

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Associated Hygienic Products, NRG Energy Inc. and  
Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas Honored at  
Texas Workforce Conference**

AUSTIN – Nominated by Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas (Heart of Texas), Associated Hygienic Products LLC (AHP) was honored as a finalist for the Employer of the Year Award at the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) 15th Annual Texas Workforce Conference held November 30 – December 2 in Houston. The Award is given to employers that exemplify the tremendous results that are possible when public and private entities partner to put people back to work. Also, NRG Energy Inc. (NRG) was honored NRG received the Employer Award of Excellence, which honors an organization that is actively involved with Texas Workforce Solutions and has made a positive impact on employers, workers and the community.

Using the *Texas Back to Work* program, AHP hired 23 individuals this year who had been receiving unemployment benefits. AHP started production last year with 173 employees, and now has more than 220 employees and plans to add up to 50 new positions by the end of 2011. Additionally, AHP employees received more than 7,964 training hours through a \$304,948 Skills Development Fund grant from the Texas Workforce Commission.

NRG operates the Limestone Electrical Generating Station in Limestone County, employing 250 full-time workers. Faced with an aging workforce, NRG partnered with Navarro College to create 31 hours of dual college-credit courses to certify high school students in power plant management and operations, growing an applicant pool from which to fill its anticipated vacancies.

Heart of Texas also received the \$25,000 Service to Business Award for partnering with Waco Transit to develop the LINK bus service between Waco businesses and workers from rural communities. Heart of Texas sought a Federal Transit Administration Job Access and Reverse Commute grant to support the creation of a public transit system with late evening service to rural communities. Heart of Texas secured financial contributions from 14 partners to meet the required local match. Today the service provides more than 1,500 monthly trips and is already helping to decrease absenteeism for area employers.

“Local workforce boards are at their best when they support and facilitate the efforts of private employers,” said TWC Chairman Tom Pauken. “I wish to commend Associated Hygienic Products, NRG and Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas for their commitment to develop creative solutions in their region. Their partnership has benefitted the local community, employers, and job seekers.”

Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas, which serves Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and McLennan counties, is one of 28 local workforce boards located throughout the state. The primary goal of TWC and the Workforce Boards is to meet the needs of Texas employers through locally designed, market-driven workforce development initiatives and services. All employers, workers and job seekers are eligible to take advantage of these services.

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***Pictured L-R:***

Andres Alcantar (TWC Commissioner Representing the Public), Keith Stanford (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), John Fry (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Diane Cowan (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Anthony Billings (Workforce Solutions Executive Director), Ted Tavares (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Ronald G. Congleton (TWC Commissioner Representing Labor), Ron Bowlin (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Tom Pauken (TWC Chairman)

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***Pictured L-R:***

Top Row: Joe Moore (Workforce Solutions), Anthony Billings (Workforce Solutions Executive Director), Ted Taveras (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Ron Bowlin (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Keith Stanford (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors)

Bottom Row: Rene Clayton (Workforce Solutions), Ralph Lujan (Workforce Solutions), Andrea Valero (Workforce Solutions), Chris Klesse (AHP), Josh Griffen (AHP), John Fry (/Workforce Solutions Board of Directors)



***Pictured L-R:***

Top Row: Joe Moore (Workforce Solutions), Anthony Billings (Workforce Solutions Executive Director), Ted Taveras (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Ron Bowlin (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), Keith Stanford (Workforce Solutions Board of Directors)

Bottom Row: Rene Clayton (Workforce Solutions), Ralph Lujan (Workforce Solutions), Andrea Valero (Workforce Solutions), John Fry (NRG Energy Inc./Workforce Solutions Board of Directors), David Knox (NRG Energy Inc.), Jerry Strouds (NRG Energy Inc.)

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*The Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board, Inc. is one of 28 local workforce boards located throughout the state. The board serves Bosque, Hill, McLennan, Limestone, Freestone and Falls counties. The primary goal of the Board is to meet the needs of Texas' employers through locally designed employer-driven workforce development initiatives and services.*

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Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board, Inc. • 254-296-5300 • <http://www.hotworkforce.com>  
Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to include individuals with disabilities.  
TTY/TDD via Texas Relay Service 1-800-735-2989 (TDD), 1-800-735-2988 (Voice)