

INVESTING IN PEOPLE

An Evaluation of Travis County Investments in Workforce Development



EVALUATION OF TRAVIS COUNTY INVESTMENTS IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

2022 UPDATE

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List of Acronyms

American YouthWorks.....	AYW
Austin Area Urban League.....	AAUL
Austin Career Institute	ACI
Austin Community College	ACC
Adult Basic Education	ABE
Certified Nurse Assistant.....	CNA
Commercial Driver’s License	CDL
English as a Second Language	ESL
Federal Poverty Guidelines	FPG
General Assessment of Instructional Need	GAIN
Goodwill Career and Technology Academy	GCTA
Health and Human Services	HHS
Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning	HVAC
High School Diploma	HSD
High School Equivalency.....	HSE
High School Equivalency Certificate	HSEC
Individual Placement and Support	IPS
Professional Networking Partnership	PNP
Ray Marshall Center	RMC
Self-Sufficiency Matrix.....	SSM
Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program	SNAP
System for Assessment and Group Evaluation.....	SAGE
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	TANF
Test for Adult Basic Education.....	TABE
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.....	TDLR
Texas Success Initiative	TSI
Texas Workforce Commission	TWC
Unemployment Insurance.....	UI
WorkInTexas.....	WIT
Workforce Education and Readiness Continuum	WERC
Workforce Education and Readiness Continuum—Travis County.....	WERC-TC
Workforce Information System.....	TWIST
Workforce Solutions Capital Area	WFSCA

Introduction

In FY 2016–FY 2021, Travis County invested over \$14 million through contracts with workforce development programs for low-income residents who face challenges in finding steady employment with sufficient earnings to support themselves and their families. These programs provide services ranging from Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL) and high school equivalency certification (HSEC) programs, to short- and long-term skills training leading to certifications and/or associate degrees across a wide range of occupations. These occupations include nursing and other healthcare professions, information technology, skilled trades, manufacturing, and other occupations in area growth industries with good prospects for career advancement.

Four of the Travis County workforce development grantees receive county-funded assistance as a consortium, the Workforce Education and Readiness Continuum–Travis County (WERC-TC). WERC-TC providers are Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers, Goodwill of Central Texas, Austin Area Urban League, and American YouthWorks. Four additional community-based organizations maintaining workforce development contracts with Travis County are included in this report: Literacy Coalition of Central Texas, Capital IDEA, LifeWorks, and Skillpoint Alliance. In addition, WERC-TC grantee American YouthWorks also delivers services to participants through Travis County funding that is not WERC-TC (Table 1).

Table 1. Travis County Funded Workforce Development Programs

Workforce Education and Readiness Continuum–Travis County (WERC-TC)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers2. Goodwill Industries of Central Texas3. Austin Area Urban League4. American YouthWorks: YouthBuild Austin and Texas Conservation Corps (This organization also receives non-WERC-TC funding from Travis County.)
Non-WERC-TC
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Career Development2. Capital IDEA: Long-Term Training3. LifeWorks: Workforce Development4. Skillpoint Alliance: Gateway5. American YouthWorks

To understand program participant outcomes and the impact of these services, the county has contracted with the Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources (RMC), an organized

research unit in the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas, to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of its investments. This evaluation report presents findings and analyses of programs funded during a six-year on-going evaluation (FY 2016–FY 2021).

REPORT ORGANIZATION

The following report section presents an overview of the evaluation questions, research methods, and a discussion of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on service delivery and employment opportunities, followed by separate sections for each of the providers examined. Each provider section includes a brief profile of the provider and its workforce development program(s), a summary of participant demographic characteristics obtained at the time of program entry, and employment and earnings outcomes and impacts for participants who exited the program during FY 2016–FY 2021. The findings include Unemployment Insurance (UI) earnings data from four quarters prior to program entry, the quarter the client exited services, and up to 20 quarters post-exit (through March 31, 2022, the latest quarter for which UI earnings data are available). This report includes the analysis of identified subgroups of exiters for selected programs. The last section summarizes evaluation findings from FY 2016–FY 2021.

Evaluation Overview

The purpose of Travis County’s investment in local workforce development services is to help low-income residents with weak labor force attachment build the skills needed for gainful employment.

The RMC’s evaluation analyzes the Travis County’s workforce investments by examining participants’ labor market experiences prior to entering the program and then tracking their labor market outcomes following program exit. Outcomes and impacts vary across the spectrum of grantees, as expected given their varying services regimes and the unique barriers to training and employment experienced by the target populations each organization serves.

This evaluation draws on multiple data sources to answer the following questions:

- Are services being delivered as planned?
- Who is being served?
- What outcomes are achieved?
- What are the impacts of the investment

DATA SOURCES

The evaluation of Travis County-funded workforce development programs draws from multiple data sources, including participant records maintained by each grantee organization, UI earnings and benefits claim files, The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) and WorkInTexas (WIT) records, interviews with program administrators and staff, program documents, grantee websites and social media, and published reports. Outcomes and impacts are reported for those program exiters with social security numbers identified within the earnings data.

Two caveats should be noted about UI earnings data used for this evaluation. First, UI earnings records have known coverage gaps. Workers in industries with high levels of self-employment or independent contracting, such as construction, truck driving, and others employed in the gig economy are less likely to be in a UI-covered position. Researchers therefore acknowledge that the outcomes reported here for programs that train for construction and truck driving occupations likely undercount actual labor market outcomes. Further, workers who obtain employment outside of the state of Texas will not be found in the Texas UI data. Second, UI earnings records are subject to review and correction by workers and employers as part of the claim's determination process for UI benefits. Therefore, numbers reported here are based on the most recently available records.¹ In addition, it should be noted that in Texas, monetary UI eligibility is based on the claimant earning sufficient earnings in at least two consecutive quarters of the five quarters prior to filing a claim for benefits. For the purposes of our study, this measure serves as a proxy measure for employment stability.

A total of 7,185 unduplicated participants were included in the dataset for this report (see Appendix A-1: Demographics of Travis County Workforce Development Program FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters and Appendix A-2: Demographics of WERC-TC Program FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters). Participants who received services from more than one Travis County-funded workforce development grantee during the study period are counted for each program in which they were enrolled.²

¹ Any discrepancies are expected to be quite small.

² WERC-TC clients were reported once, although they may have received services from more than one WERC-TC service provider.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Outcomes are reported for unduplicated participants with SSNs found in the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) data across the period examined. Outcomes reported include employment, earnings, qualification for UI benefits, and filing of UI claims. For each participant, the period examined begins four quarters prior to program entry, includes the quarter the participant exited services, and extends to include all post-service quarters available in the data. Outcomes are reported for each fiscal year participant cohort across all post-service quarters in which members of a cohort appear in the data. For example, the FY 2021 (10/1/2020–9/30/2021) cohort participants exited services during one of the four quarters represented in FY 2021, participants exiting during the first quarter of FY 2021 will be represented in more post-service quarters than participants exiting during the last quarter of the FY 2021. The outcomes data for each grantee is represented in a table followed by descriptive figures. Each table includes all participant data collected for the purposes of this report, and for the period examined. The figures illustrate employment and earnings outcomes over time, excluding post-service quarters with low cohort counts. The different figures present: a) short term employment and earnings outcomes for all cohorts from pre-service quarters to two years post-services; and b) long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from pre-service to five and four years post-services respectively. More information on the outcome measures is presented in Appendix B-1: Description of Outcomes Table Elements.

PROGRAM IMPACTS

The quasi-experimental impact analysis gauges the “value-added” from workforce program participation by comparing labor market outcomes for participants with those of a matched comparison group. Impacts are analyzed using a quasi-experimental design that employs Mahalanobis matching to select individuals from a pool of potential comparison group members who are comparable to those who received services supported by Travis County across many relevant demographic and economic characteristics. Comparison group members were drawn from TWIST records and include Travis County residents who registered for employment with the state’s WIT program or who received job search services at local Workforce Solutions Career Centers or online. Thus, the impact analysis measures the incremental difference between those who received limited employment services with those who received the additional services in which Travis County invests.

Quasi-experimental approaches tend to work well when participants for whom comparison groups are created have sufficient prior employment and earnings histories, and when data are available

on a sufficient number of variables with which to perform the match. Youth and judicially involved participants can be problematical in this regard precisely because their prior employment and earnings histories are either lacking or difficult to determine with any real confidence. Judicially involved participants present an additional problem since the status of judicial involvement is lacking for comparison group members. While our robustness checks found sufficient similarity to validate the matched comparison groups this caveat should be borne in mind when reviewing program impacts for those programs that primarily serve participants with a record of judicial involvement.

The report presents impacts for groups of program exiters for whom adequate matching could be performed. The impact figures display the quarterly employment and unconditional earnings³ of the matched treatment and control samples. Impact figures illustrate the unadjusted net effect of the comparison of average earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), and of participants to the comparison group members at four quarters prior to receiving services, at the final quarter of service, and eight quarters post-service entry. The impact tables include the estimation of unadjusted and adjusted net effects. The unadjusted net effects in the tables are simply the difference between mean outcomes for the matched participants and control groups. The “Impact Measure” in the impact tables are generated in regression models that control for remaining differences in a demographic and pre-treatment economic characteristics of the participants and matched control cases. Impact tables include data from all available post-service quarters (up to 20). For earnings impacts, the tables consider only quarters in which individuals are employed. More information on the impacts measured, the matching process, and the quality of comparison groups is provided in Appendix C: Description of Impact Table Elements; and Appendix D: Quasi-Experimental Impacts Analysis.

Because of the way data are tracked in the WIT system, members of the comparison group were located in Travis County at the time the data were obtained by RMC; however, individuals may or may not have been located in Travis County during the periods studied.

COVID-19 Pandemic: Reimagining workforce development programing

In March of 2020, some Travis County funded programs closed for spring break with little anticipation of the extent to which the COVID-19 virus would shape operations of workforce development services in Travis County and across the country. All organizations reported that program

³Unconditional earnings represent the average earnings for all program exiters and their matched comparison group, including individuals identified in the data earning zero dollars.

implementation for FY 2020 was flowing as expected with no major challenges or struggles until the number of infections and deaths began to rise across the state of Texas. Workforce training organizations were influenced by evolving federal, state, and local rules and recommendations related to the mitigation of the pandemic.

As workforce development training organizations closed their doors at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (mid-March 2020), staff went to work reimagining service delivery: creating and transitioning to virtual education, training, case management, career coaching, and support services. Organizations chose which trainings to offer online, which trainings to suspend, and some training programs were re-launched using a hybrid model that combined virtual with limited face-to-face training. Health care clinicals were put on hold and certification testing sites closed. Programs developed refresher courses for participants who experienced delays in certification testing. For most grantees, program offices remained closed with staff providing virtual services well into FY 2021, while slowly transitioning to offering face-to-face services.

Traditional avenues and venues for participant recruitment evaporated and organizations struggled to retain and reengage participants. Most grantees continue to report challenges in recruiting program participants throughout FY 2021.

The data utilized for this report includes the January 1, 2020–March 31, 2020, quarter when programs closed, and stay-at-home orders were first issues in the state of Texas and Travis County to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus in mid-March.⁴

Outcomes for both employment and the filing of UI benefits claims appear to be influenced by disruptions of the pandemic on the local workforce and economy. For each cohort, the quarter that contains the March 2020 data, the period of time initially influenced by the pandemic response, is identified with **bold font**. The pandemic reshaped the U. S. labor market with initial job loss early in the pandemic followed by the ongoing challenge to hire workers as the economy struggles to recover.

Gould and Kandra (2021) of the Economic Policy Institute reported that in 2020, the prodigious majority of job losses were among low wage earners. Less than 75% of low-wage workers were still working in 2020 compared with more than 90% of high-wage workers. The loss of low wage workers coupled with an

The influence of the pandemic on national employment and earnings trends may explain the decrease in employment and increase in earnings illustrated in this report.

⁴ORDER BY THE COUNTY JUDGE OF TRAVIS COUNTY: County Judge Order No. 2020-5: Relating the Declaration regard COVID-19. Available at: <https://www.txcourts.gov/media/1446325/travis-county-stay-home-work-safe-order-03-24-2020.pdf>

additional 1.5 million jobs added to the top half of the wage distribution, skewed average wages upward. Reported earnings grew largely because more than 80% of the 9.6 million jobs lost in 2020 were jobs held by low wage earners (Gould & Kandra, 2021). The influence of the pandemic on national employment and earnings trends may explain the decrease in employment and increase in earnings illustrated in this report.

In addition, opportunities for stay-at-home remote work for employers across the country increased and the gig economy expanded. The employment and earnings information for contract employees and those working for employers outside of Texas, do not appear in the earnings data used for this analysis.

Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum-Travis County (WERC-TC)



WERC-TC functions as a part of a larger network of Austin and Travis County providers of workforce and educational services: the Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum (WERC). WERC is a City of Austin and Travis County-funded network of community partners linked to help prepare Austin-area residents to enter or reenter today's competitive job market. With at least 18 locations across eight partner organizations, WERC provides client services ranging from case management (including the development of an Individual Employment Plan and/or Individual Education Plan); Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL); High School Equivalency Certification (HSEC) test preparation; job readiness instruction and job search assistance; paid internships; and assistance accessing a variety of occupational/vocational training options—including programs leading to industry-recognized credentials and occupational certifications and licenses. All occupational training must be provided by entities on the Texas Workforce Commission's statewide Eligible Training Provider System, linked back to an occupation on Workforce Solutions Capital Area's current targeted occupations list, and lead to a recognized credential.⁵ WERC-TC is a component of the larger WERC program.

All WERC-TC participants must have an income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG); be a resident of Travis County; be at least 16 years old; and either be a United States citizen or have "Right-to-Work" status (or be in the process of gaining this status).

The following are educational prerequisites for participants to enter WERC-TC occupational training:

- Basic Soft Skills—Demonstrated through a learning assessment such as O-Net or other pre-assessment; and
- Education Specific Foundational Skills—Demonstrated through the Aspiring Minds Computer Adaptive Test (AMCAT) assessments, client self-attestation, or a letter of foreign equivalency from a credentialed provider.⁶

WERC-TC funds four area workforce development service providers: Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, Austin Area Urban League, and American YouthWorks. Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board administers the program operating as

⁵ American YouthWorks YouthBuild programs are exempt from this requirement.

⁶ In-house Occupational Training does not require the AMCAT assessment (with the exception of HSEC).

the fiscal agent for WERC-TC funds, providing program oversight, quality assurance monitoring of client eligibility and performance outcomes, and supporting the continuum of care through partner frontline staff meetings as needed. Partner meetings offer an opportunity for staff to discuss challenges and best practices; and share information on available area workshops and services, policy updates, and trends in quality assurance.⁷

Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board contracts with Goodwill to manage the WERC-TC data management software system (CaseWorthy), as well as provide technical support and system training on an ongoing basis. All four WERC-TC providers are required to enter directly into CaseWorthy: client information; services and referrals provided; follow-up contacts; and outcomes, including employment, licensing or certification obtainment, rate of pay, and employment in field of training. CaseWorthy allows for the sharing of client data across programs, standardized reporting, and as a single data repository for WERC-TC clients with a common intake form and income eligibility requirement of 200% FPG, allowing clients to be referred to different providers in the WERC continuum of care without repeating the intake process.⁸

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 3,683 unduplicated WERC-TC participants who exited the program in FY 2016–FY 2021. Although the average age of WERC-TC participant exiters was 38, the program served youth as young as 16, and 20.7% of all exiters were fifty or older. The majority of exiters identified as Black (51.3%) with 22.8% identified as Hispanic and 21.3% as White. Most exiters were male (56.8%) with .3% identifying as transgender. The majority, 62.7%, reported having a 12th grade education or a HSEC, and 18.1% reported attending or graduating from college prior to program entry. Slightly over 36.7% reported judicial involvement, and 7.1% identified as veterans. One-fifth reported receiving any public benefits (receipt of public benefits is missing/unknown for 56.9% of the participants). The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: East Austin (26.7%), North Austin (20.1%), South Austin (17.3%) and Eastern suburbs of Austin (13.7%).

Among the 3,683 WERC-TC participants, 371 enrolled in more than one training program. The majority of these participants (338) enrolled in an additional training program within the original

⁷ Information from a conversation with Gustavo Jimenez, Director of Performance and Janee White, Quality Assurance Specialist, Workforce Solutions Capital Area on 3/9/2020.

⁸ Information from a conversation with Amy Dutton, Special Projects Manager, and Kendra Campbell, Special Projects Coordinator, Workforce Solutions Capital Area. September 6, 2017 and June 6, 2018.

organization where they entered WERC-TC services. For example, AYW participants may transition from YouthBuild to the Conservation Corps, or while working toward a high school diploma, they may complete Health Corps training and then enroll in computer technology and graphic design training. The remaining 33 participants enrolled in an additional training program at a different WERC-TC organization.

Participant Outcomes

Table 2 presents WERC-TC participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) in FY 2016–FY 2021. Outcomes are reported for 3,681 participants with social security numbers identified within the earnings data.

During the four quarters prior to entering the program, overall quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals served by WERC-TC was 48.2%. The data represents an average 12.2 percentage point gain in employment between the year prior to services and one year post-service. Although, average employment grew to 67.8% during the exit quarter, the rate of employment decreased by 7.4 percentage points four quarters post-service (60.4%). For those cohorts for whom data are available, employment continued to decrease throughout the remainder of the reporting period.

The available data identifies that overall earnings grew from an average of \$4,591 in the four quarters pre-service to an average of \$6,305 four quarters post-service: a \$1,708 average increase representing a 37.3% earnings gain. The available data for all cohorts report a continued increase in earnings from the last service quarter through the remainder of the post-service reporting period. Of interest is the increase in income across the five years post-services reported for the FY 2016 cohort. During the fifth year post-services, reported participants income doubled from \$4,603 (during the last quarter of service) to \$9,204. An increase in earnings during the pandemic recovery period is identified with bold font for each cohort in Table 2.

Prior to entering WERC-TC, 39.6% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving services, approximately 59% met the requirements for eligibility. Few participants (4% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined, and the majority of these claims were filed during the early quarters of the pandemic.

Table 2. WERC-TC Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service	4 Years Post-service	5 Years Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	872	872	872	872	872	872	872	872	
FY 2017	715	715	715	715	715	715	715	266	
FY 2018	660	660	660	660	660	660	236	.	
FY 2019	521	521	521	521	521	166	.	.	
FY 2020	553	553	553	553	284	.	.	.	
FY 2021	360	360	360	172	.	.	.	.
Totals	3681	3681	3681	3493	3052	2413	1823	1138	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	45.8%	73.3%	70.0%	63.8%	61.2%	58.9%	51.4%	49.5%	58.8%
FY 2017	39.9%	69.4%	62.1%	60.3%	55.4%	49.2%	45.9%		
FY 2018	53.9%	66.7%	62.3%	60.0%	54.1%	49.6%			
FY 2019	50.6%	67.2%	65.3%	58.7%	57.6%				
FY 2020	50.6%	64.7%	59.1%	57.7%					
FY 2021	52.9%	59.2%	61.4%						
Overall	48.2%	67.8%	63.9%	60.4%	57.1%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$4,574	\$4,603	\$5,773	\$6,041	\$6,691	\$7,320	\$8,051	\$9,204	\$7,154
FY 2017	\$4,239	\$4,443	\$5,498	\$5,779	\$6,652	\$6,931	\$7,982		
FY 2018	\$4,522	\$4,322	\$5,562	\$6,090	\$7,137	\$8,391			
FY 2019	\$5,047	\$4,847	\$6,258	\$6,512	\$7,700				
FY 2020	\$4,631	\$4,899	\$6,375	\$7,174					
FY2021	\$4,651	\$5,130	\$7,188						
Overall	\$4,597	\$4,643	\$5,971	\$6,305	\$7,053				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	38.0%	42.0%	49.0%	62.5%	58.1%	56.2%	53.1%	47.8%	54.3%
FY 2017	34.0%	40.0%	58.7%	60.8%	54.8%	51.6%	44.6%		
FY 2018	42.2%	47.6%	52.9%	56.1%	54.6%	48.0%			
FY 2019	39.6%	43.8%	53.2%	60.7%	53.9%				
FY 2020	42.5%	46.8%	55.5%	55.2%					
FY 2021	45.2%	43.1%	45.6%						
Overall	39.6%	43.7%	52.8%	59.0%	55.1%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	2.7%	1.2%	2.9%	2.1%	2.0%	1.7%	8.3%	2.5%	3.1%
FY 2017	2.6%	2.0%	1.3%	2.4%	1.7%	9.2%	3.5%		
FY 2018	3.1%	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	10.5%	5.2%			
FY 2019	2.9%	2.3%	4.6%	11.1%	3.7%				
FY 2020	2.2%	10.9%	10.1%	6.3%					
FY 2021	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%						
Overall	2.5%	2.9%	3.4%	4.0%	4.0%				

Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: WFSCA Career Centers had two participants with earnings in excess of \$25,000 for several quarters. These participants were removed from the above reported outcomes.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC. Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Table 3 illustrates the percentage increase in earnings between the time periods identified for this analysis. For all WERC-TC exiters, the largest increase in earnings is reported to occur between the exiting quarter and the second quarter post-services. Beyond this initial increase in earnings, the next largest increase in earnings is reported at the beginning of the pandemic economic recovery period (identified with bold font).

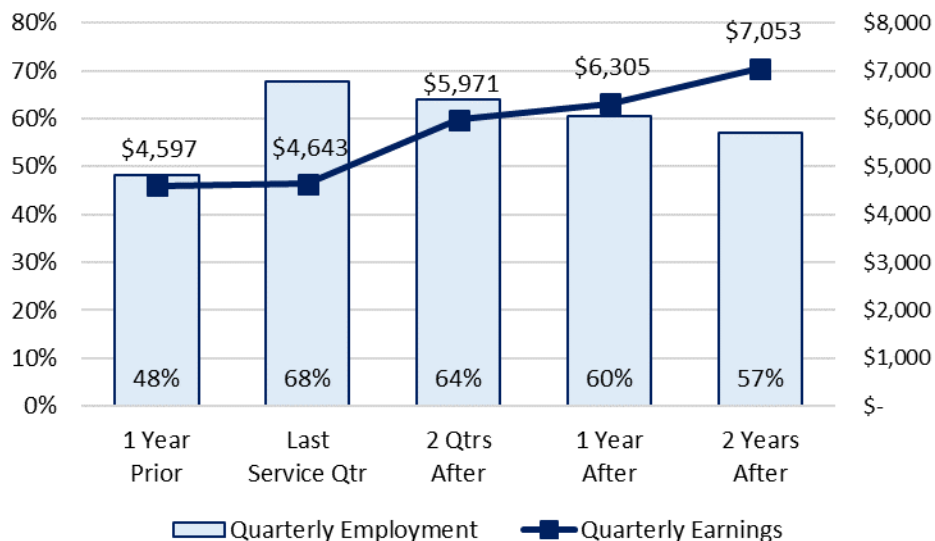
**Table 3. WERC-TC Participant Earnings Outcomes Percentage Change Over Time:
FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters**

Earnings Percentage Increase Over-time	Exit Qtr–2nd Qtr Post-services	2nd Qtr–1 Year Post-services	1 Year– 2 Years Post-service	2 Years –3 Years Post-services	3 Years– 4 Years Post-service	4 Years 5 Years Post-services
FY 2016	25.4%	4.6%	10.8%	9.4%	10.0%	14.3%
FY 2017	23.7%	5.1%	15.1%	4.2%	15.2%	
FY 2018	28.7%	9.5%	17.2%	17.6%		
FY 2019	29.1%	4.1%	18.3%			
FY 2020	30.1%	12.5%				
FY2021	40.1%					

Note: Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 1 displays for all WERC-TC cohort exiters (FY 2016–FY 2021) the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services, illustrating a trend of decreasing rates of employment accompanied by a steady increase in earnings for exiters appearing in the data.

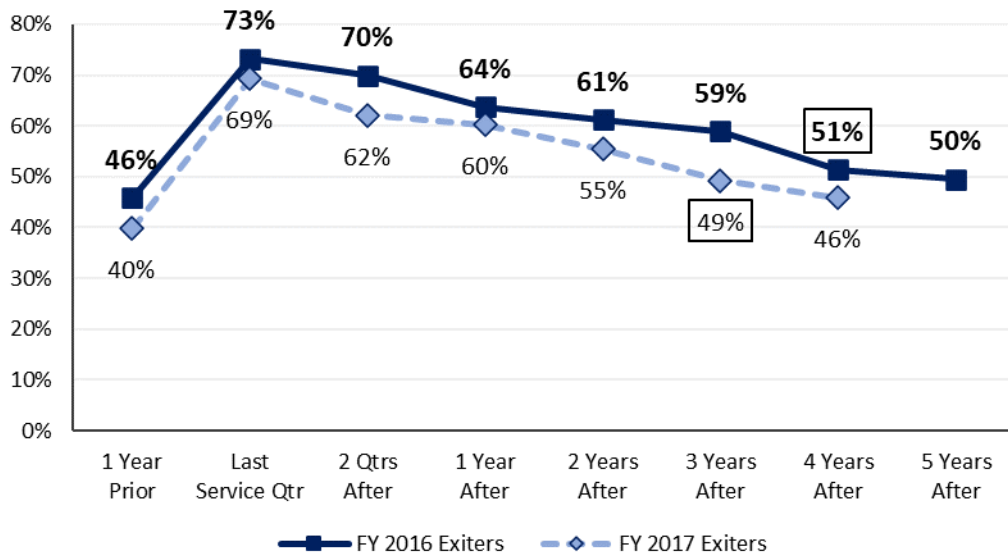
Figure 1. Average Employment and Earnings for WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts. These two participant cohorts have experienced enough post-service years to conduct an evaluation of employment and earnings outcomes over a longer period of time: from one year prior to seeking services through five and four years post-services, respectively.

Figure 2 illustrates the downward trend in employed exiters found in the data following the last service quarter. Of note are two periods of time when employment decreased at a higher rate compared to other periods of time noted in the figure. Between the last service quarter (when employment rates are at their highest) and the second quarter post-services, employment rates drop by over 7 percentage points. Employment rates dropped again with the beginning of the pandemic: 7.5 percentage points for the FY 2016 exiters and 6.2 percentage points for the FY 2017 exiters (early pandemic quarter employment rates are identified with a border in the figure). For these two cohorts, employment rates available in the data report a continued downward trend for the year following the pandemic.

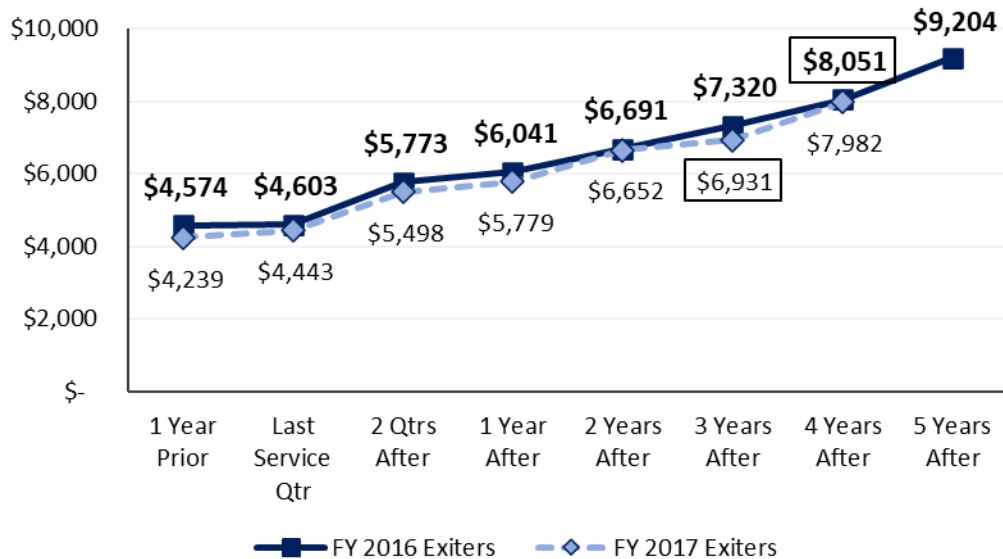
Figure 2. Average Employment for WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Note: Early pandemic quarter employment rates are identified with a border.

Figure 3 displays the increase in earnings for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 exiters found in the data. Of interest is the increase in reported income for FY 2016 exiters doubled between the last service quarter and five years post-services. The earnings reported during the beginning of the pandemic are identified with a border.

Figure 3. Average Earnings for WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Note: Early pandemic quarter employment rates are identified with a border.

Outcomes Discussion

The reported pattern of decreasing employment for WERC-TC exiters during the time period following the initial pandemic restrictions is inconsistent with the general economic recovery experienced by the Austin MSA.⁹ Table 4 identifies the unemployment rates for the Austin MSA from 2019 through 2021. As expected, an increase in unemployment began in March of 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic. Although unemployment rates began to steadily decline beginning in May 2020, the rates remained relatively high, returning to pre-pandemic levels during the final months of 2021. However, WERC-TC participants found in the data reflect a continued decline in employment during the post pandemic economic recovery period.

Table 4. Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos MSA Unemployment Rates: 2019-2021

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019	3.3	2.9	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.4
2020	2.7	2.6	4.1	11.2	10.5	8.9	8.0	6.3	5.9	5.0	5.0	4.9
2021	5.2	5.1	4.8	4.3	4.1	4.5	4.1	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.2	2.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov)

Note: The unemployment rate is the number of area residents without a job and looking for work divided by the total number of area residents in the labor force. The labor force is the number of people who are employed plus the unemployed who are looking for work ages 16 and older.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

The WERC-TC employment data may also reflect an increase in program exiters entering the gig economy. The Pew Research Center surveyed 10,348 U.S. adults in August 2021 to understand Americans' experiences earning money from online gig platforms. The research found that 16% of Americans have earned money through an online gig platform and 9% reported earning money through the online gig economy in the year prior to the survey (Aug. 2020 – Aug. 2021). The study also revealed that lower income Americans are more likely than those with higher earnings to use these sites or apps. In addition, individuals who identify as Hispanic, and those ages 18-29 are more likely than other race/ethnic and age groups to earn money using online gig platforms (Anderson, et. al., 2021).

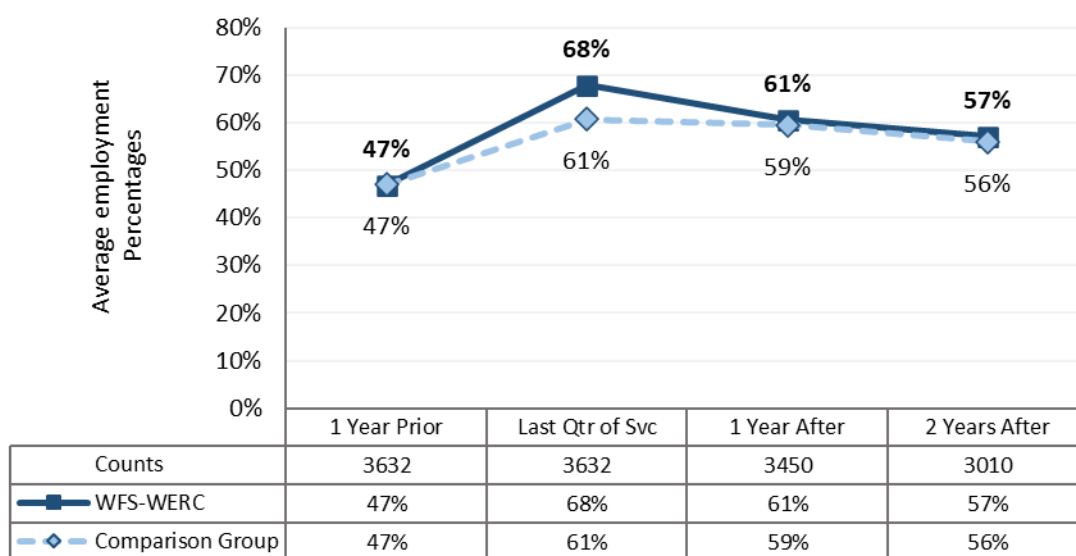
⁹ Austin–Round Rock–San Marcos metropolitan statistical area (MSA) includes Travis, Hays, Williamson, Bastrop, and Caldwell counties

Program Impacts

The following figures present findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of 3,632 WERC-TC FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. Impact measures include only those exiters for whom adequate matching could be performed.

Figures 4 and Figure 5 illustrate outcomes from 4 quarters prior to receiving services up to eight quarters post-services. In Figure 4, the impact of participation in WERC-TC is examined by looking at participants' employment over time in relation to the comparison group's employment. The analysis shows that WERC-TC participant employment rates outpaced the comparison group members by 7 percentage points during the last service quarter followed by a decline in employment rates for both groups. During the second year following services, employment rates were approximately the same for both participants and the comparison group.

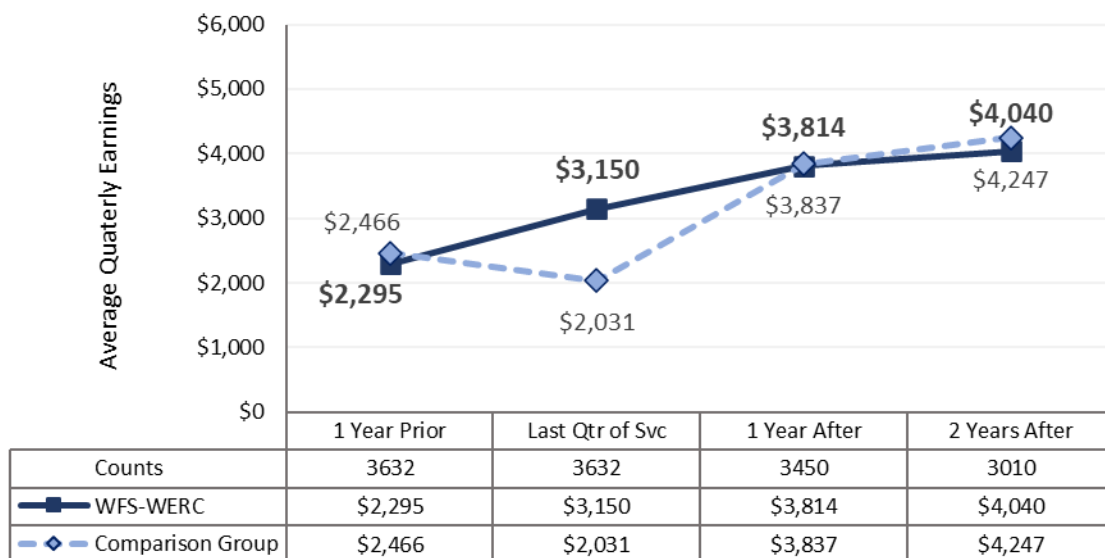
Figure 4. Employment Rates Over Time, WERC-TC Participants vs. Comparison Group: FY 2016-2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=3,632)



In Figure 5, the impact of participation in WERC-TC is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that WERC-TC participants' earnings outpaced the comparison group by slightly more than \$1,100 during the last service quarter. WERC-TC

participants earnings nearly matched the comparison groups earnings for both the first and second years post-services.

**Figure 5. Unconditional Earnings Over Time, WERC-TC Participants vs. Comparison Group:
FY 2016-2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=3,632)**



Both figures 4 and 5 report on short-term impacts for all 3,632 exiters matched to a comparison group member up to eight quarters post-services. Table 5 below reports impacts for all 3,632 exiters as well, however, Table 5 includes all post-service quarters (up to 20 post-service quarters for the FY 2016 cohort). Table 5 identifies that across all available service quarters for all exiters, participation in WERC-TC programs had a statistically significant positive impact on two of the four measures of interest: a statistically significant positive .05 impact was associated with employment, and a statistically significant positive .01 impact was associated with the filing of UI benefit claims.

Table 5. WERC-TC Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=3,632)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	55.1%	57.0%	1.9%	1.83%*
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$6,270	\$6,052	-\$218	\$151.67
Qualified for UI Benefits	46.3%	45.9%	-0.4%	0.02%
Filed UI Claim	2.95%	3.88%	0.9%	1.03%**

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

WERC-TC SUBGROUP ANALYSIS: NON-JUDICIALLY INVOLVED AND JUDICIALLY INVOLVED

The following analysis reports on outcomes and impacts for the 3,672 unduplicated WERC-TC participants who exited the program in FY 2016–FY 2021 identified in the data as non-judicially involved or judicially involved: 2,322 and 1,350 participants respectively. Judicially involved participants represent 37% of all WERC-TC exiters. This section is organized to present outcomes for both groups followed by program impacts for both groups.

Participant Outcomes

The outcomes evaluation examines participants' labor market experiences prior to entering the program, and then tracks their labor market outcomes following program exit up to the fifth year post-service for those for whom data were available.

Participant Outcomes: Participants identified as non-judicially involved

Table 6 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for 2,322 non-judicially involved WERC-TC participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021. Overall, in the four quarters prior to entering the program 54.7% were employed in a UI-covered job in Texas. Average quarterly employment grew to 67.7% during the exit quarter and decreased by 5.5 percentage points second year post-service (62.2%). The data represent an average 7.5 percentage point gain in employment between the year prior to services, and two years post-service. For those cohorts for whom data are available, quarterly employment continued to decrease throughout the reporting period.

The available data identify that earnings grew from an average of \$4,936 in the four quarters prior to service to an average of \$7,246 two years post-service: a \$2,310 average increase representing a 47% earnings gain. The available data for all cohorts report a continued increase in earnings from the last service quarter throughout the reporting period.

Prior to entering WERC-TC, 44.7% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. Two years after leaving training, approximately 61% met the requirements for eligibility. The overall rate for filing a claim for UI benefits of 3.4% was influenced by the higher than typical rates of UI benefit claims during the first year of the pandemic.

Table 6. WERC-TC Participant Outcomes Exiters Reporting No Judicial Involvement: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Year Post-service	3 Year Post-service	4 Year Post-service	5 Year Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	689	689	689	689	689	689	689	689	
FY 2017	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	64	
FY 2018	443	443	443	443	443	443	152	.	
FY 2019	335	335	335	335	335	100	.	.	
FY 2020	333	333	333	333	150	.	.	.	
FY 2021	271	271	271	127	.	.	.	.
Totals	2,322	2,322	2,322	2,178	1,868	1,483	1,092	753	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	54.2%	73.2%	73.2%	67.9%	65.6%	62.8%	56.3%	52.8%	62.7%
FY 2017	53.7%	69.3%	68.5%	70.5%	66.5%	59.0%	56.6%		
FY 2018	56.2%	68.9%	64.8%	62.8%	58.0%	56.2%			
FY 2019	53.8%	67.2%	66.6%	61.8%	60.0%				
FY 2020	56.2%	62.2%	59.2%	58.6%					
FY 2021	53.9%	57.9%	59.4%						
Overall	54.7%	67.7%	66.5%	64.3%	62.2%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$4,705	\$4,912	\$5,873	\$5,996	\$6,667	\$7,248	\$8,189	\$9,504	\$7,229
FY 2017	\$5,004	\$4,789	\$6,018	\$6,439	\$7,254	\$7,550	\$8,391		
FY 2018	\$4,976	\$4,626	\$5,888	\$6,256	\$7,520	\$8,615			
FY 2019	\$5,549	\$5,194	\$6,557	\$6,717	\$8,067				
FY 2020	\$4,920	\$5,080	\$6,536	\$7,363					
FY2021	\$4,663	\$5,116	\$7,403						
Overall	\$4,936	\$4,926	\$6,235	\$6,509	\$7,246				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	43.9%	49.6%	56.0%	66.5%	63.3%	61.0%	57.8%	52.5%	59.2%
FY 2017	44.6%	52.6%	62.2%	64.9%	68.1%	63.8%	55.0%		
FY 2018	43.2%	50.6%	55.8%	61.0%	58.9%	53.3%			
FY 2019	42.3%	47.2%	54.6%	62.1%	58.5%				
FY 2020	48.8%	51.1%	55.6%	55.6%					
FY 2021	47.4%	44.3%	45.0%						
Overall	44.7%	49.4%	55.1%	61.8%	61.4%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	3.4%	1.5%	3.5%	2.2%	2.3%	2.0%	8.3%	2.8%	3.4%
FY 2017	3.3%	2.8%	1.2%	3.6%	2.8%	10.8%	6.0%		
FY 2018	3.2%	1.4%	1.1%	0.9%	10.2%	4.3%			
FY 2019	3.1%	2.4%	3.0%	12.5%	3.9%				
FY 2020	2.3%	9.6%	8.7%	4.2%					
FY 2021	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%						
Overall	2.8%	2.7%	3.1%	3.9%	4.4%				

Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Participant Outcomes: Participants Identified as Judicially Involved

Table 7 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for 1,350 WERC-TC participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021 identified in the data as judicially involved. During the four quarters prior to entering the program, overall 36.9% were employed in a UI-covered job in Texas. Average quarterly employment grew to just over 68% during the exit quarter, and decreased by nearly 19 percentage points two years post-service (49.2%). Overall, the data represents an average 22.6 percentage point gain in employment between the year prior to services and two years post-service. For those cohorts for whom data are available, quarterly employment rates peaked during the last service quarter, followed by a persistent decrease in reported employment in all remaining quarters.

The available data identifies that earnings grew from an average of \$3,735 in the four quarters pre-service to an average of \$6,667 two years post-service: a \$3,132 average increase. The available data for all cohorts reports a continued increase in earnings throughout the fifth year post-services.

Prior to entering WERC-TC, 30.6% of participants overall had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving services, 49% overall met the requirements for eligibility. The overall rates for filing a claim for UI benefits ranged from 2.7% to 4.4% over the study period. The quarters with the higher than typical rates of UI benefit claims occurred during the first year of the pandemic.

Table 7. WERC-TC Participant Outcomes Exiters Reporting Judicial Involvement: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Year Post-service	3 Year Post-service	4 Year Post-service	5 Year Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	183	183	183	183	183	183	183	183	
FY 2017	464	464	464	464	464	464	464	202	
FY 2018	217	217	217	217	217	217	84	.	
FY 2019	186	186	186	186	186	66	.	.	
FY 2020	220	220	220	220	134	.	.	.	
FY 2021	80	80	80	44	.	.	.	.
Totals	1,350	1,350	1,350	1,314	1,184	930	731	385	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	14.3%	73.8%	57.9%	48.1%	44.8%	44.3%	32.8%	37.2%	43.8%
FY 2017	32.4%	69.4%	58.6%	54.7%	49.4%	44.0%	40.1%		
FY 2018	49.3%	62.2%	57.1%	54.4%	46.1%	35.9%			
FY 2019	44.9%	67.2%	62.9%	53.2%	53.2%				
FY 2020	42.2%	68.6%	59.1%	56.4%					
FY 2021	47.2%	65.0%	67.5%						
Overall	36.9%	68.2%	59.5%	54.0%	49.2%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$2,705	\$3,451	\$5,295	\$6,279	\$6,822	\$7,706	\$7,159	\$7,601	\$6,740
FY 2017	\$3,554	\$4,257	\$5,168	\$5,320	\$6,214	\$6,481	\$7,670		
FY 2018	\$3,467	\$3,635	\$4,807	\$5,699	\$6,151	\$7,679			
FY 2019	\$3,963	\$4,224	\$5,687	\$6,082	\$6,957				
FY 2020	\$4,049	\$4,652	\$6,129	\$6,876					
FY2021	\$4,651	\$5,228	\$6,800						
Overall	\$3,735	\$4,163	\$5,470	\$5,905	\$6,667				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	15.6%	13.1%	22.4%	47.5%	38.8%	38.3%	35.5%	30.1%	35.5%
FY 2017	28.2%	33.2%	56.9%	58.6%	47.6%	45.0%	39.0%		
FY 2018	40.3%	41.5%	47.0%	46.1%	45.6%	37.3%			
FY 2019	34.7%	37.6%	50.5%	58.1%	45.7%				
FY 2020	33.0%	40.5%	55.5%	54.6%					
FY 2021	36.9%	38.8%	47.5%						
Overall	30.6%	33.9%	49.0%	54.3%	45.2%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	1.6%	0.6%	0.6%	8.2%	1.6%	2.1%
FY 2017	2.2%	1.5%	1.3%	1.7%	1.1%	8.4%	2.2%		
FY 2018	3.0%	1.4%	2.3%	2.8%	11.1%	6.9%			
FY 2019	2.4%	2.2%	7.5%	8.6%	3.2%				
FY 2020	2.2%	12.7%	12.3%	9.6%					
FY 2021	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%						
Overall	1.9%	3.1%	3.9%	4.1%	3.2%				

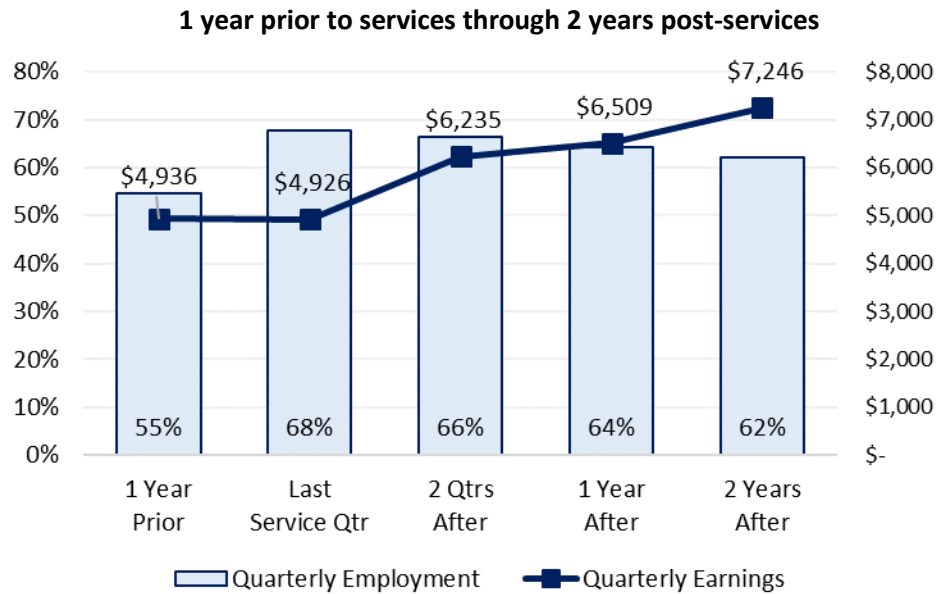
Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

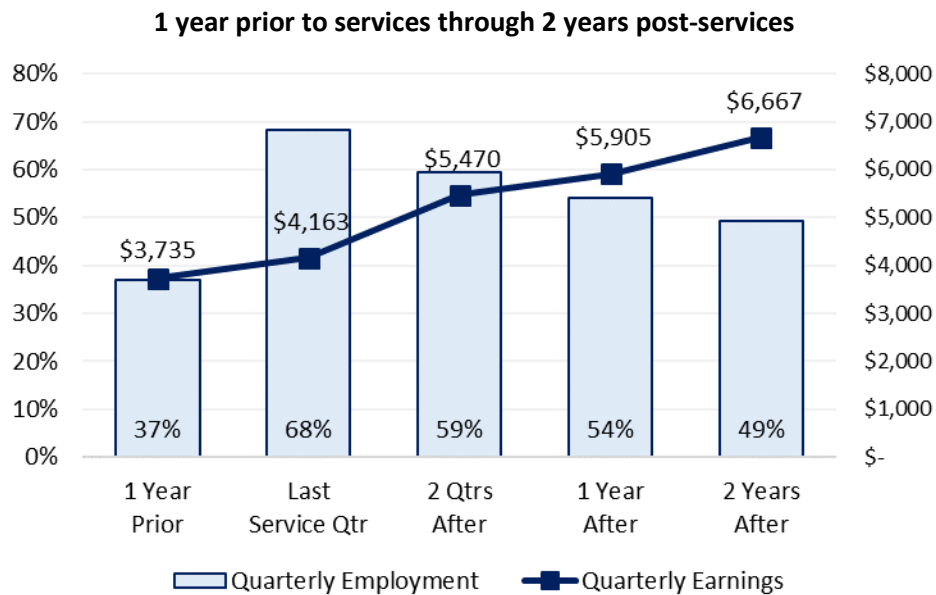
Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC. Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figures 6 and 7 display the rate of employment and the average earnings for all cohorts (FY 2016–FY 2021) from one year prior to entering services through two years post-services for the two groups of interest. The figures illustrate a trend of decreasing employment and a steady increase in earnings for both groups. The employment data present intriguing differences for the two groups in the rates of employment between the last service quarter and two quarters post-services. For the non-judicially involved exiters, the percentage point decrease in the rate of employment between these two time periods is 1.2, in contrast to the 8.7 percentage point decrease reported for judicially involved exiters.

