

WorkQuest

FOCUS

on Jobs for People with Disabilities

WorkQuest Newsletter XLIV

November 2018

Marilyn Parsons of West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind honored with 2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award



Marilyn Parsons, an employee of West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind, was honored with the 2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award presented by WorkQuest, (formerly TIBH Industries, Inc.) at its recent awards dinner. The award honors an outstanding community rehabilitation program (CRP) employee for his or her leadership, dedicated service and commitment to excellence.

“People can either be a stumbling block or a stepping stone,” Parsons said. “I want to be a positive force and an encourager.”

Parsons serves across all areas of production at the Lighthouse, including writing instruments, lanyard assembly, operating the bagging machine and blister packaging. Parsons has adapted quickly to new tasks over the past six years, and she’s also the first to volunteer to try a new task or help a new employee, making her an invaluable presence at work, according to her supervisor.

“She can learn anything, even the more challenging jobs,” Leslie Bell, Parsons’ supervisor, said. “We can rely on her because it always just clicks.”

Parsons’ road to the Lighthouse began in 1979 when she was diagnosed with sarcoidosis, an inflammatory disease that caused scarring on her retina. Her vision progressively worsened over the next two decades, leaving her with numerous blind spots. In 2005, her doctor advised her to stop working as an activity director and assistant administrator at a nursing home—a job she cherished for 22 years. Parsons was unable to work for seven years, which left her without hope, but after she began working at the Lighthouse, her sense of purpose returned.

“Marilyn is the perfect example of our mission of creating jobs and changing lives,” Vickie Sanders, marketing director at West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind, said.

After attendees celebrated Parsons’ story of perseverance and reclaiming her sense of purpose after losing her sight, Parsons’ family joined her on stage as she accepted the 2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award amid tears of happiness.

Congratulations to Marilyn Parsons and to all of the 2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award nominees for their dedicated work and commitment to excellence.

We are WorkQuest!

For the past 40 years, we have been on a quest with one another. Every day, in countless ways across the state, we’ve come to symbolize hope and fortitude—and the right solution. In recognition of our 40th anniversary, and in an effort to celebrate this journey, we are excited to announce that TIBH Industries, Inc. is now WorkQuest, a name we feel fully embodies our mission to serve Texans with disabilities.

On this journey, we’ve forged a pathway, connecting people with meaningful employment opportunities, improving their quality of life and moving business forward in a profoundly meaningful way. Together, we have dared to imagine something bigger than ourselves.

Our new name reflects a spirit of motivation, progress and togetherness while celebrating the hard work of those we serve and while recognizing the organizations with which we partner to enhance the lives of Texans with disabilities.

While our name has changed, our commitment to our mission—and to each of you—remains constant.

We are WorkQuest!



WorksWonders employees and customers recognized during 11th annual Artie Lee Hinds Award dinner

WorkQuest (formerly TIBH Industries, Inc.) celebrated 40 years of providing employment opportunities for Texans with disabilities during its 11th annual Artie Lee Hinds Award dinner in Austin in September. Nearly 400 attendees, including award nominees and their families and friends, as well as WorkQuest board members and employees, gathered to recognize WorkQuest, its community rehabilitation program (CRP) partners and dedicated employees for their commitment to the Texas State Use *WorksWonders* Program.

During the dinner, WorkQuest presented several awards to employees in recognition of their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm for their jobs. Armando Perez of PCSI, Inc. received the Most Inspirational Employee Award, while Arnold Joiner of Marian Moss Enterprises received the Most Motivational Employee Award.

WorkQuest also presented this year's Spirit of State Use Awards to Milton Turnipseed, Randy Bassett and Jerry Mayfield for their tireless work to ensure the success of the *WorksWonders* Program and those it serves. Turnipseed joined WorkQuest as the product research and development manager, and he also oversaw the opening of WorkQuest's Central Store and the development of affiliate State Use programs. Bassett began his career with WorkQuest in 1998 and continued to work there part-time after his retirement. Mayfield, the executive director of Travis Association for the Blind, has been an instrumental advocate of the State Use Program for 40 years.

Motivational speaker and author, Derek Clark, a survivor of severe child abuse, abandonment and 13 years in the foster care system, shared his emotional story of resilience during the evening's keynote address. Clark gained national attention on social media after his inspirational rap generated more than 225 million views, earning him the nickname, the "Rapping Dad." Clark uses his platform to travel the world, sharing his story in hopes of inspiring others to overcome personal obstacles in order to gain self-confidence and a sense of purpose.

