

Water Workforce Development in Texas

The Power of the Springboard Program

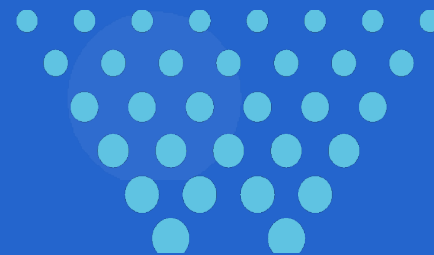
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West Houston Association
July 16, 2019



**Water Environment
Association of Texas**



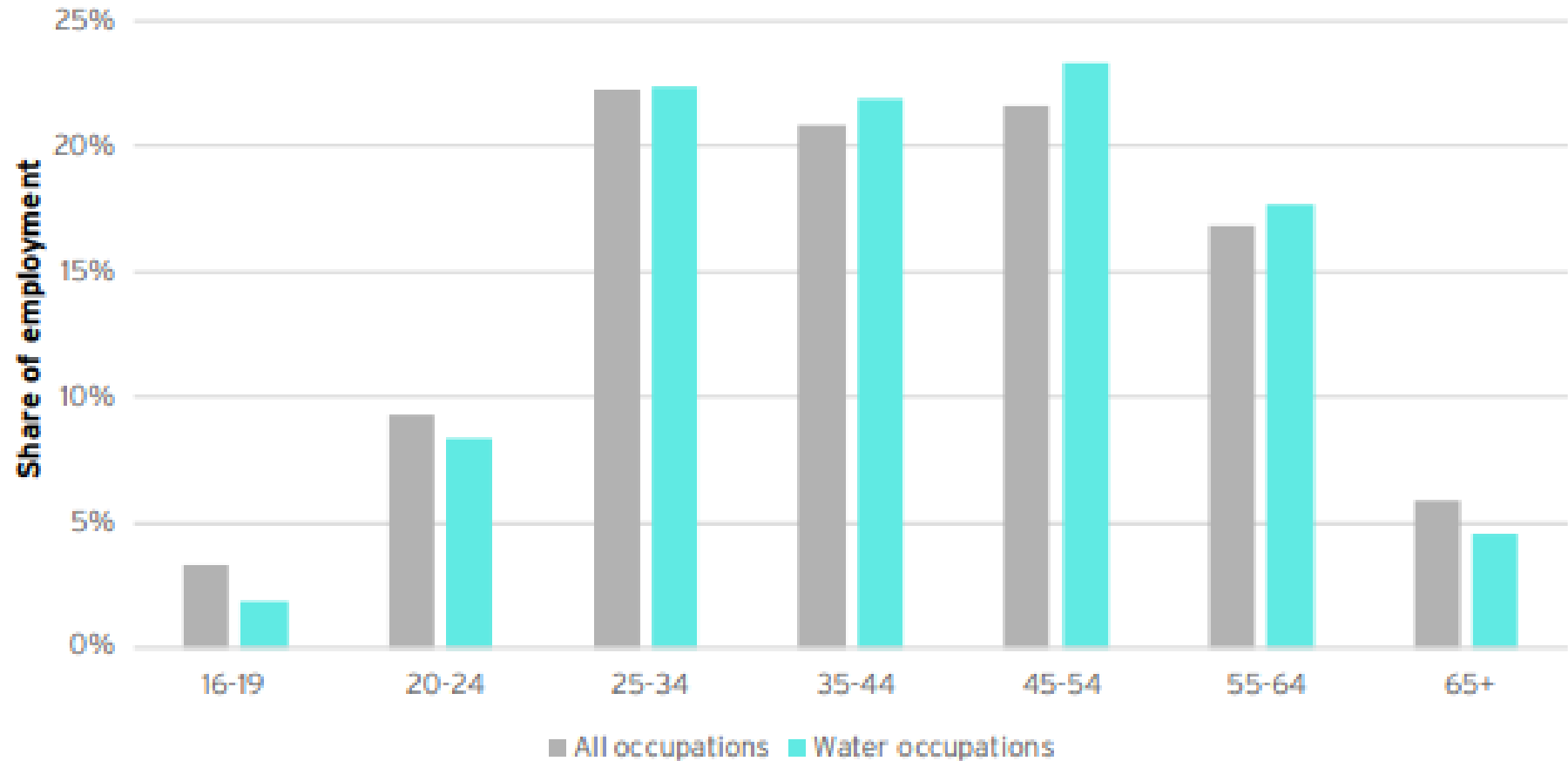
So, What is the Problem?