**Figure 6. Average Employment and Earnings for WERC-TC Exiters, No Judicial Involvement:
FY 2016–FY 2021**



**Figure 7. Average Employment and Earnings for WERC-TC Exiters, Judicial Involvement:
FY 2016–FY 2021**



To further illustrate the differences in employment outcomes between the two groups, Figure 8 compares the long-term employment outcomes for the FY 2016 cohort. Employment gains were nearly matched for the two groups during the last service quarter yet quickly diverged with judicially involved program exiters experiencing a greater decrease in employment rates over time compared to the non-judicially involved exiters. The figures illustrate a 15.6 percentage point gap between rates of employment for the two groups by the fifth year post-services.

However, when comparing the rates of employment for the two groups from one year prior to service to five years post-services, the data reports judicially involved participants experienced an employment gain of 22.9 percentage points from 14% employment one year prior to services, increasing to 37% five years post-services. While the available data tells a different story for the non-judicially involved reporting a rate decrease of 1.4 percentage points from 54% one year prior to services to 53% five years post-services.

**Figure 8. WERC-TC Judicially Involved and Non-judicially Involved Employment Outcomes: FY 2016
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**

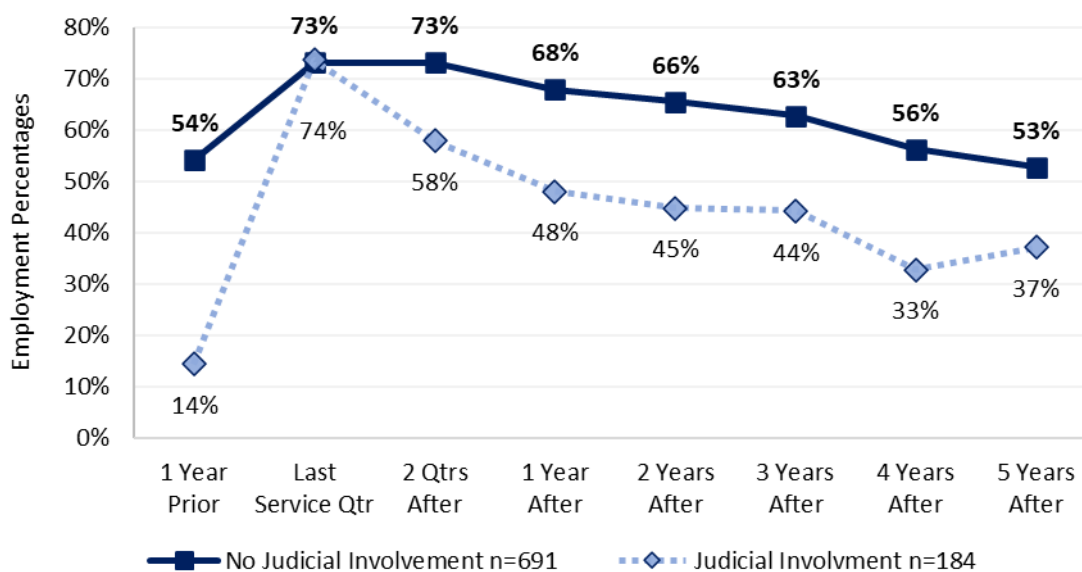
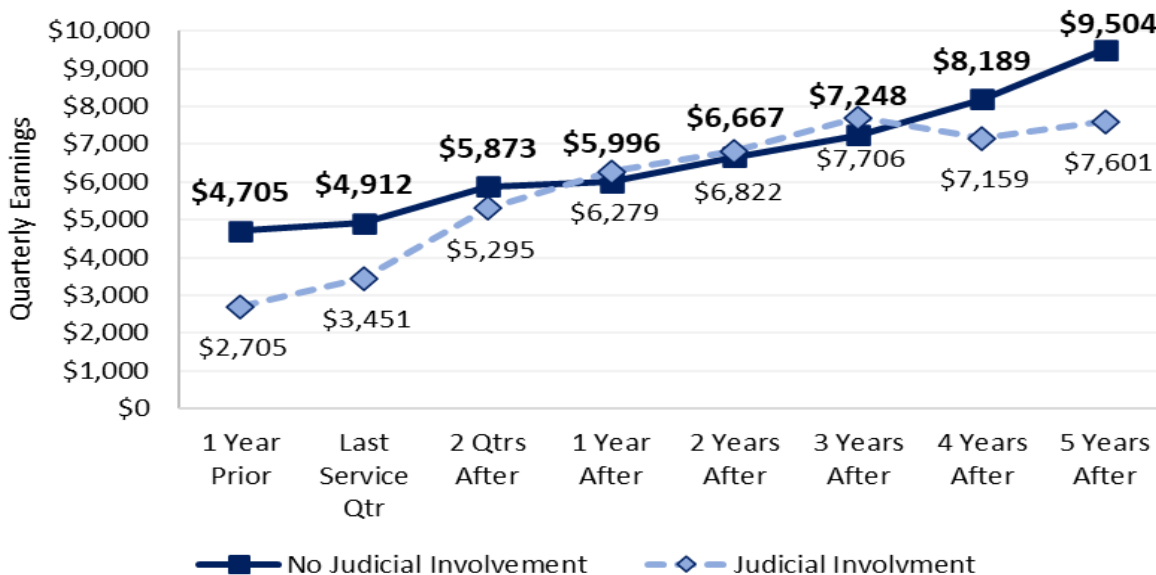


Figure 9 compares earnings for the two groups with the judicially involved nearly matching the non-judicially involved participants by two year post-services with the judicially involved participants reporting slightly higher earnings through the third year post-services. By the final two reporting periods, the non-judicially involved increased in earnings outpaced the earnings of the judicially involved with an estimated quarterly earnings gap of approximately \$2,000 between the two groups by the fifth year post-service.

Figure 9. WERC-TC Judicially Involved and Non-judicially Involved Earnings Outcomes: FY 2016
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Discussion of Outcomes

The outcomes data may represent coverage gaps in the UI earnings records. Workers in industries with high levels of self-employment or independent contracting, such as construction, truck driving, and delivery driving may be more desirable for those with a judicial history and less likely to be UI-covered positions. Recidivism rates may also influence outcomes for participants with a history of judicial involvement. A 2021 report submitted to the 87th Texas Legislature by the Legislative Budget Board records the percentage of adults released from residential correctional facilities who were reincarcerated within three years. According to the report: a) 20.3% of the 2017 prison cohort was reincarcerated within three years of release; b) the Texas state jail 2017 cohort had a 28% rate of reincarceration within three years of release; and c) for individuals released from Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facilities, the rate was even higher, 43.9%.

Conversations with area service providers and partners offered additional insights into the disparity presented in the data for the employment rates between the two groups.¹⁰ Service providers noted a need for participants to receive job retention skills training, tools to help participants keep jobs, self-management skills, and training on how to ask for help or ask a question at work. Providers reported participants experience interpersonal challenges and frustrations that impede their capacity to cope with relationships in an employment situation. Further, partners agreed that staff would benefit from learning how to build supportive relationships when working with people who experienced trauma. In addition, interviews identified a need for employers to receive training and technical assistance in the following areas related to hiring individuals with a history of judicial involvement:

- What is the responsibility or liability to an employer when hiring someone?
- How to vet employees, interpret criminal background reports, and assess risk to their organization.
- Need for an increase in access to data supporting positive outcomes for organizations that hire those with a history of judicial involvement.

¹⁰ Information from conversations with David Clause, American YouthWorks; Charelsa Russel, AAUL; Mike Tucker, WFSCA; Kelly Nicoles, Reentry Round Table; and Nathion Gillmore, GCT. Interviews were conducted in August and September of 2021.

Program Impacts: Participants Identified as Non-judicially Involved and Judicially Involved

The following figures present findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of two WERC-TC subgroups, those identified with no judicial involvement and those identified as judicially involved to the outcomes of matched comparison groups. Impact measures include only those exiters for whom adequate matching could be performed. The impact analysis has an inherent weakness in that participants identified in the WERC-TC data as non-judicially involved or judicially involved could not be matched with similarly identified individuals within the earnings date (UI earnings data does not report participant judicial involvement status).

Figures 10 and 11 present the overall employment rates for both groups including all cohorts (FY 2016–FY 2021) from one year prior to service through two years post-services. The employment rate for the non-judicially involved exiters was similar to the comparison group in the year before entering services followed by an increase in employment for both groups with the non-judicially involved WERC-TC participants outpacing the comparison group by 8 percentage points. Employment rates declined for by the second year post services to 62% for the WERC-TC participants and 58% for the comparison group.

The employment rates for the judicially involved exiters was similar to the comparison group in the year before entering services (36%) followed by a marked increase in employment for both groups with the judicially involved WERC-TC participants (68%) outpacing the comparison group (63%) by 5 percentage points. Employment rates declined for both groups by the second year post services to 49% for the WERC-TC participants and 52% for the comparison group.

Figure 10. Employment Rates Over Time, WERC-TC Non-judicially Involved Participants vs. Comparison Group: FY 2016-2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=2,290)

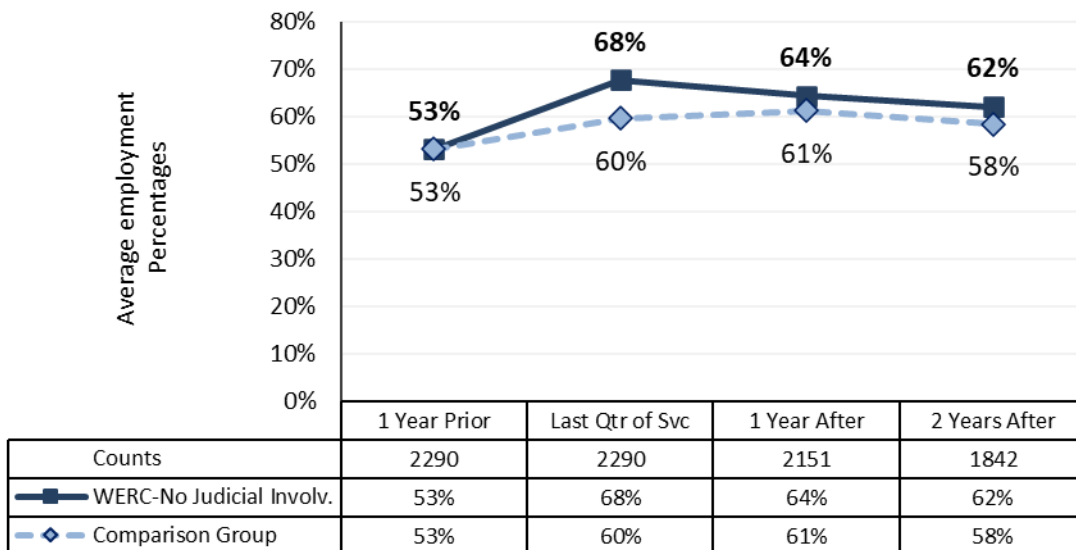
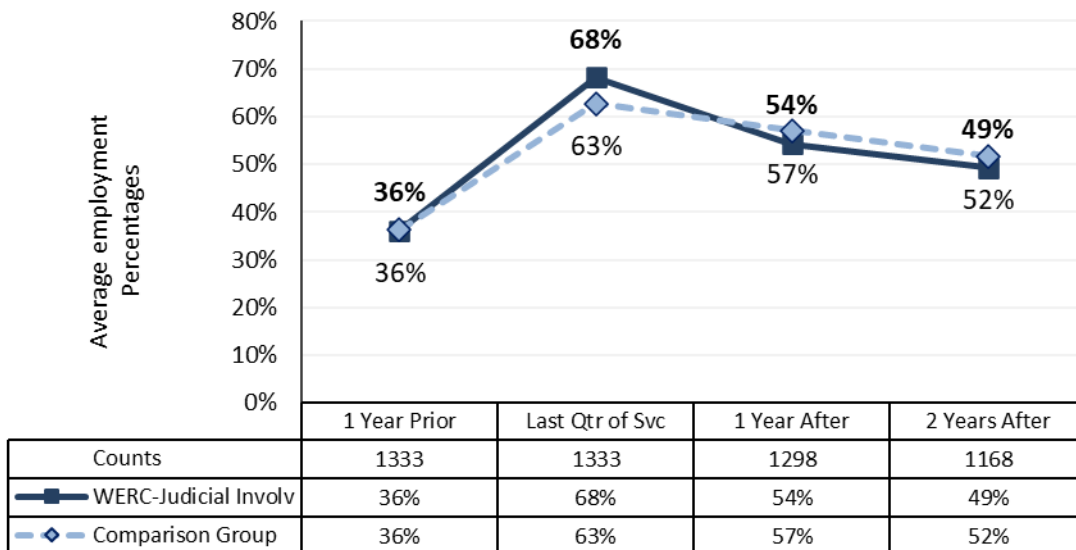


Figure 11. Employment Rates Over Time, WERC-TC Judicially Involved Participants vs. Comparison Group: FY 2016-2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=1,333)



Figures 12 and 13 present overall earnings for both groups including all cohorts (FY 2016-FY 2021) from one year prior to service through two years post-services, compared to a matched comparison group. Earnings for the non-judicially involved participants was slightly greater than the comparison group one year prior to entering services, followed by a steady increase in earnings for the WERC-TC participants. The data identifies that during the second year post services, both groups reported similar earnings, an approximate \$1,700 increase reported for both groups over time.

The reported average earnings for judicially involved participants one year prior to services was \$1,453 compared to the matched group earnings of \$1,660, representing a slight earnings gap. One year post-service earnings for the two groups were similar. Earnings reported for the second year post-services illustrate an earnings gap of \$475, with the comparison group earnings outpacing the judicially involved WERC-TC participants.

Figure 12. Earnings Over Time, WERC-TC Non-judicially Involved Participants vs. Comparison Group: FY 2016-FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=2,290)

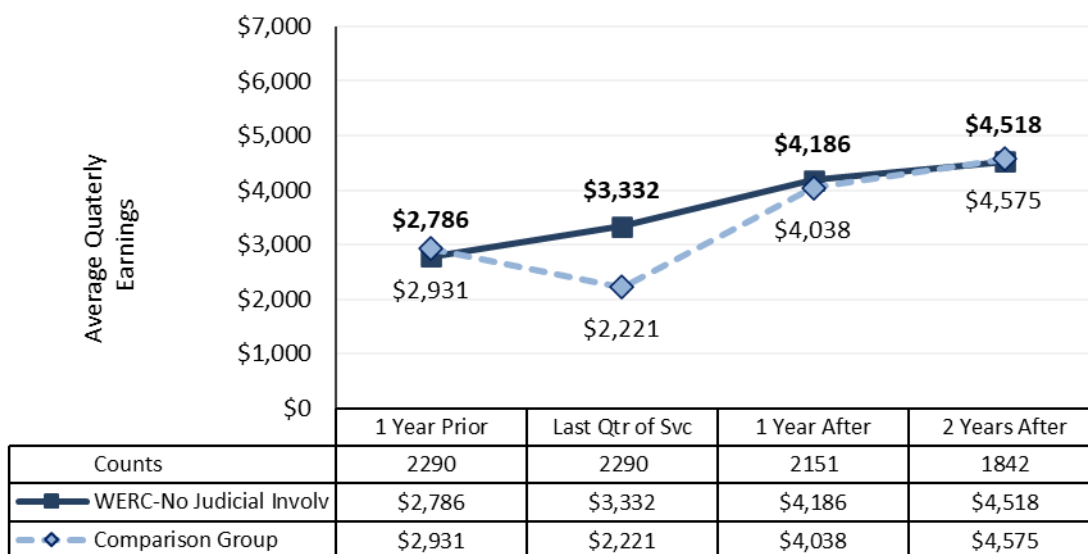


Figure 13. Earnings Over Time, WERC-TC Judicially Involved Participants vs Comparison Group: FY 2016-FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=1,333)

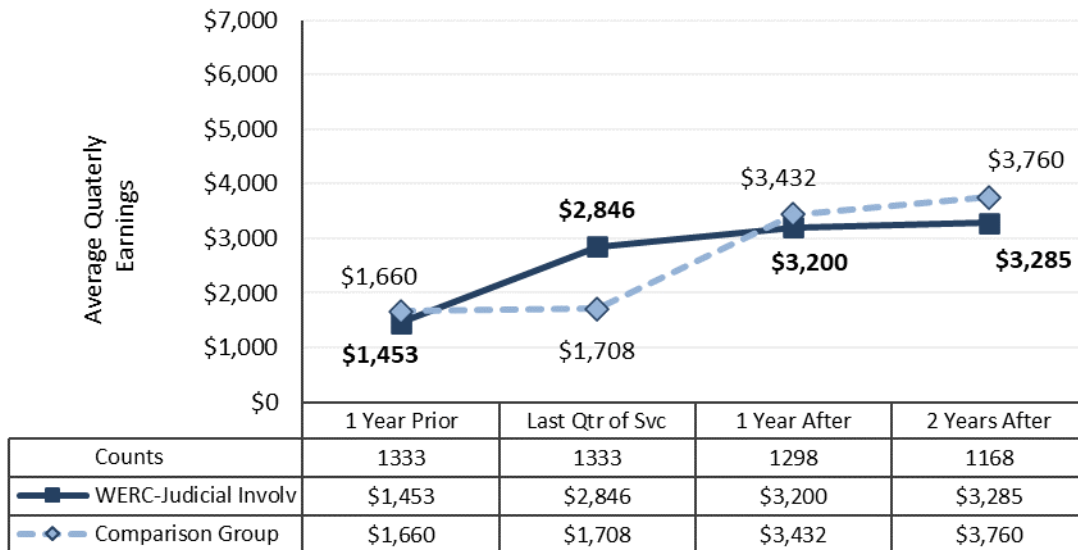


Table 8 reports impacts for 2,290 non-judicially involved exiters for all post-service quarters. For this group of WERC-TC participants, the analysis identified statistically significant positive effects in three of the areas of interest. A statistically significant positive .01 impact was associated with employment and the filing of UI benefit claims, and an .05 impact was associated with the \$349 difference in earnings.

Table 8. WERC-TC Quarterly Impacts Non-judicially Involved: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=2,290)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	57.3%	60.6%	3.3%	3.17%**
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$6,433	\$6,515	\$82	\$349*
Qualified for UI Benefits	49.0%	50.6%	1.6%	1.0%
Filed UI Claim	2.9%	3.7%	0.8%	0.99%**

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

Table 9 reports impacts for 1,333 judicially involved exiters for all post-service quarters. For this group of WERC-TC participants, the analysis identified a .01 statistically significant positive effect in filing UI benefit claims.

Table 9. WERC-TC Quarterly Impacts Judicially Involved: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=1,333)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	51.6%	48.9%	-2.7%	0.5%
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$5,902	\$5,279	-\$624	-220%
Qualified for UI Benefits	41.7%	38.3%	-3.5%	-0.7%
Filed UI Claim	2.88%	4.23%	1.35%	1.47%**

Note: **=significant at p<.01; *= significant at p<.05

Discussion of Program Impacts

As noted above, this impact analysis has an inherent weakness in that participants identified in the WERC-TC data as non-judicially involved, or judicially involved, could not be matched with similarly identified individuals in the data. The above figures depict a gap in both employment and earnings history between the judicially involved participants and their matched comparison group *prior to the service entry quarter*. This gap may represent weaker employment histories for the judicially involved prior to service entry and a challenge in matching judicially involved participants to a comparison group. Table 10 presents the program impacts for all WERC-TC participants compared to the program impacts for the non-judicially involved and judicially involved participants. The statistically significant positive .05 impact on filing of UI claim benefits was shared by both subgroups, however, the .01 positive effect on employment for all WERC-TC participants was only reflected for non-judicially involved participants. Likewise, the overall positive effect on earnings for all WERC-TC participants was reflected in the .05 positive impact on earnings for only the non-judicially involved.

Table 10. All WERC-TC, Non-judicially, and Judicially Involved Participant Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021

Impact measure	WERC-TC Program Impact		
	All WERC-TC Participants	Non-judicially Involved Participants	Judicially Involved Participants
Quarterly Employment	1.83%*	3.17%**	0.5%
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$151.67	\$349*	-220%
Qualified for UI Benefits	0.02%	1.0%	-0.7%
Filed UI Claim	1.03%**	0.99%**	1.47%**

Note: **=significant at p<.01; *= significant at p<.05

WERC-TC Funded Organization Descriptions and Participant Outcomes

The following section further describes each of the WERC-TC funded organizations, the services and supports provided, issues specific to the continued effect of the pandemic on services, new initiatives introduced in FY 2021, the target populations served, a summary of demographic characteristics describing program participants at the time of program entry, and individual organizations' participant outcomes.¹¹ Table 11 presents each WERC-TC organization's FY 2016–FY 2021 exit counts with SSNs found in the earnings data and included in the outcomes analysis.

Table 11. WERC-TC Exiters by Organization with SSNs Found in the Earnings Data: FY 2016–FY 2021

WERC-TC Programs	FY 2016 Exiters	FY 2017 Exiters	FY 2018 Exiters	FY 2019 Exiters	FY 2020 Exiters	FY 2021 Exiters	Total
Workforce Solutions Capital Area Career Centers	257	208	186	137	185	164	1,137
Goodwill	224	209	173	166	171	116	1,059
Austin Area Urban League	310	237	225	121	118	44	1,055
American YouthWorks	81	61	75	96	80	36	429
Totals	872	715	659	520	554	360	3,680

¹¹ Demographics are reported on all exiters with SSNs provided by each organization. Outcomes are reported for all exiters with SSNs found in the earnings data.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS CAPITAL AREA CAREER CENTERS

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Workforce Solutions Capital Area is the local Workforce Development Board for Travis County that oversees federal, state, and local employment and training programs.

“Workforce Solutions Capital Area is dedicated to advancing the Austin/Travis County workforce and local economy.”

In FY 2016, Workforce Solutions became the administrative agent for the WERC-TC, managing the annual distribution of \$630,315, which includes \$402,732 in funding for WFSCA Career Centers.



www.wfscapitalarea.com

The purpose of the WFSCA Career Center WERC-TC program model is to accelerate the time it takes for individuals to become employed or re-employed with new skills and a marketable credential. Services are specifically targeted to disadvantaged county residents, in particular judicially involved individuals, TANF-Choices and SNAP recipients, low-income individuals, and those seeking financial assistance from the county.¹²

Individuals seeking training services receive case management services from specialists assigned to the WERC-TC program. The program specialist discusses training and employment options with each participant to determine the appropriate career pathway. Services include short-term occupational training, job search and placement services, and WERC-TC funded internship opportunities. The Aspiring Minds Computer Adaptive Test (ACCAT) and other assessments may be given to those seeking short-term training services to assess their readiness level for the desired skills training.

Participants select from a number of high-demand occupations for which short-term training is available, including general construction, electric and plumbing, administrative assistant and project management, certified nurse aide, and commercial driver's license.

¹² Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Choices assists participants receiving cash assistance to transition from welfare to work through participation in work-related activities, including job search and job readiness classes, basic skills training, education, vocational training, and support services. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides a monthly supplement for purchasing nutritious food.

Support Services

WFSCA Career Center clients are often co-enrolled in other programs providing support services. WFSCA Career Center staff regularly conduct WERC-TC recruitment efforts at various criminal justice transition sites and community centers. Additional referring programs include Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), TANF Choices, and SNAP. Through co-enrollment, these programs help augment the wrap-around support services participants need to be successful.

Through WERC-TC funds, job search participants can receive up to 12 weeks of transportation assistance while looking for employment, and training participants can receive up to 24 weeks transportation assistance while attending classes. Emergency assistance (utility payments, auto repairs, etc.) and assistance with work related expenses are also available on a case-by-case basis. Participants can receive a \$25 incentive upon entering employment and four additional \$25 incentives at each retention milestone.

Pandemic Impact on Services

During FY 2021, training programs continued to be provided primarily online, or some form of a hybrid combination of online and in person services. Career Centers offered limited scheduled face-to-face appointments to initially meet with potential program participants. Recruitment, enrollment, and retention issues continued throughout FY 2021.

New Workforce Environment

Staff reported that in FY 2021, employers experienced a tight job market and changed recruitment strategies in efforts to hire staff. Some employers increased earnings and lowered minimum requirements for positions to increase the pool of potential employees. The Austin area workforce experienced an increase in online opportunities as staffing companies recruited candidates for virtual jobs across the country, such as call centers arranging support services like medical transportation. WFSCA revised support service policies to allow for the purchase of technology required for individuals to work at home, and some employers provided computers as a part of their onboarding process. Service delivery drivers' jobs were also popular during this time.

Being able to work remotely may offer more opportunities for individuals with a history of judicial involvement as employer concerns related to working onsite may no longer be a barrier.

New Initiatives

ATX Bridge to Opportunity: LCCT received funding from the Michael and Susan Dell foundation to partner with WFSCA to establish a closed loop referral system to assist individuals interested in enrolling in WFSCA-funded occupational/vocational training who need adult basic education remediation. The development of this system required the commitment of LCCT and WFSCA staff at all levels of management and service delivery to create a detailed road map incorporating a process for ongoing evaluation and quality improvement. The referral process begins when WFSCA staff identify prospective training participants in need of remediation in order to pass assessments required to begin occupational training. Then, WFSCA initiates a referral to LCCT using a secure online referral platform. LCCT provides the needed educational services and refers individuals back to WFSCA upon determination the individual is prepared to successfully retake the assessment and enter the desired training. ATX Bridge to Opportunity began serving its first clients in Spring 2022.

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 1,137 unduplicated WERC-TC WFSCA Career Center participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016–FY 2021. The average age of participant exiters was 39, with 44.8% of exiters identifying as Black, 24.5% identifying as White, and 23.7% identifying as Hispanic. Most exiters were male, 66.4%, and the majority, 63.3%, reported having a 12th grade education or an HSEC, while over one-quarter reported attending or graduating from college (26.0%). Approximately one-fourth of participants reported judicial involvement (26.8%), 7.9% identified as veterans, and approximately 14% reported receiving any public benefits (59.1% of the sample had missing/unknown receipt of public benefits). The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: North Austin (25.5%), East Austin (22.3%), South Austin (14.6%), and Eastern suburbs of Austin (10.6%).

Participant Outcomes

Table 12 presents WFSCA Career Center participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016–FY 2021. Outcomes are reported for 1,136 participants with social security numbers identified within the earnings data. In the four quarters prior to entering the program, overall quarterly employment in a UI-covered job in Texas for individuals served by WFSCA Career Centers was over half (56.7%). Average quarterly employment grew to 69.8% during the exit quarter and fell by 8 percentage points by the second year post-service (61.8%). However, overall earnings grew from an average of \$5,944 in the quarters before services and to an average of \$7,871 four quarters post-service: an increase of \$2,127. The available data for most cohorts report a continued pattern of employment earnings growth over time.

Prior to entering WFSCA Career Centers, approximately 49% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, approximately 66% met the requirements for eligibility. The overall rates of filing a claim for UI benefits varied from 3.2% to 4.8% with marked increase in UI benefit claims rates identified during the first year of the pandemic.

Table 12. WFSCA Career Center Participant Outcomes: FY 2016-FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Year Post-service	3 Year Post-service	4 Year Post-service	5 Year Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	
FY 2017	208	208	208	208	208	208	208	51	
FY 2018	186	186	186	186	186	186	56	.	
FY 2019	137	137	137	137	137	42	.	.	
FY 2020	184	184	184	184	82	.	.	.	
FY 2021	164	164	164	79	.	.	.	.
Total	1136	1136	1136	1051	870	693	521	308	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	56.1%	80.5%	77.8%	70.8%	63.4%	58.4%	54.1%	49.4%	61.5%
FY 2017	49.0%	66.8%	63.9%	59.1%	58.2%	49.5%	43.8%		
FY 2018	62.5%	71.5%	72.6%	66.1%	64.5%	57.5%			
FY 2019	61.7%	75.9%	72.3%	64.2%	66.4%				
FY 2020	58.8%	62.5%	62.5%	60.9%					
FY 2021	54.3%	57.9%	62.2%						
Overall	56.7%	69.8%	69.0%	64.7%	61.8%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$5,886	\$5,649	\$7,412	\$7,614	\$8,548	\$8,955	\$9,973	\$11,973	\$9,000
FY 2017	\$5,517	\$5,107	\$6,505	\$7,062	\$7,906	\$8,665	\$9,040		
FY 2018	\$6,566	\$5,843	\$6,717	\$7,843	\$9,161	\$11,466			
FY 2019	\$7,443	\$6,665	\$8,676	\$9,246	\$11,075				
FY 2020	\$5,309	\$5,842	\$7,702	\$8,371					
FY2021	\$5,062	\$5,581	\$7,981						
Overall	\$5,944	\$5,740	\$7,415	\$7,871	\$8,983				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	49.6%	52.9%	56.4%	73.5%	65.8%	58.8%	55.3%	50.2%	59.4%
FY 2017	40.9%	48.1%	60.1%	59.6%	55.8%	50.0%	44.2%		
FY 2018	50.4%	58.1%	64.0%	66.1%	61.3%	61.8%			
FY 2019	55.8%	57.7%	61.3%	75.2%	64.2%				
FY 2020	48.6%	56.0%	58.2%	58.7%					
FY 2021	47.9%	45.1%	43.9%						
Overall	48.5%	52.8%	57.4%	65.8%	60.9%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	4.8%	2.3%	3.1%	3.5%	2.7%	3.1%	6.6%	3.1%	3.6%
FY 2017	4.2%	2.4%	2.4%	3.4%	2.4%	8.2%	5.8%		
FY 2018	5.0%	1.6%	1.6%	0.5%	11.3%	6.5%			
FY 2019	5.1%	1.5%	5.8%	12.4%	4.4%				
FY 2020	3.1%	15.2%	6.5%	8.2%					
FY 2021	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%						
Overall	3.8%	3.9%	3.2%	4.8%	4.7%				

Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

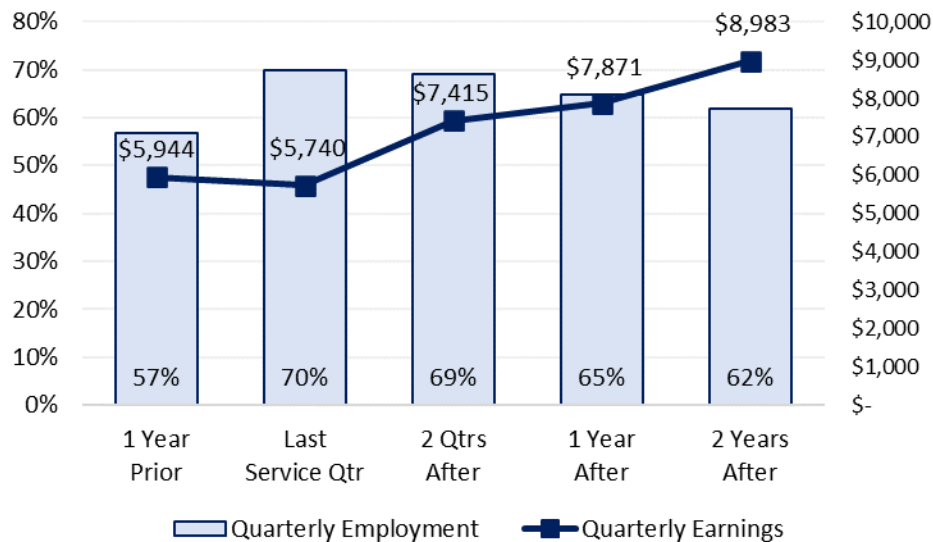
Note: WFSCA Career Centers had two participants with quarterly earnings in excess of \$25,000 for several quarters. These participants were removed from the above reported outcomes.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe.

Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC. Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 14 displays for all cohorts (FY 2016 – FY 2021), the rates of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services through two years post-services, illustrating the trend of decreasing employment found in the data and the steady increase in earnings.

**Figure 14. Average Employment and Earnings for WFSCA Career Center Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services**



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 15 illustrates the downward trend in employed exiters found in the data following the last service quarter. Although the FY 2017 cohort reported lower rates of employment compared to the FY 2016 cohort, both groups experienced a steady downward trend in reported employment following the last service quarter.

**Figure 15. Average Employment for WFSCA Career Center Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**

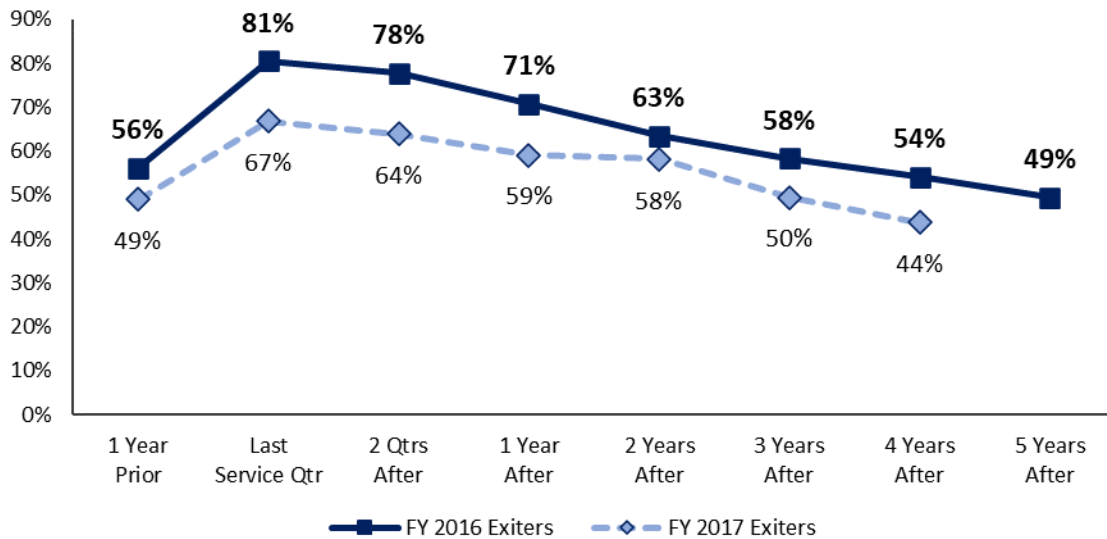
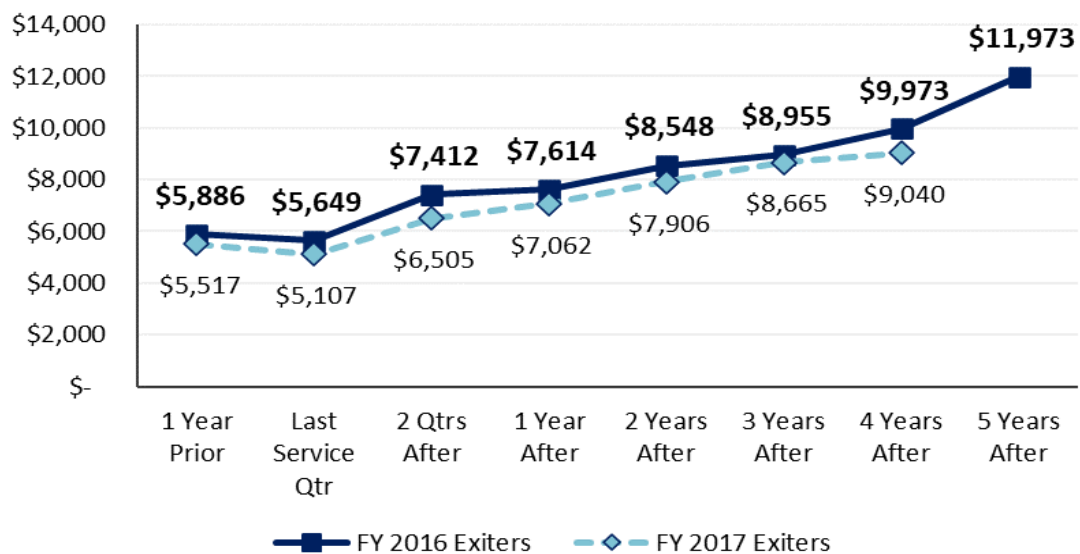


Figure 16 displays the increase in earnings for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 exiters found in the data. Of interest is the increase in reported income for FY 2016 exiters more than doubled between the last service quarter and five years post-services.

**Figure 16. Average Earnings for WFSCA Career Center Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**



Goodwill Industries of Central Texas Mission

“Transforming generations by empowering people through education, career training, and work.” *

In FY 2016-FY 2021 Goodwill annually received \$137,439 in funding through the WERC-TC collaborative.



*<https://www.goodwillcentraltexas.org/>

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF CENTRAL TEXAS

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Goodwill’s education and training programs are accessible at several locations throughout Travis County, including the Goodwill Career and Technical Academy (GCTA), the Excel Center, and Workforce Advancement sites distributed around the City of Austin and Travis County.

Goodwill provides education, training, and employment services to individuals with complex barriers to employment: judicial involvement, homelessness, individuals with disabilities, individuals who lack a high school diploma or HSEC, opportunity youth, and others who face barriers in the labor market. Goodwill works with a number of organizations to accept referrals of potential participants, including Travis Correctional Complex, the Austin Transitional Center, Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH), Foundation Communities, Salvation Army, Integral Care, SAFE Alliance, and other providers serving the homeless.

Services include case management, skills assessments, occupational training and certifications, résumé development and interviewing skills workshops, job search assistance, and childcare support.

The occupation-focused training includes short-term training in three Austin area high-demand occupations.

- 1) Healthcare: medical assistant, nursing assistant, and phlebotomy.
- 2) Skilled trades: basic commercial construction, commercial vehicle operator, electrical helper and building maintenance technician.
- 3) Information technology: programing with Python.¹³

¹³ The GCTA programs are approved by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Career Schools and Colleges. The GCTA Nursing Assistant Program is also approved by the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). See: <https://www.goodwillcentraltexas.org/education-job-training/goodwill-career-technical-academy>

Furthermore, WERC-TC funding permits Goodwill to offer a number of paid internships for participants.

Support Services

Program participants with a history of judicial involvement receive job readiness assistance from career case managers specifically trained to guide participants to incorporate their history into the job search process. Service delivery incorporates a Transtheoretical Cognitive Transformation approach: this approach recognizes that the process of change occurs in stages over time while individuals develop a sense of self-efficacy. Participants receive information on the federal bonding program, career options and limitations, and how to write to, and speak with, employers about their circumstances. Goodwill Business Solutions staff conduct outreach to employers to learn what skills participants must demonstrate to gain employment, and this information informs the training program's curriculum. In coordination with the UT Law School, Goodwill hosts Texas law expunction project clinics and driver's license recovery clinics.¹⁴

Case managers encourage and assist all homeless individuals to complete the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) coordinated assessment to match individuals with appropriate housing assistance. Case managers work with participants to develop housing stability plans and assist qualifying participants to apply for additional supports. Other services offered to participants, based on their individual needs, include transportation, help in obtaining identification cards, mental health services, child care referrals, connections to food pantries, and resources for work/interview clothing.

Participants can earn \$25 from Goodwill for every 30 days of employment retention up to 180 days of job retention. This incentive encourages participants to maintain a connection to the program and to continue involvement in case management services.

Pandemic Impact on Services

Goodwill, like most area service providers, experienced challenges with recruitment, enrollment, and retention in a virtual environment. In response, in FY 2021, Goodwill staff implemented a rotating office schedule to offer face-to-face appointments and limited access to the computer lab. As interest in training began to rebound, enrollment continued to remain low due to child care issues,

¹⁴ For additional information see: Texas Law Expunction Project, <https://law.utexas.edu/probono/projects/special-projects/texas-law-expunction-project/> and Driver's License Recovery Clinic, <https://law.utexas.edu/probono/opportunities/court-debt-relief-and-drivers-license-recovery-intake-with-drivers-license-recovery-project-2-2-2-2/>

financial instability of households, and as reported by staff, “people just didn’t have the emotional and mental capacity” to commit to a training program. Goodwill staff identified an increased need for mental health services as reports of interpersonal violence, depression, and stress were high. Staff report that the majority of individuals seeking services needed basic assistance, particularly housing assistance.

As testing sites for healthcare certifications began to reopen, Goodwill offered content refresher courses and tutoring to prepare program completers for certification testing in their field of study. In addition, Goodwill coordinated discounted transportation for test takers with Lyft ride service.

New Initiatives

FY 2021 was the planning phase to implement a Goodwill truck driving school. By coordinating the program in house, Goodwill decreased the cost per participant by \$600 (from \$4,500 to \$3,900 per participant). The program began enrolling in October 2021.

Goodwill continued to partner with Indeed’s enhanced services in connecting program participants to PC for People, a national nonprofit digital inclusion social enterprise working to get low-cost quality computers and internet into the homes of individuals, and families with low income.

FY 2021 was also a planning period for a new partnership with Travis County juvenile probation department and Gardner Betts Juvenile Justice Center to provide Career Advancement Essentials training in life skills and job readiness skills. Goodwill began hiring staff for this partnership in Spring 2022, and services will begin in the Fall 2022.

Participant Profile

Among the 1,059 unduplicated Goodwill participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016–FY 2021, the average age was 41. Over half of participants identified as Black (54.5%), 21.5% identified as White, with 20.7% identifying as Hispanic. Just over half of program exiters were male (54.3%) and the majority, 64.7%, reported having a 12th grade education or a HSEC with 17% reporting less than a 12th grade education. Nearly 45% of participants reported judicial involvement, 7.6% identified as veterans, and 22.4% reported receiving public benefits (59.1% had missing/unknown receipt of public benefits). The majority of the exiters reported residing in the following areas: East Austin (25%), North Austin (21.5%), South Austin (17.1%), and Eastern suburbs of Austin (15%).

Participant Outcomes

Table 13 presents Goodwill participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016–FY 2021. Outcomes are reported for 1,059 participant social security numbers identified within the earnings data. Overall, half of the participants served by Goodwill were employed in the four quarters prior to entering the program. Employment increased to nearly 75.5% during the last quarter of service yet declined to 60.3% by the second year post-service (a decline by 15.2 percentage points). However, overall earnings grew from an average of \$4,248 in the quarter before services to an average of \$6,992 two years post-service: a \$2,744 average earnings gain representing a 64.5% increase in earnings. For all cohorts, the quarters represented in the data present a continued pattern of employment earnings growth over time.

Prior to entering Goodwill services, approximately 42% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. Two years after exiting services, approximately 58% met the requirements for eligibility. For the majority of the quarters represented in the data the UI benefits claims rate was below 2.9%. During the first year of the pandemic UI claims increased as high as 13.5%.

