

Project RIO: 2008-2009 Exit Cohort



Re-Integration of Offenders: Project RIO

Project RIO is a collaborative partnership between three state agencies, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), the Texas Youth Commission (TYC), and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). It helps ex-offenders and adjudicated youth reenter the labor market by equipping them with the necessary skills, attitudes, and abilities, and guiding them toward post-release job opportunities.

Pre-release Project RIO services are provided by TDCJ and TYC within their respective correctional facilities to prepare offenders and adjudicated youth for their eventual return to the labor market. Services for adult offenders are prioritized based upon projected release date. In TDCJ prisons, adult offenders are offered services 24 months prior to their projected release date, while at state jails offenders are offered services 18 months prior to projected release. Offenders assigned to substance abuse felony punishment facilities are eligible for Project RIO services six months prior to release. TYC adjudicated youth are generally offered services six months from projected release. In the correctional environment, Project RIO promotes vocational, academic, and life skills preparation to releasees, refers participants to relevant correctional unit work assignments, develops reentry plans, and assists participants with obtaining the documents necessary to secure and retain employment after release.

Post-release Project RIO services are provided through cooperative agreements between TWC and the 28 Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) serving Texas employers and job seekers. These services build upon the services provided to TDCJ offenders and TYC adjudicated youth during incarceration. Post-release services are offered to adult ex-offenders for a period up to one year following the discharge of their sentence. TYC adjudicated youth ages 16 through 21 are also targeted for post-release Project RIO services. Criminal justice parole partners play a critical role in referring unemployed and underemployed ex-offenders and adjudicated youth to the Texas workforce system for services.

For the 2012-2013 biennium, Project RIO's appropriation was zero. LMCI will continue to evaluate the labor market outcomes of RIO cohorts still in the pipeline and follow these individuals longitudinally.

Methodology

The Labor Market and Career Information (LMCI) division of TWC received the original program year 2009 (PY2009) file containing 92,239 seed records for Project RIO. Each seed record represents a unique program service event associated with a participant Social Security Number (SSN). Because many participants received more than one service, the input file included many duplicates of the same SSN. The records were grouped by SSN and service code in order to eliminate as much duplication as possible. This left 18,483 unique seed records for analysis. After performing linkages to the Texas Bureau of Vital Statistics' database to identify and exclude deceased participants, 18,393 records remained.

Purpose of the Report

Senate Bill 281 (2003) requires the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to, at least annually, issue an analysis of the job placement performance of each workforce development program by occupation and by training provider (possibly including other relevant data), for the previous one-year, three-year, and five-year periods. TWC's Labor Market and Career Information (LMCI) department fulfills this mandate. We provide these data in the spirit of continuous improvement and do not seek to single out or punish any program, provider or geography. LMCI's mission is to improve the way Texans make career and educational decisions by providing useful and reliable information about careers, educational training options and jobs. For more information, visit www.lmci.state.tx.us.

Structure of the Report

This report addresses the set of individuals (cohort) that exited Choices programs in 2007-2009. The report examines a snapshot of the cohort's outcomes, i.e. their employment and median earnings, in the fourth quarter of 2009 (Q42009). Three-year and five-year snapshots of this cohort's outcomes in Q42012 and Q42014 will be added to the report as the data become available. The report's body provides a high-level overview and analysis of the data. Detailed tables of all measures discussed can be found in appendix A. All data are from LMCI's follow-up analysis unless otherwise noted.

Caveats About the Data and Analysis

To our knowledge, there is no better source of data on labor market outcomes than UI wage records, but these data have some limitations. UI wage records do not cover individuals engaged in certain types of employment ranging from domestic workers to railroads. The collection of UI wage data involves editing to clean incoming data, but inaccurate records may remain in the system unless and until a claim for UI benefits is filed. SSNs are not validated against a national database: fraudulent SSNs may be present in the data as well as multiple individuals using one SSN (leading to

outlandishly high earnings in some cases). Neither occupational title nor hours worked per quarter are reported, preventing us from calculating hourly wage and determining relatedness of training to employment or part-time/full-time status. This characteristic of the data sometimes leads to very low earnings in the case of individuals who worked for only part of a quarter we sampled. Despite these limitations, data from UI wage records provide an invaluable glimpse of post-exit achievements of workforce training participants.

