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For Immediate Release

October 29, 2020

rootEd Alliance Partners with Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas to Improve Postsecondary Outcomes for Rural Students

Abilene, Texas – Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas, a local workforce development board, is partnering with rootEd Alliance, Inc. to address the most challenging obstacles to success for rural students attending Bangs, Clyde, Coleman, Eula, and Snyder high schools. Dedicated youth success advisors have been placed on the high school campuses to provide resources and support for postsecondary and career opportunities.

Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas Executive Director Mary Ross stressed the importance of postsecondary education, given that today nearly two thirds of jobs require some type of education or training beyond high school. Despite this, just one-third of young people living in rural communities enroll in college and only 26% of students graduate with a bachelor’s or associate degree. “rootEd Alliance and Workforce Solutions are committed to making meaningful improvements in rural student outcomes by increasing postsecondary enrollment and successful transition into quality careers from our partner high schools over the next three years,” said Ross.

The program will be administered by the Career & Education Outreach team at Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas. Youth Career & Education Manager Amelia Reeves commented, “High-quality, experienced advisors will be placed at high school campuses in Bangs, Clyde, Coleman, Eula, and Snyder. In addition, a Regional Advising Coordinator and Work-Based Learning Coordinator will be in place to support program activities.” Youth Success Advisors will provide postsecondary education support, early exposure to education pathways and careers, and strengthen connections between education and local industry. Students will also be connected with sources of financial aid and opportunities for internships.

“Now, more than ever, it is critical that we invest in the potential of rural students,” said Noa Meyer, President of rootEd Alliance. “Over the past two years, we have seen success through the

rootEd model across Missouri and Tennessee, and we're excited to share what we've learned with rural communities in rural West Central Texas, in partnership with Workforce Solutions."

About rootEd Alliance

rootEd Alliance, Inc. is a collaborative philanthropic effort to clear the path to a stronger future for students in rural America. With its network of partners, rootEd provides advice, exposure and access to college and career opportunities to students in high school and college. rootEd Alliance partners with local and national organizations working to meaningfully improve postsecondary and career outcomes, so that all students in rural areas and towns can pursue their dreams. Together, these organizations form a holistic model that supports students starting in high school through college and beyond.

About Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas

Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas is committed to strengthening the economic vitality of a 19-county region. With its network of five center locations and numerous virtual service offerings, Workforce Solutions provides resources for good jobs, strong employers, and a healthy regional economy. The Career & Education Outreach team equips the workforce of tomorrow with the knowledge, tools, and resources to make educated decisions about their career pathway. In partnership with education and industry, Workforce Solutions aims to build connections with students early in their career exploration journey to ensure a successful pathway from school into the workforce.

For more information, please contact Amelia Reeves at Amelia.Reeves@workforcesystem.org or (325) 795-4364.

Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available, upon request, to individuals with disabilities. Relay: 1-800-735-2989 (TTY) / 711 (voice). Board programs/services are funded with 87% federal funds and 13% non-federal funds.

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