

**Title V Abstracts**

**For Selective**

**Texas Universities and Community Colleges**

**FY 2012-2016**

**Office of Institutional Effectiveness**

**Oct 2016**

**Introduction**

The Hispanic-Serving Institutions Division administers the Developing Hispanic–Serving Institutions (HSI) Program which is authorized under Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.  The purposes of the program are to expand educational opportunities for, and improve the academic attainment of, Hispanic students, and to expand and enhance the academic offerings, program quality, and institutional stability of the colleges and universities that educate the majority of Hispanic students and help large numbers of Hispanic and other low-income students complete postsecondary degrees.

In order to receive a grant under Title V program, an institution of higher education must have applied for and been designated as an eligible institution.  The Notice Inviting Applications for the Designation as an Eligible Institution was published in the Federal Register on December 7, 2009 (74 FR 3579).  In addition, to basic eligibility requirements, an institution must have at least 25 percent enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent (FTE) Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application.

The Hispanic-Serving Institutions Division awards Developing Hispanic–Serving Institutions Individual Development Grants (one eligible Hispanic-Serving Institution) and Cooperative Development Grants (one eligible Hispanic–Serving Institution in cooperation with one or more Institutions of Higher Education).  Although the allowable activities and the five-year performance period for the Individual Development Grant and the Cooperative Development Grant are the same, the maximum award amounts differ.

The Developing Hispanic–Serving Institutions Program supports many institutional activities that include:  purchase of equipment for education and research; improvement of instruction facilities (construction, maintenance, renovation); faculty and staff development; curriculum revision and development; purchase of educational materials; improvement of telecommunication capacity; enhancement of student services; enhancement of administrative and funds management systems; establishment or improvement of a development office; creation or enhancement of community outreach programs for elementary and secondary students; and establishment or increase of an institutional endowment fund.

Note:  The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) as amended, section 503(b) was expanded to include:  activities to improve student services, including innovative and customized instruction courses designed to help retain students and move the students into core courses; articulation agreements and student support programs designed to facilitate the transfer of students from two-year to four-year institutions; and providing education, counseling services, and financial information designed to improve the financial and economic literacy of students or their families.  The list of authorized activities in section 503(b) was also amended to use the term “distance education technologies” in place of “distance learning academic instruction capabilities.”

Contents

[Lone Star College-Tomball 5](#_Toc465332403)

[Lone Star College-North Harris 6](#_Toc465332404)

[Palo Alto College 7](#_Toc465332405)

[Lee College District 8](#_Toc465332406)

[El Paso Community College 9](#_Toc465332407)

[University of Houston - Downtown, TX 10](#_Toc465332408)

[Lone Star College Kingwood, TX 10](#_Toc465332409)

[University of Texas at San Antonio, TX 11](#_Toc465332410)

[San Antonio Alamo Community College District, TX 11](#_Toc465332411)

[Texas State University, TX 12](#_Toc465332412)

[Del Mar College, TX 12](#_Toc465332413)

[University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, TX 13](#_Toc465332414)

[Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, TX 14](#_Toc465332415)

[Howard County Junior College District, Big Spring, TX 15](#_Toc465332416)

[Brookhaven College, Farmers Branch, TX 16](#_Toc465332417)

[Texas A& M University – Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 17](#_Toc465332418)

[The University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX 18](#_Toc465332419)

[Del Mar College, Corpus Christi, TX 19](#_Toc465332420)

[The University of Texas of the Permian Basin, Odessa, TX 20](#_Toc465332421)

[Northeast Texas Community College, Mt. Pleasant, TX 21](#_Toc465332422)

[Northwest Vista College, San Antonio, TX 22](#_Toc465332423)

[San Antonio College, San Antonio, TX 23](#_Toc465332424)

[Amarillo College, Amarillo, TX 24](#_Toc465332425)

[College of the Mainland, Texas City, TX 25](#_Toc465332426)

[South Plains College, Levelland, TX 26](#_Toc465332427)

[Angelo State University, TX 27](#_Toc465332428)

[Southwest Texas Junior College, TX 27](#_Toc465332429)

[Our Lady of the Lake University, 27](#_Toc465332430)

[San Antonio College, San Antonio TX 27](#_Toc465332431)

[Texas Agriculture & Mechanics International University, TX 29](#_Toc465332432)

[Laredo Community College, TX 29](#_Toc465332433)

[Houston Baptist University, TX 30](#_Toc465332434)

[South Texas College, TX 31](#_Toc465332435)

[St. Mary’s University Texas, San Antonio,TX 32](#_Toc465332436)

[Sul Ross State University, Alpine,TX 33](#_Toc465332437)

[The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso,TX 34](#_Toc465332438)

[The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio TX 35](#_Toc465332439)

[Schreiner University, TX 36](#_Toc465332440)

[University of Texas – Pan American, TX 37](#_Toc465332441)

[Laredo Community College, TX 38](#_Toc465332442)

[Texas A&M International University, TX 38](#_Toc465332443)

[The University of Texas at El Paso, TX 39](#_Toc465332444)

[Drexel University, TX 39](#_Toc465332445)

[Galveston College, TX 40](#_Toc465332446)

[Texas State University, San Marcos, TX 41](#_Toc465332447)

[University of Houston, Downtown, TX 42](#_Toc465332448)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FY 2016 HIS Institution Name** | | **Annual Grant** | **Total Grant** |
| **TX** | **Lone Star College-Tomball** |  | **$2,039,976** |
| **TX** | **Lone Star College-North Harris** |  | **$2,587,367** |
| **TX** | **Palo Alto College** | **n/a** |  |
| **TX** | **Lee College District** | **n/a** |  |
| **TX** | **El Paso Community College** | **n/a** |  |
| **FY 2015 HIS Institution Name** | | |  |
| **TX** | **University of Houston - Downtown** | **$539,454** |  |
| **TX** | **The University of Texas at San Antonio** | **$649,986** |  |
| **TX** | **Texas State University** | **$647,815** |  |
| **TX** | **Univ of Texas Health Science Center of San Antonio** | **$477,168** |  |
| **TX** | **Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi** | **$524,876** |  |
| **TX** | **Howard County Junior College District** | **$525,000** |  |
| **TX** | **Brookhaven College** | **$525,000** |  |
| **TX** | **Texas A&M University - Kingsville** | **$525,000** |  |
| **TX** | **The University of Texas at Arlington** | **$524,791** |  |
| **TX** | **Del Mar College** | **$525,000** |  |
| **TX** | **The University of Texas of the Permian Basin** | **$524,860** |  |
| **TX** | **Northeast Texas Community College** | **$524,639** |  |
| **TX** | **Northwest Vista College** | **$471,609** |  |
| **TX** | **San Antonio College** | **$525,000** |  |
| **TX** | **Amarillo College** | **$524,948** |  |
| **TX** | **College of the Mainland** | **$524,149** |  |
| **TX** | **South Plains College** | **$524,022** |  |
| **FY 2014 HIS Institution Name** | |  |  |
| **TX** | **Angelo State University** | **$521,668** |  |
| **TX** | **Our Lady of the Lake University** | **$558,553** |  |
| **TX** | **Texas Agriculture & Mechanics International University** | **$574,216** |  |
| **TX** | **Houston Baptist University** | **$510,478** |  |
| **TX** | **South Texas College** | **$524,200** |  |
| **TX** | **St. Mary's University Texas** | **$524,993** |  |
| **TX** | **Sul Ross State University** | **$524,236** |  |
| **TX** | **The University of Texas at El Paso** | **$524,536** |  |
| **TX** | **The University of Texas at San Antonio** | **$516,970** |  |
| **FY 2013 HIS Institution Name** | |  |  |
| **TX** | **Schreiner University** | **n/a** |  |
| **TX** | **University of Texas-Pan American** | **n/a** |  |
| **FY 2012 HIS Institution Name** | | **Type of Grant Distribution Unavailable** | |
| **TX** | **Laredo Community College** | **$775,000** |  |
| **TX** | **The University of Texas at El Paso** | **$502,361** |  |
| **TX** | **Galveston College** | **$627,149** |  |
| **TX** | **Texas State University - San Marcos** | **$456,387** |  |
| **TX** | **University of Houston - Downtown** | **$642,362** |  |

# Lone Star College-Tomball

**FY 2016 ABSTRACT**

Established in 1971, Lone Star College-Tomball (LSC-Tomball) is one of six colleges in the largest institution of higher education in the Houston area, with a total student headcount of 16,961. The rate at which Hispanic students complete, graduate, and transfer is inequitable to the overall percentage of enrolled Hispanic students. While Hispanic students are completing course at rates of 80-89 percent, the success rate is much lower. Success rates for Developmental Math, Developmental English are 49 percent and 70 percent, respectively, for face-to-face instruction and much lower for online or hybrid courses. Success rates for College Algebra, 52 percent, and English Composition and Rhetoric, 62 percent, reinforce the need for support.