Table 13. Goodwill Participant Outcomes: FY 2016-FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Year Post-service	3 Year Post-service	4 Year Post-service	5 Year Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	224	224	224	224	224	224	224	224	
FY 2017	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	96	
FY 2018	173	173	173	173	173	173	55	.	
FY 2019	166	166	166	166	166	65	.	.	
FY 2020	171	171	171	171	101	.	.	.	
FY 2021	116	116	116	63	.	.	.	.
Total	1059	1059	1059	1006	873	671	488	320	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	48.0%	81.7%	73.7%	66.1%	65.2%	63.0%	53.1%	52.2%	62.0%
FY 2017	36.4%	80.9%	65.6%	60.3%	54.1%	47.9%	45.9%		
FY 2018	65.6%	80.4%	74.0%	70.5%	61.3%	53.8%			
FY 2019	55.3%	74.7%	73.5%	65.1%	60.2%				
FY 2020	50.4%	67.8%	58.5%	57.3%					
FY 2021	55.0%	58.6%	61.2%	.					
Overall	50.9%	75.5%	68.3%	62.8%	60.3%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$4,515	\$5,183	\$5,956	\$6,288	\$6,952	\$7,339	\$7,622	\$9,352	\$7,255
FY 2017	\$3,729	\$4,407	\$5,504	\$5,686	\$6,695	\$7,070	\$8,047		
FY 2018	\$3,746	\$4,645	\$5,818	\$6,024	\$6,974	\$8,030			
FY 2019	\$4,161	\$4,045	\$5,675	\$5,711	\$6,576				
FY 2020	\$4,563	\$5,242	\$6,438	\$7,334					
FY2021	\$5,006	\$4,982	\$6,819	.					
Overall	\$4,248	\$4,740	\$5,950	\$6,251	\$6,992				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	39.0%	45.5%	60.3%	72.8%	61.6%	62.1%	57.1%	50.0%	60.5%
FY 2017	35.2%	35.9%	71.8%	71.3%	53.1%	51.7%	45.0%		
FY 2018	49.9%	63.6%	67.1%	69.4%	64.7%	54.3%			
FY 2019	43.1%	51.8%	62.7%	65.1%	58.4%				
FY 2020	44.0%	48.5%	60.8%	57.3%					
FY 2021	47.8%	43.1%	48.3%	.					
Overall	42.4%	47.8%	62.8%	66.2%	58.5%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	2.5%	0.9%	4.0%	1.8%	1.8%	0.5%	6.7%	2.2%	2.7%
FY 2017	2.8%	2.9%	0.5%	1.0%	1.4%	9.6%	1.9%		
FY 2018	2.8%	1.7%	2.3%	2.9%	12.7%	5.8%			
FY 2019	2.6%	1.8%	3.6%	10.8%	3.0%				
FY 2020	2.2%	9.4%	13.5%	3.5%					
FY 2021	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.					
Overall	2.3%	2.8%	4.1%	3.5%	3.9%				

Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

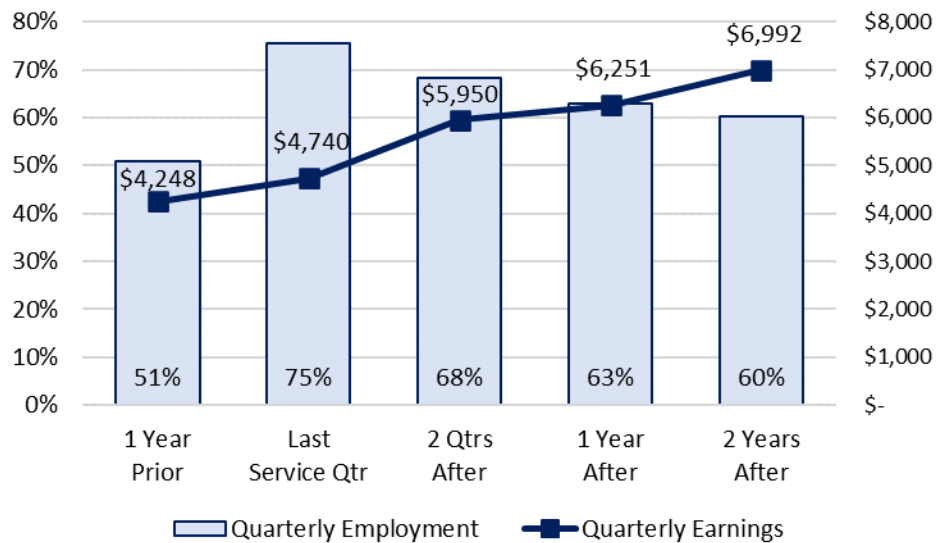
Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe.

Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC. Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 17 displays for all cohorts (FY 2016–FY 2021), the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services, illustrating the expected trend of decreasing employment rates found in the data and the steady increase in earnings.

**Figure 17. Average Employment and Earnings for Goodwill Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services**



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 18 illustrates the downward trend in employed exiters found in the data following the last service quarter. Although the FY 2017 cohort reported lower rates of employment compared to the FY 2016 cohort, both groups experienced a steady downward trend in reported employment following the last service quarter. Figure 19 presents the steady upward trend in earnings found in the data for both FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts.

Figure 18. Average Employment for Goodwill Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services

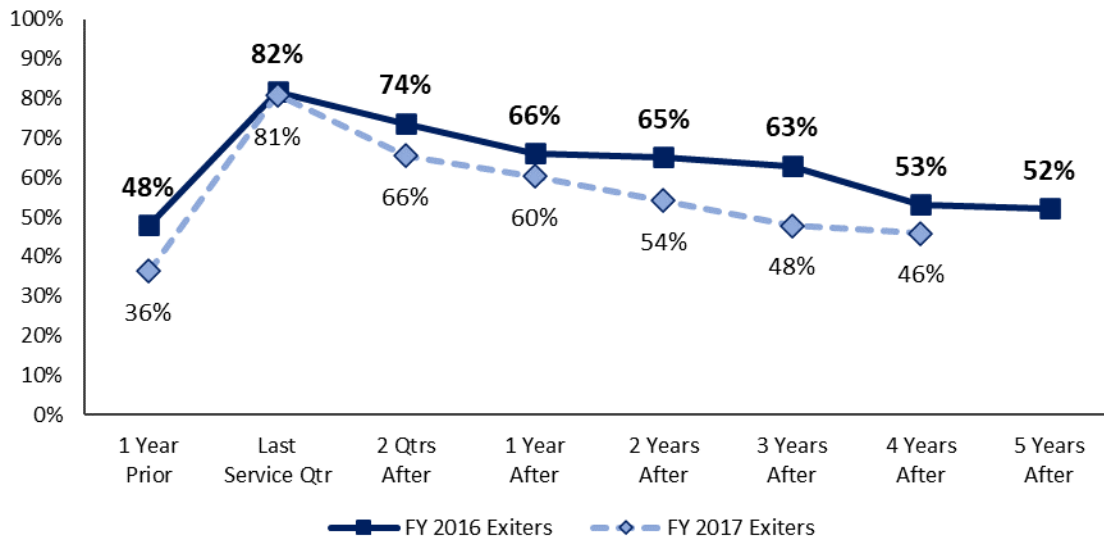
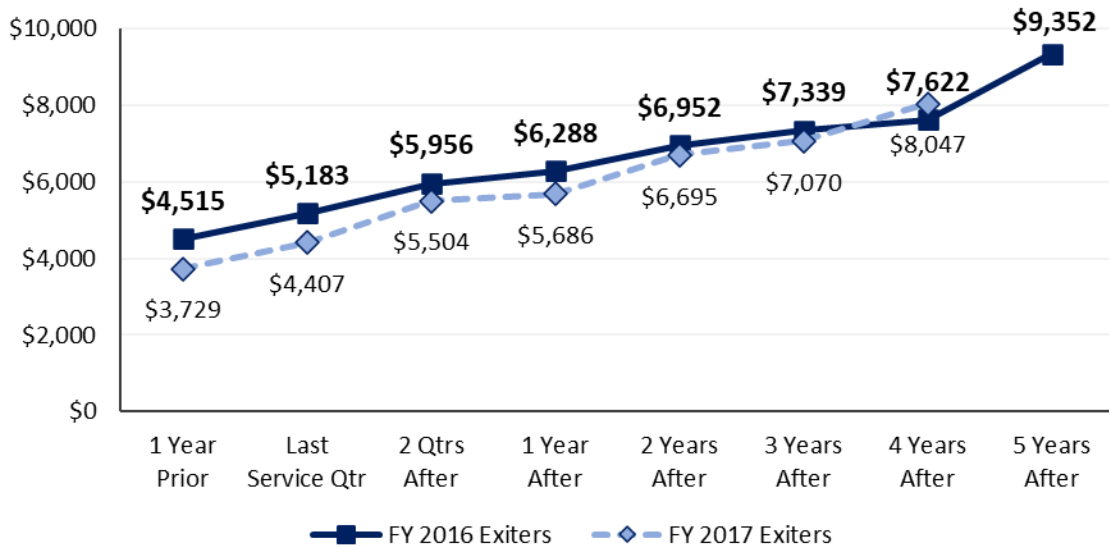


Figure 19. Average Earnings for Goodwill Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



“The mission of the Austin Area Urban League (AAUL) is to provide tools to African-Americans and underserved populations to build a foundation for social and economic equality.” *

AAUL strives to achieve this mission by focusing on educational improvement, employment readiness, health and wellness, and the preservation of affordable housing.

In FY 2016, AAUL joined the collaborative WERC-TC to help individuals attain certifications and credentials valued by employers. In FY 2016-FY 2020, AAUL annually received \$45,744 WERC-TC funding for each program year.



*<http://www.aaul.org/>

Workforce Development Programs and Services

The AAUL Workforce and Career Development program supports participants' financial self-sufficiency by providing career counseling, job placement assistance, professional development workshops, occupational training tracks, financial literacy, and long-term employment retention strategies.

Approximately half of program participants are judicially involved, including residents of the Austin Transitional Center. AAUL has developed a workforce development curriculum, *Pathway to a Career Academy* (PWTC). PWTC integrates a Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) framework to guide AAUL clients to think differently about themselves and employment.¹⁵ The program endeavors to “meet the participant where they are” and help them to build the skills, beliefs, and attitudes they need to be successful.

PWTC is a four-week training course focused on developing financial literacy, workplace literacy (such as business math and business communications, both verbal and written), computer skills (emphasizing Microsoft Office suite and Internet/email basics), and job readiness skills. The training also exposes participants to office technology, such as multi-line phone systems and fax/copy machines. At the conclusion of the PWTC training, each participant delivers a class presentation to demonstrate the knowledge they

have learned, gain experience expressing themselves, and receive support from the group.

Technical training is provided in partnership with Goodwill, ACC, Consulting Solutions, the College of Health Care Professionals, and Ascension Seton Medical Center. Participants receive CDL training through Goodwill. CNA training is provided through ACC and Goodwill. Medical assistant training is provided in partnership with Ascension Seton Medical Center and the College of Health Care Professionals. ACC also provides medication aide, and logistics and supply chain-management training.

¹⁵ Research supports the efficacy of CBT for judicially involved individuals to change their beliefs about themselves in the world, and about their future, thus contributing to behavior that supports healthy attitudes, relationships and behaviors. Hoffman, Asnaani, Vonk, Sawyer, and Fang. (2012). The Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: A Review of Meta-analyses. Cognitive Therapy and Research. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3584580/>

Technology training, including Comptia A+ and foundation technology network training, is offered through Consulting Solutions. AAUL staff report many participants are interested in CDL training, but due to limited funding and the expense of the course, AAUL is unable to meet the need.¹⁶ AAUL also has funding through the WERC-TC collaborative to offer a limited number of paid eight-week internships.

AAUL has established relationships with hiring managers in healthcare, insurance, customer service, construction, information technologies, and education among other fields. AAUL works with a number of area Fair-Chance employers, including the City of Austin and Travis County.¹⁷

Support Services

AAUL works to connect participants with resources in the community, including the UT School of Law sponsored Texas Law Expunction Project clinics, Dress for Success clothing for women, and the Huston-Tillotson chapter of Omega Psi Phi, along with various faith-based agencies, for interview and work clothes for male participants. Bus passes and gas cards are also provided as funding allows. AAUL operates its own vans to transport groups of individuals to and from classes. Incentives, \$25 gas cards and bus passes are provided at 30-day intervals to support attainment of the 6-month employment retention target. AAUL also helps with work-related expenses, refers to Workforce Solutions for child care, and can provide emergency assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Pandemic Impact on Services

Throughout FY 2021, AAUL continued to provide the majority of services online with limited staff available in the office.

The connection between AAUL and the UT School of Law sponsored Texas Law Expunction Project clinics was fractured as clinics were no longer hosted on program sites. An online process for applying for services is now available, requiring participants to have access to the internet and an email address to process an application and communicate with the clinic regarding their request for assistance.

¹⁶ Information from a conversation with Charelesa Russell, Workforce Program Manager, March, 2019 and February, 2020.

¹⁷ “The City of Austin’s Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance, which took effect April 4, 2016, aims to reduce recidivism and unemployment, and increase re-integration for qualified job applicants with criminal histories. The law places restrictions on certain private employers on when they can ask about a job applicant’s criminal history and how that information can be used.” <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/fair-chance-hiring>

New Initiatives

Collaboration with Clean Investments, Inc.

During the pandemic, AAUL entered into a collaboration with the Clean Investments, Inc. program to offer the Returning Citizens Advancement Program (RCAP)¹⁸. RCAP provides 90 days of service to felony convicted individuals coming from county or state facilities with addiction issues experiencing barriers to housing, education, and employment. AAUL RCAP staff are officed at the Clean Investments site and provide participants with case management services, a backpack of toiletries and under clothing, bus passes, Pathways to Career classes, and assistance with parole fees.

Tech and Career Academy

During FY 2021, AAUL began planning a new collaboration with Workforce Solutions Capital Area and Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area to implement a Tech and Career Academy (TCA). TCA offers supports and fast track training leading to a certification in an occupation in demand in Austin/Travis County and the surrounding areas. Using a cohort-based model, TCA offers classes during the day and evening hours, training courses are between five to twelve weeks in length, and participants receive employment assistance. TCA was launched in the spring of 2022.¹⁹

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 1,055 unduplicated AAUL participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016–FY 2021. The average age of participant exiters was 39 with 25.4% identified as 50 years of age or older. Nearly 70% of participants identified as Black, 15.9 % identified as Hispanic, and 14.1% identified as White. Half of the exiters were male and a majority of exiters, 76.1%, reported having a 12th grade education or a HSEC, and 16.4% reported less than a 12th grade education. Half of all exiters reported judicial involvement (49.4%). Just under 6% identified as veterans and 24.8% reported receiving public benefits (48.2% of the sample had missing/unknown receipt of public benefits). The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: East Austin (31.6%), Eastern suburbs of Austin (20.1%), and North Austin (18.5%).

Participant Outcomes

Table 14 presents AAUL participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016–FY 2021. Outcomes are reported for 1,011 participants whose social security numbers were

¹⁸ Clean Investments, Inc., provides outpatient addiction treatment services for citizens returning to the community after a period of incarceration. For more information see: <http://www.cleaninvestmentsinc.com>

¹⁹ For additional information on the Tech and Career Academy see: <https://aaul.org/tca>

identified within the earnings data. In the four quarters prior to entering the program, overall quarterly employment for individuals served by AAUL was approximately 42 percent, increasing to 63.2% during the last service quarter, and decreasing to 56.3% by the fourth quarter post-service. Overall, quarterly earnings grew from an average of \$3,887 in the quarter before services to \$4,950 four quarters post-service, which amounts to a \$1,063 average earnings increase. For all cohorts, most quarterly earnings represented in the data present a continued pattern of employment earnings growth over time.

Prior to entering AAUL services, approximately 35% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, approximately 47% met the requirements for eligibility. UI benefits claims increased during the pandemic resulting in the overall claims for UI benefits of 4% in the period examined.

Table 14. AAUL Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Year Post-service	3 Year Post-service	4 Year Post-service	5 Year Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	310	
FY 2017	237	237	237	237	237	237	237	99	
FY 2018	225	225	225	225	225	225	103	.	
FY 2019	121	121	121	121	121	39	.	.	
FY 2020	117	117	117	117	75	.	.	.	
FY 2021	44	44	44	18	.	.	.	.
Totals	1054	1054	1054	1028	968	811	650	409	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	38.4%	65.2%	62.6%	58.1%	55.5%	53.6%	45.8%	45.2%	53.1%
FY 2017	35.8%	64.6%	57.4%	60.8%	52.7%	46.0%	44.3%		
FY 2018	46.3%	57.8%	49.8%	50.7%	42.2%	39.6%			
FY 2019	46.5%	60.3%	52.1%	51.2%	43.0%				
FY 2020	48.9%	68.4%	57.3%	59.8%		.			
FY 2021	48.9%	72.7%	72.7%		.	.			
Overall	42.0%	63.6%	57.3%	56.5%	50.0%	46.5%			
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$3,642	\$3,348	\$4,389	\$4,561	\$5,281	\$6,305	\$6,794	\$7,051	\$5,662
FY 2017	\$3,732	\$4,054	\$4,827	\$5,095	\$5,750	\$5,710	\$7,265		
FY 2018	\$3,589	\$3,078	\$4,354	\$4,797	\$5,349	\$5,766			
FY 2019	\$4,523	\$4,769	\$5,652	\$5,828	\$7,269				
FY 2020	\$4,543	\$3,928	\$5,347	\$5,730		.			
FY 2021	\$2,972	\$4,848	\$6,102		.	.			
Overall	\$3,843	\$3,753	\$4,810	\$5,083	\$5,722	\$6,050			
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	33.0%	34.8%	39.0%	49.7%	51.0%	48.1%	45.5%	41.6%	45.7%
FY 2017	29.6%	38.0%	51.5%	56.5%	55.3%	50.6%	43.5%		
FY 2018	37.8%	38.2%	43.1%	43.1%	44.4%	33.8%			
FY 2019	36.2%	39.7%	52.9%	50.4%	43.0%				
FY 2020	44.9%	47.0%	62.4%	54.7%		.			
FY 2021	37.5%	40.9%	54.6%		.	.			
Overall	35.1%	38.4%	47.5%	50.6%	49.2%	44.3%			
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	1.9%	0.7%	2.6%	1.6%	1.9%	1.6%	11.0%	2.6%	3.5%
FY 2017	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	3.4%	1.7%	9.3%	3.0%		
FY 2018	2.8%	1.3%	1.3%	1.8%	7.1%	3.6%			
FY 2019	2.7%	5.8%	3.3%	9.9%	5.8%				
FY 2020	2.1%	8.6%	15.4%	10.3%		.			
FY 2021	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%		.	.			
Overall	2.1%	2.4%	3.4%	4.0%	3.6%	4.3%			

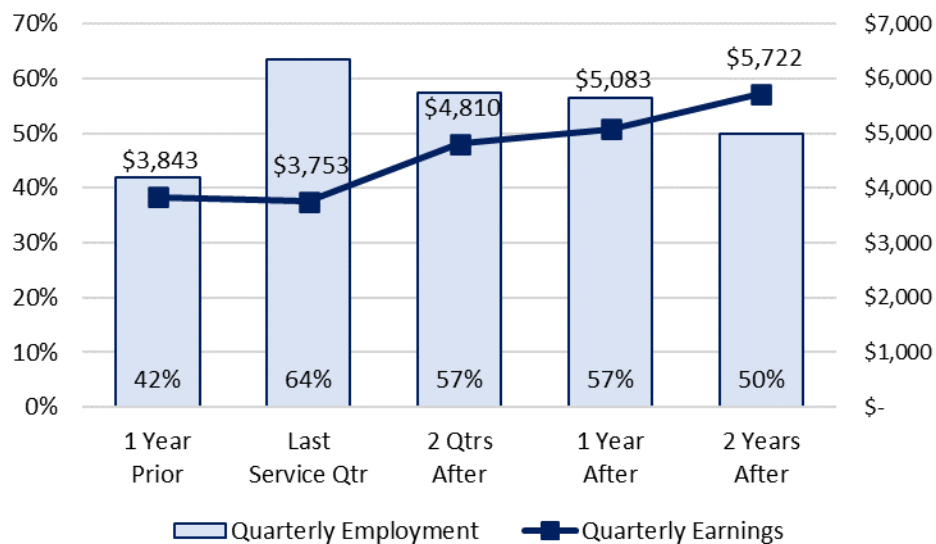
Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC. Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 20 displays for all cohorts (FY 2016 – FY 2021), the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services, illustrating the trend of decrease in employed exiters found in the data and the steady increase in earnings.

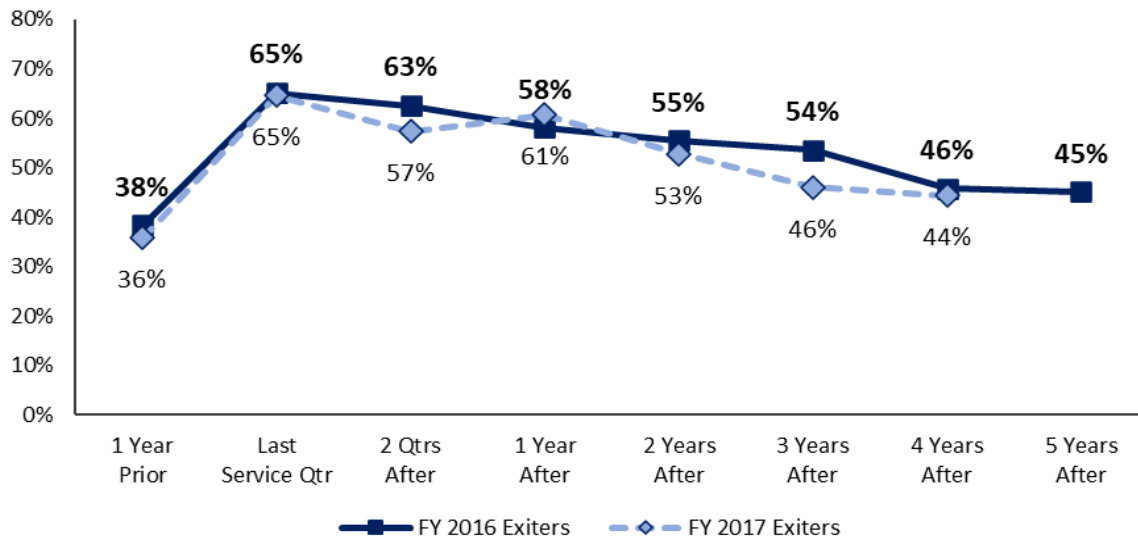
Figure 20. Average Employment and Earnings for AAUL Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

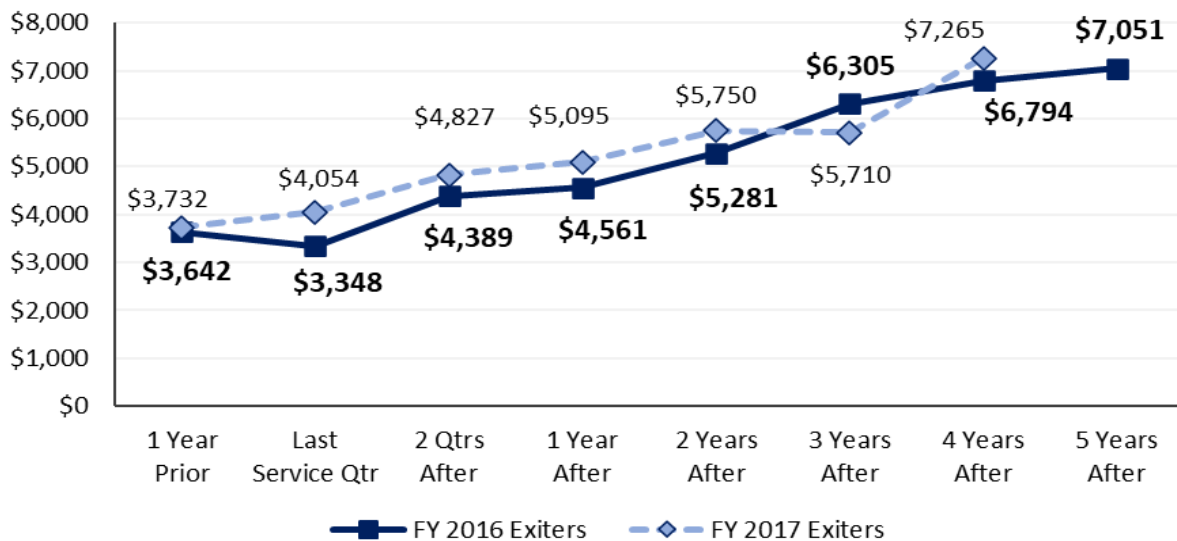
Figure 21 illustrates a general downward trend in employment following the last service quarter with an overall increase in employment overtime from one year prior to service to the fourth and fifth year post-services: an increase of 6.8 percentage points for FY 2016 exiters and an 8.5 percentage point increase for FY 2017 exiters. Figure 22 presents the steady upward trend in earnings found in the data for both FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts with income nearly doubling for both cohorts by the fifth and fourth years post-services, respectively.

Figure 21. Average Quarterly Employment for AAUL Exitters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Note: Employment averages for FY 2016 exitters are displayed in a larger, bold font.

Figure 22. Average Quarterly Earnings for AAUL Exitters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Note: Average earnings of participants for FY 2016 exitters are displayed in a larger, bold font.

American YouthWorks
Mission

“...to provide young people with opportunities to build careers, strengthen communities, and improve the environment through education, on-the-job training, and service to others.” *

In FY 2016–FY 2021, Travis County annually invested \$145,000 workforce development funds combined with Metro Parks Project funding of \$100,000. YouthBuild also receive \$44,401 in funding from WERC-TC.



*www.americanyouthworks.org

AMERICAN YOUTHWORKS

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Travis County funds two American YouthWorks (AYW) training programs: YouthBuild Austin and the Texas Conservation Corps.²⁰

YouthBuild Austin

YouthBuild Austin is a Department of Labor pre-apprenticeship program that combines education and job training. Participants range in age from 16-24 years old, have an income at or below 200% FPG, and are typically disconnected from education and training opportunities.

YouthBuild programs use a service-learning model that combines occupational skills training and academic instruction with community service projects. YouthBuild Austin is designed to offer three training tracks: construction, computer technology and graphic design, and healthcare.²¹

In FY 2019, AYW entered into partnership with Goodwill to open a Goodwill Excel Center at the AYW location in South Austin.²² YouthBuild students enroll in the Goodwill Excel Center to complete their high school diploma or obtain a HSEC while participating in one of the three training tracks. For most

participants, half of the day is spent in high school diploma or HSE classes, while the other half of the day is spent learning a trade, combining certification classes with hands-on training.

Construction: Students learn green energy efficient construction skills while repairing houses for low-income families or building micro-homes for homeless individuals. Construction training is a nine-month course of study and participants earn certifications through the Occupational Safety and Health

²⁰ Non-WERC-TC AYW Travis County funded participants are discussed later in this report.

²¹ Prior to entering class students participate in a week-long orientation process. Orientation includes, among other topics, a *Mental Toughness Workshop* to increase student resilience and confidence.

²² The Excel Center is a public charter high school where adults ages 18-50 can earn a high school diploma.

Administration (OSHA) and the National Center for Construction Education and Research. The program's core curriculum is *Construction Center*, a pre-apprenticeship training program. Staff work to increase partnerships with area employers to offer three week paid pre-apprenticeships as helpers to electricians, plumbers, or welders.

Computer Technology and Graphic Design: Students learn computer technology and graphic design while building and repairing computers for low-income area residents, and designing and producing marketing materials (t-shirts, mugs, embossed items, and more) for local non-profits. Students work with the City of Austin's Digital Inclusion Program and the Austin Resource Recovery program to refurbish equipment to be donated or installed in public computer labs including Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH), and the Housing Authority for the City of Austin site computer labs. Further, students can obtain certification in Adobe and Microsoft Office suite.

Healthcare: Students earn certification as Community Health Workers while gaining experience volunteering to provide health screenings at community health fairs, organizing blood donation events, and volunteering with local health care providers. Participants who graduate with a high school diploma or GED, are eligible to receive financial assistance to attend Certified Nursing Assistant classes at Austin Community College.

Texas Conservation Corps

The Texas Conservation Corps program trains youth (ages 18-28) to build, restore, and maintain the natural environment.²³ Through work in parks, nature trails, wildlife habitats, and disaster relief services, participants learn environmental management and safety practices. Contracts with Travis County, the City of Austin, the Texas Parks and Wildlife department, and the National Parks Service, among others, give participants real work experience while creating benefits for the broader community.²⁴

Support Services

In addition to job training and on-site access to the Goodwill Excel Center, YouthBuild provides a number of wrap-around support services to help individuals succeed, including case management and counseling services. All staff are trained in restorative justice and trauma informed care practices,

²³ Conservation Corps offers a summer youth program for high school students and recent graduates ages 15-18.

²⁴ AYW Texas Conservation Corp. also manages a fee for services model to cover expenses and provide additional work experience opportunities for youth.

philosophical approaches that are the foundation of the program service delivery model.²⁵ AYW coordinates mental health care through different service providers including interns from the University of Texas School of Nursing and School of Social Work.

In partnership with the juvenile justice system, YouthBuild provides services to justice involved youth through the New Start program. A re-entry specialist provides case manager services for program participants. New Start offers rolling enrollment and enhanced mental health services. Staff conduct outreach and recruitment for Del Valle and Garner Betts juvenile justice facility residences.

Transportation assistance is provided in a variety of forms: bus passes, gas cards, emergency car repair funds, and AYW van transportation. The program also provides uniforms and safety equipment, tools, clothing for interviews, on-site child care, and emergency assistance for food, diapers, and other necessities. YouthBuild participants receive a bi-weekly stipend and Texas Conservation Corps members receive a living expense allowance to help cover their cost of expenses while in service. The stipend and living allowance are provided through co-enrollment in AmeriCorps, and other funding sources.

Beyond the academic and occupational skills training, the AYW transition team provides YouthBuild participants with employability skills, “life skills,” and financial literacy training. Full-time counselors help participants overcome other obstacles to success and promote retention in employment or post-secondary education through on-going support services for all YouthBuild alumni. The program partners with the WERC collaborative to connect participants with other training opportunities and employment support services.

AYW collaborates with Child Inc. and United Way to provide a two-generation early childhood care and education program with on-site quality early childhood care and education services to children ages 0-5.²⁶ The program provides case management services, a diaper bank, family field trips, parenting education/support sessions (scheduled during the school day to encourage attendance), and parent/child activities with an opportunity for facilitators to model helpful parenting behavior to encourage healthy bonding between parent and child. Children who attend the program remain

²⁵ Restorative Justice as a general framework for responding to school-based conflict emphasizes mitigating harm; attending to root causes of conflict; and, fostering relationships, empathic dialogue, and community accountability (Sandwick,, Hahn, and Hassoun, A. , 2019). Trauma informed care recognize that the experience of trauma can greatly influence an individual’s receptivity to and engagement with services, interactions with staff and clients, and responsiveness to program guidelines, practices, and interventions (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment).

²⁶ Child Inc. is the Austin area Head Start/Early Head Start grantee.

enrolled at no cost while the parents are enrolled in the program and maintain regular attendance.²⁷

Pandemic Impact on Services

Throughout FY 2021, AYW programs continued to experience the influence of the pandemic on services, particularly with recruitment, enrollment, onsite child care, mental health services, and Conservation Corps members experiencing an increased need for support services.

On-site child care services were unable to maintain the site's licensed care capacity. Staff report the site is offering only half as many slots post-pandemic due to staffing issues. Child care workers traditionally make low earnings, and it has become increasingly difficult to attract new workers in the current Austin economy. Staff reported a waitlist of approximately 12 families who needed care as of April 2022.

Mental health supports have been expanded to offer services through contracted therapists who can offer sustained relationships with program participants. Staff report that during the pandemic more participants sought services for symptoms of anxiety and depression. Staff suggest that, in general, the stigma around seeking mental health services has diminished during the pandemic.

The Austin Community College collaboration Early College Start has been suspended during the pandemic. The ACC welding lab was damaged and is being repaired and renovated. Articulation credit agreements for the construction program completers were also at a standstill as a result of the pandemic.²⁸

Texas Conservation Corps: Challenges

The Conservation Corps was hampered with significant enrollment shortages. Much of the work performed by the Corps is supported through a fee-for-service model. With fewer Corps members available to work in the field, this necessary source of program income declined. Staff suggested the cost of living in Austin, particularly housing costs, is a barrier for potential members who are interested in completing their term of service in Austin. AS the cost of living increases in Austin, the limited Corps stipend isn't sufficient to support members who come to the program without additional personal support.

²⁷ David Clauss, YouthBuild Austin Program Director, participates in the United Way sponsored 2-Gen Stakeholder Network.

²⁸ TSI is a required Texas college and university entrance exam designed to determine a student's readiness for college-level coursework in the general areas of reading, writing, and mathematics.

New Initiatives

FY 2021 was the planning period for AYW's manufacturing pre-apprenticeship training track. The program curriculum, *Tooling U-Society of Manufacturing Engineers* (Tooling U-SME), will prepare participants to obtain certification and begin entry-level employment as a manufacturing technologist. AYW will be collaborating with specific area employers, such as Tesla, Redbird flight simulation, and other small manufacturing and print shops to develop employment opportunities for certified program completers. Tooling U-SME also prepares participants to take the next step on a training path to become certified as a production technician through the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) training offered by Skillpoint Alliance and ACC. The first AYW manufacturing pre-apprenticeship cohort enrolled mid fall 2021 (the first quarter of FY 2022).

Participant Profile

The following analysis reports on the 429 unduplicated AYW participants who exited the program for any reason in FY 2016–FY 2021. Although AYW reports fewer WERC-TC exiters than other agencies, AYW serves the largest percentage of exiters with less than a 12th grade education, over half (54.3%), and the highest percentage of exiters 19 years old and younger (35%), with an average exiter age of 22. Providing services to Opportunity Youth with limited education and workforce experience results in longer service delivery periods per participant. Over half of the program exiters were males (53.1%) with 41.7% of exiters identified as Hispanic, 30.1% identified as White, and 20.7% identified as Black. Of the participants, 6.8% indicated veteran status and 11.2% identified as being judicially involved. Nearly 20.5% of exiters received some form of public benefits (66.9% of the sample had missing/unknown receipt of public benefits). A plurality of the exiters reported residing in South Austin (46.6%), and East Austin (30.3%).

Participant Outcomes

Table 15 presents AYW WERC-TC participants who exited services (completed or dropped-out) in FY 2016–FY 2021. Outcomes are reported for the 393 participants whose social security numbers were identified within the earnings data. In the four quarters prior to entering the program, overall quarterly employment for individuals served by AYW was 33.1%, increasing to 52.5% four quarters post-service. For participants exiting the program in FY 2016 and FY 2017, employment outcomes continued to increase through the twelfth quarter post-service to 70.4% and 65.6% respectively (representing a 97% gain for FY 2016 and an 80% gain for FY 2017).

Overall earnings grew from an average of \$2,157 in the quarter before services to \$4,446 four quarters post-service, which amounts to a \$2,289 average quarterly earnings increase. For all cohorts, most post-service quarterly earnings represented in the data present a continued pattern of earnings growth over time (outcomes are further illustrated in Figure 20 and Figure 21).

Prior to entering AYW services, only 19% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, 42% met the requirements for eligibility. Few participants (3% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined with a reported increase in UI benefit claims occurring during the pandemic.

Table 15. AYW WERC-TC Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Year Post-service	3 Year Post-service	4 Year Post-service	5 Year Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	
FY 2017	61	61	61	61	61	61	61	20	
FY 2018	75	75	75	75	75	75	22	.	
FY 2019	96	96	96	96	96	20	.	.	
FY 2020	80	80	80	80	26	.	.	.	
FY 2021	36	36	36	12	.	.	.	.
Totals	429	429	429	405	339	237	164	101	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	35.8%	58.0%	63.0%	56.8%	65.4%	70.4%	59.3%	59.3%	62.7%
FY 2017	36.5%	57.4%	62.3%	62.3%	60.7%	65.6%	59.0%		
FY 2018	28.7%	49.3%	46.7%	48.0%	46.7%	49.3%			
FY 2019	31.5%	50.0%	57.3%	49.0%	58.3%				
FY 2020	34.1%	57.5%	55.0%	47.5%					
FY 2021	44.4%	50.0%	44.4%		.				
Overall	34.1%	53.9%	55.7%	52.8%	56.9%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$2,085	\$3,133	\$4,016	\$4,811	\$4,834	\$5,931	\$7,268	\$7,800	\$5,909
FY 2017	\$2,058	\$3,682	\$4,352	\$4,534	\$5,470	\$5,441	\$7,226		
FY 2018	\$2,087	\$1,897	\$3,914	\$4,290	\$5,400	\$6,536			
FY 2019	\$2,130	\$3,169	\$3,958	\$4,245	\$4,742				
FY 2020	\$2,397	\$3,131	\$4,098	\$5,754					
FY 2021	\$3,207	\$3,812	\$5,938		.				
Overall	\$2,271	\$3,078	\$4,185	\$4,786	\$5,180				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	17.6%	24.7%	32.1%	48.2%	51.9%	63.0%	64.2%	58.0%	53.3%
FY 2017	23.4%	34.4%	37.7%	45.9%	55.7%	60.7%	49.2%		
FY 2018	18.3%	13.3%	21.3%	38.7%	44.0%	41.3%			
FY 2019	14.1%	14.6%	25.0%	44.8%	44.8%				
FY 2020	22.2%	21.3%	27.5%	42.5%					
FY 2021	34.0%	36.1%	33.3%		.				
Overall	20.0%	22.1%	28.7%	44.0%	48.1%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	7.4%	1.2%	1.6%
FY 2017	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	3.3%		
FY 2018	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%	5.3%			
FY 2019	0.5%	0.0%	6.3%	11.5%	1.0%				
FY 2020	0.3%	7.5%	3.8%	2.5%					
FY 2021	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%		.				
Overall	0.4%	1.4%	2.1%	3.2%	3.2%				

Source: WERC-TC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

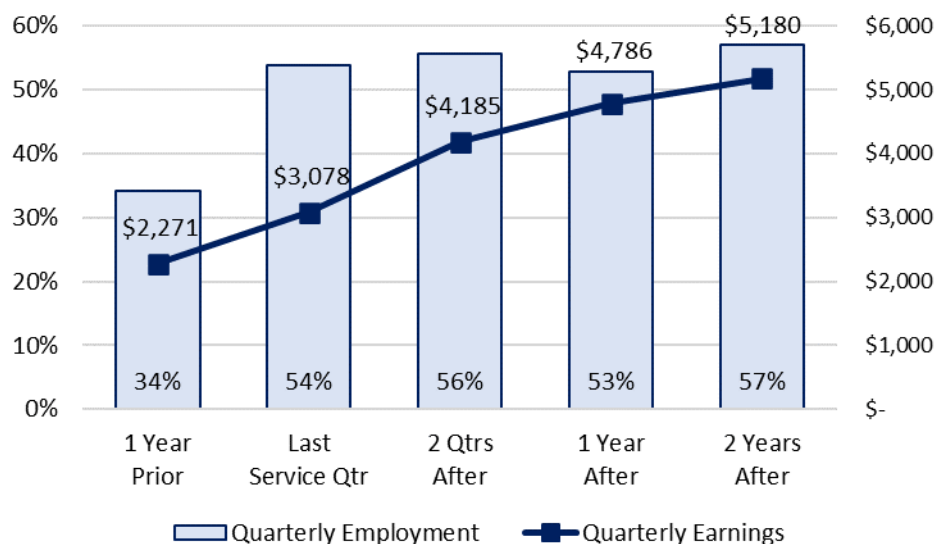
Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC. Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 23 presents the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services for all cohorts (FY 2016–FY2021). For WERC-TC AYW exiters found in the data, employment outcomes do not match the overall employment trends of the larger WERC-TC population included in this analysis. WERC-TC participants experienced a trend of decreasing rates of employment over time (See Figure 1. Average Employment and Earnings for WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2017). WERC-TC participants experienced a 10.7 percentage point decrease in employment between the last service quarter and the second year post-services, while AYW exiters were found to experience a 3 percentage point increase in reported employment between the last service quarter and second year post-services.

WERC-TC participants were found to have an overall 48.2% employment rate one year prior to entering services, while the AYW WERC-TC participant rate of employment one year prior to service was 34.1%, a 14.1 percentage point difference between the WERC-TC population and AYW WERC-TC participants. While the low rate of employment prior to entering services may be attributed to the limited employment experiences of the younger population AYW serves, by the second year post-services the difference in rates of employment between AWY and the larger population of WERC-TC participants was only .2 percentage points.

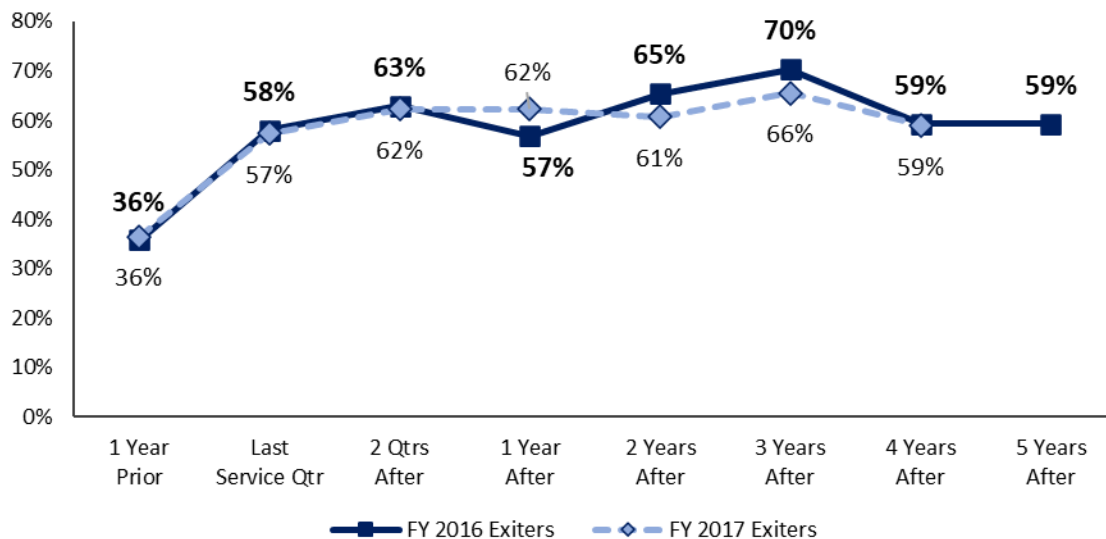
Figure 23. Average Employment and Earnings for AYW Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 24 illustrates a different pattern of employment rates over time when AYW exiters are compared to the WERC-TC FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts. The WERC-TC data indicates that the highest earnings are reported for the last service quarter for both FY 2016 (73%) and FY 2017 (69%). In contrast, the period of time with the highest earnings reported for the AYW participants is three years post-services at 70% for FY 2016 cohort and 66% for the FY 2017 cohort.

**Figure 24. Average Quarterly Employment for AYW WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**



Note: Employment averages for FY 2016 exiters are displayed in a larger, bold font.

Figure 25 presents the steady upward trend in earnings found in the data for both FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts. Reported incomes are relatively low during the year prior to services, a reflection of the youth population with limited employment experience served by AYWs. The average earnings for WERC-TC FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts reported for one year prior to services was approximately \$4,400, approximately \$2,070 (representing a gap of \$2,330) higher than the pre-service average earnings reported for the AYW FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts. By four years post-services, WERC-TC exiters average earnings for both cohorts increased to \$8,016, while AYW exiters reported that average earnings increased to \$7,248 – lowering the gap between the two groups to approximately \$768.

Figure 25. Average Quarterly Earnings for AYW WERC-TC Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Note: Average earnings of participants for FY 2016 exiters are displayed in a larger, bold font.

Non-WERC-TC Travis County Funded Programs

The next section of this report describes the organizations receiving Travis County funding other than through WERC-TC: Literacy Coalition of Central Texas, Capital IDEA, LifeWorks, Skillpoint Alliance, and American YouthWorks. For each organization, this section presents a brief profile of the provider and its workforce development program(s), a summary of participant demographic characteristics obtained at the time of program entry, and outcomes and impacts for participants who exited the program during FY 2016–FY 2021. The report presents impacts only for groups for which adequate matching to a comparison group could be performed.

LITERACY COALITION OF CENTRAL TEXAS

Career Development Programs and Services

The Literacy Coalition of
Central Texas

“The Literacy Coalition of
Central Texas breaks the
cycle of intergenerational
poverty through holistic
literacy services.” *

In FY 2016–FY 2021
Travis County annually
invested approx.
\$241,196 in LCCT
Career Development
services.



*[http:// willread.org](http://willread.org)

The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas (LCCT) Career Development services are offered at the LCCT Learning Center and through the coordination of a network of community-based adult education service providers. The Career Development program integrates literacy, HSE, and English as a second language instruction with job readiness skill building and vocational skills training. Services are targeted for very low-skilled, working age adults.²⁹

The Learning Center and each literacy partner site works with two LCCT AmeriCorps members (an instructor and a job coach) trained to implement the Career Development program in the context of each site’s existing literacy services.³⁰ Participants meet with AmeriCorps members to complete an intake process, establish goals, and create a plan to achieve educational and employment goals. The Learning Center offers additional opportunities for vocational training.

Participants pursuing ABE and HSE certification test preparation take the TABE at the beginning of their participation in the program and are retested after 50-60 hours of instruction. Students interested in advanced workforce preparation receive job readiness skill-building services and work with a job coach to complete an Individual Learning Plan to further outline their educational and career goals. The job readiness training includes computer literacy, the Microsoft Office suite and Google Drive system, job etiquette, letter and email writing, job application writing, résumé development, job searching and interview skills.

In coordination with WFSCA, LCCT sponsors students to attend the Austin Career Institute (ACI) HVAC program and, in the past, partnered with Skillpoint Alliance to provide an ESL CNA class. Staff

²⁹ The information for this report was obtained from a conversation with Janet Torres, Chief Executive Officer; Marykate Hammer, Career Development Program Manager; and Sarah Forbes, Partnerships Program Manager, LCCT, June 6, 2022.

³⁰ In FY 2016, AmeriCorps members who were teaching ESL/ABE were trained to add workforce prep and career development services into their teaching and their work with students.

report the commercial HVAC program is popular with participants, reporting high rates of program completion and industry retention.

Job coaches meet monthly to strategize working with area employers to create relationships with general managers and business owners who offer higher than typical entry level earnings focused on the hospitality and food service industries. In FY 2021, the LCCT target earnings for those who entered employment was \$11.00 per hour.

In addition, in FY 2021, LCCT staff began planning with the City of Austin's Director of Economic Development to create and implement a pilot Certified Production Technician (CPT) training course for Spanish speakers, and to develop employment connections with area manufacturing employers. The CPT pilot is scheduled to be implemented in FY 2022.

Support Services

The LCCT staff have identified that many program participants have experienced violence and trauma. All LCCT staff and AmeriCorps members have received training in trauma-informed practice to 1) recognize the pervasive impact of trauma on individuals, families, and communities; 2) inform service delivery; and 3) prepare staff to make appropriate referrals for support and services. AmeriCorps members also receive training on motivational interviewing, a style of relationship building that supports participants to overcome internal barriers to realizing their goals.

