

March 2026

With spring approaching, Texana Center is launching new initiatives designed to create meaningful, **positive changes** in our communities.

We are pleased to announce that we have been **awarded funding** for two new programs: the **Youth Crisis Outreach Team (YCOT)** and the **Outpatient Biopsychosocial Intervention (OBI) program**. Selected by the HHSC to implement these important services, we are proud to begin the work of bringing them to our community.

Below, you will find additional information about YCOT. We will continue to provide updates in future newsletters as this program begins making a measurable **impact on the youth of Fort Bend County**.

We were also recently notified by HHSC that we have been awarded the OBI program.

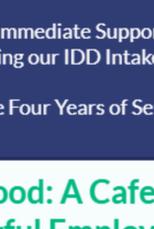
This initiative focuses on **servicing individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities** who are also experiencing **mental health challenges**.

We look forward to sharing more details as the program is established and begins serving our community.

Finally, our Board of Trustees has approved the **Strategic Goals** for Fiscal Years 2026-2028. These goals will guide our efforts as we continue strengthening our foundation and expanding our positive impact in the years ahead.

We are looking forward to a great 2026!

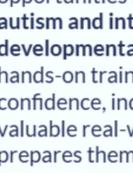
Shena Ureste
Chief Executive Officer



Inside This Issue:

- More than Exceptional Food: A Cafe Intern's Story of Meaningful Employment
- Center for Advancement Creates Impactful Opportunities Where Every Voice Is Heard
- New State-Funded Program Offers Immediate Support for Youth in Crisis
- Where Support Begins: Understanding our IDD Intake and Referral Process
- Texana Cafe Invites you to Celebrate Four Years of Service to the Fort Bend Community!

More than Exceptional Food: A Cafe Intern's Story of Meaningful Employment



Texana Cafe creates more than exceptional food, it creates pathways to meaningful employment.

For four years, the cafe has been a cornerstone of the Fulshear community, providing paid internship opportunities for **individuals with autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities**. Through hands-on training, interns gain confidence, independence and valuable real-world experience that prepares them for long-term success.

Cafe Manager Rany Thommen said one of the most rewarding parts of her role is watching interns grow and apply the skills they learn at the cafe to other employment opportunities.



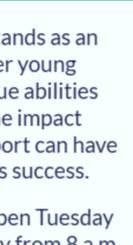
Amy, one of the cafe's graduates, is a testament to that mission.

After completing her one-year internship, **Amy strengthened her customer service and hospitality skills** while learning how to channel her bubbly personality into professional growth.



She later secured a position at a local coffee shop, where she continues taking orders, crafting beverages and serving customers with confidence.

Thommen said **Amy's success reflects the purpose behind the internship** program creating meaningful employment opportunities and fostering independence.

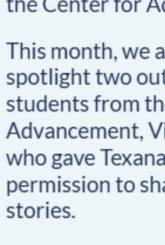


Amy's journey stands as an example for other young adults with unique abilities and highlights the impact community support can have on an individual's success.

Texana Cafe is open Tuesday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 7440 FM 359 S. in Fulshear.

Community members are invited to enjoy homemade sweet treats and premium coffee while supporting a business that transforms lives.

Center for Advancement Creates Impactful Opportunities Where Every Voice is Heard



The **Center for Advancement** is a growing program that is helping

students with developmental disabilities and autism improve their social skills, foundational skills, creative abilities and workplace readiness.

Our students consistently do a phenomenal job showcasing their talents and the progress they've made through their involvement in the Center for Advancement.

This month, we are honored to spotlight two outstanding students from the Center for Advancement, Victoria and Ben who gave Texana Center permission to share their inspiring stories.

Ben is a paid intern at the Texana Cafe and a dedicated student at the Center for Advancement. Before graduating from high school, Ben participated in the Life Management course, which is led in a small group setting by a board-certified behavior analyst (BCBA). In this class, students work on money management, workplace conflict resolution, housing and home management skills, while also learning how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Ben says his disability does not define him and that he is more than capable of doing anything anyone else can do. He enjoys how the class helped him build transferable skills that he now uses in the workplace.

After receiving a scholarship to continue in the Life Management class, Ben says he's looking forward to another strong year.



Victoria, a talented art major at the University of St. Thomas, and is also a student at the Center for Advancement.

She has participated in several Social Crafting Art classes in Fulshear, which she says brought out a confidence she didn't know she had. She acknowledges the Center for Advancement staff for guiding her as she explored and developed her creative talents.

Victoria thanks her mother and grandmother for their unwavering support and for introducing her to opportunities she once never imagined were possible.