The college seeks to address three significant problems. First, FTIC students do not have the requisite skills to successfully persist to degree attainment. Second, there is a lack of opportunities for professional development for faculty and staff that increase awareness of the diverse needs of the Hispanic and low income student population and prepare faculty with teaching strategies that lead to student success. Finally, decreases in revenues combined with increasing need for services prohibit LSC-Tomball from making necessary changes to improve success rates and overcome institutional deficiencies.

LSC-Tomball seeks to (1) enhance the First-Year Experience (FYE) course by embedding grit and growth mindset theory into the curriculum; (2) enhance outreach initiatives to the Hispanic community (increase enrollment/matriculation activities and referral to services);.

create alternative course designs that move students quickly into college-level coursework and promote faster completion of degree and transfer programs; (4) create a technology-enhanced multidisciplinary academic support center (i-MASC) to improve retention and sense of belonging and direction for underserved students; and to (5) provide faculty and staff with professional development opportunities and resources that promote student success and cultural competency.

These strategies will be organized under CLASS: Center for Leadership, Academic, and Student Success. CLASS includes establishing a program endowment and the transfer of significant pieces of CLASS to the college over the life of the grant so that activities can continue once the grant ends.

# Lone Star College-North Harris

**FY 2016 ABSTRACT**

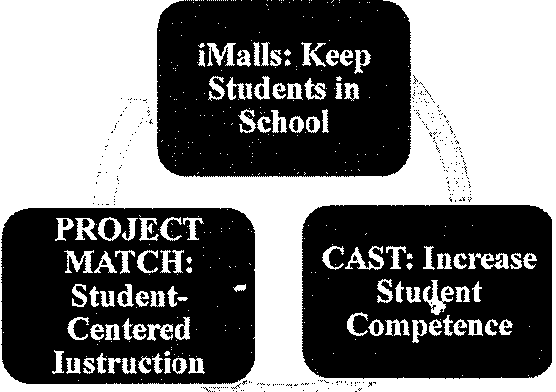
Lone Star College-North Harris (LSC-NH) was established in 1972 as North Harris Community College. Since then, it has served as the anchor college for the six-campus Lone Star College system serving the northern regions of the Houston Metropolitan area. LSC-NH has a headcount of more than 27,000. Currently, 36.8 percent of students are Hispanic, 76.7 percent are minority, 50.6 percent receive financial aid, and more than half are first-time in college and/or first-generation students.

The college is situated in the most urban and economically disadvantaged communities within the Lone Star College System. Because of its open door policy and the composition of the service area surrounding the college, LSC-NH enrolls a large number of educationally and economically disadvantaged students. Many students arrive at LSC-NH without the skills necessary for academic success. Data reveal that almost 60 percent of the student population needs developmental (remedial) instruction in English, Reading or Mathematics. Many of these students feel out of place in college and are unaware of how to access available resources that could improve their grades, build their success skills, connect their degree plan to their career goals, and improve their overall chance of post-secondary success. As a result, many students start college already on the path toward dropping out (remediation-low GPA-probation-drop out).

Like the student population, the faculty at Lone Star College-North Harris comes from diverse backgrounds. While some faculty has been teaching for more than a decade, the college's high ratio of adjunct professors means that a large number of instructors have limited classroom experience. Regardless of their experience level, all faculty at LSC-NH must work to better address the unique and changing needs of the academically needy 21'1 century learners on campus.

In an effort to best-serve the current student population, LSC-NH is proposing a comprehensive project called Mi Casa Es Su CASA (connect to the Campus Community; Acclimate and Adapt to the Rigors of Academic Life; succeed and Self-Improve for the Duration; and Achieve and Compete in College and Beyond). The proposed project has single activity: Increase the persistence, completion and transfer rates of Hispanic and underserved students by: I ) Improving student engagement and preparedness through increased student awareness of and access to LSC­ NH resources and opportunities; and 2) Improving student success rates by providing best-fit instruction to the LSC-NH student population.

This activity focuses on guiding students through each of the four CASA phases through the introduction of three initiatives. The first two initiatives - iMalls (Information technology enhanced.



Multidisciplinary Academic Learning Lounges (Center for Academic Success and Transition) -are designed to connect students to LSC-NH resources and improve student engagement. The third initiative - Project MATCH

(Meaningfully Aligned Targeted Curriculum/Courses for Hispanic and underserve students) -will help ensure instructional delivery and professional development are student-centered and in line with needs of underserved 21'1 century learners.

# Palo Alto College

**FY 2016 ABSTRACT**

Palo Alto College, one of the five Alamo Colleges, has been a pillar of the south San Antonio community since it began offering classes in 1985 with an enrollment of 23 l students. Its opening was the realization of a community dream to build an institution of higher learning in the south side of San Antonio -a historically impoverished, educationally underserved, and predominantly Hispanic community. Now in its 30th year, the college has an enrollment of 8,376 students and continues to provide high-quality education in San Antonio, the 7th largest city in

the nation with one of the largest, fast-growing Hispanic populations. However, workers make 11 percent below the nationwide average with a per capita income of only $22,619. Only 24.6 percent of the population ages 25 and above have a bachelor's degree or higher. Reflecting these figures, Palo Alto students face many barriers to achievement: 42 percent are economically disadvantaged, 49 percent receive financial aid, and 78 percent require remediation. Ever perseverant, Palo Alto College students see themselves as hard workers striving to improve their families and communities; with the proper support, Palo Alto College can be a catalyst for improvements in their educational and economic standing. Thus, Project Impacto proposes to establish college wide best practices and support systems that enable high-need students to successfully enter, persist, and complete an associate's degree program by:

Strengthening high impact practices for continuing students to improve student persistence and completion.

Establishing a Student Advocacy Center at Palo Alto College to improve overall rates of student success.

Increasing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff that will improve student engagement, teaching, and learning.

# Lee College District

**FY 2016 ABSTRACT**

Lee College, a comprehensive community college in Harris County, Texas, proposes a Title V project with two goals: increase student success by improving the persistence of ail students, particularly male students and increase the capacity of the college to support students to the point of program completion or transfer. After a two-year comprehensive development process that involved teams of faculty, staff, administrators and students, the college community identified these two goals and associated measurable objectives as part of a Completion by Design focus on progress and completion.

Through two activities, wraparound services and engagement to completion, the college will reach its goals. The wraparound services include a case management strategy for counselors and advisors, case management with Student Ambassadors and a Call Center, and enhanced technology to support student progress through the system. To engage the students to completion, the college will put an emphasis on transition to improve career knowledge and transfer possibilities. It will provide use the services of a consultant to maximize the utility of the student enterprise software, PeopleSoft. Finally, it will increase the possibilities for professional development for both full-time and part-time faculty, student services staff and the entire college community to support students to completion, especially in online delivery courses.

Overall, the budget of $2,625,000 reflects the two goals, the two activities that arise from these goals and the two competitive priorities of increasing academic success and increasing success in online classes throughout the college system. All of this emphasis on success is designed to lead to additional completion by first-generation college students, low income students, and students from underrepresented groups.

# El Paso Community College

**FY 2016 ABSTRACT**

Positioned along the U.S. Mexico border, El Paso County Community College (EPCC) enrolls approximately 30,000 students from the surrounding communities, allowing us the opportunity to serve a predominately first-generation, Hispanic population with a low socio­ economic status. The proposed project directly addresses the Title V purpose of expanding opportunities for and improving the academic attainment of Hispanic students.

This Early Alert Case Management Program will provide high need students with academic and other support services to increase their ability to adjust and remain in college through program completion. Many of these students are deficient in basic academic and college social skills necessary to be successful. This project will provide the case management; educational activities and student tracking that will allow early and effective intervention. The primary goal is to increase the percentage of FTIC students that successfully complete a degree or certificate and are able to enter the workforce or transfer to a four-year institution. The major program objectives are to increase the retention rate (Fall to Fall enrollment) by 10 percent for FTIC students seeking degrees or certificates starting Fall 2015 through year five of the grant and increase the graduation rate of FTIC students by 6 percent seeking degrees or certificates within three years of enrollment.

These objectives will be attained through implementation of the Early Alert Case Management Program targeting all FTIC students by fall 2016. This effort will be implemented by program staff trained and assigned exclusively to the Early Alert Program. They will utilize open communication, integration, and cooperation between support services and the different departments at EPCC. Utilizing electronic software such as DropGuard® and Civitas will enable the early identification of FTIC students who are in danger of terminating their educational pursuit, and allow these students to receive timely intrusive and effective intervention.

# University of Houston - Downtown, TX

# Lone Star College Kingwood, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

***Pathways to Teaching Careers***

Pathways to Teaching Careers (PTC) is a collaborative initiative between the University of Houston Downtown (UHD) and Lone Star College Kingwood (LSC-KW). UHD (14,439 students) and LSC-KW (20,055 students) have high-risk enrollments of minorities (80 percent at UHD and 54 percent at LSC-KW), first-generation college students (60 percent at UHD and 34 percent at LSC-KW), and 100 percent commuters, with about 59 percent of LSC-KW students providing care for dependents living in the home (e.g., parents, children, spouse, etc.). These are all high risk factors for academic failure, and produce student populations that: i) have relatively lower levels of college readiness skills; ii) lack adequate family guidance and financial support; iii) have excessive off-campus employment obligations/hours; and iv) other challenges, that cause them to prolong graduation, accumulate an excessive number of credit hours, and seem unfocused.