Partner sites each deliver varying support services to participants. At each site, the AmeriCorps members maintain a site manual that includes site specific supports available for students and a listing of additional common referral sources. Students enrolled at the LCCT Learning Center are eligible to access a number of additional support services.³¹ The Learning Center employs a full-time case manager/participant support specialist and a social services coordinator who work to improve program persistence and completion by offering support services such as transportation assistance, primarily in the form of bus passes. In addition, LCCT has also aided with auto repairs and gas cards. The organization provides limited emergency rent or utility assistance on a case-by-case basis. The social services coordinators make referrals to organizations throughout Travis County based on participant need.

Child care is a noted need for parenting participants. Parents may be referred to Child Inc. to apply for Early Head Start/Head Start services. In addition, staff report that students often create

³¹ LCCT coordinates four Learning Center sites: LCCT Headquarters, Santa Rita Courts, Booker T. Washington Terrace and Juan Navarro Family Resource Center.

informal child care arrangements among themselves. LCCT staff participate in the United Way of Greater Austin 2-Gen Strategic Planning Committee.

Job coaches use text messaging to follow-up with employed participants, and they offer an incentive gift card to track client academic achievements and employment and job retention rates. Participants who complete 35 hours of class time receive a \$20 gift card; those obtaining a certification, such as HVAC or CNA, receive a \$40 gift card. Participants who provide documentation of six months employment retention receive a \$50 gift card, and those with documentation regarding an improved employment situation receive a \$100 gift card.³²

Pandemic Impact on Services

In FY 2021, the pandemic continued to impact recruitment efforts, enrollment numbers, services offered, and how services were provided. LCCT increasingly relied on their partner network to share information about the LCCT and refer individuals to the program.³³ The typical recruitment events, such as enrollment tabling events at area schools, went online and were reportedly not effective for recruiting LCCT clients. Staff reported that word-of-mouth was a typical referral source during this period.

AmeriCorps members working at partner sites continued to provide in-person services in coordination with the pandemic response of their work sites. The Learning Center offered a hybrid service model providing instruction both online and by appointment. By July of 2021, half of the Learning Center services were provided in-person while staff continued to gradually increased in-person availability at the Center.

LCCT staff identified two major support services that continued to experience disruptions in FY 2021: child care and public transportation. The impact of the pandemic on the area child care services affected both program participants and staff as there are fewer options available and the cost of care has risen. Staff identified an available child care benefit for members through the national AmeriCorps program. However, AmeriCorps members must negotiate several layers of bureaucracy, making the

³² Information for this report was obtained from a conversation with Janet Torres, Chief Executive Officer; Marykate Hammer, Career Development Program Manager; and Sarah Forbes, Partnerships Program Manager, LCCT, June 6, 2022.

³³ During FY 2016-FY 2020, LCCT received funding from Travis County to execute recruitment strategies (Literacy Illuminates) including community-wide outreach and education efforts to raise the general awareness of literacy services in the Travis County area, including Spanish language radio advertisements.

program difficult to access. Transportation has also been a challenge as CAP Metro reduced services due to staffing shortages and the lack of bilingual drivers.

AmeriCorps Program Challenges

The LCCT service delivery model is dependent upon AmeriCorps members. In FY 2021, LCCT was unable to recruit enough members to fill all the placements available at partner sites. Furthermore, six AmeriCorps members resigned their positions due to physical and mental health issues affecting themselves or family members. Staff suggest two significant issues are driving these challenges: the cost of living in Austin, particularly housing costs, and the burden of compounding stressors during a pandemic.

The cost of living in Austin is a barrier for potential members interested in completing a term of service in Austin, and stressful for those who do choose to serve in the Austin area. The AmeriCorps program will be increasing member stipends in FY 2022 and LCCT staff have initiated an innovative program to provide low cost housing for members beginning the Fall of 2022. The LCCT Career Development Program team negotiated an agreement with the Ball Park North apartment complex to provide affordable, furnished housing for AmeriCorps members.

LCCT offers AmeriCorps members a number of options for health and mental health services. AmeriCorps offers the Members Assistance Program (MAP), providing no cost telehealth mental health services. Locally, members have access to referrals to local mental health service providers. LCCT staff have increased the support provided to members through frequent check-ins, training targeting the specific needs of members, and an ongoing flow of information relevant to managing stress.

New Initiatives

ATX Bridge to Opportunity: LCCT received funding from the Michael and Susan Dell foundation to partner with WFSCA to establish a closed loop referral system to assist individuals interested in enrolling in WFSCA-funded occupational/vocational training, and who also need literacy remediation. The development of this system required the commitment of LCCT and WFSCA staff at all levels of management and service delivery to create a detailed road map with a built-in process for ongoing evaluation and quality improvement. The referral process begins when WFSCA staff identify prospective training participants in need of remediation in order to pass assessments required to begin occupational training, then WFSCA initiates a referral to LCCT using a secure online referral platform. LCCT provides

the needed literacy services and refers individuals back to WFSCA upon determination that an individual is prepared to successfully retake the assessment and enter the desired training.

AmeriCorps Research and Evaluation Grant: LCCT has been awarded an evaluation grant to review options for increasing the number of participant SSNs reported by partner sites. LCCT will determine the potential for each partner site to serve individuals with SSNs and work in partnership with sites to create procedures for requesting participant SSN's.

Self Sufficiency Matrix: LCCT has piloted the implementation of a Self Sufficiency Matrix that will guide the partnership between participants and staff to gain a comprehensive view of client strengths, areas of concern, and to identify incremental steps to be taken toward achieving their goals.

Participant Profile

This analysis reports on the available data of 448 Literacy Coalition participants who exited the program in FY 2016–FY 2021 with SSNs identified in the data.³⁴ The average age of Literacy Coalition participant exiters is 36 and nearly 12% are 50 or older. Over half of the program exiters identified as Hispanic (53.6%), while 19.4% identified as Black, and 13.6% identified as White. Most exiters were female (56%). One-third of exiters report less than a 12th grade education (education level is missing/unknown for 48% of the participants). Exiters report residing primarily in the following areas: East Austin (31.5%), South Austin (26.6%), and North Austin (20%).³⁵

Participant Outcomes

Table 16 presents the available data for Literacy Coalition participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) in FY 2016–FY 2021. Outcomes are reported for the 448 participants whose social security numbers were identified within the earnings data. In the four quarters prior to entering the quarterly employment for the Literacy Coalition exiters was 53.5%. Overall average quarterly employment grew to 64.1% during the exit quarter, followed by minor fluxuations in employment for many of the remaining quarters for those for whom data are available.

³⁴ Literacy programs are not required by Travis County to request social security numbers from clients.

³⁵ Information on exiter's judicial involvement, veteran status and receipt of public benefits were missing/unknown from the reported data.

The average overall earnings during the pre-service quarters was \$5,351, increasing to \$6,995 two years post-services, a \$1,644 average quarterly earnings increase. For all cohorts, most post-service quarterly earnings represented in the data demonstrate a continued pattern of earnings growth over time.

Prior to entering Literacy Coalition, 42.7% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. A year after leaving training, 53.9% met the requirements for eligibility. Very few participants (2.1% overall) filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined with minor increases in claims filed during the pandemic.

Table 16. Literacy Coalition Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service	4 Years Post-service	5 Years Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	
FY 2017	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	.	
FY 2018	99	99	99	99	99	99	16	.	
FY 2019	121	121	121	121	121	54	.	.	
FY 2020	21	21	21	21	21	.	.	.	
FY 2021	23	23	23	9	.	.	.	.
Total	448	448	448	434	425	337	200	77	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	50.7%	55.8%	59.7%	53.3%	57.1%	59.7%	49.4%	45.5%	54.0%
FY 2017	52.8%	65.4%	62.6%	62.6%	67.3%	57.9%	57.9%	.	61.7%
FY 2018	57.3%	63.6%	64.7%	63.6%	58.6%	59.6%	.	.	
FY 2019	54.3%	66.1%	61.2%	65.3%	47.9%	.	.	.	
FY 2020	44.1%	57.1%	52.4%	57.1%	47.6%	.	.	.	52.4%
FY 2021	53.3%	82.6%	82.6%	.	.	.	.	.
Overall	53.5%	64.1%	62.7%	62.0%	56.9%	59.6%			
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$3,837	\$3,654	\$3,992	\$4,494	\$4,709	\$4,841	\$5,889	\$6,244	\$5,021
FY 2017	\$4,899	\$5,645	\$5,259	\$4,896	\$5,968	\$5,249	\$6,283	.	\$5,531
FY 2018	\$5,860	\$5,824	\$7,022	\$7,501	\$8,364	\$8,580	.	.	
FY 2019	\$5,728	\$5,801	\$7,383	\$7,196	\$8,776	.	.	.	
FY 2020	\$5,123	\$5,128	\$5,158	\$5,406	\$6,177	.	.	.	\$5,557
FY 2021	\$8,056	\$6,226	\$11,516	.	.	.	.	.
Overall	\$5,351	\$5,446	\$6,432	\$6,267	\$6,995	\$6,460		\$6,244	
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	37.0%	40.3%	41.6%	50.7%	53.3%	48.1%	53.3%	42.9%	47.2%
FY 2017	46.0%	44.9%	51.4%	58.9%	55.1%	58.9%	52.3%	.	55.3%
FY 2018	43.4%	52.5%	55.6%	58.6%	60.6%	55.6%	.	.	
FY 2019	44.0%	50.4%	51.2%	57.0%	54.6%	.	.	.	
FY 2020	35.7%	28.6%	42.9%	57.1%	42.9%	.	.	.	47.6%
FY 2021	52.2%	52.2%	47.8%	.	.	.	.	.
Overall	43.2%	46.9%	50.0%	57.1%	55.3%	54.6%			
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	2.0%	2.6%	0.0%	2.6%	1.3%	1.3%	5.2%	1.3%	1.8%
FY 2017	1.6%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.9%	4.7%	0.9%	.	1.5%
FY 2018	1.3%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	3.0%	1.0%	.	.	
FY 2019	1.0%	0.0%	1.7%	4.1%	4.1%	.	.	.	
FY 2020	0.0%	0.0%	9.5%	0.0%	0.0%	.	.	.	3.2%
FY 2021	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	.	.	.	.	.
Overall	1.3%	0.5%	1.3%	1.6%	2.4%	2.7%			

Source: LCCT participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

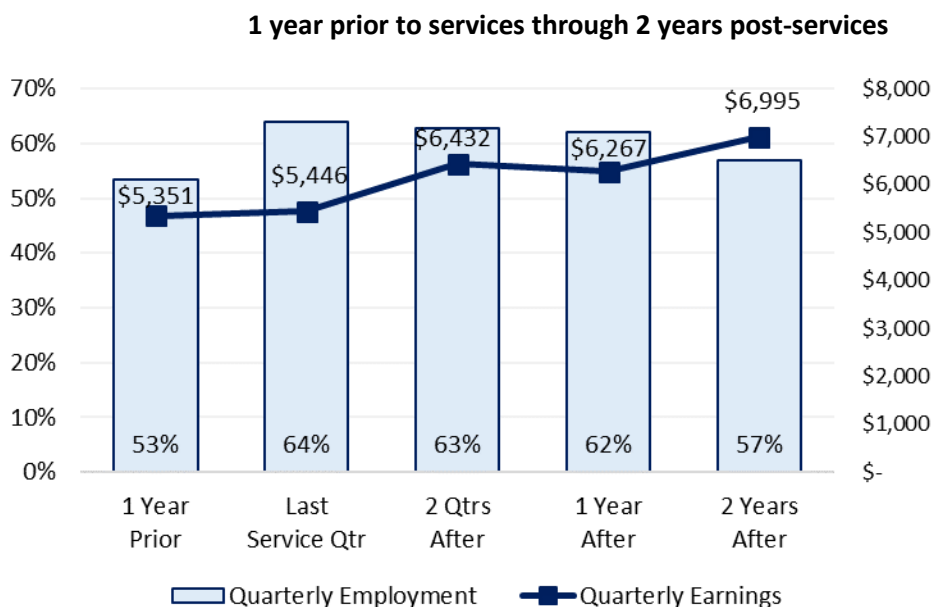
Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 26 displays for all cohorts (FY 2016 – FY 2021), the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services, illustrating the trend of a decrease in employed exiters found in the data and a steady increase in earnings.

Figure 26. Average Employment and Earnings for LCCT Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 27 illustrates a trend of minor variations in employment over time for both cohorts following the last service quarter. Employment for both cohorts reported an approximate 10 percentage point decrease during the pandemic, followed by no change in employment for the fourth year post-services for the FY 2017 cohort, and a continued decrease in employment for the FY 2016 cohort throughout the final quarters for which data are available.

**Figure 27. Average Quarterly Employment for Literacy Coalition Exiters:
FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**

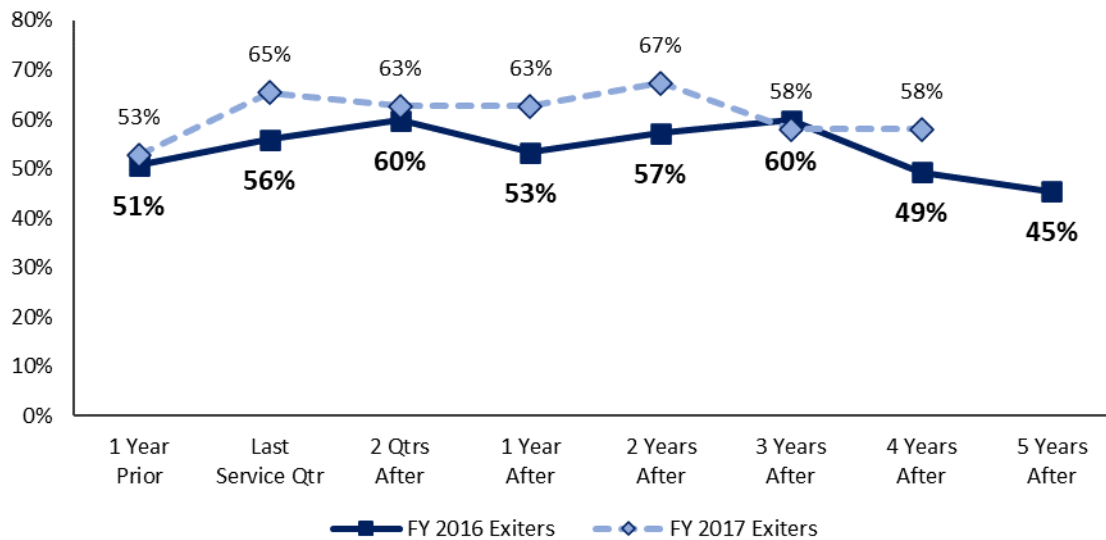
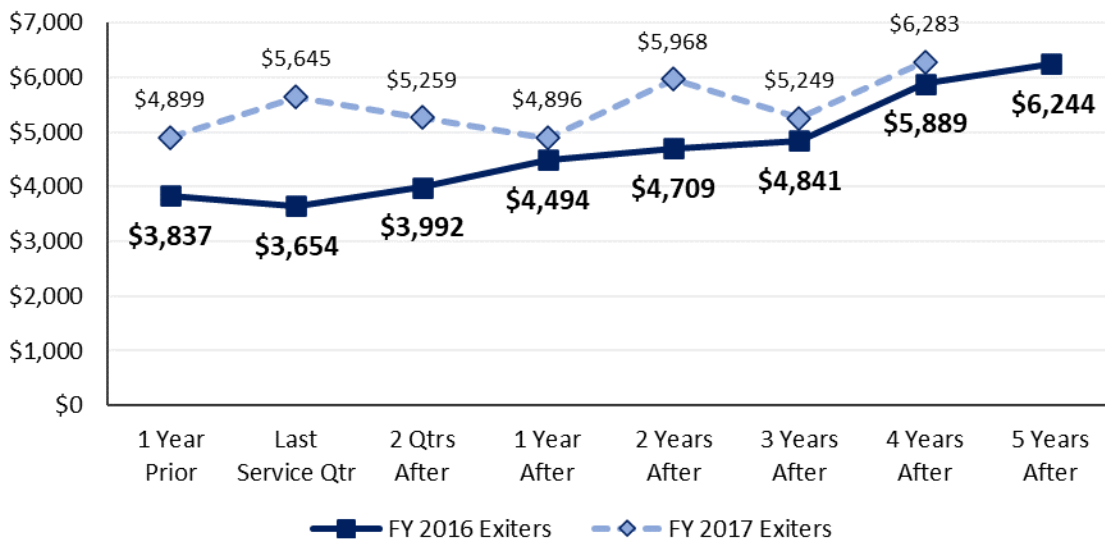


Figure 28 presents a steady upward trend in earnings found in the data for FY 2016, while FY 2017 cohorts reported variations in reported income with earnings reported one year post-services matching the pre-service earnings. The remaining FY 2017 post-service periods identify fluctuations in earnings with average income rising to \$6,238 four years post-services, representing a \$1,438 increase in earnings over time from one year before receiving services to four years post-services.

**Figure 28. Average Quarterly Earnings for Literacy Coalition Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**

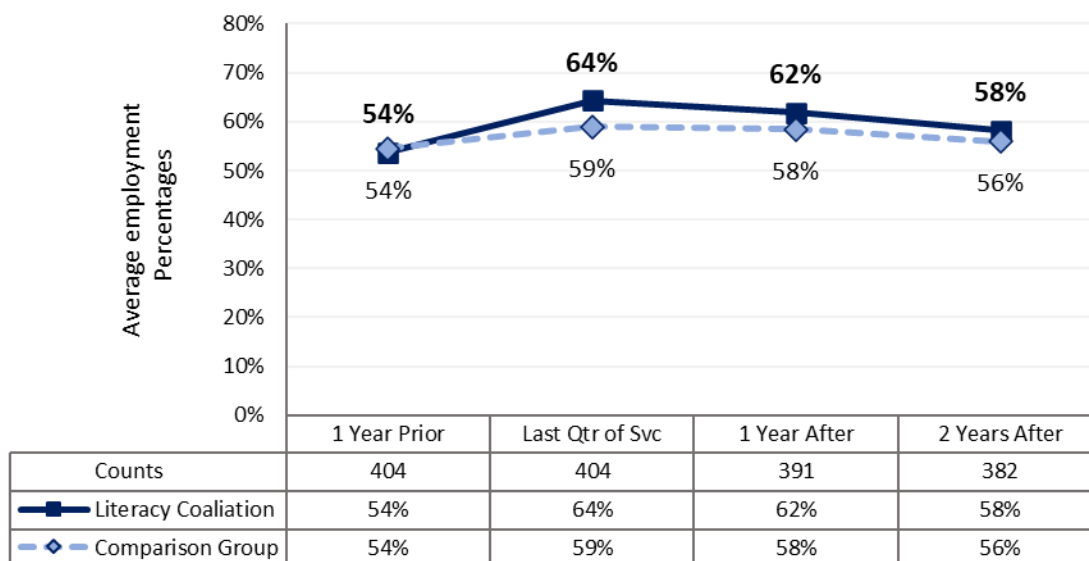


Program Impacts

The following figures present findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of 404 Literacy Coalition FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. Impact measures include only those exiters for whom adequate matching could be performed.

Both Figures 29 and 30 report on short-term impacts for all 404 exiters matched to a comparison group member up to eight quarters post-services. The analysis of employment outcomes shows that Literacy Coalition participant employment rates slightly outpaced the comparison group members during the first quarter following service and then experienced minor decreases similar to the comparison group over time (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Employment Rates Over Time, Literacy Coalition Participants vs. Comparison Group: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=404)



In Figure 30, the impact of participation in Literacy Coalition is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that Literacy Coalition participants' earnings slightly outpaced the comparison group during the last service quarter followed by a gradual increase that did not keep pace with the comparison group. The data identified an approximate \$500 difference in earnings between the two groups, with the comparison group earnings outpacing the LCCT participants.

Figure 30. Unconditional Earnings Over Time, Literacy Coalition Participants vs. Comparison Group: FY 2016–FY 2021

1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=404)

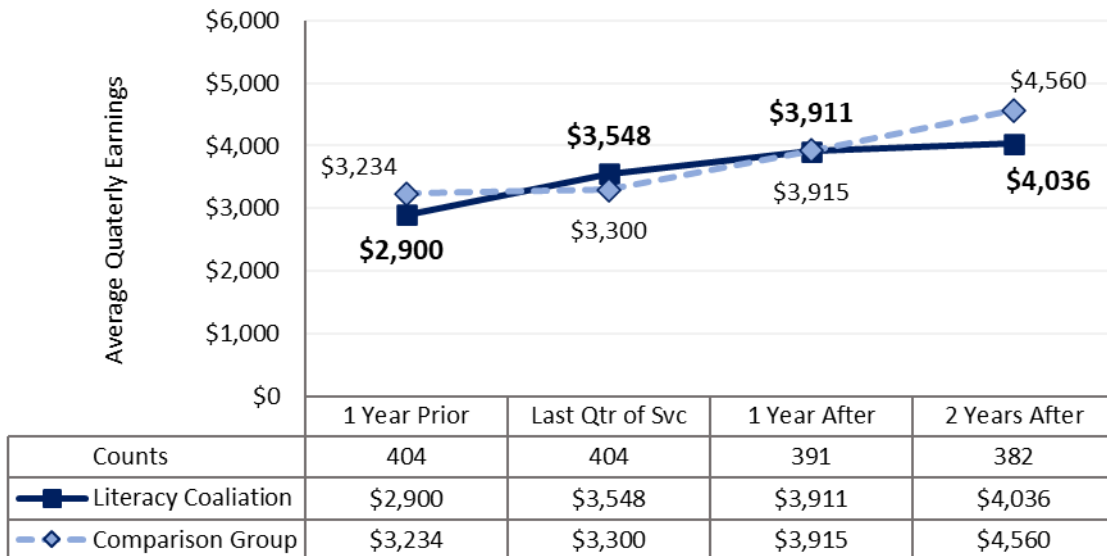


Table 17 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of 404 Literacy Coalition FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group for all post-service quarters. Participation in Literacy Coalition programs was positively associated with one of the outcomes measured: a 4.8% increase in employment (statistically significant at the .05 level).

Table 17. Literacy Coalition Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=404)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	56.4%	60.2%	3.8%	4.8%*
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$6,596	\$5,920	-\$676	-\$168.01
Qualified for UI Benefits	48.9%	46.4%	-2.5%	0.85%
Filed UI Claim	2.52%	2.73%	0.2%	-1.19%

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

The following is an analysis of labor market outcomes for two LCCT participant subgroups, those who completed work readiness training, and those who completed occupational skills training and who also received an industry-based credential (IBC) during FY 2017–FY 2020.

Literacy Coalition Subgroup Analysis: Workforce Training Participants

Among the 348 FY 2017–FY 2020 Literacy Coalition participants with SSN’s identified in the data, 135 completed work readiness training. Among the exiters completing work readiness training, 52 enrolled in and completed vocational training, receiving an industry based certification (IBC). The majority of the participants who earned an IBC (37 of the 50 IBC earning participants) completed HVAC – residential technician training at the Austin Career Institute (ACI). The remaining IBC obtainers completed nurses aid training at Skillpoint Alliance. LCCT partnered with ACI and Skillpoint Alliance to incorporate an LCCT developed English@Work curriculum into the HVAC and nurses aid training instruction.³⁶ In the Austin area, HVAC – residential technicians currently make a starting salary of at least \$24.00/hour (Indeed, 2022).

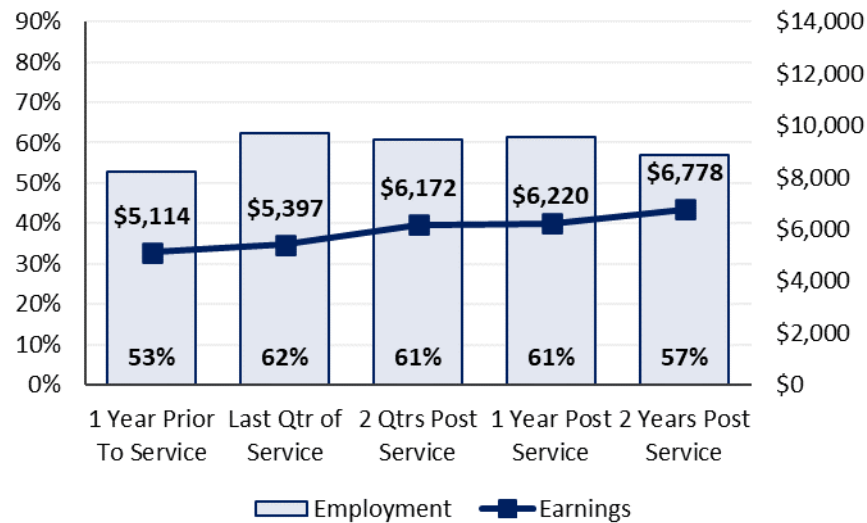
Participant Outcomes

This outcomes evaluation examines participants’ labor market experiences prior to entering the program, and then tracks their labor market outcomes following program exit up to two years post-service for those for whom data was available. The following two figures display outcomes for FY 2017–FY 2020, specifically the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services, for exiters found in the data who completed work readiness training (Figure 31), as well as for those completing work readiness training, vocational training, and obtained an IBC (Figure 32).

The rates of employment for both groups increased during the last quarter of services. Work Readiness training completers experienced minor decreases in employment over time. Employment rates during the second year post-services were four percentage points greater than pre-service employment rates. During the time period examined for this analysis Workforce Readiness training completer’s earnings increased by \$1,663 (23% increase).

³⁶ The English Work program is based on the premise that English language speaking skills are learned more effectively in the context of the workplace a person functions in through curriculum customized to the workplace and to students’ job descriptions.

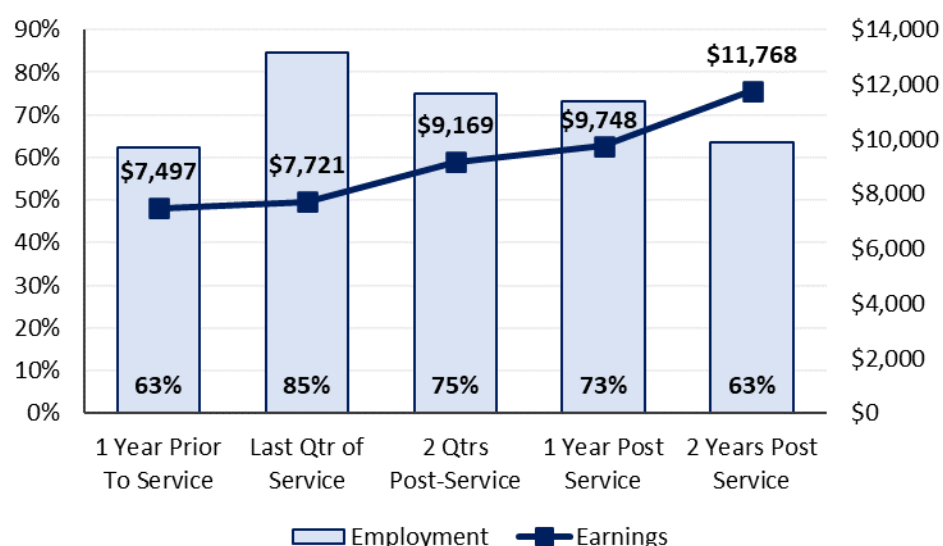
**Figure 31. LCCT Exiters Completing Work Readiness Training: FY 2017 & FY 2020
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=83)**



Note: This graph excludes the LCCT participants who completed work readiness training, vocational training and earned an IBC.

Employment rates for participants completing vocational training and obtaining an IBC increased 23 percentage points during the last quarter of services and decreased over time to match the pre-service employment rate by the second year post-services. LCCT participants who completed vocational skills training and earned an IBC entered the program with strong employment and earning histories. One year prior to program entry, IBC earners reported on average \$2,383 in higher earnings compared to the Work Readiness training completers. Similarly, the data identified an approximate 10 percentage point difference in reported employment during the year prior to program entry, with IBC earners entering services with the employment advantage. IBC obtainers' earnings increased on average by \$4,270 (57% increase) during the period examined.

**Figure 32. LCCT Exiters Completing Vocational Skills Training and Obtained an IBC: FY 2018 & FY 2019
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=52)**



An additional area of interest between these two subgroups of LCCT participants is the average rates of eligibility for UI benefits. Eligibility for UI benefits serve as a proxy for employment stability. The IBC obtainers were found to have higher rates of eligibility for benefits over time compared to the work readiness completers (Table 18).

Table 18. Qualification for UI Benefits: LCCT Work Readiness Training Completers and IBC Obtainers: FY 2017–FY 2020

Qualified for UI Benefits:	1 Year Prior To Service	2 Years Post-service	Change Over Time
Completers			
Work Readiness	42.8%	55.6%	12.8%
Vocational Training & IBC	48.6%	75.0%	26.4%

Discussion of Participant Outcomes

Table 19 presents the two year post-service labor market outcomes for all LCCT participants who appear in the workforce data, along with outcomes for the two subgroups: Workforce Readiness training completers, and those earning an IBC. The data illustrate the career development pathway opportunities that LCCT offers participants. Although the data report only minor differences in outcomes between all LCCT participants and those completing Workforce Readiness training, the data demonstrate an increase in employment, earnings, and employment stability (evident in the increase in

those qualifying for UI earnings benefits) for participants receiving an industry-based certification.

Table 19. LCCT Participant Outcomes Two Years Post-service: All Participants, WFR Training Completers, and Vocation Training Completers with IBC

Two years Post-service	All LCCT Participants FY 2016-FY2021 n=448	Workforce Readiness Training Completers FY 2017-FY2020 n=83	Received Industry-Based Certifications FY 2018 & FY 2019 n=52
Employment	56.9%	57.0%	63.5%
Earnings	\$6,995	\$6,778	\$11,768
Qualified for UI Benefits	55.3%	55.6%	75.0%
Filed UI Claim:	2.4%	2.2%	0.0%

The sample sizes for the two LCCT subgroups were too small to evaluate impacts at the required level of confidence.

Capital IDEA Mission

“Capital IDEA’s mission is to lift working adults out of poverty and into living earnings careers through education and career advancement.” *

In FY 2016–FY 2021, Travis County annually invested \$760,800 in Capital IDEA programming.



*www.capitalIDEA.org

CAPITAL IDEA

Workforce Development Programs and Services

Capital IDEA is a sectoral workforce development program offering training in health care, information technology (IT), and other leading industries such as professional trades and applied technologies.³⁷

Eligible applicants must be at least 18 years old, have a HSEC or high school diploma, lack an associate or higher degree, meet reading and math skills requirements, and report a household income at or below 200% FPG.³⁸

Interested individuals must attend a CareerUp program information session, complete an application, take a skills and vocational assessment, and schedule an initial meeting with staff. CareerUp sessions are hosted on Zoom and take 25 to 35 minutes. Sessions provide information about the support services Capital

IDEA offers, the careers for which they are providing training, and participant qualifications. The application process was transitioned to online while staff continued to offer limited face-to-face appointments to support applicants with limited access to computers and the internet.

Applicants are carefully screened for suitability and commitment through an assessment process that includes the Wonderlic Assessment for reading and math and the Criteria Cognitive Aptitude Test (CCAT).³⁹ Applicants participate in an online career counseling session to review assessment results and prepare an Individual Services Strategy that outlines the training and support services needed to meet their educational and career goals. The last step in the selection process is an interview with a Capital IDEA director who makes the final recommendations on acceptance of applicants.

Participants scoring at a 5th grade level or lower on the Wonderlic assessment, a level indicating

³⁷ Union apprenticeships are available through UA Local 286 Plumbers & Pipefitters and Election Local Union 520. Internships are available for IT students through a number of local employers and non-profit organizations.

³⁸ The majority of Capital IDEA’s participants are non-traditional, first generation college students.

³⁹ The CCAT assessment evaluates interests, strengths, and aptitudes, and cognitive abilities in order to assess a candidate’s fit for and commitment to a particular career field. The TABE retired in 2020, Capital IDEA is currently piloting the Wonderlic Assessment.

that they are unlikely to pass the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA 2.0), which is required for college admission, are enrolled in Capital IDEA's College Prep Academy. The College Prep Academy, offered at the ACC Highland Campus prior to the pandemic was made available online in FY 2021. The College Prep Academy training is customized to meet student specific needs, and staff report that less than 10% of participants require more than one semester of academy instruction; those who do continue with a second College Prep Academy training typically need additional support in math. Capital IDEA participants enter their chosen course of study at one of two community colleges. Ninety-five percent of Capital IDEA students enroll in ACC, and the remaining students enroll in Temple College. The average length of enrollment for participants is 3.5 to 4 years in training, plus two years of job placement assistance with follow-up and guidance as needed.

Students are encouraged to be self-sufficient by working part-time during training. Financial literacy and job readiness are core competencies of the program supported through ongoing discussions with, and support from, career navigators.

Support Services

Capital IDEA covers the cost of tuition, fees, books, uniforms, tools, training software, and anything required on a class syllabus.⁴⁰ Participants receive assistance with purchasing school supplies including backpacks, printer ink, and paper. The program also covers the cost of other services important to learning, such as eye examinations and eyeglasses. Emergency financial assistance is available on a case-by-case basis to help with things like utility bills, mortgage and rent assistance.

Each student is assigned a career navigator who offers support in navigating the academic environment and assists students in overcoming academic and personal barriers to the achievement of their academic goal. Career Navigators communicate with students through scheduled face-to-face appointments, telephone calls, text messaging, email, and video conferencing platforms. An employment coordinator assists graduates and soon-to-be graduates to develop résumés and cover letters, prepare for interviews, and conduct a job search. The employment coordinator also forms partnerships with employers to develop opportunities for program graduates and internships for IT students.

ACC students have access to free Cap Metro services through the "green pass" program, which provides free bus, rail, and Express Bus services in the region for the entire semester. WFSCA provides

⁴⁰ Workforce Solutions Capital Areas' (WFSCA) WIOA program partners with Capital IDEA to provide limited funding for some of these training related costs.

child care services for Capital IDEA participants living in Travis County. Capital IDEA employs a full-time program specialist to assist participants navigating the child care process and offers supplemental child care support for qualifying parents who do not receive support through WFSCA.⁴¹ Capital IDEA has a network of informal and formal relationships with area social service providers. Participants in need of mental health counseling may be referred to the Samaritan Center or LifeWorks.

Pandemic Impact on Services

Student retention continued to be a struggle during FY 2021. IT students struggled with online learning, and staff report that approximately 25% of IT students withdrew from the program in FY 2021. Staff report that many IT students are more comfortable learning in classrooms and computer labs. In general, staff identified that students between the ages of 18-24 withdrew from the program at higher rates than students 25 and older. Students 25 and older typically withdrew due to the needs of their families.

The service delivery cycle was also affected by the pandemic. In an effort to keep students engaged, students were allowed to reduce their course load to one class per semester. Even with this accommodation, some students chose to withdraw, with plans to return to school after the pandemic stressors relax. Staff reported that at the beginning of the pandemic, students who were close to graduation completed their course of study to meet their graduation goal. This disruption to the pace of students progressing through the program will result in students graduating later than originally anticipated and may impact enrollment capacity and service delivery going forward, as well as the flow of Capital IDEA students into the Austin area workforce.

Vaccination requirements affected the majority of Capital IDEA students, most of whom enter healthcare training. As one would expect, most clinical sites and employers require COVID-19 vaccinations. The majority of healthcare students agreed to be vaccinated, yet some LVN students withdrew from the program due to this requirement, and career navigators struggled to find clinical placements at sites with COVID-19 protocols that did not require vaccinations.

Child care assistance continued to be a need for many parenting students. Staff reported that approximately 40% of each student cohort were parents, and many needed assistance with child care and after school care for their families. During the pandemic, Capital IDEA offered families the option to pay a person, 18 years or older and selected by the parents, to care for children in the family home while parents attended online classes and study.

⁴¹ Capital IDEA participates in the United Way sponsored 2-Gen Stakeholder Network.

Participant recruitment continued to be a challenge as traditional avenues for program recruitment were unavailable and the program relied upon online platforms, media ads, and social media as their primary venue for recruiting students. Prior to the pandemic, Capital IDEA students identified other students in need of Capital IDEA support and recruited these students into the program. This venue for word-of-mouth recruitment wasn't available during FY 2021.

Program Challenges

The Capital IDEA College Prep Academy continued providing virtual instruction throughout FY 2021 using Zoom and Blackboard. Instructors reported that, for some students, online instruction was not a good fit, while for others, particularly students living a distance from the ACC Highland campus, online learning was a welcomed relief from their commute to campus.

In January 2021, the Texas Education Coordinating Board announced changes to the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) exam and introduced TSIAI 2.0. The college prep academy instructors quickly responded to ensure that students taking the TSIA 2.0 were aware of and prepared for the changes. The test content remained largely the same with some additional content added and a reorganization of the testing categories. Further, in 2020, the TABE Assessment used by Capital IDEA was retired and a new assessment tool, Wonderlic, is being piloted.

New Initiatives

The limited number of enrollment slots available at the ACC nursing program has been an ongoing issue for Capital IDEA participants who complete the program prerequisites, qualify for the program, but yet are not selected to enroll. The City of Austin awarded American Rescue Plan Act funds to pilot a Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) program for eligible Capital IDEA students with Concordia University. FY 2021 was the planning phase for this collaboration and student enrollment began in Spring 2022.

Participant Profile

This analysis reports on 1,180 Capital IDEA participants who exited the program in FY 2016–FY 2021. The average age of Capital IDEA participant exiters is 30. Approximately 43% of exiters identified as Hispanic, one quarter identified as White, and 19.5% identified as Black. Most exiters were female (70.3%) and half reported a 12th grade education or HSEC, with 47.5% reporting having attended college. Judicial involvement is reported for 5.8%, 1% identified as veterans, and 17.4% reported having received public benefits (judicial involvement, veteran status and receipt of public assistance was missing/unknown for approximately 54% of participants). The majority of the exiters report residing in

three areas: North Austin (25%), East Austin (24.9%), and South Austin (24.7%).

Participant Outcomes

Table 20 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for Capital IDEA FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters. Outcomes are reported for 1,180 participant social security numbers identified within the earnings data. In the four quarters prior to enrolling in Capital IDEA, overall quarterly employment was approximately 68 percent, rising during the second quarter post-services to an average of 80.5%. These high rates of employment are consistent with the Capital IDEA philosophy of client self-sufficiency: Capital IDEA recruits employed, low-earnings earners into the program and encourages them to maintain and/or obtain employment throughout their participation in the program. Program exiters continued to exhibit strong average employment levels for all remaining post-service quarters.

Earnings in the pre-service quarter averaged \$4,700 for employed participants. During the second post-service year, Capital IDEA exiters earned an average of \$10,344, representing a 120% increase over pre-service earnings. Income continued to rise for exiters found in the data for the remaining post-service periods represented in the data.

Prior to entering Capital IDEA, over half (57.4%) had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. Two years after leaving training, nearly three-quarters (76.1%) met the requirements for eligibility. Overall few participants filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined, with increases in claims filed during the pandemic.

Table 20. Capital IDEA Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service	4 Years Post-service	5 Years Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	175	
FY 2017	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	79	
FY 2018	221	221	221	221	221	221	123	.	
FY 2019	209	209	209	209	209	99	.	.	
FY 2020	212	212	212	212	121	.	.	.	
FY 2021	215	215	215	106	.	.	.	.
Total	1,180	1,180	1,180	1,071	874	643	446	254	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	68.3%	72.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	75.4%	73.7%	74.9%	77.2%
FY 2017	68.2%	71.0%	87.8%	84.5%	79.7%	83.1%	75.7%		
FY 2018	63.9%	73.3%	76.9%	78.7%	79.2%	75.1%			
FY 2019	70.0%	73.2%	80.4%	78.0%	73.7%				
FY 2020	71.0%	68.4%	79.3%	77.8%					
FY 2021	67.3%	67.9%	80.9%						
Overall	68.1%	70.9%	80.5%	79.4%	77.6%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$4,469	\$6,350	\$8,225	\$8,606	\$8,894	\$9,784	\$10,548	\$11,583	\$9,730
FY 2017	\$4,292	\$4,687	\$8,762	\$9,826	\$10,729	\$10,389	\$12,612		
FY 2018	\$4,654	\$5,111	\$7,937	\$8,824	\$9,247	\$11,294			
FY 2019	\$4,901	\$4,813	\$8,849	\$9,532	\$11,880				
FY 2020	\$4,669	\$4,939	\$8,203	\$10,200					
FY 2021	\$5,047	\$5,745	\$9,199						
Overall	\$4,700	\$5,271	\$8,532	\$9,523	\$10,344				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	55.1%	66.9%	66.9%	76.0%	76.0%	76.0%	72.0%	72.6%	73.5%
FY 2017	61.4%	66.9%	67.6%	76.4%	83.1%	79.1%	76.4%		
FY 2018	54.1%	58.4%	63.4%	70.6%	75.6%	73.8%			
FY 2019	59.7%	68.4%	67.5%	72.3%	75.1%				
FY 2020	57.2%	70.3%	66.0%	69.8%					
FY 2021	56.2%	64.7%	57.2%						
Overall	57.1%	65.8%	64.5%	72.3%	76.1%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	0.3%	0.6%	0.6%	1.1%	2.3%	1.1%	5.7%	0.0%	1.7%
FY 2017	0.5%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	1.4%	2.7%	2.0%		
FY 2018	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.1%	3.2%			
FY 2019	1.2%	0.0%	3.8%	6.7%	2.4%				
FY 2020	1.4%	8.5%	6.6%	2.4%					
FY 2021	0.1%	0.9%	0.5%						
Overall	0.8%	1.9%	2.1%	2.1%	3.4%				

Source: Capital IDEA participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

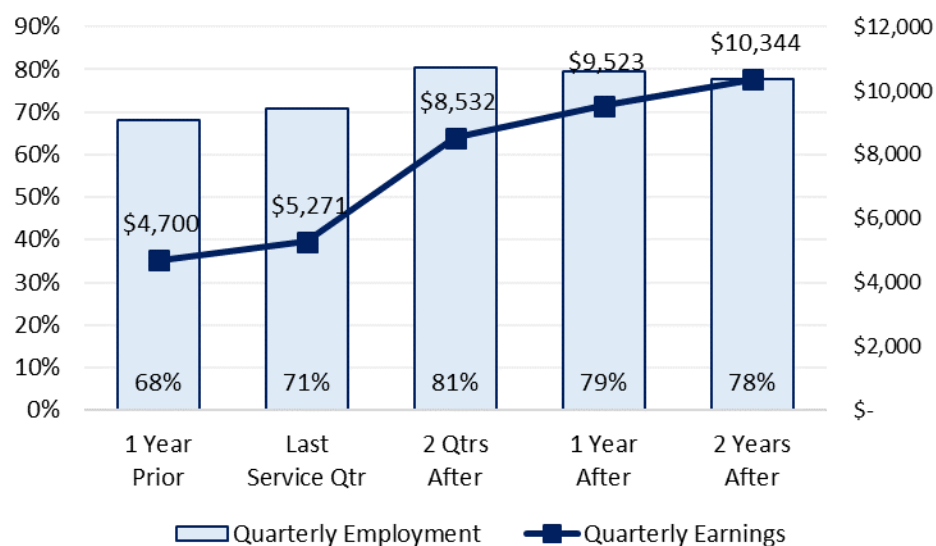
Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 33 displays for all cohorts (FY 2016–FY 2021), the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services. The employment gains identified over time were sustained during this reporting period with a minor decrease in employment rates of approximately 3 percentage points between the second quarter post-services and two years post-services. This slight decrease can be attributed to the early pandemic period. Reported earnings illustrate an increase in earnings throughout the reported period.

Figure 33. Average Employment and Earnings for Capital IDEA Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 34 illustrates the trend in employment found in the data for both cohorts FY 2016 and FY 2017. Compared to the year prior to entering services, employment outcomes improved for both cohorts across time with some fluctuation, settling at an employment rate of nearly 75% for both cohorts in the last post-service year data are available.

Figure 34. Average Quarterly Employment for Capital IDEA Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services

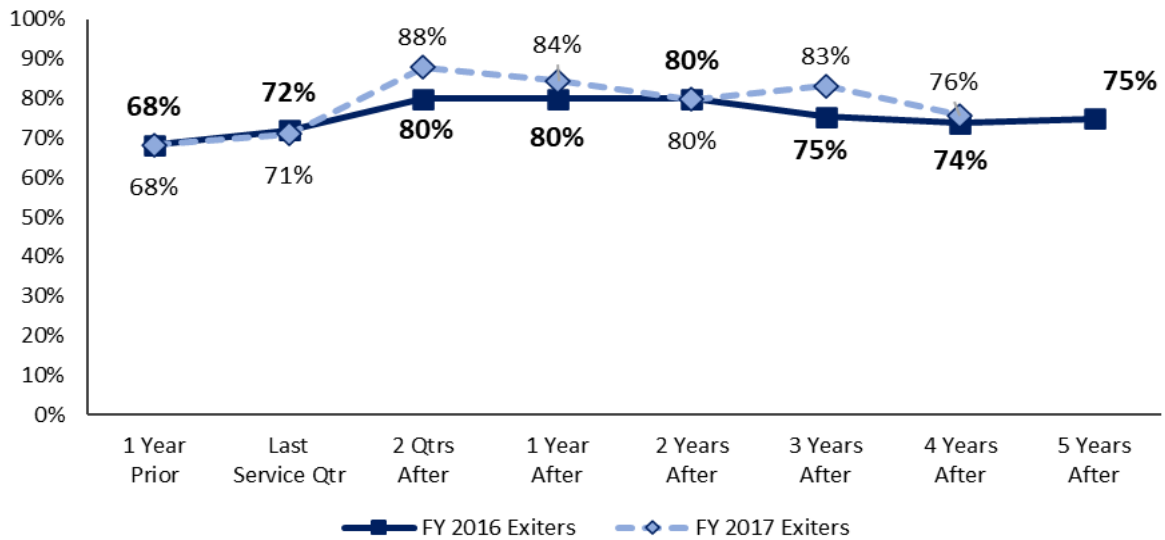
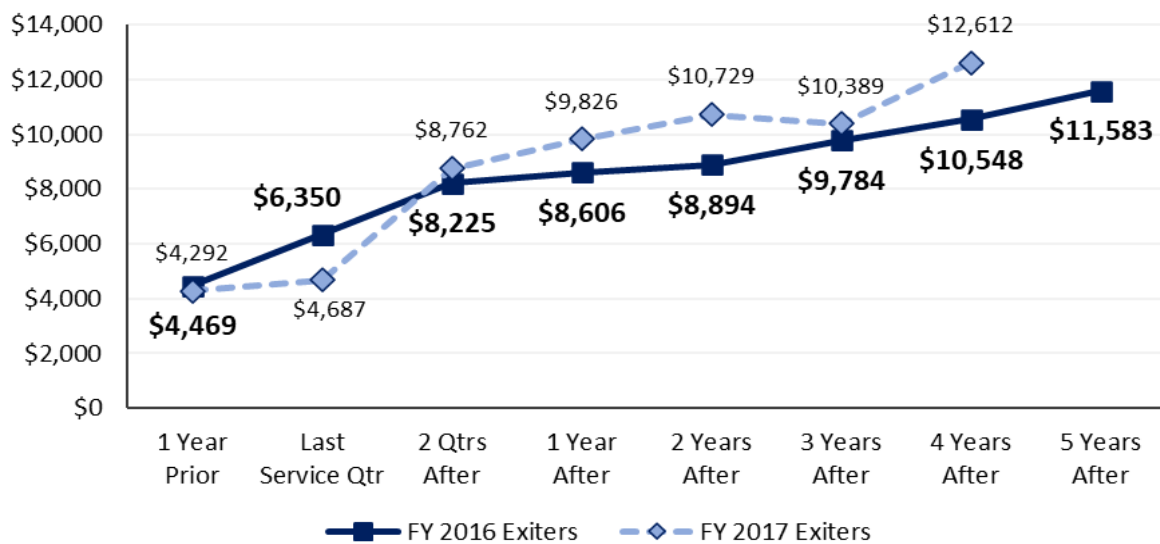


Figure 35 illustrates a steady upward trend in earnings from the last service quarter through the fourth and fifth years post-services. Earnings found in the data for the FY 2017 cohort increased by nearly 200% across the period of time examined. The FY 2016 cohort earnings increased by approximately 160% across time for the periods examined.

