Trade Adjustment Assistance:
2008-2009 Exit Cohort Study

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TAA is a program to afford time for American initiative, American adaptability and American resiliency to assert themselves. [It] is designed to strengthen the efficiency of our economy, not to protect inefficiencies.

—President John F. Kennedy

The broad consensus among mainstream economists is that, on the whole, free international trade has positive effects on growth, income, prices and the variety choices available to consumers. Nevertheless, the aggregate benefits for the economy are usually only slightly larger than the negative effects, which tend to concentrate in a few industries. As a result, the gains in average income from a given liberalizing trade policy change tend to be overshadowed by its redistributive effects. The costs borne by the group of workers directly affected by trade include lost earnings, retraining or relocation and, for longtime workers, the destruction of job-specific human capital; resources allocated to assist these individuals can enhance the speed and efficiency with which the labor market adjusts to the shocks of trade policy (Johnson 2005).

The federally-funded Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides these resources to individuals who lose their jobs or face reduced wages because of imports or shifts in employment to other countries. To be certified as trade-affected and receive TAA services, a group of workers or their representative must file a petition with the US Department of Labor (DOL), who then approves or denies the petition based on statutory criteria. If DOL approves the petition, the workers are considered Trade-certified and can apply for TAA services through their state workforce agency. In Texas, TAA is a fully-integrated part of the workforce system administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

TAA participants come from a variety of backgrounds and industries, and therefore many enter the program with a wide array of skills and experience. However, the majority of TAA participants who enter the program face similar challenges in obtaining reemployment, which can include no education beyond high school, job skills solely in the manufacturing sector, and an average age of 46 with over 12 years of experience in a specific job that may no longer exist (TAA Texas State Profile 2011). In 2010, 131 (of 163) TAA petitions were certified in Texas, 12,893 Texas workers were covered by new certifications and $26,637,497 in federal funds were allocated to provide TAA benefits and services in Texas. The largest certifications in 2010 were in electronics manufacturing: 700 Hewlett Packard Workers, 700 Flextronics International and 600 Freescale workers obtained certification (Ibid.).

TWC keeps a consistent focus on early intervention by integrating the TAA program with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) dislocated worker services such as skills assessment in order to achieve successful reattachment to suitable employment or training in new skills for high-growth, high-demand occupations when suitable employment is not available.

Trade-certified workers are also eligible for services under the Workforce Investment Act available any unemployed/"dislocated" worker including job search assistance, skills assessments, and advanced vocational skills training as well as other assistance, such as transportation reimbursements and child care while in training provided through Texas One-Stop Centers. They also qualify for wage insurance and health care subsidies under TAA. A detailed description of TAA services and benefits appears in the program's latest annual report, found here http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/taa/taarpt11.pdf.

The most important difference in actual services provided to TAA participants is training vs. non-training. Vocational training is available for TAA participants only if no suitable employment is available in their local commuting area. Training is the most visible component of TAA. According to a national survey of TAA participants published in 2010, 90 percent of participants (60 percent of eligible non-participants) were aware of subsidized training opportunities available under TAA before participation compared to less than 60 percent of participants aware of other TAA-specific benefits such as health care subsidies (just over 30 percent of eligible non-participants; Dolfin and Berk 2010). At the same time, 65 percent of TAA participants reported interest in training or schooling as a main reason for their participation in the program (Ibid.). However, the majority of TAA recipients do not receive training services.

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.

Methodology

LMCI received 18,389 original seed records for 2008-2009 TAA exiters from the Policy and Service Delivery Department of TWC's Workforce Development Division. Each of these original records represents a service delivered to a unique client, i.e. a combination of SSN and service code. Because clients could receive more than one service, the input file included the same SSN multiple times. Seed records were grouped by SSN and by service category. After unduplicating the file by SSN, there were 17,039 usable, unique records.

