

IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAPIDES AMERICAN JOB CENTER

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A Message from the Director

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Summer 2022 is here! The Summer Youth WIOA Work Experience Program is in full swing! Currently, we have 30 young adults in work experiences at various worksites in the parish and are still recruiting for Phase II of our summer program. We appreciate the employers who are currently participating and encourage others to take advantage of this opportunity to train our next workforce. If interested, please reach out to our youth workforce professional at (318) 767-6019 or (318) 767-6030.

Business Services activity remains at a very high level at the Rapides American Job Center. We currently have 680 active recruiting announcements for 945 job openings. Competition to attract and retain good talent is stiff. We encourage all our business customers to take advantage of our recruiting services. We can also host a job fair to help attract the talent you are seeking. We also have a variety of pre-employment assessments such as Work Keys and Sage to help companies identify the best candidates. If you need any assistance with business services, please reach out to our Business Services Representative, Eric Irby at (318)487-5547.

Elaine Morace, Director
Rapides American Job Center



LWC Offers Scholarships for Google Career Certificates

Louisianians looking to pursue a career in technology can now get no-cost, online training with no prior experience required. The Louisiana Workforce Commission is offering hundreds of scholarships that provide access to the Google Career Certificates.

“We know careers of the future are in technology and Louisiana needs to be at the forefront,” said LWC Secretary Ava Cates. “As broadband infrastructure expands across our state, having these certificates available through online learning platforms makes them more accessible to all Louisianians who want to gain valuable job-ready skills that they’ll take with them through their career.”

The Grow with Google scholarships are funded through a partnership between the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and Google, who together are making 30,000 program scholarships available throughout the country. Google offers career certificates in high-growth fields like project management, user experience (UX) design, data analytics, IT support, and digital marketing and e-commerce.

Classes are self-paced and offered through the online learning platform, Coursera. The certificates require under 10 hours of flexible study per week and take 3-6 months to complete on average. They utilize hands-on projects and direct employer connections to help learners fully understand the subject matter.

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CLECO Gives \$100,000 to LSUA to Support Accountants for the Future



from left to right: Dr. Randall Dupont, Dr. Paul Coreil, Bill Fontenot, Melissa Anderson, & Dr. Abbey Bain
Photo credit: Nathan Parish

Cleco completed its pledged giving of \$100,000 to support LSUA's Accountants for the Future initiative. LSUA Chancellor Dr. Paul Coreil and Cleco President and CEO Bill Fontenot celebrated with a ceremonial "big" check presentation.


Like many local business leaders, Fontenot supports the idea that we can educate and employ qualified accountants right here in central Louisiana. Accounting is essential to the growth and sustainability of nearly every industry. As such, LSUA has devoted significant energy to revitalizing its pathway into this crucial career.

"Cleco's significant commitment to LSUA's Accountants for the Future initiative will result in more qualified accountants entering the workforce," said LSUA Chancellor Coreil. "By adding faculty and enhancing curriculum, the LSUA College of Business is committed to preparing and graduating job ready accounting students that can live and enjoy a successful career right here in central Louisiana."

"Cleco is honored to be a part of the Accountants for the Future project to grow the accounting department at LSUA," said Bill Fontenot, president and CEO of Cleco Corporate Holdings. "This donation is an investment in the communities where we live, work, and serve, and Cleco is committed to helping leading institutions like LSUA prepare their students to meet current and future workforce needs."

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Entergy Providing \$1 Million to Help Jumpstart LCTCS Implementation of MJ Foster Promise Program

 Entergy Louisiana is committed to helping develop the workforce of the future by supporting education initiatives that tap into the rich diversity of the communities it serves.



The company announced today that it will provide \$1 million over three years to the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) Foundation to help jumpstart the MJ Foster Promise Program, a financial aid program funded by the State of Louisiana that will help qualifying residents attend two-year colleges or approved proprietary schools and receive training for high-demand jobs in growing sectors.

Entergy Louisiana President and CEO Phillip May was joined during the announcement by Gov. John Bel Edwards, Louisiana Senate President Page Cortez, Louisiana House Speaker Clay Schexnayder, Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education Kim Hunter-Reed, LCTCS President Monty Sullivan, and LCTCS Director of Advancement Tarie Roberson. The group discussed how the MJ Foster Promise Program was developed, supporting legislation and what the program solves.

According to LCTCS, tens of thousands more adults will need to earn credentials beyond high school to fill jobs in Louisiana over the next decade. The MJ Foster Promise Program, a new \$10.5 million state fund, was created to address that need by providing financial assistance to low-income residents who are 21 years or older and seek credentials required for employment in workforce areas like construction, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing and transportation and logistics.

View the full story [here](#).

To learn more about the MJ Foster Promise program, click [here](#).