In the fourth quarter of 2009 (Q42009), the period examined in this report, the Texas economy continued to fare better than that of most other states. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the U.S. economy peaked in December 2007 and entered the “Great Recession,” which officially ended in July 2009 (although subsequent growth has been anemic, with the remaining effects of the Great Recession strongest in the labor market). The Texas economy proved robust during much of this period, continuing to grow through most of 2008 and maintaining an unemployment rate 1-2 percent lower than the national average. Employment peaked in October of 2008, after which Texas joined the nation in losing jobs. Texas unemployment in Q42009 was 8.1 percent, 2.4 percent higher than Q42008. At the same time, the U.S. national unemployment rate was 10.0 percent, rising 3.1 percent on the year. For purposes of this report, we frequently cite Q42009 median earnings for WIA participants. For reference, the Texas median worker’s 2009 quarterly earnings were \$6,663.¹

¹Texas median quarterly worker earnings were derived by dividing estimates of annual median worker earnings from the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (2009 one-year estimates) by four.

Results

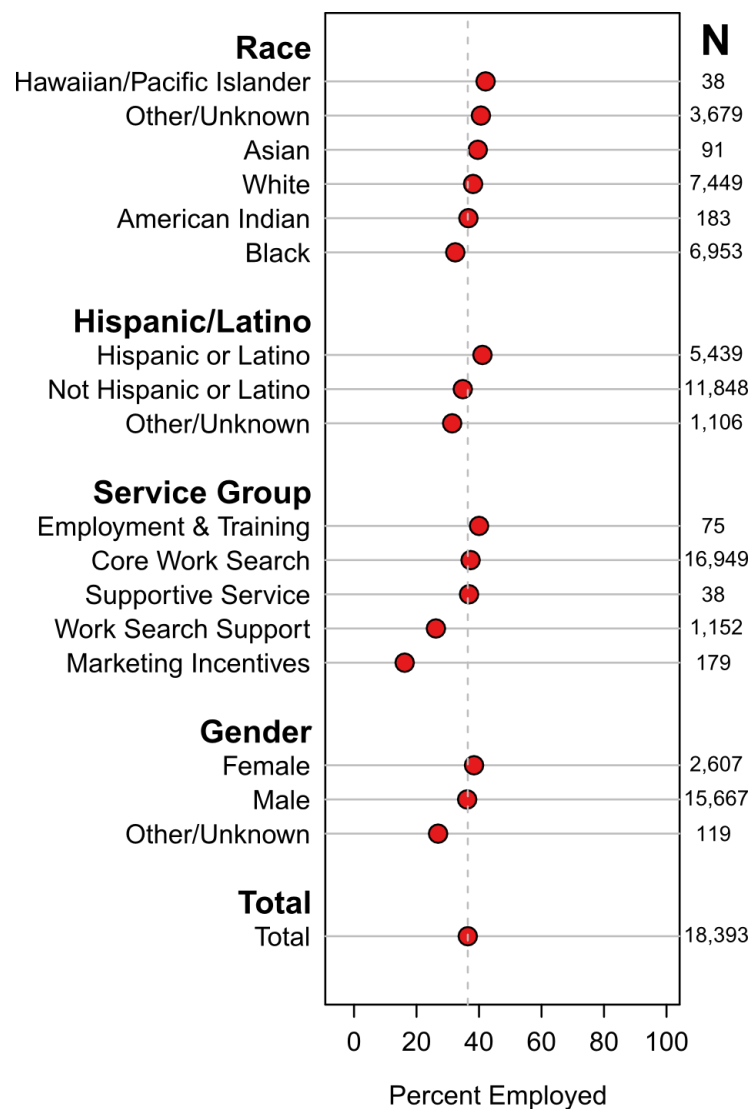
Female RIO participants had the highest employment percentage during the 4th quarter of 2009 with 38.4 percent employed (Figure 1). Excluding participants whose gender was not identified in the seed records, males had the highest median earnings in the 4th quarter of 2009 at \$3,403. Overall, the cohort had employment of 36.4 percent, with median earnings of \$3,193.