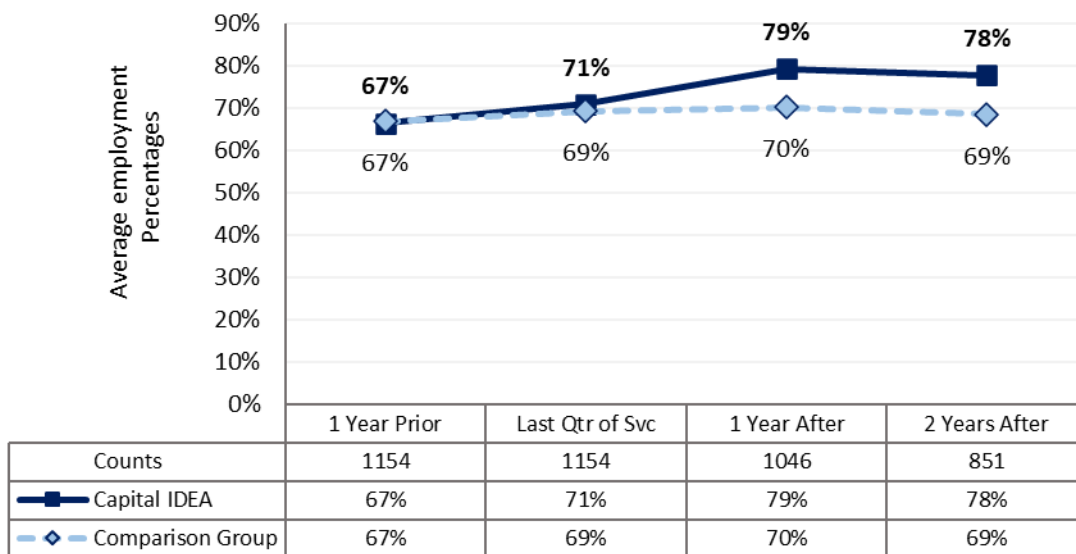
Figure 35. Average Quarterly Earnings of Employment Capital IDEA Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Program Impacts

In Figure 36 the impact of participation in Capital IDEA services is examined by looking at participants' employment over time in relation to the comparison group's employment. The analysis includes all Capital IDEA exit cohorts (FY 2016 – FY 2021) from one year prior to services through two years post-services. During the last service quarter, Capital IDEA participants' average rate of employment slightly exceeded the rate of the comparison group and continues to outpace the comparison group for the remaining post-service quarters.

**Figure 36. Employment Rates Over Time, Capital IDEA Participants vs. Comparison Group:
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=1,154)**



In Figure 37, the impact of participation in Capital IDEA services is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that Capital IDEA participants' average quarterly earnings began to outpace the comparison group during the last service quarter followed by a sharp gain in reported earnings during the first year post-services and continuing to increase throughout the second year post-services significantly outpacing the comparison group by \$3,227.

**Figure 37. Unconditional Earnings Over Time, Capital IDEA Participants vs. Comparison Group:
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=1,154)**

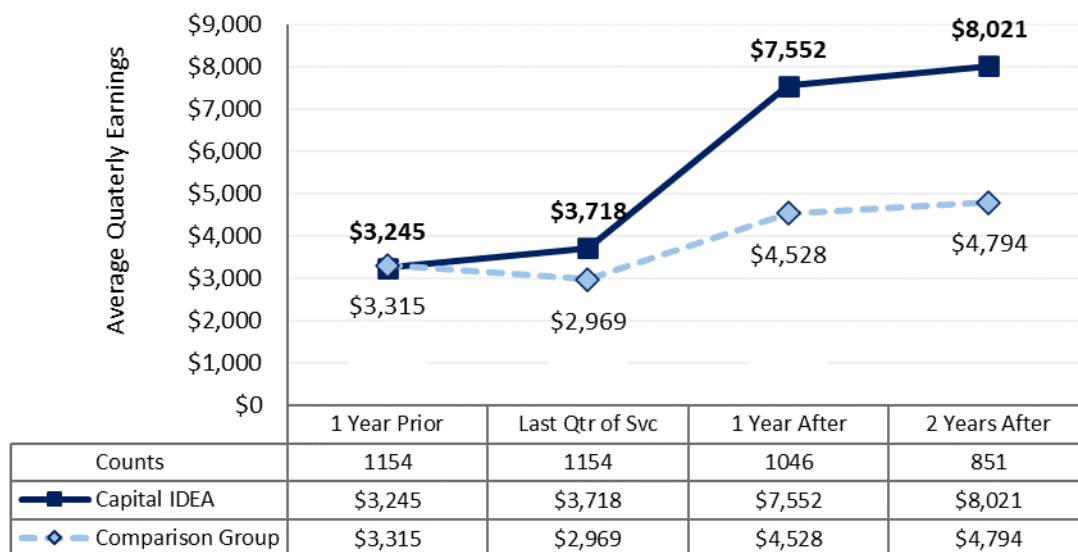


Table 21 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of 1,154 Capital IDEA FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. The table presents impacts only for exiters for whom adequate matching could be performed. Participation in Capital IDEA was positively associated and statistically significant at the .01 level for three of the four outcome measures of interest. The data identified a statistically significant positive impact for program participation of \$2,828 in earnings, 9.46% in employment, and 9.8% in qualification for UI benefits.

Table 21. Capital IDEA Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=1,154)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	67.6%	77.9%	10.3%	9.46% **
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$6,569	\$9,331	\$2,762	\$2828.86**
Qualified for UI Benefits	59.6%	71.6%	12.0%	9.8%**
Filed UI Claim	2.61%	2.61%	0.00%	0.16%

Note: **=significant at p<.01; *=significant at p<.05

LIFEWORKS

Workforce Development Services

LifeWorks creates an integrated and comprehensive system of support for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, youth aging out of foster care, young parents, and youth involved with the juvenile justice system.⁴² LifeWorks provides a continuum of services: housing, counseling, education, and workforce development supports.⁴³ Education and workforce programs provide literacy and HSEC test preparation classes, connections to other area training opportunities (ACC, Skillpoint Alliance, and Goodwill), workforce placement, and critical skill-building support. Youth and families may access one or multiple LifeWorks programs with continuity.

In FY 2016, Travis County funded LifeWorks to implement the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model, an evidence-based, supported-employment model developed at Dartmouth College. The model, originally designed to assist adults with serious mental health challenges in obtaining and maintaining employment, has been adapted to serve transition-aged youth who have experienced trauma to overcome obstacles to workplace success. The core premise of IPS is the belief that work promotes mental wellness. The IPS model priority is the support of participants in their efforts to achieve steady, meaningful employment in competitive jobs. Subsequent vocational training

and career development occurs alongside paid employment. Essential to the IPS model are the relationships staff develop and maintain with employers to ensure job placements that meet the needs

“The LifeWorks mission is to fearlessly advocate for youth and families seeking their path to self-sufficiency through comprehensive service delivery including housing, counseling, education, and workforce development.” *

LifeWorks provides services for youth and young adults (ages 16 to 26) facing major obstacles to achieving their goals including: homelessness, trauma, abuse, foster and judicial involvement.

In FY 2016–FY 2020, Travis County annually invested \$241,196 in LifeWorks education and workforce development programing.



*www.lifeworksaustin.org

⁴² LifeWorks is an aftercare transition services provider for foster youth, these services are funded by Texas DFPS.

⁴³ In January 2017, Austin was awarded a \$5.2 MM Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create a locally coordinated community response to prevent and end homelessness for unaccompanied youth by 2020. The Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) is collaborating with LifeWorks to accomplish this goal. *Ending Youth Homelessness in Austin/Travis County*. Available at: <http://www.lifeworksaustin.org/research-resources/>

of both the worker and employer.⁴⁴

Participants with a desire to enter the workforce are referred to the IPS program by a LifeWorks staff member, or are identified during case staffing, have a valid ID and Social Security Card, and have identified employment as a goal.⁴⁵ Individuals entering the workforce program have an established relationship with a LifeWorks case manager who works in collaboration with the IPS employment specialist. Employment specialists focus on employment assessment, the development of relationships with employers, job placement, job coaching, and follow-along supports. Industries such as retail, food service, hospitality, and some skilled trades are typical employers of participants. Employment support services include, at a minimum, weekly visits for the first month of employment followed by monthly contact. Visits occur in locations that work best for the client, such as a local coffee shop or library. Supports are individualized and can range from wake-up phone calls and transportation assistance to assistance learning specific job tasks and support with on-the-job interpersonal relationships. An IPS employment specialist is available two days each week at the LifeWorks Youth & Family Resource Center to provide information regarding the program to interested youth and to assist in developing résumés and cover letters, locating, and applying to jobs, and preparing for interviews.

LifeWorks education program offers HSEC test preparation, academic tutoring, life skills training, career awareness, computer skills training, and information on available training options provided through other area workforce development programs. Education services are offered at Lifeworks' South location Monday through Thursday at a variety of times in collaboration with ACC through the Adult Education and Literacy Consortium, as well as the Literacy Coalition of Central Texas. The Literacy Coalition coordinates AmeriCorps volunteers to support the direct education services. All students are assessed using the TABE, and an individualized service plan is developed to identify service needs and to monitor educational progress. While studying in the program, each student's educational progress is assessed monthly.

LifeWorks offers college readiness assistance to program participants who have an HSEC or HSD. Supports may include, but are not limited to, familiarizing clients with educational institutions, helping to complete applications, tutoring, navigating financial aid, providing direct assistance for books and

⁴⁴ Information from a conversation with LifeWorks staff Nicholas Winowsky, Program Director, Workforce Development, Literacy & HSEC; Jackie Platt, Division Director, Education and Workforce Development; Kate Bennet, Director of Grants and Contracts Compliance; and Danielle Owens, Chief Program Officer on 3-13-2019 and 3-3-2020.

⁴⁵ Team staffing of clients include case managers, career navigators and a mental health specialist.

supplies, and introducing clients to campus resources and personnel.

Support Services

At intake, each client works with their case manager to complete an initial assessment using a Self-Sufficiency Matrix (SSM). The SSM identifies client strengths, needs, and goals in order to guide case managers to provide support and make referrals. LifeWorks directly assists clients with housing, counseling, and transportation services, while referring to a variety of service providers within Travis County to provide services such as child care, health care, additional training beyond a HSEC, and other supports. The SSM, reviewed and updated quarterly, is used to track clients' movement across programs and measure the impact of services. The SSM is also used by staff to identify effective program interventions.⁴⁶

On the continuum of mental health supports, LifeWorks offers participants an opportunity to meet with peer support specialists. With the supervision and guidance of the LifeWorks counseling department, each peer support specialist brings their own personal experience of recovery from mental health, substance use, or trauma to offer emotional support, knowledge, skills, and practical assistance in connecting youth to resources and opportunities.⁴⁷ Peer support specialists often assist youth in engaging with ongoing mental health services including counseling and psychiatric services.

Participant Profile

In FY 2017–FY 2021, over half of LifeWorks participants included in this analysis were female (62.2%) with 1.6% identifying as transgender. The average age of participants is 20, with 49% being 19 or younger. The majority of exiters identified as Hispanic (47.8%), while 25.3% identified as Black, and 20.1% identified as White. Over two-thirds of participants had less than a 12th grade education (68.3%). Although judicial involvement status was missing/unknown for 80.3% of participants, approximately 14.9% reported judicial involvement and less than 1% identified as veterans. Nearly one third of participants reported having received public benefits (receipt of public benefits is missing/unknown for 69.5% of the participants). The majority of the exiters report residing in two areas: South Austin (39%) and East Austin (34.1%).

⁴⁶ Information from a conversations with Jackie Platt, Division Director, Education and Workforce Division, Nicholas Winowsky, Program Director, Workforce Development and HSEC Programs, and Peg Gavin, Director of Grants and Contracts, LifeWorks. 9/13/ 2017 and 4/24/2018.

⁴⁷ Peer Supporters must be in full recovery and complete specialized training and certifications to be eligible to guide and support our clients toward wellness. See: LifeWorks Facebook post 12-21-2018.

Participant Outcomes

In FY 2018, RMC and Travis County adjusted the outcomes analysis to report program outcomes for all program participants for whom SSNs are available, not just program exiters. Table 22 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for the 247 LifeWorks FY 2017–FY 2021 participants whose social security numbers were identified within the earnings data. In the four quarters prior to services, 42.8% of individuals included in this analysis were employed, increasing to 57.6% during the second year after entering services for those whom data are available. Average earnings four quarters before services was \$2,258 increasing to \$2,615 during the second year after entering services. Prior to entering LifeWorks, 26% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings history to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI eligibility, increasing to 35.5% during the second year after entering services. Overall, the rates for filing a claim for UI benefits during the service quarters ranged from 2% to 7.7%, with increases in UI benefit claims during the pandemic period.

Table 22. LifeWorks Participant Outcomes: FY 2017–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	1 st Qtr of Services	2 nd Qtr After Entering Services	1 Year After Entering Service	2 Years After Entering Services	3 Years After Entering Service
Number of Participants:						
FY 2016	.	.	.	.	.	.
FY 2017	9	9	9	9	9	9
FY 2018	107	107	107	107	107	99
FY 2019	44	44	44	44	44	11
FY 2020	53	53	53	53	23	.
FY 2021	34	34	26	11	.	.
Totals	247	247	239	224	183	119
Quarterly Employment:						
FY 2016	.	.	.	.	.	.
FY 2017	30.6%	55.6%	88.9%	44.4%	66.7%	44.4%
FY 2018	40.4%	52.3%	57.9%	60.8%	57.9%	56.6%
FY 2019	35.2%	43.2%	43.2%	45.5%	43.2%	
FY 2020	49.1%	58.5%	54.7%	58.5%		
FY 2021	53.7%	61.8%	61.5%			
Overall	42.8%	53.4%	56.1%	57.6%	55.2%	
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
FY 2016	.	.	.	.	.	.
FY 2017	\$1,331	\$1,776	\$1,631	\$2,747	\$2,919	\$7,884
FY 2018	\$2,492	\$2,438	\$2,759	\$2,703	\$3,469	\$4,183
FY 2019	\$1,956	\$1,457	\$1,366	\$1,805	\$2,201	
FY 2020	\$2,017	\$2,017	\$2,385	\$2,574		
FY 2021	\$2,443	\$2,582	\$2,915			
Overall	\$2,258	\$2,196	\$2,432	\$2,615	\$3,199	
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
FY 2016	.	.	.	.	.	.
FY 2017	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	55.6%
FY 2018	20.1%	27.1%	30.8%	37.4%	43.0%	35.4%
FY 2019	23.3%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	
FY 2020	34.4%	34.0%	28.3%	35.9%		
FY 2021	39.0%	29.4%	46.2%			
Overall	26.0%	27.9%	30.1%	35.3%	35.5%	
Filed UI Claim:						
FY 2016	.	.	.	.	.	.
FY 2017	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	33.3%
FY 2018	0.5%	0.0%	0.9%	1.9%	11.2%	2.0%
FY 2019	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	11.4%	2.3%	
FY 2020	4.3%	7.6%	13.2%	0.0%		
FY 2021	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%			
Overall	1.8%	2.0%	3.4%	3.1%	7.7%	

Source: LifeWorks participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

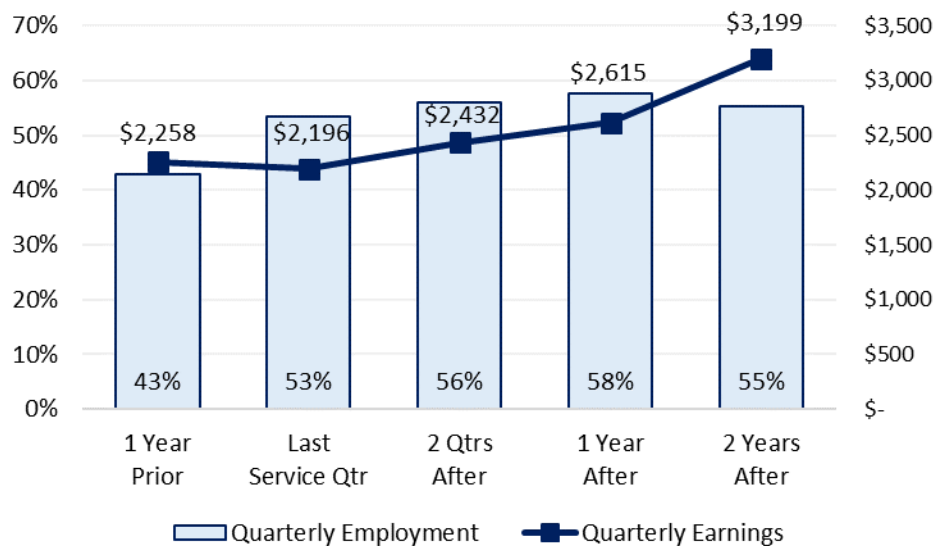
Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

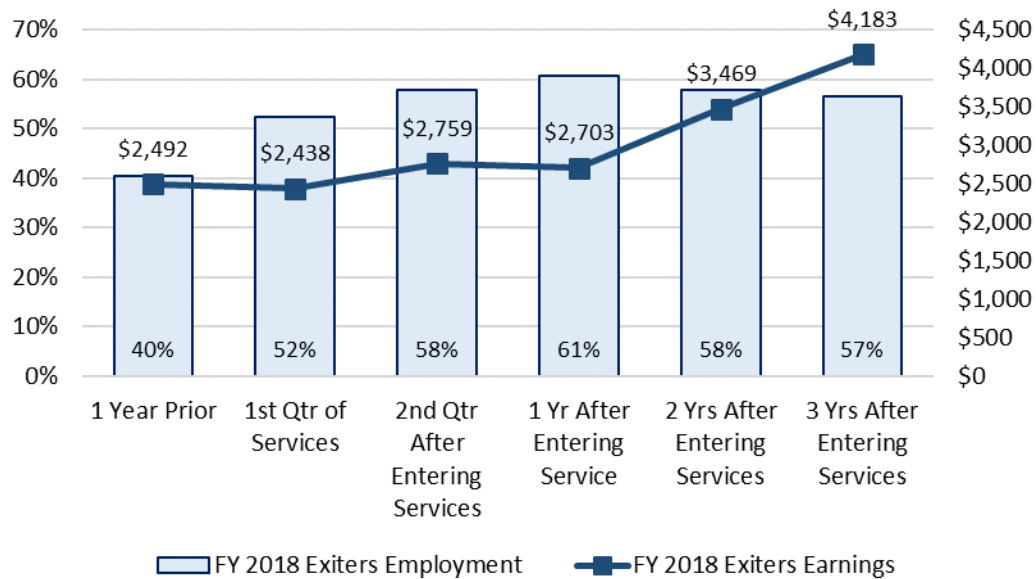
Figure 38 displays for all cohorts (FY 2017–FY 2021) the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services, illustrating an increase in reported employment following the first quarter of services through one year post services. As with several other programs evaluated in this report, the employment trend declines by the second year post-services, despite a steady increase in earnings over time.

**Figure 38. Overall Average Employment and Earnings for LifeWorks Participants: FY 2017–FY 2021
year prior to services through 2 years post-services**



In FY 2018, LifeWorks provided RMC with data for all participants with SSNs, including participants who entered the program prior to FY 2018. Employment and earnings outcomes are illustrated in Figure 39 for this group of 107 participants found in the UI earnings data. Across the period examined, employment increased from 40.4% one year prior to services to 60.8% one year after entering services then decreasing by 4.2 percentage points to 56.6% three years after entering services. For this group of program participants, average quarterly earnings steadily increased from \$2,492 prior to service entry to \$4,183 by the third year after entering services. One minor dip in earnings was identified one year after entering services, the period of time with the highest rate of employment.

Figure 39. Average Employment and Earnings for LifeWorks Participants, FY 2018 (n=107)
1 year prior to services through 3 years post-services



LifeWorks participant outcomes represent all program participants with an SSN found in the data. Program impacts are measured through the process of matching program participants with individuals found in the data who have similar observable characteristics. Unobserved characteristics that have an effect on the matches includes systems involvement such as the experiences of former foster youth, youth involved with the judicial system, and homeless youth. The assumed influence of the unobserved characteristics creates unique challenges and barriers for LifeWorks participants that weakens the confidence in creating the necessary matched comparison group required for an impact analysis.

Skillpoint Alliance
mission:

“...to provide a gateway
for individuals to
transform their lives
through rigorous skills-
based training and
education.” *

Skillpoint connects
individuals, training
providers, employers,
and other community
organizations together
to meet identified
workforce skills gaps.

In FY 2016–FY 2021,
Travis County annually
invested \$270,800 in the
Gateway program.



*www.skillpointalliance.org

SKILLPOINT ALLIANCE

Workforce Development Programs and Services

The Skillpoint Alliance Gateway program objective is to employ individuals in high demand, living earnings occupations through short-term training. Depending on the occupation targeted, the full-time training program may range from four to seven weeks. Each curriculum emphasizes project-based learning opportunities with a combination of class time and active hands-on skill development. The program targets individuals with challenges to employment, including a history of judicial involvement, TANF and SNAP recipients, veterans, the homeless, and opportunity youth. The majority of program participants report an income less than 200% FPG.

In FYs 2016–2021, the program offered training and certification in pre-apprentice electrical, HVAC technician, pre-apprentice plumbing, and advanced manufacturing.⁴⁸

In order to be successful in the fast-paced training environment, participants in the skilled trade programs must have an HSD or HSEC and demonstrate an 8th grade reading and math academic competency on the General Assessment of Instructional Need (GAIN) skills test. Individuals who do not obtain the required scores on screening tests to enter the program may be referred to Literacy Coalition for remediation.

Skillpoint prepares participants for the workforce by creating a worksite-style environment throughout the training period. Participants are expected to arrive on-time, be prepared to work, and conduct themselves in a professional manner. The skilled trades programs convene a *tailgate* every morning to discuss any shop issues and reinforce employment readiness skills. In addition to the technical skills needed to be successful in the workplace, staff provide application and résumé development, interview preparation and practice sessions, jobsite visits, guidance on how to discuss

⁴⁸ The Nurse Aide training program was discontinued in FY 2020.

potential challenges to employment during interviews (such as previous judicial involvement), and how to respond to multiple offers from a number of employers. Skillpoint staff maintain a number of employer partnerships. These partnerships create opportunities for direct introductions to employers seeking to hire skilled workers and employers offering paid apprenticeship positions.

Manufacturing Technician training program is a six-week class that prepares students for the Certified Production Technician (CPT) certification and also includes hands-on training in CNC machining, 3D printing, soldering, and more. In addition, students receive virtual reality safety training, Lean Six Sigma White Belt certification, OSHA-10 training, and direct industry engagement with field trips to local manufacturers.

Pre-Apprentice Electrical training program is a four-week class that prepares students for success as apprentice electricians. Students learn safety, wiring, conduit bending, and more in a hands-on-focused training model that includes direct industry engagement, OSHA-10, Greenlee hand-bending certification, and more.

HVAC Technician training program focuses on safety, basic tools, math, A/C maintenance and troubleshooting, the refrigeration cycle, soldering and brazing of copper pipe, OSHA-10, other skills. The class also prepares students for the EPA-608 universal exam, which certifies individuals to handle refrigerant chemicals legally and safely.

Pre-Apprentice Plumbing class is four weeks long and helps individuals gain hands-on experience and entry-level recognition of the tools, techniques, and materials involved in becoming an apprentice plumber. The class includes safety, pipe recognition, construction math, pipefitting, soldering and brazing, fixture layout, and other skills. Graduates are prepared to enter the field and start an apprenticeship training program. Skillpoint continues to serve as a Pre-Apprenticeship pipeline partner to registered apprenticeship programs in the region.⁴⁹

Mentorship Program

In FY 2018, Skillpoint was awarded a grant to develop and implement an industry mentorship component to the skilled trades programs. Skillpoint staff with experience in high school and secondary education mentorship programs designed the local model. The goal of the program is to strengthen industry employer partnerships and help participants navigate their initial entrance into the industry.

⁴⁹ Skillpoint Alliance Annual Report 2021. Available at: <https://skillpointalliance.org/about-us/annual-report/>

The mentorship model relies upon industry employers to participate as mentors to inform curriculum and provide relevant conversations with participants about the industry and the workplace culture.

Mentors also provide some of the employment readiness training by presenting to participants realistic information regarding the expectations of employers and advice on navigating the workplace, including the importance of being on time for work, discussions of potential interview questions, what employers are looking for in new employees, interpersonal skills, how to conduct oneself on the job, and relationships on the job. By participating in the mentorship program, employers increase their understanding of the program, and become acquainted with participants preparing to work for them. Staff members report it is not uncommon for participants to receive more than one offer from area employers on the day of the graduation *skills challenge*.

Mentors for the pre-apprentice plumbing and electrical programs are invited to attend the graduation *skills challenge*, where program graduates have an opportunity to demonstrate the skills they have learned to prospective employers. With guidance from industry mentors, the electrical and plumbing program curricula have been revised and the courses have been restructured from eight and seven weeks, respectively, to four weeks. Staff continue to work with union and open shop mentors to ensure the curricula supports the skills needed for hire, maintaining the program efficacy.

Support Services

In addition to covering the full cost of the training and professional development activities noted above, Skillpoint also provides substantial support services to help participants cope with the travel, equipment, and clothing requirements of the programs. Services include bus passes, tools, work clothes, shoes, and books. Upon securing employment, Skillpoint provides participants with the tools and equipment needed to enter the job. WFSCA is also able to apply WIOA funding to help ensure that all training needs are met for qualified participants.

During class orientation, students are introduced to the student success coordinator who provides ongoing support and connects participants with other resources in the community as needed. Administrative staff collaborate with employers to facilitate opportunities for participants with judicial involvement histories.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Enrollment challenges related to the pandemic continued for Skillpoint training programs in FY 2021. Early in the fiscal year some classes were rescheduled in response to the pandemic. Despite these

challenges, Skillpoint trained 112 participants. In addition, during the summer of FY 2021, Skillpoint was able to provide a culinary course for incarcerated juveniles (funded by Travis County). This course was not offered during the previous year due to pandemic restrictions. Because these youth are in a detention center, confidentiality laws prohibit their information being included in the data as program participants.

New Initiatives

In FY 2021 Skillpoint offered their first advanced manufacturing course, Certified Production Technician.

Participant Profile

Among the 897 Skillpoint Alliance participants included in this evaluation who exited the program during FY 2016–FY 2021, the average participant age was 31. A third of exiters identified as Hispanic (34.1%), while 32.4% identified as Black, and 23.4% identified as White. Over half of exiters were Male (55.3%) and approximately one third reported having attended or having graduated from college, and 60% reported a 12th grade or HSEC education level. Judicial involvement was reported for 13.6% of participants, while 5% of participants reported veteran status. Receipt of public benefits is missing/unknown for all participants. The majority of the exiters report residing in the following areas: South Austin (20.3%), East Austin (18.8%), Northern suburbs (15.1%), and North Austin (13.9%).

Participant Outcomes

Table 23 provides an overview of Skillpoint participant outcomes. Outcomes are reported for 894 participants whose social security numbers were identified within the earnings data. In the year prior to entry, overall employment in a UI-covered job in Texas averaged 62.8%, with the overall employment rate two years post-services increasing to 68.6%. Overall cohort employment rates, for all post-service periods evaluated, are notable for being atypically high for short-term training programs ranging from 68.6% to 78.3%.

Average quarterly earnings for the year prior to services was \$4,538, increasing on average to \$6,850 two years post-services, followed by continued income gains for those whom data are available. The data reports an income gain of \$5,642 for the FY 2016 cohort from last service quarter earnings (\$2,934) to the fifth year post-service (\$8,576), nearly a 200% increase in earnings.

Prior to entering Skillpoint, over half (53.9%) of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. Two years after leaving training 68.8% met the requirements for eligibility. Relatively few participants filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined, with greater than typical UI benefit claims being filed during the pandemic.

Table 23. Skillpoint Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service	4 Years Post-service	5 Years Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	178	178	178	178	178	178	178	178	
FY 2017	168	168	168	168	168	168	168	69	
FY 2018	148	148	148	148	148	148	77	.	
FY 2019	170	170	170	170	170	76	.	.	
FY 2020	118	118	118	118	66	.	.	.	
FY 2021	112	112	112	50	.	.	.	.
Total	894	894	894	832	730	570	423	247	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	66.4%	66.3%	82.6%	79.8%	73.0%	70.8%	66.8%	62.9%	71.7%
FY 2017	64.6%	63.1%	75.6%	78.0%	72.0%	64.2%	63.7%		
FY 2018	58.8%	71.6%	73.0%	68.9%	64.1%	54.1%			
FY 2019	64.9%	76.5%	81.8%	78.8%	67.7%				
FY 2020	57.6%	61.0%	72.8%	69.5%					
FY 2021	62.1%	67.9%	83.0%		.				
Overall	62.8%	68.0%	78.3%	76.1%	68.6%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$4,041	\$2,934	\$5,059	\$4,932	\$5,893	\$6,281	\$7,121	\$8,576	\$6,371
FY 2017	\$4,241	\$3,127	\$4,712	\$4,890	\$6,231	\$6,917	\$7,148		
FY 2018	\$4,309	\$3,316	\$5,290	\$5,762	\$6,763	\$7,994			
FY 2019	\$4,680	\$3,660	\$6,490	\$6,613	\$8,114				
FY 2020	\$5,005	\$3,737	\$6,000	\$7,511		.			
FY 2021	\$5,456	\$4,122	\$7,608		.	.			
Overall	\$4,538	\$3,433	\$5,770	\$5,985	\$6,850				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	54.9%	60.1%	62.4%	65.7%	70.8%	69.7%	68.0%	61.8%	65.9%
FY 2017	52.7%	53.6%	58.9%	64.9%	70.2%	69.1%	61.9%		
FY 2018	55.2%	54.7%	55.4%	67.6%	64.2%	61.5%			
FY 2019	51.8%	60.6%	63.5%	75.9%	75.3%				
FY 2020	48.1%	54.2%	55.1%	66.1%					
FY 2021	62.1%	60.7%	54.5%		.				
Overall	53.9%	57.4%	58.8%	68.4%	68.8%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	2.0%	2.8%	1.7%	1.7%	2.8%	0.0%	8.4%	3.4%	2.8%
FY 2017	2.4%	3.6%	0.6%	2.4%	3.0%	7.7%	4.8%		
FY 2018	2.7%	2.7%	2.0%	1.4%	4.1%	3.4%			
FY 2019	1.5%	2.4%	2.4%	9.4%	4.1%				
FY 2020	3.4%	5.1%	5.9%	4.2%					
FY 2021	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%		.				
Overall	2.1%	2.8%	2.0%	3.6%	3.2%				

Source: Skillpoint participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

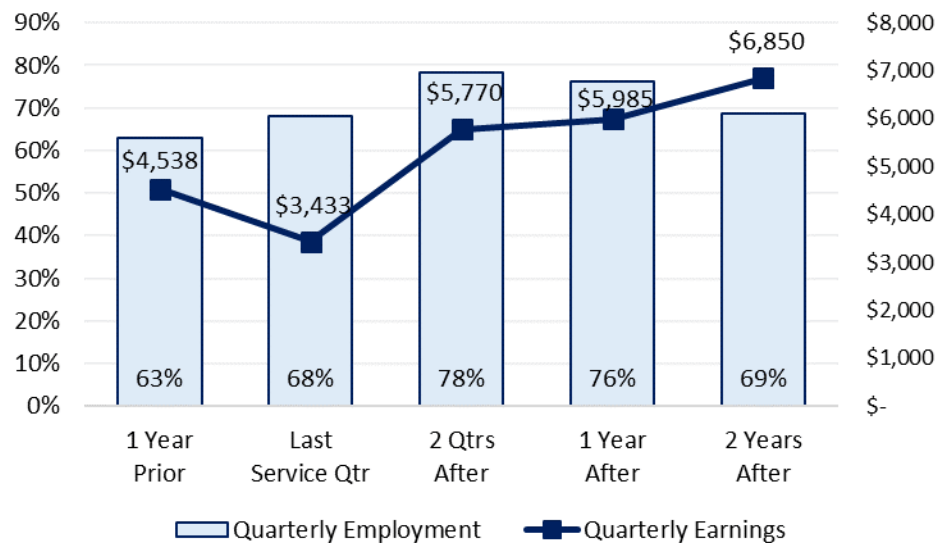
Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes.

Figure 40 displays for all cohorts (FY 2016–FY 2021), the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services, illustrating a drop in reported employment between the period with the highest reported employment of 78.3% (two quarters post-services), to 68.6% (two years post-services). The increase in earnings from the last service quarter through two years post-services represents an earnings increase of nearly 100%.

Figure 40. Average Employment and Earnings for Skillpoint Alliance Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services



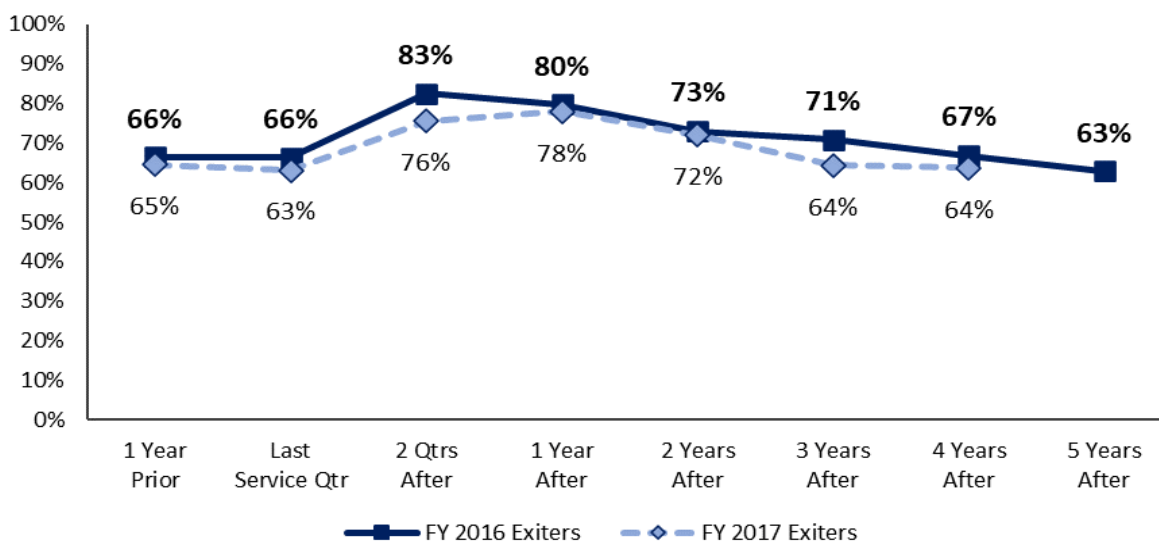
The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 41 illustrates an increase in employment from the last service quarter to the second quarter after leaving services for both cohorts: 16.3 percentage point increase for the FY 2016 cohort and a 11 percentage point increase for the FY 2017 cohort. These gains are followed by a decreasing trend in employment over time for both cohorts. Employment for both cohorts declined by the fourth and fifth years post-services to an employment rate slightly below the employment rate one year prior to receiving services.

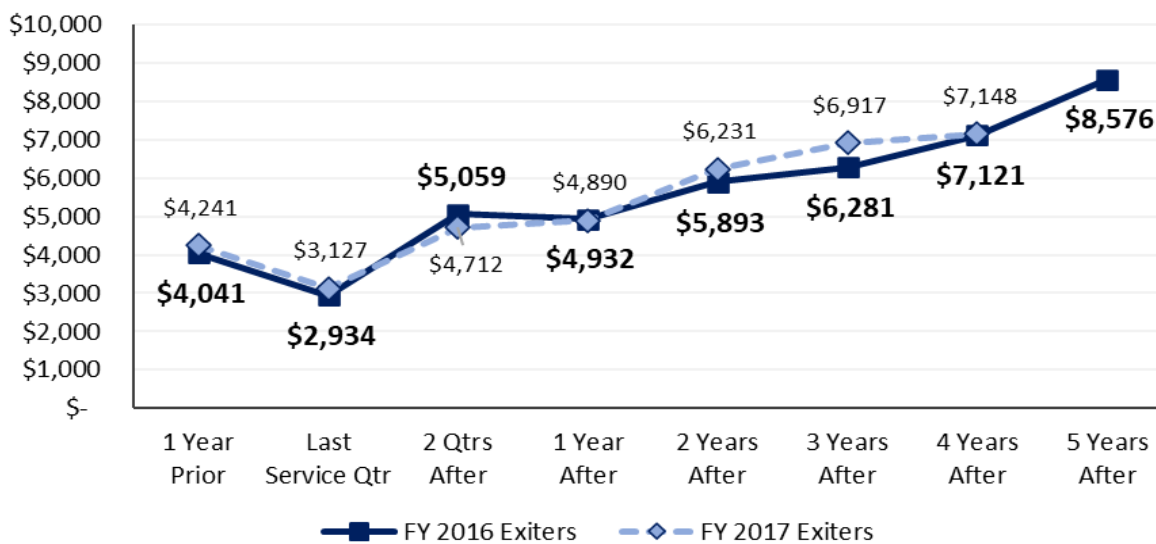
Figure 42 illustrates the earnings found in the data for both FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts. Across time, both cohorts experienced similar increases, with the FY 2016 cohort average quarterly earnings increasing by \$4,435, representing a 112% increase in earnings from one year prior to services through the fifth year post-services. The FY 2017 cohort experienced a similar increase of \$2,907, representing a

69% increase in earnings across the time period examined for this analysis.

**Figure 41. Average Quarterly Employment for Skillpoint Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**



**Figure 42. Average Quarterly Earnings of Employed Skillpoint Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**



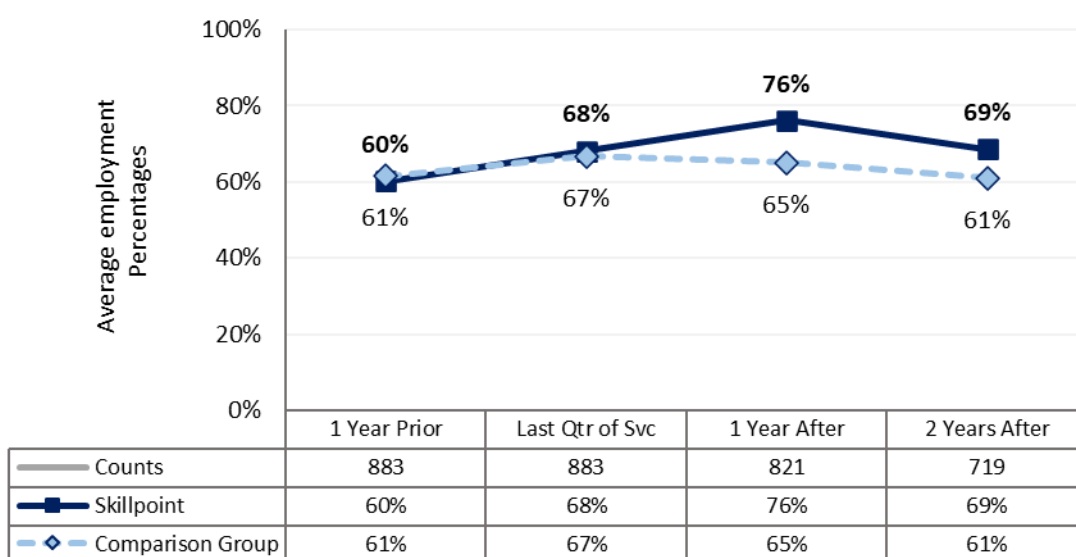
Program Impacts

The following two Figures present findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of 883 Skillpoint FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group.

In Figure 43, the impact of participation in Skillpoint services is examined by looking at participants' employment rate over time in relation to the comparison group's employment rate. The analysis shows that Skillpoint participants' employment rate nearly matched the comparison group employment rate during the quarter services began. Skillpoint participant employment steadily increased to maintain a higher rate than the comparison group, even as the overall employment rate of both groups dropped during the remaining quarters for which data were available.

**Figure 43. Employment Rate Over Time, Skillpoint Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016–FY 2021**

1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=883)



In Figure 44, the impact of participation in Skillpoint services is examined by looking at participants' average quarterly earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that Skillpoint participants' earnings surpassed the matched comparison group earnings one year post-service by approximately \$681, yet this advantage was not maintained. During the second year post-services, the difference in earnings between the two groups narrowed to approximately \$331.

Figure 44. Earnings Over Time, Skillpoint Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=883)

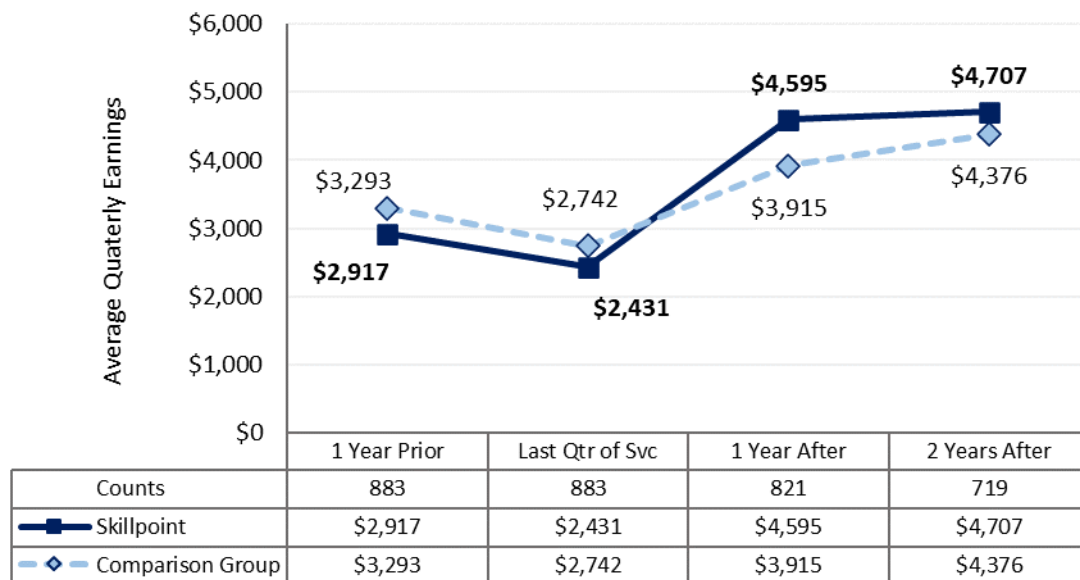


Table 24 demonstrates that participation in the Skillpoint program was positively associated and statistically significant for three of measures of interest. The data identified a 10.43% advantage in employment and a 8.3% advantage in qualifyity for U benefits, both at the .01 level of significance. Participants experienced an average earnings advantage of \$445 at the .05 level of significance.

Table 24. Skillpoint Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=883)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	61.2%	71.5%	10.3%	10.43%**
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$6,013	\$6,328	\$315	\$445*
Qualified for UI Benefits	51.8%	59.4%	7.7%	8.3%**
Filed UI Claim	3.21%	3.06%	-0.2%	-0.317%

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

Skillpoint Alliance Subgroup Analysis: CNA and Skilled Trades Training Participants

The following analysis reports on outcomes and impacts for the 894 unduplicated Skillpoint Alliance participants who exited the program in FY 2016–FY 2021 identified in the data as CNA training participants (374)⁵⁰, or skilled trades training participants (520).

