

Brenham | Washington County Economic Development

Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 4

Fall, 2023

Keeping up with a changing workforce

Staying on top of the workforce needs of our employers is critical to Economic Development.

Site selectors say that workforce availability is the #1 Site Selection criteria

Companies all across the nation are confronted with a workforce shortage and there's been a variety of reasons given for that—Boomers retiring, younger population is drying up, etc. Some have said that any rebound that occurred after Covid was attributed to women. No matter the reason, there's still another challenge in that the skill-set is also changing. At a recent conference, a speaker noted that the jobs our children will have in the future haven't even been invented yet.

So how does a community keep up with not only a staffing shortage problem, but also an ever changing target for skills?

Ideas:

- **All companies are tech companies.** If you think of it this way, then our workforce needs to prepare for technical work no matter what.
- **Never stop learning.** Professional growth and development in all jobs needs to be part of the job. Help your employees improve by making continued learning something that's available, embraced and



encouraged at all levels.

- **What is your business known for?** I mean it. What reputation does it have? Is it a place everyone wants to work at because of flexible schedules, regular performance evaluations, opportunities to excel and move up?

According to Forbes, here are the [8 Biggest Future Of Work Trends In 2024 Everyone Needs To Be Ready For Now.](#)

1. Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence)—If you don't understand its significance, you should start learning about it.
2. Sustainable Working Practices—This is a topic that won't go away.
3. Future Skills
4. Employee Experience—Employees want an employer who cares about work/life balance,

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wellness, intellectual challenge and personal growth and development.

5. Changing Workforce Demographics
6. Digitization and Datafication of Work—Its going to be more and more important to understand and analyze data for opportunities.
7. Lifelong Learning
8. The Decentralized Workplace—It may be time to consider a hybrid model of face-to-face and remote working. ✨

Texas Workforce Commission FREE Corporate Training

Training a quality workforce is essential to the success of any business. Blinn's Corporate Training Program provides customized training for your company to meet your specific needs to effectively train your workforce and maximize your efficiency. Money is available through the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) for small and large businesses to receive FREE training for full-time employees related to their positions.

More info at

Blinn.edu/workforce/corporate-training.html



Welcome our newest staff member!

Join us in welcoming Christine Simich as Administrative Assistant to the Economic Development team!

Christine's most recent positions were with the City of Bryan, TX and the Grimes County Chamber of Commerce, although she has worked in various industry sectors throughout her career.

She received her Business Administration Certification at the Bradford School of Business in Houston.

"We're excited to have her," said Teresa Rosales, Economic and Community Development Director. She will be working on a wide variety of projects helping the Director with tracking and monitoring compliance, grant processes, organizing meetings and so much more.

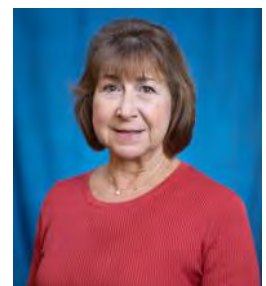
She will also be assisting Leigh Linden, Main Street Manager, in coordinating events, managing meeting minutes and notes, and overall general duties related to First Friday

Farmer's Market. "Christine will have an opportunity to work all events involved in Main Street programming, and there are a lot of them," said Linden.

Her role with the team will be invaluable and there's a lot to learn.

"I am ready to learn all that I can in my new role here in Brenham. The opportunity to be a part of such a fantastic team and city is very exciting," said Simich.

