

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Alyssa Goodgame

PHONE: (325) 513-5952

Workforce Solutions and Callahan County Medical Clinic partner to help area students gain career exposure

Abilene, Texas — The Work-Based Learning Program at Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas offers a series of connected educational and training opportunities for students at participating schools to explore and gain experience in high-demand career fields. This spring, students who identified a strong interest and aptitude in a healthcare or manufacturing career through job shadowing participated in internships to gain hands-on experience in their selected fields.

Ireland McCoy, a senior at Merkel High School, recently completed an internship with Callahan County Medical Clinic to learn more about nursing. “Interns get to really see what it's like to work in the community,” said Nurse Practitioner Paula Parkhill. “She gets to see what it's like to work with patients who are happy, healthy, and well. I also have patients that have cancer, so she gets to see the reality of that. She gets to see, you know, they come in on a sick day. Well, how do you help them if they're sick? And you just kind of see the whole process from the start of the visit, through the visit, to checking out.”

Employer partners in the program host students for industry tours, job shadowing and potentially internships that give students the opportunity to learn about a career opportunity, immerse themselves in the job, and work for pay or credit towards high school graduation. It's valuable preparation for students before going on to pursue postsecondary training and enter the workforce. “I realized how much work you have to put in to something like this,” said student intern Ireland McCoy. “I never realized how much work actually goes into running a clinic or actually health care in general, so kind of getting to experience all that's really cool.”

Work-based learning is not only a benefit to students, but to employers as well. Through their partnership in the program, employers have improved talent pipelines, and more engaged and

productive workforces. In the case of Ireland McCoy and Callahan County Medical Center, she was offered a summer job until she heads off to college in the fall.

During the 2023-2024 school year, 131 students across eight high schools including Clyde and Baird gained exposure through job shadowing and 31 students went on to complete spring internships. For more information on the program and how to participate, please visit www.wfswct.org/wbl.

The Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas Board is charged with oversight and policy-making responsibility for local workforce and training programs. We are committed to strengthening the economic vitality of our 19-county region by investing in the success of residents and businesses. Our assistance and expertise are provided to both the job seeker and the employer. Visit our website at www.wfswct.org. Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available, upon request, to individuals with disabilities. Relay: 1-800-735-2989 (TTY) / 711 (voice). Programs/services are funded 92.5% with federal funds and 7.5% with non-federal funds.

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