Participants whose ethnicity was identified as Hispanic or Latino had the highest employment percentage in 4Q2009 with 41.1 percent employed. Participants whose ethnicity was Other/Unknown had the highest median quarterly earnings during 4Q2009 with \$3,805.

Participants whose race was identified as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander had the highest employment percentage and median quarterly earnings during the study period with 42.1 percent employed and earnings of \$3,630. Participants whose race was identified as Other/Unknown had the second largest employment percentage with 40.6 percent and the second-highest median earnings, \$3,545.

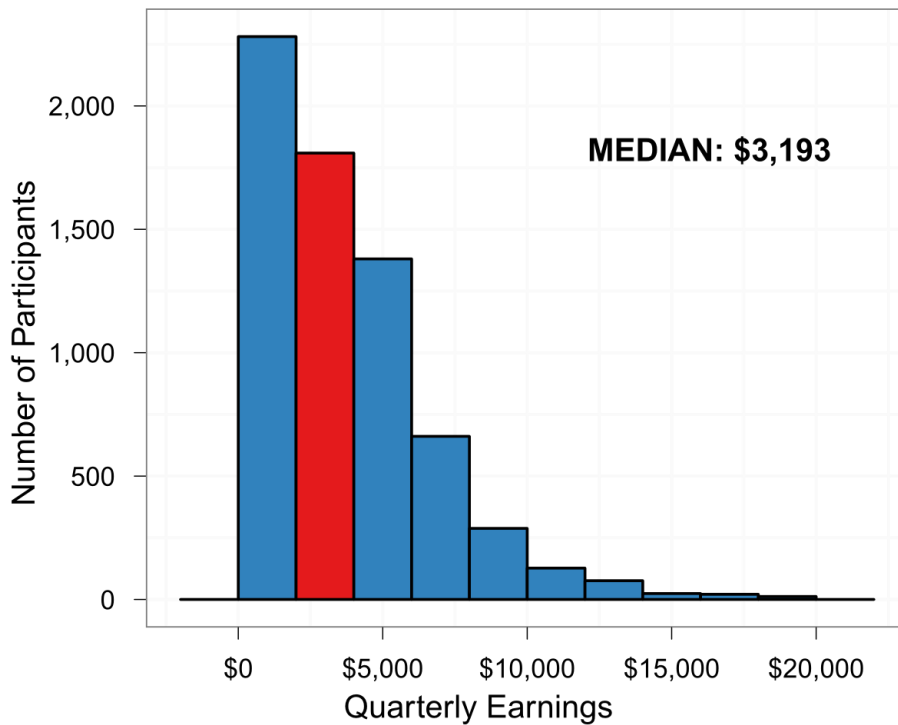
Most participants received services from the Core Work Search Activity group. That group had employment at 37.3 percent. Participants receiving Employment and Training services had the highest employment at 40.0 percent, as well as the highest median earnings with \$4,291. Participants receiving the Core Work Search Activity service had median quarterly earnings of \$3,171 during the 4th quarter of 2009.