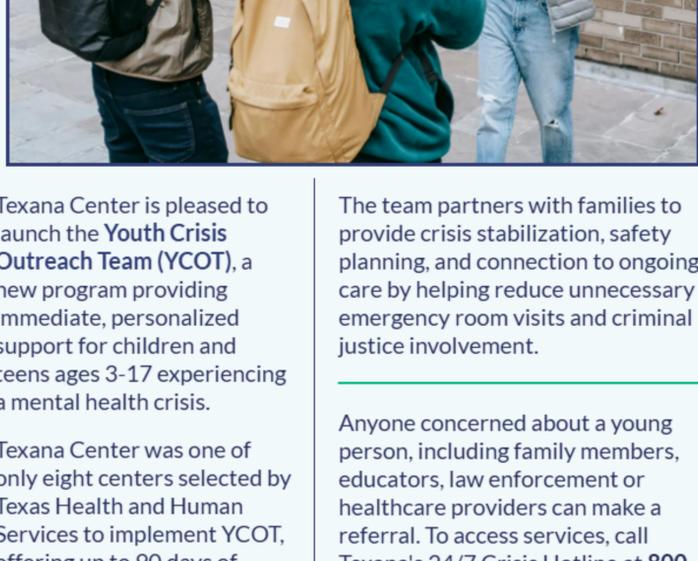
Throughout her artistic journey at the Center for Advancement, Victoria has sold several pieces of her artwork and even featured her work at the Texana Cafe Family Fun Day in 2025. She was also awarded a scholarship to continue pursuing her gifted talent.

Victoria hopes her story inspires other young adults like herself to keep striving.

"**Anything is possible**," Victoria said. "**Just look at my story.**"



New State-Funded Program Offers Immediate Support for Youth in Crisis



Texana Center is pleased to launch the **Youth Crisis Outreach Team (YCOT)**, a new program providing immediate, personalized support for children and teens ages 3-17 experiencing a mental health crisis.

Texana Center was one of only eight centers selected by Texas Health and Human Services to implement YCOT, offering up to 90 days of follow-up services to help stabilize youth and support families in Fort Bend County.

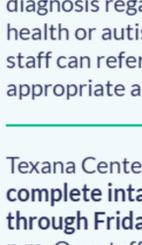
YCOT intervenes early to prevent crises from escalating and works directly in homes, schools, hospitals and within the juvenile justice system across Fort Bend County.

The team partners with families to provide crisis stabilization, safety planning, and connection to ongoing care by helping reduce unnecessary emergency room visits and criminal justice involvement.

Anyone concerned about a young person, including family members, educators, law enforcement or healthcare providers can make a referral. To access services, call Texana's 24/7 Crisis Hotline at **800-633-5686** or dial/text **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**. Be on the lookout for updated referral information, and we look forward to visiting your organization or school to personally introduce you to YCOT team members.

YCOT reflects Texana Center's commitment to providing responsive, compassionate care for youth and families when it matters most.

Where Support Begins: Understanding our IDD Intake and Referral Process



When someone calls our **IDD Intake and Referral** team, they are the first point of contact for services.

Intake and referral often receives calls regarding intellectual/developmental disabilities; however, if someone is needing a screening or diagnosis regarding mental health or autism services our staff can refer families out to the appropriate area of service.

Texana Center clients must **complete intakes Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.** Our staff can also assist families throughout the process in-person.

The individual is then referred out to Texana's licensed psychologist who will then perform an on-site testing required by the state to see what services the person is eligible for.

Eligible clients must be within our catchment areas, **Fort Bend, Austin, Colorado, Matagorda, Waller, and Wharton Counties**, those individuals can have Medicaid provider, be uninsured or in most cases on a sliding scale fee.

On-site testing is done on Airport Avenue at the Service Center, which consist of clinical interviews with the family, a wrap up session, and testing that can take from 30 minutes to 2-hours depending on the clients circumstances and developmental abilities.

Our psychologist can normally get a basic overview of determination of disability within minutes of evaluating the child or adult.

Contact Us Today!

Texana Cafe Invites you to Celebrate Four Years of Service to the Fort Bend Community!

Scan the QR code to RSVP your attendance.



We are proud to honor the dedication, commitment, and **impact** our organization has made over the years.

Our mission is a testament to the meaningful work we continue to do for families and **young adults with autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities**. We are more than the

exceptional food we serve, we **create pathways** to success, independence, and purpose.

Join us as we celebrate four years of empowering individuals and strengthening our community.

Strengthening Our Community through Shared Resources

24/7 Mental Health Crisis Hotline
(800) 633-5686
[Learn More](#)

Texana Cafe
(832) 471-7903
[Learn More](#)

Children's Center for Autism
CCAAAdmissions@texanacenter.com
[Learn More](#)

United Way Helpline: 211
help@unitedwayhouston.org
[Learn More](#)

IDD Intake and Referral
(281) 239-1363
IDD.Intake@texanacenter.com