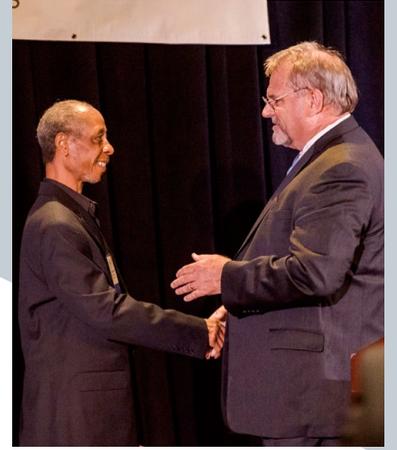
Following his presentation, which included an impromptu rap performance, WorkQuest recognized the Top 10 customers who purchase products, services and temporary employment services through the *WorksWonders* Program. These customers include multiple state, city and county agencies and organizations.

Throughout the event, attendees viewed videos showcasing the standout employees recognized during the program, including Perez and Joiner, as well as the recipient of the pinnacle honor of the evening, the 2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award, which was presented to Marilyn Parsons of the West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind. She was recognized for her leadership, perseverance, dedicated service and commitment to excellence in her job at the Lighthouse, where she is a cherished employee and role model.

The evening concluded with the unveiling of WorkQuest's new name, logo and tagline. Marie Richter, WorkQuest's director of Administration, announced the change to those in attendance, along with the organization's vision for an even more prosperous future.

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend this year's event. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Scenes from the Awards Dinner



A Message from President and CEO Fred M. Weber, Jr.



I'd like to thank everyone who was able to attend this year's Artie Lee Hinds Award dinner and Products and Services Expo. These events serve as shining examples of the benefits that the *WorksWonders* Program provides to individuals with disabilities across the state, as well as to the stakeholders that utilize the products and services provided through the Program.

I believe we have one of the best State Use Programs in the country, and not just because we continually lead those programs in terms of hours worked by individuals with disabilities and wage growth. The *WorksWonders* Program employs some of the hardest working and most dedicated individuals in the state of Texas. That fact was evident as we were introduced to the nominees who were acknowledged and highlighted at this year's dinner, and as we got to see the exemplary products and services those individuals can provide at the expo the following day.

For the past 40 years, TIBH Industries, Inc. has made it our mission to continually expand the opportunities for employment available to individuals with disabilities across the state. Throughout those four decades, we have encountered momentous successes, while overcoming challenging hardships, to achieve this mission. That is in large part due to the steadfast relationships we have established with the state agencies and CRPs that make up the backbone of our program. Together, we have been able to navigate the path that has lead us to where we are today. As we journey down the next part of that path in pursuit of fulfilling our shared mission even further, TIBH is excited to do so with a new name: WorkQuest.

As TIBH, we were able to enhance the livelihood and broaden the horizons of hundreds of thousands of individuals with disabilities.

As WorkQuest, we are eager to embark on a new journey alongside all of you, to overcome new obstacles, and achieve new goals and successes, all with the hope of broadening those horizons even further throughout the next 40 years.

Spirit of State Use

- Nick Allen, Janie Clements Industries/Center for Life Resources
- Bobbie Antwine, David & Ivory Ministries, Inc.
- Ernest Arce, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind
- Edward Burney, Andrews Diversified Industries
- Casey Canales, Goodwill of Northwest Texas
- Christy Clemmer, East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
- Edgar Contreras, Xceed Resources
- Pedro Garcia, Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth
- Joe Garcia, Fresh Start of Monroe, Inc.
- Frances Hannibal, The Lighthouse of Houston
- Kenneth Harris, On Our Own Services
- Lindsey Henderson, Camino Real
- Alfonso Hernandez, Achieve
- Zach Hinrichsen, Goodwill of East Texas
- Oscar Holbrook, Work Services Corporation
- Bruce Innes, South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
- Joyce Johnson, ABG Fulfillment
- Arnold Joiner, Marian Moss Enterprises
- Jim Kazmierski, Daniel Pest Control and Professional Services
- Ronald Machen, The Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County
- Alexce Marshall, Woodcreek Outreach Rehabilitation Development
- Todd Mernin, Endeavors Unlimited
- Vanessa Monsivais, Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind
- Vicente Moreno, The Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County
- Victor Nevarez, Xceed Resources
- Marilyn Parsons, West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
- Armando Perez, Professional Contract Services, Inc.
- Mark L. Pineda, EQUIP Enterprises, Inc.
- Anna Maria Pluymen, Travis Association for the Blind – The Austin Lighthouse
- Terry Pucket, Precious Gems Services, Inc.
- Daniel Ramirez, Xceed Resources
- Lina Ramirez, Rising Star Resource Development Corporation
- Demetreck Riley, Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center/Woods, Etc.
- Roland Rios, World Technical Services, Inc.
- Travis Rodgers, Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center/Woods, Etc.
- Steven F. Shields II, Goodwill Industries Central Texas
- Jennifer Snyder, Center for Recovery & Wellness Resources
- Erik Stearns, Peak Performers
- Jonathan Teague, WorkQuest – Central Store
- David Timms, EXPANCO
- Edmundo Vargas, Relief Enterprise of Texas
- Robert G. White, Beacon Lighthouse, Inc.
- Emilou Wilcox, Starcare Specialty Health Systems
- Shamarco Williams, Easter Seals Central Texas
- Martin Womack, Aldersgate Enrichment Center
- Victoria Wooden, Relief Enterprise of Texas