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Louisiana Department of Education Child Care Assistance Program



Louisiana's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provides families with financial support for child care services.



CCAP helps families, with a parent or legal guardian who is working or attending school or job training, pay for high-quality child care for children under age 13 or children with special needs up to age 18.

CCAP pays for a significant portion of the child care costs, and families pay the difference charged by the provider.

Families are eligible for CCAP if:

- Every adult in the household is a US citizen or an eligible alien, residing in the state of Louisiana
- Every adult in the household, meets one of the following requirements:
 - Works at least 20 hours a week
 - OR attends an accredited school or a training program as a full-time student
 - OR attends an accredited school or a training program at least 20 hours a week
 - OR attends a combination of work and school
 - OR is actively seeking work
 - OR participates in a transitional living program
 - OR receives disability income
 - OR is experiencing homelessness
- Your household's income before any deductions from your paycheck is less than the amount listed [here](#) for your household size (monthly gross earned and unearned income).

For more information about the program log on to [Louisiana Department of Education](#).

Eligible families can apply [here](#).

Rapides Regional Medical Center Offers a FREE Phlebotomy School



Rapides Regional Medical Center offers a free phlebotomy school that prepares students for the national certification exam of the American College of Clinical Pathology and includes clinical hours.



The Phlebotomy Program is a 12-week course that involves clinical and classroom instruction. All clinical and classroom experiences are designed to prepare graduates to successfully pass the ASCP certification exam and to meet NAACLS competencies for an approved phlebotomy program.

In addition to phlebotomy classes, students will complete a BLS course and become CPR certified during the program. Students will be required to rotate all clinical shifts (day, evening, and night) during the program. All classroom and clinical training is conducted at RRMC. There is no college credit awarded for classroom learning completed in this program. A certificate of completion will be awarded upon the successful completion of the program. This certificate is not dependent on the graduate passing any certification exam.

The deadline for applications to the next class (which begins in August) is July 15. Applications can be downloaded [here](#). Requests for application packets can be made by calling Rapides Regional Laboratory, at 318.769.3177 or emailing the Phlebotomy Program Director at Elizabeth.Duck2@hcahealthcare.com

For more information, log on to [Rapides Regional Medical Center](#).

Community Partners



**Rapides Parish
Police Jury**
(318) 473-6660



**Louisiana Workforce
Commission**
(318) 487-5532



**Louisiana Technical
& Community
College System**
(318) 487-5443



**Louisiana
Rehabilitation
Services (on site)**
(318) 487-5335



**National
Association for
Hispanic Elderly**
(318) 221-7611



**Alexandria
Housing Authority**
(318) 442-8843

Helpful Organizations for Employers



**US Department
of Labor**



**Louisiana Workforce
Commission**



**Cenla Regional
Chamber of
Commerce**



**Louisiana
Small Business
Development Center**



Secretary of State



**Rapides Sales & Use
Tax Department**



Employer.gov

Click the logos to access the organization's website.





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Benefits to Employers

Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC)

WOTC is one tool in a diverse toolbox of flexible strategies designed to help move people into gainful employment and obtain on-the-job experience. It joins other tax credits, education, and workforce training and development programs that help American workers with barriers to employment prepare for good jobs; ease their transition from job to job; benefit from the creation of effective regional economic development strategies; and create high performance workplaces.

For more information, [click here](#).

Fidelity Bonding

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) offers bonding services for hard-to-place job seekers under the Fidelity Bonding Program. The federal bonding program provides insurance to employers that protects against employee dishonesty and acts as an incentive to hire at-risk applicants, including Returning Citizens (ex-offenders). Fidelity Bonding covers theft, forgery, larceny and embezzlement. Bond insurance issued ranges from \$5,000 - \$25,000 for a 6-month period with **no deductible**. The bond can be issued to employers once the applicant has received a job offer with a scheduled start date.

For more information, [visit here](#).

The Rapides Foundation Reconnecting Cenla Program Grant

The Rapides Foundation has released the **Reconnecting Cenla Program Grant**, a new funding opportunity which seeks to fund eligible organizations to create or expand programs and partnerships for reconnecting disconnected youth and young adults to education and employment opportunities.

Disconnected youth, also referred to as opportunity youth, are young adults ages 16 to 24 who are neither in school nor working. In 2019, The Rapides Foundation expanded the scope of its programs to address disconnected youth in Central Louisiana.

The Reconnecting Cenla Program Grant provides grant awards up to \$300,000, with a grant term of up to 36 months. The goal of the funding opportunity is to support a mix of urban and rural community anchor organizations throughout the Foundation's nine-parish service area to develop local coordinated systems which will identify and recruit disconnected youth and address specific barriers they face when reengaging to education and/or employment services.