Attracting, training, and retaining a skilled workforce is one of the most pressing issues facing the sector today

- 37% of water and 31% of wastewater utility workers will retire over the next decade, according to a US Governmental Accountability Office report
- The median age of water sector workers is 48 years old, which is six years older than the national median age of workers
- There are more water workers in their prime and nearing retirement than the national average and fewer younger workers
- The water workforce also lacks gender and racial diversity



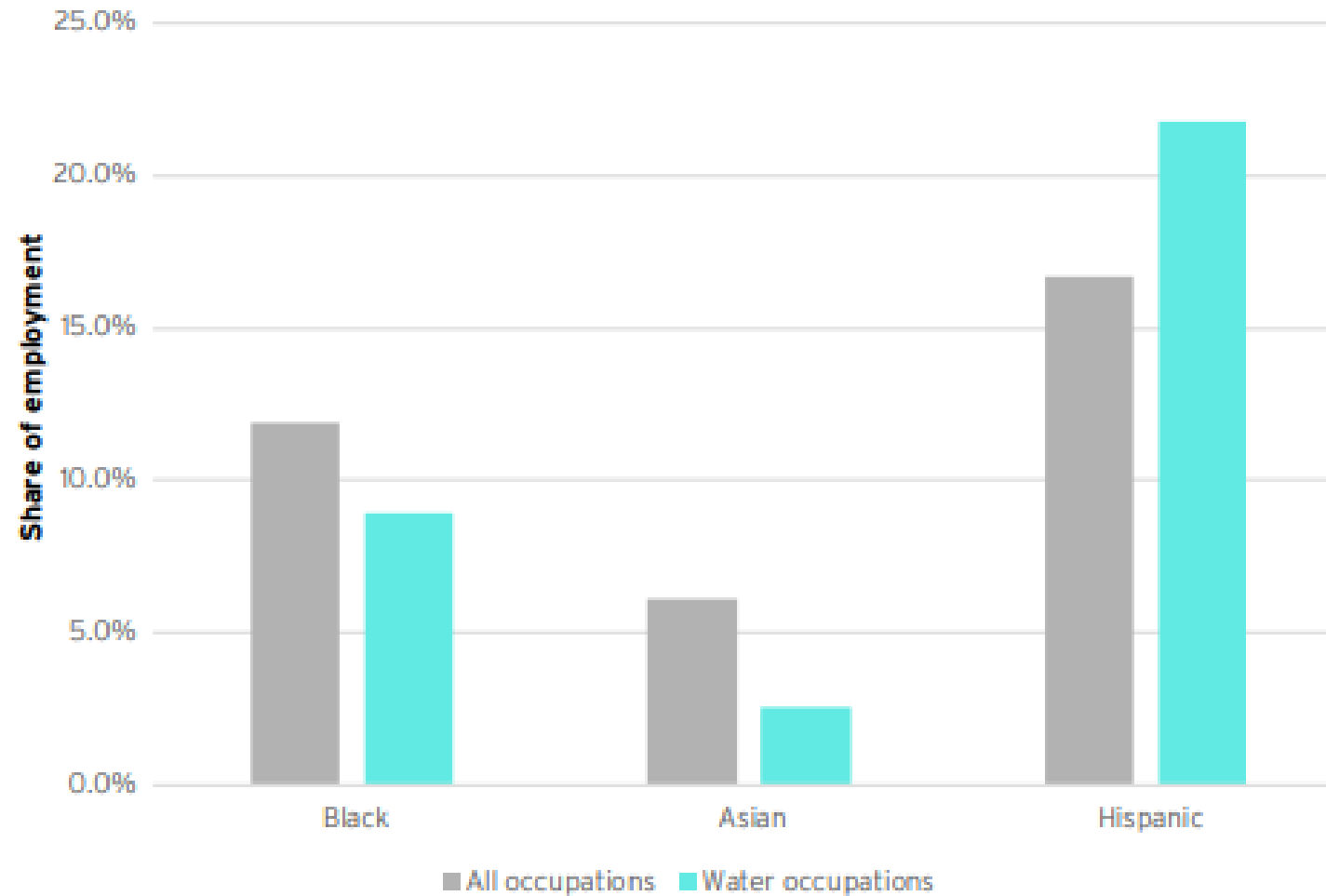
Age range of workers in water occupations vs. all occupations 2016



