



805 S. Missouri Avenue, Mercedes, TX 78570  
McAllen | Mercedes | San Antonio | Waco  
Projects Nationwide  
JUNE | JULY 2025

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## South Texas ISD VAT Summer Camp: Empowering Future Professionals

### Career Readiness Through Self-Discovery

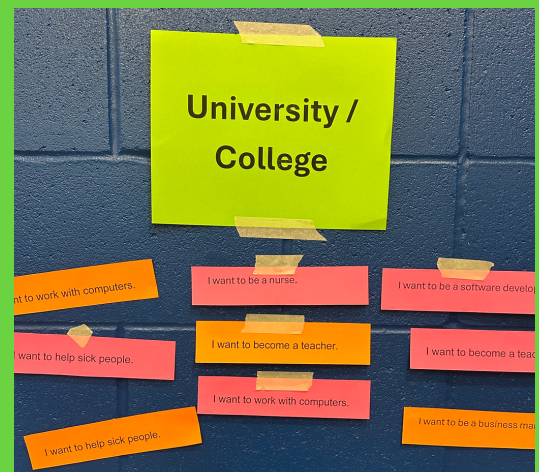
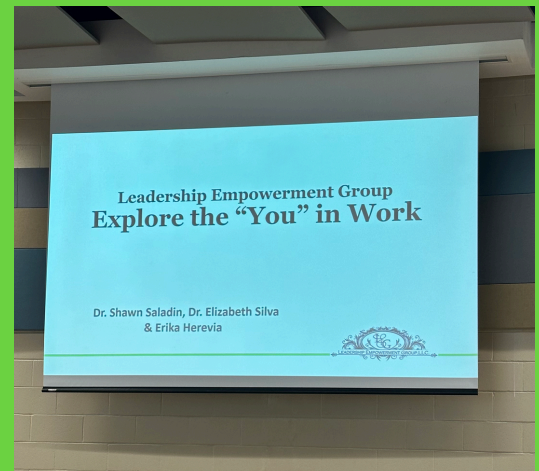
In late June, the Leadership Empowerment Group had the opportunity to support the STISD VAT Summer Camp, a week-long experience held at South Texas High School for Health Professions in Mercedes, Texas. This enriching camp brought together high school juniors and seniors for an immersive and meaningful journey of self-discovery, career exploration, and postsecondary planning.

Throughout the week, students engaged in hands-on sessions using interactive and accessible content from our VAT (Vocational Adjustment Training) curriculum. Each day was designed to guide students through a deeper understanding of their own interests, strengths, values, and long-term goals. With the support of trained facilitators, participants explored how their personal identities connect to future academic and career opportunities.

The camp created a safe and empowering space for students to reflect, ask questions, and engage in honest conversations about their aspirations. By the end of the week, many walked away with greater clarity and confidence in their next steps beyond high school, whether that meant college, vocational training, or direct entry into the workforce.

Events like these highlight the importance of early career development and personalized support in education. Leadership Empowerment Group is proud to offer programs that meet students where they are, fostering growth through customized and culturally relevant learning experiences.

Interested in hosting a future VAT training, workshop, or collaborative camp? Connect with our team to learn how we can bring empowering, student-centered programming to your school, district, or region.



## QUICK FACT: ADA TURNS 35 IN JULY



President George H. W. Bush signing the ADA on the South Lawn of the White House while Justin Dart, Jr. (right) and others watch, July 26, 1990.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed into law on July 26, 1990, ensures civil rights for individuals with disabilities and prohibits discrimination in employment, education, transportation, and public accommodations.

The ADA has helped shape a more accessible and inclusive society. As we celebrate its 35th anniversary, we honor the progress made and continue working toward full inclusion.

Consider sharing a fun ADA fun fact this month or hosting a small celebration in your office.

*"The ADA is not about pity. It's about power, access, and equal opportunity."*

*-Justin Dart Jr.*

*Leading Advocate & Key Figure of the ADA*



## A Moment of Visibility: Mercedes Police Department Debuts "Auti"

In a proud show of unity and advocacy, the Mercedes Independent School District and the Mercedes Police Department joined forces to promote autism acceptance and awareness.

In late March, the Mercedes Police Department invited the public to a special unveiling of "Auti", the newly wrapped Autism Awareness Police Unit, at the Mercedes Police Department. This exciting moment celebrated the department's ongoing commitment to inclusivity and support for individuals with autism.

Leadership Empowerment Group is proud to house their main offices in the City of Mercedes!

## Disability Pride Month: Honoring Identity & Progress

Disability Pride Month is more than a celebration—it's a movement. It recognizes the strength, resilience, and contributions of people with disabilities, while challenging the societal stigma that too often surrounds disability.

At Leadership Empowerment Group, we believe disability inclusion is central to our mission. Through personalized coaching, skills-based training, and employer engagement, our VR team supports individuals as they step into the workforce with pride and purpose.

The Arc, the largest national community-based organization advocating for and with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) states, "At its core, Disability Pride is about being accepted on our own terms. It says disability is not something to hide or fix—it's part of who we are. Everyone deserves inclusion, rights, and respect, without having to earn them."

Interested in celebrating Disability Pride Month with your students or colleagues? Reach out for resources or activity ideas.