An informational webinar will be held on Thursday, June 16, for interested applicants to learn about the new grant. Registration is required for the webinar. Click [here](#) to register.

Full details about the funding opportunity, including the Request for Proposals, eligibility criteria, proposal submission deadlines and online application link, can be found by clicking [here](#).

Visit the The Rapides Foundation [Grants page](#) to see all funding opportunities available and to learn details about how to apply.

Log on to [The Rapides Foundation](#).

Career Wave 6 Website



Career Waves 6 is a collaborative initiative purposed by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V Federal Grant Program). The overarching goal is to expand opportunities for every student to explore, choose and follow CTE programs of study and career pathways to earn credentials of value including postsecondary degrees and industry-based certificates.

This platform will provide valuable career and educational resources for communicating with and connecting high school and college students, parents and employers to Louisiana Department of Labor Region 6's academic and training opportunities.

Visit the [website](#), get familiar with the platform and set up your profile!



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Upon completing the certificate, graduates get free access to career resources like coaching sessions, mock interviews and resume building tools including access to "Big Interview." They will also have the opportunity to connect with over 150 employers in the Google Career Certificates employer consortium.

"This is the first step in making Louisiana tech ready! We see the citizens in Louisiana with a strong desire to expand their skillset, and this program offers a perfect opportunity to do just that," said Cates. "This partnership creates opportunity for people to grow their careers or perhaps find a new career from a coffee shop, a classroom, or the comfort of their own home."

Job seekers interested in a scholarship can [apply here](#). Additional information about the Google Career Certificates can be found [here](#).

Full story can be viewed [here](#).

COVID-19 Vaccine & Booster Shots Locations

**Rapides Regional
Medical Center**
211 4th St. Alexandria, LA
(318) 769 - 5931

**Christus St. Francis
Cabrini Hospital**
3330 Mansonic Dr.,
Alexandria, LA
(318) 487 - 1122

LSU of Alexandria
8100 Highway 71 S.,
Alexandria, LA
(318) 427 - 4468

Boyce Pharmacy
513 Ulster Ave., Boyce, LA
(318) 793 - 2400

Ray's Pharmacy
5822 Monroe Hwy, Ball, LA
(318) 640 - 1174

Rapides Parish Health Unit
5604 Coliseum Blvd.
Alexandria, LA
(318) 487 - 5282

**Woodworth Community
Health Center**
9375 Hwy 165 S,
Woodworth, LA
(318) 484 - 9588

Boyce Pharmacy
513 Ulster Ave., Boyce, LA
(318) 793 - 2400

**Rapides Primary
Health Care Center**
1217 Willow Glen River
Rd., Alexandria, LA
(318) 487 - 4400

Pearson Drugs #7
1806 Water St.,
Lecompte, LA
(318) 776 - 5649



Vaccine availability is
subject to change.

Appointments are
required at most locations.

To stay updated with
vaccine locations and
availability, click the
CDC logo.

RoyOMartin Millwright Recounts Journey to Earning His GED



Photo: Brandon Moak



Like a lot of young people, Brandon Moak was not interested in school. He dropped out and went to work in the oilfield, knowing that one day his lack of degree could affect his career. Then he found his way to the construction crew at RoyOMartin's OSB manufacturing facility in Oakdale, La. There, he became part of a team who saw his potential and believed he could grow and advance.

At RoyOMartin, growing their people is not just a slogan. They believe in the limitless potential of individuals. Watch Brandon tell his unique story of how RoyOMartin helped him achieve his goal of earning his high school equivalency diploma [here](#).

Visit www.youtube.com/royomartin for more inspiring stories like Brandon's!

RoyOMartin gives special thanks to their friends at Central Louisiana Technical Community College for providing the necessary tools for Brandon to get this done!

RoyOMartin and its subsidiaries strive to be the employer of choice in the areas in which they operate. They offer employees the opportunity to exercise their talents in a challenging and rewarding work environment.

If you want to be a part of RoyOMartin's team, check out their job opportunities [here](#).

DID YOU know?



CMAP (Cenla Medication Access Program) offers FREE or low-cost medications statewide?



In 2001, The Rapides Foundation created this program in response to local assessments that showed barriers to healthcare access and the high cost of prescriptions were affecting the health of Central Louisiana adults. CMAP offers FREE or low-cost medications to those who are eligible.

Find out if you're eligible! Visit www.cmaprx.org Or call 1-888-443-7494.

CMAP is funded by
The Rapides Foundation.

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Dr. Randall Dupont, Dean of the LSUA College of Business, explained Cenla Accountants for the Future is a public-private initiative by seven central Louisiana firms to place more accounting graduates in the workforce. Members of the group include Cleco, RoyOMartin, Crest Industries, Virtual Partner Advantage, Red River Bank, Payne Moore Herrington, and Central Management. Other partnerships are in progress. The initiative was spearheaded by Roy O. Martin, III in 2020, who brought together other companies to address the local shortage of professional accountants and auditors. Members of the group wanted to equip more LSUA graduates with the knowledge and competencies to successfully complete the CPA exam and enter into public accounting, industry, governmental, or non-profit employment in Central Louisiana and beyond.

