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#### **Our Mission:**

The mission of the South Plains workforce system is to meet the needs of the region's employers for a highly skilled workforce by educating and preparing workers.

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## **April Newsletter**

### **Lubbock MSA and Regional Unemployment**

Lubbock's MSA unemployment rate for April 2019 is 2.1%, down from March's 3.1%. Midland MSA recorded the lowest unemployment rate at 1.7%, second lowest was Odessa MSA at 2.0% and Amarillo MSA's recorded the third lowest rate at 2.1%.

\*Employment estimates released by TWC are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. All estimates are subject to revision. To access this and more employment data, visit [Texas LMI](#).

### **Upcoming Events in 2019:**

#### **-South Plains Job Fairs-**

- October 9, 2019 -  
Lubbock Memorial Civic  
Center

-10am - 2pm-

#### **-Jobs Y'all Career Exploration Events-**

September 2019

For 8th graders

Dates/time/locations still  
pending

The TWC Lubbock MSA and South Plains WDA Economic Profiles provide a breakdown of employment by industry. Click on the images to the right to access the profiles.

(Image located on page 3)

**- South Plains Career Expo -**

-October 22, 2019 -  
Lubbock Memorial Civic Center  
- 8:00am - 12:00pm -

**Hiring Red, White & You**

Veterans Job Fair  
- November 7, 2019 -  
-10:00am - 2:00pm-


**CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**  
Metro Areas (Seasonally Adjusted)


Metro Areas	Apr 2017	Monthly Change	Annual Change	Annual % Change
Abilene MSA	68,100	100	700	1.0
Amarillo MSA	121,300	-1,100	1,200	1.0
Austin-Round Rock MSA	1,021,900	-400	29,300	3.0
Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA	164,000	900	-800	-0.5
Brownsville-Harlingen MSA	143,000	100	2,700	1.9
College Station-Bryan MSA	115,900	-400	2,500	2.2
Corpus Christi MSA	192,400	-100	1,400	0.7
Dallas-FW-Arlington MSA	3,582,400	-18,000	99,600	2.9
Dallas-Plano-Irving MD	2,555,000	-15,600	76,600	3.1
Fort Worth-Arlington MD	1,027,800	-3,200	22,600	2.2
El Paso MSA	317,000	400	9,200	3.0
Houston MSA	3,044,300	13,700	44,000	1.5
Killeen-Temple MSA	146,600	500	3,600	2.5
Laredo MSA	104,000	100	2,300	2.3
Longview MSA	96,700	300	-600	-0.6
Lubbock MSA	146,300	-1,000	800	0.5
McAllen MSA	256,700	600	4,900	1.9
Midland MSA	87,800	-100	100	0.1
Odessa MSA	69,800	100	-200	-0.3
San Angelo MSA	48,600	400	-500	-1.0
San Antonio MSA	1,035,600	3,800	24,800	2.5
Sherman-Denison MSA	47,000	100	1,000	2.2
Texarkana MSA	60,200	-500	-800	-1.3
Tyler MSA	106,200	400	2,300	2.2
Victoria MSA	42,000	200	-300	-0.7
Waco MSA	120,400	600	2,200	1.9
Wichita Falls MSA	58,000	400	-100	-0.2


**Highlights**

(MSA industry data are not seasonally adjusted)

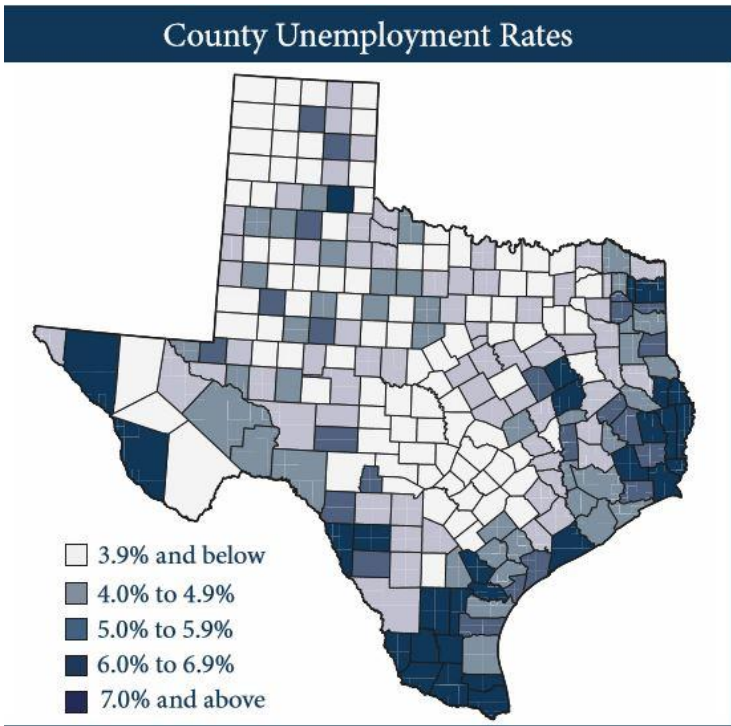
- Seventeen of 26 areas grew in April for a combined increase of 22,700 jobs. Nineteen areas grew over the year, while seven areas contracted.
- The Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA accounted for more than half of all area employment gains over the month. The MSA increased its annual growth rate to 1.5 percent.
- The San Angelo MSA grew fastest in percentage terms with a 0.8 percent April expansion. Per not seasonally adjusted industry data, Retail Trade and Other Services each added 200 jobs over the month, while Government was down 200 positions.
- The Dallas-Plano-Irving MD led in actual and percentage job growth annually. Professional and Business Services led all major industries with 21,000 positions gained, followed by Leisure and Hospitality with 10,900 jobs added.
- The Beaumont-PA and the Texarkana MSAs lost the most jobs annually. The loss of 2,100 jobs in Retail was primarily responsible for the contraction in the Beaumont-PA MSA, while employment losses in Texarkana were spread across industries.