Figure 1: Employment by Selected Characteristics



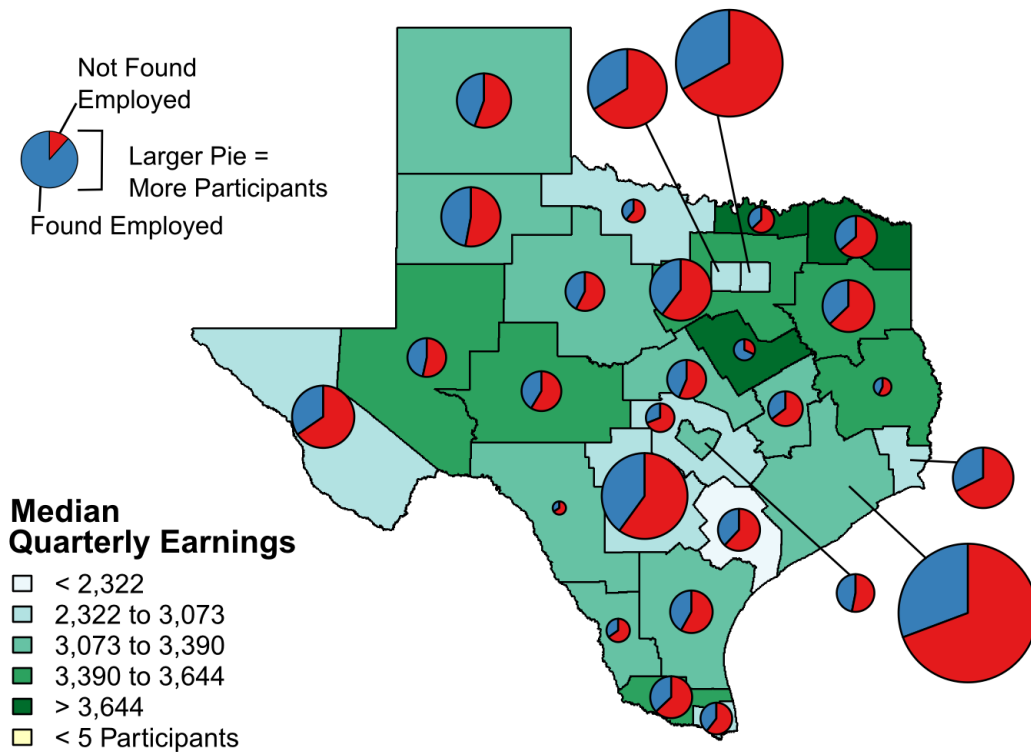
Overall, the cohort's median quarterly earnings for Q42009 were \$3,193. The distribution of these earnings is below. Most participants had earnings below \$10,000, with only a few exceeding this amount. The high number of individuals with less than \$2,000 in quarterly earnings likely indicates a high-number of part-time employees.

Figure 2: Distribution of Quarterly Earnings



Heart of Texas LWDA had the highest employment in the 4th quarter of 2009 with 68.0 percent of RIO exiters employed (Figure 3). South Plains LWDA had 47.0 percent of their exiters employed. Gulf Coast LWDA, which had the largest number of RIO participants, had an employment rate of 30.7 percent. Participants from Heart of Texas LWDA had the highest median earnings with \$4,020 followed by Texoma LWDA with \$3,847. Gulf Coast LWDA had median quarterly earnings of \$3,390 during the study period.

Figure 3: Labor Market Outcomes by LWDA



We see in Table 1 that the most prominent industry of employment for RIO participants during the 4th quarter of 2009 was Employment Services. This industry typically includes temporary agencies and other “temp-to-hire” types of jobs. The Limited-Service Eating Places industry employed the next largest group of exiters, followed by Full-Service Restaurants. Program participants employed in the Support Activities for Mining industry had the highest median earnings at \$6,878 followed by Animal Slaughtering and Processing with median earnings of \$5,055.

Table 1. Top 10 Industries of Employment by 4-Digit NAICS Code			
Industry of Employment	N Working	Median earnings	NAICS Code
Employment Services	1,191	\$1,946	5613
Limited-Service Eating Places	727	\$2,231	7222
Full-Service Restaurants	537	\$2,535	7221
Animal Slaughtering and Processing	237	\$5,055	3116
Building Equipment Contractors	185	\$5,041	2382
Automotive Repair and Maintenance	180	\$3,065	8111
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	179	\$2,204	5617
Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors	130	\$3,583	2381
Business Support Services	121	\$2,672	5614
Support Activities for Mining	117	\$6,878	2131

References

Project RIO Program Information. <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/rio.html>

Project RIO Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009.
http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/rio_plan_08.pdf

Texas Workforce Commission Annual Report 2009. <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/aro8.pdf>

TRACER. <http://www.tracer2.com>

Appendix A: Detailed Data Tables

Note: Cells with values less than 5 are marked "n/a" to protect the privacy of cohort members.