This report documents the labor market outcomes of those 17,039 TAA participants during the fourth quarter of 2009 (Q42009). LMCI determines labor market outcomes by linking the seed record file to several government databases. The most important data linkage is to the Texas Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage record database, to determine post-program employment and earnings. We also perform linkages with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) master enrollment file for the fall semester of 2009, the results of which are available in the "Higher Education Dashboard," found in the appendix. We also link data with the United

States Department of Defense (DoD) and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Q42009 employment files to locate any participants employed by the federal government. LMCI also linked records to the Texas Bureau of Vital Statistics (TBVS) database to identify and exclude deceased participants. After performing all exclusions, 16,975 records remained for analysis.
If the linkage to the Q42009 UI Wage Record database records resulted in a match for any program participant, that participant's earnings and the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code for the employer of record were both retained for analysis. If a participant was found employed by more than one employer, the sum of the participant's earnings and the NAICS code of the employer paying the most wages were retained for analysis.

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 (Stevens 2007). 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 can lead to low earnings in the case of individuals who worked only part of a quarter we sampled. Despite the 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). For reference to the median quarterly earnings and employment recounted in this report, the Q4009 Texas employment rate was 91.9 percent and the median worker's quarterly earnings were $6,663. [1]

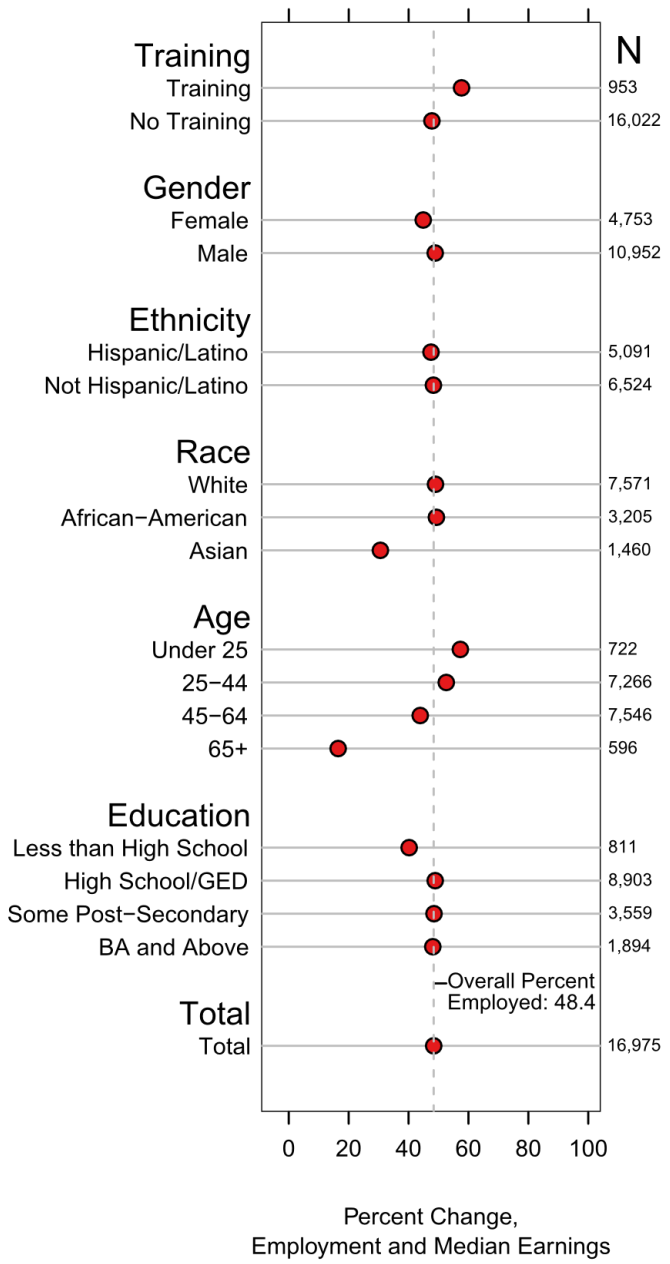
Many factors, particularly the dynamics of the local economy and interplay with national and international trends all drive the metrics we use. The metrics tell part of the story about performance, but should not be used alone to make judgments about the quality (or lack thereof) of a single provider, Workforce Development Area or program.

[1] US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009 One-Year Estimates, Median Worker Earnings, divided by four to derive median quarterly earnings.

