



ALAMO
COLLEGES

**Westside Education & Training Center
(WETC)**

Workforce Labor Study and Education Needs

2020 Strategic Plan Amendment

Prepared by:



**WESTSIDE
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alamo Colleges' Westside Education and Training Center (WETC) engaged the Westside Development Corporation (WDC) to update the 2020 Strategic Plan for WETC to include a labor market study and community workforce education and training needs report.

As part of this update the WDC performed on-going project management from August 30, 2015 to August 30, 2016. This work included data gathering, analysis and planning, implementation support including focus groups, community meetings and stakeholder input for the purpose providing recommendations on workforce education programming to the WETC Advisory Board and the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development for Alamo Colleges.

Key points of this research include the following labor study findings:

- Vibrant industry clusters in San Antonio identified by the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation and Alamo Colleges do not completely coincide with the current workforce needs being advertised.
 - Low skill jobs are just as in-demand, if not more, than mid skill jobs.
- While San Antonio industries identify mostly mid skill worker needs, the case can be made for more entry pathways for low skill workers as well.
 - Low skill to mid skill development is crucial to meeting San Antonio's industry cluster needs.
- Lack of soft skill training is impacting both low skill and mid skill job placement.
 - Demand for low skill and mid skill workers can be attributed to the lack of soft skills training industry wide.

In addition, key points of this research include the following focus group findings:

- Even basic training is important.
- Soft skills really matter.
- Construction industry cluster is important.
- Aging work force is concerning.
- Basic math skills are a must.
- Employers are willing to train hard and soft skills.
- Training certificates matter.
- Criminal background checks are still a barrier.

Collectively, this lack of soft skill training is preventing upward job placement opportunities of low-skilled workers into mid-skill workers. Also, lack of soft skill training continues to be the main attribute for mid-skill and low-skill demand despite workers having qualified hard skills.

These understandings provide opportunities for Alamo Colleges WETC to meet low-skill and mid-skill worker development needs and to develop methodologies and training programs for low-skill workers to transform into mid-skill level workers. Certain recommendations are provided at the conclusion of this report.

LABOR MARKET STUDY

Background

The Westside Development Corporation (WDC), a local government corporation created by the City of San Antonio for the purpose of economic development in a 15-square mile target area in the near West side, served as the facilitator for the findings in this study.

The Alamo Colleges' Westside Education and Training Center, commonly referred to as "The WETC", is one of nine off-campus sites of the Alamo Colleges. The WETC is a workforce specialty center implemented under Dr. Federico Zaragoza, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development. It was opened in 2006 for the purpose of being "an avenue for community residents to attain entry-level occupation skills, to increase technical skills, or to connect to jobs or higher education opportunities," WETC is not an independently-accredited campus, but offers college credit courses through affiliation with the five accredited colleges in their system.

The WETC operates on the site of a former elementary school campus of the Edgewood Independent School District. It is a collaborative effort between Alamo Colleges, Edgewood Independent School District, the City of San Antonio, WDC, and numerous area community organizations.

The WDC has been engaged to study the local workforce and labor market demographics to determine occupational and technical skill training that can be conducted at WETC now and in the future. As part of this effort, focus groups were conducted by the WDC with distinct target audiences in mind: community, business, industry, and professionals.

Alamo Colleges will use this assessment of information as they deliberate future programming and training programs for WETC and the community in which it resides.

The following pages detail the focus groups, workforce and labor data, data analysis, and recommendations for adoption by the WETC Advisory Board and Alamo Colleges.

The WDC utilized several different data sources to identify 2016 in-demand occupations, occupations that are projected to grow, positions that require only a certificate or high school education, jobs that require a degree of some kind and all of which can lead to a well-paying career. These sources include the U.S. Department of Labor, Indeed.com, CareerBuilder.com, the National Skills Coalition (NCS), 2015 Workforce Training Effectiveness Survey's on Transportation/Logistics and Manufacturing conducted by WDC on behalf of Alamo Colleges, and the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation.

The WDC focused on these data sets in relation to the State of Texas, Bexar County, and the City of San Antonio. The following is a breakdown of the data gathered through this

report, including WDC analysis and recommendations.

WORKFORCE DATA

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics cites in its most recent report dated May 2015 for the San Antonio-New Braunfels Metropolitan Statistical Area the following occupation codes as the most in-demand for the area.

