

**Name of Contact**

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**Full Name of State Agency**

Texas Workforce Commission

**Email Address**

Courtney Arbour

**Name of Initiative the state (and/or partnership) is being nominated for: 2020 Pinnacle Award for Workforce Development (Innovative Set of Services)****Award Nomination:**

Texas Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Integrated Services Initiative

**Response to Question 1:**

Rural Capital Area stakeholders have spent more than three years working to strengthen connections among local workforce, adult education, and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) partners. Since 2016, Rural Capital leadership have worked closely to build systems that allow for smoother referral and enrollment into Adult Education and Learning (AEL), VR and other workforce programs. Rural Capital stakeholders have worked diligently to strengthen connections among local workforce, adult education, and VR partners. Beyond working on high level agreements such as MOUs and discussions among leadership, the service providers have come together to do the work of process building that includes consistent communication and training that has resulted in sustained change that have yielded better outcomes for adult learners and workers with disabilities and the local businesses who need their talents. Rural Capital's activities have included: Developing a shared vision across stakeholders; providing cross-system professional development to help frontline staff learn how their counterparts approach things; creating streamlined referral protocols and data collection processes; educating stakeholders about the services and eligibility requirements of their peers; and more.

**Response to Question 2:**

Examples of the work accomplished include:

- Standard Operating Procedures for customer referrals across AEL, VR and other workforce programs
- An electronic system for sharing referral while protecting customer information across the programs
- Desk guides for staff on AEL, VR and other workforce programs eligibility, services, and contacts
- Joint training of staff

As a result of these efforts more than more than 1000 referrals have been made among the partners since the integration became a focus.