Source: Brookings analysis of BLS Occupational Employment Statistics and CPS data



Racial diversity in water occupations vs. all occupations 2016



Source: Brookings analysis of BLS Occupational Employment Statistics and CPS data



The Solution(s) and Opportunities

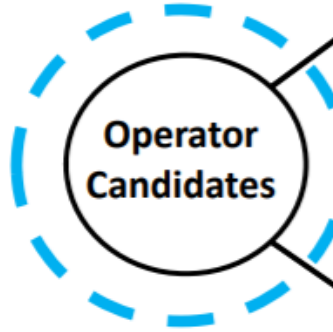
- WEF/WEAT Operator Springboard Program = Workforce Pipeline
- Forging New Partnerships and programs across the state
- Concept of Fast Follow – learn from those that have already charted the course
- The water workforce needs greater public visibility, especially when trying to reach younger workers and other prospective job candidates
- Better market jobs in the water and wastewater industry as an attractive career path

Overview of Program DRAFT

February 2018



(Such as City of Houston, City of Sugar Land, etc.)

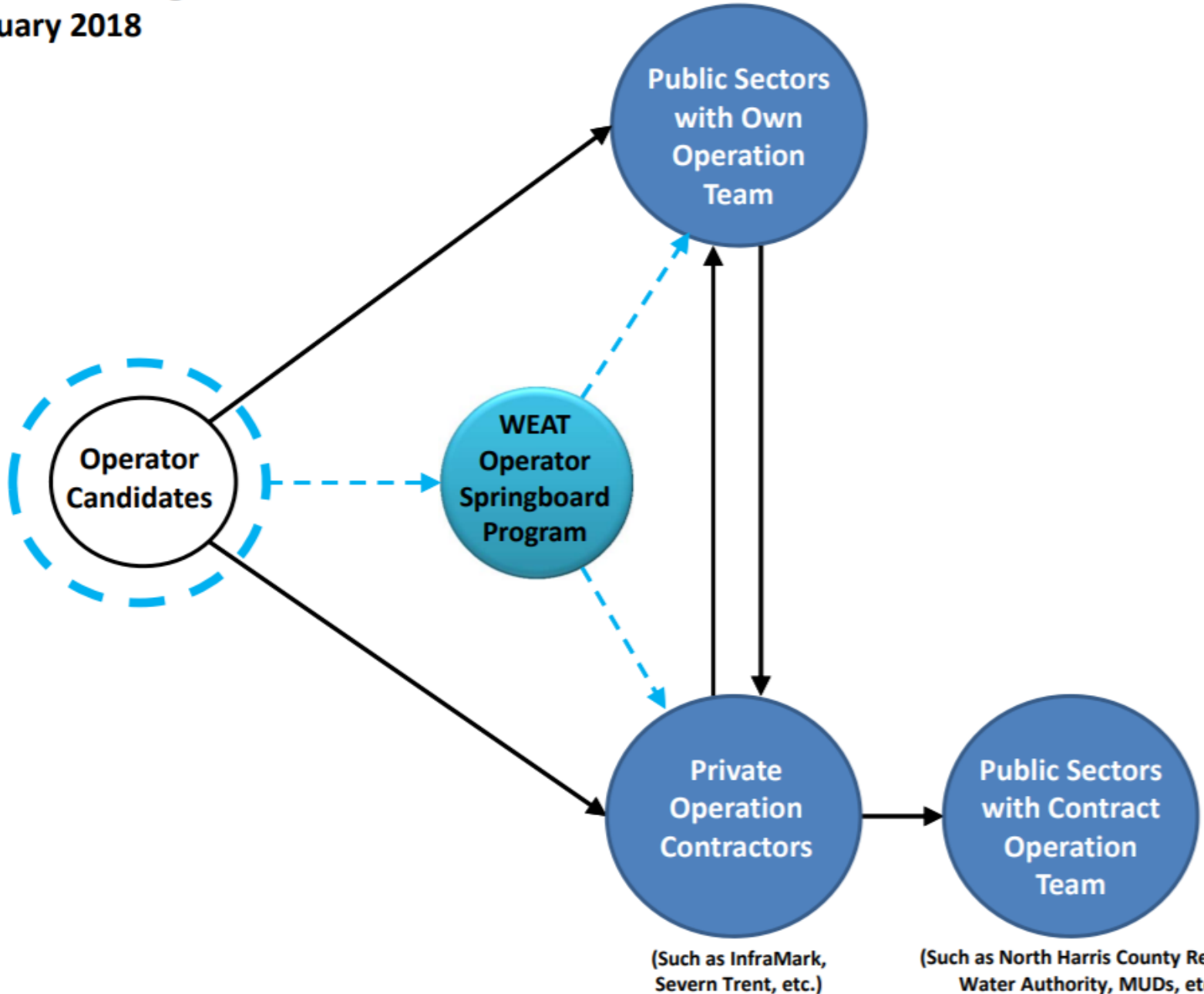


(Such as InfraMark, Severn Trent, etc.)



(Such as North Harris County Regional Water Authority, MUDs, etc.)

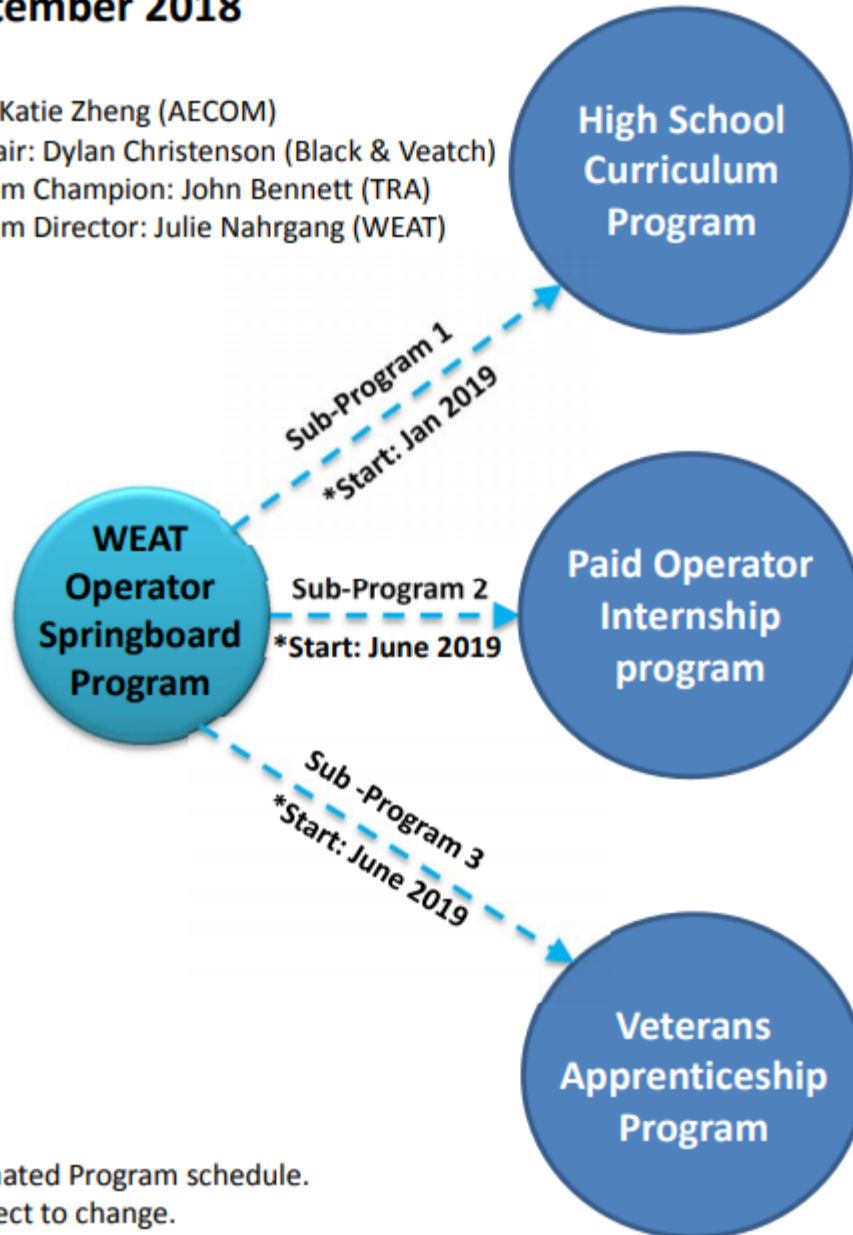
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WEAT-SE Operator Workforce Solution Three Sub-Programs September 2018

Chair: Katie Zheng (AECOM)
Co-Chair: Dylan Christenson (Black & Veatch)
Program Champion: John Bennett (TRA)
Program Director: Julie Nahrgang (WEAT)



*Estimated Program schedule.
Subject to change.

