)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers2. Goodwill Industries of Central Texas3. Austin Area Urban League4. American YouthWorks: YouthBuild Austin and Texas Conservation Corps (Also receives non-WERC-TC funding from Travis County)
Non-WERC-TC
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Workforce Infusion2. Capital IDEA: Long-Term Training3. LifeWorks: Workforce Development4. Skillpoint Alliance: Gateway5. American YouthWorks:

This evaluation examines outcomes and impacts for participants in the Travis County-funded community-based workforce programs exiting services in FY 2016 – FY 2017. To understand the impact of these services, the county has contracted with the Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources (RMC) at the University of Texas at Austin to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of its investments. This Workforce Development (WFD) evaluation will present the analysis of outcomes and estimated net impacts of these investments in the programs funded the first two years of a five year on-going evaluation (FY 2016 – FY 2020).

The following section presents an overview of the evaluation questions and research methods, followed by separate sections for each of the providers examined. Each provider section includes a brief profile of the provider and its workforce development program(s), a summary of participant demographic characteristics obtained at the time of program entry, and details outcomes and impacts for participants who exited the program during FY 2016 – FY 2017. Findings examine UI wage data for the quarter the client exited services, four quarters prior to entering the program, and up to eight quarters post-exit. Findings examine results in the post-service period through June 30, 2018, the latest quarter for which UI wage data is available. The final section summarizes evaluation findings from FY 2016 – FY 2017. Outcomes and impacts vary across the spectrum of grantees as would be expected given their varying services regimes, and the unique barriers to training and employment experienced by the target populations they service.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The purpose of Travis County's investment in local workforce development services is to help low-income residents with weak labor force attachment build the skills needed for gainful employment. Accordingly, each program is evaluated based on its participants' outcomes. Output and outcome performance goals are established for each provider in its contract with the County. Among the various performance measures utilized, four are shared across the majority of providers:

- Number of unduplicated clients served;
- Percentage of clients who obtain or improve employment or enter postsecondary education, or training;
- Percentage of clients who retained their placement for six months; and
- Average wage at job entry.

Other performance measures are based on the type of service provided, for example:

- Number of clients who enter basic education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), or secondary (high school/GED) education;
- Number of clients who enter and complete occupational skills training;
- Number of clients who complete educational training programs; and
- Number of clients enrolled in internships.

Performance results of workforce and other social service investments are detailed annually in the Workforce Development Community Impact Report prepared by the Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHS).² While these reports assess how a provider fared in relation to its contractually-established performance goals, the focus is primarily on immediate and near-term objectives (e.g., wage at entry and the following two calendar quarters of employment).

The Ray Marshall Center's evaluation extends the analysis of Travis County's workforce investments by examining participants' labor market experiences prior to entering the program and then tracking their labor market outcomes following program exit. This evaluation draws on multiple data sources to answer the following questions:

² These reports is available at: <https://www.traviscountytx.gov/health-human-services/research-planning/cir>

- Are services being delivered as planned?
- Who is being served?
- What outcomes are achieved?
- What are the impacts of the investment?

The outcomes evaluation focuses on four key labor market measures:

- Average quarterly employment,
- Average quarterly earnings of those employed,
- The share meeting monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits quarterly, and
- The share filing a claim for UI benefits quarterly.

It should be noted that the third measure is a proxy measure for employment stability. In Texas, monetary UI eligibility is based on the claimant earning sufficient wages in at least two consecutive quarters of the five quarters prior to filing a claim for benefits. For the FY 2016 – FY 2017 exiting participant groups, labor market outcomes are examined in the four quarters prior to entering the program, the last quarter of participation in provider services (the “exit quarter”), and up to eight post-service quarters. Findings in this report examine results in the post-service period through June 30, 2018, the latest quarter for which UI wage data is available.

DATA SOURCES

The evaluation of Travis County-funded workforce development programs draws from multiple data sources including participant records maintained by individual programs, UI wage and benefits claim files, The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) and WorkInTexas (WIT) records, interviews with program administrators and staff, program documents, provider websites, and published reports.³

Two caveats should be noted about UI wage data used for this evaluation. First, UI wage records have known coverage gaps. Workers in industries with high levels of self-employment or independent contracting, such as construction and truck driving, are less likely to be in a UI-covered

³ While UI benefit data are collected and reported weekly, the outcomes are examined on a quarterly basis to mirror UI wage records.

position.⁴ Researchers therefore acknowledge that the outcomes reported here for programs that train for construction and truck driving occupations likely undercount actual labor market outcomes. Second, UI wage records are subject to review and correction by workers and employers as part of the claims determination process for UI benefits. Therefore, numbers reported here are based on the most recently available records.⁵

A total of 2,641 unduplicated participants were included in the dataset for this report (see Appendix A-1: Demographics of Travis County Workforce Development Program FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters and Appendix A-2: Demographics of WERC-TC Program FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters). A few participants were clients of more than one Travis County-funded workforce development service during the study time period. Outcomes for these participants are documented for each program in which they were enrolled.⁶

Outcomes and impacts are reported for those participant social security numbers identified within the wage data.

PROGRAM IMPACTS

The quasi-experimental impact analysis seeks to gauge the “value-added” from workforce program participation by comparing labor market outcomes for participants with those of a matched comparison group. Impacts are analyzed by means of quasi-experimental design that uses propensity score matching to select individuals who are comparable along multiple dimensions to those who received services support by Travis County. Comparison group members were drawn from The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) records and include Travis County residents who registered for employment with the state’s WIT program or who received job search services at local Workforce Solutions Career Centers or online. Thus, the impact analysis measures the incremental difference between those who received limited employment services with those who received the additional services in which Travis County invests.

Quasi-experimental approaches tend to work well when participants for whom comparison groups are created have sufficient prior employment and earnings histories, and when data are

⁴ The Austin-based Workers Defense Project has thoroughly documented the extensive practice of hourly worker misclassification as contract employees in the construction industry in Austin and elsewhere in Texas. See *Building Austin, Building Injustice* (Workers Defense Project) 2009.

⁵ Any discrepancies are expected to be quite small.

⁶ WERC-TC clients were reported once, although they may have received services from more than one WERC-TC service provider.

available on a sufficient number of variables with which to perform the match. Youth and ex-offenders can be problematical in this regard precisely because their prior employment and earnings histories are either lacking or difficult to determine with any real confidence. Ex-offenders present an additional problem since offender status is generally lacking for comparison group members.

The report presents quasi-experimental impacts only for groups/providers for which adequate matching could be performed. The analysis will include the estimation of unadjusted and adjusted net effects. The unadjusted net effect is simply the difference between mean outcomes for the participants and control groups. Net effects (labeled as “impact measure” in the tables) have been modified to account for unmeasured socioeconomic and other differences not already controlled in the matching process. Impact graphs compare the average earnings and wages over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), of participants to the comparison group members at least four quarters prior to receiving services, at the quarter of service entry and up to eight quarters post-service entry. More information on the matching process and the quality of comparison groups is provided in Appendix B.

Because of the way data is tracked in the WIT system, members of the comparison group were known to have been located in Travis County at the time the data was obtained by RMC; however, individuals may or may not have been located in Travis County during the time periods studied.

WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION READINESS CONTINUUM-TRAVIS COUNTY (WERC-TC)



WERC-TC functions as a part of a larger network of Austin and Travis County providers of workforce and educational services: the Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum (WERC). WERC is a City of Austin and Travis County-funded network of community partners linked to help prepare Austin-area residents to enter or reenter today's competitive job market. With 18 locations,

WERC provides client services ranging from case management; ABE and ESL; job readiness instruction and job search assistance; and assistance accessing a variety of employment training options, including industry-recognized credentials, occupational certifications and licenses, and internships. All external occupational training provided must be with entities on the Workforce Solutions Eligible Training Provider list and lead to a credential.⁷ WERC-TC is a component of the larger WERC program.

WERC-TC offers both occupational training in-house and through arrangements with external providers. The following is included as a prerequisite for participants to enter external occupational training:

- 1) Basic Soft Skills - Demonstrated through a learning assessment such as O-Net or other pre-assessment,
- 2) Education Specific Foundational Skills - Provided by the training organization; these prerequisites can be demonstrated through the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE), client self-attestation, or a letter of foreign equivalency from a credentialed provider.⁸

WERC-TC funds four area workforce development service providers: Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, Austin Area Urban League, and American YouthWorks. Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board administers the program operating as the fiscal agent for WERC-TC funds, providing program oversight, quality assurance

⁷ External Approved Training Provider List is updated weekly. The most current list is available at: <https://apps.twc.state.tx.us>.

⁸ In-house Occupational Training does not require the TABE assessment (with the exception of GED/HS Diploma).

monitoring of client eligibility and performance outcomes, and supporting the continuum of care through quarterly partner meetings. Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board contracts with Goodwill to manage the WERC-TC data management software system: CaseWorthy Empowered Case Management (ECM). WERC-TC funds two additional Goodwill staff to manage the data system. All four WERC-TC providers are required to directly enter into CaseWorthy client information, services and referrals provided, follow-up contacts, and outcomes. CaseWorthy allows for the sharing of client data across programs, standardized reporting, and a single point of entry for WERC-TC clients with a common intake form and income eligibility requirement of 200% FPG, allowing clients to be referred to different providers in the WERC continuum of care without repeating the intake process. ⁹ The target placement wage for the WERC-TC county funded program in 2017 was \$12 per hour.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The following analysis reports on the 1,587 unduplicated WERC-TC participants who exited the program in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Although the average age of WERC-TC participant exiters is 39, the program served youth as young as 16 and slightly over 5 percent of the exiters were in their sixties. The majority of exiters identified as either Black (46.7%) or White (43.7%) with 14.6 percent identifying as Hispanic. Most exiters were male (60.1%), with .3 percent identifying as transgender. The majority, 61.6 percent reported having a 12th grade education or a GED and 19.7 percent reported attending or graduating from college prior to program entry. Nearly forty-one percent reported judicial involvement and 9.8 percent identified as veterans. Less than half reported receiving any public benefits (46.9%). The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: North Austin (20.8%), East Austin (28.6%), eastern suburbs of Austin (22.1%) and South Austin (15.4%).

Outcomes and impacts are reported for 1,437 participants with social security numbers identified within the wage data.

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

Table 2 presents WERC-TC participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program quarterly employment

⁹ Information from a conversation with Amy Dutton, Special Projects Manager, and Kendra Campbell, Special Projects Coordinator, Workforce Solutions Capital Area. September 6, 2017 and June 6, 2018.

in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals serviced by WERC-TC was nearly 44 percent. Average quarterly employment grew to just over 71 percent during the exit quarter and fell by nearly 6 percentage points in the second quarter post-service (66%) and dropped again by 4.7 percentage points four quarters post-service (62.1%). The increase of employment rates during the service exit quarter (nearly 30 percentage points), may be attributed to the WERC-TC program focus to quickly move participants into employment combined with enrolling participants in a limited number of paid internships. (In FY 2016 – FY 2017 WERC-TC enrolled 150 participants in paid internships with an 89 percent completion rate.)¹⁰ Figure 1 further illustrates WERC-TC participants experience an 18.4 percentage point gain in employment between the year prior to services and one year post-service; however, employment dropped on average by 9.5 percentage points between the last service quarter and one year post-service.

For those maintaining employment wages grew from an average of \$4,452 in the four quarters pre-service to an average of \$6,014 four quarters post-service: a \$1,562 average increase representing a 35 percent wage gain (earnings outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 2). The available data for the FY 2016 cohort in the eighth quarter post-services reports continued employment and wage growth.

¹⁰Travis County Workforce Development FY 2016 and FY 2017 Community Impact Reports. Available at: <https://www.traviscountytx.gov>.

Table 2. WERC-TC Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	1,434	1,434	1,434	993	190	1,434
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	47.2%	73.8%	69.8%	63.1%	66.3%	66.4%
FY 2017	40.2%	69.4%	62.0%	59.5%	.	61.3%
Overall	43.8%	71.6%	66.0%	62.1%	66.3%	64.5%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$4,622	\$4,936	\$5,976	\$6,272	\$6,905	\$6,208
FY 2017	\$4,247	\$4,465	\$5,518	\$5,256	.	\$5,449
Overall	\$4,452	\$4,712	\$5,765	\$6,014	\$6,905	\$5,941
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	39.7%	40.1%	49.7%	60.9%	62.6%	56.1%
FY 2017	34.2%	37.6%	55.7%	58.7%	.	56.6%
Overall	37.0%	38.8%	52.7%	60.3%	62.6%	56.3%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	3.0%	1.2%	3.2%	2.3%	1.1%	2.6%
FY 2017	2.6%	2.0%	1.3%	3.0%	.	1.8%
Overall	2.8%	1.6%	2.2%	2.5%	1.1%	2.3%

Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: WFSCA Career Centers had one participant with quarterly earnings in excess of \$25,000 for several quarters. This participant was removed from the above reported outcomes.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Overall, prior to entering WERC-TC, 37 percent of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, approximately 60 percent met the requirements for eligibility. Few participants (less than 2.3% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 1. Average Quarterly Employment for WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

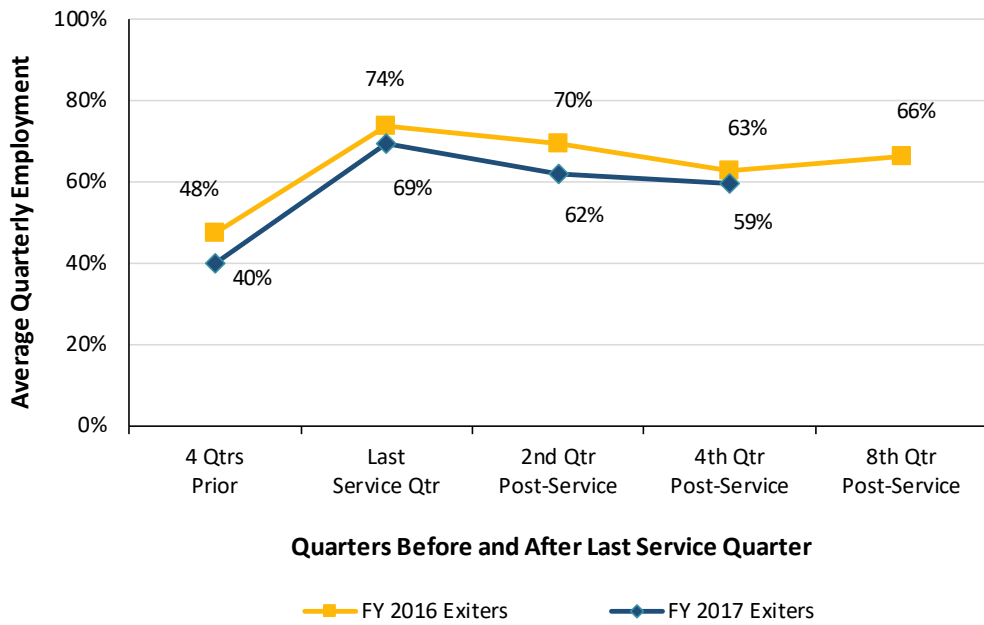
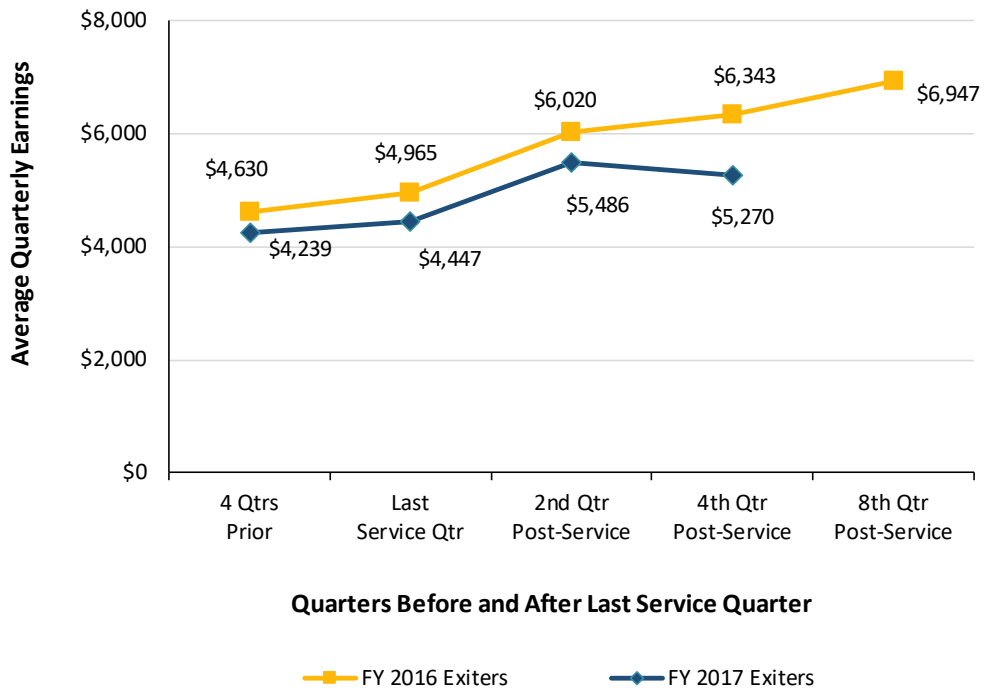


Figure 2. Average Quarterly Earnings of Employed WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



PROGRAM IMPACTS

Table 3 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of WERC-TC FY 2016 – FY 2017 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. Participation in WERC-TC programs was positively associated with two of the four outcome measures of interest: a 7.6 percentage point advantage in employment and a \$502 advantage in average quarterly earnings. The employment and wage advantage are both statistically significant.

