

North Texas e-News

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The Allen Group facilitates launch of Texas Business Opportunity Workforce Development Center

LANCASTER, TEXAS -- The Allen Group, a major developer of commercial properties across the United States, announced a collaboration between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Texas Department of Transportation Cedar Valley (TxDOT) and Cedar Valley College to launch the first-ever construction training program for disadvantaged businesses in Texas. Named the Texas Business Opportunity Workforce Development Center (TBOWD), the program aims to enhance career opportunities in the construction industry among disadvantaged populations.

The Texas Business Opportunity Workforce Development Center is the first of its kind in Texas. It provides construction trainees with on-the-job training and supportive services as well as comprehensive training and technical assistance to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE's) in the Dallas, Lancaster and surrounding communities.

J.D. Dossett, director of TxDOT's Business Opportunity Program Office in Austin said the goal of the center is to increase the number of minorities participating in the highway construction industry as entrepreneurs and journeymen. "Programs such as the TBOWD and partnerships with Cedar Valley College provide information on contract opportunities," said Dossett. "It also enhances business development skills by making technical industry and business development training available to a larger number in the construction industry."

The Allen Group, which had the vision for the creation of such a project, brought all three organizations together to make the program a reality. A kick-off event was held on March 22, 2007 at the

Cedar Valley College campus (Performance Hall), 3030 North Dallas Avenue, in Lancaster. The event included remarks from federal, state and local transportation officials and state and local dignitaries as well as a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"We are committed to creating opportunities for the Lancaster and Dallas/Fort Worth communities and in supporting the Cedar Valley College to develop a workforce that can take advantage of the thousands of highly trained jobs that the Dallas Logistics Hub will bring to the community," said Leslie Jutzi, The Allen Group's Director of Government Affairs and Community Relations. The Allen Group is developing the Dallas Logistics Hub, the largest new logistics park in North America with 6,000 acres master-planned in Dallas, Lancaster, Wilmer, and Hutchins.

"We are so grateful to The Allen Group for having the idea for creating such a project, as well as for the support from the FHWA, TxDOT and public officials who worked to make it a reality," said Dr. Jennifer Wimbish, Ph.D., President of Cedar Valley College. "This program is one of many partnerships the college is working on to develop the skills necessary to increase opportunities for our students and members of the community."

In year two of the TBOWD program, up to 10 senior-level students from the Lancaster Independent School District may participate in the School-to-Work initiative, which will develop construction trade skills among interested high school students.

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About The Allen Group

The Allen Group is a commercial development firm specializing in rail-served industrial parks and build-to-suit facilities, including Class A office buildings. The Company currently has 8,000 acres under development across the United States, with commercial properties ranging in size from 35,000 square feet to 1.7 million square feet, as well as four master-planned industrial parks. These projects include the International Trade and Transportation Center (www.ittc.com); MidState99 Distribution Center (www.midstate99.com); the Dallas Logistics Hub (www.dallashub.com), and recently announced a new BNSF Intermodal logistics hub near Kansas City.

The Allen Group, based in San Diego with regional offices in Visalia and Bakersfield, Calif., Dallas, Texas, and Kansas City, Kansas, is trusted by Fortune 500 companies such as VF Corporation, Cox Communications, FedEx, International Paper Company, Intuit, Kraft Foods and Wal-Mart Stores. For more information about The Allen Group, please visit <http://www.allengroup.com/>.

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