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High School Seniors will be career ready after completing this program.

Phase I: Assist Houston Water to revitalize prior Partnership with Houston ISD to implement program geared at providing high school students TCEQ certified classroom training and unpaid internships with the goal of transitioning them into the water workforce post-graduation.

Phase II: Broaden partnership to more HISD campuses and also Dual Credit program via partnership with Houston Community College System

High School Graduates will be able to join the workforce immediately after completing this program.

Phase I: Assist Houston Water and InfraMark to recruit pre-screened candidates from Workforce Solutions talent pool and to provide paid Internship to selected candidates (over 18 years, legal status to work in the USA, minimum education of GED or High School Diploma).

Phase II: Facilitate the standardization of the operator field training at public or private operation sectors.

Veterans will receive additional benefits while being able to join the workforce immediately after completing this program

Phase I: TCEQ certified classroom training (offered by Houston Water for free)

Phase II: TCEQ certified classroom training & Apprenticeship program (additional funding from Federal Apprenticeship Program) allowing them time to move up operator classification and pay grade.



Forging New Partnerships and programs across the state through Springboard

Stakeholders included on Workforce Development Calls include:

- Houston Water
- Houston ISD
- Inframark – Operations partner providing host of services to municipalities
- Workforce Solutions
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
- Texas Education Association (TEA)
- US Department of Labor (DOL)
- Houston Community College (HCC)



Tour at Texas Water

Event Leads:

- Dylan Christenson, Black & Vetch
- Julie Nahrgang, WEAT
- Katie Zheng, AECOM

Exhibit Hall Moderators (will be paired with 12 students):

- Aaron Chan, City of Houston
- Magda Alanis, City of Houston
- Brianna Morales, Gulf Coast Authority
- Bryan Thomas, Inframark
- Carlos Gularte, Freese & Nicoles
- Hector Ortiz, Inframark
- William Jordan, Inframark

Operations Challenge Moderator:

- John Bennett, Trinity River Authority

Top Ops Moderator:

- Roy Aristizabal, Inframark

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Free
Guided Tour
for the Conference
Exhibit Hall

**George R. Brown Convention
Center**
April 4th, 9 am -12 pm

Limited space available (15)

The Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT) is introducing an initiative that strives to identify promising students from high schools who are interested in professional careers in the water industry.

You can get an exclusive look at the Exhibit Hall through the lens of industry experts on special guided tours. These free tours follow topic-specific education sessions in the Exhibit Hall.

Reservations are required for each student. Please e-mail Katie Zheng at Katie.Zheng@aecom.com to reserve your spot today.