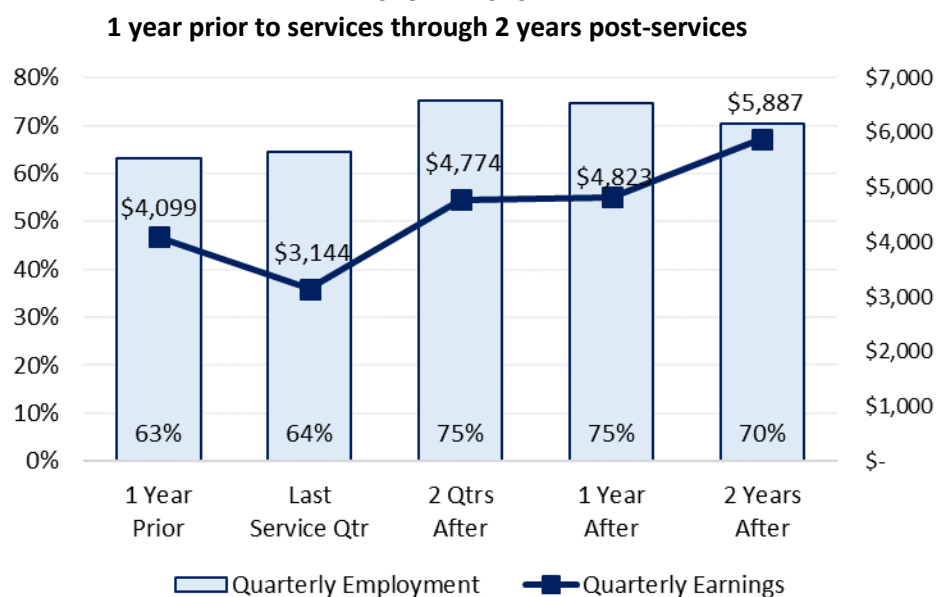
Participant Outcomes: CNA and Skilled Trades training participants

The outcomes evaluation examines participants’ labor market experiences prior to entering the program, and then tracks their labor market outcomes following program exit up to the fifth year post-service for those for whom data were available.

Figure 45 illustrates employment and earnings outcomes for Skillpoint CNA training participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2020. In the four quarters prior to entering the program 63.2% were employed in a UI-covered job in Texas. Average quarterly employment grew to 75.1% by the second quarter post-service, then declined to 70.1% by the second year post-services. The data represent an overall 7.3 percentage point gain in employment between the year prior to services and two years post-service.

The available data identify that quarterly earnings grew from an average of \$4,099 in the four pre-service quarters, to an average of \$5,877 two years post-service: a \$1,778 average quarterly gain.

Figure 45. Average Employment and Quarterly Earnings for Skillpoint Alliance CNA Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2020

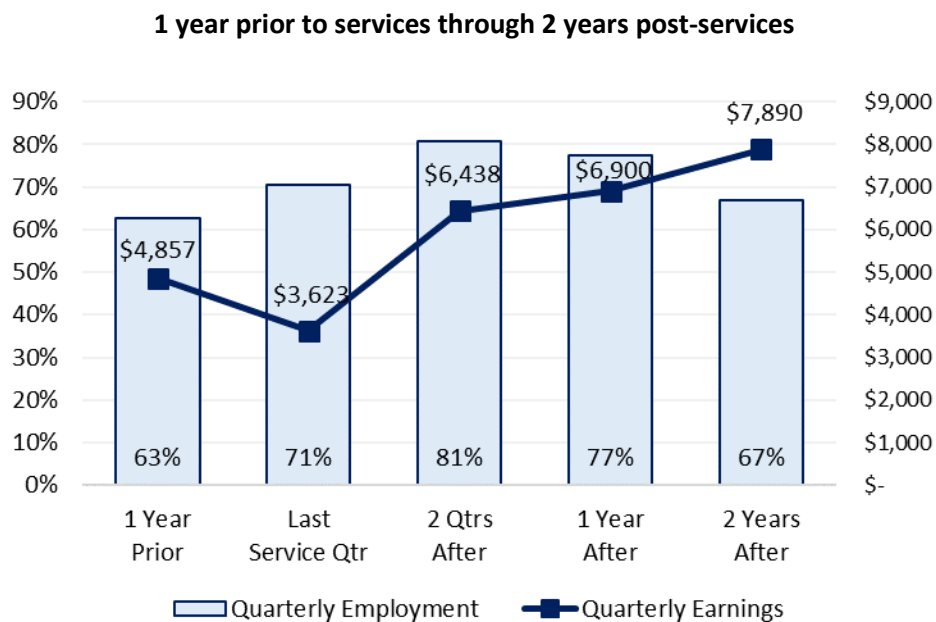


⁵⁰ The last cohort of CNA participants were enrolled in FY 2020.

Figure 46 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for Skillpoint skilled trades training participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021. In the four quarters prior to entering the program 62.6% were employed in a UI covered job in Texas. The available data demonstrate that employment for all cohorts peaked at 80% during the second quarter post-services followed by a steady decline in employment to 66.8% two years post-services, which equals to a 4.2% employment gain compared to the year prior to receiving services.

The available data identify that overall quarterly earnings grew from an average of \$4,857 in the four pre-service quarters, to an average of \$7,890 two years post-services, or a \$3,033 gain in average quarterly earnings.

Figure 46. Average Employment and Quarterly Earnings for Skillpoint Alliance Skilled Trades Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021



The following figures present the CNA and Skilled Trades training exiters' long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 47 illustrates an increase in employment from the last service quarter to the second quarter after leaving services for both CNA cohorts, 13.1 percentage point increase for the FY 2016 cohort and a 12.6 percentage point increase for the FY 2017 cohort. These gains are followed by a decreasing trend in employment over time for both cohorts.

**Figure 47. Average Quarterly Employment for Skillpoint CNA Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**

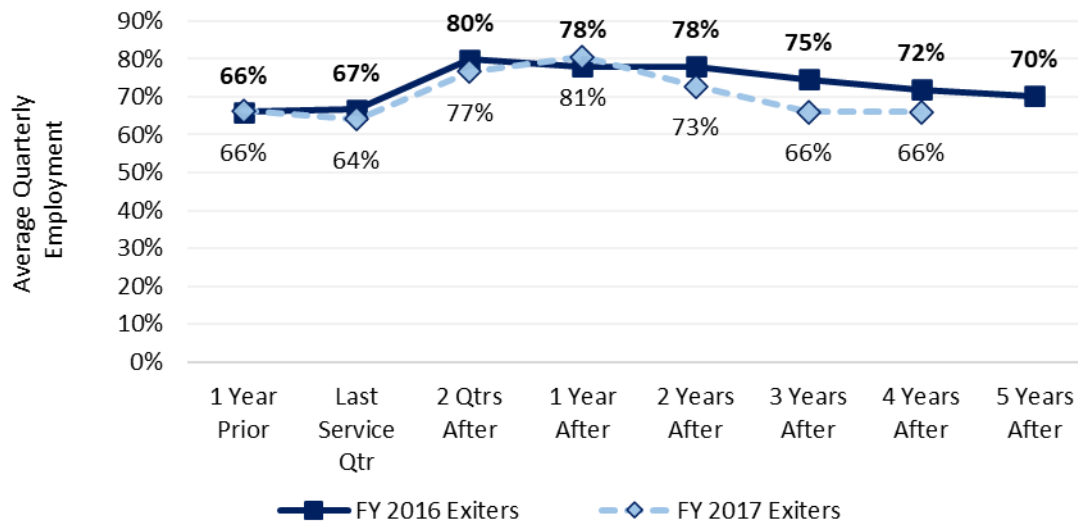


Figure 48 illustrates an increase in average quarterly earnings across time for both CNA cohorts. The FY 2016 cohort quarterly earnings increased by \$4,216, representing a 110% increase in quarterly earnings from one year prior to services through the fifth year post-services. The FY 2017 experienced an increase of \$2,060, representing a 51% increase in quarterly earnings across the time period examined for this analysis.

**Figure 48. Average Quarterly Earnings for Skillpoint CNA Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services**



The following two figures present the Skilled Trades training exiters' long-term earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through five- and four-years post-services, respectively.

Figure 49 illustrates an increase in employment for both cohorts between the last service quarter to the second quarter after leaving services, a 21.9 percentage point increase for the FY 2016 cohort and a 12.4 percentage point increase for the FY 2017 cohort. Following the earnings in the available data for the first year after receiving services, both cohorts experience a steady decrease in employment outcomes. Employment for the FY 2016 cohorts declined by the fifth year post-services to an employment rate 17.2 percentage points below the cohort employment rate at one year prior to receiving services. Employment for the FY 2017 cohort declined to 1.9 percentage points below the employment rate one year prior to entering services.

**Figure 49. Average Quarterly Employment for Skillpoint Skilled Trades Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services**

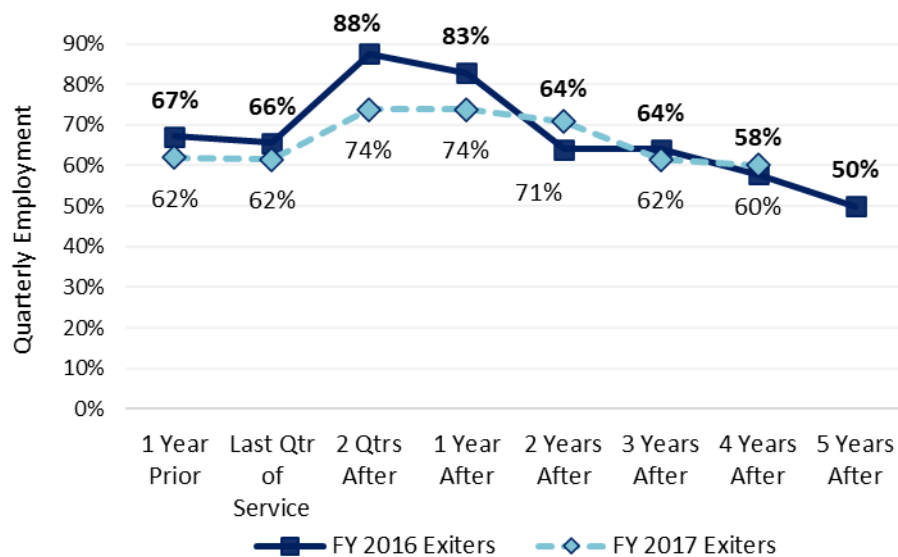
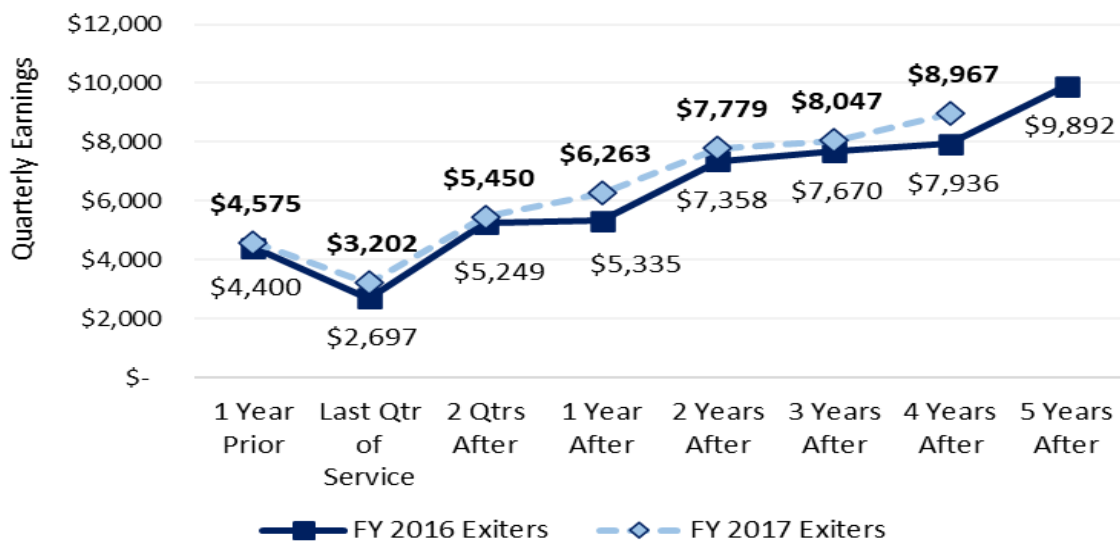


Figure 50 illustrates an increase in average quarterly earnings across time for both skilled trades cohorts. The FY 2016 cohort earnings increased by \$5,492, representing a 125% increase in earnings from one year prior to services through the fifth year post-services. The FY 2017 cohort experienced an increase of \$4,392, representing a 96% increase in earnings across the time period examined for this analysis.

Figure 50. Average Quarterly Earnings for Skillpoint Skilled Trades Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 5 years post-services



Discussion of Participant Outcomes

Table 25 represents the labor market outcomes, qualification for UI benefits, and UI claims filed for Skillpoint participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021 and were identified in the data as CNA training participants or skilled trades training participants. The table presents the cohorts’ overall outcomes for the four quarters before and two years after receiving services. Both groups experienced an increase in the rate of participants eligible for UI benefits (an indicator of employment stability). CNA participants made fewer UI benefit claims compared to the skilled trades participants.

Table 25. Skillpoint CNA and Skilled Trades Exiters Overall UI Benefit Eligibility and UI Claims Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Before Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Year Post-service
Qualified for UI Benefits:					
Skilled Trades	55.4%	57.5%	58.5%	73.1%	68.7%
CNA	51.9%	57.2%	59.4%	62.6%	68.8%
Filed UI Claim:					
Skilled Trades	2.3%	2.9%	2.3%	4.6%	3.1%
CNA	1.8%	2.7%	1.6%	2.4%	3.3%

Source: Skillpoint participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Program Impacts: CNA and Skilled Trades training participants

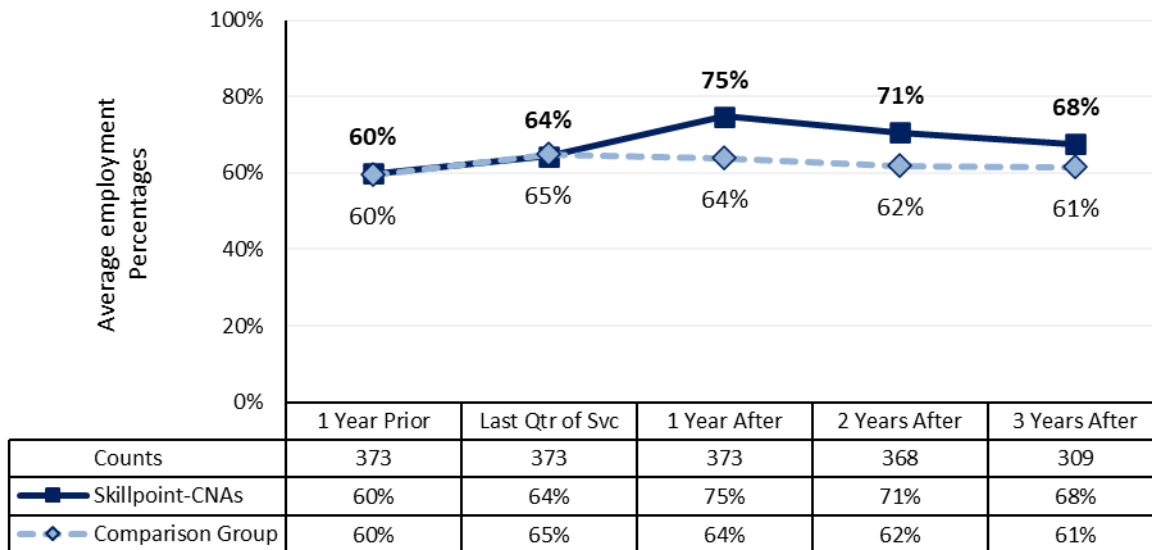
The following figures present findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of the two subgroups of Skillpoint participants to a matched comparison group for whom adequate matching could be performed. The analysis reports on short-term impacts up to twelve quarters post-services.

The analysis shows that CNA training participants' employment rate nearly matched the comparison group employment rate during the last service quarter then outpaced the comparison group by 11 percentage points during the first year post-services. Both groups experienced a decrease in employment rates during the second and third year post-services with the CNA trained participants maintaining a slightly higher rate of employment compared to the matched group (Figure 51).

In Figure 52, the impact of participation in Skillpoint CNA training is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that although both groups experienced earnings increases following the last service quarter, the CNA training participants' earnings remained below the earnings of the comparison group throughout the period examined.

**Figure 51. Employment Over Time, Skillpoint CNA Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016–FY 2021**

1 year prior to services through 3 years post-services (n=373)



**Figure 52. Earnings Over Time, Skillpoint CNA Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016–FY 2021**

1 year prior to services through 3 years post-services (n=373)

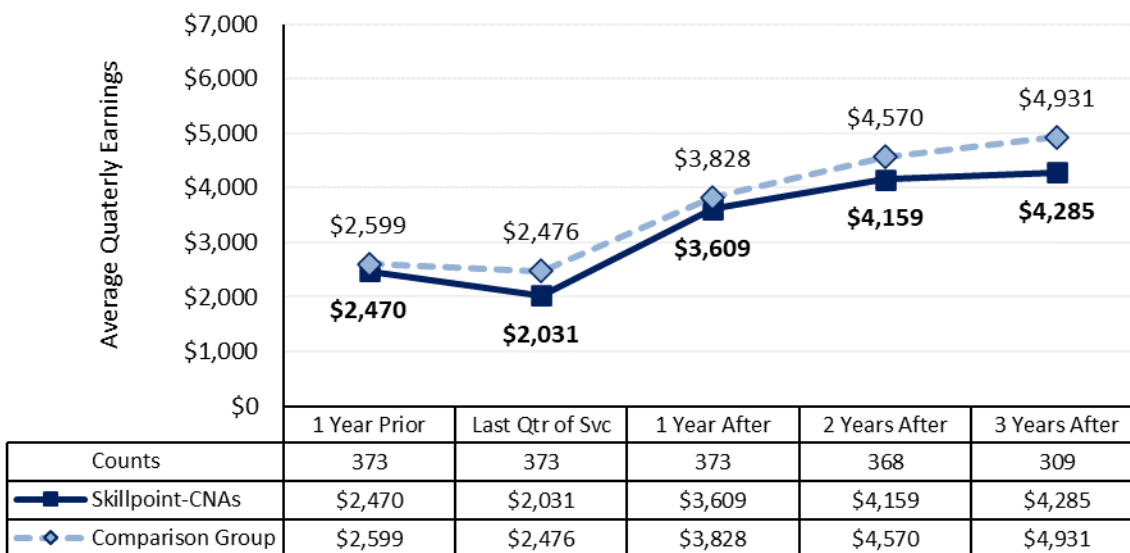


Table 26 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of 373 CNA training participants to a matched comparison group for all post-service quarters. The findings demonstrates that participation in the Skillpoint CNA training program was positively associated with employment at a .05 level of statistical significance.

Table 26. Skillpoint CNA Program Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=373)

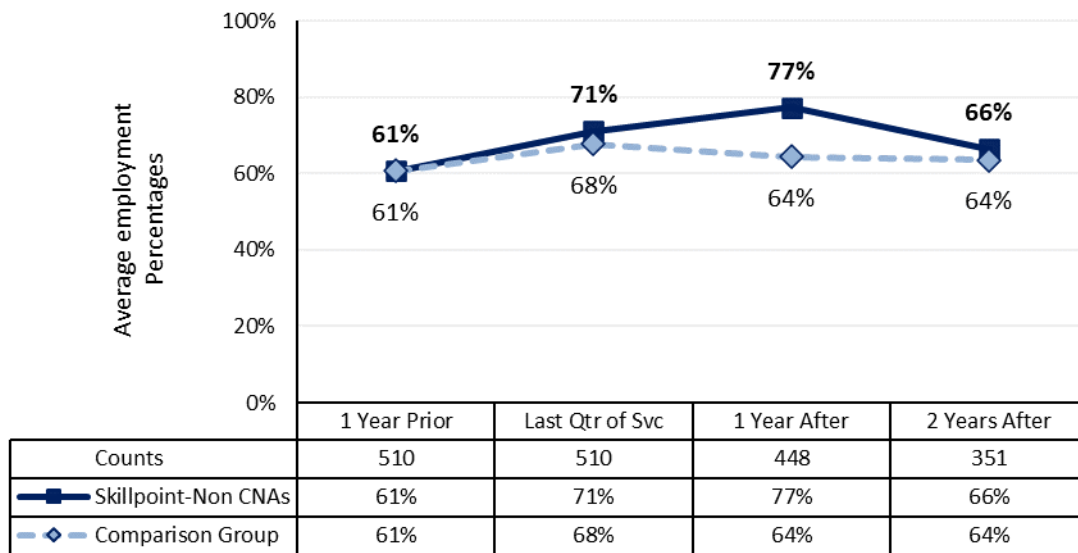
Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-Service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-Service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	61.9%	69.5%	7.5%	7.03%**
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$6,214	\$5,382	-\$832	-\$352.42
Qualified for UI Benefits	52.8%	57.9%	5.2%	5.5%
Filed UI Claim	3.11%	3.10%	-0.01%	-0.3%

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

The following two figures illustrate the impact analysis for 510 Skillpoint skilled training participants compared to a matched group. The analysis shows that skill training participants' employment rate nearly matched the comparison group employment rate during the last service quarter then outpaced the comparison group by 13 percentage points during the first year post-services. Both groups experienced a decrease in employment rates during the second year post-services with the skilled trades trained participants maintaining a slightly higher rate of employment compared to the matched group (Figure 53).

In Figure 54, the impact of participation in Skillpoint CNA training is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that although both groups experienced similar earnings during the last service quarter, skilled trades training participants outpaced the comparison group by \$1,117 during the first year post-services. Although both groups experienced a decrease in reported earnings during the second year post-services, skilled trades training participants maintained a slight advantage.

**Figure 53. Employment Over Time, Skillpoint Skilled Trade Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=510)**



**Figure 54. Employment Over Time, Skillpoint Skilled Trade Participants vs. Comparison Group
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=510)**

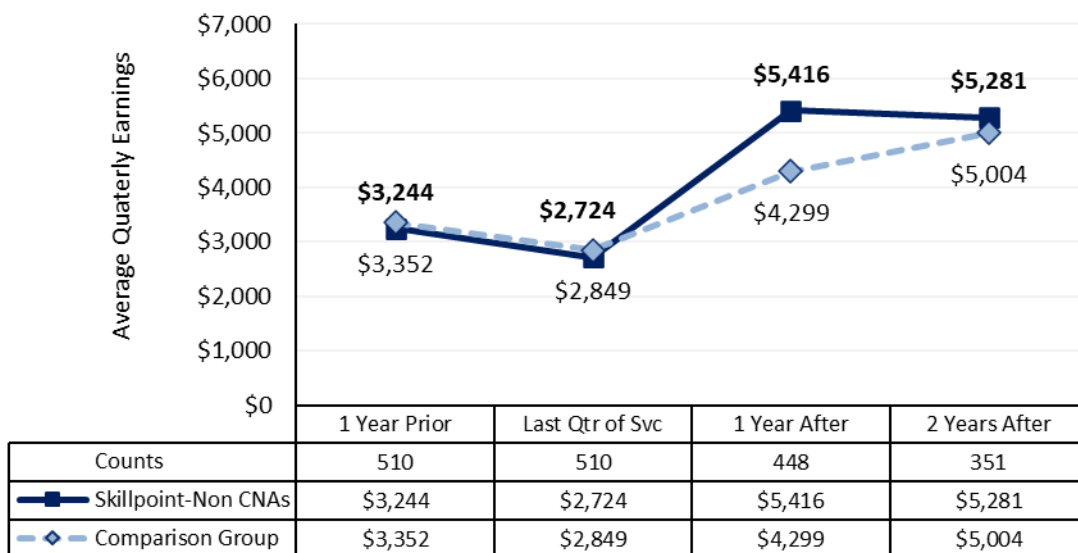


Table 27 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of 510 Skillpoint

skilled trades training participants to the outcomes of a matched comparison group for all post-service quarters. The analysis identified that participation in skilled trades training positively impacted employment outcomes. This finding is statistically significant at the .01 level.

Table 27. Skillpoint Skilled Trades Program Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=510)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-Service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-Service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	61.1%	73.0%	11.9%	11.29%**
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$6,410	\$7,012	\$602	\$343
Qualified for UI Benefits	52.6%	60.8%	8.2%	6.5%
Filed UI Claim	3.5%	3.0%	-0.4%	0.4%

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

Skillpoint Alliance Subgroup Analysis: Skilled Trades Non-Judicially Involved and Judicially Involved

Within the FY 2016–FY 2021 skilled trades 520 exiter group, 107 (20.6%) individuals were identified in the data to have a history of judicial involvement. The following figures present a comparison of the employment and earnings outcomes for skilled trades exiters identified as either judicially involved or not judicially involved.⁵¹ The patterns of employment and earnings outcomes for the two groups presented in Figures 55 and 56 is similar to the employment and earnings patterns found among the group of WERC-TC participants when comparing judicially involved to those reporting no judicial involvement (See earlier in this report: WERC-TC Subgroup Analysis: Non-judicially Involved and Judicially Involved, p. 18). The judicially involved participants from both WERC-TC and Skillpoint Alliance experienced a decline in employment over time compared to the non-judicially involved. A steady increase in earnings is found in the data for both WERC-TC and Skillpoint judicially involved participants, yet their earnings are consistently lower compared to the non-judicially involved.

⁵¹ Judicial involvement information was missing for 36.3% of all Skillpoint Alliance training exiters.

Figure 55. Skilled Trades Employment Outcomes Judicial and Non-judicially Involved: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services

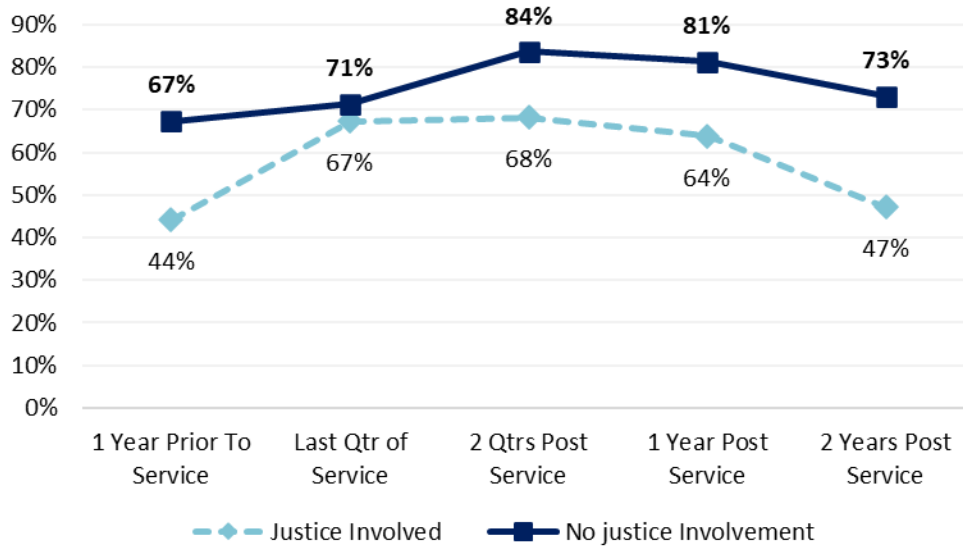
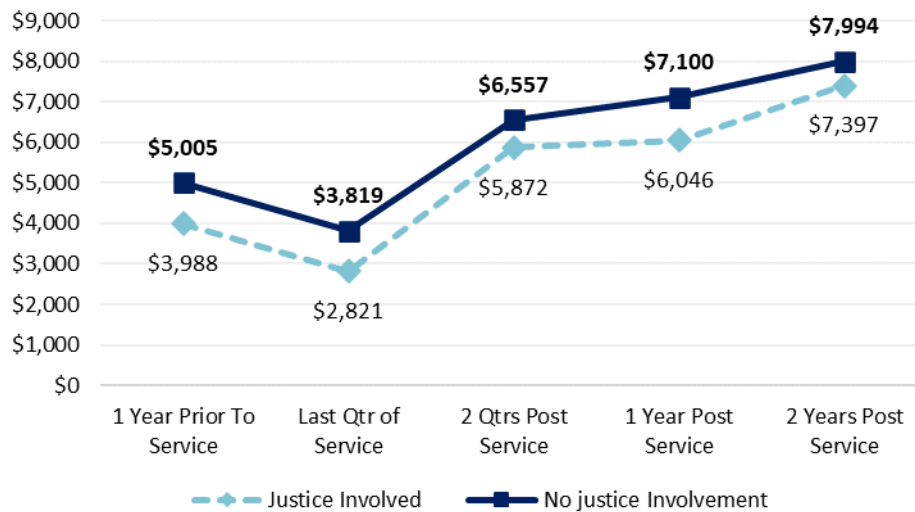


Figure 56. Skilled Trades Average Quarterly Earnings Outcomes for Judicially and Non-judicially Involved: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services



AMERICAN YOUTHWORKS NON-WERC-TC PARTICIPANTS

AYW workforce development county funding is channeled through three contracts: WERC-TC, Workforce Development (direct to AYW), and the Travis County Metro Parks Project.⁵² The services and participants reported in this section are only funded through Travis County Workforce Development and Travis County Metro Parks funding and are identified as non-WERC-TC funded participants. YouthBuild participants receiving services through WERC-TC are reported in the previous WERC-TC section of this report.

Participant Profile

This AYW participant analysis reports on 728 participants who exited the program in FY 2016–FY 2021. AYW provides services to youth as young as 16, with over one-third of participants ranging in age from 16 to 19 (35.4%), and nearly 60% of participants ranging in age from 20 to 29 years. The average age of AYW participant exiters is 21. The majority of exiters identified as White (40.2%), with 30.5% identified as Hispanic, and 8.9% identified as Black. Most exiters were male (54.7%) with 0.8% identifying as transgender. Over one third of participants had less than a 12th grade education (38%). Although judicial involvement status was missing/unknown for 61.6% of participants, approximately 18% reported judicial involvement.⁵³ The majority of the exiters reported residing in two areas: South Austin (34.5%) and East Austin (25.4%).

Outcomes and impacts are reported for program participants with social security numbers identified within the earnings data. This analysis discusses AYW YouthBuild participants followed by an analysis of TxCC participants. The analysis of these two groups includes outcomes disaggregated by education, race/ethnicity, and gender.

⁵² The Metro Parks Project can be understood as a transfer of HHS funds to Travis County passed through to AYW for a subsidized work experience program.

⁵³ Data elements were missing/unknown for the following demographic variables: Education, 19 percent; race, 27 percent; ethnicity, 78 percent; and judicial involvement was missing/unknown 72 percent. Veteran status and receipt of public benefits were not reported for the exiting participants. AYW is designed to support primarily youth, thus veteran status may not be an applicable data element.

Participant Outcomes: YouthBuild

Table 28 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for American YouthWorks YouthBuild participants who exited services (completed or dropped out), from FY 2016–FY 2021. In the year prior to entering the program, 35.2% were employed. Quarterly employment among all cohorts grew on average to 58.7% during the second quarter post-services decreasing to 53.7% two years post-service for those for whom data are available. The overall employment rate increased by 18.7 percentage points from one year prior to services through the second year post-services.

Pre-program quarterly earnings averaged \$2,262 for those employed in the year prior to service entry. Generally, reported earnings illustrate a steady increase in earnings over time for all cohorts. Overall average quarterly earnings increased by \$2,593, from \$2,262 one year prior to service to \$4,855 in the second year post-service.

Prior to entering AYW, only 19.5% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. Two years after exiting services, approximately 43.7% met the requirements for eligibility. Filing for UI benefits increased for all cohorts during the early pandemic period.

Table 28. American YouthWorks YouthBuild Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service	4 Years Post-service	5 Years Post-service
Number of Participants:								
FY 2016	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
FY 2017	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	10
FY 2018	63	63	63	63	63	63	20	.
FY 2019	87	87	87	87	87	26	.	.
FY 2020	79	79	79	79	16	.	.	.
FY 2021	66	66	66	22	.	.	.	.
Total	358	358	358	314	229	152	83	29
Quarterly Employment:								
FY 2016	35.5%	52.6%	79.0%	52.6%	42.1%	63.2%	42.0%	42.1%
FY 2017	25.0%	50.0%	54.6%	56.8%	52.3%	52.3%	59.1%	
FY 2018	38.1%	65.1%	65.1%	68.3%	58.7%	57.1%		
FY 2019	35.3%	52.9%	60.9%	42.5%	51.7%			
FY 2020	34.2%	58.2%	53.2%	54.4%				
FY 2021	40.2%	60.6%	53.0%		.			
Overall	35.2%	57.3%	58.7%	54.1%	53.7%			
Average Qrtly Earnings:								
FY 2016	\$2,172	\$2,188	\$3,203	\$3,330	\$5,201	\$4,656	\$5,904	\$5,487
FY 2017	\$1,818	\$2,384	\$2,401	\$2,806	\$4,336	\$3,849	\$5,733	
FY 2018	\$2,238	\$2,529	\$3,738	\$3,676	\$4,777	\$5,819		
FY 2019	\$2,025	\$2,821	\$3,957	\$4,407	\$5,102			
FY 2020	\$2,135	\$2,419	\$3,809	\$4,380				
FY2021	\$2,895	\$3,632	\$4,991		.			
Overall	\$2,262	\$2,753	\$3,825	\$3,923	\$4,855			
Qualified for UI Benefits:								
FY 2016	27.6%	36.8%	31.6%	52.6%	42.1%	52.6%	47.4%	36.8%
FY 2017	10.2%	18.2%	20.5%	40.9%	43.2%	47.7%	43.2%	
FY 2018	18.3%	28.6%	30.2%	54.0%	52.4%	52.4%		
FY 2019	19.8%	20.7%	19.5%	47.1%	40.2%			
FY 2020	19.3%	21.5%	21.5%	41.8%				
FY 2021	24.2%	25.8%	34.9%		.			
Overall	19.5%	23.7%	25.4%	45.9%	43.7%			
Filed UI Claim:								
FY 2016	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%	0.0%
FY 2017	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.6%	2.3%	
FY 2018	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.9%	4.8%		
FY 2019	0.9%	0.0%	5.8%	6.9%	4.6%			
FY 2020	0.0%	16.5%	5.1%	1.3%				
FY 2021	1.5%	1.5%	0.0%		.			
Overall	0.6%	3.9%	2.5%	2.6%	3.9%			

Source: AYW participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

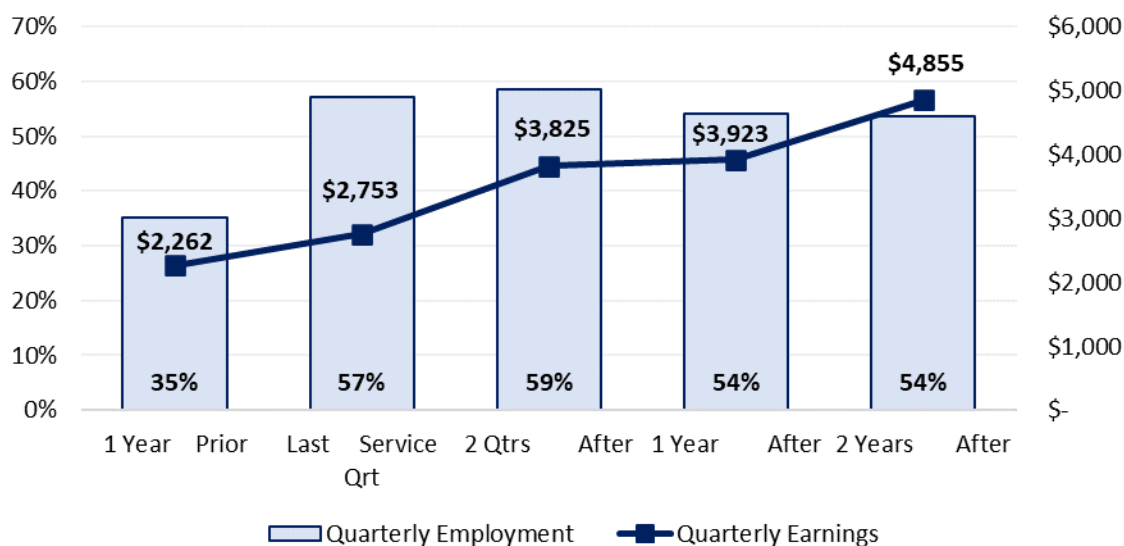
Note: Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcomes figures.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes

Figure 57 presents the rate of employment and the average earnings from one year prior to entering services to two years post-services for all cohorts (FY 2016–FY 2021). AYW exiters’ employment gains peak during the second quarter post-services, from 35.2% the year prior to entering services to 58.7% at the second quarter post-services (a 23.5 percentage point increase), followed by a decline in employment. However, employment gains from one year prior to services through the second year post-services represent a gain of nearly 18.7 percentage points in employment over time.

**Figure 57. Average Employment and Quarterly Earnings AYW YouthBuild Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services**

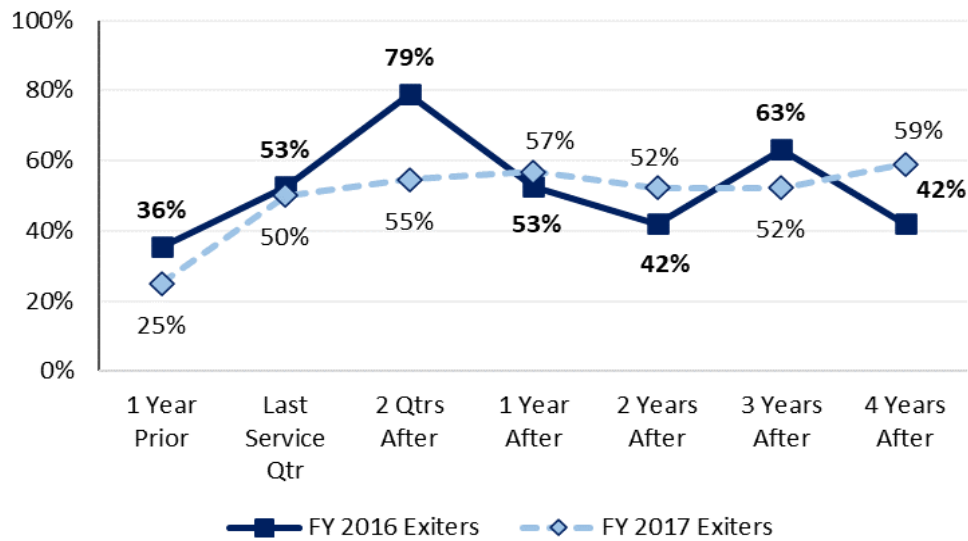


The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through four years post-services.

Figure 58 illustrates the trend in employment found in the data for both FY 2016 and FY 2017 YouthBuild cohorts. Compared to the year prior to entering services, employment outcomes improved for both cohorts across time with some fluctuation including large fluctuations in employment reported for the FY 2016 cohort. Over time, the FY 2016 cohort earnings increased by 6 percentage points from the year prior to services to four years post-services. The increase overtime for the FY 2017 cohort increased from 25% prior to services settling at 59% four years post-services, representing a 34 percentage point gain.

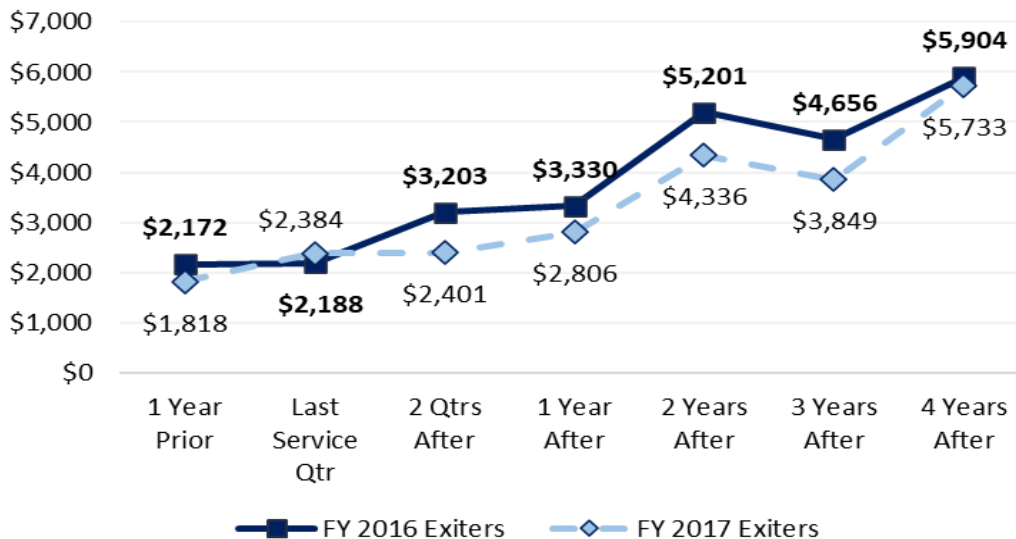
Figure 59 illustrates a largely steady upward trend in earnings from the last service quarter through the fourth years post-services. Earnings found in the data for the FY 2016 cohort increased by 172% across the period of time examined. The FY 2017 cohort earnings increased by approximately 215% across time for the period examined.

**Figure 58. Average Employment for AYW YouthBuild Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 4 years post-services**



Note: FY 2016 year 5 was dropped from this graphic due to low counts in the data.

**Figure 59. Average Quarterly Earnings for American YouthBuild Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 4 years post-services**

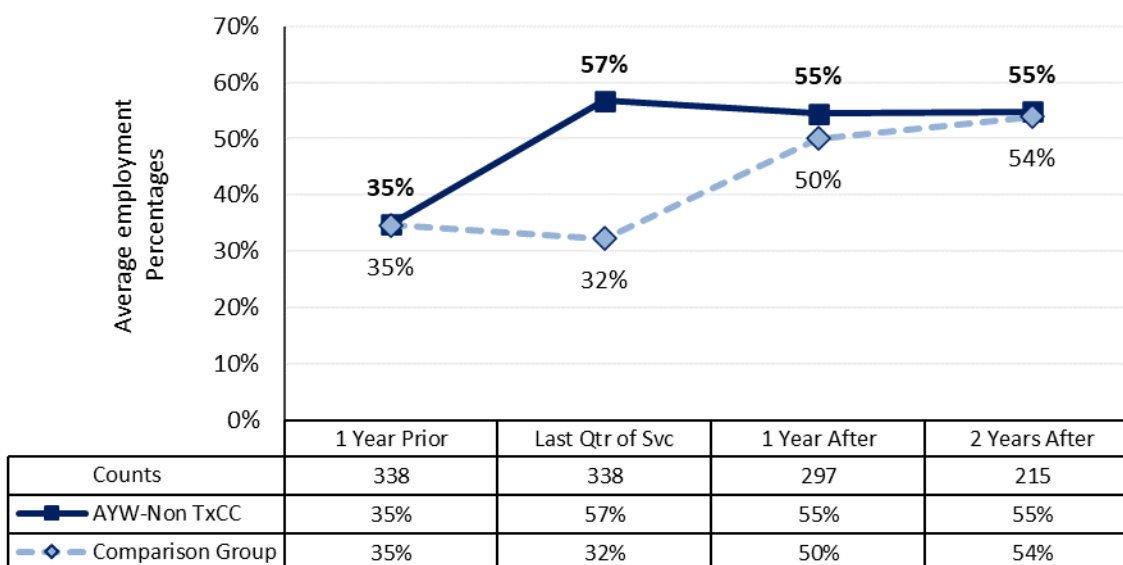


Note: FY 2016 year 5 was dropped from this graphic due to low counts in the data.

Program Impacts

In Figure 60, the impact of participation in AYW YouthBuild services is examined by looking at participants' employment rates over time in relation to the comparison group's employment rate. The table presents impacts only for exiters for whom adequate-matching could be performed. The analysis shows that YouthBuild participants' employment rates outpaced the comparison group during the last service quarter, however, the two groups' employment rates nearly converged during the first and second years post-services.

**Figure 60. Employment Rate over Time, AYW YouthBuild Participants vs. Comparison Group:
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=338)**



In Figure 61, the impact of participation in AYW YouthBuild services is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that YouthBuild participants' earnings during the last service quarter surpassed the comparison group's earnings by \$811. During the first and second year following services the two group's earnings increased. The comparison group earnings nearly matched the YouthBuild earnings during the first year post-services and slightly surpasses YouthBuild earnings in the second year post-services.

**Figure 61. Unconditional Earnings over Time, AYW YouthBuild Participants vs. Comparison Group:
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=338)**

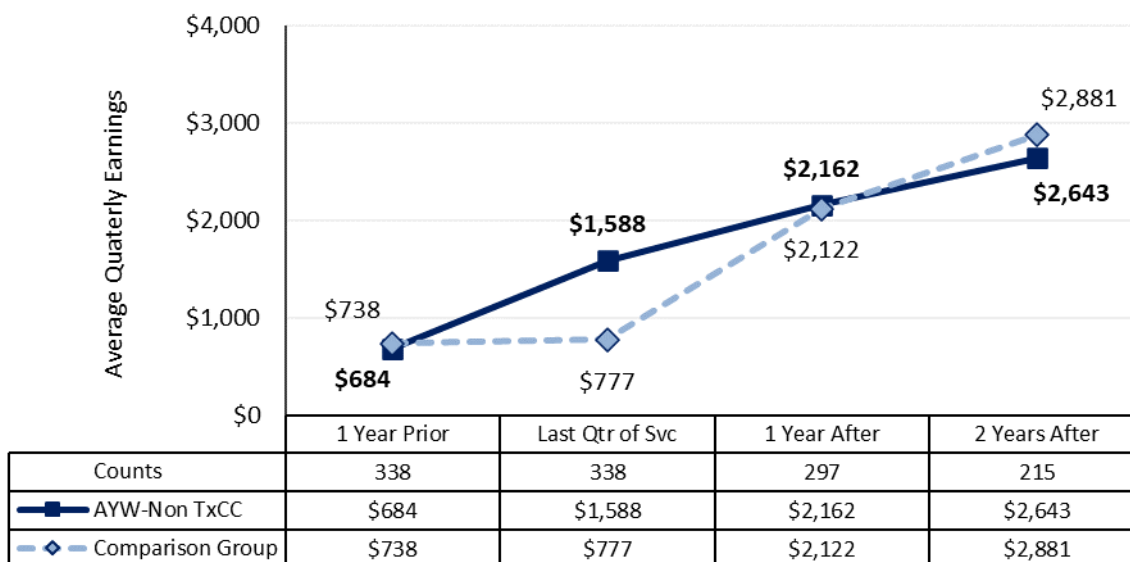


Table 29 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of YouthBuild FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. Participation was associated with slightly higher (2.47%) employment rates, and lower quarterly earnings (-\$55.85). These differences between the AYW YouthBuild exiters and the matched control group are not statistically significant.