Labor Market Outcomes: Employment

Figure 1 shows employment for all TAA participants by selected characteristics for the 4th quarter of 2009 (4Q2009). Participants in the training group had the highest employment (57.7 percent), while overall employment of the cohort was 48.4 percent. Participants in the Employment Services (ES) group had employment of 47.8 percent. Individuals who obtained training are likely be better prepared for employment in high-growth sectors, and thus more likely to find employment than those continuing to look for work in the declining sectors that TAA targets.

Figure 1: Employment by Selected Characteristics

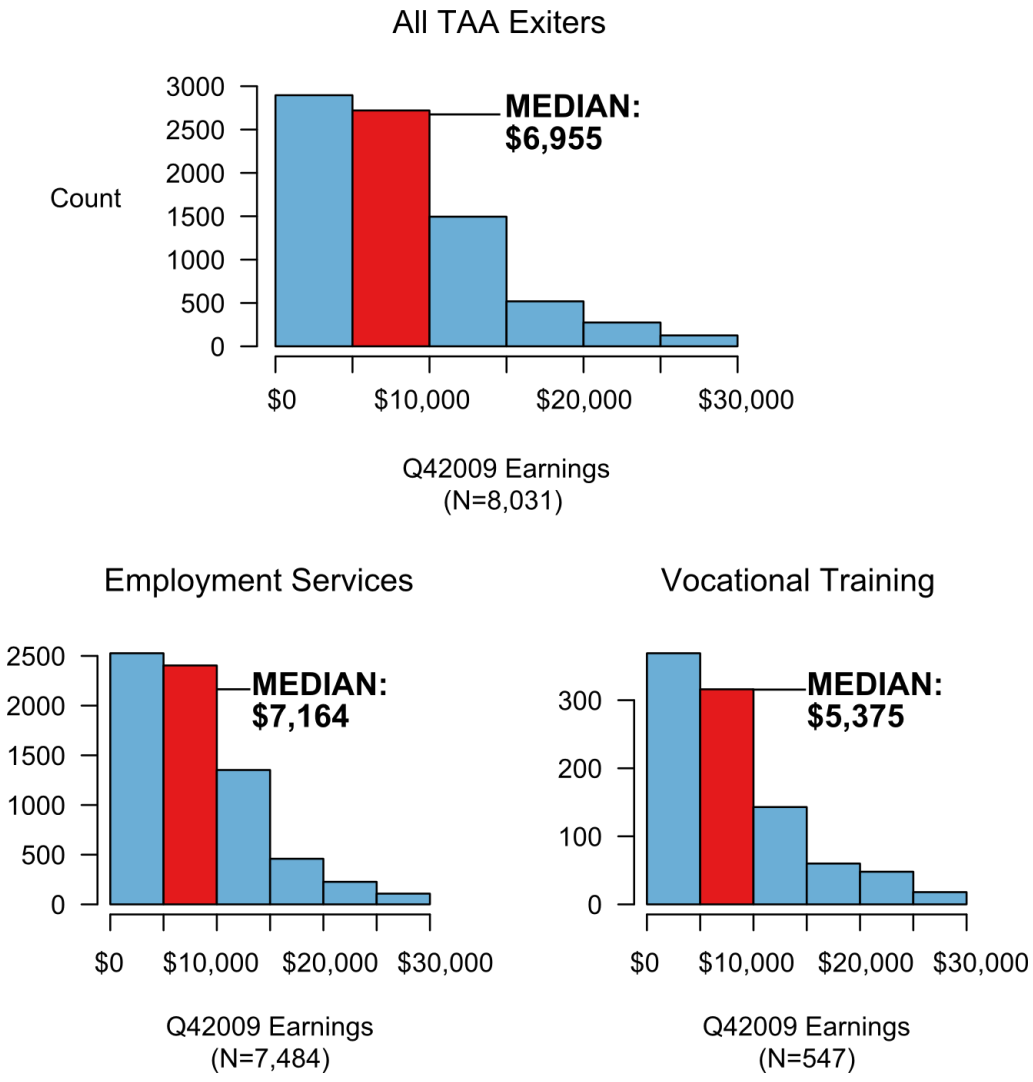


Males had a higher employment percentage during the snapshot quarter than their female counterparts with 48.9 percent employed compared to 44.9 percent. Flipping the trend with most TWC programs, individuals of Asian descent were employed at a lower rate than other groups, while individuals of African-American descent had the highest percent employed. Younger individuals tended to fare better in their job search than older individuals. Education level beyond high school was not a strong predictor of employment for this cohort. The employment rate of all groups with at least a high school degree/GED was between 48 and 49 percent, and the differences not statistically significant. However, those with less than a high school degree/GED were employed at much lower rates than other groups. Due to the manufacturing focus of TAA, these results are somewhat anachronistic, resembling a bygone era in the US economy when a high school diploma or GED was the ticket to gainful employment.