Table 2. Employment and Earnings by Service Received				
Service Received	N	N Working	% Working	Median earnings
Job Search Assistance/Job Search	12,144	4,419	36.4	\$3,196
Resume/Application Interview Preparation	1,812	826	45.6	\$3,031
EDP/IEP/ISS Development	1,346	487	36.2	\$3,293
Labor Market Information	1,242	436	35.1	\$2,936
Outreach/Intake/Orientation	1,093	291	26.6	\$3,830
Counseling	313	125	39.9	\$3,633
WOTC Eligibility	177	29	16.4	\$3,230
Job Readiness/Pre-Employment Skills	70	23	32.9	\$3,379
Occupational/Vocational Training	60	27	45.0	\$4,405
Initial Assessment	44	8	18.2	\$2,738
Transportation	35	13	37.1	\$2,396
Case Management	11	n/a	18.2	\$2,352
Job Search Basic	10	5	50.0	\$5,230
Work Experience/Skills Training	6	n/a	16.7	\$900
Group Counseling	5	n/a	n/a	n/a
Training - Non-TWC	5	n/a	20.0	\$1,651
Other	n/a	n/a	25.0	\$968
Basic Educational Skills/ABE	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Seminars/Workshop	n/a	n/a	50.0	\$2,980
Job Development	n/a	n/a	100.0	\$993
Short-term Prevocational Services	n/a	n/a	100.0	\$2,179
Bonding Assistant	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Work-related Incentives	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
On-the-Job Training	n/a	n/a	100.0	\$10,738
Counseling	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Work Related Expense	n/a	n/a	100.0	\$4,093
Total	18,393	6,701	36.4	\$3,193

Note: Cells with values less than 5 are marked "n/a" to protect the privacy of cohort members.

Table 3. Employment and Earnings by LWDA

LWDA	N	N Working	% Working	Median earnings
Gulf Coast	4,161	1,276	30.7	\$3,390
Dallas	2,466	816	33.1	\$2,851
Alamo	1,594	637	40.0	\$3,018
Tarrant County	1,347	455	33.8	\$2,976
Upper Rio Grande	840	291	34.6	\$2,986
North Central	818	325	39.7	\$3,520
South East Texas	793	257	32.4	\$3,073
South Plains	761	358	47.0	\$3,206
Panhandle	637	283	44.4	\$3,162
East Texas	581	216	37.2	\$3,499
Coastal Bend	391	164	41.9	\$3,180
Golden Crescent	383	146	38.1	\$2,322
Lower Rio Grande Valley	380	141	37.1	\$3,644
North East Texas	379	137	36.2	\$3,738
Concho Valley	343	142	41.4	\$3,459
Central Texas	328	143	43.6	\$3,230
West Central	327	139	42.5	\$3,284
Permian Basin	324	151	46.6	\$3,544
Capital Area	307	144	46.9	\$3,361
Brazos Valley	260	92	35.4	\$3,350
Cameron County	217	86	39.6	\$2,999
Rural Capital	177	55	31.1	\$2,798
Texoma	145	54	37.2	\$3,847
South Texas	118	41	34.8	\$3,230
North Texas	113	44	38.9	\$2,806
Heart of Texas	97	66	68.0	\$4,020
Deep East Texas	68	29	42.7	\$3,586
Middle Rio Grande	38	13	34.2	\$3,385
Total	18,393	6,701	36.4	\$3,193

Table 4. Employment and Earnings by Service Group				
Service Group	N	N Working	% Working	Median earnings
Core Work Search Activity	16,949	6,326	37.3	\$3,171
Support Activities to Work Search	1,152	302	26.2	\$3,814
Marketing Incentives	179	29	16.2	\$3,230
Employment & Training	75	30	40.0	\$4,291
Supportive Service	38	14	36.8	\$2,629
Total	18,393	6,701	36.4	\$3,193