With spiraling growth in the enrollments of such high risk students, amid UHD’s six-year graduation rate of 19.2 percent, and LSC-KW’s three-year graduation rate of 11 percent, **this collaborative seeks to provide a responsive pathway with built-in supports to prepare students for K-12 teaching credentials and careers.** The PTC program seeks to increase students’ success, persistence, and graduation by enrolling them in a structured, caring, and guided career-based curriculum that enables them to take fewer years (four-five years) to graduate as certified Bachelor’s or Master’s degree teachers for K-12 schools. The PTC program uses conceptual frameworks and major elements of the CUNY’s Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), recently evaluated by MDRC, and assessed by WWC as meeting *“WWC group design standards without reservations”* (May 2015), as well as curriculum mapping frameworks used by universities such as Florida International University.

# University of Texas at San Antonio, TX

# San Antonio Alamo Community College District, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

PIVOT for Academic Success

To prepare, inspire, validate, orient, and transition (PIVOT) students at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and the San Antonio Alamo Community College District (ACCD) five campuses, PIVOT proposes four activities that support student-centered academic achievement across the partnering institutions. PIVOT’s goals are to increase Hispanic, low SES, and first generation undergraduate transfer, retention, and graduation rates.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity 1  Alamo Runners  Identifies students who were admitted to the University of Texas at San Antonio but instead enrolled at one of the five 2­year campuses in the Alamo College District. It pairs them with  a coordinator and peer mentor who guide them to dual enroll in 12 credit hours at the Alamo  2­year campus, plus 3 credit hours at the UTSA 4­year campus program. It concludes with their successful transfer to UTSA to pursue the 4­year degree once requirements for the 2­year degree are met. | Activity 2  Roadrunner Transition Experience (RTE)  Offers a transition experience for transfer students to the 4­year UTSA campus. Aimed at in­coming Roadrunners who are excluded from the freshman First Year Experience, it trains and makes available transition peer mentors who ensure students have access to peers who are eager to support them. It creates resources and programs that provide a rich transition experience to increase transfer student retention and graduation rates. |
| Activity 3  First to Go and Graduate (F2G&G)  Are programs for the near 50 percent first generation student population that emphasize graduation as the goal. F2G&G’s innovative features include the creation of (1) a first-generation faculty to first-generation student coaching program; (2) F2G&G peer mentors, and (3) an F2G&G Council comprised of students and faculty. | Activity 4  Math Matters (M2)  Is a Math Department course re­design of Math 1073, a prerequisite Algebra course for Scientists and Engineers, utilizing the National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT) hybrid­model (flipped/online/lab features) to decrease its high failure rate. This course is one that Alamo Runners (Activity #1) may elect for their dual enrolled course at UTSA. |

PIVOT’s integrated activities support student academic success by increasing: 1) the percentage of Alamo College two­year degree­seeking students who transfer to UTSA’s four-year campus; 2) the number of students who pass Math 1073 with a grade of C or better, so that they are retained and prepared to move into upper­division course work; and 3) the retention and graduation rates of first-generation, Hispanic, transfer, and low SES students across the partnering campuses.

# Texas State University, TX

# Del Mar College, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Texas State University, located in San Marcos, Texas, serves less than 36,000 students and is one of the largest Hispanic-serving universities in America. This commitment to access and opportunity is also reflected in Texas State’s recognition as the 14th ranked college for awarding Bachelor’s degrees (N = 1098) and 30th ranked college for awarding Master’s degrees (N = 210) to

Hispanics in 2010 by Hispanic Outlook. Del Mar College (DMC) is a community college located in Corpus Christi, Texas, which offers a wide variety of academic and vocational programs. DMC is designated as a Hispanic-serving institution, with 58 percent of its student population being Hispanic.

Activity 1: Graduation Success Centers at Texas State University and Del Mar College. To enhance student preparation for the transition to the university (from Del Mar College) or to the workforce (from Texas State University and Del Mar College) or graduate / professional schools (Texas State University), a one-stop shop for students nearing completion of associate, baccalaureate and certificate degree programs will be developed. These Centers will serve students at risk of failing to complete degree programs.

Activity 2: Career Readiness Institutes at Texas State University and Del Mar College. To respond to increasing demands for “soft skills” among college graduates, a Career Readiness Institute will provide opportunities for student, faculty, and staff development. A curriculum will be developed for students and a workshop series will be planned. Students completing a minimum of 85 percent of workshops in the series will receive a Title V Career Readiness Institute certificate. Faculty and staff will be invited to participate in a workshop held during the summer where plans for implementing a career readiness unit into classes will be developed.

Measurable Outcomes. Project evaluation will assess achievement of the following TXST – DMC Title V goals: Academic achievement of participants [participant aggregate GPA supported by graduation coaching compared to non-participating peers]; Persistence to the degree completion for participants [total number of aggregate semester and cumulative GPA / semester credit hours completed annually following participation (goal = 2.5 percent improvement) compared to peers; Degree completion / graduation / transfer rates for participants [percent completed / graduated compared to percent not receiving services completed / graduated (goal = 2.5 percent improvement)]; Number of financial transition plans completed for at-risk groups [number of plans completed annually (goal = 2.5 percent annual improvement)]; Number of Career Readiness Certifications obtained [number of certifications received annually (goal = 2.5 percent annual improvement)]; Number of classes with embedded career readiness units [number of classes annually (goal = 2.5 percent annual improvement)].

This Cooperative Arrangement Development Grant proposal supports the Absolute Priority and both Competitive Preference Priorities identified within the program announcement in the Federal Register.

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# University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

The School of Nursing (SON) in the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA) is a Hispanic-serving Institution that educates culturally inclusive high-quality nurses to address health disparities in the South Texas geographic area. The UTHSCSA-SON is the only Academic Health Science Center in the South Texas/Border region which comprises nearly 46,000 square miles organized into 38 counties reaching from San Antonio to the U.S.-Mexico border. South Texas demographics, unmet health needs, healthcare workforce shortages and the current expansion of team science and community outreach occurring at UTHSCSA provide a rich context for promoting the enhanced learning and success of under-represented, underprepared students in programs leading to a professional degree. The SON seeks Title V Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program funding from the United States Department of Education for an innovative student support and faculty development program that will be administered through its newly created Student Success Center.

*Realce: Academic Skills Enhancement for South Texas Nurses* project provides solutions to two key problems faced by the School of Nursing: 1) improving academic support programs to reverse the recent downward trend of first-time pass rates for SON graduates on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN®); and 2) the need for improved instruction by novice faculty to address the needs of culturally diverse populations and the need to increase faculty-student engagement opportunities – especially for the low-income and first-generation students served by the SON.

If funded, this grant will provide a two-pronged approach to address these problems by developing and improving academic support programs for at-risk and/or Hispanic learners (Activity I) and by providing narrowly-tailored faculty development activities and a new undergraduate research program entitled the *Summer Undergraduate Nursing Research Immersion Experience (SUNRISE)* that will connect Hispanic, first-generation, low-income, and at-risk students with faculty engaged in ground breaking research in the field of nursing (Activity II).

Key measures of success will include: a) the improvement of the first-time pass rate on the NCLEX-RN examination by SON graduates; b) the increase in research productivity by undergraduate students, and c) the improvement in cultural competence and instructional ability by novice faculty throughout the undergraduate curriculum. *Realce* (the Spanish word for ‘Enhancement’) serves to enhance the student learning experience with academic supports, enhance faculty competencies in their ability to teach a new generation of diverse students, and ultimately enhance the School of Nursing to better provide for the healthcare needs of South Texas and the Rio Grande Border region.

# Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

*Project GRAD: Graduation and Retention through Academic Diversity* is a project led by Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMUCC) in which a seamless pipeline has been formed to increase the number and proportion of high-need students who are academically prepared for, enroll in, and complete on time college. Project GRAD plans to decrease the amount of remediation students, especially high-need, must take in order to enter into a degree-seeking program, persist, and graduate within six years. Project GRAD will do this with a three pronged approach that includes capacity building through library renovations and increased online instruction, a Summer Prep Academy to provide remedial prep courses to underprepared students to decrease the amount of necessary remedial courses, and by creating a campus of inclusivity focused on family engagement and high-impact practices.

The project will provide needed services and programs aimed at keeping the educational pipeline open to Hispanics, first-generation, low-income, and traditionally underrepresented students who attempt a baccalaureate degree. Services include a remedial Summer Prep Academy and Spanish-speaking orientation sessions, increased internship and undergraduate research opportunities, family engagement events, increased online course options, and a more innovative library space. Goals of the project include: (1) increasing the number of high-need students who are able to enter TAMUCC college ready; (2) increase the number of high-need students who persist and graduate within six years; (3) increase the amount of online course instruction offered, while also enhancing the professional development for faculty and staff; and (4) renovating space and upgrading technology in the Bell Library.

