



2020 WANTO Grants Abstracts

Goodwill Industries of East Texas Inc.

Applicant's name: Goodwill Industries of East Texas, Inc. (GIET)

Title: Goodwill of East Texas (GIET) TA for Women's Tech Sector Advancement program

Area to be served: East Texas 13-county region (Anderson, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rusk, Shelby, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt and Wood counties)

Number of participants: GIET TA services will introduce 2,500 women to apprenticeship and careers in nontraditional occupations, enroll 150 women in pre-apprenticeship or other preparatory training, and place 40 women in apprenticeship or other nontraditional employment, which would result in a 10.78% increase in women engaging in the regional IT Sector (BLS Employed persons, LMD: 1/22/20). Further, GIET will provide Technical Assistance to 15 Workforce Investment Boards, employers, tradeswomen's committees, affiliated organizations, support groups and/or labor unions across our 13-county region, thus meeting the local labor force demand for IT professionals.

Funding level requested: \$500,000

Total cost-per-participant: \$2,631.59 for 150 women enrolled in pre-apprenticeship or other preparatory training and 40 women placed in apprenticeship or other nontraditional employment.

Project Scope: "Goodwill of East Texas (GIET) TA for Women's Tech Sector Advancement" program reflects GIET's dual strategy of offering direct employment training services across a 13-county region in East Texas, while providing area businesses and labor force development organizations TA designed to enhance local employment infrastructure and further the advancement of women participating in nontraditional occupations, such as in the Tech Sector.

Notably, as we moved forward during this pandemic, many of our community members had access to training to help them retool and pivot to work from home, while others struggled to retain employment (15,483 individuals filed for unemployment in Smith County, 3/7/20-6/20/20, while 1,344 filed during the same period in 2019, twc.texas.gov). Most women in the Tech industry were able to retain their jobs. Still, low-income women faced significant hardships. Too often, the Digital Divide undergirds the multi-layered employment barriers that are unique to women, as noted in a recent survey of low-income Texas residents, which indicates 39% of low-income individuals lack basic digital literacy and are unable to conduct



a Google search [42.1%], create a social media account [52.5%], copy or paste [53.9%], use navigation buttons [56.3%], and save a file to a flash drive [61.3%] (University of Texas, 2017). In response, GIET offers TA services regarding our research-based multi-literacy approach using “the Great Equalizer,” Digital Literacy, interwoven with Basic, Financial, and Soft Skills, to provide on-ramps for women seeking 21st century careers.

In fulfillment of GIET’s mission to "provide skills training and vocational opportunities for people with barriers to employment," we create a well-trained workforce pipeline of women prepared for the “20 Fastest Growing Industries in East Texas" for 2023 (Emsi Q1, 2020 Data Set). Utilizing this crisis as a catalyst to ensure the well-being of our community, GIET is uniquely positioned to offer TA services to more fully engage women in A/NTO.