

# WorkQuest FOCUS

## on Jobs for People with Disabilities

**WorkQuest Newsletter LXVIII**  
June 2025

### **Beacon Lighthouse for the Blind:** Providing jobs with a purpose



*Andy Millard, Beacon Lighthouse for the Blind, performs his duties as a press operator.*

Since 1974, Beacon Lighthouse for the Blind has been providing meaningful employment opportunities to Texans with disabilities. What began as a team of five people has grown into a nearly 50-employee company in the Wichita Falls area.

The Beacon Lighthouse is a Community Rehabilitation Program through the *WorksWonders* Program, which enables the organization to secure contracts with multiple state agencies. The Beacon Lighthouse manufactures a variety of products such as scrubbing pads, shovels, rakes, reflective sheeting and sponges, among others. These products are provided to agencies such as the Texas Department of Transportation and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

Judy Koetter, president and CEO at Beacon Lighthouse for the Blind, says she is honored to provide jobs that help employees achieve self-fulfillment and financial independence.

“Our job is to enhance an individual’s life by providing employment,” said Koetter. “There are all sorts of disabilities in this world and having a job allows our employees to fulfill what they want to do with their life and have a place in the community. Providing these employment opportunities helps the individuals pay taxes, have homes, vehicles and be productive members of society.”

Koetter is grateful for the organization’s partnership with WorkQuest, which has helped them generate more business and supports its mission. “We sell the majority of our products through our partnership with WorkQuest,” said Koetter. “About 40% of our sales are going to the State.”

Beacon Lighthouse has impacted the lives of many over the past five decades, including Andy Millard, who has worked there since 1994 and now serves as a press operator.

“I went from line worker to now being a press operator, and I’ve just about done any job,” said Millard. “I haven’t done a job at the Lighthouse that I didn’t like. I get a lot out of knowing that I’m part of a team that helps people who are blind.”

Koetter said that she feels fortunate to have long-tenured employees who enjoy what they do and are passionate about their work.

“We couldn’t do it without each other, we like to refer to ourselves as a family,” said Koetter. “Our employees are what contribute to our success.”

The Beacon Lighthouse looks forward to continuing its mission of providing meaningful employment and empowering its employees to be contributing members of their communities.

# A message from the President and Chief Executive Officer

## Fred M. Weber, Jr.

The first week of June marked the end of the 89th session for the Texas Legislature. As we do every session, WorkQuest continued to monitor legislation that may impact the Purchasing from People with Disabilities Program and its stakeholders.

Starting next month, WorkQuest will offer our 2025 Community Rehabilitation Program Compliance & Training Seminars. These sessions are designed to help new and existing CRPs better understand the guidelines and requirements of the *WorksWonders* Program. A few of the topics that will be discussed include procurement procedures and laws, person-centered planning and career counseling training, governmental contracting, and other related subjects.

Our team is also hard at work planning our two major annual events, the 18th annual Artie Lee Hinds Award Dinner and the 37th annual Products and Services Expo, which will both take place this September. We look forward to celebrating the outstanding work of our CRPs, their hard-working employees and the customers who purchase products and services through the Program.

More information about the seminars, the Artie Lee Hinds Award Dinner, and the Products and Services Expo can be found on our website, [www.WorkQuest.com](http://www.WorkQuest.com).

WorkQuest is deeply grateful to every individual who supports our mission. Your continued support allows us to provide employment opportunities for Texans with disabilities. We wish you a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events.



Fred M. Weber, Jr.  
President/CEO



WorkQuest staff with Horizon Industries at the Texas Public Purchasing Association 2025 Spring Conference in Round Rock, promoting products and services while strengthening relationships through in-person interactions.



WorkQuest staff attend the Texas Emergency Management Conference at the Fort Worth Convention Center, showcasing new safety gear and connecting with current customers.



# Texas Department of Public Safety K-9 Teams Complete Annual Certifications at WorkQuest Warehouse

The Texas Department of Public Safety is home to one of the top K-9 programs in the nation. While the DPS utilizes multiple training locations, the WorkQuest Warehouse is honored to serve as a longtime site where the K-9s and their handlers complete their annual certification training.

These highly skilled dogs are trained to detect a wide range of controlled substances, including methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine and marijuana. Through rigorous training, the dogs are conditioned to operate in high-pressure environments such as vehicle searches, package inspections and large-scale criminal investigations.

Their contributions go beyond enforcement, serving as a deterrent to criminal activity and reinforcing the DPS' commitment to protecting communities from the devastating effects of illegal drugs. WorkQuest is proud to support this important work by providing a facility that upholds a shared dedication to serving communities across Texas.

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*K-9 Handlers pictured with WorkQuest team member, Jonathon Teague, at the WorkQuest Warehouse.*

## CRP Compliance & Training Seminars

### JULY 10, DFW

Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center  
1800 Highway 26E  
Grapevine, TX 76051

### JULY 30, CORPUS CHRISTI

DoubleTree Beachfront  
3200 Surfside Boulevard  
Corpus Christi, TX 78402

### AUGUST 22, HOUSTON

Houston Marriott Westchase  
2900 Briarpark Drive  
Houston, TX 77042

### JULY 24, AUSTIN

UT Thompson Conference Center  
Conference Room 2.120  
2405 Robert Dedman Drive  
Austin, TX 78712

### AUGUST 5, EL PASO

Hilton Garden Inn  
6650 Gateway Blvd. East  
El Paso, TX 79915

### SEPTEMBER 9, ABILENE

Hilton Garden Inn Abilene  
4449 Ridgemont Drive  
Abilene, TX 79606

### JULY 29, SAN ANTONIO

DoubleTree Hotel SA Northwest  
6809 North Loop 1604  
San Antonio, TX 78249

### AUGUST 21, TYLER

Residence Inn  
350 W. Heritage Drive  
Tyler, TX 75703

### SEPTEMBER 11, WEBINAR

Link will be provided to registrants as the date approaches.

# WorkQuest

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## Artie Lee Hinds Award Dinner

Monday, September 22, 2025

Doubletree Hotel Austin

6505 IH-35

Austin, Texas 78752

## Products and Services Expo

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Doubletree Hotel Austin

6505 IH-35

Austin, Texas 78752

**View the WorkQuest catalog at [WorkQuest.com](http://WorkQuest.com)**