**Component One** – Summer Prep Academy: The purpose of this component is to provide academic and social support services to high-need students who may need remedial coursework. The students will receive academic prep courses, faculty and peer mentoring, College 101 presentations from campus departments and services, a community service experience (High Impact Practice), free TSI [Texas Success Initiative] assessment retest, optional Spanish-speaking orientation sessions, and early registration capabilities. This component will enable students to start college academically prepared for credit-bearing courses in a tight-knit group of peers with faculty mentors able to provide guidance.

**Component Two** – Engage and Interact: The purpose of this component is to provide a myriad of opportunities for educational and social engagement and involvement for students and their families. This includes family events every semester, a centralized database of internships and undergraduate research opportunities, informational events to increase participation in internships and undergraduate research, and increased usage of existing academic resources on campus through early alert tracking and intensive mentorship by both peers and faculty.

**Component Three** – Resources and Development: The purpose of this component is to provide resources and development to enhance campus practices for high-need students. This includes faculty and academic advisor development, faculty stipends to increase the incentive to develop and implement online course creation, and renovations and upgrades to the Bell Library to increase usage from students, staff, and faculty.

# Howard County Junior College District, Big Spring, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Howard College (HC), which has four campuses in west central Texas, is a public, Hispanic-serving, two-year degree granting college that serves approximately 4,000 students. HC’s service area is economically-depressed, with the median household income in the 13-county region at just

$47,214, below the average of $51,900 for Texas as a whole, according to the most recent estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. The Hispanic population in HC’s 13-county service area is 40.13 percent, well over the percentages for Texas and the United States, but close to Howard College’s rate of 44 percent. HC caters to local area residents who either cannot afford to leave the area to pursue schooling or who choose to stay in the area because of family or other obligations.

The college has an open admissions policy, which means that many students have deficits in their academic skills when they enroll, calling for additional services to be provided.

The college’s Title V application, Perfecting Achievement in Student Success (PASS) represents as aggressive approach to providing services. PASS will address several targeted weaknesses at Howard College, including declining retention rates, ineffective systems for collecting and analyzing data, a professional development plan that is inconsistent among the college’s campuses and lack of online degree programs. As a result of a long-term and intensive planning process, HC has identified four opportunities that will be addressed through this project, each with a related component, as follows:

Component 1: Student resources

Component 2: Professional Development

Component 3: Online Degrees

Component 4: Implementation of a Student Information System

Amount requested: The total request for this project is $2,625,000 over five years. This represents 39 percent invested in salaries and fringe benefits; 50 percent for equipment; 5 percent for supplies; 3 percent for contractual; 2 percent for travel; and 1 percent for other expenses.

Program Management and Evaluation: Howard College is requesting $673,684 (25 percent) over five years to support the program management dimension of the project. This includes $598,684 for salaries and fringe benefits of the project director and two activity directors; as well as $75,000 for an external evaluator. One Activity Director will be institutionalized at the end of the project, while the Project Director and second Activity Director are grant-specific positions for the five year period.

Howard College is confident that PASS will enable the institution to put into place new capacity to better serve students, to encourage residents from the region to seek a higher education.

# Brookhaven College, Farmers Branch, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Brookhaven College (BC), one of seven colleges in the Dallas County Community College District, serves ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged and increasingly Hispanic neighborhoods. As a large urban commuter college, BC’s service area includes the communities of North Dallas, Farmers Branch, Addison and Carrollton. Over the past decade the Hispanic student enrollment at Brookhaven College increased from 22 percent to 36 percent (Fall 2014 enrollment

12,284 credit students) to become the predominant ethnic group of students at the college.

Hispanic students are highly motivated to enroll in college and obtain a degree. However, the challenges (cultural barriers, financial burdens, family responsibilities) often hinder timely college completion for Hispanic students. Currently only three percent of Hispanic students at BC graduate within three years of initial enrollment. Using evidence-based best practices Brookhaven College proposes an Academic Engagement and Support Center (AESC) that provides student-centered academic advising and comprehensive case management. Services at the AESC will include accessible tutoring, learning support, financial counseling, family advocacy, and referrals for non-academic financial need (child care, housing and social services). In addition, the proposed Business/Industry Mentoring, Transfer and Placement Center will provide information and linkages for mentorships, internships, experiential learning and university transfer advising, as well as job interviewing and placement. To improve Hispanic student retention and completion, core/gatekeeper distance learning courses will be Quality Matters (QM) certified, reflecting results of academic research on effective distance learning. Project RISE, with the assistance of Title V funding, will increase Hispanic student success at Brookhaven College.

Activity: $2,625,000 over five years

Brookhaven College proposes a single comprehensive Activity: *Project Rise: Increasing the academic success of Hispanic and low-income students* with four major activity components.

1. Reducing Hispanic student time to completion
2. Improving distance learning pedagogy
3. Strengthening Hispanic student support services
4. Enhancing college-wide access to student information

Project RISE addresses both Title V Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2.

1. Programs designed to improve academic success – Activity Components 1 and 2
2. Projects designed to reduce time to completion – Activity Components 2 and 4

# Texas A& M University – Kingsville, Kingsville, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Integrating a Culture of Academic and Research Engagement—I-CARE Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TAMUK) is a state supported institution serving an area of rural South Texas bordering Mexico. The University serves an area approximately the size of West Virginia, ranging from San Antonio to the Mexican border. The student body is split almost equally between men (53 percent) and women (47 percent). Seventy-two percent of students are undergraduates. Ethnically, the campus reflects the demographics of the area, with 62 percent of the students being Hispanic, 27 percent (non-Hispanic), and five percent African American. TAMUK is dedicated to serving an ethnically and culturally diverse population and is committed to its mission of teaching, research, and service in South Texas for the advancement of knowledge and of regional development.

The I-CARE project design is based on the premise that students are our greatest assets. They come to us with preliminary skill sets and capabilities. Through the I-CARE program, students will be able to understand their limitations and develop a new vision of who they are and what they can achieve. The project is composed of three major Goals:

Goal 1 addresses the need to provide career development and career planning which will provide a foundation for students as they move through their academic career and their educational goals at the university. Goal 2 will increase the number of high-need students who enroll in and successfully complete courses that provide an undergraduate research component. These courses have been designed to expose students to scholarly and experiential undergraduate research thereby increasing the number of students who are academically prepared for graduate studies. Goal 3 will provide an undergraduate research commons in the university library that will provide a dedicated space for students to participate in undergraduate research. These goals and proposed activities are in direct alignment with the university mission and vision and the absolute priority for the Title V competition.

Competitive Preference Priority 1 will address:

* Faculty professional development to support innovative learning methods including undergraduate research and experiential learning
* Course redesign to engage students, improve critical skills, retention and graduation
* Infrastructure development to support course redesign, increase visibility of research and experiential learning and improve students’ experiences
* Professional academic advisor development to support student engagement in innovative learning
* Enhance counseling and student guidance services through academic career literacy
* Financial literacy modules to increase student retention and success

Competitive Preference Priority 2 will address:

* Online course redesign that includes research and experiential learning
* E-databases and online journals
* Online career modules and financial literacy modules to support retention and success

# The University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Located in the heart of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the fourth largest metro area in the country and one of the fastest growing with a growing Hispanic population, the University of Texas at Arlington draws most of its undergraduates from the local “metroplex” and surrounding counties. Reaffirming its commitment to providing access through its 2020 strategic plan, which calls for “Transforming the Student Experience by Enhancing Access and Ensuring Student Success,” the university has made great strides as it moves toward Tier One status (very high research activity) within the state.

With an increasingly diverse student body in a “majority minority” state, UTA students require both academic and personal support as they embark upon their academic careers at a large research oriented university. With a Fall 2014 (overall) enrollment of 33,278 and a global enrollment of approximately 50,000 students (inclusive of online students), a significant proportion of UT Arlington’s students consists of first-generation, low-income and high-need students. UTA’s enrollment includes 8,332 (25 percent) students who are Hispanic (IPEDS) and 10,665 (32 percent) are low-income (UTA DSA, 2014), based on U.S. Department of Education Federal Low-Income Guidelines.

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) requests for $2,621,654 (over a five-year funding period) to support the success of these high-need students through a grant under the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program. Title V funding will create the I.D.E.A.S. Project (Innovation, Diversity, Excellence, Access, and Success) providing flexible and after- hours services to students transitioning to a four-year institution. The proposed activity coordinates efforts from across the institution; these include University College, Faculty Affairs, Distance Education, the Central Library, University leadership, and the HSI Task Force.

