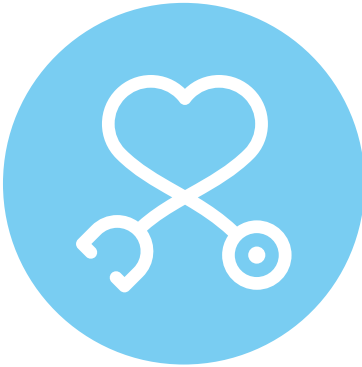


PROMISING PRACTICE

RECRUITMENT | EDUCATION, TRAINING & SUPPORT SERVICES

Volunteers of America Texas Health Profession Opportunity Grants (VOATX HPOG)
at Volunteers of America Texas

 HOUSTON, TX



Bridging the digital divide to help people succeed.

Volunteers of America Texas Health Profession Opportunity Grant (VOATX HPOG) provides education and employment opportunities for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and other low-income individuals in the Greater Houston area. The goal of this program is to have participants obtain specialized occupational training and help them find employment in healthcare careers.

With Houston schools and businesses going remote due to COVID-19, online learning and engagement was essential for VOATX HPOG students to continue their education and find employment. Many participants had limited access to technology and low computer literacy skills, resulting in a new barrier. VOATX realized they had to pivot to help their students achieve their career goals

The VOATX team addressed the digital divide by incorporating a digital literacy assessment into enrollment procedures. The results helped staff identify skill deficits and address students' individual needs. VOATX staff provided digital support

for virtually proctored placement tests, online courses, virtual meeting platforms, clinical simulations, web-based instruction, and virtual hiring opportunities.

HPOG participant, Jada, enrolled in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program but was unsure if she could keep up with virtual courses. Her HPOG coach and training instructor devised a plan to improve her digital skills. With their support, Jada became one of the top three students in her cohort. She obtained employment from one of VOATX HPOG's virtual job fairs and now earns \$14 per hour at CHI St. Luke Hospital.

Under the guidance of the VOATX staff, students conquered their digital fears, completed their coursework, gained employment, and encouraged other students to do the same.

This Promising Practice was self-identified by the grantee and information contained in this document was provided by the grantee.