Table 29. AYW YouthBuild Participant Quarterly Impacts: FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=338)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	50.6%	56.0%	5.5%	2.47%
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$4,657	\$4,075	-\$582.21	-\$55.85
Qualified for UI Benefits	40.8%	43.4%	2.5%	0.22%
Filed UI Claim	2.2%	3.0%	0.8%	0.55%

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

American YouthWorks Texas Conservation Corps Training

AYW TxCC participants enter a term of service for 6 or 11 months for up to 4 terms of service. Crew members receive a monthly stipend during their term of service and, upon successful completion of their service agreement, may be eligible for an AmericCorps Education Award to assist with college tuition or paying student loans. TxCC participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, unemployed students, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Participant Outcomes

The following analysis reports on outcomes for the 370 unduplicated AYW participants who exited the Texas Conservation Corps (TxCC) in FY 2016–FY 2021. The outcomes evaluation examines participants' labor market experiences prior to entering the program, and then tracks their labor market outcomes following program exit up to five years post-services for those for whom data were available.

Table 30 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for TxCC training participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021. In the four quarters prior to entering the program, 28.4% overall were employed in a UI-covered job in Texas. Average quarterly employment grew to 41.6% during the second quarter post-services decreasing to 36% during the second year post-services. The data represent a 7.6 percentage point gain in employment between the year prior to services and the second year post-services.

The available data demonstrate that overall earnings grew from a quarterly average of \$3,698 in the four quarters prior to service, to a quarterly average of \$6,155 during the second year post-services: a \$2,457 average gain in quarterly earnings. Figures 62 further illustrates the overall trend in employment and earnings from one year prior to services through the second year post-services.

Prior to entering TxCC, only 23.2% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. Two year after leaving service, 33% met the requirements for eligibility. Few participants filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined, with increases in UI claims filed during the early pandemic quarters.

Table 30. AYW TxCC Participant Outcomes: FY 2016–2021

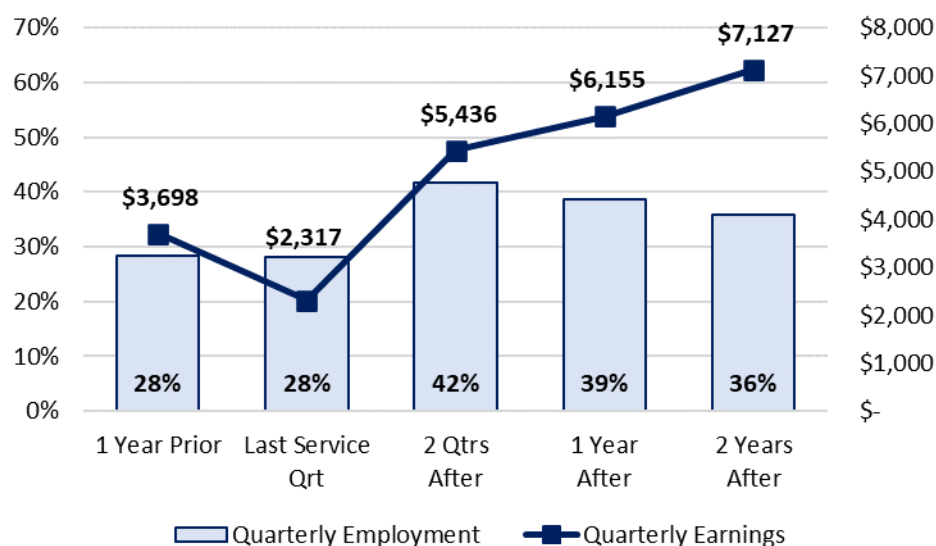
Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service	4 Years Post-service	5 Years Post-service	All Post-service Qtrs
Number of Participants:									
FY 2016	68	68	68	68	68	68	68	68	
FY 2017	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	45	
FY 2018	85	85	85	85	85	85	42	.	
FY 2019	63	63	63	63	63	31	.	.	
FY 2020	39	39	39	39	17	.	.	.	
FY 2021	45	45	45	13	.	.	.	.
Totals	370	370	370	338	303	254	180	113	
Quarterly Employment:									
FY 2016	14.3%	25.0%	41.2%	42.7%	38.2%	36.8%	30.8%	30.9%	35.8%
FY 2017	20.7%	24.3%	38.6%	37.1%	35.7%	31.4%	28.6%		
FY 2018	30.9%	27.1%	38.8%	34.1%	34.1%	31.8%			
FY 2019	30.2%	19.1%	33.3%	36.5%	38.1%				
FY 2020	48.1%	23.1%	35.9%	38.5%					
FY 2021	37.2%	57.8%	68.9%		.				
Overall	28.4%	28.1%	41.6%	38.8%	36.0%				
Average Qrtly Earnings:									
FY 2016	\$2,033	\$2,212	\$4,670	\$5,708	\$6,955	\$7,686	\$9,038	\$9,688	\$7,415
FY 2017	\$3,776	\$1,539	\$4,884	\$5,870	\$7,573	\$7,843	\$9,494		
FY 2018	\$3,339	\$1,931	\$5,463	\$7,352	\$7,484	\$9,588			
FY 2019	\$3,459	\$2,117	\$5,340	\$5,052	\$6,136				
FY 2020	\$4,529	\$3,887	\$5,200	\$5,660					
FY2021	\$4,505	\$2,783	\$6,751		.				
Overall	\$3,698	\$2,317	\$5,436	\$6,155	\$7,127				
Qualified for UI Benefits:									
FY 2016	13.6%	8.8%	5.9%	27.9%	38.2%	35.3%	36.8%	30.9%	29.3%
FY 2017	16.1%	14.3%	7.1%	27.1%	34.3%	32.9%	30.0%		
FY 2018	26.2%	24.7%	10.6%	24.7%	31.8%	35.3%			
FY 2019	19.4%	15.9%	7.9%	23.8%	30.2%				
FY 2020	37.8%	25.6%	2.6%	23.1%					
FY 2021	35.6%	24.4%	13.3%		.				
Overall	23.2%	18.4%	8.1%	26.3%	33.0%				
Filed UI Claim:									
FY 2016	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	0.7%
FY 2017	1.1%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%		
FY 2018	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	1.2%			
FY 2019	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%				
FY 2020	0.6%	7.7%	2.6%	0.0%					
FY 2021	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		.				
Overall	0.3%	1.1%	0.3%	0.9%	1.0%				

Source: AYW TxCC participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe. Participants were counted as employed if they were found in Texas UI earnings records. Those who were not found may be unemployed, employed outside of Texas, or employed in Texas in a position that is not UI-covered and reported to TWC.

Bold font figures represent the time period when the pandemic began influencing outcomes

**Figure 62. Average Employment and Quarterly Earnings American YouthWorks TxCC Exiters:
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services**



The following two figures present the long-term employment and earnings outcomes for the FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts from one year prior to seeking services through four years post-services.

Figure 63 illustrates the trend in employment found in the data for both FY 2016 and FY 2017 cohorts. Compared to the year prior to entering services, employment outcomes improved for both cohorts across time with some fluctuation, with an employment gain of 7.9 percentage points for the FY 2017 cohort and 16.6 percentage points for the FY 2016 cohort.

Figure 64 illustrates a steady upward trend in earnings from the last service quarter through the fourth year post-services for both cohorts. Earnings found in the data for the FY 2016 cohort increased by more than 344% over the period of time examined. The FY 2017 cohort earnings increased by approximately 150% across time for the periods examined.

Figure 63. Average Quarterly Employment for AYW TxCC Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services

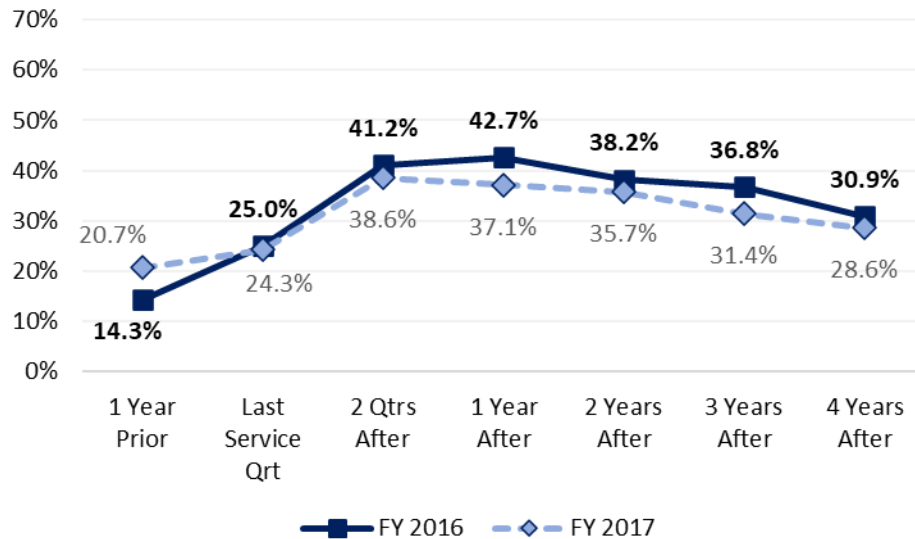
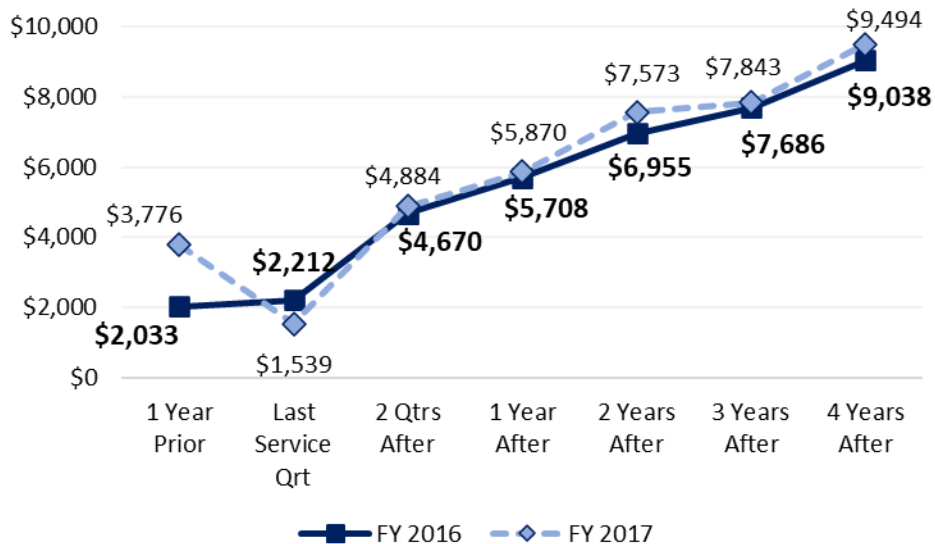


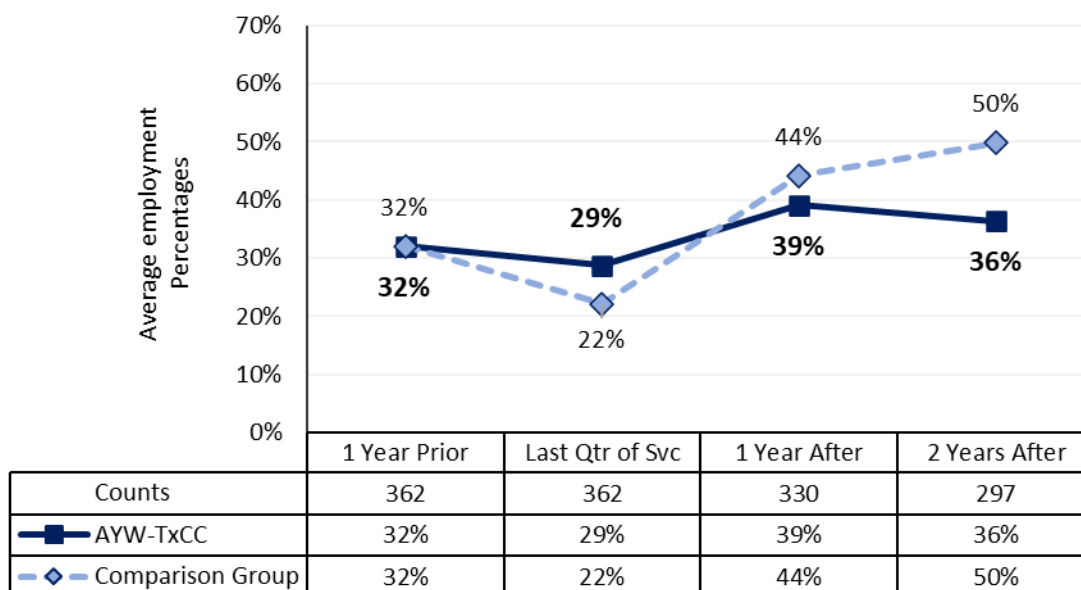
Figure 64. Average Quarterly Earnings for AYW TxCC Exiters: FY 2016 and FY 2017
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services



Program Impacts

In Figure 65, the impact of participation in AYW TxCC services is examined by looking at participants' employment rate over time in relation to the comparison group's employment rate. The analysis shows that the comparison group outpaced the TxCC group by 14 percentage points by the second year post-services. TxCC participants are often students who intend to return to complete their secondary education following their TxCC experience. This continued enrollment in education may be the factor influencing TxCC employment rates during the period examined for this analysis.

**Figure 65. Employment Rate over Time, AYW TxCC Participants vs. Comparison Group:
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=362)**



In Figure 66, the impact of participation in AYW TxCC services is examined by looking at participants' earnings over time, regardless of employment status (i.e., unconditional earnings), in relation to the comparison group's unconditional earnings. The analysis shows that the comparison group's earnings outpace the TxCC participant group throughout the first and second year post-services. During the second year post-services the comparison group earnings surpassed TxCC earnings by \$1,334.

**Figure 66. Average Annual Earnings Over Time, AYW TxCC Participants vs. Comparison Group:
FY 2016–FY 2021
1 year prior to services through 2 years post-services (n=362)**

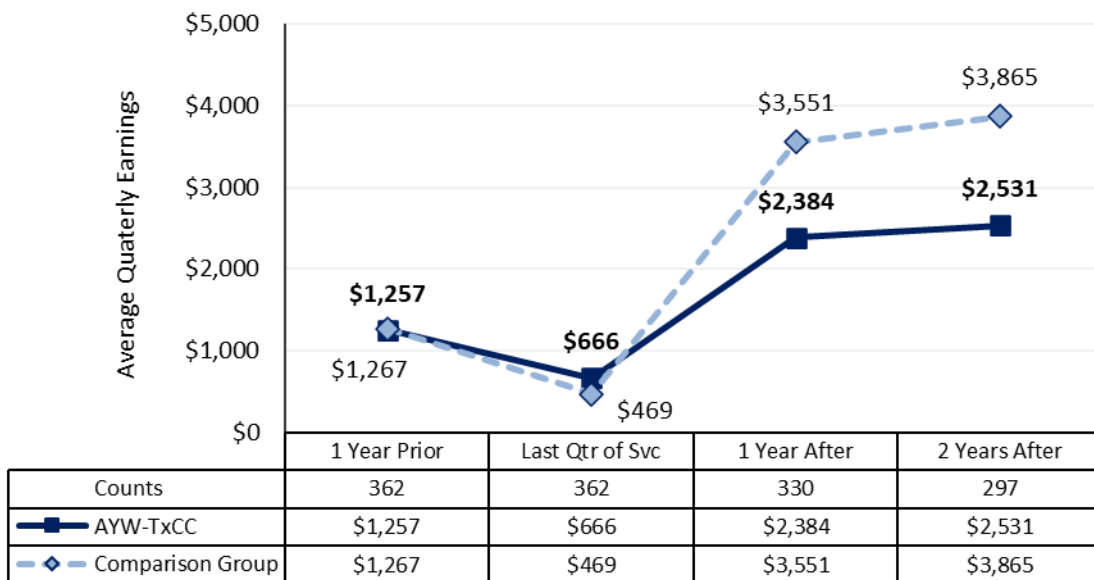


Table 31 presents findings from the impacts analysis comparing the outcomes of TxCC FY 2016–FY 2021 exiters to the outcomes of a matched comparison group. The analysis identified a statistically significant postive impact in UI benefits claims at the .05 level of significance.

Table 31. AYW TxCC Program Impact FY 2016–FY 2021 (n=362)

Impact measure	All Qtrs Post-service: Comparison Group	All Qtrs Post-service: Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	47.3%	38.7%	-8.6%	-5.5%
Average Quarterly Earnings	\$7,574	\$5,672	-\$1,903	-\$405
Qualified for UI Benefits	42.2%	29.7%	-12.6%	-7.0%
Filed UI Claim	1.79%	1.00%	-0.8%	-1.1%*

Note: **=significant at $p < .01$; *= significant at $p < .05$

As a group, TxCC participants often continue their education at colleges and universities following their term of service. Recent findings in research conducted by Conzelmann et al (2022) find that more than 30% of recent college graduates are living and working in a different state than where

they graduated. The migration of higher education graduates to other states may influence the employment and earnings outcomes and impacts, as the data available for this analysis included only Texas UI earnings data.

AYW Subgroup Analysis: YouthBuild & TxCC Participant Outcomes and Program Impacts by Race/Ethnicity and Education

This report section evaluates the employment and earnings outcomes for three groups of AYW FY 2016–FY 2021 program exiters by race/ethnicity: (1) YouthBuild exiters without a high school credential, (2) YouthBuild exiters with a high school credential (HSC), and (3) Texas Conservation Corps exiters. For the purpose of this analysis, participants identified in the data as Hispanic were assigned solely a Hispanic status. Therefore, individuals identified as White/Hispanic or Black/Hispanic were assigned as Hispanic. Demographics for each of the three groups are presented in Table 32. The majority of YouthBuild exiters *without* an HSC identified as Hispanic (59.6%), the majority of exiters for both the YouthBuild *with a HSC* and the TxCC groups, identified as white (44.6% and 60.3% respectively). The YouthBuild participants entering the program without an HSC were younger and more likely to have experienced judicial involvement compared to the other two groups included in this analysis.

Table 32. AYW Program Exiters by Race/Ethnicity and Education: FY 2016–FY 2021

	YouthBuild Without a High School Credential	YouthBuild With a High School Credential	Texas Conservation Corps
Number of Participants with SSNs	275	83	370
Gender			
Female	44.7%	47.0%	43.5%
Male	54.9%	51.8%	55.1%
Transgender	0.4%	1.2%	1.1%
Race			
White	12.0%	44.6%	60.3%
Black	16.4%	14.5%	2.2%
Hispanic	59.6%	24.1%	10.3%
Asian	0.0%	3.6%	2.7%
Two Or More Races	2.9%	3.6%	2.7%
Other	6.2%	4.8%	2.4%
Missing/Unknown	2.9%	4.8%	19.5%
Age			
14 - 19 years	70.9%	20.5%	12.4%
20 - 29 years	22.9%	77.1%	84.1%
30 - 39 years	0.4%	0.0%	1.1%
Missing/Unknown	5.8%	2.4%	2.4%
Average Age	19	22	23
Judicial Involvement			
Yes	42.5%	18.1%	0.0%
No	43.3%	39.8%	0.0%
Missing/Unknown	14.2%	42.2%	100.0%

Participant Outcomes

The following analysis reports on outcomes for three groups of AYW FY 2016–FY 2021 program exiters by race/ethnicity: (1) YouthBuild exiters without a high school credential, (2) YouthBuild exiters with a high school credential, and (3) Texas Conservation Corps exiters. The outcomes evaluation examines participants' labor market experiences prior to entering the program, and then tracks their labor market outcomes following program exit up to three years post-service for those for whom data were available.

YouthBuild participants entering without an HSC

Table 33 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for 275 YouthBuild participants who entered services without a high school credential and exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021. For this analysis, labor market outcomes are disaggregated by race/ethnicity.

A majority of the 275 exiters who entered services without a high school credential identified as Hispanic (59.6%), 16.4% identified as Black, 12% identifying as White, and 6.2% as Other (see Table 30).

From one year pre-service through the second year post-service, Black participants overall experienced the greatest increase in employment, rising from 19.4% to 60.7% two year post-services, a 41.3 percentage point gain representing a 213% increase in employment. Participants identified as White experienced the greatest income gains from one year pre-service (\$1,578) through two years post-service (\$5,475), representing a \$3,897 increase over time. Hispanic participants had the highest pre-service earnings of \$2,302 with reported earnings increasing to \$4,700 by the second year post-services, a gain of \$2,398.

Prior to entering YouthBuild, only 17.6% of participants had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits, increasing to an overall 44.3% two years post-services. White participants experienced the greatest rate gain in eligibility for UI benefits from one year prior to services (15.2%) through the second year post-services (61.5%), a 46.4 percentage point gain.

Overall, White participants filed fewer UI benefit claims (3.0% during the last service quarter), compared to Black and Hispanic participants who filed benefit claims during most service periods examined for this analysis, ranging from .5% to 7.1%.

**Table 33. AYW YouthBuild Exiters Without a High School Credential at Program Entry:
FY 2016–FY 2021**

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service
Number of Participants:						
White	33	33	33	26	13	10
Black	45	45	45	40	28	20
Hispanic	164	164	164	147	109	75
Other	25	25	25	22	18	8
Missing/Unknown	8	8	8	8	8	8
Total	275	275	275	243	176	121
Quarterly Employment:						
White	28.8%	57.6%	51.5%	50.0%	61.5%	70.0%
Black	19.4%	44.4%	51.1%	52.5%	60.7%	50.0%
Hispanic	43.0%	68.3%	65.9%	58.5%	59.6%	60.0%
Other	37.0%	68.0%	60.0%	50.0%	22.2%	12.5%
Missing/Unknown	37.5%	62.5%	62.5%	50.0%	50.0%	75.0%
Overall	36.7%	62.9%	61.1%	55.6%	55.7%	57.0%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
White	\$1,578	\$2,573	\$3,585	\$4,030	\$5,475	\$5,421
Black	\$1,377	\$2,186	\$2,430	\$3,348	\$3,939	\$4,358
Hispanic	\$2,302	\$2,777	\$3,527	\$3,465	\$4,700	\$4,561
Other	\$1,433	\$2,067	\$3,413	\$3,939	\$2,870	\$10,281
Missing/Unknown	\$1,958	\$1,411	\$2,351	\$2,253	\$4,641	\$4,072
Overall	\$2,064	\$2,577	\$3,337	\$3,504	\$4,554	\$4,659
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
White	15.2%	18.2%	24.2%	38.5%	61.5%	70.0%
Black	10.0%	11.1%	13.3%	37.5%	46.4%	40.0%
Hispanic	19.8%	28.7%	31.7%	53.7%	45.9%	49.3%
Other	17.0%	24.0%	20.0%	45.5%	27.8%	25.0%
Missing/Unknown	28.1%	50.0%	25.0%	37.5%	25.0%	50.0%
Overall	17.6%	24.7%	26.6%	48.2%	44.3%	47.9%
Filed UI Claim:						
White	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Black	1.1%	4.4%	2.2%	5.0%	7.1%	0.0%
Hispanic	0.5%	6.1%	1.8%	2.0%	4.6%	10.7%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Overall	0.5%	4.7%	2.2%	2.5%	4.0%	7.4%

Source: AYW YouthBuild participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe.

YouthBuild participants with an HSC

Table 34 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for YouthBuild participants who entered services with a high school credential and exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021.

A majority of the 83 exiters found in the data identified as White (44.6%) or Hispanic (24.1%), while 14.5% of participants identified as Black.

From one year pre-service through the second year post-service, for those with SSNs found in the data, Black participants experienced the greatest increase in employment, from 31.3% one year prior to services to 66.7% at two years post-services, representing a 35.4 percentage point increase. Those identifying as Hispanic experienced a 26.1 percentage point gain, from 52.5% one year prior to receiving services to 78.6% at two years post-services.

Participants identifying as Black experienced the greatest income gains from one year pre-service (\$2,808) through the second year post-services (\$6,983), a \$4,176 earnings gain for those appearing in the data.

Overall, participants with sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits increased from 25.6% prior to receiving services to 41.5% during the second year post-services.

Overall, White participants filed the fewest UI benefit claims during the period examined, while Blacks filed nearly twice as many claims as White participants.

Table 34. AYW YouthBuild Exiters with a High School Credential at Program Entry: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service
Number of Participants:						
White	37	37	37	32	21	14
Black	12	12	12	7	6	4
Hispanic	20	20	20	19	14	5
Other	10	10	10	9	8	4
Missing/Unknown	4	4	4	4	4	4
Total	83	83	83	71	53	31
Quarterly Employment:						
White	14.9%	32.4%	40.5%	40.6%	23.8%	21.4%
Black	31.3%	50.0%	58.3%	42.9%	66.7%	100.0%
Hispanic	52.5%	50.0%	65.0%	63.2%	78.6%	100.0%
Other	47.5%	30.0%	40.0%	55.6%	50.0%	75.0%
Missing/Unknown	12.5%	25.0%	75.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%
Overall	30.1%	38.6%	50.6%	49.3%	47.2%	51.6%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
White	\$4,002	\$3,788	\$6,602	\$6,817	\$6,056	\$3,346
Black	\$2,808	\$6,090	\$8,295	\$4,354	\$6,983	\$7,351
Hispanic	\$2,563	\$2,819	\$3,649	\$4,851	\$3,999	\$5,081
Other	\$3,528	\$1,811	\$5,355	\$5,086	\$10,092	\$9,885
Missing/Unknown	\$580	\$2,866	\$5,559	\$4,250	\$8,271	\$7,079
Overall	\$3,060	\$3,703	\$5,777	\$5,538	\$6,034	\$6,349
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
White	14.2%	10.8%	10.8%	37.5%	38.1%	21.4%
Black	25.0%	33.3%	25.0%	14.3%	33.3%	75.0%
Hispanic	46.3%	35.0%	40.0%	36.8%	50.0%	100.0%
Other	35.0%	20.0%	20.0%	44.4%	37.5%	75.0%
Missing/Unknown	6.3%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	50.0%	25.0%
Overall	25.6%	20.5%	21.7%	38.0%	41.5%	48.4%
Filed UI Claim:						
White	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%
Black	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	16.7%	0.0%
Hispanic	1.3%	5.0%	10.0%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Overall	0.9%	1.2%	3.6%	2.8%	3.8%	0.0%

Source: AYW YouthBuild participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe.

Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcome's graphs.

TxCC Participants

Table 35 provides an overview of labor market outcomes for TxCC participants who exited services (completed or dropped out) from FY 2016–FY 2021. A majority of the 370 exiters found in the data identified as White (60.3%), 10.3% identified as Hispanic, and only 2.2% identified as Black (19.5% of the participants found in the data were missing/unknown race/ethnicity).

Hispanic participants were found to have the highest rate of employment during the four quarters pre-service, 54%, compared to Blacks at 34.4%, and Whites at 29.7%. The highest gain in the rate of employment during the second year post-services was reported for Hispanics, a 14.1 percentage point increase.

Consistently, for all groups represented in the data, earnings gains were steady across the entire post-service period examined. Participants with race/ethnicity identified as missing/unknown (approximately 20% of TxCC participants) experienced the greatest income gains from pre-service through the second year post-service, \$5,061. White, Hispanic, and Other participants experienced income gains across this period ranging from approximately \$2,294 to \$3,499 (participants identified as Black did not appear in sufficient numbers in the data to report on income during this time period).

During the four quarters prior to service, an average of 23.2% of exiters were identified in the data to have sufficient employment and earning history to meet the monetary eligibility requirement for UI benefits, with Hispanics having the highest rate of 38.8%. By the second year post-services, for those for whom data were available, the overall rate of eligibility rose to 33%, with Hispanics experiencing an increase to 52%, an 13.2 percentage point increase.

Overall, few participants filed a claim for UI benefits in the period examined with the highest rates of UI claims likely occurred during the pandemic.

Table 35. AYW TxCC Exiters: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service
Number of Participants:						
White	223	223	223	201	188	156
Black	8	8	8	8	6	5
Hispanic	38	38	38	32	25	17
Other	29	29	29	27	22	14
Missing/Unknown	72	72	72	70	62	62
Total	370	370	370	338	303	254
Quarterly Employment:						
White	27.9%	26.9%	37.2%	36.8%	34.0%	31.4%
Black	34.4%	25.0%	50.0%	37.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	54.0%	39.5%	71.1%	59.4%	68.0%	58.8%
Other	27.6%	24.1%	37.9%	29.6%	27.3%	28.6%
Missing/Unknown	16.0%	27.8%	40.3%	38.6%	35.5%	33.9%
Overall	28.4%	28.1%	41.6%	38.8%	36.0%	33.1%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
White	\$4,016	\$2,448	\$5,919	\$6,104	\$7,244	\$8,125
Black	\$4,584	\$1,944	\$2,137	\$4,637	.	.
Hispanic	\$3,274	\$3,113	\$5,610	\$7,205	\$6,773	\$7,559
Other	\$4,212	\$835	\$3,966	\$5,732	\$6,506	\$8,570
Missing/Unknown	\$2,167	\$1,883	\$4,902	\$5,848	\$7,228	\$8,023
Overall	\$3,698	\$2,317	\$5,436	\$6,155	\$7,127	\$8,053
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
White	22.3%	20.2%	8.1%	24.9%	31.4%	34.6%
Black	31.3%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Hispanic	38.8%	29.0%	18.4%	56.3%	52.0%	58.8%
Other	21.6%	10.3%	3.5%	11.1%	22.7%	35.7%
Missing/Unknown	17.4%	9.7%	5.6%	22.9%	35.5%	32.3%
Overall	23.2%	18.4%	8.1%	26.3%	33.0%	35.0%
Filed UI Claim:						
White	0.1%	0.9%	0.5%	0.5%	1.1%	0.6%
Black	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	0.7%	5.3%	0.0%	3.1%	4.0%	5.9%
Other	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Overall	0.3%	1.1%	0.3%	0.9%	1.0%	0.8%

Source: AYW YouthBuild participant records and Texas Workforce Commission UI earnings and claim records.

Note: A dot represents too few participants (<10), no data to report, or insufficient time passing to report for that timeframe.

Post-service quarters with low cohort counts were not included in the outcome's graphs.

Discussion of Outcomes

Among all three groups of exiters, Hispanic participants had the highest rates of employment one year prior to services, as well as the highest rates of employment in the second year post-services with one exception: all YouthBuild participants entering services without an HSC experienced similar rates of employment during the second year post-services. However, the data demonstrated that the participants identifying as Black (YouthBuild participants without an HSC) experienced the highest percentage change in employment over time (Table 36).

Table 36. AYW Exiters Employment Outcomes by Race/Ethnicity FY 2016–FY 2021

Employment	Hispanic	Black	White
One Year Prior to Entering Services			
YouthBuild no HSC n=275	43.0%	19.4%	28.8%
YouthBuild with HSC n= 83	52.5%	31.3%	14.9%
TxCC n=370	54.0%	34.4%	27.9%
Second Year Post-services			
YouthBuild no HSC n=176	59.6%	60.7%	61.5%
YouthBuild with HSC n=53	78.6%	66.7%	23.8%
TxCC n=303	68.0%	37.5%*	34.0%
Percentage Change Across Time			
YouthBuild no HSC	16.6%	41.3%	32.8%
YouthBuild with HSC	26.1%	35.4%	9.0%
TxCC	14.1%	3.1%*	6.1%

*one year post-service

YouthBuild participants with an HSC and TxCC participants identified as White entered services with the highest reported earnings. White YouthBuild participants who entered services with an HSC experienced the greatest increase in earnings over time. Hispanic YouthBuild participants with an HSC at the time of program entry were identified in the data to have had the weakest earnings gains across time (Table 37).

Table 37. AYW Exiters Earnings Outcomes by Race/Ethnicity FY 2016–FY 2021

Earnings	Hispanic	Black	White
Four Quarters Prior to Entering Services			
YouthBuild no HSC n=275	\$2,302	\$1,377	\$1,578
YouthBuild with HSC n= 83	\$2,563	\$2,808	\$4,002
TxCC n=370	\$3,274	\$4,584	\$4,016
Second Year Post-services			
YouthBuild no HSC n=176	\$4,700	\$3,939	\$5,475
YouthBuild with HSC n=53	\$3,999	\$6,983	\$6,056
TxCC n=303	\$6,773	\$4,637*	\$7,244
Change Across Time			
YouthBuild no HSC	\$2,398	\$2,562	\$3,896
YouthBuild with HSC	\$1,436	\$4,176	\$2,055
TxCC	\$3,499	\$53*	\$3,228

*one year post-service

YouthBuild & TxCC: Participant Outcomes and Program Impacts by Gender and Education

The following section evaluates the employment and earnings outcomes for three groups of AYW FY 2016–FY 2021 program exiters by gender (those identifying as either male or female): (1) YouthBuild exiters without a high school credential, (2) YouthBuild exiters with a high school credential (HSC), and (3) Texas Conservation Corps exiters (Tables 38, 39, and 40).

Table 38. AYW YouthBuild Exiters Outcomes Without a High School Credential at Program Entry by Gender: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service
Number of Participants:						
Female	123	123	123	101	66	47
Male	151	151	151	141	110	74
Total	274	274	274	242	176	121
Quarterly Employment:						
Female	41.3%	65.9%	61.0%	51.5%	54.6%	.
Male	33.0%	60.3%	60.9%	58.2%	56.4%	.
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
Female	\$2,075	\$2,490	\$2,999	\$3,245	\$3,791	
Male	\$2,067	\$2,643	\$3,606	\$3,611	\$4,997	
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
Female	20.5%	28.5%	28.5%	44.6%	43.9%	
Male	15.4%	21.9%	25.2%	50.4%	44.6%	
Filed UI Claim:						
Female	0.4%	7.3%	3.3%	2.0%	7.6%	
Male	0.5%	2.7%	1.3%	2.8%	1.8%	

Table 39. AYW YouthBuild Exiters Outcomes With a High School Credential at Program Entry by Gender: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service
Number of Participants:						
Female	39	39	39	32	24	13
Male	43	43	43	38	28	17
Total	82	82	82	70	52	30
Quarterly Employment:						
Female	39.7%	46.2%	53.9%	50.0%	45.8%	.
Male	20.9%	30.2%	46.5%	47.4%	46.4%	.
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
Female	\$3,495	\$4,006	\$6,221	\$6,892	\$7,471	
Male	\$2,400	\$3,436	\$5,495	\$4,533	\$5,071	
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
Female	35.3%	25.6%	25.6%	46.9%	37.5%	
Male	16.9%	14.0%	16.3%	29.0%	42.9%	
Filed UI Claim:						
Female	1.3%	0.0%	7.7%	3.1%	8.3%	
Male	0.6%	2.3%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	

Table 40. AYW TxCC Exiters Outcomes by Gender: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service	Last Qtr of Service	2nd Qtr Post-service	1 Year Post-service	2 Years Post-service	3 Years Post-service
Number of Participants:						
Female	161	161	161	143	125	105
Male	204	204	204	190	176	147
Total	365	365	365	333	301	252
Quarterly Employment:						
Female	36.7%	32.9%	49.1%	42.7%	42.4%	.
Male	22.1%	24.5%	36.3%	36.8%	31.8%	.
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
Female	\$3,787	\$2,114	\$5,436	\$6,120	\$6,879	
Male	\$3,638	\$2,577	\$5,482	\$6,185	\$7,361	
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
Female	30.3%	25.5%	12.4%	30.8%	33.6%	
Male	18.0%	13.2%	4.9%	23.7%	33.0%	
Filed UI Claim:						
Female	0.2%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	
Male	0.4%	1.0%	0.5%	1.6%	0.6%	

Table 41 illustrates outcomes for the three groups from one year prior to services through the second year post-services. Within the available data, all three groups across time represent more males than females. Prior to program entry, more females are represented in the employment data compared to males. By the second year post-services, not only do more individuals appear in the data as employed, but the share of male participants also increased, decreasing the gap between males and females found in the data. In general, females reported higher earnings during the one year prior to services. During the second year post-services the YouthBuild participants entering without an HSC and TxCC members outpaced the females in average quarterly earnings by \$367 and \$64, respectively. YouthBuild females entering services with an HSC reported, on average, \$2,359 in higher average quarterly earnings than males during the second post-service year.

During the pre-service year, more females met the eligibility requirements to qualify for UI benefits. This trend held throughout the second year post-services for YouthBuild participants entering with an HSC and the TxCC. However, males entering without an HSC were found to have higher rates of eligibility for UI benefits than females during the second post-service quarter. Overall, few participants, males, and females, filed UI benefits claims during the period examined.

Table 41. AYW Exiters Outcomes by Gender: FY 2016–FY 2021

Cohort Outcome Measure	1 Year Prior to Service			2nd Year Post-service		
Number of Participants:	YB No HSC	YB HSC	TxCC	YB No HSC	YB HSC	TxCC
Female	123	39	161	101	32	143
Male	151	43	204	141	38	190
Total	274	82	365	242	70	333
Quarterly Employment:						
Female	41.3%	39.7%	36.7%	51.5%	50.0%	42.7%
Male	33.0%	20.9%	22.1%	58.2%	47.4%	36.8%
Difference	8.3%	18.8%	14.6%	-6.7%	2.6%	5.8%
Average Qrtly Earnings:						
Female	\$2,075	\$3,495	\$3,787	\$3,245	\$6,892	\$6,120
Male	\$2,067	\$2,400	\$3,638	\$3,611	\$4,533	\$6,185
Difference	\$8	\$1,095	\$149	-\$367	\$2,359	-\$64
Qualified for UI Benefits:						
Female	20.5%	35.3%	30.3%	44.6%	46.9%	30.8%
Male	15.4%	16.9%	18.0%	50.4%	29.0%	23.7%
Difference	5.1%	18.4%	12.3%	-5.8%	17.9%	7.1%
Filed UI Claim:						
Female	0.4%	1.3%	0.2%	2.0%	3.1%	0.0%
Male	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%	2.8%	2.6%	1.6%

Conclusions

Travis County invests local tax dollars in a continuum of services to improve opportunities for disadvantaged residents, including long-standing investments in workforce development services. Through contracts with a mix of workforce development providers and programs, the County funds opportunities that range from adult basic education to short-term job skills training, up to and including longer-term occupational training for high-earnings careers. Each training provider receiving Travis County funding has established target populations to serve, with many using County funds to serve individuals facing considerable obstacles to employment, such as homelessness or judicial involvement.

For all programs included in this analysis, operations were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in mid-March 2020. The data appear to capture early effects on employment and earnings, as well as on the share of exiters filing for unemployment benefits, stemming from local, state, and federal efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus. For all programs, FY 2021 continued with hybrid solutions in providing services, while facing challenges in both retention, and recruitment.

For all programs, the analysis of the FY 2016–FY 2021 cohorts overall employment outcomes identified gains in employment over time. From one year prior to entering services through two years post-services, overall program participant employment rate gains ranged from 3.5 percentage points to 22.8 percentage points. In addition, during this same time period, the rate of participants meeting the employment requirements to be eligible for UI benefits also increased ranging from 12.1 percentage points to 28.1 percentage points, signaling an improvement in employment stability.

However, the analysis of long-term employment outcomes for the FY 2016 cohort did not identify a consistent pattern across all programs. Rather, outcomes from one year prior to service entry through five years post-services varied. Removing from this discussion the two programs serving the majority of youth ages 19 and younger,⁵⁴ participants with comparatively lower rates of pre-service employment and the highest rates of employment gains across time (23.5 and 14.4 percentage points), employment rates for the remaining program participants ranged from a 6.8 percentage point gain a loss of 6.7 percentage points.

During this same time period, the rate of participants meeting the employment requirements to be eligible for UI benefits increased, ranging across programs and populations from .6 percentage points to 40.4 percentage points, with most rates of eligibility for UI benefits ranging from 5.9 to 17.4 percentage points, signaling an improvement in employment stability for the majority of program

⁵⁴ Serving participants 19 or younger: LifeWorks, 49.0% and American Youth Works 35.4%.

participant exiters.

While overall employment rates declined over time for many program participants, earnings outcomes for those for whom data are available illustrated earnings gains. Across all programs, overall participants found in the data report a steady increase in earnings over time, with earnings gains from one year prior to services to five years post-services ranging from \$2,407 to \$7,113.

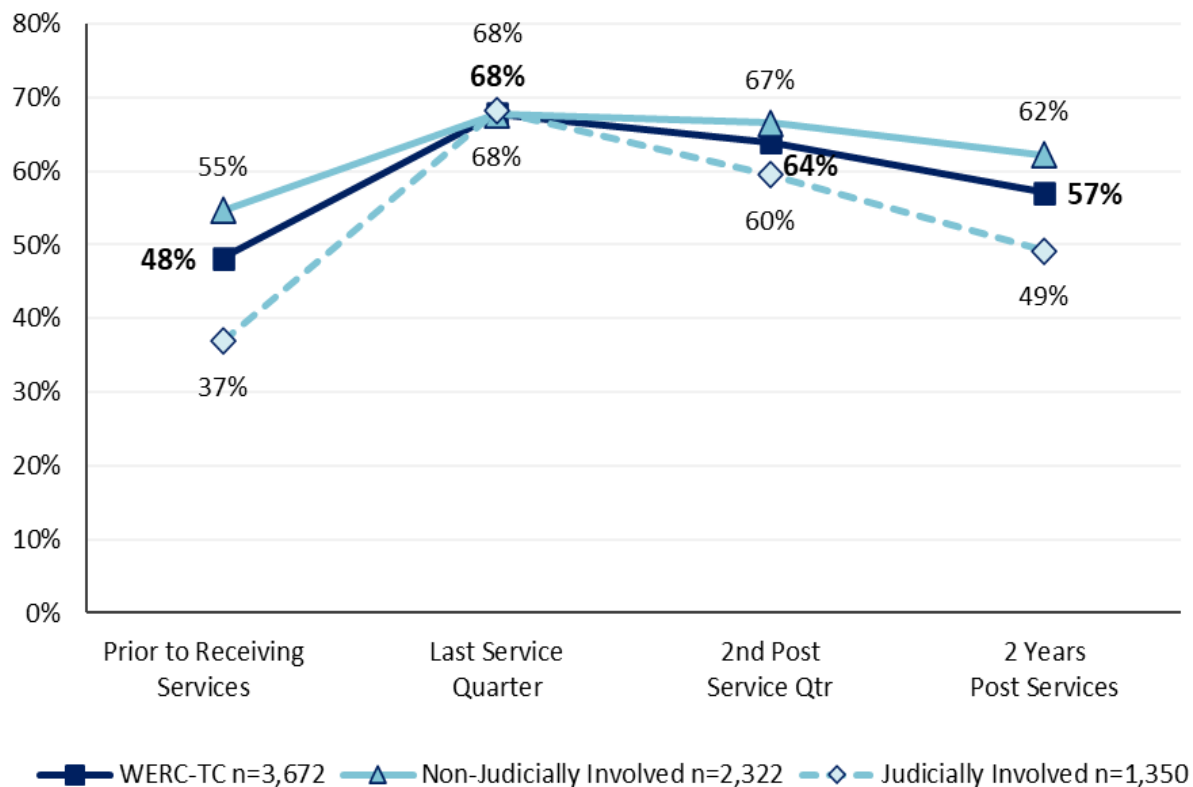
The decline in employment and the gains in earnings found in the data may reflect a number of factors. The UI earnings data does not report on contract labor employment and earnings. As employment rates dropped during the early quarters of the pandemic, unemployed individuals may have entered contract employment as opportunities to work as delivery drivers and other contracted services increased during the pandemic. Further, the UI earnings data is limited to employers in the state of Texas. During the pandemic companies outside of the state of Texas recruited to hire remote workers. These remote Texas workers, employed by a company outside of the state, will not be included in the Texas earnings data. It is unknown how many individuals are included in these two groups, or that can be combined with individuals who experienced fragile housing, transportation, and child care arrangements that may have influenced their ability to consistently maintain employment.

One of the strengths of the Travis County workforce development funding model is that funds are distributed to organizations providing services to individuals at different points along their career development pathway. The variety of services offered, and target populations served with Travis County workforce development funding makes cross-provider comparisons inappropriate. The providers can be grouped by populations and subpopulations served to provide a more in-depth review of participant outcomes and program impact.

Interviews with area service providers revealed concerns for the employment stability of individuals with a history of judicial involvement. Providers noted that in their experience, the participants with a history of judicial involvement obtain employment at rates similar to other program participants yet experience unique challenges in maintaining employment.⁵⁵ Figure 67 presents the changes in overall rates of employment outcomes for WERC-TC collaborative participants, and those identified as judicially involved and non-judicially from pre-service to two years post-services. The figure illustrates the identical rates of employment for all three groups during the last service quarter, followed by a steady decrease in employment for all three groups with the judicially involved exiters experiencing the greatest decline in employment.

⁵⁵ Two programs served 73.9% of the 1,350 WERC-TC judicially involved participants: Goodwill and AAUL.

**Figure 67. Overall Employment Outcomes Changes Over Time:
All WERC-TC Exiters, Non-Judicially Involved and Judicially Involved for FY 2016–FY 2021**



This report included the analysis of participant outcomes by education, race/ethnicity, and gender for three subpopulations of American Youthworks participants. As discussed earlier in this report, White YouthBuild participants entering services with an HSC were identified in the data as experiencing the lowest rate of employment during the four quarters pre-service, 14.9%. Black YouthBuild participants who entered services without an HSC also had a low pre-service employment rate of 19.4% compared to other subpopulations included in this analysis. Table 42 presented the changes over time in average quarterly employment and earnings across four quarters pre-service to the second year post-services. During the period examined Black participants entering YouthBuild services without an HSC experienced the highest increase in employment, 41.3% and the Black participants entering services with an HSC experienced the highest earning gain of \$4,176.

Table 42. AYW Changes in Average Employment and Quarterly Earnings by Race/Ethnicity from One Year Prior to Services through Two Years Post-services

Employment	Hispanic	Black	White
YouthBuild no HSC n=275	16.6%	41.3%	32.8%
YouthBuild with HSC n= 83	26.1%	35.4%	9.0%
TxCC n=370	14.1%	3.1%*	6.1%
Earnings	Hispanic	Black	White
YouthBuild no HSC n=275	\$2,398	\$2,562	\$3,896
YouthBuild with HSC n= 83	\$1,436	\$4,176	\$2,055
TxCC n=370	\$3,499	\$53*	\$3,228

* one year post-service

The full effects on employment and earnings stemming from the pandemic are far from fully understood but will merit deeper scrutiny in the coming months and years. Fundamental transformations to the workforce and the workforce development system are becoming evident, and the methods for measuring these effects are still to be developed.

