

# WorkQuest

# FOCUS

## on Jobs for People with Disabilities

**WorkQuest Newsletter LXVI**  
December 2024

### **Junction 5-0-5:** Contributing to your community through employment



*Joshua Pfuntner, Junction 5-0-5, performs his duties as a recycling assistant working on a contract with the City of Bryan.*

Junction 5-0-5 is a nonprofit organization that strives to provide support and employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities to help them meet their potential and enhance their quality of life.

Junction 5-0-5 has proudly served thousands of people in Brazos County for over 40 years. Being a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) in the *WorksWonders* Program has allowed the organization to work closely with WorkQuest to continue to fulfill its mission.

“We are in this to advance a cause, create more opportunities together and improve people’s lives. I think we share that mission with WorkQuest and have been doing so since we started working with them in 1987,” said Jennifer Patridge, executive director at Junction 5-0-5. “We are able to do our work to help people with disabilities while WorkQuest helps us advocate for those individuals by making sure that they have competitive wages.”

Partridge is honored to work for an organization that fosters a nurturing work environment to help its employees thrive in their roles.

“We meet people where they are and match them with jobs where their abilities and skills can thrive,” said Patridge. “Creating that space for people with disabilities is critical because everyone wants to feel

like they are integrated and contributing to their community. It is valuable for everyone to work in an environment where they are supported, accepted and included.”

Joshua Pfuntner is one of the many individuals whose lives have been positively impacted by Junction 5-0-5. He came across this opportunity through a local newspaper and is honored to have the opportunity to work in the community that he has always called home.

“I’ve been working with Junction 5-0-5 for a number of years and the people I work with are really nice,” said Pfuntner. “I like working in a team and it helps to work with nice people who support me.”

Kyle McCain, public works solid waste operations supervisor for the City of Bryan, is one of the individuals who purchase employment services through Junction 5-0-5. McCain appreciates Pfuntner for always bringing a positive attitude to work and is proud to see how much he has grown.

“We have been working with WorkQuest for a long time and it’s a very streamlined process,” said McCain. “This is a great opportunity because we are giving the employees an opportunity to go out and make a wage. It is rewarding to see how they grow within their roles by coaching them and teaching them new things.”

## Message from President/CEO Fred M. Weber, Jr.

As we approach the end of another year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible work we've accomplished together through the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Purchasing from People with Disabilities (PPD) Program. Thanks to your dedication and partnership, we've made significant strides in creating meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

As we celebrate these achievements, I want to express my gratitude to all of the Community Rehabilitation Program staff for your contributions. Your passion and dedication make a difference in the lives of so many, and I am inspired by the work you do every day. A special note of appreciation goes to the WorkQuest Board of Directors, the Texas Workforce Commission and our loyal customers. Your continued support and belief in the TWC PPD Program have been the cornerstone of our success. Your efforts have helped empower individuals, strengthen communities, and demonstrate the profound impact of inclusion and opportunity. Each milestone we've reached is a testament to your hard work and shared commitment to our mission.

As the holiday season approaches, I hope you have time to reflect and celebrate with family and friends. May this season bring joy, peace and a renewed sense of purpose as we prepare for the new year.

On behalf of everyone at WorkQuest, thank you for your partnership, vision and commitment to making a difference. We wish you all the best during the holidays and look forward to another year of success together in 2025.



Fred M. Weber, Jr.  
President/CEO



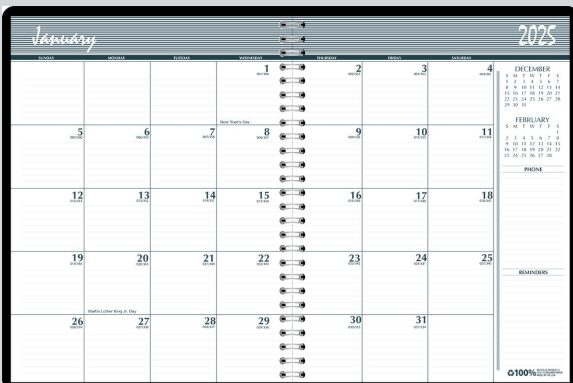
## Product Spotlight: 2025 Calendars

Start 2025 off on the right foot and plan ahead with a new *Works Wonders* Program calendar.

Monthly Appointment Planner  
Commodity Code: 61515074505

Monthly Appointment Planner. Wire-bound, Black. 8-7/8" X 11-1/4". Keep track of events and activities over a full year, two pages display one month. Features 14 months, December-January. Page size is 8" X 11". 100% post-consumer recycled.