Area: San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX					
Period: May 2015					
Occupation (SOC code)	Employment(1)	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage(2)	Annual median wage(2)	Employment per 1,000 jobs
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers(113071)	520	44.88	93340	86680	0.553
Food Service Managers(119051)	970	30.48	63400	57060	1.02
Purchasing Agents Except Wholesale Retail and Farm Products(131023)	2590	33.89	70480	69740	2.735
Computer User Support Specialists(151151)	5050	23.72	49340	45890	5.328
Surgical Technologists(292055)	950	18.66	38810	39340	0.998
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians(292071)	2070	17.95	37330	34220	2.186
Insurance Sales Agents(413021)	4620	23.52	48920	43890	4.873
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists(493031)	2130	21.87	45480	44210	2.25
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers(533032)	11820	20.93	43530	40760	12.474
Footnotes:					
(1) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.					
(2) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by 2080 hours.					

The Bureau of Labor Statistics also projects out short-term in demand occupations for a two-year period of time (i.e. 2015 to 2017) and long-term in demand occupations for a 10-year period of time (i.e. 2014 to 2024). The tables below reflect their latest data sets.

The WDC notes little to no change in most in-demand jobs between 2015 to 2017 and 2014 to 2024.

U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Short-Term Occupation Projects through 2017							
Occupation Name	Base Year	Base	Proj Year	Proj	Change	Percent Change	Avg Annual Openings
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	2015	24660	2017	26230	1570	6.4	1230
Computer User Support Specialists	2015	61390	2017	64580	3190	5.2	2280
Food Service Managers	2015	22300	2017	23640	1340	6	1090
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2015	188630	2017	200850	12220	6.5	9120
Insurance Sales Agents	2015	54980	2017	62440	7460	13.6	5140
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	2015	16510	2017	17160	650	3.9	650
Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products	2015	26520	2017	27080	560	2.1	1000
Surgical Technologists	2015	9480	2017	9860	380	3.9	270
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	2015	9940	2017	10470	530	5.4	470

U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Long-Term Occupation Projects through 2024							
OccupationName	BaseYear	Base	ProjYear	Proj	Change	Percent Change	Avg Annual Openings
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	2014	25300	2024	32130	6830	27	1120
Computer User Support Specialists	2014	56740	2024	70880	14140	24.9	2140
Food Service Managers	2014	17780	2024	22260	4480	25.2	810
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2014	187610	2024	226690	39080	20.8	7100
Insurance Sales Agents	2014	35480	2024	43820	8340	23.5	1770

Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	2014	16580	2024	21520	4940	29.8	870
Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products	2014	26500	2024	29880	3380	12.7	1070
Surgical Technologists	2014	9660	2024	12560	2900	30.1	390
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	2014	8940	2024	10700	1760	19.7	370

Occupation Skills Needed in State of Texas

National Skills Coalition 2014 research shows that it is middle-skill jobs that make up the largest part of Texas' labor market. Specifically, these are jobs that do not require a four-year degree but do require a high school diploma. NCS says that it is the middle-skill jobs where key industries in Texas are having trouble finding a sufficient number of trained workers to fill the jobs. According to them, 49% of the job openings from 2010-2020 will be for workers with middle-skill development as compared to 20% low-skill, and 31% high-skill.

NOTE: Throughout the remainder of this report the WDC has indicated next to the top in-demand job the skill level required – low, mid and high.

2016 Demand Jobs

Both career occupational worksites, Indeed.com and CareerBuilder.com, conduct research each year based on 1) positions listed and 2) most in-demand jobs for any given area. According to their most current data sets, trends across all sectors of the economy have been identified. The trends for both indicators show that services and support staff that do not require a four-year degree are the most in-demand jobs right now. The positions listed below are considered the most in-demand in 2016 and the minimum skill level required to pursue these positions is indicated.

Position	Low-Skill	Mid-Skill	High-Skill
1. Truck Drivers	X		
2. Food Service Managers	X		
3. Computer User Support Specialists	X		
4. Insurance Sales Agents	X		
5. Medical Records and Health Information Technicians		X	
6. Surgical Technicians		X	
7. Bus/Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	X		

8. Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers			X
9. Purchasing Agents		X	

San Antonio Occupations by Industry Cluster

The San Antonio Economic Development Foundation (SAEDF) recognizes seven vibrant industries in San Antonio:

- Aerospace
- Biosciences
- Environmental Technology
- Financial Services
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing and Military

Workforce Solutions Alamo has identified the following as the top in-demand jobs in each industry cluster from the Texas Workforce Commission.