The I.D.E.A.S. Project consists of three main components:

1. *Student Success through I.D.E.A.S. Center* – Creation for a resource hub focused on support services designed to improve and increase undergraduate persistence and graduation rates for high-need students: Hispanic and low income.
2. *Student Success through Efficient use of Technology* - Formation and implementation of digital (online) support services to on-campus and distance education learners
3. *Student Success through Faculty Development* - Implement faculty development designed to increase cultural competence for our high-need students (i.e., Hispanic, low-income students, students in transition). In addition to support for “gateway” courses as students transition into their major. The proposed I.D.E.A.S. Project addresses the Title V purpose *to expand educational opportunities for and improve the academic attainment of Hispanic students.* This proposal also addresses both Competitive Preference Priorities. Priority #1 is clearly addressed through the mix of Student Services Programs designed to improve academic success that include partnerships with University College and other programs in the Library’s Academic Plaza. Priority #2 is addressed through the development and implementation of high-quality online/hybrid opportunities focus on supporting student success in critical gateway courses for popular majors.

# Del Mar College, Corpus Christi, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Del Mar College. Del Mar College (DMC) is a two-year institution founded in 1935 and located in Corpus Christi, Texas. The College has an enrollment of over 10,000 students, with a 62 percent enrollment of Hispanic students. It is ranked among the nation’s top three percent of community colleges granting associate degrees to Hispanic Students, according to the national publication *Community College Week*. Del Mar College has a service area of 7,541 square miles (Connecticut and Rhode Island) along the Gulf Coast. Those counties served are economically challenged with a population of over 500,000, with an estimated Hispanic population of 375,000.

Activity 1: Viking Connect Centers at Del Mar College. To enhance student preparation for the transition to the college, university, or to the workforce, a one-stop shop for students nearing completion of associate, transfer to attain a baccalaureate or certificate degree programs will be developed. These Centers will serve students at risk of failing to complete degree programs. Two Viking Connect Centers will be created on East and West Campus.

Activity 2: Career Readiness Institutes at Del Mar College. To respond to increasing demands for “soft skills” among college graduates, a Career Readiness Institute will provide opportunities for student, faculty, and staff development. A curriculum will be developed and a workshop series will be planned for students. Students completing a minimum of 85 percent of workshops in the series will receive a Title V Career Readiness Institute certificate. Faculty and staff will be invited to participate in a workshop held during the summer where plans for implementing a career readiness unit into classes will be developed. Three Career Kiosks will be created on three different campuses East, West and Northwest Center.

The project’s overall five-year budget of $2,625,000 focuses on building new capacities and systematic improvements that are sustainable and affordable.

# The University of Texas of the Permian Basin, Odessa, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

The University of Texas of the Permian Basin (UTPB), located in rural West Texas, is proposing the project, *Linking & Advancing Student Success Opportunities (LASSO)* as a 2015 Title V grant in order to improve the success of its students and to increase efficiencies. Through four goals and related objectives, UTPB proposes one interlinking campus wide activity, including the establishment of a teacher education recruiting and support program, online and evening advising, peer advocates, renovations for a teacher education lab, the addition of an Office of Student Advocacy, and finally, a Faculty to Student mentoring program. The goals of the project are that by 2020: (1) UTPB will significantly increase its students' academic success as measured by persistence and graduation rates, through increased student access to critical services, such as tutorials, faculty mentoring, academic advising, testing and student advocacy; (2) UTPB will improve its ability to provide online services, such as student advising and advocacy to its past, present and future students; (3) UTPB will significantly improve its rates recruiting, retaining, advising and developing teacher education candidates; and (4) UTPB will implement a rigorous system of monitoring and evaluating progress of the LASSO project, both formative and summative.

Pursuant to these goals, the university will employ a project director who will work in tandem with The Dean for Student Success, The Dean of the College of Education, The Associate Vice President for Student Services, The Director of Housing, The Provost and the President in an intensive, cohesive, university wide effort to unify and strengthen support. The LASSO project is designed to enhance student attainment and to address the fundamental weaknesses identified through the Comprehensive Development Plan in Academic, Fiscal and Institutional Management areas. The overarching theme of the project is to grow the university in quality of services, student academic performance and persistence to graduation.

# Northeast Texas Community College, Mt. Pleasant, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Institutional Background: Northeast Texas Community College (NTCC) is one of 50 public, open-access community colleges in Texas. The small College is located on 375 acres in a rural setting of gently rolling hills, streams, rivers and farms, in the picturesque and historic Chapel Hill area. The main NTCC campus is located approximately equidistant between the county seats of the three counties which make up the NTCC district: Daingerfield (Morris County), Mount Pleasant (Titus County); and Pittsburg (Camp County). Over 36 percent of the service area population is minority.

Absolute Priority. This project meets the Absolute Priority by increasing the number and proportion of high-need students who will complete college on-time.

Competitive Preference Priorities. This project meets Competitive Preference Priority #1 by providing counseling and student services designed to improve within-term success, retention and degree completion. It meets Competitive Preference Priority #2 by supporting the review and redesign of online courses to increase within-term student success, reduce course repeats and decrease time to degree completion.

Improving Student Success, Completion and Time to Degree. This Title V project will increase within-term success; first fall to second fall retention, two-year degree completion within 150 percent of normal time and decrease time to degree.

Key Outcomes: 1) Close the achievement gap between Hispanic learners and non-Hispanic learners; 2) increase fall-to-fall retention of Hispanic and other high-need students by 10 percent; increase the number of degrees and certificates awarded to Hispanic and low-income students by 15 percent; 3) increase the proportion of first-time, degree-seeking Hispanic and low-income students who graduate within 150 percent of normal time to completion by 10 percent; 4) increase gateway course success by 10 percent; 5) increase developmental course success rates by 10 percent; and 6) improve the quality of online courses and student success rates in online courses.

Student Body Characteristics

Fall 2014 Headcount Enrollment: Undergraduate: 3,227. White-54.8 percent; Hispanic/Latino-25.8 percent; Black or African American-13.0 percent; Race/Ethnicity Unknown-0.2 percent; Asian-0.7 percent; American Indian or Alaska Native-0.6 percent; Native Hawaiian-0.1; Two or More Races-2.6 percent; Non-Resident Alien: 1.6 percent.

Faculty Characteristics: Faculty to credit student ratio: 1: 23. Full-time: 70; Part-time: 125.

Five-Year Project Budget: $2,625,000.

# Northwest Vista College, San Antonio, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Northwest Vista College (NVC) is a two-year institution serving the rapidly growing and predominately Hispanic northwest side of San Antonio, Texas. NVC offers academic and technical courses to 15,797 students pursuing associates degrees, certificates, and transfer credit. Approximately 60 percent of these students are Hispanic.

The mission of Northwest Vista is to create opportunities for success by offering quality academic, technical and life-long learning experiences to its diverse communities in a collaborative, student-centered, data-informed and shared leadership environment.

Currently math forms the largest obstacle to student success, persistence and completion. NVC proposes to overcome this barrier by implementing *Project Math Paths (PMP)* as a five-year,

$2,282,901 project designed to improve our three year graduation rate by correctly welcoming, advising, placing, and accelerating students through the math core and eliminating developmental math hours. Project Math Paths uses a two-pronged systemic approach to address the Absolute Priority and the two Competitive Priorities:

1.) Integration of cross college resources to increase graduation and improve math placement; and

2.) A fundamental shift away from college algebra to include the mathematics of statistics and liberal arts to increase graduation.

Goals for Project Math Paths include:

Goal 1: Implement intrusive advising for all FTIC students through Vista Central - One Stop

Shop;

Goal 2: Accelerate the Developmental Math Sequence and advise into optimal college level math courses;

Goal 3: Maximize student success by dramatically increasing optimal math placement, including

Math 1414, College Algebra for STEM majors;

Goal 4: Reduce time needed and facilitate student enrollment through the creation of Vista Central - One Stop Shop with imbedded support services to facilitate the enrollment process, monitor and advise student progress, and;

Goal 5: Increase student enrollment, retention and core math completion.

Northwest Vista has committed the resources of its faculty, administration, staff, and facilities to the success of this project. The activities proposed in this grant are fully aligned with the college’s Strategic Plan and our six main goals of Completion, Learning and Sustainability, Strategic Enrollment Management, Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, and forming Strategic Partnerships.

# San Antonio College, San Antonio, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

SAC – one of the largest community colleges in Texas – educates approximately 18,000 students in San Antonio, Texas, the nation’s seventh-largest city located 150 miles north of the U.S./Mexico border. In San Antonio, more than 60 percent of all 1.6 million residents are Hispanic, and 75 percent of all residents 25 and older have less than a bachelor’s degree. In the neighborhoods that surround our campus, one-third to one-half of all families have incomes below poverty.

At least half of all SAC students are Hispanic, low-income and/or first-generation, and

11 percent graduate within three years because of the many barriers they face, perpetuating low educational attainment and poverty in San Antonio. The *Puentes* project will help reverse this trend by significantly increasing our institution’s capacity to provide the guidance, engagement and academic support Hispanic and low-income students need to succeed in higher education. Funding will allow SAC to:

1. Increase the availability of enrollment assistance, the quality and reach of SAC’s New Student Orientation (NSO) program, the availability of academic advising and access to tutoring support college-wide.
2. Offer accelerated remedial education options to at least 500 additional students each year, and increases the availability of online learning, tutoring and advising resources.
3. Modernize teaching and learning in STEM classrooms and labs that at least half of all students encounter while attending SAC.

