



City of San Antonio

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DEPARTMENTS: Economic Development

DEPARTMENT HEADS: Rene Dominguez

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

The Economic and Human Development Committee (EHDC) will hear briefings from community leaders of workforce development organizations including SA Works, Alamo Colleges, and Project Quest.

SUMMARY:

The Economic and Human Development Committee (EHDC) will hear briefings from community leaders of workforce development organizations that play an important role in the workforce development strategy of the City of San Antonio.

SA Works is a newly formed non-profit housed with SAEDF and overseen by a business led board. The intent of SA Works, using the collective impact model, is to align the full extent of the community's resources to achieve an optimum workforce for the businesses, industries, and residents of San Antonio and Bexar County.

The Alamo Community College District is one of the largest community college systems in Texas and the United States. They serve the Bexar County community through their many programs and services that help students succeed in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their careers.

Project QUEST, Inc. is a nationally recognized community-based economic development program serving San

Antonio since 1992. QUEST was initiated by a partnership between the City of San Antonio, the State of Texas, COPS (Communities Organized for Public Service), Metro Alliance, and San Antonio Business Leaders. The creators believed that a well trained workforce is essential for economic development and competitiveness.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

With the importance of workforce development increasing nationwide and a quickly changing economy, understanding the specific needs of our local economy is critical. SA Works is an innovative approach to tie existing systems in economic development, education, and workforce development together in a more comprehensive manner. The organization's work is accomplished within three main areas of focus. The first area of focus is identifying and validating targeted industry skill gaps specifically in healthcare, advanced manufacturing / aerospace, and information technology / cyber security. The second area of focus is aligning and defining education pathways from kindergarten to post-secondary education including Career & Technical Education (CTE) and HB 5 endorsements. The third area of focus is centered on connecting the unemployed and underemployed with targeted interventions to career pathways.

Working through the three focus areas, SA Works will engage with industry, education, and other non-profits to create coherent career pathways and a focused middle skills strategy and will lead the community-wide workforce development strategy. With SA Works housed at SAEDF, they will also be tied to the workforce strategy of Forefront SA and the larger economic development strategy.

The effort in the second focus area is accomplished through a partnership with Alamo Colleges. As our primary partner in occupational training and education, Alamo Colleges provides both credit based and non-credit certificate based programs to train the skills needed by industry. This partnership has provided unique approaches between ACCD and the City of San Antonio which funds important programs like the Alamo Academies and the Eastside Education and Training Center (EETC). Alamo Colleges will give an overview and update on these initiatives.

Project Quest is an example of how the three focus areas tie together. Participants with Project Quest come from the third area of focus: under-skilled, underemployed, or unemployed. They are served by Project Quest even if they are not eligible for WSA services. In working with Alamo Colleges and other training providers such as the Open Cloud Academy, Project Quest provides access to training programs that leads to certificates, associate degrees, bachelor degrees, or industry recognizes certifications specifically in the targeted industries in the first focus area including IT/Cyber Security and Healthcare. Project Quest will provide an overview of the services and programs they offer.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing only. No action is needed from the committee.