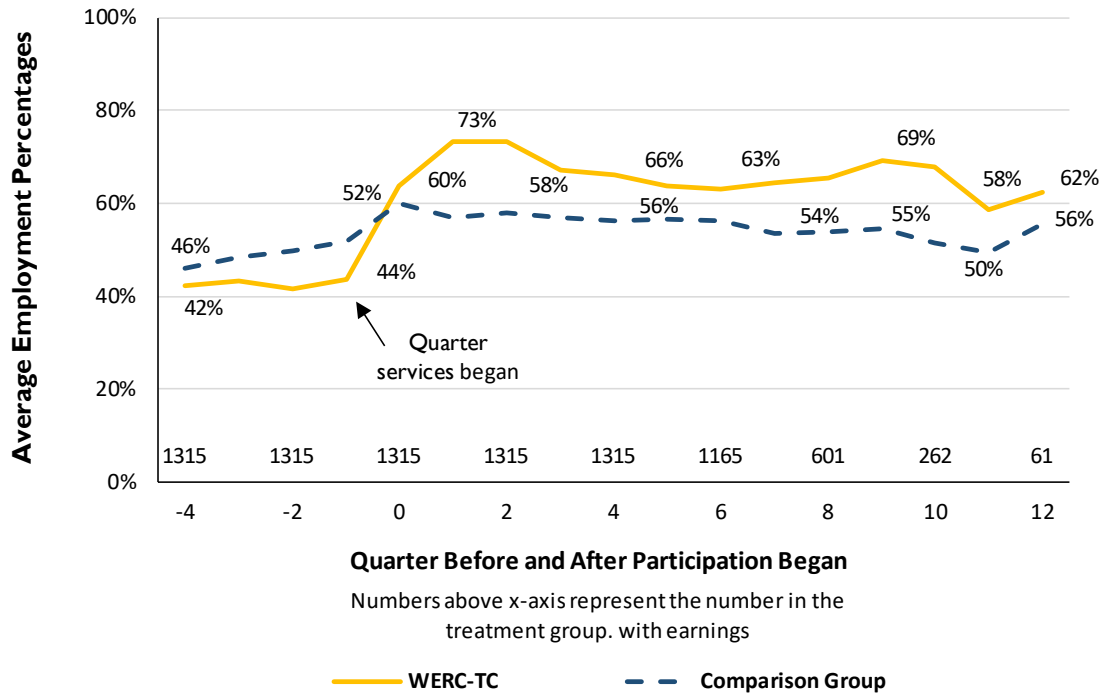
Table 3. WERC-TC Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016 – FY 2017

Impact Measure	Number of Post Service Person Qtrs	All Qtrs Post Service Entry Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post Service Entry Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment:	10,565	55.9%	64.5%	8.6%	7.6%**
Average Qrtly Earnings:	\$5,902	\$5,861	\$6,017	\$157	\$502*
Qualified for UI Benefits:	4,002	44.0%	43.2%	-0.8%	0.0%
Filed UI Claim:	10,565	0.45%	0.52%	0.06%	-0.18%

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

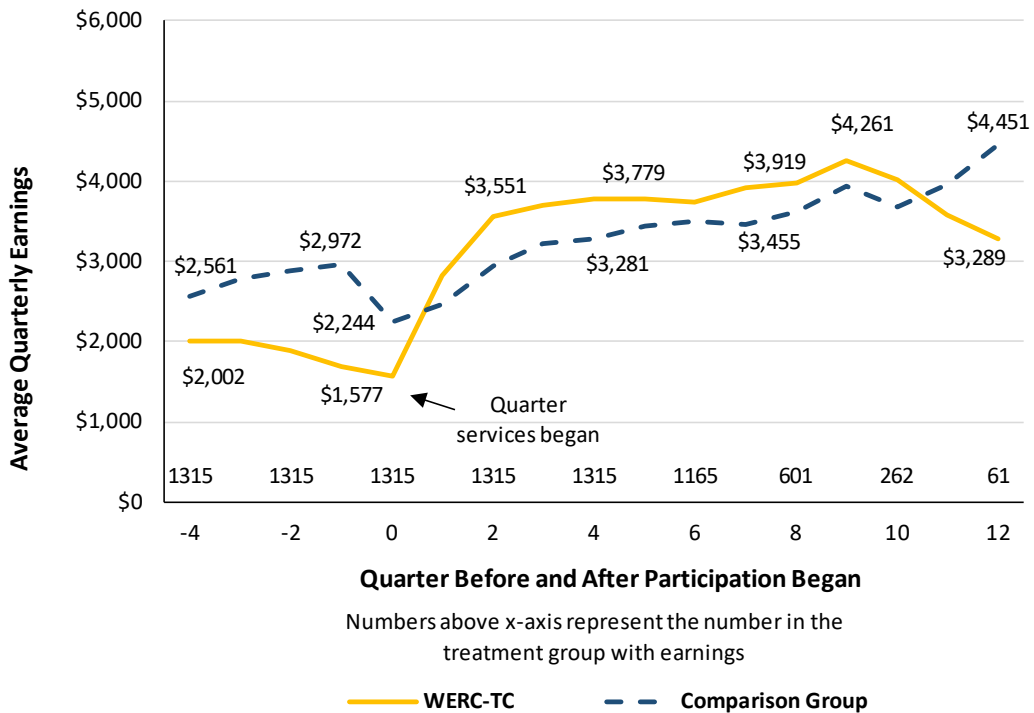
In Figure 3, the impact of participation in WERC-TC is examined by looking at participants' employment over time in relation to the comparison group's employment. The analysis shows that WERC-TC participants quickly outpaced the control group members during the second quarter of participation in the program and maintained a higher rate of employment over time.

**Figure 3. Employment Rates Over Time, WERC-TC Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016 – FY 2017**



In Figure 4, the impact of participation in WERC-TC is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that WERC-TC participants quickly outpaced the control group members during the first quarter of participation in the program and continued to gain income over time. The final quarter identifies a decrease in earnings for the 61 WERC-TC participants for whom data was available.

**Figure 4: Unconditional Earnings Over Time, WERC-TC Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016 – FY 2017**



DESCRIPTIONS OF WERC-TC FUNDED PROGRAMS

This report section further describes each of the WERC-TC funded organizations, the services and supports provided, the target populations served, a summary of demographic characteristics describing program participants at the time of program entry, and individual organization participant outcomes. Table 4 presents each WERC-TC organizations FY 2016 and FY 2017 exit counts with SSNs included in this analysis.

Table 4. WERC-TC Exiters by Program with SSNs: FY 2016 – FY 2017

WERC-TC Program	FY 2016 Exiters	FY 2017 Exiters	Totals
Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers	257	208	465
Goodwill	224	209	433
Austin Area Urban League	310	237	547
American YouthWorks	81	61	142
Totals	872	715	1,587

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board operated the Travis County-funded Rapid Employment Model (REM) program through FY 2015. REM launched in 2006 as a pilot demonstration project then transitioned into the regular workforce program operations at the Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers (WFSCA Career Center). The program was funded exclusively by Travis County. In FY 2016, the program and its funding were folded into the WERC-TC effort.

The purpose of the WFSCA Career Center WERC-TC program model is to accelerate the time it takes for individuals to become employed or reemployed with new skills and a marketable credential. Services are specifically targeted at disadvantaged county residents, in particular judicially involved individuals, TANF-Choices and SNAP recipients, low-income individuals, and those seeking financial assistance from the county.¹¹ In-depth assessment, individual employment planning (IEP), intensive case management, and flexible service tracks leading to rapid employment with an average wage goal of \$12.

All participants receive case management from specialists assigned to the program. The program specialist discusses training options and opportunities with each participant. The focus is on employment rather than training with those for whom this is an appropriate service track. Job-

Workforce Solutions Capital Area is the local Workforce Investment Board for Travis County. It is one of 28 local boards in Texas. The board oversees federal, state, and local employment and training programs.

Travis County funded the Rapid Employment Model (REM) project as a regular workforce services program in 2010-2012 for \$244,275 annually; annual funding for 2013 and 2014 settled at \$400,157, and rose to \$493,580 in FY 2015.

In FY 2016 and FY 2017, Workforce Solutions became the administrative agent for the WERC-TC, responsible for managing the distribution of \$630,315.



www.wfscapitalarea.com

¹¹Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Choices assists participants receiving cash assistance to transition from welfare to work through participation in work-related activities, including job search and job readiness classes, basic skills training, education, vocational training, and support services. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides a monthly supplement for purchasing nutritious food.

ready participants may steer directly into limited pre-employment services and job search or a work experience program for rapid placement. Others receive more intensive pre-employment, job search and placement services, including WERC-TC funded internship opportunities, and short-term occupational training lasting less than six months. The TABE is given to those seeking short-term training services to assess their readiness level for the desired skills training.

Participants select from a number of occupations for which short-term training is available, including general construction, electric and plumbing; administrative assistant, project management; certified nurse aide; and truck driving. ESL, ABE and GED classes are also available.

Support Services

WFSCA Career Center clients are often co-enrolled in other programs providing support services. WFSCA Career Center staff regularly conducts “in-reach” (the recruitment of participants) for WERC-TC prospects at the Austin Transitional Center.¹² WERC-TC partners recruit and refer to the program participants receiving services from other criminal justice transition sites and community centers. Additional referring programs include Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA), TANF Choices, and SNAP. Through co-enrollment, these programs provide the wrap-around support services participants need to be successful.

Job search participants can receive up to 12 weeks of transportation assistance while looking for employment, and training participants can receive up to 24 weeks transportation assistance while attending classes. Emergency assistance (utility payments, auto repairs, etc.) and work related expenses up to \$200, are also available on a case-by-case basis. Participants can receive a \$25 incentive upon entering employment and four additional \$25 incentives at each retention milestones.¹³

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 465 unduplicated WERC-TC WFSCA Career Center participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016 – FY 2017. The average age of participant exiters is 42. Nearly equal amount of exiters identified as either White (43.7%) or Black (43%) with 13.8 percent identifying as Hispanic. Most exiters were male (67.3%) and the majority,

¹² The Austin Transition Center is a residential treatment center and halfway house providing substance abuse counseling and treatment for persons recently released from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

¹³ Information from a conversation with Amy Dutton, Special Projects Manager, and Kendra Campbell, Special Projects Coordinator, Workforce Solutions Capital Area at Capital Area September 6, 2017 and June 6, 2018.

53.5 percent reported having a 12th grade education or a GED and 31 percent reported attending or graduating from college. Nearly a third of participants reported judicial involvement (30.3%), 11 percent identified as veterans, and approximately a third reported receiving any public benefits (34%). The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: North Austin (26%), East Austin (26%), eastern suburbs of Austin (14.4%) and South Austin (14.4%).

Outcomes and impacts are reported for 423 participants with social security numbers identified within the wage data.

Participant Outcomes

Table 5 presents WFSCA Career Center participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program, quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals serviced by WFSCA Career Centers was over half (52.9%). Average quarterly employment grew to 74 percent during the exit quarter and fell by nearly 6 percentage points by the fourth quarter post-service (68.2%). However, overall wages grew from an average of \$5,677 in the quarter before services and to an average of \$7,507 four quarters post-service: an increase of \$1,830 representing a 32 percent wage gain. The available data for the FY 2016 cohort in the eighth quarter post-services reports a continued pattern of employment decrease and wage growth (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 5 and Figure 6).

Table 5. WFSCA Career Center Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	423	423	423	270	61	423
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	56.2%	80.4%	78.1%	70.8%	60.7%	72.8%
FY 2017	49.4%	67.2%	63.7%	56.9%		62.4%
Overall	52.9%	74.0%	71.2%	68.2%	60.7%	69.2%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$5,785	\$5,958	\$7,534	\$7,733	\$8,414	\$7,709
FY 2017	\$5,544	\$5,150	\$6,605	\$6,298	.	\$6,549
Overall	\$5,677	\$5,605	\$7,132	\$7,507	\$8,414	\$7,355
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	51.4%	49.3%	54.8%	71.2%	55.7%	62.1%
FY 2017	41.2%	45.6%	56.4%	58.8%		56.9%
Overall	46.5%	47.5%	55.6%	68.9%	55.7%	60.3%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	5.1%	2.3%	3.2%	4.1%	3.3%	3.6%
FY 2017	4.3%	2.5%	2.5%	5.9%		3.1%
Overall	4.7%	2.4%	2.8%	4.4%	3.3%	3.5%

Source: WFSCA Career Center participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering WFSCA Career Centers, approximately 46 percent of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, approximately 69 percent met the requirements for eligibility. Few participants (less than 3.5% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 5. Average Quarterly Employment for WFSCA Career Center Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

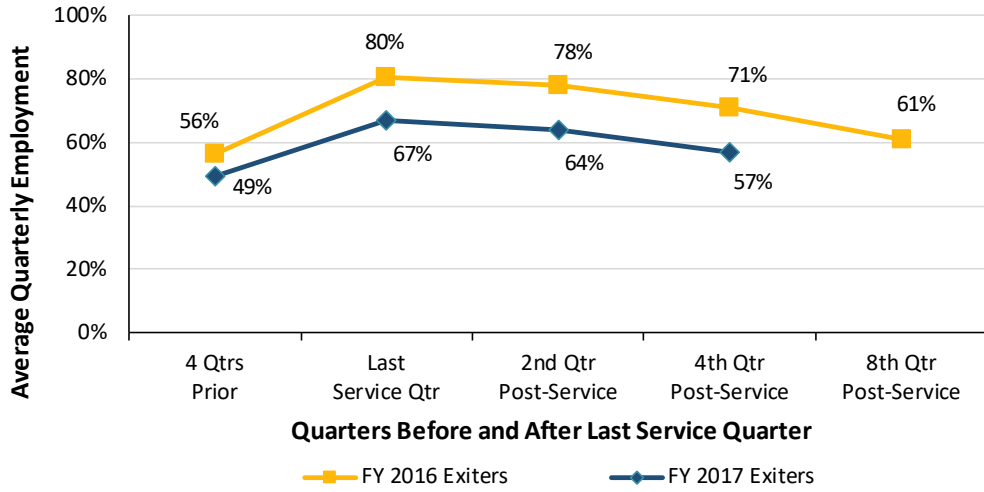
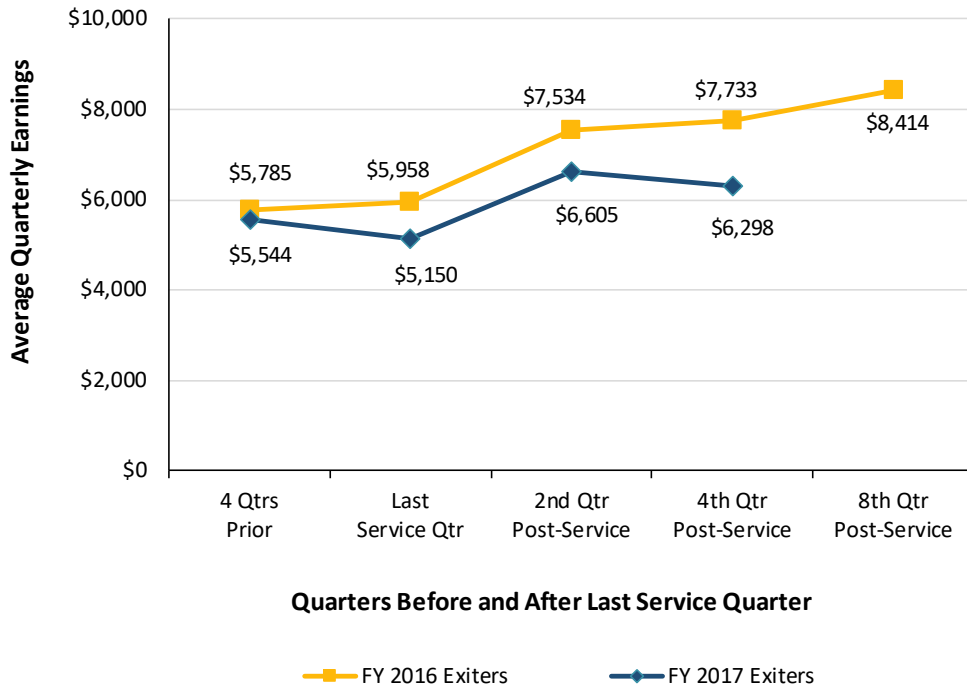


Figure 6. Average Quarterly Earnings for WFSCA Career Center Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



Goodwill Industries of Central Texas provides services to justice involved individuals, the homeless, individuals with disabilities, individuals who lack a high school diploma or GED, opportunity youth, and others who face barriers in the labor market. Its mission is to help individuals generate lifelong connections to work.

From 2011 to 2015, Travis County invested \$137,439 annually in Goodwill's Ready to Work program. In FY 2016 and FY 2017 Goodwill continued to receive level funding through the WERC-TC collaborative.



<https://www.goodwillcentraltexas.org/education-job-training>

Goodwill Industries of Central Texas

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Goodwill's education and training programs are accessible at several locations throughout Travis County, including the Goodwill Career and Technical Academy (GCTA), the Excel Center, and Workforce Advancement sites distributed about the City of Austin and Travis County.

For FY 2016, Goodwill joined the WERC-TC collaborative to enhance the continuum of education, training, and employment services available to participants, with a focus on credentials valued by industry in occupations with career pathway potential leading to a living wage.

This occupationally focused training includes not only very short-term credentials like Travis County Food Handler permit for entry into the hospitality sector, but also expanded access to more substantive training paths such as: Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) with ancillary credentials for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and phlebotomy; Texas Commercial Driver's License (CDL); QuickBooks; Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC); office administration; and dental assistant.

Furthermore, WERC-TC funding permits Goodwill to provide paid internships for participants.

Goodwill provides services to individuals with complex barriers to employment: judicial involvement, homelessness, individuals with disabilities, individuals who lack a high school diploma or GED, opportunity youth, and others who face barriers in the labor market. Goodwill works with a number of

organizations to accept referrals of potential participants including: Travis Correctional Complex, the Austin Transitional Center, Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH), Foundation

Communities, Salvation Army, Integral Care, SAFE Alliance, and other providers serving the homeless.

Case managers working with justice involved participants frame service delivery within a Transtheoretical Cognitive Transformation approach: This approach recognizes that the process of change occurs in stages over time while individuals develop a sense of self-efficacy. Justice involved individuals receive job readiness assistance from career case managers specifically trained to guide participants to incorporate their history into the job search process. Participants receive information on the federal bonding program, career options and limitations, and how to write to and speak with employers about their circumstances. Goodwill also conducts outreach to employers through its Business Solutions staff to understand what participants need to be able to demonstrate to gain employment.

Support Services

Participants can earn \$25 from Goodwill for every 30 days of employment retention up until 180 days of job retention. This incentive encourages participants to maintain a connection to the program and continued involvement in case management services. Case managers may also distribute Goodwill/Simon gift cards per the program support services policy. Case managers may work with participants to develop housing stability plans and assist qualifying participants to apply for additional supports. Other services offered to participants, based on their individual needs, include transportation, help in obtaining identification cards, child care referrals, connections to food pantries, and resources for work/interview clothes.

As a result of its partnership with United Way, Goodwill has incorporated financial education into its programs. Participants are offered classes and one-on-one sessions with a financial literacy trainer focusing on topics such as budgeting, credit repair, and the dangers of payday loans.