Table 5. Employment and Earnings by Gender				
Gender	N	N Working	% Working	Median earnings
Male	15,667	5,668	36.2	\$3,403
Female	2,607	1,001	38.4	\$2,493
Other/Unknown	119	32	26.9	\$3,064
Total	18,393	6,701	36.4	\$3,193

Table 6. Employment and Earnings by Ethnicity				
Ethnicity	N	N Working	% Working	Median earnings
Not Hispanic or Latino	11,848	4,121	34.8	\$3,075
Hispanic or Latino	5,439	2,233	41.1	\$3,357
Other/Unknown	1,106	347	31.4	\$3,805
Total	18,393	6,701	36.4	\$3,193

Table 7. Employment and Earnings by Race, Regardless of Ethnicity

Race	N	N Working	% Working	Median earnings
White	7,449	2,839	38.1	\$3,428
Black	6,953	2,250	32.4	\$2,799
Other/Unknown	3,679	1,493	40.6	\$3,545
American Indian or Alaska Native	183	67	36.6	\$2,651
Asian	91	36	39.6	\$3,000
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	38	16	42.1	\$3,630
Total	18,393	6,701	36.4	\$3,193

Table 8. Employment and Earnings by RIO Correctional Division

RIO Correctional Division	N	N Working	% Working	Median earnings
Institutional Division	16,080	5,849	36.4	\$3,212
State Jail Division	2,140	797	37.2	\$3,108
TYC	118	31	26.3	\$2,165
ESP	31	9	29.0	\$3,534
Work Against Recidivism	24	15	62.5	\$3,614
Total	18,393	6,701	36.4	\$3,193

Table 9. Higher Education Dashboard

Summary of Linkage	N	% of Cohort	Median Earnings
Working Only	6,500	35.3	\$3,211
Pursuing Higher Education Only	278	1.5	N/A
Working & Pursuing High Ed.	210	1.1	\$2,874
Subtotal for All Working	6,710	36.5	\$3,191
All Enrolled	488	2.7	N/A
Not Verified	11,109	60.4	N/A
Subtotal	18,402	99.6	N/A
TX Vital Statistics	81	0.4	N/A
Total	18,483	100.0	N/A

N	%	Higher Education Enrollment by Institution Type
456	93.4	Community/Technical Colleges & Career Schools/Colleges
32	6.6	Public or Private Universities & Health Science Centers
488	100.0	Total Found Enrolled

Top 10 LWDA's by Enrollment	N	Number Enrolled	% of All Enrolled
Heart of Texas	97	9	9.3
North East Texas	379	22	5.8
Central Texas	328	18	5.5
Panhandle	637	31	4.9
Capital Area	307	13	4.2
Coastal Bend	392	14	3.6
North Texas	114	N/A	N/A
North Central	818	26	3.2
Lower Rio Grande Valley	380	12	3.2
East Texas	581	18	3.1

Top 10 Public Postsecondary Institutions	N	% of All Enrolled	Top 10 Majors (6-digit Classification of Instructional Programs Code)	N	% of All Enrolled
Houston Community College	50	10.3	Liberal Arts and Sciences	84	17.3
Amarillo College	31	6.4	Precision Metal Working	37	7.6
DCCCD El Centro College	24	4.9	Business Administration, Management and Operations	31	6.4
Paris Junior College	20	4.1	Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Technologies	26	5.4
San Antonio College	16	3.3	Computer and Information Sciences, General	19	3.9
El Paso Community College Dist	16	3.3	Ground Transportation	17	3.5
Austin Community College	16	3.3	Mental and Social Health Services	15	3.1
St. Philip's College	14	2.9	Business/Commerce, General	13	2.7
DCCCD Eastfield College	12	2.5	HVAC Maintenance Technology/Technician	12	2.5
Del Mar College	11	2.3	Undeclared	12	2.5