Randy Bassett, who joined WorkQuest in 1998, received a 2018 Spirit of State Use Award for his dedication to expanding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities throughout Texas.



Milton Turnipseed, former WorkQuest product and development manager, was presented with a 2018 Spirit of State Use Award for his tireless work to ensure the success of the *WorksWonders* Program.



Jerry Mayfield, executive director of the Travis Association for the Blind, was presented with a 2018 Spirit of State Use Award for his instrumental advocacy of the State Use Program for four decades.

WorkQuest 30th Annual Products and Services Expo



In September, WorkQuest (formerly TIBH Industries, Inc.) hosted its 30th annual Products and Services Expo in Austin, following the previous evening's 11th annual Artie Lee Hinds Award dinner. The expo serves to link community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) across Texas with state agencies that use—or may be able to use—their products and services through the *WorksWonders* Program, which helps connect Texans with disabilities with meaningful employment.

At the expo, representatives from 25 CRPs answered questions and displayed the various products and services they offer to current and potential customers in attendance. Many booths provided samples of their products, which has proven to be a popular way for customers to preview what they can order from the various CRPs.

"I'm glad they hold the expo every year so newer purchasers can come out and see what is being offered," Kristy Watts, a purchaser in the procurement department at the Texas Department of Public Safety, said. "This is my fourth year at the expo, and I come because I like to meet vendors face-to-face. What's better than that?"

While many CRPs attend each year, several new CRPs were participating for the first time and were excited to connect with potential new customers. Each new state contract helps a CRP ensure there is enough work for their employees.

"This is our first time at the expo, and we're hopeful it will generate some new business," Laura Alvarez, State Use Program manager at Pride Industries, said. "We were just recently certified with WorkQuest and are excited to see how we can support the program."

Some CRPs presented new products and services that purchasers hadn't seen before, which helped them gauge interest and learn about what their customers find most valuable. This is one of the most beneficial aspects of the expo for CRPs, according to Debra Martin, program manager at ABG Solutions.

"Seeing what's new in the consumer's world is important to help us serve them better," Martin said.

"I've learned a lot through attending the expo this year—even some things about our own products and how people are actually using them," Billie Jo King, program coordinator at Bluebonnet Trails, said.

Many purchasers who attended the expo were quick to point out how important it is to connect with CRPs while helping to provide adequate jobs for employees with disabilities. Paula Fulsom, administrative assistant in the commissary and trust fund department at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, reflected on the importance of

purchasing products and services through the *WorksWonders* Program, as well as meeting new CRP connections at the expo.

"This opportunity is awesome for purchasers, and it's so helpful for those with disabilities," Fulsom said.

The expo also gives customers and CRP representatives the opportunity to meet one another for the first time. Additionally, it allows customers to discuss which products or services they find most helpful, as well as provide input on those they would like to see available in the future.

"The best part about being here is putting everybody's faces to their names," Calvin Starrit, purchaser IV at the Texas Workforce Commission, said. "I've known my WorkQuest rep for five or six years, but this is the first time I'm getting to meet her in person. It is so exciting!"