Aerospace/Advanced Manufacturing

Occupation	Change #	Growth Change	Entry Education	2014 Median Wage Hourly	Skill Level
Logistician	410	38.3%	Bachelor's degree	\$35.76	High-Level
Engineers, All	140	16.1%	Bachelor's degree	\$43.44	High-Level
Team Assemblers	1,040	19.2%	High School	\$11.69	Mid-Level
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal/Plastic	30	37.5%	High School	\$22.13	Mid-Level
Machinists	430	27.4%	High School	\$17.18	Mid-Level

Business/Finance

Occupation	Change #	Growth Change	Entry Education	2014 Median Wage Hourly	Skill Level
Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Auditing Clerks	2,330	22.2%	High School	\$17.14	Mid-Level
Medical Secretaries	2,880	39.9%	High School	\$13.63	Mid-Level
Paralegals & Legal Assistants	510	31.9%	Associate's Degree	\$21.16	Mid-Level
Secretaries & Admin Assistants, Ex. Legal, Medical & Executive	3,350	22.2%	High School	\$14.84	Mid-Level
Chefs & Head Cooks	120	17.9%	High School	\$24.84	Mid-Level

Bioscience/Healthcare

Occupation	Change #	Growth Change	Entry Education	2014 Median Wage Hourly	Skill Level
Phlebotomists	190	23.2%	Postsecondary non-degree award	\$13.95	Mid-Level
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	210	51.2%	Associate's Degree	\$29.60	Mid-Level
Respiratory Therapists	240	26.4%	Associate's Degree	\$24.58	Mid-Level
Registered Nurses	4,870	26.4%	Associate's Degree	\$31.48	Mid-Level
Occupational Therapy Assistants	110	45.8%	Associate's Degree	\$31.07	Mid-Level

Information Technology

Occupation	Change #	Growth Change	Entry Education	2014 Median Wage Hourly	Skill Level
Computer Systems Analysts	1,150	33.4%	Bachelor's Degree	\$37.33	High-Level
Software Developers, Applications	810	27.5%	Bachelor's Degree	\$44.64	High-Level
Software Developers, Systems Software	520	26.0%	Bachelor's Degree	\$47.81	High-Level
Network & Computer Systems Administrators	600	24.1%	Bachelor's Degree	\$34.67	High-Level
Computer Network Architects	230	25.6%	Bachelor's Degree	\$42.94	High-Level

Energy

Occupation	Change #	Growth Change	Entry Education	2014 Median Wage	Skill Level
Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas, & Mining	260	54.2%	Less than high school	\$17.61	Low-Level
Electricians	700	18.3%	High School	\$20.11	Mid-Level
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,100	22.0%	Postsecondary non-degree award	\$17.90	Mid-Level

Consistent with the industry clusters previously identified, below is San Antonio employment for May 2016 by major industry sector:

SA Area Employment (thousands)	May 2016	Change from May '15 to May '16	
		Number	Percent
Total nonfarm	1,010.2	28.4	2.9
Mining and logging	6.8	-1.5	-18.1
Construction	51.9	2.2	4.4
Manufacturing	45.9	-1.0	-2.1
Trade, transport, utilities	174.7	6.0	3.6
Information Technology	21.5	-0.6	-2.7
Financial activities	84.4	1.1	1.3
Professional and business services	126.3	1.6	1.3
Education and health services	156.0	7.0	4.7
Leisure and hospitality	132.4	6.2	4.9
Other services	39.4	3.5	9.7
Government	170.9	3.9	2.3

With the exception of construction, leisure and hospitality, and government, San Antonio's top in demand jobs in each cluster correlate with San Antonio employment growth.

It can be said that San Antonio is missing the industry cluster opportunities for construction, leisure and hospitality, and government.

Workforce development programs that will close the existing skills gap will be vital to the city's continued growth.

Skills Gap

The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas hosted a series of roundtable discussions in San Antonio in early 2012 to better understand what employers saw as significant drivers of unemployment. Across all industries, employers cited a lack of basic reading and math skills as well as a lack of soft skills in the areas of customer service, attendance, and punctuality.

Employers in the manufacturing industry noted a shortage of workers with skills

adequate for “higher-level” jobs in machinery, engineering, and programming. This shortage of qualified labor significantly impacts the manufacturing industry as a lack of work-ready individuals creates slack between an employer’s capacity to produce and their ability to find qualified labor to match that capacity. One employer noted that this slack has led to a 30 to 35 percent underutilization of its operations. Others remarked that their company has declined to pursue bids for work because they do not have the labor force to fulfill additional orders.

WDC analysis of these findings compared to local data reflects inadequacies in assisting low-skill employee transition to mid-skill level employees.

