

NEWS



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
OFFICE OF INFORMATION, DALLAS, TEXAS

FOR RELEASE: A.M. EDITIONS
WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 13, 1974

74-26 (2-11)
February 11, 1974
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File Regular Computer - 1974

600 MIGRANT YOUTH DROPOUTS IN TEXAS

TO GET CHANCE FOR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

Six hundred youths from migrant and seasonal farmworker families in Texas will have a chance to finish their high school education under the Labor Department's High School Equivalency Program (HEP), R. L. Coffman, regional director of Manpower Administration, announced in Dallas today.

A total of \$688,490 will fund four nine-month grants to help youths 17 to 24 years of age pass the General Education Development (GED) Examination.

HEP students will live on college campuses, with access to all student facilities as well as health and medical services. Throughout the grant period they will receive intensive tutorial, counseling, and pre-vocational service.

Enrollees will be recruited from among poverty-level families by the colleges and universities running HEP, as well as through local Texas Employment Commission offices and other local social agencies.

The four grants to Texas are part of a national program of 13 grants totaling \$2,339,840.

Each project maintains a staff recruiter and a placement officer. Successful completers of the GED will be placed in permanent jobs, vocational training or college. Once placed, the youths will receive regular follow-up services, including continued counseling.

MORE

Texas institutions funded under the new grants are:

- Pan American University, Edinburg, Texas, will train 150 youths with \$218,000;
- Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas, 150 youths, \$158,825;
- The University of Texas at El Paso, 150 youths, \$186,265;
- University of Houston, 150 youths, \$125,400.

The average length of stay in HEP is about five months. No more than 55 students are enrolled at any given time and each student works at his own rate.

HEP has been operating since 1966. In July of 1973, the program was transferred from the Office of Economic Opportunity to the Department of Labor. During the 1973 calendar year, HEP placed a total of 1,152 youths -- 488 in jobs, 279 in vocational education programs, and 385 in colleges and universities as regular full-time students.

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