Labor Market Outcomes: Median Quarterly Earnings

The overall median quarterly earnings for the group were $6,995, slightly higher than the comparable statewide measure, $6,663. The Employment Services group had higher median earnings than the Training group, $7,164 vs. $5,375. Individuals who received training likely found employment in new occupations or industries. Lacking the advantages of long experience enjoyed by participants who did not change occupations or industries, participants who received training had lower median earnings.[2] Subsequent analyses of this cohort should reveal the training group's returns to training as time passes. Figure 2 displays the earnings distributions and medians for both groups.

Figure 2: Earnings Distribution by Service Group (Earnings Greater than Zero)

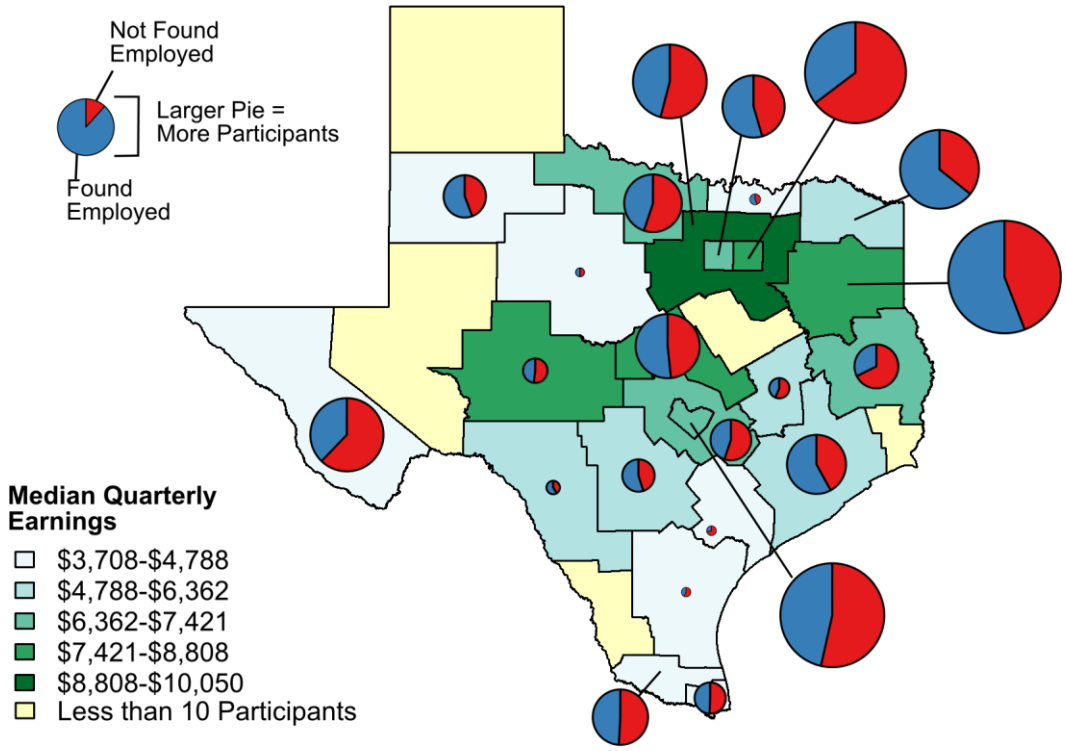


[2] "Since a switch of an occupation involves a substantial destruction of human capital, the associated decline in wages needs to be accounted for" (Kambourov et. al. 2010)

Labor Market Outcomes by Geography

Figure 3 displays the percent employed and median quarterly earnings of 2008-2009 TAA exiters by Local Workforce Development Area or LWDA. The most participants were found in Capital Area (Travis County), Dallas (Dallas County) and East Texas (Tyler and surrounding area) LWDAs. North East (Texarkana and surrounding area) LWDA had the highest percent employed at 64.3 percent, while North Central LWDA (area around the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex) had the highest median quarterly earnings of $10,050 (over 50 percent higher than the Texas median of $6,663). East Texas LWDA could be said to have the best overall outcomes, with median earnings of $8,160 and 55.9 percent of participants found employed.