2015 Alamo Colleges Workforce Training Effectiveness Survey

In examining previous surveys for Alamo Colleges on Workforce Training Effectiveness during July and August 2015, conducted by the WDC., the following analysis reveals that local San Antonio companies feel that even college graduates lack the full set of skills for the positions they were hiring. Comparing this survey data with this labor market study data reveals that even college graduates can greatly benefit from some soft skills training. This can be attributed to the lack of vibrant professional industries in San Antonio.

Additional low-skill to mid-skill job demand remains consistent with previous workforce training effectiveness survey data with truck drivers, engine mechanics, logistics, sales, and machine operators being the most in demand since 2015.

FOCUS GROUPS

In August 2016, the WDC initiated workforce focus groups that included business, community, professional, industry leaders and involved them to garner their input and ideas based on workforce needs. The discussions identified a number of insights and provided detailed participant feedback. Key questions posed were:

- Are you finding a shortage or potential employees for positions you have open?
- Based on your current employees, what skills, including hard and soft skills, do you think they could use the most training on?
- What are some of the most important work skills you value?
- What type of training do you wish potential employees had?
- What skills do you find employees lack?
- Are there any patterns in your workforce that you have noticed in relation to hard skill and soft skill training?

A Summary of focus group finds are provided below:

EVEN BASIC TRAINING MATTERS

"What I usually look for in potential employees is some kind of [relevant] experience. If on-the-job experience isn't available, some kind of school training in [the industry] is beneficial."

--Visual Media Manager

SOFT SKILLS REALLY MATTER

"Yes, there are patterns in the workforce that I have noticed in relation to soft and hard skill training. People who are gossipers or bring negativity are not usually asked back. Since the business requires long hours, managers generally do not like to bring back people who don't bring the best possible attitude."

--Music Producer

"The overall greatest challenge is finding employees with good soft skills: showing reliability, having a good attitude, and showing good work ethic."

-- Energy Company Manager

"The training I think that is sorely needed falls in the category of customer service. My definition of customer service is having a basic understanding of businesses and how and why they operate. I would also throw in the ability to adapt to changes. I see a lack of understanding of the basics of office operations: phone etiquette, greeting customers, how to converse with clients, how to handle clients with issues, and customer courtesies."

--Bank Manager

"Soft skills to me means simple business operations: how are the hours of work assigned, expectations of the employer, reliability, growth opportunities, and how to discover and reach for them. People that have gained trust of the student/client/participant."

--Consumer Service Manager, Banking

"The skills that I find that are lacking in new employees are endurance and dependability. After [they] complete several projects, new employees begin to become more serious and focused on their jobs. Usually this happens when there is money to be made."

--Visual Media Producer

"I feel that today's employees lack perspective, decisions are made in haste and with limited and somewhat negative aspects. As bankers, with our clients I stress that aspect to my team."

--Branch Banking Manager

"We are looking for basic technical skills, communication skills, and any customer service experience."

--Human Resource Professional

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY CLUSTER IMPORTANT

"We need [industry] training for our field from skilled laborers, carpenter helpers, carpenters, foreman and even superintendents."

--Construction Company Owner

AGING WORKFORCE CONCERNING

"The average age for our construction workers is 55 to 58, but I also have employees that are 60 and over."

--Construction Company President

"I think if we don't start doing something [about the aging worker population] we will eventually have no workers to choose from."

--Construction Field Supervisor

EMPLOYERS WILLING TO TRAIN

"For our entry level employees in construction trades, we are willing to provide on-the-job training."

--Energy Company President

"I look for reliable transportation and experience. If they have no experience, we offer a two-week training program."

--Restaurant Owner

"However, even that [math] can be learned on-the-job."

--Weatherization Company Manager

BASIC MATH A MUST

"The greatest lack in hard skills is fundamental math, which is essential: "measure twice, cut once."

--Weatherization Company Owner

"The pool of the blue collar work force is decreasing at drastic rates. I would say basic motor skills, math skills, experience, and consistency."

-- Electric Company Owner

"In the banking business, we suggest having any education in finances or a finance degree. We are also looking for employees with basic technical skills and customer service experience."

--Branch Manager for Local Bank

EMPLOYER SOFT SKILL TRAINING A TREND

"Soft skills to me also include success coaches."

--Banker

TRAINING CERTIFICATIONS MATTER

"Really any type of related training would be helpful. Specifically, OSHA safety training and first aid are nice to have and in our industry we work a lot off the ground (on ladders, scaffolding and boom lifts) so lift certification are always a plus."

--Construction Company Owner

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS STILL A BARRIER

"The two biggest obstacles we come across for potential employees are guys that can't drive due to a suspended license and guys who can't pass a background check. A lot of our work is on school campuses and they've become very strict on background checks."

