

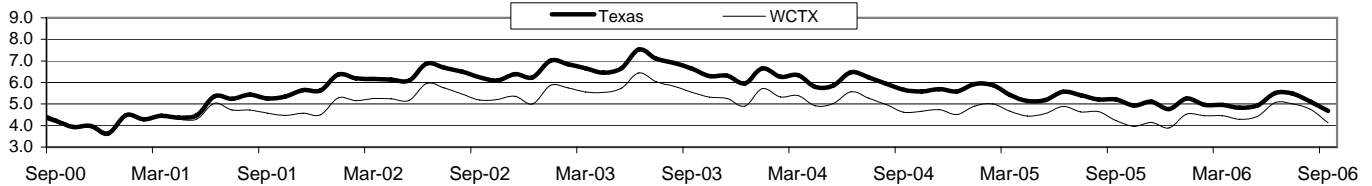
West Central Texas Workforce Development Area

September 2006

Civilian Labor Force Estimates (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

	West Central Texas WDA				Texas			
	CLF	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	CLF	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Sep-06	159,415	152,832	6,583	4.1	11,535,540	10,995,414	540,126	4.7
Aug-06	159,705	152,124	7,581	4.7	11,538,653	10,949,914	588,739	5.1
Sep-05	157,951	151,274	6,677	4.2	11,295,522	10,707,152	588,370	5.2

Historical Unemployment Rates



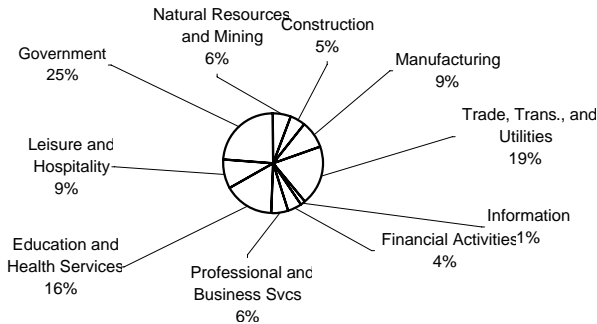
Total Claims

	Sep-06	Aug-06	Sep-05	OTY
Initial	412	533	579	-167
Continued	1,991	3,419	3,157	-1,166
Continued Claims for the Week of the 12th				
Continued	492	707	652	-160

Average Weekly Wage

	WCTX	Change	Texas
1st Qtr 2006	\$533.81	(2.39)	\$824.64
2005 Average	\$536.20	20.63	\$822.95
2004 Average	\$515.57		\$799.03

West Central WDA Industry Composition 1st Quarter 2006



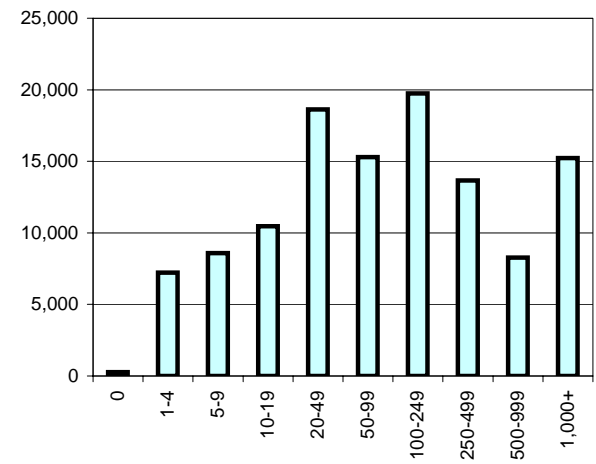
Top 10 Private Employers in the WDA 1st Quarter 2006

3M COMPANY MANUFACTURING COMPANY
 ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
 ABILENE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
 AMS BUSI SOLU & STERLING PERSONNEL SVCS
 BROWNWOOD MEDICAL CENTER LLC
 GIRLING HEALTH CARE INC
 HENDRICK MEDICAL CENTER
 KOHLER COMPANY
 UNITED SUPERMARKETS LTD
 WAL-MART ASSOCIATES INC

NAICS COVERED EMPLOYMENT QUARTERLY DATA 1st Quarter 2006

SUPER SECTOR	Total	Change Quarter	Year
Natural Resources & Mining	6,647	-402	602
Construction	5,769	204	967
Manufacturing	10,146	54	351
Trade, Trans., and Utilities	21,759	-354	213
Information	1,677	17	57
Financial Activities	5,058	-60	28
Professional and Business Svcs.	6,325	81	289
Education & Health Services	18,438	-375	-83
Leisure & Hospitality	10,766	427	807
Other Services	3,439	-21	-83
Federal Government	1,936	-18	213
State Government	5,966	130	-21
Local Government	19,313	49	-31
Nonclassified & Confidential	126	-129	53
TOTAL	117,365	-397	3,362

