



# 2010 OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN TEXAS GOVERNMENT

## Nomination Form

Please print clearly or type in the spaces below.

### Category:

(Choose One Only)

- Outstanding Professional Development
- Outstanding Management
- Outstanding Contribution
- Outstanding Community Involvement

### Deadline:

5 p.m. May 2, 2010

### Checklist:

- The nomination form is signed by the agency's director or board member
- A narrative statement of up four pages is included
- The submission includes four copies of all materials including the original signed nomination form.

### Nominee Information

Name Nicole Verver  
 Contact Phone 512-936-3160  
 Mailing Address 101 E. 15 St.  
 City Austin State TX ZIP 78778  
 E-Mail nicole.verver@twc.state.tx.us  
 State Classification Title Director I, B26  
 Job Title Director of Workforce Policy and Program Assistant

### Agency Information

Agency Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)  
 Agency Contact Ann Hatchitt  
 Contact Phone 512-463-8556  
 Address 101 E. 15 St.  
 City Austin  
 E-Mail ann.hatchitt@twc.state.tx.us

### Certification

X  
 Signature of agency director or board member (required) [Signature] Date 5/6/10  
 Print or type name Larry Temple  
 Title TWC Executive Director

Submit four copies, including the original, of the completed nomination form and the narrative statement to:

State Agency Council  
 Post Office Box 13354  
 Austin, Texas 78711

For Overnight or hand deliveries only:  
 c/o Governor's Commission for Women  
 1100 San Jacinto  
 Room E2.258  
 Austin, Texas 78701

The State Agency Council will not return materials submitted as part of a nomination. Letters of recommendation will not be accepted.

## OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN TEXAS GOVERNMENT AWARDS

**Nominee:**

Nicole Verver  
Director of Workforce Policy and Program Assistance  
Texas Workforce Commission  
101 E.15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78778

**Category of Achievement:**

Outstanding Contributions

**Agency:**

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)

**Title and Job Description:**

Director of Workforce Policy and Program Assistance for Child Care, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Employment and Training Program, Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Program, Foster Youth, and Project Re-Integration of Offenders (RIO) Director I (B26)

Directs, manages, and oversees the activities of the:

- Child Care and Development Fund-funded (CCDF) services to nearly 116,500 children daily in Texas, the second largest number in the country. Texas is only one of three states that administer these federal funds through its workforce commission. As the lead agency for both CCDF and state employment services, TWC integrates child care and employment services on both the state and local levels. Verver oversees a budget of well over a half-million dollars including \$450 million for child care, \$95 million for TANF, \$16 million for SNAP and \$4 million for RIO. In addition, the state of Texas received \$214 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to expand child care services and quality.
- Child care policies and provisions throughout the Texas workforce system and the 28 Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) and their subcontractors to insure appropriate provision and utilization of child care funding. While the state legislature establishes the performance measures for child care providers, Verver, as the state's child care administrator, develops and establishes performance targets and management tools for the Boards and provides oversight and monitoring of services.
- Each Board's individual child care allocation and performance targets in the Board's Child Care Services contract. TWC rules require each Board to submit its child care policies and plans to TWC to ensure that policies and services comply with the relevant state and federal rules and regulations and submit individual plans for monitoring child care contractors.
- Boards as they coordinate with independent school districts (ISDs), Head Start, and Early Head Start program providers to ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that full-day, full-year child care is available to meet the needs of low-income parents who are working or attending a job training or educational programs.
- Improved relative child care provider's background checks system. Each caregiver who is employed in a child care facility must undergo a criminal background and Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) abuse and neglect central registry check at the time of employment and once every 24 months thereafter. In addition—for licensed, registered, and listed child care home providers—anyone living in the home who is over 14 years of age is subject to those same requirements. DFPS checks all child care operation addresses against the Texas Department of Public Safety's Sex Offender Registry on a regular basis. DFPS follows up with the operation to ensure the safety of the children, when an

address matches or a registered sex offender lives within a proximity of the child-care operation. TWC has an interagency memorandum of understanding with DFPS, transferring CCDF funds to DFPS for the licensing and monitoring of child care facilities.