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(Image located on page 6)



**Click image to  
view full report:**

Lubbock Metropolitan  
Statistical Area (MSA)



**Click image to  
view full report:**

South Plains Regional  
Workforce Development Area





### **Advocacy Enhances Future Career Skills**

Students with disabilities from a 15-county area, along with their families, took steps to further their preparation for life after high school by participating in SPARC (Student Parent Advocacy Readiness Conference) on April 27th. Texas Workforce Commission – Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the South Plains Regional Workforce Development Board’s Student HireAbility Navigator, Diana Gatlin, and community partners sponsored the event, which featured sessions on:

- Self-Advocacy and Disability Disclosure Advantages/Disadvantages (when attending school or applying for employment),
- Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying,
- Guardianship,
- Vocational Rehabilitation, and
- Social Security Income and How Work Affects Benefits.

Following a lunch provided by United Supermarkets, conference attendees were presented with information on career and leadership development by motivational speaker Coach D - Darrell Andrews.

The Region 17 Education Service Center provided space for the event, and surrounding school districts were instrumental in encouraging families to explore the options that students with disabilities have available to them in the South Plains region when considering career and life options.

The event aligns with the Navigators’ mandate to increase and coordinate community and system awareness of the resources and activities available to students with disabilities in five pre-employment services:

- Career exploration/counseling,
- Work-based learning experiences (in school and after school activities, or experience outside of a traditional school setting – including internships),
- Counseling on enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at

institutions of higher education,

- Workplace readiness training (social skills and independent living), and
- Instruction in self-advocacy.



*Stephanie McLoughlin, Regional Coordinator of the PEN Project for Regions 16 & 17 Education Service Centers, discusses the importance of advocacy at the SPARC event on April 27<sup>th</sup>.*

#### **Area Student HireAbility Navigators participate in Capacity Building Conference**

Bill Dean, of Workforce Solutions West Central Texas, Gema Canizares, of Workforce Solutions Permian Basin, and Diana Gatlin, of Workforce Solutions South Plains, joined area partners from TWC – Vocational Rehabilitation, Education Service Centers from Regions 3, 9, 11, 12, 16 and 17 and surrounding school districts for a two-day conference May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> in Lubbock. The goal of the conference was to foster effective transitions teams and identify resources for transition planning that would allow all involved agencies to utilize their resources in a collaborative manner.

Individuals with disabilities face challenges in their transition from school to adult life, especially in the transition from school to employment. Federal legislation requires local and state education agencies to work with the state vocational rehabilitation agency to facilitate a smooth transition from school to employment.

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) have developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to help guide the two agencies for collaborations. In order to effectively implement the MOU, TWC has proposed and funded several initiatives to enhance the quality of transition services in Texas. One of the initiatives is for Texas A&M University's Center on Disability and Development to provide training and technical assistance to regional and local transition teams for the purpose of building statewide capacity in providing quality transition services to students with disabilities.

Following the conference, the Navigators toured the Workforce Solutions office in Lubbock to gain an understanding of how the Career Center and TWC – VR Services are working in tandem to benefit South Plains residents. They also shared information regarding events in their respective areas and discussed ways for Navigators to work on future projects to ensure successful outcomes for students with disabilities.



*Elizabeth Archer (left), Region 17 Student Support Services Education Specialist, & Heather Saldana, TWC – VR Services Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in Lubbock, brainstorm on ways to collaborate among agencies.*



## Texas private sector employers has added 283,000 jobs over the year

*State unemployment rate is 3.7 percent in April*

AUSTIN – Texas adds 28,900 seasonally adjusted nonfarm jobs in April. April marked the 108th consecutive month of annual growth for total nonfarm employment.

Read the full [press release](#).

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### Sources:

**Texas Labor Market Review**

<https://texaslmi.com/api/GetHomeLinks/TLMR>

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Workforce Solutions South Plains Community Stakeholder

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