Welcome to Texas Water 2019



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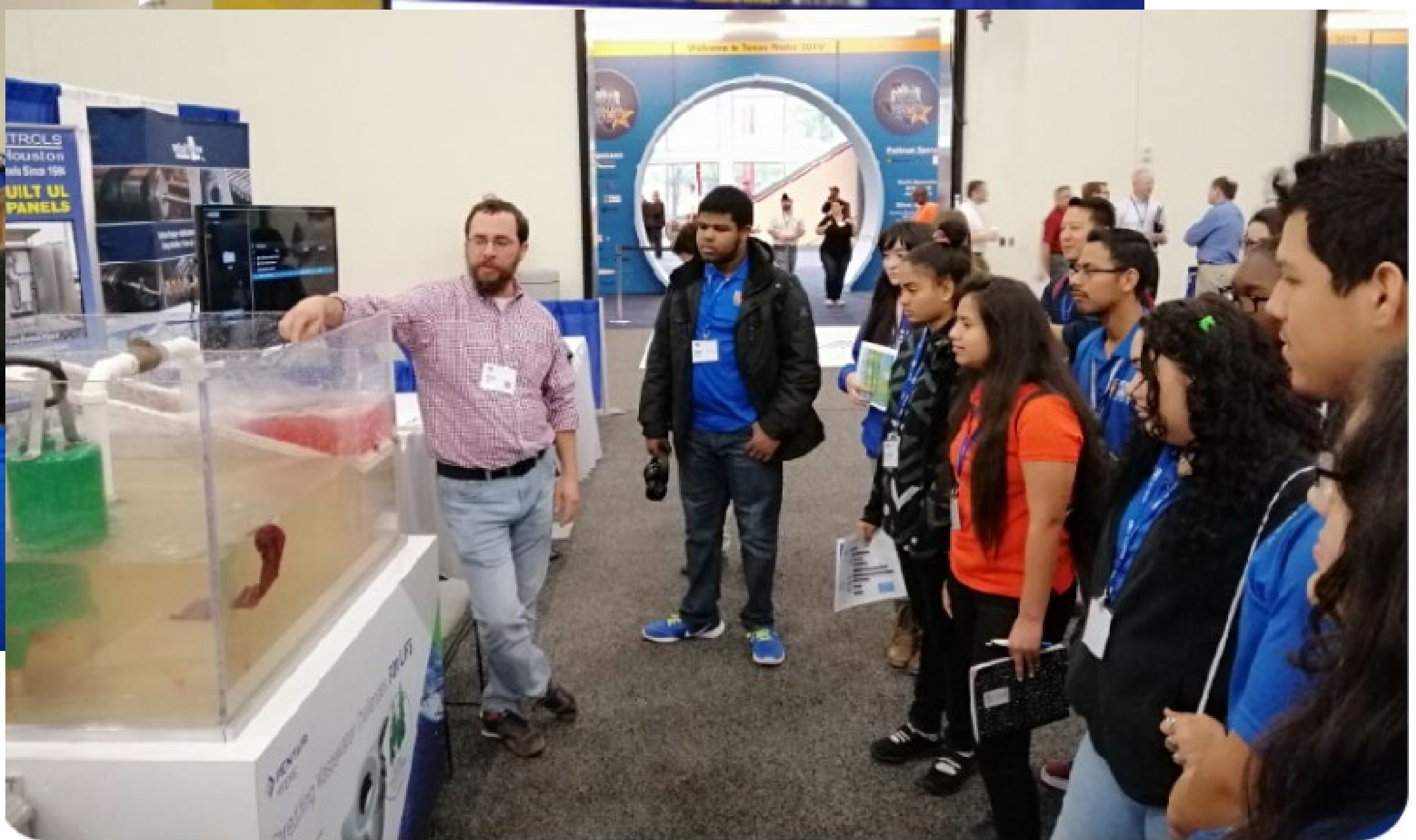
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Silver Sponsor







Houston ISD and City of Houston

- ✓ The right People for the Job – Embrace Alphabet Soup
- ✓ Actively promote careers in water and tell the story of opportunity

- COH submitted draft curriculum in July 2019.
- COH to provide trainers
- Meeting with Houston ISD in August/September to finalize the details
- Submit the program to TCEQ in Fall 2019.
- Identify the scholarship details provided by WEAT
- Dylan and Katie to offer supports as needed





Houston Community College and Continuing Education

- ✓ Good sources: Knowing, contacting, or tapping the right people for the job
- ✓ Talk early: HCC has been part of the conversation from August 2018
 - HCC submitted curriculum (Basic Water Operations) in June 2019
 - HCC is scheduled to submit Basic Wastewater end of July 2019
 - COH/Inframark/Gulf Coast Authority reviewed and commented July 2019
 - Meeting with HCC again in early August to finalize details
 - Submit the program to TCEQ in Fall 2019
 - Still identifying and finalizing the list of qualified trainers



Next Steps and Continued Momentum

- Smaller groups with higher cadence addressing specific implementation challenges, HCC, COH, HISD
- Connect Community Colleges across the state
- Texas Water 2020 tour and feeding existing programs
- Continue to
- Advocacy – Policy and Law supporting workforce development and apprenticeship programs
- Veterans and the water workforce

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Questions or Comments

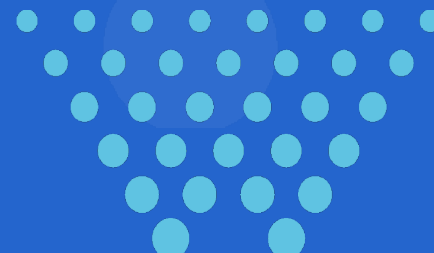
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