- Research and development for establishing the Child Care Attendance Automation (CCAA) system, a statewide attendance and tracking system. The CCAA application allows child care providers who have signed agreements to serve children subsidized by a Board to record attendance and contact log information using the Internet. Additionally, in order to increase the efficiency as well as strengthen the integrity of child care services, TWC is undertaking an initiative to use electronic validation technologies such as an attendance swipe card, voice, and biometric identification in order to track and verify child care attendance. Verver also directed the electronic attendance validation to be used as the basis for billing and payments using electronic funds transfers to the provider. The benefits to this system include a reduction in the number of errors that were made using the manual system and helps providers reduce staff time devoted to reporting attendance thereby reducing administrative costs of child care providers.
- TWC Foster Youth Initiative, its purpose being to expand and improve transitional services for foster care youth. The Foster Youth program provides employment, training, educational support, and transitional living services geared specifically for foster youth and youth formerly in foster care ages 16-25 and still in need of assistance. Comprehensive services are provided through Foster Youth Transition Centers (FYTCs) and include access and referrals to support service partners and other resources. Since June 2005, TWC has funded \$1.4 million to expand and enhance FYTCs in Texas. The Houston Alumni and Youth (HAY) Center was a two-year U.S. Department of Labor foster youth demonstration project cofounded by TWC. From June 2005 to July 2007, the HAY Center served nearly 400 youth and achieved an 81 percent placement rate and a 62 percent diploma/GED attainment rate. The HAY Center continues operation with additional funding from TWC and Casey Family Programs of Seattle, Washington. TWC has added three more FYTCs in El Paso, Beaumont-Port Arthur, and Central Texas.
- Development and dissemination of the Texas Child Care quarterly journal. The magazine's audience is early childhood professionals. The journal is distributed to all licensed child care providers and relative child care providers and offers early education and care information regarding methods of training staff, improving services to families, and managing business efficiently. Although licensed child care directors are the journal's primary audience, direct caregivers, registered child care home providers, public school administrators and teachers, college child development instructors, high school work-prep teachers, and parents can benefit from its articles. Of the 24,300 copies printed quarterly, 23,700 are distributed free to regulated child care providers, residential facilities and foster care placement agencies, child care licensing staff, Boards and their child care contractors, and teen parent programs in Texas. The remainders are sold by subscription throughout the United States, Canada, and overseas military bases.
- Child care community throughout the state and recently oversaw appropriate policy changes to ensure that child care providers who are on corrective action with DFPS aren't taking care of CCDF children. TWC's three Commissioners are pursuing these policy changes. While DFPS does all the licensing TWC recommends and reviews policies.

#### **Nomination:**

Nicole Verver's responsibilities at TWC are far-reaching, covering many services the agency provides. Her energetic leadership skills inspire innovation and creativity within her 32-member team, propelling TWC to the forefront of workforce systems across the nation. Verver's primary responsibilities include the administration of the TANF/ Choices, Child Care, SNAP Employment and Training, and Project RIO programs as well as programmatic oversight of the state's integrated automated client data collection systems.

After more than 10 years at TWC, Verver has achieved increasing levels of leadership responsibility, receiving high praise with each new position. Verver listens to concerns voiced by the child care community throughout Texas, and is viewed as a state-level resource who will initiate needed changes. Her contributions at the state

level have created safer and healthier environments for children receiving subsidized child care. These contributions are also helping to automate outdated manual processes, which will result in a net increase in the availability of care for children. Verver's contributions have been felt throughout the child care community from 2005 to the present.

The foster care initiative that began under Verver's leadership serves as a national model; Verver's staff has spoken at many national conferences on its success. These centers provide a supportive one-stop environment for foster youth to receive education and employment-related services, as well as necessary support services. To date, these centers have served more than 1,000 foster youth and are expected to serve more than 500 this year.

These are just a few examples of the innovative workforce solutions developed by a 32-member team inspired by a remarkable, young leader. TWC is proud to nominate Nicole Verver as the Outstanding Woman in Texas Government in the Outstanding Contribution category.

Verver is an accomplished professional with extensive experience in policy development, program administration, program evaluation and policy implementation. Verver is a member of the Executive Committee for the National Association of TANF State Administrators. She also serves as the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program State Administrator and the Child Care State Administrator for the State of Texas. In addition, Verver serves as a primary point of contact at TWC for several local, state and federal agencies and is often called upon to brief members of the legislature regarding workforce programs and policy. Furthermore, Verver was recently appointed by Governor Rick Perry to serve on the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. This Council will facilitate the development and enhancement of high quality systems to improve the school readiness of children.

Prior to joining Workforce Policy, Verver spent several years in various roles within in TWC, including TWC's Welfare Reform Initiatives Department and managing TWC's Performance, Analysis and Reporting department. She is often invited to share her programmatic expertise as a speaker and panelist at national conferences. Verver has Bachelor and Master's of Science degrees from Southwest Texas State University.