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 433 unduplicated Goodwill participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016 – FY 2017. The average age of participant exiters is 41 and 90 percent of participants identified as either White (46.9%) or Black (43.6%) with 15.2 percent identifying as Hispanic. Most exiters were male (64.4%) while less than 1 percent identifying as transgender. The majority, 64.2 percent reported having a 12th grade education or a GED and 18

percent reported less than a 12th grade education. Nearly half of participants reported judicial involvement (49.2%), 6.9 percent identified as veterans, and over half reported receiving any public benefits (54.7%). The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: East Austin (27.3%), North Austin (21.9%), eastern suburbs of Austin (20.3%) and South Austin (17.8%).

Outcomes and impacts are reported for 420 participant social security numbers identified within the wage data.

Participant Outcomes

Table 6 presents Goodwill participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program, quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals serviced by Goodwill was 43 percent. Employment increased to nearly 82 percent during the last quarter of service, yet declined to 64.5 percent by the fourth quarter post-service (a decline by approximately 17 percentage points). However, overall wages grew from an average of \$4,210 in the quarter before services and to an average of \$5,954 four quarters post-service: a \$1,744 average wage gain representing a 41 percent wage gain. The available data for the FY 2016 cohort in the eighth quarter post-services reports gains in both employment (72.3%) and earnings \$7,243 (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 7 and Figure 8).

Table 6. Goodwill Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	420	420	420	310	65	420
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	48.7%	82.9%	74.5%	66.7%	72.3%	70.8%
FY 2017	37.0%	80.9%	65.7%	59.6%		63.8%
Overall	43.0%	81.9%	70.2%	64.5%	72.3%	68.2%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$4,549	\$5,250	\$6,007	\$6,388	\$7,243	\$6,328
FY 2017	\$3,738	\$4,433	\$5,518	\$4,839	.	\$5,318
Overall	\$4,210	\$4,858	\$5,785	\$5,954	\$7,243	\$5,974
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	39.4%	44.4%	60.2%	69.4%	67.7%	65.2%
FY 2017	35.7%	33.8%	70.1%	66.0%		68.8%
Overall	37.6%	39.3%	65.0%	68.4%	67.7%	66.5%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	2.4%	0.9%	4.2%	1.9%	0.0%	2.6%
FY 2017	2.8%	2.9%	0.5%	1.1%		0.7%
Overall	2.6%	1.9%	2.4%	1.6%	0.0%	1.9%

Source: Goodwill participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering Goodwill services, approximately 38 percent of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, approximately 68 percent met the requirements for eligibility. Very few participants (less than 1.9% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 7. Average Quarterly Employment for Goodwill Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

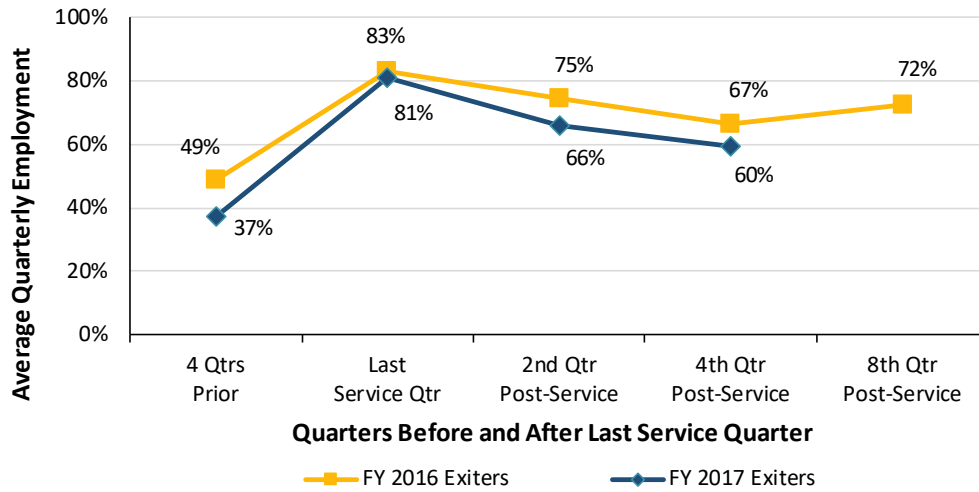
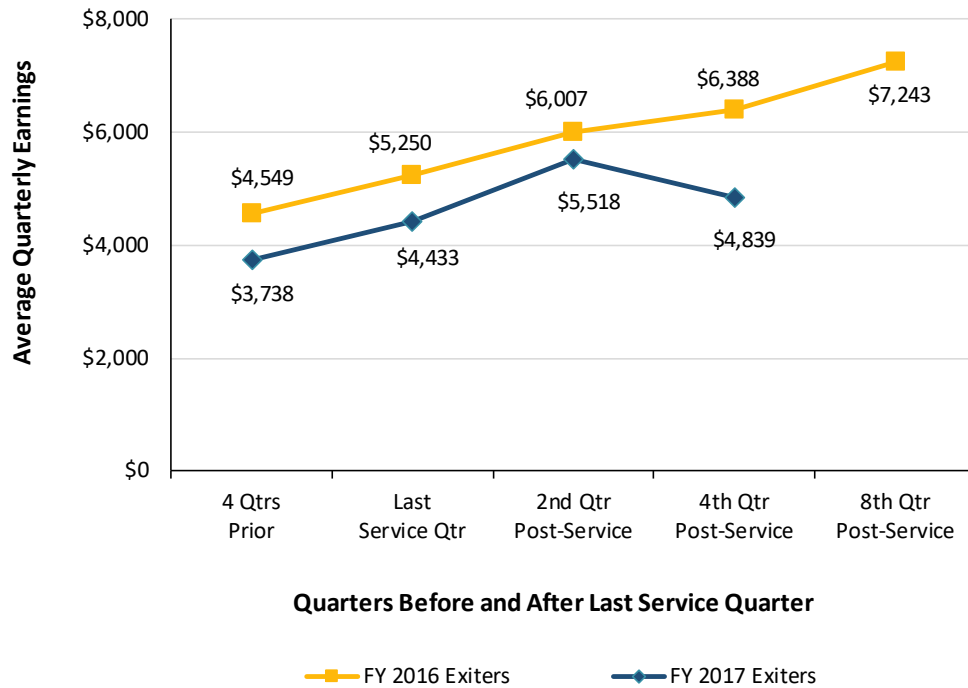


Figure 8. Average Quarterly Earnings for Goodwill Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



Austin Area Urban League

Workforce Development Programs and Services

The AAUL Workforce and Career Development program supports participants' financial self-sufficiency by providing career counseling, job placement assistance, professional development workshops, occupational training tracks, financial literacy and long-term employment retention strategies.

The majority of participants are judicially involved and AAUL has developed a workforce development curriculum, Pathways to a Career Academy (PWTC). PWTC integrates a Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) framework to guide AAUL clients to think differently about themselves and employment.¹⁴ The program endeavors to "meet the participant where they are" and help them to build the skills, beliefs and attitudes they need to be successful.

PWTC is a six week training course and focuses on developing financial literacy, workplace literacy (such as business math and business communications both verbal and written), computer skills (emphasizing Microsoft Office suite and Internet/email basics), and job readiness skills. The training also exposes participants to office technology, such as multi-line

"The mission of the Austin Area Urban League (AAUL) is to provide tools to African-Americans and underserved populations to build a foundation for social and economic equality." * AAUL strives to achieve this mission by focusing on educational improvement, employment readiness, health and wellness, and the preservation of affordable housing.

In FY 2016, AAUL joined the collaborative WERC-TC to help individuals attain certifications and credentials valued by employers.

In FY 2016 and FY 2017, AAUL received \$45,744 WERC-TC funding.



*<http://www.aaul.org/>

phone systems and fax/copy machines. As a conclusion to the PWTC training each participant delivers a class presentation to demonstrate the knowledge they have learned, gain experience expressing themselves, and receive support from the group.

GED classes are offered two evenings a week and the TABE is used to identify the required skill level for technical training. Historically, technical training was provided in partnership with ACC,

¹⁴ Research supports the efficacy of CBT for judicially involved individuals to change their beliefs about themselves in the world and their future, thus contributing to behavior that supports healthy attitudes, relationships and behaviors. Hoffman, Asnaani, Vonk, Sawyer, and Fang. (2012). The Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: A Review of Meta-analyses. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3584580/>

in 2017, AAUL entered into partnership with Goodwill to train participants in truck driving (CDL) and Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA). AAUL also has funding through the WERC-TC collaborative to offer a limited number of paid eight week internships.¹⁵

PWTC job readiness training provides assistance with resume writing and interviewing, job search best practices, as well as job leads and referrals. AAUL has established relationships with hiring managers in healthcare, insurance, customer service, construction, information technologies, and education among other fields. Given the weak work histories and barriers to employment of most participants (the majority of whom are judicially involved), AAUL works with a number of area fair-chance employers, including the City of Austin and Travis County. The City of Austin's Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance, which took effect April 4, 2016, aims to reduce recidivism and unemployment and increase re-integration for qualified job applicants with criminal histories.¹⁶ The ordinance places restrictions on certain private employers regarding when they can ask about a job applicant's criminal history and how that information can be used. Travis County Commissioner's Court established Guidelines for Hiring Ex-Offenders providing opportunities for the successful reintegration of persons with a criminal history to obtain gainful employment within Travis County and the private sector.¹⁷

Support Services

AAUL works to connect participants with resources in the community, including Dress for Success clothing for women and the Huston-Tillotson chapter of Omega Psi Phi, and various faith-based agencies, for interview and work clothes for male participants. Bus passes and gas cards are also provided as funding allows. AAUL operates its own vans to transport groups of individuals to and from classes. Participants interested in developing a small business are referred to the Economic Growth Business Incubator for assistance. Incentives (\$25) are provided at 30-day intervals to support attainment of the 6-month employment retention target. AAUL also helps with work-related expenses, refers to Workforce Solutions for child care, and can provide emergency assistance. AAUL is currently in conversations with United Way of Greater Austin regarding 2-Generation programing.

¹⁵ Information from a conversation with Darnise Bowens-Jones, Workforce Program Manager, June, 2018.

¹⁶ For more information visit: http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/HR/ORD_20160324-019.pdf

¹⁷ For more information visit: <https://www.traviscountytx.gov/human-resources/jobs/guidelines>

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 547 unduplicated AAUL participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016 – FY 2017. The average age of participant exiters is 40 with 59.4 percent identified as Black, 38.2 percent identified as White, and 11 percent identifying as Hispanic. Just over half of the exiters were male (53.4%), and a plurality of exiters, 74.6 percent, reported having a 12th grade education or a GED and 15.5 percent reported less than a 12th grade education. Similar to Goodwill, half of all exiters reported judicial involvement (50.5%). Just over 8 percent identified as veterans and nearly half reported receiving any public benefits (47.9%). The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: eastern suburbs of Austin (34.9%), East Austin (29.6%), and North Austin (18.6%).

Outcomes and impacts are reported for 475 participant social security numbers identified within the wage data.

Participant Outcomes

Table 7 presents AAUL participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program, quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals serviced by AAUL was approximately 38 percent, increasing to 63.2 percent during the last service quarter, yet decreased to 56.1 percent by the fourth quarter post-service. Overall, wages grew from an average of \$3,733 in the quarter before services and to an average of \$4,906 four quarters post-service: a \$1,173 average wage increase representing a 31 percent wage gain. The available data for the FY 2016 cohort in the eighth quarter post-services reports gains in both employment (65.9%) and earnings \$5,207 (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 9 and Figure 10).

Table 7. AAUL Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	475	475	475	337	41	475
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	40.6%	61.8%	59.2%	54.6%	65.9%	57.6%
FY 2017	35.8%	64.6%	57.4%	59.6%		58.0%
Overall	38.2%	63.2%	58.3%	56.1%	65.9%	57.8%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$3,734	\$3,724	\$4,490	\$4,731	\$5,207	\$4,660
FY 2017	\$3,732	\$4,054	\$4,827	\$5,290		\$4,967
Overall	\$3,733	\$3,893	\$4,655	\$4,906	\$5,207	\$4,781
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	35.1%	31.9%	39.5%	45.4%	70.7%	44.7%
FY 2017	29.6%	36.3%	48.1%	52.5%		49.4%
Overall	32.4%	34.1%	43.8%	47.5%	70.7%	46.5%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	2.1%	0.8%	2.9%	1.7%	0.0%	2.1%
FY 2017	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	4.0%		2.1%
Overall	1.8%	1.1%	2.1%	2.4%	0.0%	2.1%

Source: AAUL participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering AAUL servies, approximately 32 percent of participants overall had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, approximately 44 percent met the requirements for eligibility. Few participants (less than 2.1% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 9. Average Quarterly Employment for AAUL Exitters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

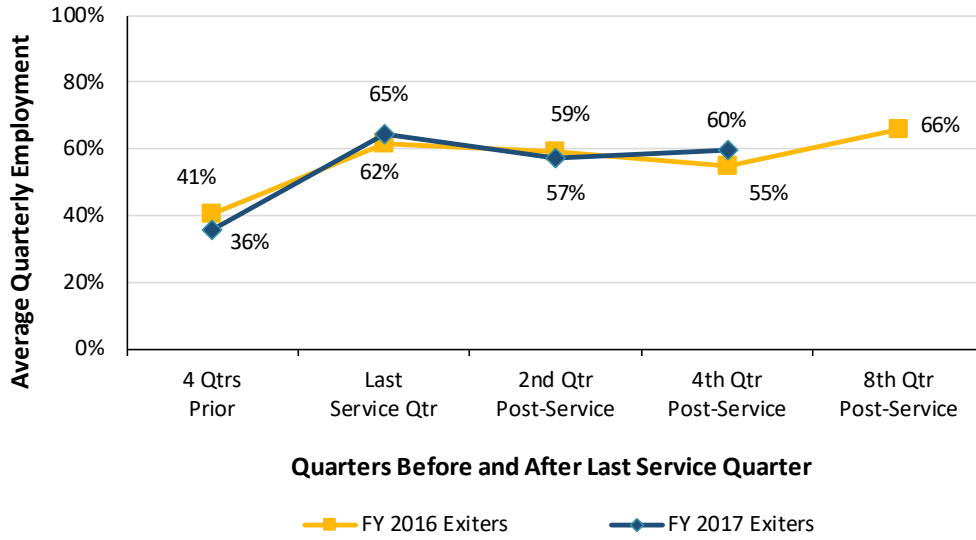
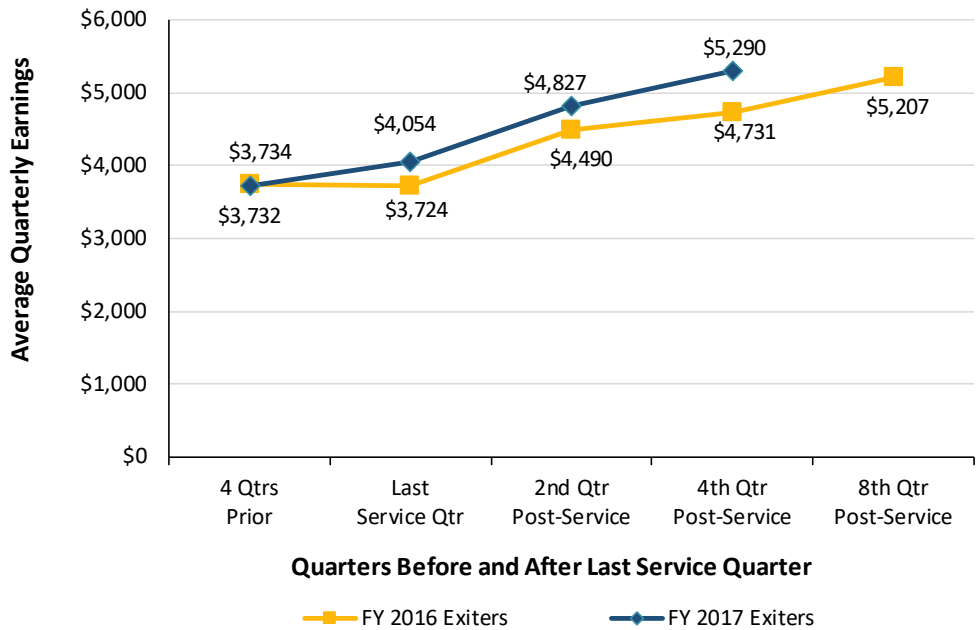


Figure 10. Average Quarterly Earnings for AAUL Exitters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



The mission of American YouthWorks is “...to provide young people with opportunities to build careers, strengthen communities, and improve the environment through education, on-the-job training, and service to others.”*

The program offers college, high school, and GED classes, as well as job training programs based on a service learning model that combines academic instruction with occupational skills development and community service projects.

In FY 2016 and FY 2017, Travis County invested \$145,000 workforce development funds combined with Metro Parks Project funding of \$100,000. In FY 2017, YouthBuild also received \$44,401 in funding from WERC-TC.



*www.americanyouthworks.org

American YouthWorks

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Travis County funds two training programs through American YouthWorks (AYW): YouthBuild Austin and the Texas Conservation Corps. YouthBuild Austin offers three training tracks: Casa Verde Builders, Media Corps, and Health Corps.¹⁸

YouthBuild

YouthBuild programs use a Service Learning Academy model that combines occupational skills training and academic instruction with community service projects. Students may complete their high school diploma or obtain a GED while participating in one of the three training tracks and often complete multiple tracks and certifications. Participants with a HSD/GED may be assessed using the TABE to assess their preparedness for their chosen training and may receive remediation to achieve the required scores to be successful in their training track.

YouthBuild Austin is part of the national initiative led by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Housing & Urban Development. Participants typically range in age from 16-24 years old, have an income at or below 200% FPG, and experience challenges that are best served through the YouthBuild education model.

Casa Verde students learn *green* energy efficient construction skills while repairing houses for low-income families or building micro-homes for homeless individuals.

The Casa Verde training takes approximately nine months to complete. Participants earn 18 credit

¹⁸ Non-WERC-TC AYW Travis County funded participants are discussed later in this report.

hours at ACC at the completion of the construction training. Participants also earn certifications through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Home Builders Association. Casa Verde includes a pre-apprenticeship program: preparing youth for careers as electricians, plumbers, or welders. Students participating in the Early College Start program attend welding and automotive tech courses at the ACC Riverside campus on Friday afternoon.