*Puentes* will serve as a catalyst for long-term improvements that will address the disproportionately low rates at which Hispanic and other low-income students achieve, persist and succeed at SAC. The innovative strategies we employ in our Activity Components will directly address our institution’s weaknesses and will pave the way for systemic changes that will enable SAC to achieve its institutional goals and objectives. Every *Puentes* strategy is designed to help our majority underrepresented students successfully “bridge” the academic and cultural divide from enrollment to remedial education to college-level study and eventual graduation and transfer. Our Implementation Strategies meet the requirements of the Absolute Priority for the Title V program and both Competitive Preference Priorities.

By the end of the project: 1) at least 62 percent of all SAC full-time, first-time-in-college students (FTICs) will remain enrolled after their first year; 2) at least 79 percent of all students will pass courses with a “C” or better; 3) at least 15 percent of all students will be graduating from SAC within three years, and at least 23 percent will be transferring to Texas public senior institutions within six years; and 4) at least 97 percent of all students will be retained within each semester.

# Amarillo College, Amarillo, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Amarillo College (AC), Amarillo, Texas, a comprehensive, two-year public community college, lies in the heart of the Texas Panhandle and serves a 9,363 square-mile service area, with most of its 300,000 residents concentrated around Amarillo, the largest city in a 120-mile radius. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and governed by a Board of Regents, AC offers 140 developmental, transfer-oriented, and technical programs to over 10,000 credit students. Mirroring the demographics of our area, 4,992 of Fall 2014 students were Hispanic (38 percent). With the Hispanic proportion of the area population projected to reach nearly 49 percent by 2050, major strides must be made to include them in the emerging economy. Yet, service area degree attainment for Hispanics remains historically low at only seven percent for a Bachelor’s degree or above—less than a third of the rate for all residents (21 percent).

Student Characteristics: Typical AC students attend part-time (70 percent) while they juggle work (81 percent) responsibilities. Interest in online and hybrid courses continues to grow with 38 percent of students taking at least one online course in Fall 2014.

Significant Problems: Retention and graduation rates are unacceptably low for the predominantly high-need students AC serves. Our analysis indicates that a major stumbling block to student success lies in the quality of our developmental reading, writing, and math; technical core; and gateway college-level courses. Failure rates in these courses range from 25-60 percent, pointing to high percentages of students whose progress is delayed and whose educational costs climb higher with each additional course they must retake. The following weaknesses in our target courses inhibit student success and must be addressed: teaching methods remain static, with lecture still the primary teaching method; instruction does not promote interaction and collaboration; and use of technologies in course design is limited. A further obstacle to AC student persistence and graduation is AC’s advising system, which is ill-designed and under-resourced to address the changing needs of our students. Advisors have inadequate access to critical student information. Furthermore, advising for foundational students—those who perhaps need the most support and guidance as they navigate AC’s developmental education sequence—is fragmented, leading to confusion and frustration rather than supporting their success.

Proposed Solution: *On Time Completion: Creating a Pathway for Student Success.* AC proposes to: (1) invigorate developmental education, technical core, and high-risk gateway courses by re-designing the curricula based on best practices for active learning and learner- centered strategies supported by faculty professional development, multi-media classrooms, and collaborative workstations; (2) centralize foundational advising and establish a Foundational Advising Center; (3) develop support services—Summer Bridge and Rapid Review placement testing preparation sessions—to support the success of foundational students; and (4) develop data-driven advising using high-powered data analytic tools that offer advisors and faculty user-friendly dashboard access to data.

# College of the Mainland, Texas City, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

Goals: College of the Mainland (COM) will create systemic change to increase the graduation and retention rates of Hispanic and low income students, and in doing so will impact the rates of all students. Our overall approach will be to use new programs, processes and technology to enable better communication and increase collaboration among advisors in Student Services, faculty in Instruction and students so that obstacles on the students’ pathway can be addressed as early as possible in the their career at COM. We will clear the pathway to student success by working towards two goals. The first is to develop processes and procedures to ensure that students have *a successful start* to their college experience by contacting students early in their college experience and staying in contact with them, by increasing outreach about financial aid and by offering training in financial literacy. The second goal is to eliminate obstacles from the student’s pathway *as they proceed* on their academic journey, through a variety of programs and services related to proactive advisement, emphasizing goal planning and on-going contact.

Expected Outcomes: Student Services and Instruction will work together to clear the pathway to student success. By 2020, our objectives are to increase COM’s three year graduation rates by 10 percent and our fall to fall retention rates by 11 percent, as well as increase the percentage of students applying for financial aid by 16 percent and students receiving financial aid by 11 percent.

Contributions To Practice: Fulfilling our goals will support the research on pathways (CCRC,

2015) which points to increased student success resulting from a comprehensive redesign of the student experience, with a key element being coordination between Student Services and Instruction.

# South Plains College, Levelland, TX

**FY 2015 ABSTRACT**

SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE (SPC) is a public, open-door community college and Hispanic-Serving Institution located 350 miles due west of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. The college provides 28 Associate Degree programs and related Certificate programs from its main campus in Levelland, two extension centers in Lubbock and a center in Plainview. More than 9,600 students enroll each semester. Overall, 79 percent of students are first-generation college, 40 percent Hispanic, and 54 percent economically disadvantaged. Among students enrolled at the Plainview Center, an hour north of Levelland, the percentages are considerably higher: Hispanic (78 percent), low-income (84 percent), and first-generation college student (87 percent). (SPC Institutional Research and Reports, 2015).

SERVICE AREA: South Plains College is the *only* community college serving a vast 15-county service area of more than 13,000 square miles in west Texas. The 2013 population is estimated at

432,857 and includes 168,814 Hispanic residents (39 percent of the population). Surrounding rural counties are now close to being a majority minority, with a 50 percent Hispanic population (ACS, ’13).

CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS: Faltering enrollment and drastically reduced state appropriations have diminished the college’s ability to address key problems and opportunities: (1) Gaps in SPC’s Technical program offerings are hindering students’ access to high demand careers; (2) too many Technical students are struggling academically and failing to complete an Associate Degree; and (3) current professional development is weak in providing training that could help Technical faculty members improve student engagement in the learning process and help students persist to college completion.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES: To address these institutional problems and challenges, South Plains

College requests Title V funds to help support the following development activities:

* Improve student *access* by expanding the current Diesel Technology program to include a high demand Heavy Equipment Technician specialty and extending the program to the Plainview Center, which enrolls a large proportion of Hispanic and low-income students;
* Further improve access by adding a new Culinary Arts program to address strong student interest and job demand in the region;
* Improve *success* in Associate Degree completions, particularly among Hispanic and low- income Technical students, by incorporating active learning strategies (with an emphasis on collaborative and culturally responsive learning) into the Technical curriculum and providing new online remedial options and improved tutoring for Technical students.
* Strengthen professional development for Technical faculty by emphasizing innovative, active learning strategies and equipping classrooms to support technology-rich instruction in each of the five Technical departments.

# Angelo State University, TX

# Southwest Texas Junior College, TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

Angelo State University (ASU), a four-year institution located in San Angelo, Texas, and Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC), a two-year institution with campuses in Uvalde, Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Crystal City, Hondo and Pearsall, Texas, have partnered to develop Strengthening the Engineering Pipeline in West Texas (STEP West Texas). This project aims to solve several problems in a 35-county area served by the two institutions: lack of a civil engineering program at any institution of higher education in the region; a high demand and expected growth for civil engineers in the next 5-10 years; and limited resources to develop such a program.

The targeted region includes a Hispanic resident rate of over 47 percent, a high school graduation rate of just 74.2 percent and a poverty rate of nearly 19 percent. STEP West Texas will work to overcome many of these challenges by developing a program that will assist residents in earning jobs that are currently in need of a trained workforce. This project is being undertaken as a partnership to enable community college students to obtain an Associate of Science in Engineering Sciences (ASES) degree before transferring to ASU for a new Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (BSCE) degree. Students will benefit from distance learning, shared academic advising, dual enrollment, a Summer STEM Academy and shared resources.

STEP West Texas has been developed with a single activity. Based on a sound analysis of strengths, weaknesses/challenges and opportunities at ASU and SWTJC, the activity has two components: development of new engineering programs and related support services for students.

# Our Lady of the Lake University,

# San Antonio College, San Antonio TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) – a small, coeducational liberal arts institution – and San Antonio College (SAC) – the largest single-campus community college in Texas – educate approximately 26,000 students in San Antonio, Texas, the nation’s seventh-largest city located 150 miles north of the U.S./Mexico border. In San Antonio, more than 60 percent of all 1.6 million residents are Hispanic, and 75 percent of all residents 25 and older have less than a bachelor’s degree. In the neighborhoods that surround our campuses, one-third to one-half of all families have incomes below poverty.

