



# UPSKILL UPDATE

**JUNE 2020**

## **CHARTING A PATH FORWARD AMID UNCERTAINTY: THE PANDEMIC'S IMPACT ON HOUSTON'S WORKFORCE**

UpSkill Houston's partners and leadership are taking a longer and more informed view of the potential impacts on the Houston economy as a result of the pandemic, oil market crisis, and challenges of institutional racism. These factors only make UpSkill Houston's role in strengthening the pipeline of skilled workers even more important. Our work has been grounded in the core values of equity, dignity of work, skills-based advancement, and opportunity for all.

[Read more here.](#)

## **NAVIGATING THE CHANGING NATURE OF WORK**

The COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably accelerated and accentuated fundamental changes already underway in the education and skills needed to be successful in the workforce of today and into the future. Automation technologies, higher levels of digital skills, and globally integrated markets are transforming our regional economy and the workforce at a more rapid pace than ever before. These forces are changing the nature of work and disrupting key pathways for low- and middle-skill workers.

In mid-July, UpSkill Houston will be releasing its next report highlighting research conducted by TEconomy Partners LLC that explores how these forces are impacting Greater Houston's workforce. Building on "[Middle Skills Matter to Greater Houston](#)," which UpSkill Houston released in April, this new report on the changing nature of work will explore automation risks, increased levels of digital skills, and upskilling pathways for occupations impacted by technological disruptions.

## **HOUSTON SCHOOLS CLICK PLAY ON CAREER READINESS VIDEOS**

Houston Independent School District is producing new videos designed to help prepare students to launch their careers. The new HISD CTE career advisor YouTube presence was built to provide information ranging from the fundamental, or soft, skills employers seek in employees to the certifications students can earn while still in high school to information specific to high-growth and in-demand careers.

Employers are in the best position to articulate the education, skills, or credentials students need to enter an industry or start a career. Employers are also perfectly positioned to describe specific job roles and specialty areas to students and broaden their knowledge and understanding of an industry's full range of career opportunities.

Employers interested in partnering with HISD to share their expertise in these videos can contact district career readiness senior manager [Melaney Herron](#).

Other opportunities for employers to engage with HISD students and educators this summer and fall include the district's [Host Students for a Day](#) program (virtual tours are an option) and

presenting during its [Job Alike](#) event in August.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

### COMMUNITY COLLEGES KEY TO RECOVERY

Roughly one of three American workers said that if they lost their jobs because of COVID-19-related events they would need additional education or training to find another job with the same wages or income, according to the Strada Center for Consumer Insights' national COVID-19 Work and Educational Survey conducted in mid-May. This statistic is just one data point that points to the need for education and training programs that will provide workers with the right knowledge and skills to remain competitive in the changing landscape of work.

For years, community colleges in Greater Houston have built partnerships with employers and aligned curriculum and programs along industry standards and to meet industry needs and provide access to reskilling and upskilling opportunities for our region's workforce. This month, we highlight three examples of community college partners helping connect job seekers with opportunities in our regional economy.

### NEW TOOL SEEKS TO ANSWER MAJOR JOB SEEKER QUESTIONS: WHERE ARE JOB OPENINGS & WHERE CAN I GET THE RIGHT TRAINING?

Amid the dramatic labor fluctuations of the last several months, Houston Community College launched a new initiative to help connect displaced workers with relevant training or certification programs they may need to be hired into jobs in demand now.

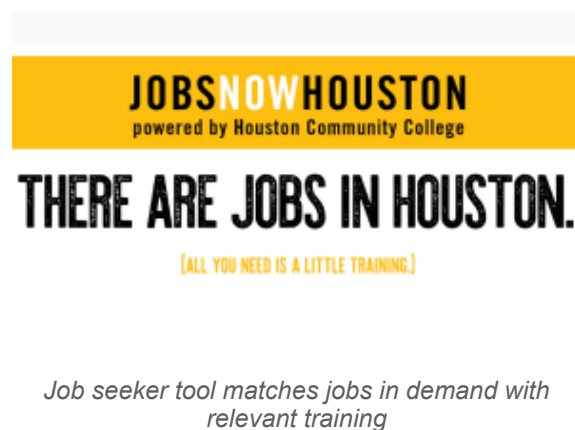
This new tool - found at [JobsNowHouston.org](#) - uses Emsi data to showcase occupations currently in demand, and maps them directly to relevant HCC programs. Data and tools are divided into three sections:

- Workforce Training - where job seekers can see in-demand occupations and wage information, linked to specific training courses
- Fast Training - where job seekers can find short-term summer training courses
- Business Center - where employers can build customized training programs for upskilling employees or rebuilding a workforce

JobsNowHouston grew out of HCC's recognition that while workers were finding themselves unemployed, areas like logistics, transportation and warehousing saw a large spike in need.

"As a training provider for in-demand occupations in the region, we saw an opportunity to drive traffic to training that would lead those unemployed back to the job market in a quick way," said Dr. Michael Webster, the college's associate vice chancellor for workforce instruction and an UpSkill Houston executive committee member.

Watch Webster, UpSkill Houston's Peter Beard and HCC Online College President Dr. Margaret Ford Fisher discuss the tool along with in-demand opportunities and training on HCC's ["Credential Up Houston" program](#).



### NEW TRANSPORTATION & GLOBAL LOGISTICS TECH CENTER EXPANDS

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DRIVERS, SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGERS

Individuals looking to enter careers within transportation and global logistics can gain the skills they need in Lone Star Corporate College's newest Workforce Center of Excellence: The LSC-Transportation & Global Logistics Technology Center.