Figure 3: Employment and Earnings by LWDA, 2008-2009 TAA Exiters



Labor Market Outcomes by Industry of Employment

Table 9 shows the top 10 industries of employment for all training participants employed in the target quarter. Employment Services was the most common industry sector of employment, followed by Elementary and Secondary Schools. Employment Services usually include temporary employment agencies that many employers use to find workers to try out first before hiring permanently. Employers also use Temporary Employment Agencies to augment staff during high demand periods without being saddled with paying benefits for permanent staff. We expect individuals who are continuously employed over the study period to move out of temporary employment and into an industry sector with longer term employment. The General Medical and Surgical Hospitals industry sector had the highest median earnings at $7,090.

Table 1: Employment and Earnings by Industry, 2008-2009 TAA Exiters

Industry of Employment	N Working	% Working	Median Earning	Naics Code
Employment Services	1,137	6.7%	$5,727	5613
Iron and Steel Mills and Ferroalloy Manufacturing	700	4.1%	$5,138	3311
Railroad Rolling Stock Manufacturing	315	1.9%	$12,041	3365
Motor Vehicle Manufacturing	209	1.2%	$10,391	3361
Elementary and Secondary Schools	182	1.1%	$4,475	6111
Semiconductor and Other Electronic Component Manufacturing	175	1.0%	$15,611	3344
Executive, Legislative, and Other General Government Support	168	1.0%	$7,163	9211
Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	137	0.8%	$9,155	5413
Other General Merchandise Stores	128	0.8%	$4,165	4529
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	126	0.7%	$6,892	6221

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Appendix A: Detailed Data Tables, All TAA 2008-2009 Exiters

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

Table 2. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by Gender

Gender	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
Other/Unknown	1,270	715	56.3	$11,316
Male	10,952	5,359	48.9	$7,453
Female	4,753	2,133	44.9	$5,221
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 3. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by "Ethnicity"

Ethnicity	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
Other/Unknown	5,360	2,638	49.2	$8,921
Not Hispanic	6,524	3,149	48.3	$6,959
Hispanic	5,091	2,420	47.5	$5,379
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 4. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by "Race"

RACE	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
Other/Unknown	4,478	2,365	52.8	$6,960
Black	3,205	1,581	49.3	$5,932
White	7,571	3,707	49.0	$7,220
American Indian	193	87	45.1	$7,690
Native Hawaiian	68	21	30.9	$7,895
Asian	1,460	446	30.6	$7,855
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 5. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by Age Group

Age	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
Under 25	722	414	57.3	$4,643
25-44	7,266	3,821	52.6	$6,984
45-64	7,546	3,314	43.9	$6,853
65+	377	62	16.5	$3,636
Unknown	1,064	596	56.0	$11,764
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 6. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by TAA Service Group

Service Group	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
Occupational/Vocational	851	508	59.7	$5,235
Es Participants	16,022	7,657	47.8	$7,164
Basic Education Skill	42	20	47.6	$5,307
ESL	24	9	37.5	$5,375
Job Search	36	13	36.1	$17,042
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 7. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by TAA Service