Media Corps students learn computer technology and graphic design while building and repairing computers for low-income area residents. Students obtain certification in Adobe, Microsoft Office suite, CompTIA, IT Foundations, and may earn college credits through ACC in Graphic Design and Video Production. During the summer of 2018, the agency worked toward another partnership with ACC to enroll participants in an on-site ACC for credit, distance learning course, *Introduction to Computing*, through the ACCelerator program.¹⁹

Health Corps students earn certification as Community Health Workers and Nurse Aides while gaining experience volunteering to provide health screenings at community health fairs, organizing blood donation events and volunteering with local health care providers.²⁰

In FY 2016, YouthBuild entered into a partnership with the juvenile justice system to provide services to justice involved youth. This program enrolls students as young as 16 into the program. YouthBuild developed a re-entry specialist case manager position to work with justice involved youth. Sixteen year old students who enroll in HS/GED and pursuing YouthBuild certifications may need an extended time with the program to complete their high school diploma/GED goals.

Texas Conservation Corps

The Texas Conservation Corps program trains youth (ages 18-28) to build, restore, and maintain the natural environment.²¹ Through work in parks, nature trails, wildlife habitats, and disaster relief services, participants learn environmental management and safety practices. A key area of focus is invasive species management. Contracts with Travis County, the City of Austin, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the National Parks Service, among others, give participants real work experience while creating benefits for the broader community.²²

¹⁹ Information from a conversation with Britni Trustman, Assistant Director–Grants Management and David Clauss, YouthBuild Austin Program Director, August, 2017; and May, 2018.

²⁰ Information from the AYW website: <http://americanyouthworks.org/programs/youthbuild/>

²¹ Conservation Corps offers a summer youth program for high school students and recent graduates ages 15-18.

²² AYW Texas Conservation Corp. also manages a fee for services model to cover expenses and provide opportunities for youth.

Support Services

In addition to job training and on-site access to Premier High School/GED studies, YouthBuild provides a number of wrap-around support services to help individuals succeed including case management and counseling services. Transportation assistance is provided in a variety of forms: bus passes, gas cards, emergency car repair funds and AYW van transportation. The program also provides uniforms and safety equipment, tools, clothing for interviews, on-site child care, and emergency assistance for food, diapers, and other necessities. Additional resources leveraged by AYW include interns from the University of Texas School of Nursing and School of Social Work. Participants in both Casa Verde Builders and Texas Conservation Corps receive bi-weekly stipends to help cover their living expenses while in training.

Beyond the academic and occupational skills training, YouthBuild participants also receive job readiness training. AYW staff help participants with the process of seeking jobs and internships. Full-time counselors help participants overcome other obstacles to success. The program partners with the WERC collaborative to connect participants with other training opportunities and employment support services. The target wage for those who enter employment was \$10 per hour minimum in 2017.

Included in this array of student support is a two-generation early childhood care and education program. AYW collaborates with Child Inc. and United Way to provide on-site quality early childhood care and development services to children ages 0-5. The program provides case management services, parenting education/support sessions that are scheduled during the school day to encourage attendance, and parent/child activities with an opportunity for facilitators to model helpful parenting behavior to encourage healthy bonding between parent and child. AYW provides a diaper bank and continues to pursue funding from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) for participants. The Child Inc. classrooms incorporate Head Start and Early Head Start slots and is pursuing certification from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Children attend the program remain enrolled at no cost while the parent remains enrolled in the program and maintains regular attendance.²³

The following section presents outcomes and impacts for two groups of AYW participants: WERC-TC funded participants and non-WERC-TC funded participants.

²³ David Clauss, YouthBuild Austin Program Director, participates in the United Way sponsored 2-Gen Stakeholder Network. strategic planning.

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 142 unduplicated AYW participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Although AYW reports fewer WERC-TC exiters than other agencies, the AYW subgroup identifies the largest percentage of exiters with less than a 12th grade education (44.4%) and the highest percentage of exiters 29 years old and under (96.5%) with an average exiter age of 23. Over half of the exiters identified as White (54.9%), 19 percent identified as Black and 28.9 percent identified as Hispanic. Nearly equal numbers of females and males exited the program: 50.7 percent and 48.6 percent respectively with less than 1 percent identifying as transgender. Twenty percent identified veteran status (20.4%), 12 percent identified judicial involvement, and nearly two thirds of exiters received any public benefits (62%). The majority of the exiters reported residing in South Austin (40.1%) and East Austin (37.3%).

Outcomes and impacts are reported for 116 participant social security numbers identified within the wage data.

Participant Outcomes

Table 8 presents AYW WERC-TC participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program, quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals serviced by AYW was 36 percent. Average quarterly employment increased to 60.3 percent during the last service quarter and declined by only 2.4 percentage points to 57.9 percent in the fourth quarter post-service. Wages grew from an average of \$2,064 in the quarter before services and to an average of \$4,800 four quarters post-service: a \$2,736 average wage increase representing a 133 percent wage gain. The available data for the FY 2016 cohort in the eighth quarter post-services reports gains in both employment (65.2%) and earnings \$5,138 (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 11 and Figure 12).

Table 8. AYW WERC-TC Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	116	116	116	76	23	116
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	34.8%	64.3%	64.3%	55.4%	65.2%	60.7%
FY 2017	37.1%	56.7%	61.7%	65.0%		62.5%
Overall	36.0%	60.3%	62.9%	57.9%	65.2%	61.4%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$2,070	\$3,326	\$4,264	\$4,896	\$5,183	\$4,671
FY 2017	\$2,058	\$3,705	\$4,242	\$4,571	.	\$4,328
Overall	\$2,064	\$3,510	\$4,253	\$4,800	\$5,183	\$4,541
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	15.2%	21.4%	32.1%	53.6%	52.2%	44.4%
FY 2017	23.8%	28.3%	35.0%	55.0%		40.0%
Overall	19.6%	25.0%	33.6%	54.0%	52.2%	42.8%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
FY 2017	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		0.0%
Overall	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: AYW participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering AYW services, only 19.6 percent of participants overall had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, 54 percent met the requirements for eligibility: representing a 175 percent increase. None of the participant exiters filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 11. Average Quarterly Employment for AYW WERC-TC Exitters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

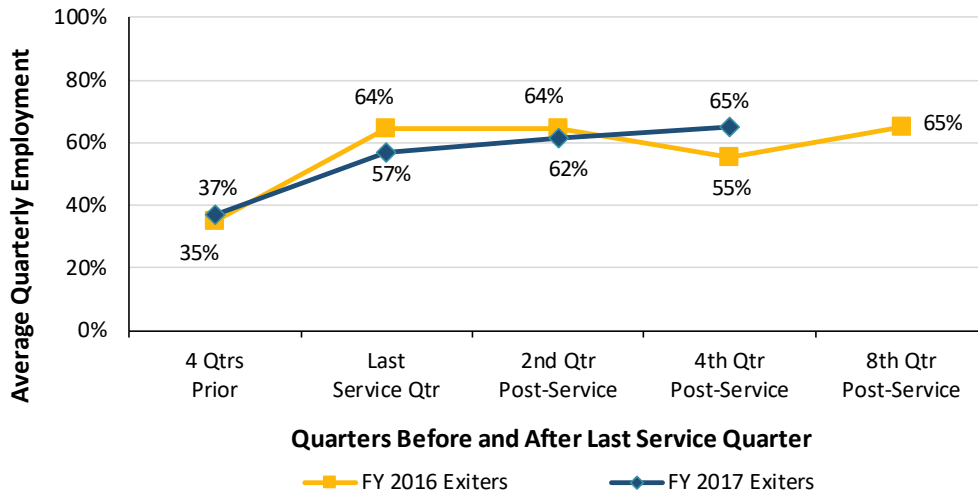
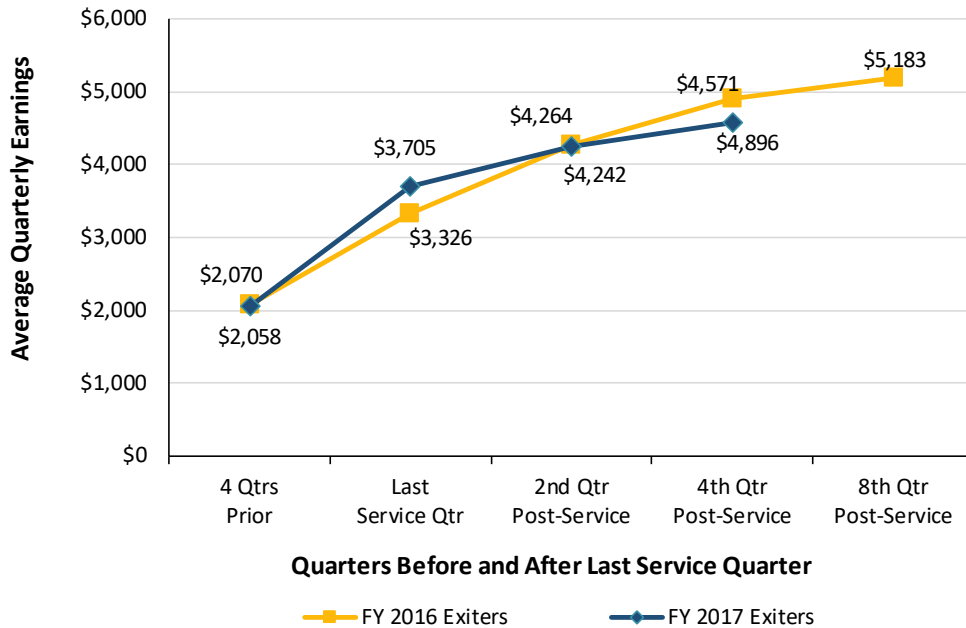


Figure 12. Average Quarterly Earnings for AYW WERC-TC Exitters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



The next section of this paper describes the non-WERC-TC Travis County funded programs including a brief profile of the provider and its workforce development program(s), a summary of participant demographic characteristics obtained at the time of program entry, and details outcomes and impacts for participants who exited the program during FY 2016 – FY 2017. The report presents impacts only for groups/providers for which adequate matching could be performed.

The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: “... improves the quality and increases the availability of literacy services for Central Texans.” * The core strategy of the organization is to embed its programming in the business, healthcare and nonprofit sectors.

In FY 2016 and FY 2017, Travis County invested \$273,054 in two Literacy Coalition programs: Workforce Infusion (\$241,196) and Literacy Illuminates (\$31,858).

In FY 2017 Literacy Illuminates funding decreased by less than 1%: \$30,000.



*[http:// willread.org](http://willread.org)

LITERACY COALITION OF CENTRAL TEXAS

Workforce Development Programs and Services

In 2014, the Literacy Coalition merged with the Ascend Center for Learning and *English @ Work*, started a bilingual parenting program, and added a workforce development component to their collaborative capacity-building programs across a number of partner sites.²⁴

As the Ascend Center merged with the Literacy Coalition, the program began to migrate from Workplace Competency to Job Readiness to the present Workforce Infusion Program. The Workforce Infusion program builds on the Literacy Coalition’s network of community-based service providers to implement workforce curricula that integrates literacy with occupation-specific workforce preparation and training across regional adult education programs. Services are targeted for very low-skilled, working age adults who are currently enrolled in adult literacy programming (ABE, GED, and ESL), and have goals to improve their employment status. The program works to utilize the capacity of community literacy services to:

- build career awareness,
- increase job readiness skills, and
- increase employment and career advancement.

The Literacy Coalition recruits interested individuals through their network of adult literacy partner organizations. Each partner site works with two Literacy Coalition AmeriCorps members (an instructor and a job coach) who are trained to implement the Workforce Infusion program in the context of each site’s existing literacy services.²⁵

²⁴ The Literacy Coalition coordinates services at a total of 12 sites: 11 are community partners and one site operated directly by the Literacy Coalition (The Learning Center formerly the ASCEND Center for Learning).

²⁵ During the first year of transition to the Workforce Infusion (FY 2016) model, AmeriCorps members who were teaching ESL/ABE were trained to add workforce prep and career development services into their teaching and their work with

Students currently enrolled in literacy programs meet with AmeriCorps members to complete an intake process to establish goals and a plan to obtain educational and employment goals. Participants take the TABE at the beginning of the program to identify skill strengths and weaknesses. Participants are then retested after every 40 hours of instruction.

Students interested in advanced workforce preparation receive job readiness skill-building services and work with a job coach to complete an Individual Learning Plan to further outline their educational and career goals. Students participate in an eight week, Monday through Thursday, 3 hour a day, job readiness program that is offered during both daytime and evening hours at six sites. The job readiness training curriculum includes: computer literacy, the Microsoft Office suite and google drive system, job etiquette, letter and email writing, job application writing, resume development, and interview skills. The job coach will connect students to additional resources as needed. In FY 2017, the target wage for those that enter employment was \$10.00 per hour.

The team of job coaches meet monthly to strategize working with area employers. The team works to create relationships with general managers and business owners who offer higher than typical entry level wages focused on the hospitality and food service industries. In FY 2017, Workforce Infusion sponsored a cohort of students to attend the Austin Career Institute (ACI) HVAC program. All students who completed the program were employed in the HVAC field with good wages. Work Infusion continues to sponsor individual students to participate in the program.

Job coaches use text messaging to follow-up with employed participants and offer an incentive program to track client employment and job retention rates. Clients who return documentation proving improved employment receive \$100 in gift cards, and those proving retention in a new position for at least six months receive a \$50 gift card.

Staff report the political climate surrounding immigration deportation enforcement impacts class attendance. Staff are responding by consistently reinforcing to students the agencies philosophy: *Everyone deserves the right to an education*. For example, one training provider initiated

students. In FY 2017, the program moved toward having dedicated ESL instructors and six job coaches who each split their time between two sites.

individual telephone calls of assurance to participants who failed to return to class following highly publicized deportations in Travis County.²⁶

Literacy Illuminates is the Literacy Coalition’s community-wide outreach and education effort. The program endeavors to raise general awareness about the literacy services in the area, distribute educational and informational materials to low literate parents of young children—to promote high literacy rates among their children—and to better connect social service professionals to the literacy resources available for their clients. The outreach campaign includes: Spanish radio announcements regarding available services and service enrollment periods, a Facebook presence, and tabling at targeted community events, such as area school enrollment events.²⁷

Support Services

Literacy Coalition partner sites each deliver varying support services to participants. At each site, the AmeriCorps volunteers maintain and update a site manual that includes site specific supports available for students and a listing of additional common referral sources. Students enrolled at the Literacy Coalition Learning Center site are eligible to access a web of support services. The Learning Center employs a full-time case manager/participant support specialist and a social services coordinator who work to improve program persistence and completion by offering a number of support services such as transportation assistance, primarily in the form of bus passes, but has also provided assistance with auto repairs and gas cards. The organization also provides emergency rent or utility assistance on a case-by-case basis. The social services coordinator makes referrals to organizations throughout Travis County based on participant need. Child care is a noted need for parenting participants and parents may be referred to Child Inc. to apply for Early Head Start/Head Start services. Also, staff report that students often create informal child care arrangements among themselves.²⁸

²⁶ Information from a conversation with Melanie Moore, MA, Chief Executive Officer, Yaira Robinson, Director of Collaborative Programs, and Ashlee Kraus, Program Manager, Career Development, of the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas. May 1, 2018.

²⁷ Information from a conversation with Sadia Tirmizi of the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas. May 14, 2018.

²⁸ Yaira Robinson, Director of Collaborative Programs, is a member of the United Way of Greater Austin 2-Gen Strategic Planning Committee. In 2018, the Literacy Coalition received a United Way grant to work with partner organizations to explore possibilities for 2-gen approaches throughout the provider network.

Participant Profile

This analysis reports on the available data of 184 Literacy Coalition participants who exited the program in FY 2016 – FY 2017.²⁹ The average age of Literacy Coalition participant exiters is 35, a plurality of program participants were between the ages of 18 and 29 (46.2%). Most exiters identified as Hispanic (38.6%), with 28.3 percent identifying as White and 28.3 percent identifying as Black. Most exiters were female (64.1%). The majority, 33.7 percent, reported less than a 12th grade education. Exiters report residing primarily in the following areas: East Austin (40.2%), South Austin (26.6%), and North Austin (17.4%).³⁰

Outcomes are reported for 180 participant social security numbers identified within the wage data. Program impacts are unavailable due to insufficient matches with a comparison group.

Participant Outcomes

Table 9 presents the available data for Literacy Coalition participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program, quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals serviced by Literacy Coalition was just over 52 percent. Average quarterly employment grew to nearly 62 percent during the exit quarter and remained constant for the second quarter post-services. For the FY 2016 cohort for whom data is available, employment decreased in the eighth quarter post-services by 7.3 percentage points (52.4%).

Earnings varied by nearly \$1,000 between the two cohorts during the four quarters prior to services. Earnings grew on average for the FY 2016 cohort by \$805 from \$3,838 prior to services to \$4,652 eight quarters past service for those whom data are available. The FY 2017 cohort wages grew on average by \$266 between the quarter before services from \$4,959 to \$5,225 for the second quarter post service, the last quarter data was available (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 13 and Figure 14).

²⁹ Literacy programs are not required by Travis County to request social security numbers from clients.

³⁰ Information on exiter judicial involvement, veteran status and receipt of public benefits were missing from the reported data.