--Construction Company Owner

LABOR MARKET STUDY ANALYSIS

The data analysis of the labor market data discussed earlier in this report indicates several key points on industry clusters, in-demand jobs, and skill training. Most pertinent to this analysis is the inclusion of the State of Texas's, National Skills Coalition skill level categories matched to San Antonio workforce needs. This is something that is currently not employed but is helpful in further classifying employer needs.

The identification of the industry clusters that have been adopted by the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation, City of San Antonio, Workforce Solutions, Alamo Colleges, and other economic development entities, do not completely coincide with the current workforce needs and the necessary skill level training needed for low, mid, and high skill.

For example, low-skill jobs are just as in-demand as mid-skill jobs. A solution to meeting San Antonio's industry cluster needs is the identification of low-skill and mid-skill jobs. This could lead to more entry pathways for low-skill workers while also providing development opportunities to mid-skill level jobs. In other words, if we don't take care of low-skill jobs then mid-skill level jobs will continue to have trouble being filled by qualified workers.

Further analysis is that of the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation seven vibrant industries in San Antonio: aerospace, biosciences, environmental technology, financial services, information technology, and manufacturing and military, information technology is the only industry identified (with exception of two positions in the aerospace industry) that requires high-skill development and training to be successful. It can be said that the push for information technology workforce is misguided when we have so many low and mid-skill job needs.

Costly, lack of soft skill training is impacting both low skill and mid skill job placement. Employers, professionals, and skill gap data for San Antonio all indicated that emphasis needs to be put on training in soft skills for all skilled workers. The data collected shows that even if a person has the hard skill training, and the lack of adequate soft skills possesses challenges for employers to hire or advance workers in positions that lead to high wage paying careers.

LABOR STUDY AND REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following matrix indicates 2016 demand jobs and workforce training courses available through Alamo Colleges system.

2016 Demand Jobs	Training Course Available	Campus Offered	Skill Level
1. Truck drivers	Professional Truck Driver I, CDL Refresher	Offsite – SAGE, St. Phillips College	Low-Skill
2. Food service managers	Food Service Manager Certification	St. Phillips College	Low-Skill
3. Computer user support specialists	Multiple Trainings Available	Northeast Lakeview College, Northwest Vista, PAC, BETC, Greater Kerrville Center, Central Texas Technology Center	Low-Skill
4. Insurance sales agents	Insurance Adjuster Training	San Antonio College	Low-Skill
5. Medical records and health information technicians	Medical Front Office Program	PAC, NVC, Alamo University Center	Mid-Skill
6. Surgical technicians	No Certification Offered	---	Mid-Skill
7. Bus/truck mechanics and diesel engine specialists	Automotive Service	St. Phillips College	Low-Skill
8. Transportation, storage, and distribution managers	Logistics, Transportation Management, Warehouse Management	St. Phillips College	High-Skill
9. Purchasing agents/Procurement	No Training Offered	---	Mid-Skill

The Alamo Colleges currently offers a number of training and certification programs for

the top in-demand jobs identified. By bringing some of these programs to the WETC campus, the local workforce would benefit as well as employers city-wide.

Soft Skill Opportunities for WETC

In particular, providing a center for soft skills training seems to be an absolute must. Given the amount of funding sources available for workforce training at the federal, state, and local levels, a soft skills training center is within the grasp of future WETC development.

WETC could design individualized worker training programs that could be taken onsite to various employers in need of on-site soft skill training.

Low-Skill to Mid-Skill to High-Skill Pathways at WETC

Specific curriculum and training programs could be provided by Alamo Colleges for every industry cluster while providing development for low, mid, and high-skill workers.

In addition, the WETC could focus on providing pathways or training for low-skill workers given the area demographics.

Another recommendation partial to this is the development of low-skill workers into mid-skill workers and the recognition and development of those pathways.

WETC Current and Future Growth Opportunities

By examining the workforce training programs and necessary skill level, the WDC recommends a healthy mix of low-skill and mid-skill development programs.

Specifically, the following training and education programs should be adopted in the immediate term for WETC programming:

- Computer User Support Specialist training
- Insurance Sales Agent training
- Purchasing Agents/Procurement training
- Portions of transportation, storage, and distribution

WDC recommends the following be adopted with the development of an expanded WETC campus:

- Food Service Manager training
- Surgical Technicians training

Relatedly, given the opportunity cluster in the hospitality and leisure, construction, and government job training programs could also be headquartered at WETC.