At least half of all SAC students and 75 percent of all OLLU undergraduates are Hispanic, low-income and/or first-generation. Less than 10 percent of SAC students and only a third of OLLU undergraduates graduate within three to six years because of the many barriers they face, perpetuating low educational attainment and poverty in San Antonio. The Exito project will help reverse this trend by significantly increasing our institutions’ capacity to provide the guidance, engagement and academic support Hispanic and low-income students need to succeed in higher education. Funding will allow us to:

Serve at least 1,000 additional potential and existing transfer students each year with academic advising and personal counseling support to increase their likelihood of timely graduation and/or transfer.

Increase low-income and underprepared student enrollment, performance and persistence in 10 of our most popular associate and bachelor’s degree programs by placing additional courses online, hiring and institutionalizing additional personnel to expand the availability of tutoring and online learning materials, and acquiring new technology to improve student learning and engagement.

Improve student persistence and learning through professional development opportunities that build students’ professional networks and disseminate best practices in teaching and student support to faculty and staff.

Exito will serve as a catalyst for long-term improvements at both our institutions that will address the disproportionately low rates at which Hispanic and other low-income students achieve, persist and succeed in postsecondary settings. The innovative strategies we employ in our Activity Components will directly address our institutions’ weaknesses and will pave the way for positive, systemic changes that will enable OLLU and SAC to achieve our respective Institutional Goals and Objectives. Every strategy is targeted to Hispanic, low-income and/or first-generation college students who need the most guidance, who have the largest deficits in academic preparation and who most need to be engaged in their education to persist and succeed.

By the end of the project: 1) undergraduate enrollment at OLLU will have increased by at least 16 percent; 2) fall-to-fall persistence rates at SAC will have increased by at least 12 percent, and fall-to-fall persistence rates for OLLU undergraduate transfer students will have increased to at least 72 percent; 3) SAC’s average three-year first time in college graduation rate will have increased by at least 34 percent; 4) OLLU’s average six-year graduation rate will have increased by at least 9 percent; and 5) both HSIs will have strengthened the transfer pipeline to OLLU by developing and implementing at least five articulation agreements in Exito’s targeted associate’s and bachelor’s degree programs.

# Texas Agriculture & Mechanics International University, TX

# Laredo Community College, TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

The Building Scholarsproject will provide the resources at both Texas A&M International University (TAMIU), with a total undergraduate enrollment of 6,585 (94 percent Hispanic, Fall 2013), and partner institution, Laredo Community College (LCC), with a total enrollment of 8,726 (96 percent Hispanic, Fall 2013), needed to implement a plan for student research and education, skill-development, faculty development, and infrastructure enhancements which is coordinated, comprehensive, and applicable at the university and community college levels. This project flows from goals outlined in both institutions’ strategic plans focusing on student development, engagement, retention and graduation. The project will provide students with a structured curriculum of progressively-rigorous and varied education, skill-development, research activities and presentation experiences that are specific to their field of study.

Activity: Building Scholars:The overarching goal is to develop scholars through project activities designed to enhance the preparation, retention, graduation, and transfer of Hispanic and other minority students to the skilled workforce or baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate programs. Other specific goals for the Building Scholars activity are to:

* Create new academic pathways for students to obtain bachelor’s and master’s degrees at TAMIU
* Strengthen academic programs through faculty development activities focusing on academic rigor, improving teaching and learning, and undergraduate student research
* Increase the use of technology to improve student success (increase retention and graduation rates) at both institutions
* Develop and improve student tracking and mutual sharing of student data to smooth the transfer of students to baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate programs
* Address the important needs of all students from the lowest achieving (developmental) to the highest (honors)
* Increase opportunities for students and faculty to better utilize resources and support services on both campuses
* Increase the full-time enrollment at both institutions
* Reduce the number of semesters it takes for LCC and TAMIU students to graduate
* Maximize federal grant resources to address the needs of low-income, underserved Hispanic students

The Building Scholars project will meet competitive priority oneby preparing students from LCC and moving them through a specialized pathway to a four-year degree, a graduate program, and a career in the workforce, thus significantly impacting the number of high-need, Hispanic students pursuing higher education goals.

The Building Scholars project will meet competitive priority twoby increasing efficiency and improving productivity through the use of data collection and analysis obtained through multiple sources of assessment such as a new student activity tracking program. Also by collaborating on faculty development, and by sharing ideas, best practices, and data on students, thereby improving student outcomes at lower costs for both institutions.

# Houston Baptist University, TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

What does it take to improve academic success for Hispanic, low-income, and First Generation College students? Houston Baptist University (HBU) is answering that question through the planning and implementation of *HBUengage: Building a Comprehensive First Year Experience.* Located in Houston, Texas, HBU is a four-year, private institution that is recognized as a leader in delivering high-quality educational programs to more than 2,500 undergraduate and graduate students, many of whom are minority students (68 percent). Though the institution has achieved success in helping most students persist to graduation, there has been a steady decline in retention due in part to the increasing numbers of incoming Hispanic, low-income, and first generation college students. After careful analysis, HBU determined the need to build a holistic system of services to support first-year students and increase retention.

In collaboration with Credo Higher Education, HBU embarked on an in-depth assessment and analysis of student academic performance, persistence, and interventions currently in place. The result was a comprehensive framework of recommendations that will allow HBU to “Move the Needle” (MTN) on increasing student success and retention. The MTN recommendations along with the Ten Pillars HBU vision document serve as the foundation to the *HBUengage* Title V project plan.

The strategies to be implemented are evidence based and designed to increase student success and retention. The primary strategies planned include the following:

* Create a leadership structure focused on student success
* Improve first-year academic advising and engagement through First Year Mentors/Advisors and training for academic advisors
* Integrate technology throughout the first year and across campus
* Create active learning spaces that facilitate out-of-class academic activities and that foster connections to faculty and other students
* Expand academic support services through Supplemental Instruction, tutoring, improved learning communities, access to OER, and summer/pre-Spring bridge programs
* Redesign orientation to incorporate student engagement activities that carry forward through the full first year
* Increase capacity in institutional research to support data-driven decision making
* Deliver faculty development in the areas of pedagogy, teaching Hispanic and low-income students, cultural diversity awareness, and integrating technology

The anticipated outcomes of the project include increased retention for all first-year and Hispanic students; increased passing rates (with “C” or better) in high DFW courses; increased financial literacy among Hispanic students; increased participation in First Year Experience (FYE) activities; increased integration of best practices in instruction through faculty development; demonstrated student satisfaction with FYE activities; and increased enrollment as a result, in part, of improved first year activities and services. The overarching outcome is increased capacity of HBU to help first-year students, including Hispanic and low-income students, to persist and complete college.

# South Texas College, TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

South Texas College (STC) a traditional Hispanic Serving Institution serving over 31,000 students in Hidalgo and Starr counties along the U.S.-Mexico border has a student body that is 94 percent Hispanic with more than 70 percent qualifying for some level of financial aid and first in their family to attend college. STC is comprised of five campuses and one virtual campus, offering 112 degree and certificate options, 20 on-line Associate degrees, and four Bachelor degrees. STC strives to prepare its students with an education aligned with the evolving workforce markets and with further higher education degree pathways.

STC proposes a district-wide program to increase student success and institutional productivity. *STC in FOCUS* will place the Focus on Creating Ultimate Student Success through a: (1) FOCUS on Learning. Faculty will receive professional development in Active Learning pedagogy to heighten student learning; and, Active Learning Classrooms (ALC) will be added to facilitate student engagement in learning through collaborative team work. (2) FOCUS on Advising will redesign the Faculty Advising (FA) Training program and develop a system to expand the FA reach because proper advising is key to student success. This model builds on the Faculty-Student relationship to strengthen the students’ commitment to their pathway while increasing productivity by expanding use of strong, existing talent at a significantly lower cost (approximately $185,600/year). (3) FOCUS on Infrastructure STC’s IT structure is being used beyond capacity. In order to support the projects’ proposed as well as daily functioning of the College, the infrastructure must be enhanced. This is a productivity project. The investment will be almost paid for by the end of the project and continued cost savings will support the infrastructure. The student benefit increases exponentially access to courses across campuses, provision of on-line students support services, and connection to STC faculty and staff.

# St. Mary’s University Texas, San Antonio,TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

St. Mary’s University (StMU) is a private, four-year institution located in San Antonio, Texas, about 150 miles from the Mexico border. Offering graduate and undergraduate programs, StMU’s total Fall 2013 enrollment was 3,868. StMU embraces diversity—78 percent minority and 72 percent Hispanic undergraduate population—and serves a local area, Bexar County, marked by disadvantage for a predominantly Hispanic population (59.1 percent), 22 percent of whom live in poverty.