Table 9. Literacy Coalition Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	180	180	180	77	42	180
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	50.7%	55.8%	59.7%	53.3%	52.4%	55.6%
FY 2017	53.4%	66.0%	63.1%			63.1%
Overall	52.2%	61.7%	61.7%	53.3%	52.4%	58.2%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$3,837	\$3,654	\$3,992	\$4,494	\$4,652	\$4,314
FY 2017	\$4,959	\$5,688	\$5,225	.	.	\$5,225
Overall	\$4,494	\$4,900	\$4,714	\$4,494	\$4,652	\$4,654
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	37.0%	39.0%	41.6%	49.4%	38.1%	43.9%
FY 2017	46.6%	43.7%	50.5%			50.5%
Overall	42.5%	41.7%	46.7%	49.4%	38.1%	46.2%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	2.0%	2.6%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	1.0%
FY 2017	1.7%	0.0%	1.0%			1.0%
Overall	1.8%	1.1%	0.6%	2.6%	0.0%	1.0%

Source: Literacy Coalition participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering Literacy Coalition, 42.5 percent of participants overall had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, 49.4 percent met the requirements for eligibility. Very few participants (less than 1% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 13. Average Quarterly Employment for Literacy Coalition Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

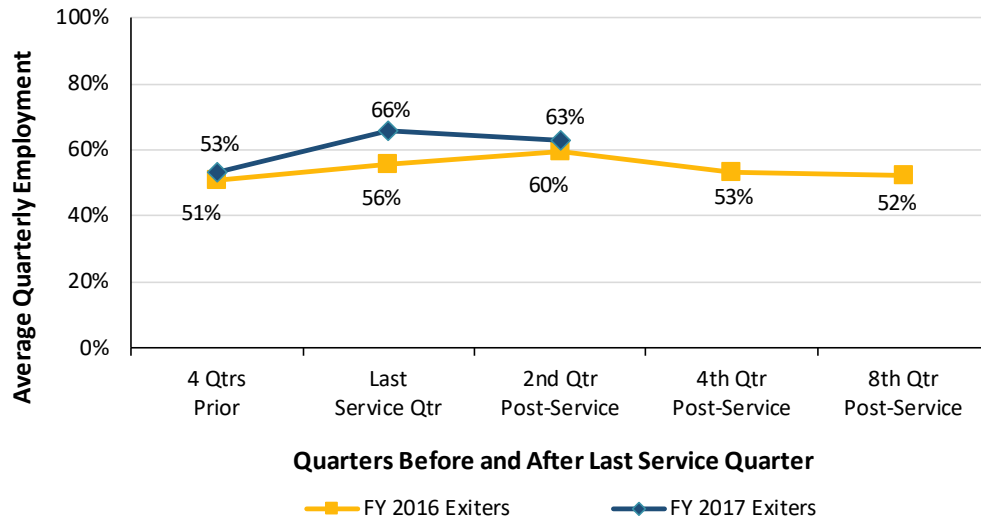
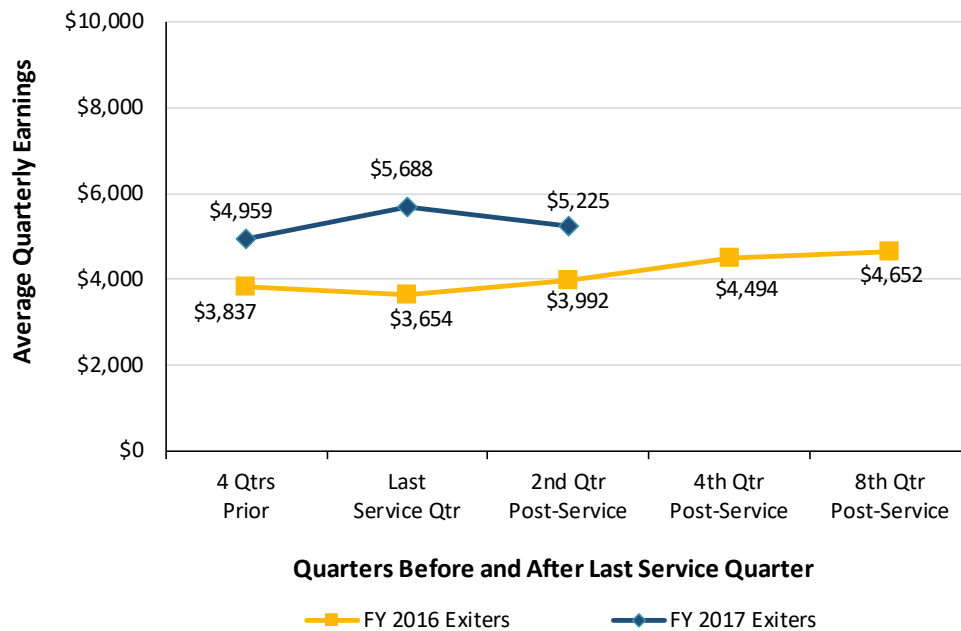


Figure 14. Average Quarterly Earnings of Employment of Literacy Coalition Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



“Capital IDEA’s mission is to lift working adults out of poverty and into living wage careers through education and career advancement.”*

The program provides non-traditional, low-income students with the opportunity to pursue long-term training in high-wage, high-demand occupations.

Capital IDEA collaborates with employers and training providers to help prepare participants for good jobs with family-supporting wages and benefits.

In FY’s 2014 and 2015, annual funding from Travis County was \$875,000. FY 2016, Travis Co. removed child care funding from the grant and the amount decreased to \$760,800. In FY 2017, the program received level funding.



*www.capitalIDEA.org

CAPITAL IDEA

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Capital IDEA is a sectoral workforce development program offering training in health care, information technology, and professional trades industries. Healthcare occupations (both patient care and allied health) historically have accounted for approximately 75 percent of the training in which participants are enrolled. Each training program supported at Capital IDEA is identified by area employers as an occupation in high-demand paying \$20.00 or more per hour for occupations requiring an associate’s degree, and at least \$12.00 for other certifications: The FY 2017 target wages for Capital IDEA participants entering employment.

Eligible applicants must be at least 18 years old, have a GED or High School diploma, lack an associates or higher degree, meet reading and math skills requirements, and report a household income at or below 200% FPG.³¹

Interested individuals must attend a one hour CareerUp program information session, complete an online application and schedule an initial meeting with staff. Applicants are carefully screened for suitability and commitment through an assessment process including: the TABE and the System for Assessment and Group Evaluation (SAGE).³² Applicants participate in a career counseling session

to review assessment results and prepare an individual Services Strategy to outline the training and support services needed to meet their educational and career goals. The last step in the process is an interview with a Capital IDEA director who makes the final recommendations on acceptance of applicants.

³¹ The majority of Capital IDEA’s participants are non-traditional, first generation college students.

³² The SAGE assessment evaluates reasoning, math, language, interests, strengths, and aptitudes.

Participants scoring as low as a 5th grade level on the TABE and are judged to be unlikely to pass the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA), which is required for college admission, are enrolled in the College Prep Academy. The College Prep Academy, offered at the ACC Highland Campus, is an intensive 6.5 hour per day, five-day a week, 12 week program designed to build math, reading, writing, and study skills. The College Prep Academy training is customized to meet student specific needs and often students qualify to be successful on the TSI within a shorter time frame. Less than 10 percent of participants require more than one semester of the academy; those who do repeat typically need additional support in math. Ninety-five percent of Capital IDEA students enroll in ACC, the remaining students enrolling in Temple College. Overall, the average length of enrollment for participants is 3.5 to 4 years in training, plus two years of job placement assistance, follow-up and guidance as needed.³³

Furthermore, in Fall 2015, in response to increasing employer demand for experienced workers, Capital IDEA and ACC introduced the IT Career Expressway (ACC calls the program Career ACCelerator), which provides paid internships to IT students.³⁴ Capital IDEA IT participants attend classes at the ACCelerator lab at the ACC Highland Campus. Students can utilize multiple pods of (600+) computer stations for individualized and self-paced learning, as well as the tutoring, academic advising, adult and continuing education, and college readiness services in the state-of-the-art facility. Capital IDEA also has staff and offices at the Highland campus.

In FY 2016, in an effort to recruit more IT students, Capital IDEA began recruiting from Austin ISD, low-income, high-need applicants to enter the program right after graduation. An initial recruitment campaign yielded 100 interested qualifying students; however, the majority identified a desire to enter the nursing field, demonstrating the ongoing challenge in recruiting students for IT programs. Austin ISD counselors continue to refer qualified students to Capital IDEA. Administrators note that 40 percent of these recent high school graduates fail to pass the Texas Success Initiative Assessment and need developmental education.³⁵

³³ Those who withdraw or suspend participation usually do so at about 2.5 years, typically for financial, personal health or family issues, according to Capital IDEA Director, Steve Jackobs, during a conversation on 8/28/2015.

³⁴ Entry-level IT jobs may pay less than the target wage, but the career path is expected to quickly lead to occupations that surpass that rate. As the IT Career Expressway ramps up in the next year, it will rebalance the occupational prevalence of healthcare occupations. Jackobs attributes the model to the Workforce Potential Project, conducted by the Ray Marshall Center in 2012 on behalf of the Austin Area Research Association (AARO).
<http://www.mystatesman.com/news/business/acc-programs-aim-build-a-fast-track-to-higher-pay/npbsx/>

³⁵ Information from a conversation with Steve Jackobs, Executive Director, Eva Rios-Lleverino, Director of Operations, and Amy Price, Director of Development, on 8/26/2016 and 4/23/2018.

Each student is assigned a career navigator to help guide them through the higher education system offering one-on-one sessions and support group sessions. Topics for these sessions are driven by student needs and their ability to navigate the college experience. Navigators meet individually with participants at the start of each semester to make sure they get off on the right track. Participants are encouraged to manage their own self-sufficiency by working part-time during training. Financial literacy and job readiness are core competencies of the program supported through ongoing discussions with and support from Career Navigators.

Support Services

Capital IDEA covers all tuition, fees, books, the cost of uniforms, shoes, tools, training software, and anything required on a class syllabus. Workforce Solutions' WIOA program partners with Capital IDEA to provide funding for some of these training related costs. ACC students have a "green pass", which entitles them to free bus, rail, and Express Bus services in the region for the entire semester.

Participants receive assistance with purchasing school supplies including backpacks, printer ink, and paper. The program also covers the cost of other services important to learning, such as eye examinations and eyeglasses. Emergency utility vouchers, and mortgage and rent assistance are also available on a case-by-case basis.

Workforce Solutions provides limited child care services for Capital IDEA participants living in Travis County. Through 2015, Capital IDEA offered supplemental child care support for qualifying parents who did not receive support through Workforce Solutions. In FY 2016, child care expenditures were disallowed under the Travis County Workforce Development grant and child care has become an ongoing challenge for parents of young children. In response, Capital IDEA hired a part-time program specialist to assist students navigating the child care process and continues to disperse limited program funds to provide for the child care needs of participant families.³⁶

Capital IDEA has a network of informal and formal relationships with social service providers. Participants in need of mental health counseling may be referred to the Samaritan Center

³⁶ FY 2016, Travis County disallowed child care support expenditures, causing Capital IDEA to rely on Workforce Solutions or other funding sources to provide child care support. In July 2016, TWC placed a freeze on child care support for Priority 3 workforce participants, reserving funds for Priority 1 and 2 (TANF and Child Protective Services). Although existing workforce clients were grandfathered in, the freeze presents ongoing challenges to the for new Capital IDEA participants. Information from a conversation Eva Rios-Lleverino, Director of Operations, Capital IDEA on 9/13/2017 and 4/23/2018. In 2018, William Askew, Career Navigation Program Manager, participates in the United Way sponsored 2-Gen Stakeholder Network strategic planning.

or LifeWorks. Other partners include Dress for Success and other sources for interview clothes, Blue/Brown Santa, food banks, the Housing Authority, Foundation Communities, SafePlace, and many others.

Participant Profile

This analysis reports on 322 Capital IDEA participants who exited the program in FY 2016 – FY 2017. Although the average age of Capital IDEA participant exiters is 30, a plurality of program participants were between the ages of 18 and 29 (53.9%). Most exiters identified as White (46.4%), with 25.7 percent identifying as Black and 27.2 percent identifying as Hispanic. Most exiters were female (67.5%). Forty-seven percent reported a 12th grade education or GED, with 51.4 percent reported having attended college. Thirteen percent reported judicial involvement and 2.5 percent identified as veterans. The majority of the exiters report residing in three areas: East Austin (28.5%), North Austin (27.9%), and South Austin (22.9%).

According to the Capital IDEA Annual Reports for 2016 and 2017 more than half (69%) of program participants completed certificates or degrees in a healthcare-related training program; 16 percent completed an information technology-related program; and 14 percent completed professional trade or other training program.³⁷

Outcomes and impacts are reported for 322 participant social security numbers identified within the wage data.

Participant Outcomes

Table 10 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for Capital IDEA FY 2016 – FY 2017 exiters. In the four quarters prior to enrolling in Capital IDEA, overall quarterly employment was approximately 68 percent, rising during the last quarter of service to an average of 71.7 percent. Capital IDEA exiters experience relatively high employment rates when compared to other programs described in this report. The rate of employment is consistent with the Capital IDEA philosophy of client self-sufficiency that encourages participants to maintain and obtain employment through-out their participation in the program. Program exiters continued to exhibit strong employment levels (close to or above 80%) during the four quarters post-service and increasing for the FY 2016 cohort to 86.8 percent during the eight quarter post service for those whom data are available. Earnings in

³⁷ Capital IDEA Annual Reports are available at: <http://www.capitalidea.org/about/#history>

the pre-service quarter averaged \$4,392 for employed participants. During the four post-service quarters Capital IDEA exiters earned an average of \$8,904, representing 100 percentage increase over their pre-service earnings (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 15 and Figure 16).

Table 10. Capital IDEA Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	322	322	322	253	68	322
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	68.5%	72.4%	79.9%	79.9%	86.8%	81.0%
FY 2017	68.2%	71.0%	87.8%	81.0%		85.5%
Overall	68.4%	71.7%	83.5%	80.2%	86.8%	82.6%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$4,476	\$6,350	\$8,237	\$8,562	\$8,742	\$8,460
FY 2017	\$4,292	\$4,687	\$8,762	\$9,647		\$9,054
Overall	\$4,392	\$5,594	\$8,491	\$8,904	\$8,742	\$8,677
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	55.9%	65.5%	64.4%	71.8%	67.7%	68.0%
FY 2017	61.4%	64.2%	64.2%	73.4%		67.4%
Overall	58.4%	64.9%	64.3%	72.3%	67.7%	67.8%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	0.3%	0.6%	0.6%	1.2%	1.5%	1.0%
FY 2017	0.5%	0.7%	0.7%	1.3%		0.9%
Overall	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%	1.2%	1.5%	0.9%

Source: Capital IDEA participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering Capital IDEA , over half, 58.4 percent of participants overall had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, nearly three-quarters (72.3%) met the requirements for eligibility. Very few participants (less than .9% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 15. Average Quarterly Employment for Capital IDEA Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

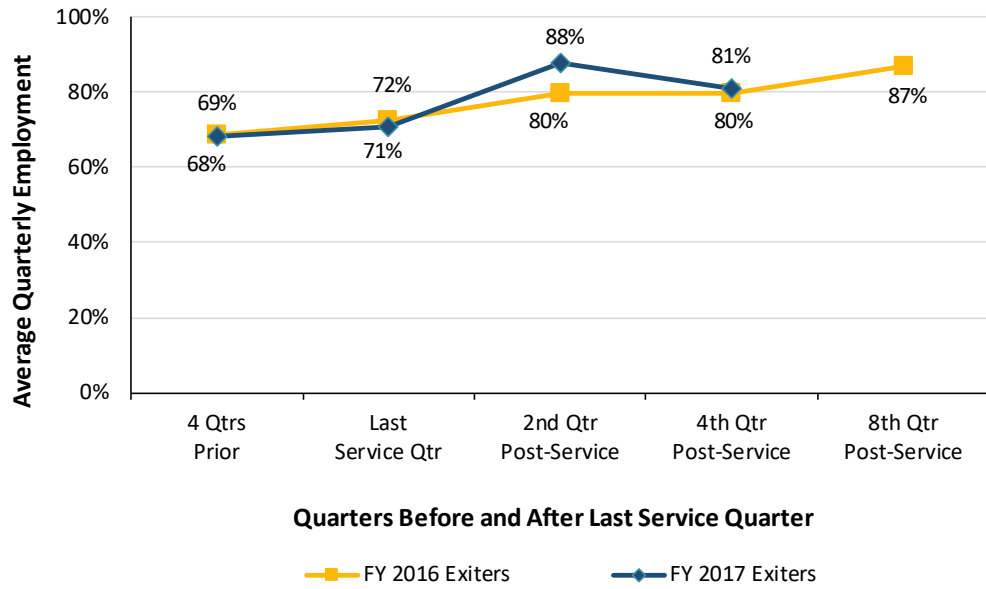
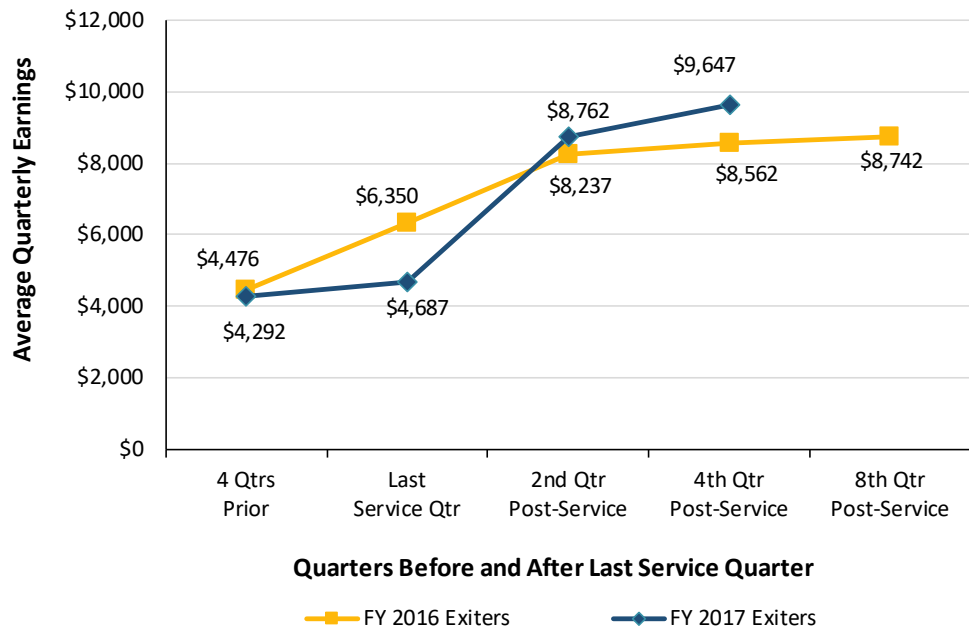


Figure 16. Average Quarterly Earnings of Employment Capital IDEA Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



Program Impacts

Table 11 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of the Capital IDEA FY 2016 – FY 2017 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. Participation in Capital IDEA was positively associated with two of the four outcomes measures of interest, notably a \$95 advantage in wages and a 12 percentage point advantage in quarterly employment. The employment advantage is statistically significant.