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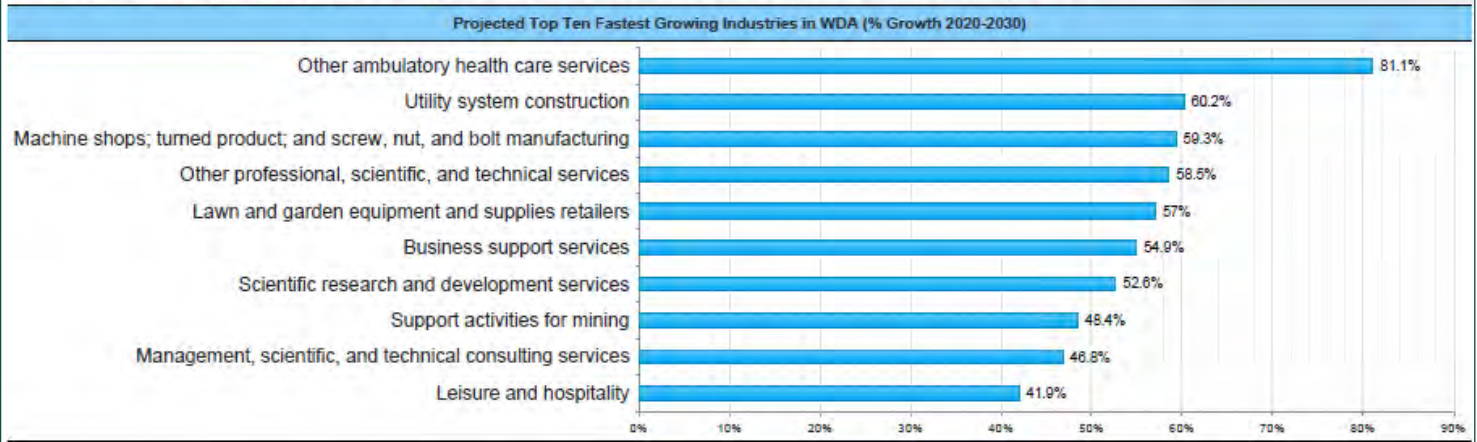


Brazos Valley Workforce Development Area

Below are projections for the fastest growing industries in the Brazos Valley Workforce Development Area as of September 2023. Surprised? Some of these are mainstays but notice how high technical services is! This is a wide variety of fields, which is good for our economy. Within each category is a skillset that can lead to good paying jobs.



Economic Profile for Workforce Development Area for the Month of September 2023 - Projections



Source: <https://texaslmi.com/EconomicProfiles/WDAProfiles>

THE A.W. HODDE, JR.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER



**Jumpstart
your career
today!**

At the **A.W. Hodde, Jr. Technical Education Center**, you can explore dynamic courses that will shape your future. Blinn students benefit from:

- ☑ Cutting-edge facilities
- ☑ Industry-experienced instructors
- ☑ Hands-on, practical training
- ☑ Career-focused education
- ☑ Supportive learning environment

THE SKILLS TO DO THE JOB

COURSES AVAILABLE FOR SPRING 2024

- Certified Nurse Aide
- Clinical Medical Assistant
- Customs Specialist
- Diesel Mechanics
- First Aid
- Manufacturing
- Pharmacy Technician
- Welding

REGISTRATION OPEN NOW!

CALL US: 979-830-4443 ■ www.blinn.edu/workforce



A Roadmap to Success: Brenham ISD's Holistic Approach to Career and Technical Education

Brenham ISD is at the forefront of providing comprehensive Career and Technical Education (CTE)

courses, fostering a foundation for students' success in various fields. Starting from Kinder through 6th grade, where students experience STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) classes, to junior high, where CTE courses become elective options, and finally at the high school level, where diverse pathways lead to endorsements and certifications.

K-6th Grades: Weekly rotation to STEAM classes exposes students to various learning projects.

Brenham Junior High: Students can choose from a range of CTE courses as electives.

Brenham High School: A variety of pathways are offered, allowing students to earn endorsements and certifications in a variety of fields such as:

Manufacturing & Machinery Mechanics, Animal Science, Applied Agricultural Engineering (Welding), Automotive, Carpentry, Culinary Arts, Cybersecurity, Design & Multimedia Arts, Digital Communications, Engineering, Environmental & Natural Resources, Exercise Science & Wellness, Healthcare Therapeutic, Law Enforcement, Marketing & Sales, Plant Science, Teaching & Training,

Travel Tourism & Attractions

Highlight Program:

Among the rapidly growing programs is Digital Communications, encompassing Audio/Video Production courses. Students actively engage in creating content for Cub TV, covering events special events, and more. The A/V Tech program stands out, equipping students



with skills using industry software like Blackmagic, Premiere Pro, After Effects, and Photoshop. The program not only prepares them for workforce entry post-graduation but also nurtures their technical proficiency and creativity.