Service	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
On-the-Job Training	6	6	100.0	$8,761
Occupational/Vocational Training	755	458	60.7	$5,248
GED	31	17	54.8	$5,874
Short-Term Prevocational Services	77	41	53.3	$4,776
Training - Non-TWC	NA	NA	NA	NA
ES	16,022	7,657	47.8	$7,164
Relocation Allowance	30	12	40.0	$17,531
English as a Second Language	24	NA	NA	NA
Basic Educational Skills/ABE	11	NA	NA	NA
Job Search Allowance	6	NA	NA	NA
Customized Training	9	NA	NA	NA
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 8. Employment and Earnings for All TAA Participants by TAA Group				
TAA Group	**N**	**N Working**	**% Working**	**Median Earning**
Training Group	953	550	57.7	$5,375
ES Group	16,022	7,657	47.8	$7,164
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 9. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by LWDA				
LWDA	**N**	**N Working**	**% Working**	**Median Earning**
North East Texas	1,343	863	64.3	$6,062
Middle Rio Grande	39	23	59.0	$5,850
Gulf Coast	755	438	58.0	$6,362
Texoma	25	14	56.0	$4,488
East Texas	2,743	1,532	55.9	$8,160
South Plains	389	217	55.8	$4,168
Alamo	226	124	54.9	$5,475
Tarrant County	838	457	54.5	$7,307
Central Texas	890	460	51.7	$8,808
Cameron County	211	104	49.3	$4,247
Lower Rio Grande Valley	664	326	49.1	$4,461
Concho Valley	129	62	48.1	$8,436
Capital Area	2,338	1,087	46.5	$7,240
North Central	1,178	541	45.9	$10,050
Rural Capital	359	161	44.9	$6,821
North Texas	719	323	44.9	$7,421
Brazos Valley	89	39	43.8	$5,950
Coastal Bend	14	6	42.9	$4,788
Upper Rio Grande	1,161	439	37.8	$4,493
Dallas	2,208	780	35.3	$8,781
Deep East Texas	417	135	32.4	$7,069
Golden Crescent	20	6	30.0	$4,034
Unknown	205	61	29.8	$7,631
Permian Basin	NA	NA	NA	NA
Heart of Texas	NA	NA	NA	NA
West Central	10	NA	NA	NA
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 10. Higher Education Dashboard, Trade Adjustment Assistance 2008-2009 Exit Cohort Study

Summary of Linkage	N	% of Cohort	Median Earnings
Working Only	7,694	45.3	$7,056
Pursuing Higher Education Only	1,078	6.4	NA
Working & Pursuing High Ed.	513	3.0	$4,239
Subtotal for All Working	8,207	48.4	$6,928
All Enrolled	1,591	9.4	NA
Not Verified	2,272	13.2	NA
Subtotal	16,975	100.0	NA
TX Vital Statistics	64	0.4	NA
Total	17,039	.	NA

N	%	Higher Education Enrollment by Institution Type
1,398	88.0	Community and/or Technical Colleges
193	12.0	Public/Private Universities & Health Science Centers
1,591	100.0	Total Found Enrolled

Top LWDAs by Enrollment	N	Number Enrolled	%of All Enrolled
East Texas	2,743	315	11.5
North East Texas	1,343	205	15.3
Capital Area	2,338	202	8.6
Dallas	2,208	184	8.3
North Texas	719	134	18.6
Central Texas	890	114	12.8
Upper Rio Grande	1,161	85	7.3
Tarrant County	838	58	6.9
Deep East Texas	417	56	13.4
Rural Capital	359	49	13.7

Top 10 Public Postsecondary Institutions	N	% of All Enrolled
Austin CC	159	14.8
Tyler Junior College	133	12.3
Vernon College	105	9.7
El Paso CCD	58	5.4
N.E. Texas CC	52	4.8
Angelina College	48	4.5
Kilgore College	42	3.9
TSTC Marshall	39	3.6
TSTC Waco	38	3.5
So. Texas College	32	3.0

Top 10 Majors (6-digit Classification of Instructional Programs Code)	N	% of All Enrolled
Liberal Arts & Sciences	170	10.9
Nursing	111	7.1
Precision Metal Working	72	4.6
Vehicle Maintenance & Repair Tech.	68	4.4
Environmental Control Tech.	64	4.1
Electrical Engineering Tech.	56	3.6
HVAC Technology	55	3.5
Allied Health Professions	52	3.3
Ground Transportation	51	3.3
Criminal Justice &Corrections	50	3.2

Appendix B: Detailed Data Tables, TAA "Training" Group

Table 10. Employment and Earnings for All TAA Participants by TAA Group

TAA Group	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earnings
Training Group	953	550	57.7	$5,375
ES Group	16,022	7,657	47.8	$7,164
Total	**16,975**	**8,207**	**48.4**	**$6,955**