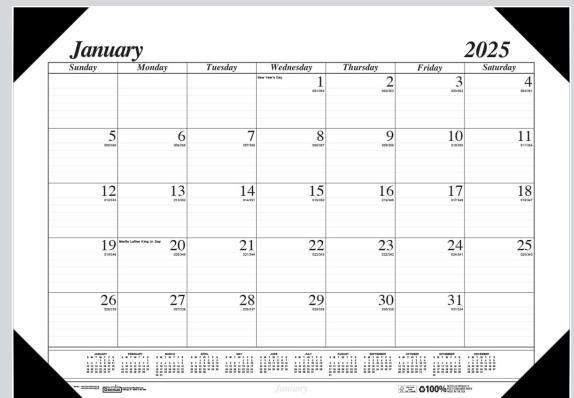
EA Monthly Appointment Planner \$15.76



Desk Pad Calendar  
Commodity Code: 61519130779

Desk Pad Calendar. 22" x 17", 12 Months, January- December. Complete year of calendars across the bottom. Reinforced, black leatherette corners hold the sheets in place. Includes Julian dates and days remaining.

EA Desk Pad Calendar \$8.49



# WorkQuest Partner Organization Spotlight

Over the last four decades, WorkQuest has endeavored to cultivate a network of partnerships between Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and their employees, who provide the products, services and temporary employment services offered through the *Works Wonders* Program, and the state agencies and government bodies that purchase those products and services.

In an effort to maintain and grow those partnerships into the future, WorkQuest intends to continue to provide support as those organizations expand their presence in their local communities and as they experience new and greater achievements each year.

WorkQuest was happy to attend the celebrations of some of the amazing accomplishments of our CRP partners over the past quarter:

■ Goodwill North Central Texas celebrated its 75th anniversary this October. Employing 53 people in its inaugural year, the organization has grown to serve nearly 12,000 individuals with disabilities in 2023.

“The lives we have helped transform over the last 75 years are a reflection of the incredible partnerships that make our mission possible,” said David Cox, president and CEO of Goodwill North Central Texas.



*Pictured left to right: Fred M. Weber, Jr., president and CEO of WorkQuest, David Cox, president and CEO of Goodwill North Central Texas, and Taylor Pena, regional marketing manager of WorkQuest, at the 75th anniversary celebration for Goodwill North Central Texas.*

■ Envision Dallas opened its state-of-the-art expansion location focused on increasing employment opportunities and access to independent living resources for the more than 150,000 people with vision loss in North Texas.

The expansion will allow Envision Dallas to directly impact the individuals they serve who are blind or visually impaired through its expanded manufacturing and warehousing facilities, enhanced vision rehabilitation center, improved assistive technology center and new workforce innovation center.

■ Peak Performers celebrated its 30th anniversary this fall. The organization celebrated three decades of employing individuals with disabilities with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the grand opening of its new headquarters in Austin.

Their unique approach of connecting highly qualified professionals with disabilities to rewarding careers has created lasting partnerships that benefit both employers and the individuals looking for employment.

■ The Austin Lighthouse for the Blind celebrated its 90th anniversary this November. The Lighthouse memorialized the event with the grand opening of its complete low vision eye care clinic, which will expand the resources available to individuals who are blind or visually impaired across the region.

“As we now collaborate together, we are positively impacting thousands of Blind Texans with educational pursuits, gaining independent living skills and supporting vocational career aspirations,” said Jim Meehan, CEO of the Austin Lighthouse.

■ The Lighthouse of Houston celebrated its 85th anniversary this November. The organization commemorated the occasion with an open house event which consisted of a tour of the Lighthouse's facilities, education about the innovative programs offered through the Lighthouse, an opportunity to meet the organization's dedicated staff and clients, and a special presentation and brick ceremony.

WorkQuest's regional marketing staff were in attendance at the below conferences offered by state agencies and government bodies over the last quarter:

- Health and Human Services Commission Manager Conference (October 9 – 10, 2024)
- Juvenile Justice Association of Texas Fall Conference (October 27 – 30, 2024)
- DIR Connect Technology Expo (October 23, 2024)
- Texas Purchasers Association Fall Conference (November 6, 2024)
- Wichita Falls North Texas State Hospital Employee's Health Fair (November 14, 2024)
- Texas Corrections Association Special Populations Conference (November 20 – 22, 2024)
- Region One Education Service Center Purchasing Cooperative Product Show (December 4 – 5, 2024)

We are excited to continue our partnerships with CRPs, state agencies and government bodies across the state as they continue to expand the scope of employment opportunities available to people with disabilities.



*WorkQuest Regional Marketing Managers Robert Olivo and Rosa Valdez attend the Region One Education Service Center Purchasing Cooperative Product Show on December 4th.*

# WorkQuest

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**WorkQuest wishes you a joyful holiday season  
and a happy New Year.**

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