Brenham ISD's commitment to CTE ensures students graduate with endorsements and certifications, empowering them for success in the workforce or continued technical education.

Incentives Available for Hiring Veterans



I'm Eric Posern and your Washington County Veterans Service Officer. Many of you have heard or already know some of the benefits to hiring veterans, qualities like assertiveness, adapta-



bility, mission focused work ethic, problem-solving, integrity and leadership. But I want to mention three incentives to hiring veterans

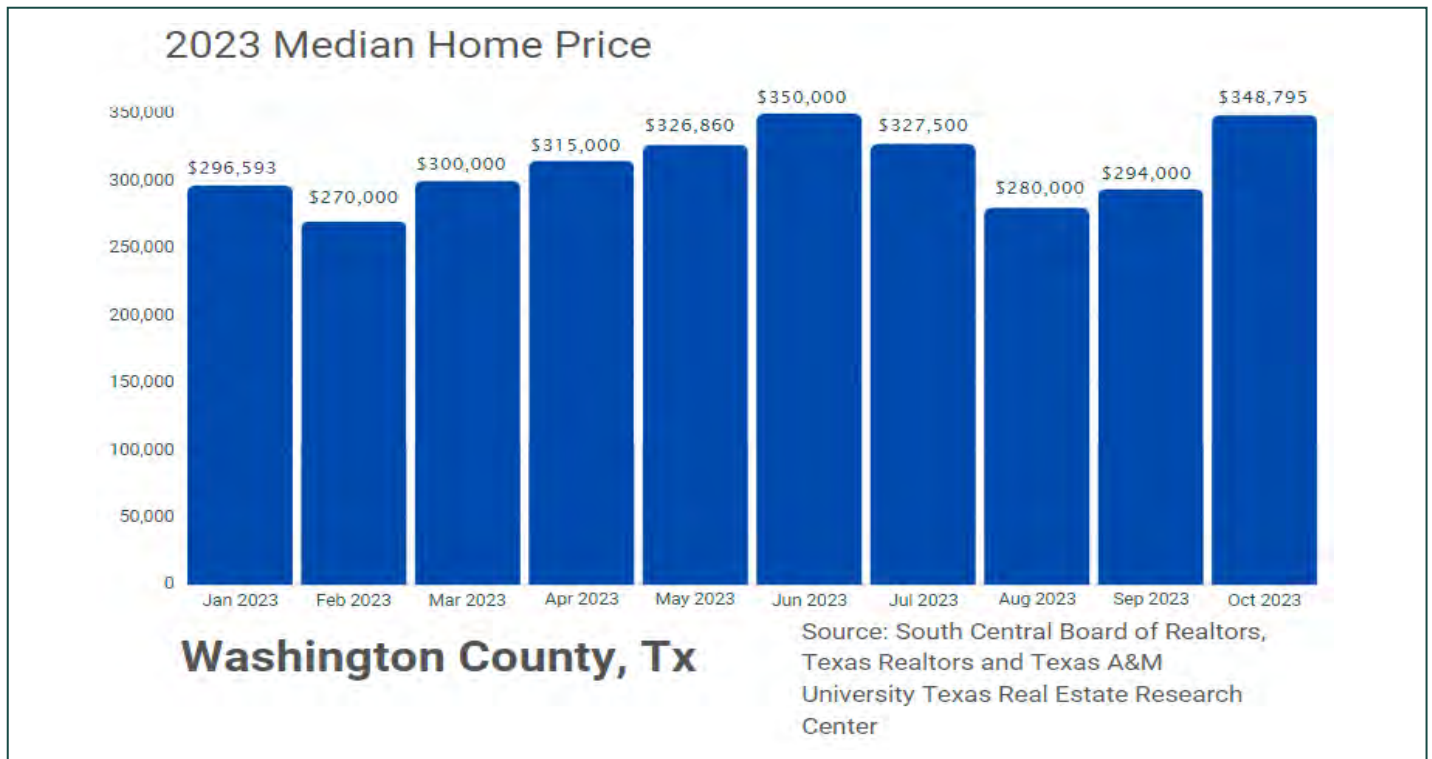
you may not have heard about that can help with your bottom line and marketing:

1. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit, it offers up to \$9600 per hire in tax credits to reduce your tax liability. There is no limit on the number of individuals an employer can hire to qualify to claim the tax credit. Certain tax-exempt organizations can take advantage of WOTC by receiving a credit against the employer's share of Social Security taxes.

2. HIRE Vets Medallion Award The Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans Act of 2017 (HIRE Vets Act) directed the U.S. Department of Labor to create a HIRE Vets Medallion Program which recognizes employers of all sizes for their efforts to recruit, employ, and retain America's veterans with the HIRE Vets Medallion Award. Award recipients range from small businesses and community-based nonprofits to larger companies. A HIRE Vets Medallion Award recipient receives national recognition

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Washington County Housing Snapshot



and provides an inside track in the search for talented veterans — all of which can result in a competitive advantage.

3. The Texas “We Hire Vets” Program. Launched in 2017, “We Hire Vets” is an employer recognition program developed by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to recognize Texas employers for their commitment to hiring veterans. Employers whose workforce is composed of at least 10 percent military veterans are eligible to receive a “We Hire Vets” employer recognition decal to display on the employer’s storefront as well as an



electronic decal to display on the employer’s website. “We Hire Vets” is a component of TWC’s Texas Operation Welcome Home initiative.

More information can be found at the “Employer Guide to Hiring Veterans”:

<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/VETS/files/Employer-Guide-to-Hiring-Veterans2022.pdf>

and

<https://texasoperationwelcomehome.portal.texas.gov/for-employers/>

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Economic Development Partners



“Maintaining a robust Texas economy and mitigating the talent shortage forecast for the next decade requires addressing several long-term challenges to the Texas workforce.” – Texas 2036

Washington County is blessed with a workforce that is supported locally by Blinn College, our school system and community leaders that aim to ensure our businesses have the talent pipeline needed to maintain and recruit the diverse workforce. The community of Chappell Hill has a diverse workforce agriculture, manufacturing and small business workforce population that not only continues to evolve as we grow, but now we see 2nd, and 3rd generation family members take over the family farms, ranches, or small businesses. We pride ourselves in being a community that can compete with larger communities and still provide quality services to the new developments and residents making Chappell Hill their home.

We also possess a strong professional workforce with many attorneys, Realtors, accountants and IT consultants officing out of their homes but fully engaged in our community.

Our community partners regularly partner with Blinn College and others educational programs and offers internships and “hands on” experience for our future workforce and we have benefitted from these partnerships as many have come back to work locally in our community.

As we all work to address the needs of our Texas workforce, we look forward to supporting the programs that will continue to positively impact Washington County and the community of Chappell Hill. We are always eager to learn more from our workforce programs and feel free to reach out to the Chappell Hill Chamber of Commerce if there are opportunities that will benefit our business members.

President

Economic Development Partners (continued)



The path to success in Washington County can look different for different people. Even in today’s world, success is too often defined as having a four-year college degree. I believe continued investment in non-traditional education programs can encourage our workforce to embrace a unique trajectory that will help shape a thriving future in the business world. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs like elevator repairers and power line installers, which often only require apprenticeships as prerequisites, boasts average salaries between \$82,000 and \$94,000 respectively. I am encouraged by this 88th leg-

islative session to witness bipartisan efforts to support career and technical education programs. Technical, trade, and vocational programs empower individuals to operate businesses confidently, while nurturing self-reliance, creativity, and a proactive approach to problem-solving. We are fortunate in Washington County to have a resource like Blinn, which can keep our county moving forward.

Wishing you and your business all the success in 2024,

Jamie Rankin
President & CEO



Brenham | Washington County
Economic Development

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