Table 11. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by Gender

Gender	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earnings
Female	465	287	61.7	$4,727
Male	487	263	54.0	$6,407
Other/Unknown	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	**953**	**550**	**57.7**	**$5,375**

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

Table 12. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earnings
Hispanic or Latino	444	274	61.7	$4,900
Not Hispanic or Latino	427	236	55.3	$5,846
Other/Unknown	82	40	48.8	$7,428
Total	**953**	**550**	**57.7**	**$5,375**

Table 13. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by Race

Race	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earnings
Other/Unknown	74	53	71.6	$5,795
Black	158	91	57.6	$5,176
White	592	338	57.1	$4,975
Asian	117	63	53.9	$6,554
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6	n/a	50.0	$11,812
American Indian or Alaska Native	6	n/a	33.3	$6,566
Total	**953**	**550**	**57.7**	**$5,375**

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

Table 14. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by Education Level

Education Level	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earnings
High School/GED	650	386	59.4	$5,401
More than HS	179	101	56.4	$5,798
BA and Above	40	22	55.0	$7,342
Elementary/ESL	73	37	50.7	$4,398
No Grade	11	n/a	36.4	$4,198
Total	**953**	**550**	**57.7**	**$5,375**

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

Table 15. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by Age Group

Age	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earnings
Between 25-44	395	261	66.1	$5,472
Less Than 25	8	5	62.5	$5,165
Between 45-64	531	282	53.1	$5,333
Greater Than 65	18	n/a	11.1	$3,683
Unknown	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	**953**	**550**	**57.7**	**$5,375**

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

Table 16. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by TAA Service

Service Group	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
Occupational/Vocational	851	508	59.7	$5,235
Basic Education Skill	42	20	47.6	$5,307
ESL	24	9	37.5	$5,375
Job Search	36	13	36.1	$17,042
Total	**953**	**550**	**57.7**	**$5,375**

Table 17. Employment and Earnings for Training Group by LWDA

LWDA	N	N Working	% Working	Median Earning
West Central	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Permian Basin	n/a	n/a	100.0	$7,755
Central Texas	n/a	n/a	100.0	$24,790
North East Texas	n/a	n/a	50.0	$6,572
Cameron County	n/a	n/a	50.0	$4,296
Heart of Texas	n/a	n/a	75.0	$1,973
Brazos Valley	5	n/a	60.0	$4,903
Coastal Bend	5	n/a	60.0	$4,446
Deep East Texas	7	n/a	42.9	$5,156
Gulf Coast	8	5	62.5	$6,391
Capital Area	11	5	45.5	$5,822
Texoma	13	6	46.2	$5,425
Middle Rio Grande	13	9	69.2	$5,514
Rural Capital	16	12	75.0	$9,019
North Central	20	10	50.0	$6,577
Concho Valley	21	15	71.4	$4,872
Lower Rio Grande Valley	30	22	73.3	$4,876
Dallas	34	25	73.5	$5,482
Unknown	40	12	30.0	$17,531
Alamo	51	32	62.8	$5,880
North Texas	66	41	62.1	$5,977
Tarrant County	167	100	59.9	$6,314
East Texas	168	88	52.4	$5,546
Upper Rio Grande	267	152	56.9	$4,141
Total	**953**	**550**	**57.7**	**$5,375**

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

Table 18. Top 10 Industries of Employment for Training Group by 4-Digit NAICS Code

Industry of Employment	N Working	Median Earnings	NAICS Code
Employment Services	65	$4,322	5613
Elementary and Secondary Schools	26	$4,148	6111
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	22	$7,090	6221
Executive, Legislative, and Other General Government Support	22	$6,950	9211
Offices of Physicians	19	$4,745	6211
General Freight Trucking	17	$4,720	4841
Office Administrative Services	17	$4,826	5611
Business Support Services	16	$4,265	5614
Building Equipment Contractors	14	$4,337	2382
Home Health Care Services	14	$3,212	6216

"Training" participants were enrolled in higher education at a much lower rate than ES participants. Of 953 participants, 56 or 5.9 percent were found enrolled in higher education.