Size Class Employment Composition 1st Quarter 2006



New Staff Positions Filled by the Workforce Board

The West Central Texas Workforce Development Board is pleased to announce the creation of a new staff position and the subsequent hiring of Ms. Karla Corpus-Vela as Quality Assurance Specialist. Primary job responsibilities for the position will include providing oversight, evaluation, and analysis of workforce programs and services to determine financial and operational compliance. Originally from Mission, Texas, Mrs. Corpus-Vela moved to Austin, Texas to attend the University of Texas. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Government and Psychology from UT and a Master of Public Administration Degree from Texas State University in San Marcos. Her past work experience includes serving as a lead case manager for the Capital of Texas Workforce Center and as an auditor for the Texas Workforce Commission in Austin. She began her job search in Abilene after her husband, David, was hired by the City of Abilene as Assistant City Manager in April 2006. Because of her knowledge and experience in the workforce arena, she was quickly identified as a leading candidate for the new position with the Board.

In addition, Mr. Randall C. Presley was recently hired to fill the newly-created position of Disability Program Navigator. Primary job responsibilities for the position will include working with advocacy groups, workforce centers, business organizations, and employers to reduce barriers to employment for people with disabilities. A native of Abilene, Mr. Presley graduated from Abilene Christian University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology and a Master of Arts Degree in History. He has over ten years of experience working with persons with developmental disabilities, through direct care, as well as house management and case management. He has worked with non-profits for over fifteen years, and has been a Ropes Course Director, assisting businesses in building teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving skills.

Ms. Vela began her tenure with the Workforce Board in August, and Mr. Presley was hired in October 2006. To contact either of these individuals, call the Workforce Board at (325) 795-4200.

Attention to Customer Service

Tips from Marcia Zidle, CEO, Leaders at All Levels

What do 3M, Southwest Airlines and Walt Disney have in common? All encourage a "how can we better serve the customer" spirit.

For example, the research staff at 3M spends 15% of their time on projects of their choice. They are encouraged to mingle with customers, take risks and champion unusual ideas. This spirit has created the famous Post-It Notes and other very profitable products. Here are three ways to cultivate that "how can we better serve the customer" spirit in your organization:

1. Establish customer-driven teams, especially at the front lines, to identify operational inefficiency and other problems that interfere with customer satisfaction. Then teach them problem-solving techniques to find and implement the best solutions.
2. Sponsor in-house trade shows. Bring together people from all different areas to share "how I, or we, solved this problem". Have prizes and fun activities. This informal setting allows your staff to be open to interesting ideas that they can then test in their area.
3. Think out-of-the-box. A community bank wanted to increase its market share. At a staff meeting, the president asked, "What can we do to make our customers angry?" Someone suggested closing down credit lines without informing customers, causing checks to bounce. What they realized is that one of the bank's greatest assets is the perception of total reliability. They then focused on ways to ensure that reliability in every customer transaction.

Welding Graduates Hired by Local Businesses

During the summer of 2006, a consortium was formed, consisting of the City of Abilene, the Workforce Center, Cisco Junior College, and the West Central Texas Workforce Development Board, to address labor shortages in welding by a number of area businesses. A training curriculum was developed by Cisco Junior College in coordination with four local businesses, including Rentech Services, Inc., Hirschfeld Steel, Lauren Engineers & Constructors, Inc., and Robinson Fans. The Workforce Center handled the application and screening of potential students.

Fourteen welders began a 120-hour express welding course, which consisted of four weeks of welding at CJC and one week of basic employment skills training at the Workforce Center. A graduation ceremony was held on Thursday, September 28, 2006, and on the following day, interviews were conducted for graduates with Rentech Services, Hirschfeld Steel, Lauren Engineers, and Robinson Fans. Of the twelve graduates, ten have been hired by one of the four sponsoring companies. Workforce Center staff has not yet received confirmation regarding employment obtained by the remaining two graduates. However, it is anticipated that a 100% placement rate will be achieved. Among those hired was Tommy Bowman Jr. of Abilene. According to Mr. Bowman, "The fast track welding program was great. It has given me a chance at not just a new job, but a new career, in a high demand field."

The second class of welding students, made up of fifteen students, began on October 9th. Individuals interested in obtaining more information about the training program in welding should contact the Workforce Center at (325) 795-4200.



WEST CENTRAL TEXAS WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD
400 Oak St. * Abilene, Texas 79602

The Workforce Center is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request in individuals with disabilities. For TDD call 1-800-735-2898 or voice accessible communication at 1-800-735-2988