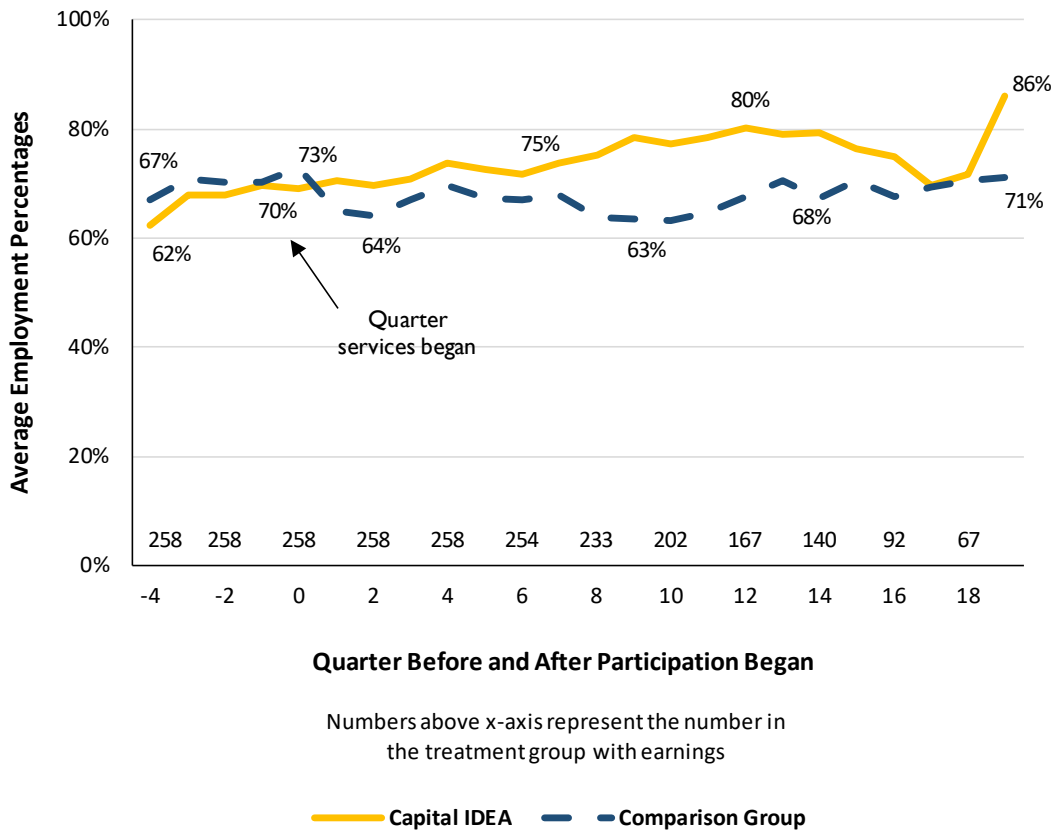
Table 11. Capital IDEA Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016 – FY 2017

Impact Measure	Number of Post Service Person Qtrs	All Qtrs Post Service Entry Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post Service Entry Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment:	3,757	67.1%	80.7%	13.7%	12.0%**
Average Qrtly Earnings:	2,519	\$6,740	\$8,370	\$1,630	\$95
Qualified for UI Benefits:	2,468	69.6%	65.2%	-4.4%	0%
Filed UI Claim:	3,757	1.65%	0.21%	-1.44%	-1.29%

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$

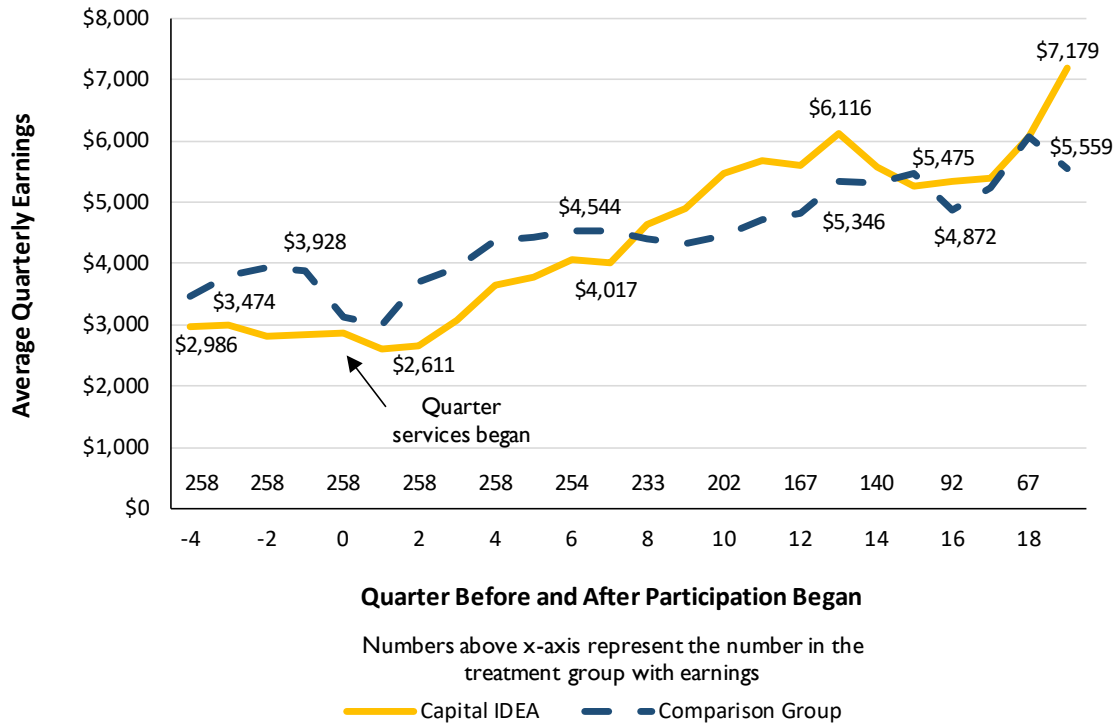
In Figure 17 the impact of participation in Capital IDEA services is examined by looking at participants' employment over time in relation to the comparison group's employment. The analysis shows that Capital IDEA participants' average quarterly rate of employment exceeds the rate of the comparison group for a large share of all post-service quarters.

**Figure 17. Employment Rates Over Time, Capital IDEA Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016 – FY 2017**



In Figure 18 the impact of participation in Capital IDEA services is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that Capital IDEA participants' average quarterly wages make relatively steady gains beginning during the second post-service quarter and exceed the average quarterly wages of the comparison group for the majority of the remaining available quarters.

Figure 18. Unconditional Earnings Over Time, Capital IDEA Participants vs. Comparison Group



The LifeWorks mission is to advocate for youth and families seeking their path to self-sufficiency through comprehensive service delivery including housing, counseling, education, and workforce development.

LifeWorks provides services for youth and young adults (ages 16 to 26) facing major obstacles to achieving their goals including: homelessness, trauma, abuse and judicial involvement.

FY 2016 Travis County invested \$241,196 in the LifeWorks education and workforce development program. In FY 2017, the program received level funding.



www.lifeworksaustin.org

LIFEWORKS

Workforce Development Programs and Services

The current LifeWorks program was created in 1998 through the merger of Pathways Community Counseling, Child & Family Service, Teenage Parent Council of Austin, and Youth Options. The goal of the merger was to establish a continuum of support for youth and families experiencing crises.

LifeWorks has more than 50 years' experience working with homeless youth, youth aging out of foster care, young adults, young parents, and youth involved with the juvenile justice system.³⁸ LifeWorks provides a continuum of services for vulnerable youth with housing, counseling, education and workforce development supports.³⁹ Education and workforce programs provide literacy and GED classes, referrals to other area training opportunities (American YouthWorks, Skillpoint Alliance, and Goodwill), workforce placement and critical skill-building support. Youth and families may access one or multiple LifeWorks programs with continuity.

In FY 2016, Travis County funded LifeWorks to implement the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model, an evidence based supported employment model developed

by Dartmouth College. The model, originally designed to provide employment services, training opportunities, and job placement assistance for individuals with mental health challenges, has been adapted to serve LifeWorks youth and young adults. The model has been modified to offer strategies for service providers working in collaboration with communities, youth, and young adults

³⁸ LifeWorks is an aftercare transition services provider for foster youth, these services are funded by Texas DFPS.

³⁹ In January 2017, Austin was awarded a \$5.2 MM Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create a locally coordinated community response to prevent and end homelessness for unaccompanied youth by 2020. The Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) is collaborating with LifeWorks to accomplish this goal. *Ending Youth Homelessness in Austin/Travis County*. Available at: <http://www.lifeworksaustin.org/research-resources/>

to overcome and work-around previous obstacles to workplace success. The core premise of IPS is the belief that work promotes mental wellness. LifeWorks has successfully completed two IPS fidelity model reviews.

Youth and young adults receiving services through LifeWorks are eligible to participate in the IPS program. Participants are referred to the IPS program by a LifeWorks staff member, or are identified during case staffings, have a valid ID and Social Security Card, and have identified employment as a goal.⁴⁰ Individuals entering the workforce program have an established relationship with a LifeWorks case manager who works in collaboration with the IPS employment specialist. Employment specialists focus on employment assessment, the development of relationships with employers, job placement, job coaching, and follow-along supports. Employment specialists seek employers offering wages and employee benefits that will place participants entering the workforce for the first time, on a track toward self-sufficiency. Industries such as retail, food service, hospitality and some skilled trades, are typical employers of participants. Employment support services include, at a minimum, weekly visits for the first month of employment followed by monthly contact. Visits occur in locations that works best for the client: such as a local coffee shop or library. Supports are individualized and can range from wake-up phone calls and transportation assistance, to assistance learning specific job tasks and support with on-the-job interpersonal relationships. For FY 2017, the targeted average starting wage for employment was \$12.00 per hour. An IPS employment specialist is available one day each week at the Youth & Family Resource Drop-In Center to provide information regarding the program to interested youth.

LifeWorks GED and literacy program targets youth and young adults who have dropped out of school or are parenting and face significant barriers to achieving their educational goals such as: homelessness, pregnancy, parenthood, or involvement in the juvenile justice system. Education services are provided at two LifeWorks locations Monday through Thursday at a variety of times. Education services are offered in collaboration with Austin Community College through the Adult Education and Literacy Consortium, as well as the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas. The Literacy Coalition coordinates AmeriCorps volunteers to support the direct education services. All students are assessed using the TABE test, and an individualized service plan is developed to identify service

⁴⁰ Team staffing of clients include case managers, career navigators and a mental health specialist.

needs and the monitoring of educational progress. While studying in the program, each student's educational progress is assessed monthly.

Support Services

At intake, each client works with their case manager to complete an initial assessment using a Self-Sufficiency Matrix (SSM). The SSM identifies client strengths, needs, and goals in order to guide case managers to make referrals and provide supports. LifeWorks directly assists clients with housing, counseling, and transportation services, while referring to a variety of service providers within Travis County to provide services such as child care, additional training beyond a GED or H.S. Diploma, and other supports. The SSM, reviewed and updated quarterly, is used to track clients' movement across programs and measure the impact of services.⁴¹

Participant Profile – Participant Outcomes – Program Impacts

Due to limited available participant data, this report is unable to report on participant demographics, participant outcomes, nor program impacts.

⁴¹ Information from a conversations with Jackie Platt, Division Director, Education and Workforce Division, Nicholas Winowsky, Program Director, Workforce Development and GED Programs, and Peg Gavin, Director of Grants and Contracts, LifeWorks. 9/13/ 2017 and 4/24/2018.

SKILLPOINT ALLIANCE

Workforce Development Programs and Services

The Skillpoint Alliance Gateway program objective is to employ individuals in high-demand occupations, at a livable wage, through short-term training. Depending on the occupation targeted, the 40 hours a week training may range from four to eight weeks. Each curriculum emphasizes project-based learning opportunities with a combination of class time and active hands-on skill development. The program targets individuals with challenges to employment: history of judicial involvement, veterans, homeless, and currently incarcerated youth. The majority of program participants report an income less than 200% FPG.

Since 2010 the Gateway program has offered a number of different certification programs, including culinary arts; office administration; construction, including HVAC and plumbing; and machine operator. In 2017, the program offered training and certification in nurse aide; culinary arts; electrical; HVAC; and in response to local workforce needs identified by an industry Advisory Committee, Skillpoint expanded their plumbing curriculum to include a pipefitting course.

Skillpoint Alliance is in the process of developing a feedback loop with area employers who hire program completers to inform and update course curriculum to meet

employer needs. Currently the pre-apprentice electrical program receives employer feedback and Skillpoint is in the process of developing similar procedures with employers of completers from the training programs.

Participants in the skilled trade programs must demonstrate an 8th grade academic competency on the General Assessment of Instructional Need (GAIN) skills test. In FY 2016, individuals with a high school diploma or GED were exempt from this requirement. During this

Skillpoint Alliance is a regional workforce intermediary providing short-term occupational skills training through its Gateway program. Skillpoints' mission is "...to provide a gateway for individuals to transform their lives through rigorous skills-based training and education."*

Skillpoint connects individuals, training providers, employers, and other community organizations together to meet identified workforce skills gaps.

In FY 2016 & FY 2017, Travis County invested \$270,800 in the Gateway program.



*www.skillpointalliance.org

period of exemption for qualifying students, training providers identified that some students entering under the exemption did not have the literacy skills to be successful in the fast-paced training environment, accordingly the requirement was reinstated.⁴²

Skillpoint prepares participants for the workforce by creating a worksite style environment throughout the training period. Participants are expected to arrive on-time, be prepared to work and conduct themselves in a professional manner. Twelve hours of Employability Workshops provide professional development and job readiness training including: application and resume development, interview preparation and practice sessions, job site visits, and how to discuss potential challenges to employment (such as previous judicial involvement). Skillpoint staff maintain a number of employer partnerships that extend to participants opportunities for direct introductions to employers seeking to hire skilled workers, and offer paid apprenticeship positions. For FY 2017, the targeted average starting wage for employment was \$12.00 per hour.

The Nurses Aide training program is provided in partnership with the Marbridge Foundation and the Austin CAN Academy (the academy providing training to opportunity youth). The four week program prepares participants to work in hospitals, home health care, or assisted living facilities. Participants also receive weekly professional development training.⁴³

Support Services

In addition to covering the full cost of the training and professional development activities noted above, Skillpoint also provides substantial support services to help participants cope with the travel, equipment, and clothing requirements of the programs. Services include bus passes, tools, work clothes, shoes, and books. Skillpoint also connects Gateway participants with other resources in the community.

Participant Profile

Among the 346 Skillpoint Alliance participants included in this evaluation who exited the program during FY 2016 – FY 2017 the average participant age was 31. A third of exiters identified as Black (35.5%), 16.2 percent identified as White, with 18.2 percent identifying as Hispanic.⁴⁴ Most exiters were female (59%). Thirty-nine percent reported attending or having graduated from college

⁴²Information from a conversation with Aaron Hill, Program Manager, May 10, 2018.

⁴³Skillpoint Alliance 2017 Annual Report. Available at: <http://skillpointalliance.org/about-us/annual-report/>

⁴⁴Race/Ethnicity data were missing for 36.1% and 51.4% of participants respectively.

and 44.2 percent reported a 12th grade or GED education level. Approximately 10 percent reported judicial involvement and 5.8 percent reported veteran status. The majority of the exiters report residing in three areas: East Austin (23.1%), South Austin (20.5%), and North Austin (12.4%).

Outcomes and impacts are reported for 346 participant social security numbers identified within the wage data.

Participant Outcomes

At the outset, it is important to note that the construction industry has significant shares of self-employed and independent contractors, some of whom are very likely misclassified – workers who would not appear in UI wage records. Therefore, the outcomes presented here likely underestimate actual outcomes for Gateway participants. Table 12 provides an overview of Gateway participant outcomes. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entry quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas averaged 65.5 percent with stronger employment rates reported one year post-service at 79.9 percent. For the FY 2016 cohort for whom data was available, the eighth quarter average employment dropping by approximately 11 percentage points to 68.6 percent only 3.1 percentage point difference from the reported pre-service quarters. Overall, average wages for the four quarters prior to service was \$4,136 increasing on average to \$4,980 one year post-services. Average eight quarter post-service reported earnings available for the FY 2016 cohort increased to \$5,411 (outcomes are further illustrated in Figures 19 and 20).

Table 12. Skillpoint Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	346	346	346	247	102	346
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	66.4%	66.3%	82.6%	79.8%	68.6%	78.4%
FY 2017	64.6%	63.1%	75.6%	78.3%		76.4%
Overall	65.5%	64.7%	79.2%	79.4%	68.6%	77.7%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$4,041	\$2,934	\$5,059	\$4,932	\$5,411	\$5,077
FY 2017	\$4,241	\$3,127	\$4,712	\$5,109		\$4,831
Overall	\$4,136	\$3,025	\$4,898	\$4,980	\$5,411	\$4,995
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	55.1%	57.9%	60.7%	64.6%	65.7%	63.3%
FY 2017	52.7%	53.6%	56.6%	60.9%		57.8%
Overall	53.9%	55.8%	58.7%	63.6%	65.7%	61.4%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	2.0%	2.8%	1.7%	1.7%	2.0%	1.8%
FY 2017	2.4%	3.6%	0.6%	4.4%		1.7%
Overall	2.2%	3.2%	1.2%	2.4%	2.0%	1.7%

Source: Skillpoint participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering Skillpoint over half (53.9%) of participants overall had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training 63.6 percent met the requirements for eligibility. Very few participants (less than 1.7% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 19. Average Quarterly Employment for Skillpoint Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

