



Texas Beacons of Excellence

October, November, & December 2024

Upcoming Conferences

Texas Transition Conference

February 19-21, 2025

Click here for more information:

<https://ttc.tamu.edu/>

Texas Council Conference

June 25-27, 2025

Click here for more information:

<https://txcouncil.com/conference>

Texas APSE Conference

Save the Date for Year 3: September 22-24 in Galveston, Texas!

Resources

Job Accommodation Network

askjan.org

Partnership Led by:



Texas Beacons of Excellence in the Community

Our team is dedicated to fostering strong, supportive relationships within our community to help individuals with disabilities access meaningful employment opportunities. We are passionate about empowering participants as they embark on their journey toward competitive and integrated work environments. We are proud to be a part of their success stories and excited to continue providing the guidance and resources needed to achieve their career goals.

Social Security Resource Limits and ABLE Accounts

As of 2024, the SSA limits countable resources to \$2,000 for individuals and \$3,000 for couples, which can restrict savings for SSI recipients. To address this, our October 18th webinar, in partnership with the National ABLE Organization highlighted how ABLE accounts can help individuals with disabilities save money, cover disability-related expenses, and achieve greater financial independence. The recorded training is now available for viewing on our website [Resources | University of North Texas](#).




For families who have dependents with disabilities:

The ABLE Act provides a way to **set aside savings money, tax-free**, for their loved one

Support for Individuals at Lubbock State Supported Living Center

On October 17th, Program Director Lucy Gafford and Project Director Ryan Cole led informational sessions at the Lubbock State Supported Living Center (SSLC). During these sessions, they engaged with individuals and their family members, providing an overview of project specifics, including benefits counseling, career discovery, and how to connect with their local Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Office. The following day, Senior Project Coordinators Sonia Martinez and Karina Saucedo facilitated a training on Disability Etiquette and Inclusion for the Lubbock SSLC Vocational Staff, promoting an inclusive workplace environment for all.





Texas Beacons of Excellence Spotlight



Darius Weatherall
Current Employer:
DHL - NIKE

Darius, with less than 90 days at DHL Nike, surpassed expectations by completing 847 processing units in one shift and was named Employee of the Month. Way to go Darius!



Nicole Meadows
Employer of the Year

Texas APSE Conference Year 2

From October 21st to 23rd, our team attended the Texas APSE Conference, part of the national movement advocating for employment as the first option for individuals with disabilities. TBE consultants presented topics such as challenging behaviors, employer relationships, and family engagement in secondary education. Goodwill Industries of Dallas CEO Tim Heis also shared their success in transitioning clients into community employment as a TBE Project Site.

Celebrating Innovation: TBE's Impact on Inclusive Employment

During the closing ceremony of the Texas APSE Conference, the TBE project was honored with the 2024 Innovation Award. This recognition highlights our team's commitment to the belief that individuals with disabilities have the right to work. We are dedicated to creating transformative impacts through innovative services and supports, both for individuals and organizations, leading to meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Our team also partners with incredible employers across the State of Texas to help them meet their unmet staffing needs while also providing employment opportunities to people with disabilities. Nikki's Popcorn Company is an employer in North Dallas where TBE has recently and successfully placed a project participant. Nicole Meadows of Nikki's Popcorn received the 2024 Employer of the Year award for her dedication to employing individuals with disabilities and fostering an inclusive workplace. She utilizes universal design principles to create an inclusive work environment where everyone can thrive.

