

Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services

Project HIRE

Helping Individuals Reach Employment

Laura M. Villarreal, Project HIRE Director



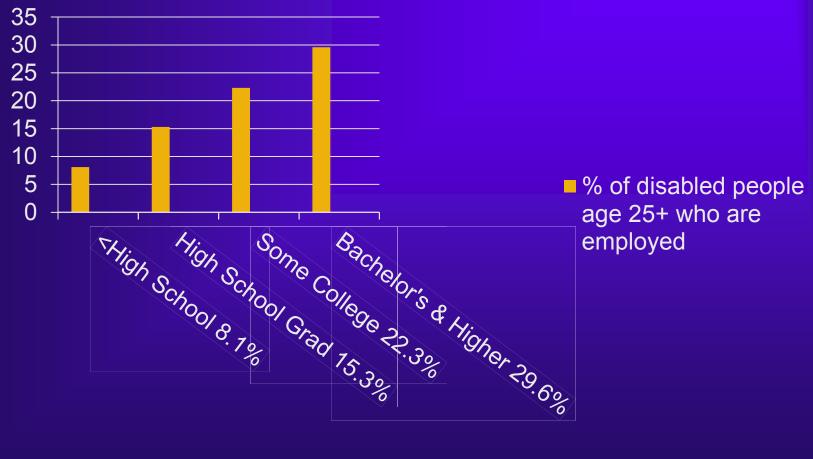


DARS Project HIRE

A 5-year \$1.25 million grant from the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities to help up to 50 consumers ages 18 to 25 with developmental disabilities who want to pursue a degree or certificate at South Texas College (STC) and find employment.



Education Improves Employment Outcomes



U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011



Why Is Project HIRE So Exciting?

- Grant participants and <u>all future</u> DARS consumers and students with disabilities will benefit.
- Involvement of mentors from the business community.
- Long-lasting collaborations and partnerships for independence.



Partners

- South Texas College
- University of Texas Pan American
- Workforce Solutions
- Mc Allen Independent School District
- Sharyland ISD
- Pharr- San Juan-Alamo ISD
- Communication Axess Ability Group
- Access Granted
- National Expert Paul Wehman, PhD
- Project Evaluator Lynn Fischer, PhD



Advisory Committee

- 14 members
- Help achieve sustainability
- Serve and represent:
 - local disability community,
 - educational institutions,
 - workforce board,
 - area businesses, and
 - DARS consumers currently attending South Texas College



Project HIRE Services

- Individual person-centered plans
- Summer college and employment readiness training
- Career exploration



Services (continued)

- One-on-one UT Pan American education coaches
- South Texas College liaison counselors
- Assistive technology evaluation
- Business mentors



Services (continued)

- Job shadowing, work study, and internships
- Monthly team support meetings for participants, families, UT Pan American educational coach, STC liaison counselors, STC department chairs, and DARS counselors
- Job placement



Selecting Participants

- Participants must have a developmental disability
- Complete an application
- Include a letter of recommendation
- Interview
- Participate in an orientation
- Comply with program requirements



Participant Reynoldo Cantu





Meet Other Participants

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwWoYKzFNzs



2012 Milestones

- January: Grant started, educational coaches hired
- March: Applicant interviews
- April: Kick-off celebration
- June: Summer trainings begin, evaluations for adaptive equipment
- August: First participants start STC
- Ongoing: Identify business mentors based on participants' vocational interests



Replicating a Successful Model of Collaboration

Find the right people in your community, who:

- Understand the common goal,
- Want to eliminate the silos, and
- Have a desire to join sustainable partnerships.





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