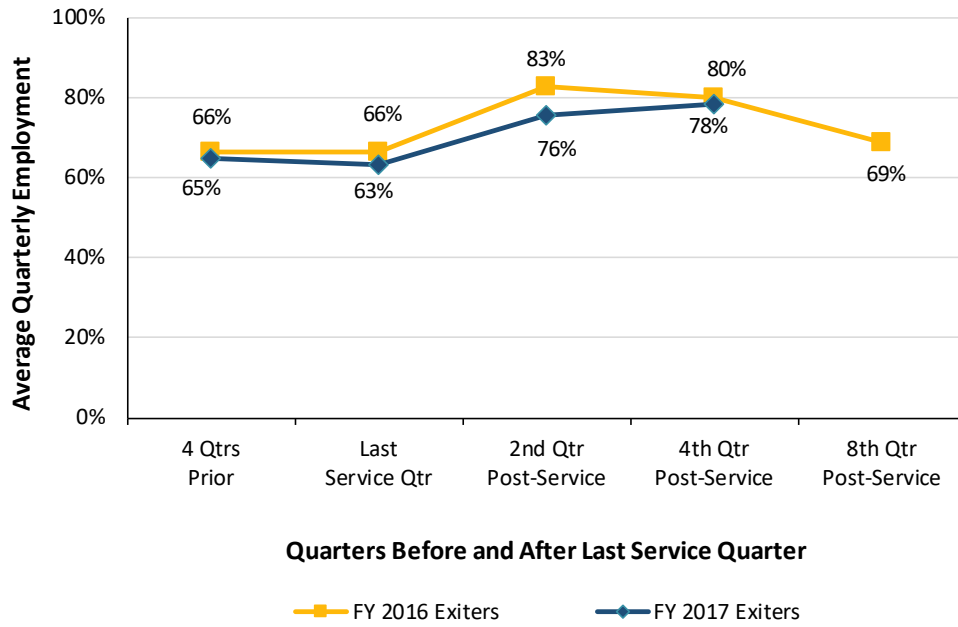
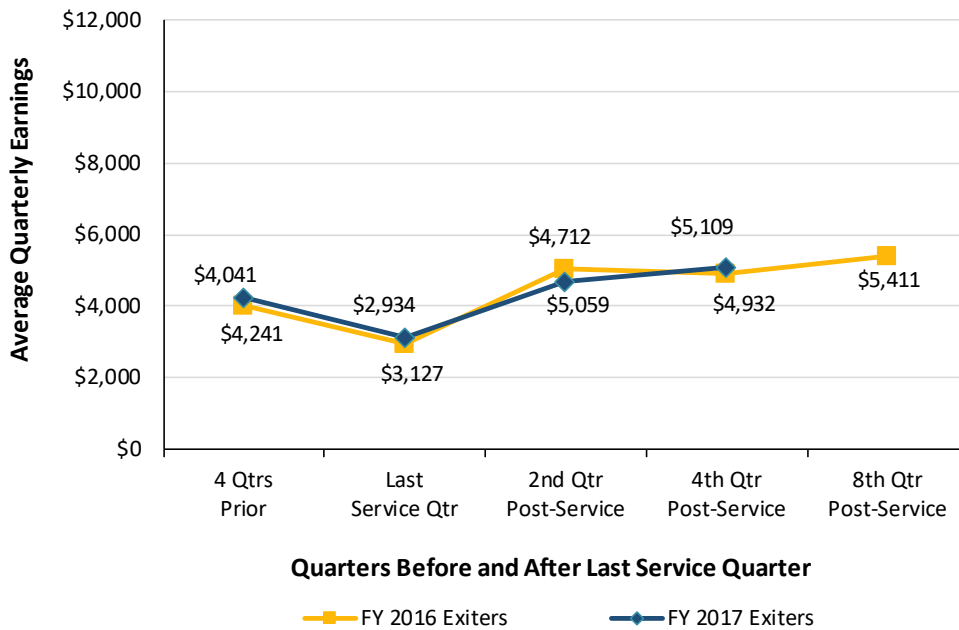


Figure 20. Average Quarterly Earnings of Employed Skillpoint Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



Program Impacts

Table 13 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of the Skillpoint FY 2016 – FY 2017 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. Participation was positively associated with one of the four outcome measures of interest: a statistically significant 8.8 percentage point increase in employment. However, the quarterly wages were negatively associated with one of the four outcome measures of interest: -\$1,068 in earnings. According to the Skillpoint Alliance 2017 Annual Report, nearly half of the 2017 participants were trained as nurses aids, an occupation that typically pays lower wages; furthermore, as many as 20 percent of participants enrolled in construction trade training enter apprenticeship programs that also pay relatively lower wages.⁴⁵

Table 13. Skillpoint Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016 – FY 2017

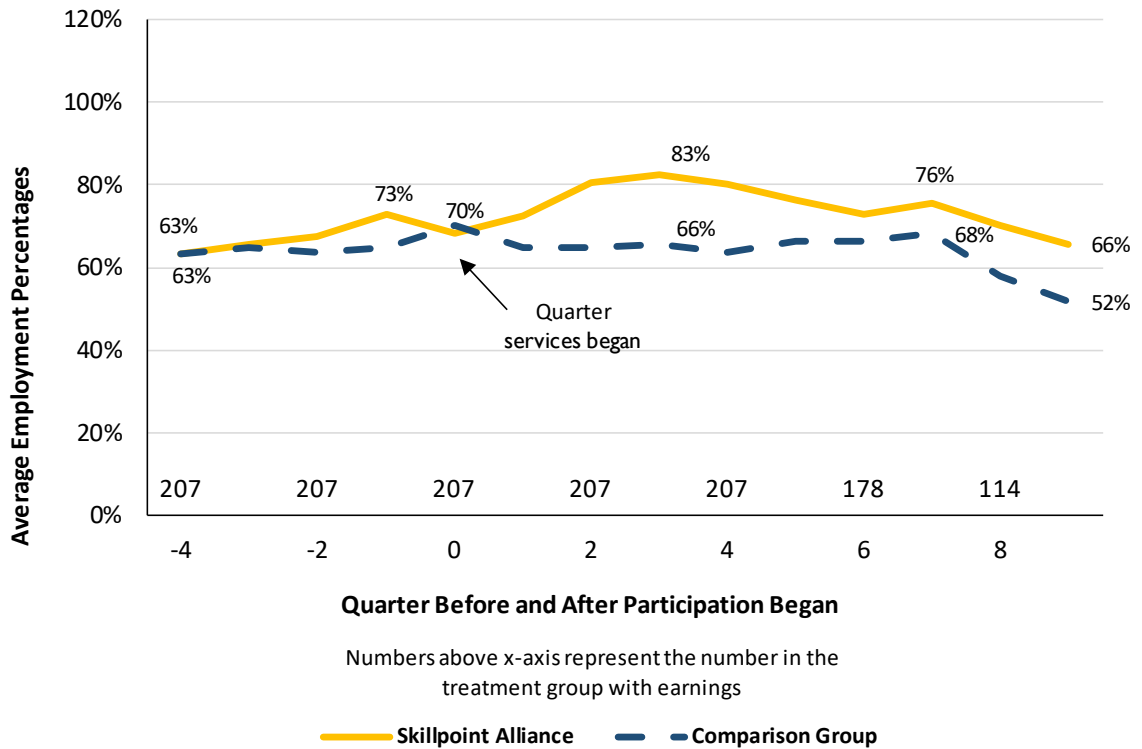
Impact Measure	Number of Post Service Person Qtrs	All Qtrs Post Service Entry Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post Service Entry Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment:	1,629	64.2%	76.8%	12.6%	8.8%**
Average Qrtly Earnings:	1,045	\$6,161	\$5,203	\$957	-\$1,068
Qualified for UI Benefits:	602	56.5%	57.8%	1.3%	0.0%
Filed UI Claim:	1,629	0.80%	0.48%	0.32%	-0.19%

Note: Note: **=significant at p<.01

In Figure 21 the impact of participation in Skillpoint services is examined by looking at participant’s employment rate over time in relation to the comparison group’s employment rate. The analysis shows that Skillpoint participants’ employment rate matched the comparison group employment rate during the quarter services began and increased during the fourth quarter to maintain a higher rate of employment, even as the overall employment rate of both groups dropped during the remaining quarters for which data was available. The higher employment rate of Skillpoint participants in relation to the comparison group is statistically significant.

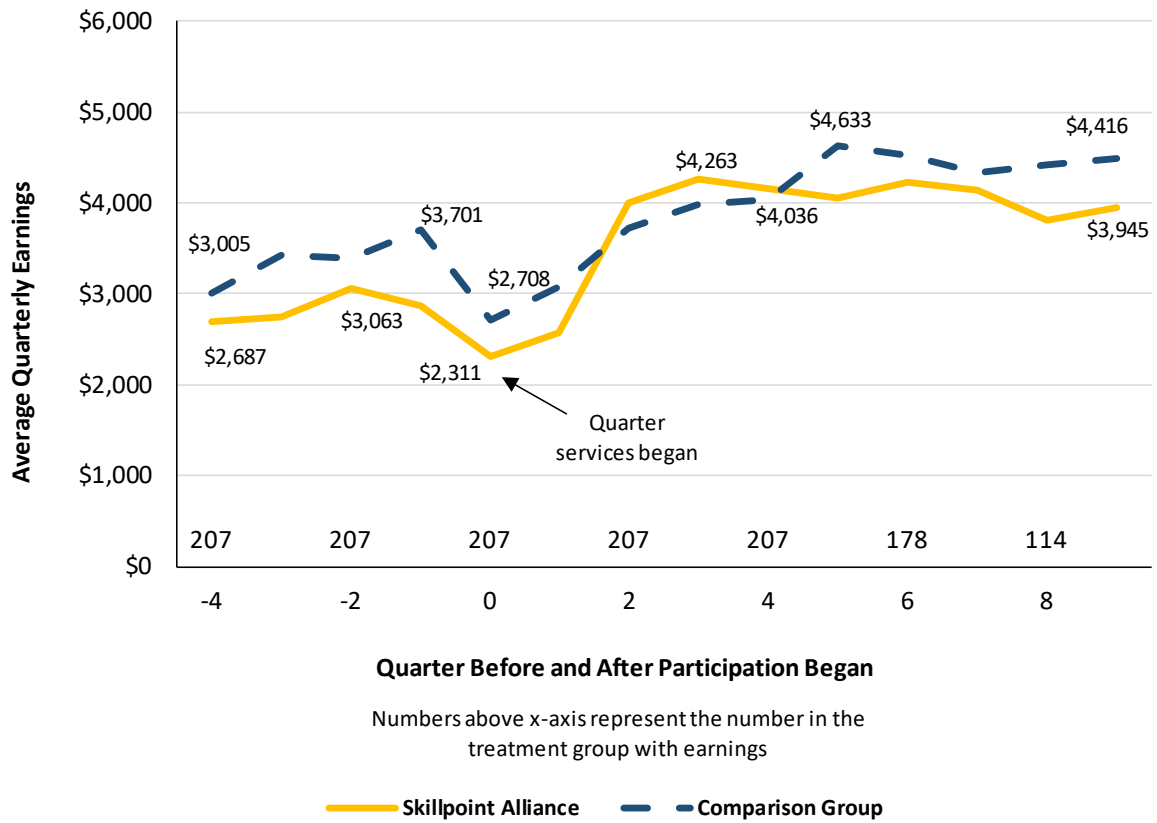
⁴⁵ Information from an email exchange with Aaron Hill, Oct. 23, 2018.

**Figure 21. Employment Rate Over Time, Skillpoint Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016 – FY 2017**



In Figure 22 the impact of participation in Skillpoint services is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that Skillpoint participants' wages matched comparison group wages by the second quarter, increased slightly during the fourth quarter, yet decreased in the remaining quarters for which data was available. Of note is the number of participants with data available begins to also drop during the sixth quarter post-service entry.

**Figure 22. Unconditional Earnings Over Time, Skillpoint Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016 – FY 2017**



AMERICAN YOUTHWORKS NON-WERC-TC PARTICIPANTS

AYW workforce development county funding is channeled through three contracts: WERC-TC, Workforce Development (direct to AYW), and the Travis County Metro Parks Project.⁴⁶ The services and participants reported in this section are only funded through Travis County Workforce Development and Travis County Metro Parks funding and are identified as non-WERC-TC funded participants. YouthBuild participants receiving services through WERC-TC are reported in the previous WERC-TC section of this report.

Participant Profile

This AYW participant analysis reports on 201 participants who exited the program in FY 2016 – FY 2017. AYW provides services to youth as young as 16 with nearly 26 percent of participants ranging in age from 16 to 19, and over 65 percent of participants ranging in age from 20 to 29 years. The average age of AYW participant exiters is 22. The majority of exiters identified as White (58.2%) with 10 percent identified as Black and 21.9 percent identified as Hispanic. Most exiters were male (59.7%). Just over 25 percent of participants having less than a 12th grade education and approximately 10 percent report judicial involvement.⁴⁷ The majority of the exiters report residing in two areas: South Austin (33.3%) and East Austin (22.9%).

Outcomes are reported for 200 participant social security numbers identified within the wage data. Program impacts are unavailable due to insufficient matches with a comparison group. Thirty percent of AYW participants were 19 or younger and less likely to have work history prior to program entry reported in the wage data, influencing the capacity to create a matched comparison group.

⁴⁶ The Metro Parks Project can be understood as a transfer of HHS funds to Travis County passed through to AYW for a subsidized work experience program.

⁴⁷ Data elements were missing for the following demographic variables: Education, 34 percent; race, 23 percent; ethnicity, 78 percent; and judicial involvement was missing 74 percent. Veteran status and receipt of public benefits were not reported for the exiting participants. AYW is designed to support primarily youth, thus veteran status may not be an applicable data element.

Participant Outcomes

Table 14 presents outcomes for American YouthWorks participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016 – FY 2017. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas was slightly over 20 percent. Quarterly employment among these participants grew on average to 46.5 percent during the second quarter post-services and declined slightly during the fourth quarter post-service to 43.7 percent. For the FY 2016 cohort for whom data are available, quarterly employment remained consistent at 44 percent during the eighth quarter post-service.

Pre-program earnings overall averaged \$2,548 for those employed in the year prior to service entry, decreasing slightly during the last service quarter. In the second quarter after service, average earnings rose to \$3,874 and continued to rise in the studied quarters for those whom data was available to \$5,138: a \$2,590 wage increase representing a 100 percent wage gain across the studied quarters. The available data for the FY 2016 cohort in the eighth quarter post-services reports a continued increase in earnings: \$6,641 (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 23 and Figure 24).

Table 14. American YouthWorks Participant Outcomes: FY 2016 – FY 2017 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	Four Qtrs Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-Service	4th Qtr Post-Service	8th Qtr Post-Service	All Post-Service Qtrs
Number of Participants:	200	200	200	142	43	200
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	19.0%	31.0%	49.4%	44.8%	44.2%	46.5%
FY 2017	21.7%	33.6%	44.3%	41.8%		43.5%
Overall	20.5%	32.5%	46.5%	43.7%	44.2%	43.7%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	\$2,090	\$2,203	\$4,159	\$5,098	\$6,641	\$4,989
FY 2017	\$2,856	\$1,980	\$3,630	\$5,205		\$4,126
Overall	\$2,548	\$2,073	\$3,874	\$5,138	\$6,641	\$4,627
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	16.7%	11.5%	11.5%	33.3%	44.2%	26.7%
FY 2017	13.9%	11.5%	10.6%	32.7%		17.9%
Overall	15.1%	11.5%	11.0%	33.1%	44.2%	22.9%
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.5%
FY 2017	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%		0.0%
Overall	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.3%

Source: AYW participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI wage and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants, no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI wage records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Prior to entering AYW, only 15.1 percent of participants overall had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, approximately 33 percent met the requirements for eligibility. Very few participants (less than .3% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined.

Figure 23. Average Quarterly Employment for American YouthWorks Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017

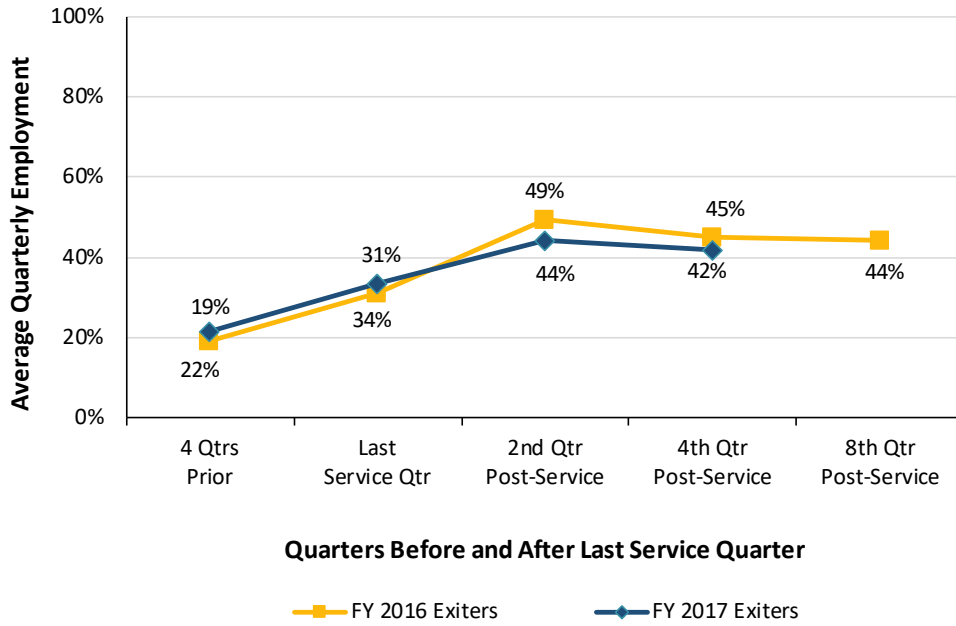
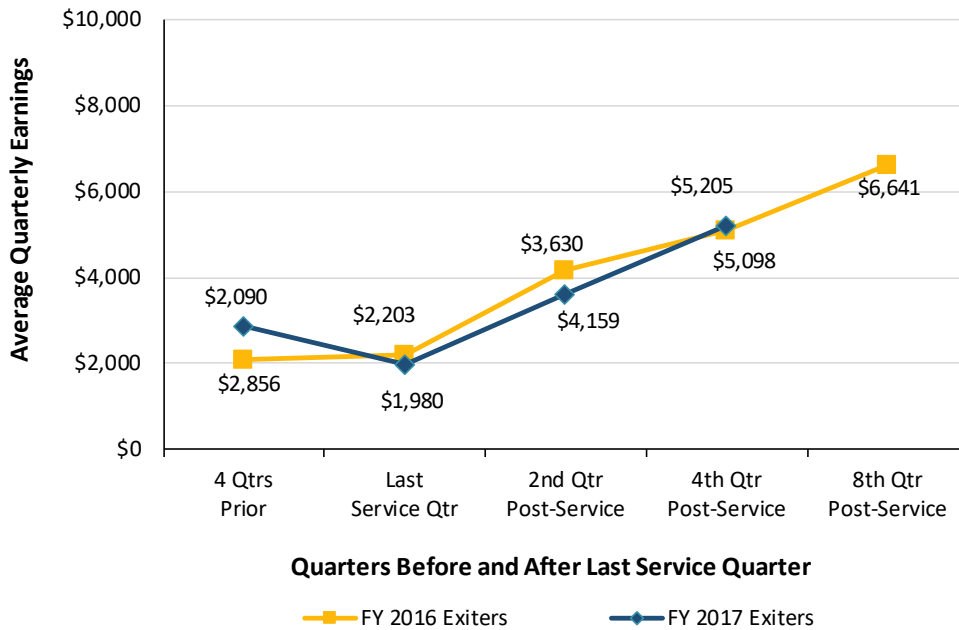


Figure 24. Average Quarterly Earnings of Employed American YouthWorks Exiters: FY 2016 – FY 2017



DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

WERC-TC program exiters experienced average employment gains of 27.9 percentage points from pre-service quarters to the service exit quarters. Goodwill participants experiencing the strongest gains in employment from 43 percent prior to services to 81.9 percent during the last service quarter, representing an increase of 37.9 percentage points. However, WERC-TC participants experiencing a decrease in employment between the last service quarter and the four quarters post-service: The decrease varies by program from 2.5 percent to 17.4 percent. Other Travis County funded programs included in this analysis experienced similar employment gains from pre-service quarters to the service exit quarter, yet most maintained steady employment increases into the fourth quarter post-service. A number of factors may influence employment obtainment and employment retention:

- 1. *Education level of participants at time of program entry.*** Research has documented the positive relationship between educational attainment and employment (US Department of Labor, 2017). Programs serving participants with higher education levels demonstrate higher participant employment engagement. For example, Capital IDEA served the largest share of participants reporting *attending or graduating college* (51.4%) with a pre-service employment rate of 68.4 percent. Capital IDEA participants experienced steady employment gains into the fourth quarter post-service (80.2%). Alternatively, AYW participants experience the lowest rate of education: 44.4 percent of WERC-TC AYW participants *report less than a 12th grade education* with a post-service employment rate of 36 percent increasing to 57.9 percent employment reported four quarters post-service. Interesting to note, AYW (a program designed to serve opportunity youth disengaged from education and employment) participants experience the largest percentage gain in employment across the examined quarters.
- 2. *General retention rates relevant to the training participants receive and the employment entered.*** For example, a number of Travis County funded programs offer CNA training as a short-term training option in response to local workforce demands; however, a Long Term Care Nurse Staffing Study (2017) reported a 2016 CNA median turnover rate in Texas long term care facilities of 65.5 percent. Future analysis may include participant employment retention by service training track.