Exhibitors who attended:

- ABG Fulfillment
- Beacon Lighthouse
- Bluebonnet Trails
- Camino Real
- Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center
- Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind
- Daniel Pest Control and Professional Services
- East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
- Enterprise Professional Services, Inc.
- Fort Worth Lighthouse for the Blind
- Goodwill Industries Central Texas
- Goodwill Industries of East Texas
- Goodwill Industries of South Texas
- The Lighthouse of Houston
- Peak Performers
- Pride Industries
- Professional Contract Services, Inc.
- Rising Star Resource Development Corporation
- San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind
- South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
- Texas Correctional Industries
- Travis Association for the Blind – The Austin Lighthouse
- VRC Industries
- West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
- WorkQuest – Central Store

Products included:

- Office and school supplies
- Furniture items
- Medical supplies
- Automotive supplies
- Bed and bath supplies
- Food supplies
- Storage supplies
- Janitorial supplies
- Safety supplies



Services included:

- Landscape services
- Parks and grounds maintenance
- Litter pick-up
- Vehicle washing
- Window cleaning
- Receptionist services
- Pest control services
- Recycling services

Temporary services included:

- Accounting and clerical support
- Engineering information
- Technology data entry

Scenes from the Expo



“I’ve learned a lot through attending the expo this year, even some things about our own products and how people are actually using them!”

Billie Jo King, Program Coordinator, Bluebonnet Trails



“This is my fourth year at the expo, and I come because I like to meet the vendors face-to-face. What’s better than that?”

Kristy Watts, Purchaser, Procurement Department, Texas Department of Public Safety



“This opportunity is awesome for purchasers, and it’s so helpful for those with disabilities.”

Paula Fulsom, Administrative Assistant, Commissary and Trust Fund Department, Texas Department of Criminal Justice



“Interacting with the people who keep our employees employed puts more behind the mission.”

Myles Wallace, Business Development Representative, Peak Performers



“I’ve known my rep for five or six years, but this is the first time I’m getting to meet her in person. It is so exciting!”

Calvin Starritt, Purchaser IV, Texas Workforce Commission



“We were just recently certified with WorkQuest and are excited to see how that helps us.”

Laura Alvarez, Texas State Use Program Manager, Pride Industries



2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award Nominees



Nick Allen, Janie Clements Industries/Center for Life Resources



Ernest Arce, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind



Edward Burney, Andrews Diversified Industries



Christy Clemmer, East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind



Edgar Contreras, Xceed Resources



Pedro Garcia, Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth



Joe Garcia, Fresh Start of Monroe, Inc.



Frances Hannibal, The Lighthouse of Houston



Kenneth Harris, On Our Own Services

2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award nominees (holding awards) are pictured with Edward Serna, deputy executive director of the Texas Workforce Commission; John Luna, chairman of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities; and Derek Clark, motivational speaker and author.



Lindsey Henderson, Camino Real



Zach Hinrichsen, Goodwill of East Texas



Oscar Holbrook, Work Services Corporation



Bruce Innes, South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind



Joyce Johnson, ABG Fulfillment



Arnold Joiner, Marian Moss Enterprises



Jim Kazmierski, Daniel Pest Control and Professional Services



Ronald Machen, The Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County



Alexce Marshall, Woodcreek Outreach Rehabilitation Development

2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award nominees (holding awards) are pictured with Edward Serna, deputy executive director of the Texas Workforce Commission; John Luna, chairman of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities; and Derek Clark, motivational speaker and author.



Todd Mernin, Endeavors Unlimited



Vanessa Monsivais, Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind



Vicente Moreno, The Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County



Victor Nevarez, Xceed Resources



Marilyn Parsons, West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind



Armando Perez, Professional Contract Services, Inc.



Anna Maria Plyumen, Travis Association for the Blind - The Austin Lighthouse



Daniel Ramirez, Xceed Resources



Lina Ramirez, Rising Star Resource Development Corporation

2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award nominees (holding awards) are pictured with Edward Serna, deputy executive director of the Texas Workforce Commission; John Luna, chairman of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities; and Derek Clark, motivational speaker and author.



Steven F. Shields II, Goodwill Industries Central Texas



Jennifer Snyder, Center for Recovery & Wellness Resources



Erik Stearns, Peak Performers



Jonathan Teague, WorkQuest - Central Store



David Timms, EXPANCO



Edmundo Vargas, Relief Enterprise of Texas



Robert G. White, Beacon Lighthouse, Inc.



Shamarco Williams, Easter Seals Central Texas

Congratulations to all of the 2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award nominees!

2018 Artie Lee Hinds Award nominees (holding awards) are pictured with Edward Serna, deputy executive director of the Texas Workforce Commission; John Luna, chairman of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities; and Derek Clark, motivational speaker and author.

WorkQuest

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

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