The new, ultramodern 16,000-square-foot facility, located in Spring, features six classrooms, an 8.3-acre driving track with six backing pads and a truck driving simulator. It is an approved Texas Department of Public Safety Third Party Testing facility meaning students who complete Lone Star's commercial driver's license (CDL) program can also be tested at the facility.



*New Workforce Center of Excellence opened in June*

*(Image from Lone Star Corporate College)*

The new center houses Lone Star's Logistics Management program and Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) certified logistics professional (CLP) certification that will prepare graduates for employment within total supply chain management areas including inventory control, materials management, and transportation.

Lone Star Chancellor Dr. Stephen C. Head noted during a grand opening event that the COVID-19 pandemic has shown "how vitally important" it is to maintain a strong supply chain.

"Lone Star College will serve the trucking and global logistics industry by providing the next generation of CDL drivers with state-of-the-art technology and equipment, providing new career opportunities and expanded training," Linda Leto Head, the college's senior vice chancellor for External and Employer Relations and member of UpSkill Houston's executive committee, said in a statement.

The center was developed with collaboration of public organizations and private industries, Linda Head said.

Learn more about the LSC-Transportation & Global Logistics Technology Center from [Lone Star Corporate College](#).

## EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS, STUDENT SUCCESS EARN SAN JACINTO NATIONAL RECOGNITION

For the third consecutive time, San Jacinto College has been tapped as one of the nation's top 10 community colleges by the Apsen Institute's College Excellence program.

The prestigious Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence recognizes institutions with outstanding achievement in the areas of teaching and learning, certificate and degree completion, workforce success, and equitable outcomes for students of color and low-income students. The \$1 million prize is awarded every two years. The next winner will be announced in May 2021.

This cycle, the Aspen Institute cited San Jacinto's comprehensive alignment around student success as well as the institution's effectiveness "in building relationships with employers to deliver what the community needs to thrive and ensuring that graduates succeed in the workforce," according to Joshua Wyner, Aspen Institute College Excellence Program executive director.

"This recognition is a testament to the resiliency and support of our community, our taxpayers, our businesses and industries, and our educational partners," said San Jacinto



*San Jacinto College receives*

College Chancellor and UpSkill Houston executive committee member Dr. Brenda Hellyer in a message to the school community. "Student success is not just something we say: It's a way of doing, thinking, planning, executing, and believing."

*third consecutive Aspen  
recognition*

The Aspen Institute recognized San Jacinto College with its Aspen Rising Star Award in 2017 and a place among the top 10 community colleges in the country in 2019.

The Aspen Institute is an international nonprofit organization committed to realizing a free, just, and equitable society.

Read more about the Aspen Prize from [San Jacinto College](#) and from the [Aspen Institute](#).

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- **July 1 & 3: [Go to College FREE Workshops](#)**; Capital IDEA Houston hosts this series of information sessions for fall 2020 for students aged 18 or older
- **July 15: [Business Beyond Borders: International Exports with EXIM Bank](#)**; The Greater Houston Partnership will host the Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) for a discussion of international trade financing amidst the COVID-19 pandemic
- **July 16: [Leading Through Digital Innovation Virtual Conference](#)**; Region 4 Education Services Center presents this digital conference to provide educators with the support needed to facilitate rigorous, engaging, curriculum-focused, and interactive learning environments
- **Various Dates: [Mission United Community Activities](#)**; These veteran-focused workshops and learning modules on a variety of topics are hosted by the United Way of Greater Houston's Mission United program

## RESOURCES & READINGS

- **[Houston Work Safe Program](#)**; The Greater Houston Partnership shares principles to help businesses protect the health of their employees and customers, minimizing the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus.
- **[Reopen Houston Safety Monitoring Dashboard](#)**; This dashboard from the Greater Houston Partnership and the Texas Medical Center provides a compilation of critical metrics spanning healthcare factors, economic metrics and local measures of citizen activity that can inform leaders the region navigates the path to recovery.
- **[Greater Houston Partnership Business Recovery Center](#)**; The GHPBRC features guidance and financing related to business recovery programs.
- **[Workforce Solutions: Jobs Now](#)**; Workforce Solutions provides this list of immediate job openings in the Gulf Coast region. It is updated daily.
- **[Middle Skills Matter to Greater Houston](#)**; This UpSkill Houston report underscores the long-term and critical role of middle-skill occupations in positioning the Houston region to be competitive in the 21st century and creating economic opportunity for its residents.
- **[Public Viewpoint: COVID-19 Workforce and Education Survey](#)**; The Strada Center for Public Insights' Public Viewpoint provides insights to the education and training providers, policymakers, employers, and individual Americans who are navigating the COVID-19 crisis; the most recent data shows what is motivating workers looking to change fields.
- **[It won't be business as usual in the post-COVID world](#)**; During this "Work in Progress" podcast from Working Nation, Joseph Fuller, co-founder of Harvard Business School's Managing the Future of Work initiative, discusses how employers are approaching rehiring workers and the skills this workforce will need.
- **[Economic Insights & Workforce Challenges Revisited](#)**; View a recording of the June 25 UpSkill Works Forum discussion with Gulf Coast Workforce Board Principal Economist Parker Harvey.

- [Designing Virtual and Micro-Internships](#); Watch a recording of the May 28 UpSkill Works Forum featuring Parker Dewey founder and CEO Jeffrey Moss and Genesys Works Houston Executive Director Katherine Taylor.
- [Virtual Internships, Micro-Internships Create Crosswalks from Classroom to Career Remotely](#); Read a recap of the UpSkill Works Forum discussion around virtual and micro-internships.

*Led by and for employers, UpSkill Houston builds the pipeline of skilled workers to grow the regional economy and provide opportunity for all Houstonians.*

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