- 3. WERC-TC Paid Internships.** Staff report internships that provide paid workforce experience for a limited number of weeks often lead to employment. Although few participants enter internships (150 participants in FY 2016 – FY 2017), identifying these individuals and tracking their employment outcomes over time may be of interest for future analysis.
- 4. Judicial Involvement.** A recent study conducted by Northwestern University reported judicially involved individuals experience more barriers to employment, yet once employed have a much longer tenure and are less likely to quit their jobs voluntarily than other workers (Minor, Pesico and Weiss, 2017). Overall, 40 percent of WERC-TC participants report judicial involvement with approximately half of Goodwill and AUUL participants represented in this evaluation report judicial involvement. Further analysis of the employment experiences for these participants over time may be of interest in future evaluations.

CONCLUSION

Travis County, Texas, invests local tax dollars in a continuum of services to improve opportunities for disadvantaged residents to increase their success in the labor market. Through contracts with a mix of workforce development providers and programs, the County supports education and workforce opportunities that match skills development and certifications to the needs of local employers. The service continuum includes ABE and ESL instruction infused with workforce preparation training, GED and high school diploma obtainment, job placement and job readiness training, training to obtain certifications in a variety of fields, including short-term training to obtain certifications as a food handler or nurse aide, to associate degrees in the health and technology fields that provide a step along a high-wage career pathway.

Each provider has established one or more target populations for services, and Travis County funds serve individuals facing considerable obstacles to employment, such as low academic attainment, homelessness, and judicial involvement, among others. All providers serve persons earning less than 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines. In addition to the differences in key focus, intensity and duration of the service regime, the program participants for each program vary by race, ethnicity, gender, education, and age. For example, over 90 percent of YouthWorks participants are 29 years of age or younger with approximately 20 percent identified as 19 or younger, while over 20 percent of WERC-TC and Literacy Coalition participants are over the age of 50; the Literacy Coalition services the largest group of Hispanics, nearly 40 percent, while WERC-TC program Austin Area Urban League serves primarily Black participants (59.4%); at least 60 percent of the Literacy Coalition, Capital IDEA and Skillpoint participants are female; and 61.6 percent of WERC-TC participants have a GED or HSD while 33.7 percent of Literacy Coalition participants have less than a 12th grade education.

This report evaluates the outcomes for program participants for FY 2016 – FY 2107, the first two cohorts of participants in a five year on-going evaluation of the new service provider continuum including the service collaborative, WERC-TC. Although the variety of features, services and populations served renders cross-provider comparisons inappropriate, all of the providers have attained some degree of positive achievement in the employment-related outcomes. The quasi-experimental analysis (for groups/providers for which adequate matching could be performed) compares the program impacts of participants to those of a matched comparison group. For the

majority of the programs, participants experienced steady employment gains and fared as well as or better than the comparison group in income increases overtime.

Participating in any skills building training appears to be associated with increased employment stability as evidenced by overall higher shares of participants in all programs meeting the earnings eligibility requirements for UI benefits in the four quarters post-service. The target populations served by the different service providers is reflected in the pre-and post-service rates of those exiters meeting the UI benefit eligibility requirements. For example, AYW provides services many opportunity youth disengaged from education and employment, while Capital IDEA is committed to recruiting the working poor. Thus, AYW (non-WERC-TC) had the fewest pre-service participants qualifying for UI benefits (15.1%) increasing to 33.1 percent in the four quarters post-service (an 18% increase), while Capital IDEA exiters present the largest pre-service quarter rate of 58.4 percent increasing to 72.3 percent one year post-services. WERC-TC had the highest increase in UI qualifying exiters from a 37 percent pre-service rate increasing to 60.3 percent one year post-service: representing a 23.3 percentage point increase. Skillpoint (9.7%), and Literacy Coalition (6.9%) also experienced percentage point increases one year post-service of UI qualifying exiters.

Few participants from any program submitted a claim for UI benefits in the quarters examined and overall UI claims from the four quarters before services compared to one year post-service slightly increased (.3% to .8%) for all programs except WERC-TC. WERC-TC participants UI claims dropped from pre-service quarters of 2.8 percent to 2.5 percent four quarters post-service.

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**APPENDIX A-1: DEMOGRAPHICS OF TRAVIS COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
FY 2016 – FY 2017 EXITERS**

	WERC-TC	American YouthWorks	Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	Capital IDEA	LifeWorks	Skillpoint
Number of Participants with SSNs	1,590	201	184	323	< 25	347
Number of records removed due to duplicate SSNs	3	0	0	0	2	1
Number of unduplicated participants included in analysis	1,587	201	184	323	< 25	346
Age						
14 - 19 years	3.0%	25.9%	6.5%	9.9%	66.7%	11.6%
20 - 29 years	24.3%	65.7%	39.7%	44.0%	33.3%	41.3%
30 - 39 years	25.9%	0.5%	10.9%	33.1%	0.0%	25.7%
40 - 49 years	23.3%	0.0%	20.1%	8.7%	0.0%	11.0%
50 - 59 years	18.0%	0.0%	17.4%	3.4%	0.0%	7.5%
60 years and older	5.2%	0.0%	2.7%	0.3%	0.0%	2.3%
Missing/Unknown	0.4%	8.0%	2.7%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%
Average Age	39	22	35	30	19	31
Race						
White	43.7%	58.2%	28.3%	46.4%	33.3%	16.2%
Black	46.7%	10.0%	28.3%	25.7%	44.4%	35.5%
Asian	1.8%	1.0%	1.1%	5.3%	11.1%	1.2%
Two Or More Races	2.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	4.9%
Other	1.2%	3.0%	2.7%	13.9%	11.1%	6.1%
Missing/Unknown	4.7%	22.9%	39.7%	8.0%	0.0%	36.1%
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	14.6%	21.9%	38.6%	27.2%	33.3%	18.2%
Non-Hispanic	31.4%	0.0%	16.8%	0.0%	66.7%	30.3%
Missing/Unknown	54.1%	78.1%	44.6%	72.8%	0.0%	51.4%

(demographics continued)	WERC-TC	American YouthWorks	Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	Capital IDEA	LifeWorks	Skillpoint
Gender						
Female	39.6%	40.3%	64.1%	67.5%	22.2%	59.0%
Male	60.1%	59.7%	35.9%	32.5%	77.8%	41.0%
Transgender	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Education Level						
Less than 12th grade	18.8%	25.4%	33.7%	0.9%	66.7%	9.2%
12th grade or GED	61.6%	39.3%	4.9%	47.1%	33.3%	44.2%
Attended or Graduated College	19.7%	1.5%	1.6%	51.4%	0.0%	39.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	33.8%	59.8%	0.6%	0.0%	7.5%
Offender						
Yes	40.8%	10.4%	0.0%	13.3%	44.4%	10.4%
No	59.2%	15.4%	0.0%	86.7%	0.0%	89.6%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	74.1%	100.0%	0.0%	55.6%	0.0%
Veteran						
Yes	9.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	5.8%
No	90.2%	0.0%	0.0%	94.4%	100.0%	94.2%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Receives Public Benefits						
Yes	46.9%	0.0%	0.0%	36.5%	55.6%	0.0%
No	53.1%	0.0%	0.0%	63.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	44.4%	100.0%
Area of Residence						
Central Austin	4.5%	6.0%	6.5%	2.5%	0.0%	1.7%
North Austin	20.8%	2.0%	17.4%	27.9%	22.2%	12.4%
Northern Suburbs	4.9%	2.5%	2.7%	8.0%	11.1%	9.5%
East Austin	28.6%	22.9%	40.2%	28.5%	22.2%	23.1%
Eastern Suburbs	22.1%	3.0%	2.7%	5.9%	0.0%	4.9%
South Austin	15.4%	33.3%	26.6%	22.9%	33.3%	20.5%
Southern Suburbs	0.1%	6.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%
West Austin	2.5%	1.0%	1.1%	3.7%	0.0%	2.0%
Western Suburbs	0.3%	4.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	1.2%
Other/Unknown	0.7%	19.4%	1.1%	0.3%	11.1%	22.0%

**APPENDIX A-2: DEMOGRAPHICS OF WERC-TC
FY 2016 – FY 2017 EXITERS BY PROGRAM**

	WFS Career Center	Goodwill WERC	Austin Area Urban League (AAUL)	American YouthWorks (AYW)
Number of Participants with SSNs	465	433	547	142
Number of records removed due to duplicate SSNs	0	0	0	0
Number of unduplicated participants included in analysis	465	433	547	142
Age				
14 - 19 years	0.4%	0.5%	2.4%	21.1%
20 - 29 years	17.8%	14.1%	24.5%	75.4%
30 - 39 years	25.4%	33.5%	26.1%	3.5%
40 - 49 years	28.6%	27.7%	21.2%	0.0%
50 - 59 years	21.7%	19.6%	18.1%	0.0%
60 years and older	5.6%	4.4%	6.9%	0.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.4%	0.2%	0.7%	0.0%
Average Age	42	41	40	23
Race				
White	43.7%	46.9%	38.2%	54.9%
Black	43.0%	43.6%	59.4%	19.0%
Asian	3.4%	1.4%	0.7%	1.4%
Two Or More Races	2.6%	3.2%	0.2%	2.8%
Other	0.6%	1.6%	0.9%	2.8%
Missing/Unknown	6.7%	3.2%	0.5%	19.0%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	13.8%	15.2%	11.0%	28.9%
Non-Hispanic	33.5%	30.9%	32.2%	22.5%
Missing/Unknown	52.7%	53.8%	56.9%	48.6%
Gender				
Female	32.7%	35.1%	46.3%	50.7%
Male	67.3%	64.4%	53.4%	48.6%
Transgender	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%	0.7%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

(WERC-TC demographics by program continued)	WFS Career Center	Goodwill WERC	Austin Area Urban League (AAUL)	American YouthWorks (AYW)
Education Level				
Less than 12th grade	15.5%	18.0%	15.5%	44.4%
12th grade or GED	53.5%	64.2%	74.6%	29.6%
Attended or Graduated College	31.0%	17.8%	9.9%	26.1%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Offender				
Yes	30.3%	49.2%	50.5%	12.0%
No	69.7%	50.8%	49.5%	88.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Veteran				
Yes	11.0%	6.9%	8.2%	20.4%
No	89.0%	93.1%	91.8%	79.6%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Receives Public Benefits				
Yes	34.0%	54.7%	47.9%	62.0%
No	66.0%	45.3%	52.1%	38.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Area of Residence				
Central Austin	7.7%	3.0%	3.1%	4.2%
North Austin	26.0%	21.9%	18.6%	8.5%
Northern Suburbs	6.2%	5.1%	4.6%	1.4%
East Austin	26.0%	27.3%	29.6%	37.3%
Eastern Suburbs	14.4%	20.3%	34.9%	3.5%
South Austin	14.4%	17.8%	8.0%	40.1%
Southern Suburbs	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
West Austin	3.7%	2.5%	0.9%	4.9%
Western Suburbs	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Other/Unknown	0.9%	1.4%	0.2%	0.0%

APPENDIX B: DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT TABLE ELEMENTS

Impact measure	At least four Qtrs Post-Service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	Treatment group mean employment rate across at least four quarters post-service	Percentage point difference between mean employment rates for treatment and control groups.	Percentage point difference between mean employment rates for treatment and control group adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).
Average Quarterly Earnings	Treatment group average earnings across at least four quarters post-service.	Difference between the average earnings for treatment and control groups.	Difference between the average earnings for treatment and control group adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).
Qualified for UI Benefits	Percentage of treatment group members who qualified for UI benefits during at least four quarters post-service.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who qualified for UI benefits.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who qualified for UI benefits adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).
Filed UI Claim	Percentage of treatment group members who filed a UI claim during at least four quarters post-service.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who filed a UI claim.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who filed a UI claim adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).

APPENDIX C: FY 2017 DATA ELEMENTS REQUESTED AND RECEIVED

	AYW	Capital IDEA	Lifeworks	Literacy Coalition	Skillpoint	WERC**	Total
2016-2017 Participants Rec'd in Raw Data	127	231	61	1,270	196	723	2,608
Participants with Exit Dates between Oct. 2016-Sept. 2017	114	148	61	1,270	189	716	2,498
Exiters with SSNs	114	148	11	107	168	715	1,263
Duplicate SSNs	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Final 2016-2017 Participant Counts	144	148	9	107	168	715	1,261
Final 2015-2016 Participant Counts	87	175	0	77	178	872	1,389
Total	201	323	9	184	346	1,587	2,650

Data Element Requested	AYW	Capital Idea	Lifeworks	Literacy Coalition	Skillpoint	WERC**
Name	√	√	√	√	√	√
D.O.B.	√	√	√	√	√	X (provided age)
SSN	√	√	√	√	√	√
Zip Code	√	√	√	√	√	√
Gender	√	√	√	√	√	√
Ethnicity	√	√	√	√	√	√
Race	√	√	√	√	√	√
Family Size	√	√	√	X	√	√
Partner/Spouse	X	Marital Status	√	X	All No	X
Ages of each minor child in the family	X	X	"Not collected"	X	All N/A	X
Housing stability	√	√	√	X	√	√
Highest education level completed	√	√	√	X	√	√
Employed at time of program entry	√	√	√	X	√	√
Public benefits received	X	√	√	X	All N/A	SNAP only

Data Element Requested cont.	AYW	Capital Idea	Lifeworks	Literacy Coalition	Skillpoint	WERC**
Veteran	X	√	√	X	√	√
Judicially Involved	√	√	√	X	√	√
Disabled	X	√	√	X	All N/A	√
Date Eligibility Determined	X	√	"Not collected"	X	√	√
Program start date	√	√	√	√	√	√
Program exit date	√	√	√	Per LCCT, set all to 9/30/2017	√	√
Program components enrolled in	√	√	√	X	All "Work Readiness Instruction"	√
Completed program	√	√	√	X	√	√
Certificate received in house	X	X	√	X	√	X
Credential or Degree earned	√	√	√	X	√	√
Employment start date	√	√	√	X	"Data Not Collected"	√
Employment starting wage	√	√	√	X	√	√
Employed in a training related occupation	X	√	All "N/A"	X	√	√
Incentives for attendance	X	√	All "No"	X	X	√
Incentives for program completion	X	√	All "No"	X	X	√
Incentives for employment entry	X	√	All "No"	X	X	√
Incentives for employment retention	X	√	All "No"	X	X	√

Note: X identifies data not reported; **Workforce Solutions – 209, Austin Area Urban League – 237, Goodwill – 209, American YouthWorks – 61, and Other 3.

APPENDIX D. QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL IMPACTS ANALYSIS

In an attempt to measure the impacts of locally-funded workforce services, researchers conducted a quasi-experimental analysis comparing labor market outcomes for workforce participants with those of a comparison group of similar non-participants. Quasi-experimental analysis has been shown to produce impact estimates comparable to those resulting from more rigorous and costly approaches involving the use of experimental designs that randomly assign individuals to treatment and control status.⁴⁸ In fact, for some groups, quasi-experimental estimates tend to understate employment and earnings impacts from workforce services. For these reasons, results presented in this report should be considered conservative estimates of the true impacts.

Quasi-experimental approaches tend to work well when participants for whom comparison groups are being created have sufficient prior employment and earnings histories and when data are available on a sufficient number of variables with which to perform the requisite match. Youth and ex-offenders are problematical in this regard precisely because their prior employment and earnings histories are either lacking or difficult to determine.

Potential comparison group members were drawn from two sources: individuals who either registered to look for employment using the state's *WorkinTexas* (WIT) program or who received "core" services under the Workforce Investment Act or WIA (such as job-matching or resume development). Thus, the comparison group selected as described below is not a "no-services," but rather a "low-intensity services" group. The resulting impact estimates thus reflect the incremental value of the community's investments in workforce services.

Workforce services participants were matched on a one-to-one basis with potential comparison group members using a method known as propensity score matching. Matching was done by selecting for each participant the one comparison group member judged most similar. Matching was done with replacement, with a caliper of 0.1 to remove the least similar matches.

Researchers were able to access matching variables for most participants in locally-funded workforce services. Exact matches carried out included: county of residence; year of entry into the program; and whether or not individuals had recently experienced an earnings dip of 20% or more. Distance matches were also carried out on up to 11 variables by treating them as numeric and

⁴⁸ For example, see Greenberg et al. (2006); Hollenbeck and Huang (2006); and Card et al. (2009).

including them in the overall multivariate distance measurement. These variables included: age (for those participants with a recorded birth date); gender; race/ethnicity (White, Black, Hispanic); time since first earnings; employed at entry; percent of time employed over four years prior to program entry; average quarterly earnings over four years prior to program entry; percent of time in any workforce development service in the year immediately prior to program entry (matched according to service intensity: high for training programs, and low for job placement services); prior participation in any WIT service; any prior participation in Project RIO; any UI claims filed in the year prior to program entry; any UI benefits received in the year prior to program entry; and whether the individual's earnings history qualified for UI if he/she were to lose a job. For those experiencing a recent earnings dip, the time since the earnings dip and the percent of earnings represented by the dip were also included in the matching process.

The adequacy of each comparison group for the quasi-experimental impacts analysis was judged by performing t-tests. These tests compared treatment and comparison groups on the same dimensions. If the groups were statistically different at $p < .01$ on two or more dimensions, the comparison was considered inadequate. The majority of programs met the criteria set forth.