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Appendix A-1: Demographics of Travis County Workforce Development Programs FY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters

	Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	Capital IDEA	Lifeworks	Skillpoint	American YouthWorks	Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WERC-TC)
Number of Participants with SSNs	448	1,180	249	897	728	3,683
Gender						
Female	56.0%	70.3%	62.2%	44.4%	44.4%	42.8%
Male	44.0%	29.7%	36.1%	55.3%	54.7%	56.8%
Transgender	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.1%	0.8%	0.3%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%
Race						
White	13.6%	24.6%	20.1%	23.4%	40.2%	21.3%
Black	19.4%	19.5%	25.3%	32.4%	8.9%	51.3%
Hispanic	53.6%	43.2%	47.8%	34.1%	30.5%	22.8%
Asian	3.1%	3.6%	0.8%	1.6%	1.8%	1.5%
Two Or More Races	0.0%	1.4%	4.0%	1.9%	2.9%	0.9%
Other	2.0%	0.4%	1.6%	1.6%	4.1%	0.8%
Missing/Unknown	8.3%	7.4%	0.4%	5.0%	11.5%	1.5%
Age						
14 - 19 years	3.6%	7.5%	49.0%	15.7%	35.4%	5.8%
20 - 29 years	21.7%	49.1%	51.0%	39.7%	60.2%	25.2%
30 - 39 years	10.5%	30.3%	0.0%	25.3%	0.7%	26.6%
40 - 49 years	12.7%	9.5%	0.0%	10.6%	0.0%	21.2%
50 - 59 years	10.0%	2.8%	0.0%	6.4%	0.0%	15.8%
60 years and older	1.8%	0.7%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	4.9%
Missing/Unknown	39.7%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	3.7%	0.4%
Average Age	36	30	20	31	21	38

(Demographics Continued)

	Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	Capital IDEA	Lifeworks	Skillpoint	American YouthWorks	Workforce Solutions Capital Area (WERC-TC)
Education Level						
Less than 12th grade	28.6%	1.4%	68.3%	5.4%	38.0%	19.2%
12th grade or HSEC	21.9%	50.3%	24.5%	60.0%	42.0%	62.7%
Attended or Graduated College	1.6%	47.5%	4.0%	30.4%	4.9%	18.1%
Missing/Unknown	48.0%	0.8%	3.2%	4.2%	15.0%	0.0%
Area of Residence						
Central Austin	4.2%	2.5%	2.0%	2.5%	4.5%	3.3%
North Austin	19.9%	25.0%	14.9%	13.9%	4.1%	20.1%
Northern Suburbs	4.9%	10.2%	2.8%	15.1%	2.5%	5.2%
East Austin	31.5%	24.9%	34.1%	18.8%	25.4%	26.7%
Eastern Suburbs	3.8%	7.4%	3.2%	8.2%	3.2%	13.7%
South Austin	26.6%	24.7%	39.0%	20.3%	34.5%	17.3%
Southern Suburbs	1.1%	0.3%	0.8%	4.0%	5.1%	0.2%
West Austin	1.6%	3.4%	2.0%	2.3%	2.5%	2.7%
Western Suburbs	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.9%	1.6%	0.3%
Other/Unknown	1.3%	1.4%	1.2%	13.9%	16.6%	10.5%
Judicial Involvement						
Yes	0.0%	5.8%	14.9%	13.6%	18.1%	36.7%
No	0.0%	40.3%	4.8%	50.1%	20.9%	63.1%
Missing/Unknown	100.0%	53.9%	80.3%	36.3%	61.0%	0.2%
Receives Public Benefits						
Yes	0.0%	17.4%	30.5%	0.0%	0.0%	20.2%
No	0.0%	28.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	22.9%
Missing/Unknown	100.0%	53.9%	69.5%	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%
Veteran						
Yes	0.0%	1.0%	0.4%	5.0%	0.0%	7.1%
No	0.0%	43.1%	99.6%	82.5%	0.0%	92.6%
Missing/Unknown	100.0%	55.9%	0.0%	12.5%	100.0%	0.3%

Appendix A-2: Demographics of WERC-TCFY 2016–FY 2021 Exiters by Program

	WFSCA Career Centers	Goodwill Will	Austin Area Urban League	American YouthWorks
Number of Participants with SSNs	1,137	1,059	1,055	429
Gender				
Female	33.5%	45.4%	49.2%	45.7%
Male	66.4%	54.3%	50.5%	53.1%
Transgender	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	1.2%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Race				
White	24.5%	21.5%	14.1%	30.1%
Black	44.8%	54.5%	67.6%	20.7%
Hispanic	23.7%	20.7%	15.9%	41.7%
Asian	3.4%	0.8%	0.3%	0.9%
Two Or More Races	1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	1.4%
Other	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.5%
Missing/Unknown	1.7%	0.8%	0.8%	4.7%
Age				
14 - 19 years	1.8%	1.0%	3.2%	35.0%
20 - 29 years	21.7%	14.4%	24.7%	62.0%
30 - 39 years	29.3%	33.5%	26.5%	2.8%
40 - 49 years	25.9%	26.6%	19.2%	0.2%
50 - 59 years	16.8%	18.4%	18.5%	0.0%
60 years and older	4.4%	5.5%	6.9%	0.0%
Missing/Unknown	0.2%	0.5%	0.9%	0.0%
Average Age	39	41	39	22

(WERC-TC demographics
by program continued)

	WFSCA Career Centers	Goodwill Will	Austin Area Urban League	American YouthWorks
Education Level				
Less than 12th grade	10.6%	17.0%	16.4%	54.3%
12th grade or HSEC	63.3%	64.7%	76.1%	23.1%
Attended or Graduated College	26.0%	18.3%	7.5%	22.6%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Area of Residence				
Central Austin	4.7%	3.0%	2.1%	3.5%
North Austin	25.5%	21.5%	18.5%	6.3%
Northern Suburbs	7.0%	6.0%	4.3%	0.5%
East Austin	22.3%	25.0%	31.6%	30.3%
Eastern Suburbs	10.6%	15.0%	20.1%	2.6%
South Austin	14.6%	17.1%	8.4%	46.6%
Southern Suburbs	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.5%
West Austin	4.5%	2.2%	0.9%	3.7%
Western Suburbs	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%
Other/Unknown	10.0%	9.3%	14.1%	5.8%
Judicial Involvement				
Yes	26.8%	44.9%	49.4%	11.2%
No	73.0%	54.4%	50.6%	88.8%
Missing/Unknown	0.2%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Receives Public Benefits				
Yes	13.9%	22.4%	24.8%	20.5%
No	27.0%	18.5%	27.0%	12.6%
Missing/Unknown	59.1%	59.1%	48.2%	66.9%
Veteran				
Yes	7.9%	7.6%	5.9%	6.8%
No	92.1%	91.7%	94.0%	92.8%
Missing/Unknown	0.0%	0.8%	0.1%	0.5%

Note: The total of WERC-TC participants found in the data equals 3,863. This total is 3 less than the WERC-TC demographics presented in the previous table due to folks from LCCT receiving WFS Career Center services who were not enrolled in WERC-TC.

Appendix B: Description of Outcomes Table Elements

Outcomes Measure	Description
Number of Participants	This represents the total number of unduplicated participant SSNs found in the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) data across the time period examined. For each participant, the time <i>period examined</i> begins four quarters prior to program entry and extends to include all post-service quarters.
Quarterly Employment	This identifies the percentage of the <i>number of participants</i> found in the TWC data at any point during the <i>period examined</i> , who were employed based on earnings submitted by employers to TWC.
Average Quarterly Earnings	This represents paid earnings for individuals that were reported to TWC by employers.
Qualified for UI Benefits	This represents the share of participants who had sufficient employment and earnings histories to meet the monetary eligibility requirements for UI benefits. *
Filed UI Claim	This represents the share of participants who submitted an Unemployment Insurance (UI) application.

*Note: In Texas, monetary eligibility is based on the claimant earning sufficient earnings in at least two quarters of the five quarters prior to filing a claim for benefits.

Appendix C: Description of Impact Table Elements

Impact measure	All Available Post-service Qtrs Data: Comparison and Treatment Group	Unadjusted Net Effect	Impact Measure
Quarterly Employment	Group mean employment rate across all available quarters post-service.	Percentage point difference between mean employment rates for treatment and control groups.	Percentage point difference between mean employment rates for treatment and control group adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).
Average Quarterly Earnings	Group average earnings across all available quarters post-service.	Difference between the average earnings for treatment and control groups.	Difference between the average earnings for treatment and control group adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).
Qualified for UI Benefits	Percentage of group members who qualified for UI benefits across all available quarters post-service.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who qualified for UI benefits.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who qualified for UI benefits adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).
Filed UI Claim	Percentage of group members who filed a UI claim across all available quarters post-service.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who filed a UI claim.	Percentage point difference between treatment and control group members who filed a UI claim adjusted for any differences in their matching characteristics (Match characteristics include a number of variables that may influence the strength of the match relationship between the two groups, including demographics, prior employment status and earnings, etc.).

Appendix D: Quasi-Experimental Impacts Analysis

In addition to updating the matching method, this year's report provides an additional type of analysis of the earnings and employment data for each of the five agencies for whom impacts analyses are conducted. Figures D2-D11 below contain the output from a series of *event study, difference-in-differences* models, using the matched comparison samples. These provide additional information about program impacts, as well as additional assessment of the robustness of the matching method described above.

As noted above, in order to measure the impacts of locally funded workforce services, researchers conducted a quasi-experimental analysis comparing labor market outcomes for workforce participants with those of a comparison group of similar non-participants. Quasi-experimental analysis has been shown to produce impact estimates comparable to those resulting from more rigorous and costly approaches involving the use of experimental designs that randomly assign individuals to treatment and control status.⁵⁶ In fact, for some groups, quasi-experimental estimates tend to understate employment and earnings impacts from workforce services. For these reasons, results presented in this report should be considered conservative estimates of the true impacts.

Quasi-experimental approaches tend to work well when participants for whom comparison groups are being created have sufficient prior employment and earnings histories and when data are available on a sufficient number of variables with which to perform the requisite match. Youth and participants with judicial involvement experiences are problematical in this regard precisely because their prior employment and earnings histories are either lacking or difficult to determine.

Potential comparison group members were drawn from two sources: individuals who either registered to look for employment using the state's *WorkinTexas* (WIT) program or who received "core" services under the Workforce Investment Act or WIA (such as job-matching or résumé development). Thus, the comparison group selected as described below is not a "no-services," but rather a "low-intensity services" group. The resulting impact estimates thus reflect the incremental value of the community's investments in workforce services.

Workforce services participants were matched on a one-to-one basis with potential comparison group members using a method known as Mahalanobis distance matching. This method is similar to the that used in previous versions of this report (propensity score matching); however, recent literature has

⁵⁶ For example, see Greenberg et al. (2006); Hollenbeck and Huang (2006); and Card et al. (2009).

demonstrated several advantages of using the Mahalanobis method⁵⁷. Matching was done by selecting for each participant the one comparison group member judged most similar, based on their pre-treatment demographic and economic attributes. The matching method allows for replacement and uses frequency weights to reflect any repeat control matches. Adequate matching was facilitated by the large sample size of potential comparison matches, consisting of 197,813 potential individuals.

Researchers were able to access matching variables for most participants in locally funded workforce services. All matching variables are measured during pre-treatment quarters. First, exact matching was imposed on three attributes: county of residence; year of entry into the program; and whether or not individuals had recently experienced an earnings dip of 20% or more within two years prior to treatment. Next, Mahalanobis distance matching was conducted on up to seven demographic variables and eight economic variables by treating them as numeric and including them in the overall multivariate distance measurement. The seven demographic variables include: age (for those participants with a recorded birth date, very rarely imputed as agency mean); race/ethnicity (White, Black, Hispanic, unknown); gender; and education level. The eight economic variables include: average earning four years prior to treatment; the magnitude of the maximum quarterly earnings dip (%) within two prior to treatment; whether the individual is employed during the quarter in which the program began; whether the individual's earnings history qualified for UI if he/she were to lose a job (prior to treatment); quarters spent employed (%) over the four years prior to program entry; time since first observed earnings (total quarters); any UI claims filed in the year prior to program entry; any UI benefits received in the year prior to program entry. Table D1 identifies the potential covariates used in the Mahalanobis distance matches for each program.

The adequacy of each agency's comparison group for the quasi-experimental impacts analysis was assessed by performing t-tests on the 15 demographic and economic attributes described previously. These t-tests compare each agency's participant (treatment) sample to its respective, matched comparison sample. Researchers ensure that each treatment sample is sufficiently similar to its matched comparison sample by testing for statistical difference at $p < .01$ on all 15 variables and setting a threshold for match adequacy using eight core variables (the eight economic variables plus age). To be considered adequate, each agency's sample must NOT have significant differences on more than one of these eight core matching variables (see Table D1⁵⁸). While not included in Table D1, we similarly

⁵⁷ King and Nielsen (2019) review the advantages of Mahalanobis matching techniques. The data analyzed in this report is well-suited for this matching method, as researchers match on a large number of covariates; employ both exact and distance matching; and match on a combination of continuous and categorical variables.

⁵⁸ Generally speaking, differences in the measurements were small, even when they were statistically significant.

ensured the adequacy of each agency's matches for relevant subsamples (i.e. AYW's TxCC participants and SkillPoint's CNA participants).

Table D1 . Covariates Used in the Mahalanobis Matching, by Provider: FY 2016-2021

	American Youth Works	Capital IDEA	Literacy Coalition of Central Texas	SailPoint	Workforce Solutions - WERC
Demographics					
Age		√	√	√	√
White	√				
Black	√				√
Hispanic	√		√	√	
Race unknown		√	√		
Gender	√		√		
Education Level					
Economic Attributes					
Average earnings, 4 years prior	√	√	√	√	√
Had earnings dip of 20% or more	√	√	√	√	√
Maximum earnings dip in prior 2 years, percent	√	√	√	√	√
Employed at entry	√	√	√	√	√
Eligible for UI based on work history	√	√	√	√	√
Percent of time employed; 4 years prior	√	√	√	√	√
Time since first observed earnings, quarters	√	√	√	√	√
Any UI benefits in prior year	√	√	√	√	√
Any UI claims in prior year	√	√	√	√	√

Note: √ = Differences between the treatment and control group for identified variables are not statistically significant at $p < .01$

The event study models used in this section are similar to the impact figures and tables in other sections of the report above in several ways: they are quasi-experimental; they use the aforementioned

For example, Age was significantly different at the $p < .002$ level for AYW's participant and matched comparison groups; however, the difference in the average age is substantively quite small: 21.5 for the AYW's treatment sample and 22.1 for the matched comparison sample. When a Mahalanobis matching failed to satisfy the adequacy threshold for a given agency, researchers added or substituted transformations of key variables (i.e. the natural log of wages or age-squared).

matched samples to eliminate pre-treatment differences between the respective participant and comparison groups; they identify an “effect” as the difference between treatment and comparison groups. Beyond these similarities, the event study models offer several additional types of useful information.

First, the event study models assess the “pre-treatment parallel trends assumption”. This provides additional information about the quality of the matches and the validity of the impact measures in the post-treatment quarters for these models, as well as the impacts figures and tables in other sections. The existing impact figures and t-tests demonstrate that treatment and control samples are similar in *levels* or average values for key, pre-treatment variables. The event study models show whether treatment and control samples have similar *trends* or trajectories in the outcome variables, during pre-treatment periods. In Figures D2-D11, there is evidence of pre-treatment parallel trends when the two plotted pre-treatment coefficients (Lead 4 and Lead 3 to the left of the vertical line) have confidence intervals that cross the horizontal, dotted line. When satisfied⁵⁹, this demonstrates that, whatever trajectories individuals demonstrate during those pre-treatment quarters, they were not significantly different between treatment and control samples. This provides additional evidence, on top of the pre-treatment period t-tests, that differences in post-treatment quarters are caused by the treatment and not some unmeasured difference between the participants and their respective comparison groups.

The second advantage of event study method is a more granular view of impacts over time. Figures D2-D11 include impact measures for two years on a quarterly basis. While the impact measures in the tables other sections test for differences in outcomes for all post-treatment quarters, overall, the quarterly impact coefficients (Lag 1 through Lag 8), reveal when the impact is the strongest and for how

⁵⁹ This condition is satisfied in nine of the ten models, which bolsters the validity of the matched comparison groups and the reliability of the impact measures here and in other sections. Only WERC-TC’s earnings data failed to provide evidence for the pre-treatment parallel trends assumption. In scientific terms, this should be understood as “finding no evidence of non-parallel pre-treatment trends.”

long the impacts remain significantly positive (or negative). When the confidence intervals attached to each quarterly coefficient are above (or below) the horizontal dotted lines, the impact coefficient for the given quarter is statistically significant in the model.

The final two advantage of these models are technical: first, these models include quarterly, “calendar-time” fixed effects that absorb quarterly shocks in earnings or employment experienced by all individuals in the data for a given quarter. This reduces the possibility that measured impacts are related to spurious, quarterly features of the broader economy, as opposed to the treatment itself. Finally, all models include individual fixed-effects that, in a statistical sense, control for all time-invariant differences among individuals in each model, measuring only the change within individuals. The latter, by design, means the model does not consider any individual who exhibits no change in employment status (or earnings) during the course of the panel (e.g. employed or unemployed for all 12 quarters).

For each agency, there are two event study models: an employment rate model and an earnings model. The interpretation of these coefficients is distinct from the impact measurements in earlier sections, as well as distinct for employment⁶⁰ models versus earnings⁶¹ models (see footnotes for details). The note below each figure, as well as the descriptions, provides guidance on how to interpret its coefficients.

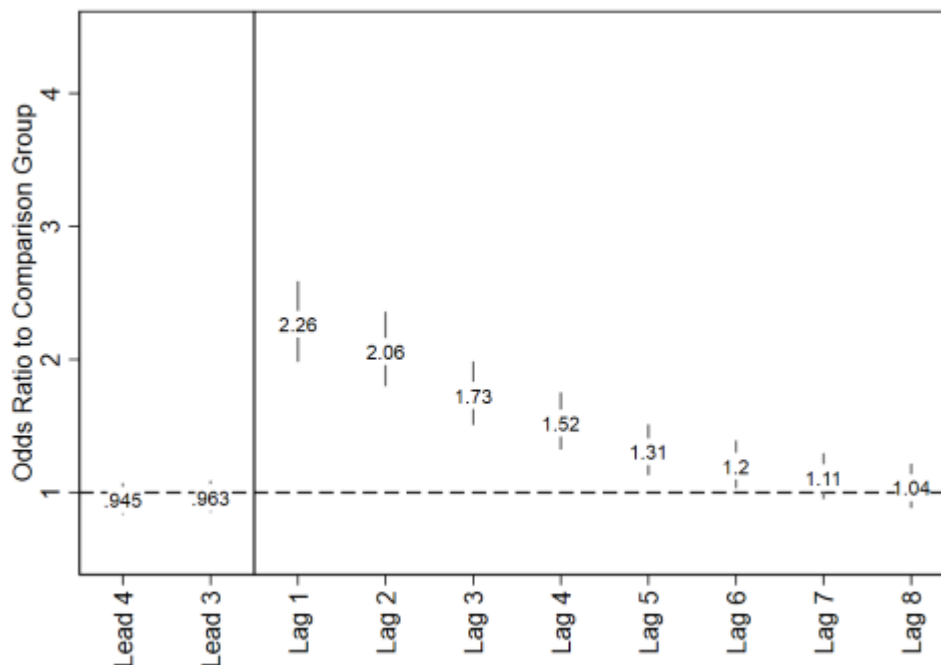
The models visualized in Figures D2-D11 corroborate the findings in the impact measures for each agency in the previous sections, while using a model that is robust to some additional factors. They also provide more evidence of the validity of the matched comparison groups by assessing the pre-

⁶⁰ Employment models are logistic regression models with exponentiated coefficients (clustered standard errors). These can be interpreted as “odds ratios” or likelihood of employment for the treatment group, compared with the comparison group. If the employment model coefficient is 1 for a given quarter, there is no expected difference between groups (equally or 1:1 as likely to be employed). If the employment coefficient is 2.26, the treatment group is 2.26 times as likely to be employed in that quarter as the treatment group.

⁶¹ Earnings models are cluster-robust OLS regression models with log-transformed conditional earnings (only earnings of those employed). Coefficients for log-transformed dependent variables are percent-change approximations. If the earnings coefficient is 7.6, the treatment group is expected to earn 7.6% more than the comparison group in that quarter.

treatment parallel trends, as well as providing insight to the duration of impacts⁶².

Figure D-2. Quarterly Employment Rate Impact, WERC-TC: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 4,771 (Total)

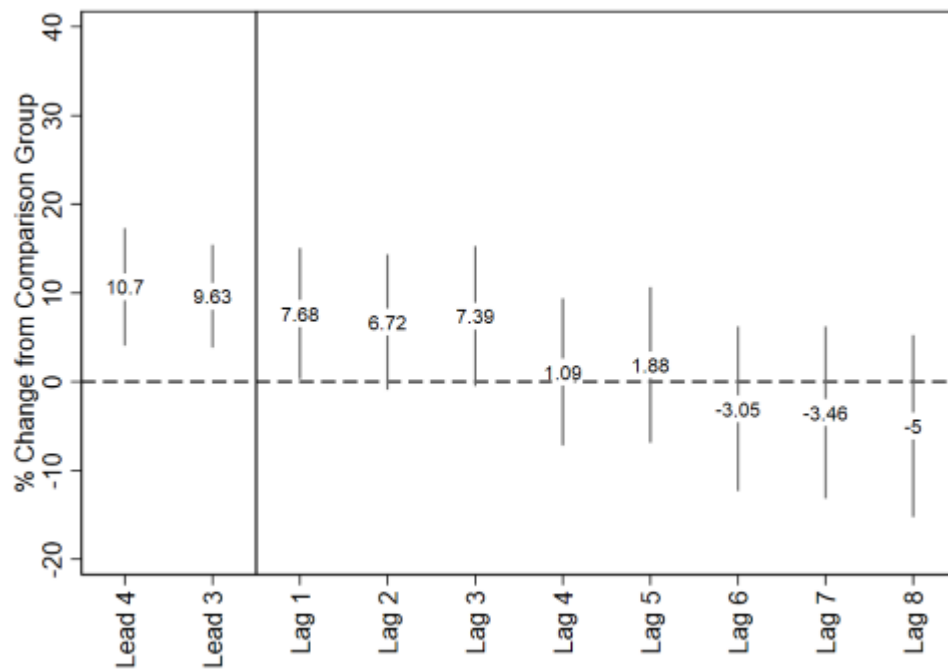


Note: Coefficients are odds ratios to comparison group. Interpret as: “participants are X.X times as likely to be employed as comparison group for given quarter.”

The WERC-TC employment model visualized in Figure D-2 finds that WERC-TC participants are significantly more likely to be employed than their counterparts in the comparison group for six quarters after treatment. In the first and second quarters after treatment (Lag 1 and Lag 2) WERC-TC participants are 2.26 times and 2.06 times as likely to be employed, respectively. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide evidence of the robustness of these and previous impact measures by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups. The result in Figure D-2 corroborates that of the impact table in direction and significance.

⁶² Technical note: According to Baker, Larcker, and Wang (2022), the model setup in this report is less likely to exhibit bias than many using similar research designs in the econometric literature (Sun and Abraham 2020) for several reasons: transformation of time into time-relevant-to-treatment; balanced “never-treated” group within all samples for the duration of the panel; removal of “Lead 1” pre-treatment quarter to eliminate potential for treatment anticipation with consistent use of “Lead 2” as baseline; no “binning” of quarters.

Figure D-3. Quarterly Earnings Impact, WERC-TC: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 5,961

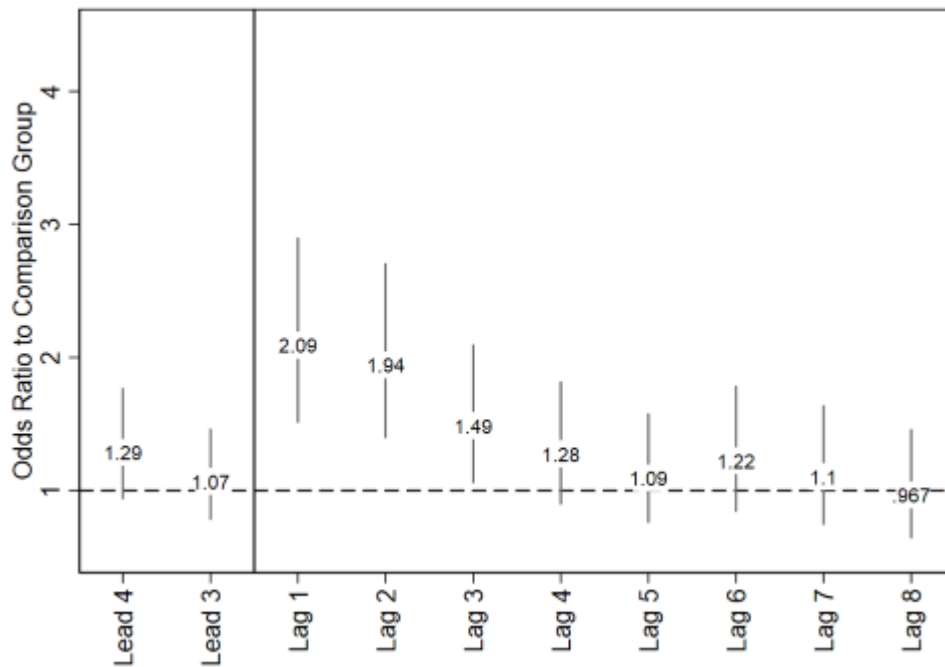


(Total)

Note: Coefficients are percent change from comparison group. Interpret as “participants earn X.X percent more than comparison group for given quarter.”

The WERC-TC earnings model visualized in Figure D-3 finds that WERC-TC participants are not significantly more likely to earn more than those in the matched comparison group; although, the coefficients in the first five post-treatment quarters (Lag1 – Lag 5) are positive in direction. It is worth noting that the WERC-TC participant sample is the only group of participants for whom the matched sample does not satisfy the pre-treatment parallel trends assessment, as Lead 4 and Lead 3 are significant. This indicates that the WERC-TC service population might have attributes that are more difficult to match than participants in other agencies. That said, these results are the same in significance and direction as the result reported in the impact table.

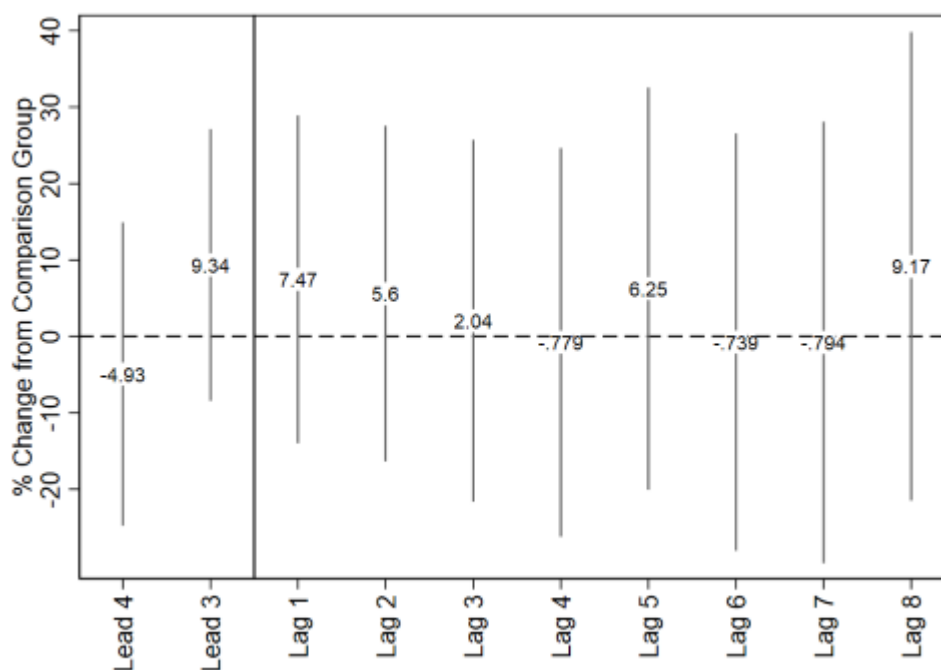
Figure D-4. Quarterly Employment Rate Impact, AYW: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 815 (Total)



Note: Coefficients are odds ratios to comparison group. Interpret as: “participants are X.X times as likely to be employed as comparison group for given quarter.”

The AYW employment model visualized in Figure D-4 finds that AYW participants are significantly more likely to be employed than their counterparts in the comparison group for three quarters after treatment. In the first and second quarters after treatment AYW participants are 2.09 times and 1.94 times as likely to be employed, respectively, as members of the matched sample. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide evidence of the robustness of these and previous impact measures by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups. Figure D-4 is the only instance in which the event study model diverges from the impacts model. The event study model finds positive (i.e. evidence of desired outcome) results, while the impact table reports statistically insignificant results.

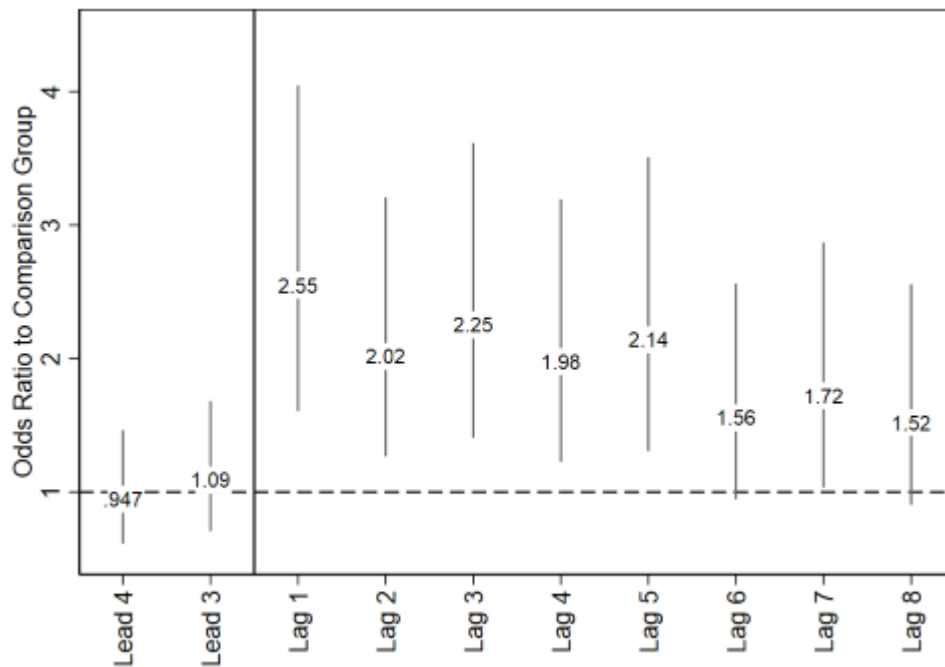
Figure D-5. Quarterly Earnings Impact, AYW: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 931 (Total)



Note: Coefficients are percent change from comparison group. Interpret as “participants earn X.X percent more than comparison group for given quarter.”

The AYW earnings model visualized in Figure D-5 does not find evidence that AYW participants are expected to earn significantly more than their counterparts in the comparison group. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide evidence of the robustness of these and previous impact measures by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups. This result corroborates the impact model in the impact table, which also found insignificant results.

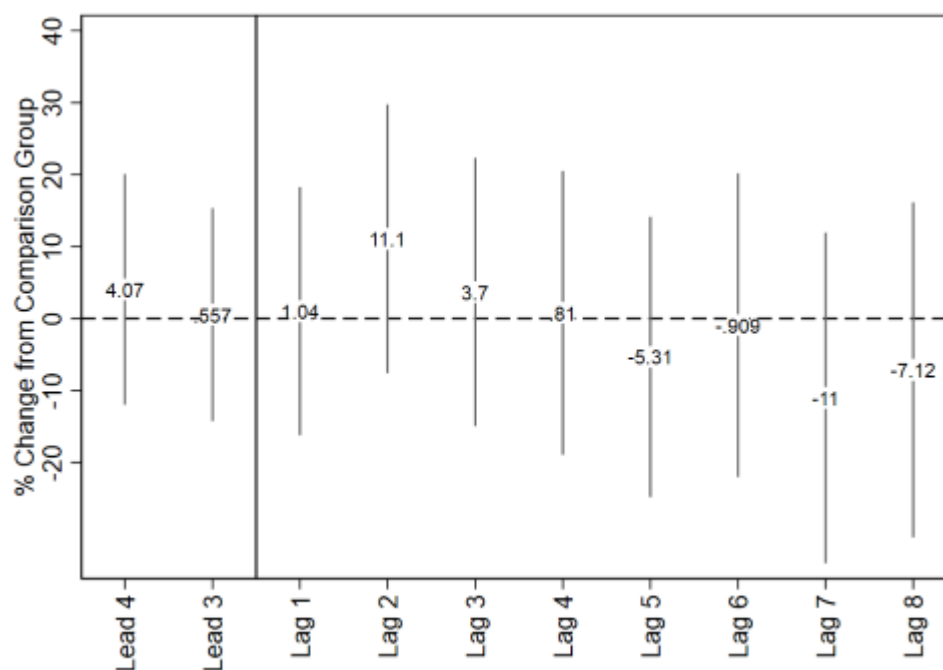
Figure D-6. Quarterly Employment Rate Impact, LCCT: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 466 (Total)



Note: Coefficients are odds ratios to comparison group. Interpret as: “participants are X.X times as likely to be employed as comparison group for given quarter.”

The LCCT employment model visualized in Figure D-6 finds that LCCT participants are significantly more likely to be employed than their counterparts in the comparison group for six of eight quarters after treatment. In the first and third quarters after treatment AYW participants are 2.55 times and 2.25 times as likely to be employed, respectively. In the remaining three quarters (Lag6-Lag8), participants are expected to have greater odds of being employed; however, quarters 6 and 8 are not significant. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide evidence of the robustness of these and previous impact measures by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups. The result is similar in direction and significance to the impact model in the agency’s main analysis.

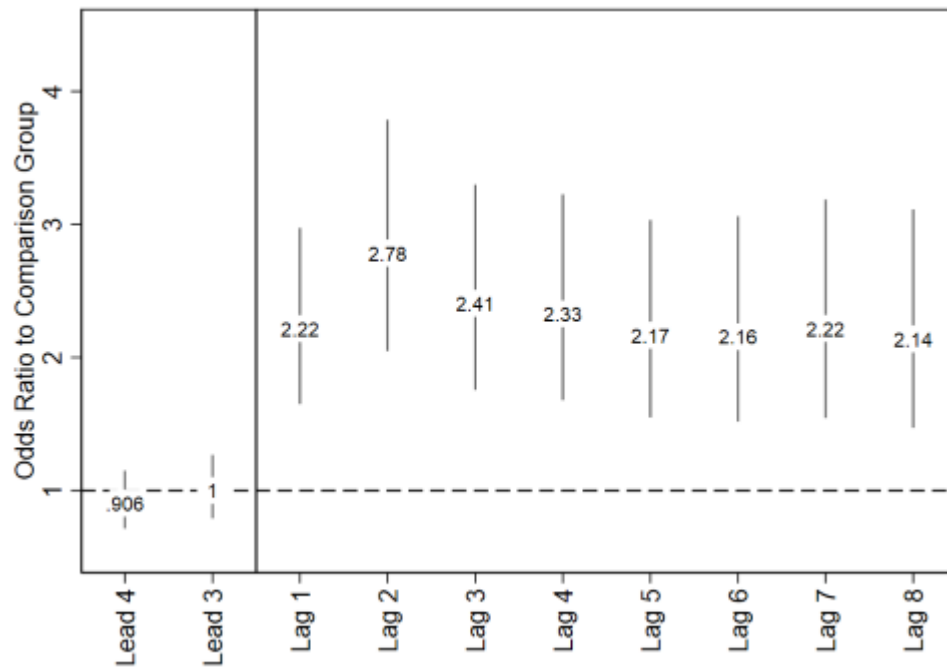
Figure D-7. Quarterly Earnings Impact, LCCT: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 670 (Total)



Note: Coefficients are percent change from comparison group. Interpret as “participants earn X.X percent more than comparison group for given quarter.”

As with the impact model reported in the main section, the LCCT earnings model visualized in Figure D-7 does not find evidence that LCCT participants are expected to earn significantly more than their counterparts in the comparison group. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide evidence of the robustness of these and previous impact measures by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups.

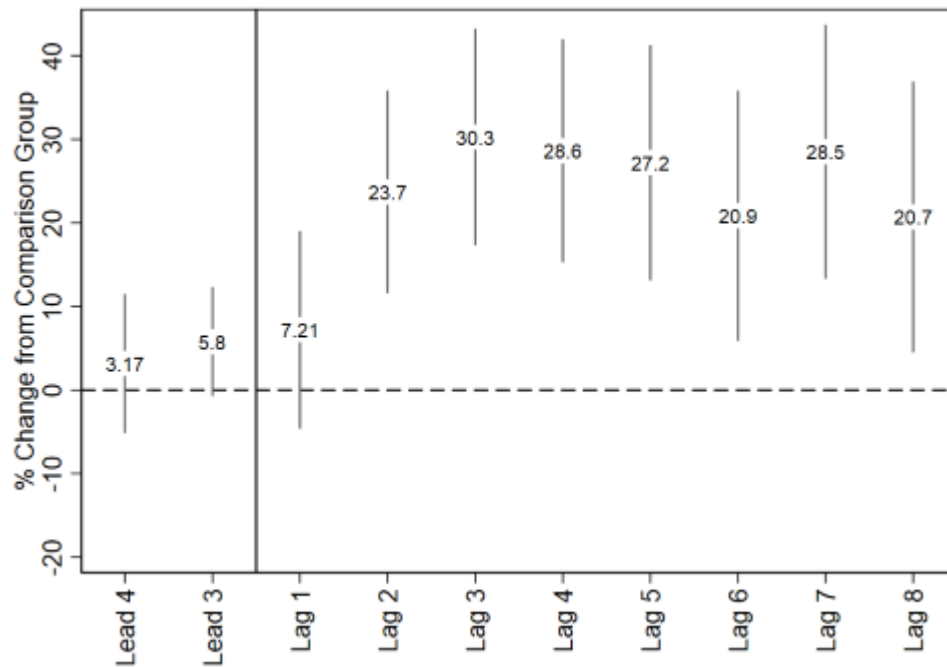
**Figure D-8. Quarterly Employment Rate Impact, Capital IDEA: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 1,295 (Total)**



Note: Coefficients are odds ratios to comparison group. Interpret as: “participants are X.X times as likely to be employed as comparison group for given quarter.”

The Capital IDEA employment model visualized in Figure D-8 finds that participants are significantly more likely to be employed than their counterparts in the comparison group for at least 8 quarters after treatment. In the third quarter after treatment Capital IDEA participants are 2.78 times as likely to be employed as the comparison group, and at least 2.14 times as likely for all other quarters in the panel. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide additional evidence of the robustness of these and previous impact measures by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups. This corroborates the result in the impact model in the main section.

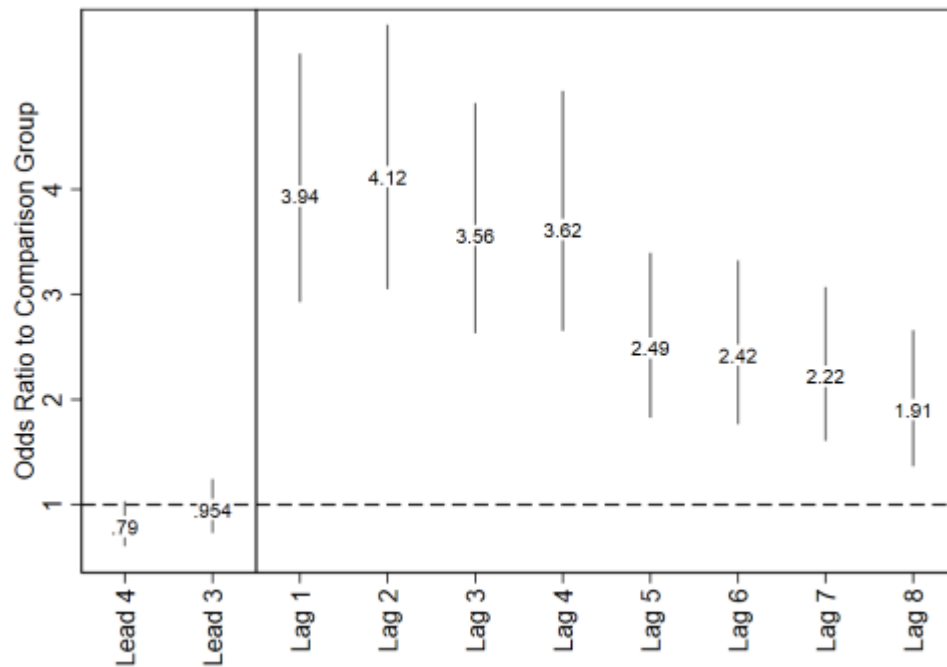
Figure D-9. Quarterly Earnings Impact, Capital Idea: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 2,090 (Total)



Note: Coefficients are percent change from comparison group. Interpret as “participants earn X.X percent more than comparison group for given quarter.”

As in the main impact model, the Capital IDEA earnings model visualized in Figure D-9 finds that participants who find work are expected to earn significantly higher wages than their working counterparts in the comparison group for, at the least, post-treatment quarters 2 through the end of the panel (Lag2-Lag8). The estimated impact during these seven quarters ranges from an increase of 20.7% to 30.3 over wages earned by the comparison group in the respective quarters. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide additional evidence of the robustness of these results, as well as the results in the impacts table, by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups.

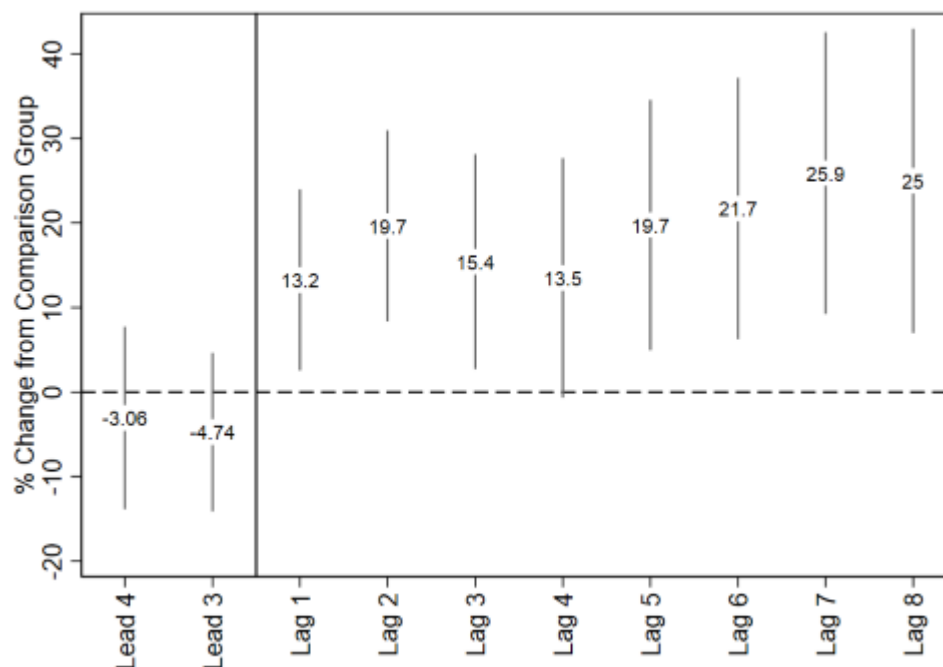
Figure D-10. Quarterly Employment Rate Impact, SkillPoint: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 1,059 (Total)



Note: Coefficients are odds ratios to comparison group. Interpret as: “participants are X.X times as likely to be employed as comparison group for given quarter.”

The SkillPoint employment model visualized in Figure D-10 finds that participants are significantly more likely to be employed than their counterparts in the matched comparison group for at least 8 quarters after treatment. In the second quarter after treatment (Lag 2) SkillPoint participants are 4.12 times as likely to be employed as the comparison group, and 1.91 times as likely eight quarters after treatment (Lag 8). The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide additional evidence of the robustness of these and previous impact measures by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups. This corroborates the result reported in SkillPoint’s impact table.

Figure D-11. Quarterly Earnings Impact, SkillPoint: FY 2016-2021
4 quarters prior to services through 8 quarters post-services, n = 1,561 (Total)



Note: Coefficients are percent change from comparison group. Interpret as “participants earn X.X percent more than comparison group for given quarter.”

As in the main model reported in the impact table, the SkillPoint earnings model visualized in Figure D-11 finds that employed participants are expected to earn significantly higher wages than their working counterparts in the matched comparison group for, at the least, seven of eight quarters, post-service. The greatest estimated percent increase in earnings (25.9%) for SkillPoint participants occurs near the end of the panel (Lag 7). The estimated impact ranges from a 13.2% to 25.9% increase over wages earned by the comparison group in the respective quarters. The insignificant coefficients for Lead 4 and Lead 3 provide additional evidence of the robustness of these results, as well as those in the impact tables, by demonstrating pre-treatment parallel trends between the treatment and comparison groups.

Appendix E: FY 2016-FY 2021 Participant Counts

	AYW	Capital Idea	Lifeworks	Literacy Coalition	Skillpoint	WERC-TC	Total
Final 2015-2016 Participant Counts	87	175		77	178	872	1,389
Final 2016-2017 Participant Counts	114	148	9	107	168	715	1,261
Final 2017-2018 Participant Counts	148	221	107	99	148	660	1,383
Final 2018-2019 Participant Counts	150	209	44	121	170	521	1,215
Final 2019-2020 Participant Counts	118	212	53	21	118	553	1,075
Final 2020-2021 Participant Counts	111	215	34	23	112	360	855
Totals	728	1,180	247	448	894	3,681	7,178
Participant Counts in the PSM Treatment Group	582	1,180	171	372	849	2,817	5,971