



2026 WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE AWARD NOMINATION FORM

NOMINATION FORM

APPLICANT:

Greenville Board of Development

Name of Community or Workforce Board

John Dickson - Director of Business Development/Retention

Contact Name and Title

jdickson@greenvilletx.gov

Email Address

(903) 455-1197

Telephone Number

35,000

Community Population (as of the most recent census or as officially marketed)

John Dickson

TEDC Member Name (TEDC membership is held by the individual, not the organization)

SUMMARY and INSTRUCTIONS:

Please attach a brief description of the workforce development initiative. Within this description, address the award criteria of Innovativeness, Transferability, Community Commitment and Leverage, Measured Objectives and Secondary Benefits. Please provide the start date of the project and completion date, if applicable.

The program or initiative is to be for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2025. Please provide measurable results for that 12-month period. The workforce development initiative can be a long-term project, however, it must show measurable results within the award year.

Important Information:

- The submittal must be the application page and four conventionally formatted 8.5" x 11" pages. Therefore, no more than five (5) pages in total for the award submission. Any award submissions that exceeds the five-page limit will be disqualified.
- The project or program may not have been submitted previously for a TEDC Workforce Excellence Award.

Please submit this completed nomination form and your project summary via email to Crystal at crystal@texasedc.org on or before 5:00 PM, Friday, May 8, 2026. You may also submit up to five (5) photographs of your workforce project as separate jpeg or png files.

Application Fee: There is a \$100 fee to apply for the TEDC's Workforce Excellence Award. An invoice will be generated upon receipt of the application.

Workforce Excellence Award Submission Write-Up

Paris Junior College – Youth Career Exploration Initiative

Paris Junior College's Youth Career Exploration initiative is a hands-on workforce development program designed to connect education with industry while strengthening the future talent pipeline across Northeast Texas.

This initiative engages students in grades 7–12 through immersive, real-world experiences that introduce high-demand career pathways. As a targeted pilot serving 30 students, participants explored fields including HVAC, Mechatronics, Electrical, Aviation, EMS/EMT, Nursing, and advanced healthcare careers such as Sonography and Radiology.

With the support of Workforce Solutions North Central Texas, Paris Junior College was awarded \$20,000 in funding to support implementation, allowing students to attend the program at no cost and removing financial barriers to participation.

Innovative Approach

What distinguishes this initiative is its emphasis on hands-on, industry-led learning in a small-cohort environment. Rather than a large-scale, passive event, this model prioritizes depth over volume—allowing students to actively engage with equipment, instructors, and industry professionals in a meaningful way.

Through structured breakout sessions, live demonstrations, and direct interaction with professionals, students gain practical exposure to real tools, technologies, and workplace expectations. Local industry partners play an active role by hosting interactive stations, sharing career insights, and outlining the skills required for success in their fields. Many partners also supported the program through sponsorships, which provided lunches for students which further strengthened community engagement.

Additionally, the program leverages data-driven outreach and participant placement, utilizing secure digital tools to align students with career pathways based on their interests, creating a more personalized and impactful experience while establishing a scalable framework for future growth.

Community Commitment & Leverage

This initiative is driven by strong collaboration between Paris Junior College, local school districts, the Greenville Board of Development, industry partners, and community stakeholders.

Industry partners—including Hunt Regional Medical Center, Quality Care ER, ORBIS, Greenville Economic Development Corporation, Sabert, and Smurfit-Westrock—played an active role in connecting students to real-world career opportunities. Participating school districts included PTAA Greenville, Caddo Mills ISD, Greenville Christian, Bland ISD, Lone Oak ISD, Boles ISD, Greenville ISD, Quinlan ISD, Royse City ISD, as well as homeschool students.

These partnerships ensure the program reflects current workforce needs while fostering early, meaningful connections between students and employers. The small-cohort model allows for deeper engagement, helping build relationships that can lead to future training, internships, and employment opportunities.

Measured Outcomes & Impact

The program is designed with clear, measurable outcomes, including:

Direct engagement of a pilot cohort of 30 students

Exposure to 10+ high-demand career pathways:

Health Occupations: LVN, RN, CNA, Surgical Tech, Radiology Tech, Sonography Tech, EMS, Paramedic,

Skilled Trades: Mechatronics, HVAC, Aviation, Electrician

Participation from multiple local industry partners:

Hunt Regional Medical Center, Quality Care ER, ORBIS, Greenville Economic Development Corporation, Sabert, Smurfit-Westrock

Collection of actionable feedback from students, parents, and partners

Impact:

Participants in the Youth Career Exploration Initiative leave with increased confidence, a clearer understanding of viable career pathways, and meaningful connections to industry professionals. Through immersive, hands-on experiences, students engage directly with real equipment, technologies, and workplace expectations—gaining insight that traditional classroom settings cannot provide.

The small-cohort model ensures individualized attention and deeper engagement, empowering students to make informed decisions about their educational and

career paths earlier in their academic journey. Many participants discover new interests, while others gain clarity and direction to pursue targeted training or higher education opportunities.

Success is measured through participation metrics, post-event surveys, and stakeholder feedback, ensuring continuous improvement and long-term effectiveness.

Transferability & Scalability

While successfully launched as a pilot program, the Youth Career Exploration model is intentionally designed for broad replication and adoption by other communities. Every core element—including the targeted outreach strategy, industry engagement protocols, scheduling templates, breakout session formats, data-driven participant matching, and comprehensive evaluation tools—has been developed as a clear, documented, and easily adaptable blueprint.

This structured framework allows other communities across Texas to duplicate the event with confidence, while tailoring specific career pathways and local partnerships to meet their unique regional workforce demands. The small-cohort, hands-on approach is particularly transferable because it maintains high quality and deep engagement even as participation grows.

By using a deliberate phased implementation—starting small to ensure excellence and then scaling responsibly—the model protects program integrity while expanding its reach. Communities can confidently replicate the Youth Career Exploration Initiative knowing they are adopting a proven, low-risk framework that delivers measurable impact for students, educators, and local employers alike.

Conclusion

Paris Junior College's Youth Career Exploration initiative represents a strategic, high-impact approach to workforce development. By prioritizing meaningful engagement, strong partnerships, and a scalable model, the program lays the foundation for long-term growth and expanded reach.

This initiative is not just an event—it is a pilot model for building a stronger, more connected, and workforce-ready community. We have already begun planning for the 2026 Youth Career Exploration event!

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/l5v7H2IyOJo>