View the full story [here](#).
For more information about Accounting at LSUA, visit explore.lsua.edu.



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Unemployment Rates in Central Louisiana by Parishes

- Allen Parish - 4.0%
- Avoyelles Parish - 3.6%
- Catahoula Parish - 3.7%
- Concordia Parish - 4.6%
- Grant Parish - 2.9 %
- La Salle Parish - 2.3%
- Natchitoches Parish-3.3%
- Rapides Parish - 2.8%
- Vernon Parish - 3.3%
- Winn Parish - 3.4%

Preliminary unemployment rates in Central Louisiana for April 2022. Not seasonally adjusted. - Source: Labor Market Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program

Job Openings Advertised online in Cenla by Parishes

- Allen Parish - 132
- Avoyelles Parish - 204
- Catahoula Parish - 24
- Concordia - 128
- Grant Parish - 41
- La Salle Parish - 83
- Natchitoches Parish - 362
- Rapides Parish - 2,734
- Vernon Parish - 386
- Winn Parish - 62

This data above shows the distribution number of job openings advertised online in Central Louisiana by parishes on June 12, 2022 - Source: Online advertised jobs data

Occupations with the Highest Number of Job Openings Advertised in Alexandria, MSA

- Registered Nurses - 419
- Physicians, All Other - 116
- LPN & LVN - 57
- Customer Service Rep - 47
- Critical Care Nurses - 37
- Physical Therapists - 36
- Medical & Health Services Managers - 36
- Occupational Therapists - 34
- First-Line Supvr of Food Prep. & Serving Workers - 33
- Heavy & Tractor - Trailer Truck Driver - 32

Source: Online advertised jobs data. June 12, 2022

Labor Market Information

| Latest Unemployment Rates | | | |
|--|------------|------------|---------------|
| | April 2022 | March 2022 | February 2022 |
| Rapides Parish (not seasonally adjusted) | 2.8% | 2.8% | 2.8% |
| Louisiana (seasonally adjusted) | 3.5% | 3.8% | 3.9% |
| United States (seasonally adjusted) | 3.6% | 3.6% | 3.8% |

Source: LWC Monthly Employment Bulletin

| Industries with Highest Job Openings Advertised Online in Alexandria, LA MSA | | |
|--|---|--------------|
| Rank | Industry | Job Openings |
| 1 | Health Care and Social Assistance | 273 |
| 2 | Retail Trade | 216 |
| 3 | Educational Services | 165 |
| 4 | Mngt. of Companies & Enterprises | 123 |
| 5 | Accommodation and Food Services | 150 |
| 6 | Admin. & Support & Waste Mgmt. & Remediation Services | 105 |
| 7 | Public Administration | 85 |
| 8 | Manufacturing | 72 |
| 9 | Professional, Scientific, and Technical Svcs | 68 |
| 10 | Unclassified | 858 |

The table above shows the top ten job openings advertised online for the industries selected in Alexandria, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area on June 12, 2022. Source: Online advertised jobs data.

We thank and acknowledge the Contributors:

- Rapides American Job Center - Elaine Morace
- The Rapides Foundation - Tammy Moreau
- Rapides Medical Regional Center - Sarah Clancy
- LSUA - Dr. Randall Dupont & Adam Lord
- LCTCS - AcQueenena Grant
- RoyOMartin - Amanda Guillot
- LSUA - Dr. Haywood Joiner
- Louisiana Workforce Commission
- Louisiana Department of Education

WIOA Mandated Partners (on-site)

Cenla Community Action Committee, Inc.
318-314-3480

CLTCC
318-487-5443

Job Corps Center Alexandria
318-487-6773 x102

Louisiana Workforce Commission- Employment Services
318-487-5532

National Farm Worker Program
318-435-8885

Native American Programs
985-851-5408

Trade Adjustment Assistance
318-487-5539

Unemployment Insurance
1-866-783-5567

Wagner-Peyser
318-487-5532

WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker & Youth
318-767-6030

WIOA Mandated Partners (off-site)

AYUDA & Institute for Indian Development
318-767-6040

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services
318-487-5335

Louisiana State University Alexandria
318-427-4441

National Association for Hispanic Elderly
318- 221-7611



Ava Cates, Secretary

Rapides American Job Center

5610 - B Coliseum Blvd.
Alexandria, LA 71303

(318) 487-5532

Mon -Thurs - 7:00 am - 5:30 pm • Friday - 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

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