Despite static enrollment, the University has experienced significant enrollment gains in undergraduate STEM programs since 2010, especially among Hispanic students (up from 150 in 2010 to 208 in 2012). At the same time, San Antonio has embarked on a mission to build STEM industry in the city. Historically a liberal arts institution, StMU is primed to strengthen and expand its STEM pipeline in order to connect students with growing professional opportunities while building enrollment, but to do so, StMU will have to address several institutional challenges: low STEM retention and graduation rates, high failure rates in STEM courses, outdated STEM lab facilities and instrumentation, programming gaps in high demand STEM areas, and insufficient support services for STEM students.

StMU’s proposed activity, *Fostering Success in STEM Education,* has three initiatives: 1) redesign high risk foundational and STEM gateway curricula and tutoring, renovating and adding updated instrumentation to core science labs; 2) develop a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering program, with new industry-standard labs; and 3) develop intrusive advising, academic skills workshops, and a summer bridge program for STEM students. By the end of the project, StMU anticipates increasing the postsecondary success of our high-need students (*competitive preference priority #1*) and improving the University’s productivity (*competitive preference priority #2*).

# Sul Ross State University, Alpine,TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

Sul Ross State University (Sul Ross), a Hispanic-serving institution in Alpine, Texas, stands at the gateway to Texas’ Big Bend Country, a multifaceted region encompassing vast expanses of the great Chihuahuan Desert, the rocky pinnacles of Big Bend National Park and the Davis Mountains, and a number of historic sites that vividly depict the region’s diverse Indian, Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo backgrounds. Yet for the people who live here, this is a land of hardship as well—frontier, geographically-isolated, sparsely populated, ethnically-diverse, impoverished, and undereducated.

The residents of the Sul Ross service region face not only geographic isolation, but also economic and social barriers that impede the attainment of many educational and career ambitions. The 2010 U.S. Census data illustrates that the service region counties have a population which is largely minority, is overwhelmingly low-income, and has a baccalaureate degree attainment level that is significantly lower than state and national averages. The demographic breakdown for the 19 county Sul Ross service region reveals overwhelming social and economic gaps. 74.9 percent of the target population is Hispanic and overall 77.5 percent of the residents are ethnic minorities. Census data shows that 67.7 percent of the residents speak a language other than English in the home (U.S.: 20.1 percent; Texas: 34.2 percent). 25.8 percent of the residents in the service region live below the poverty line, which is nearly double the U.S. figure of 13.8 percent. The demographics of the Sul Ross student body reflect this 19 county service region.

**Project Description**

In response to student needs and to the gaps and weaknesses in Sul Ross services and infrastructure, Sul Ross has established clear, specific activities with realistic and measurable objectives that relate to the institutional problems and goals defined in the Sul Ross Title V El Camino del Lobo al Éxito Comprehensive Developmental Plan (CDP). The overarching outcome to be achieved by this project is to improve the academic attainment of Hispanic students and to expand and enhance the program quality and Sul Ross’s institutional stability in its mission to help Hispanic and low-income students complete postsecondary degrees. Specific goals for Sul Ross’s Title V El Camino del Lobo al Éxito Program are: Goal 1: increase undergraduate retention rates; Goal 2: increase undergraduate six year graduation rates*;* and Goal 3: increase Sul Ross State University’s fiscal stability.

To achieve these three goals the project will complete two activities: 1) Develop a comprehensive educational career program; and 2) Develop a comprehensive student success environment. Through the successful implementation of these strategic activities Sul Ross will significantly increase its undergraduate retention and graduation rates and, with its renewed fiscal stability, will be able to enhance the affordable, quality education it offers to the underserved populations in southwest Texas.

# The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso,TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

Situated along the U.S.-Mexico border, The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) enrolls primarily from its surrounding community, allowing us the privilege to serve a predominately first-generation, Hispanic and low socio-economic student population. Our students are intelligent, motivated, and ready to learn; therefore, we understand that if we provide them with well-scaffolded, structurally sound support, they can move from the idea of a college education and career, to an earned degree and professional ventures that match their aspirations.

Working from this fundamental standpoint, UTEP has made strides in increasing our six-year graduation rates from 31.5 percent in FY 2009 to 39.5 percent in FY 2013, but there remain great student success opportunities to realize, particularly with students who are at high risk in terms of academic progress. In response to these challenges, this proposal targets students who graduated in the third quartile of their high school classes. Specifically, this program will focus on increasing academic performance, decreasing stop outs, and propelling this cohort of students to graduation.

These goals will be realized by three activities: (1) creation of a joint Academic Affairs and Student Affairs partnership unit to lead the development of cluster areas of academic support and response teams to identify and engage at-risk students early in enrollment; (2) enhancement of current interventions in large lecture courses to help students connect with their instructors, peers, and the cluster leads/response teams; and (3) investment in the design and deployment of integrative technologies to facilitate communication among students, support team members, and cluster leaders, and to serve as a data collection infrastructure for tracking students. From these activities, we expect to optimize our students’ chances at success by reducing withdrawals and failing grades in large lecture courses, decreasing stop outs, and building a fully networked student support and Early Alert system.

# The University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio TX

**FY 2014 ABSTRACT**

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) is a Hispanic- and minority-serving institution that prides itself on its success in graduating high numbers of Hispanics and high-need students. UTSA is committed to work with community colleges and high schools in its service area to ensure that the pool of Hispanic and high-need students is college ready. The purpose of this grant is to ensure that Hispanic and other high-need students are provided enriched educational experiences to enable their continued success in obtaining a university degree. We have been encouraged by the University’s administration to develop this application in an effort to supplement activities that the University already has underway to increase the participation of more Hispanic students. This project supports the University’s efforts by primarily focusing on increasing the pool of Hispanics and other high-need students who are college ready, to researching and addressing ways of retaining and graduating more of the freshmen Hispanic students at the college, and developing a culturally responsive support system to ensure these students who have traditionally been underserved have the opportunity to enroll and graduate from UTSA.

UTSA proposes goals designed to strengthen the pipeline from high school through community colleges leading to higher enrollment and retention of Hispanic students at UTSA with a vision of lifelong learning for students. A task force involved in this grant has closely connected the proposed project with the UTSA 2016 strategic plan and the Graduation Rate Improvement Plan (GRIP) to guide and ensure that this application creates synergy between ongoing efforts and established project goals.

These project goals are related to the following: UTSA institutional goals in the 2016 strategic plan: Goal A: Enriching Educational Experiences to Enable Students Success; Goal C: Promote access and affordability; Goal D: Serve the public through community engagement.

Project goals are: Project Goal 1: increase the number of Hispanic and high need students enrolling at UTSA by 20 percent; Project Goal 2: increase the number of Hispanic and high need students graduating by 25 percent from 12 percent baseline retention rate data; Project Goal 3: increase the number of Hispanic and high need students majoring in critical teaching shortage areas; Project Goal 4: support 75 percent of participating project students in finding employment or enrolling in graduate school within six months after graduation (before student loan repayment begins); and Project Goal 5: evaluate and study best practices in increasing Hispanic and high- need student’s college completion rates, teacher preparation in the critical teaching shortage areas, and disseminate that information.

(10/14/2014)

# Schreiner University, TX

**FY 2013 ABSTRACT**

Schreiner University (SU) is a small private liberal arts university located in "Texas Hill Country," 60 miles northwest of San Antonio. In fall 2011 SU had a total student population of 1,090; total enrollment has increased from 822 in 2005 or by 32 percent in six years. Ninety-seven percent of the students are from Texas and 75 percent of the students live outside of major metropolitan statistical areas. Predominantly and historically serving low income, rural students, Schreiner is attracting more urban students and their families (including Hispanic families), seeking quality college options with smaller classes (14:1 student/faculty), where students are known by names not numbers. *Learning by Heart* is the Schreiner University motto.

Project Title: Improving Retention and Graduation Rates - *Effective strategies for Emerging Hispanic Institutions*

Problems Addressed: In addition to the core issue that retention and graduation rates trail peer colleges, institutional problems addressed by the proposal include (but are not limited to): University structure and policy for student success did not model exemplary HSI’s (Hispanic-serving Institutions); Underdeveloped, decentralized, and siloed academic support and advising services are compounding retention and graduation issues; SU has been slow to integrate effective high impact practices to engage students in their academic studies and has not developed support for the faculty needed to make changes.

Activity Strategies:SU did not choose to create new 'boutique' special program to serve pockets of Hispanic students each year with this $3.25 million; instead, *these funds will transform of the small university into a culturally responsive HSI uniquely suited to the needs of students needing and seeking personalized support during their college career.* Strategies implemented will include: creation of a new division of the University under a Dean of Student Success; Centralization and strengthening of vital support services such as advising and learning support. Retention Interventions, ranging from college readiness and outreach to new methods to improve success rates in barrier gateway courses which are blocking progress for hundreds of students; learning and living communities, faculty development, and integration of emerging technologies and tools across the curriculum.

Focus on Continuous Improvement, Scale and Sustainability:Integral to the proposed activities is a carefully designed evaluation plan (working with the National Latino Research Center) and a new Data Analyst that will provide the implementation team and an advisory team with formative and summative data to evaluate activity outcomes and guide adjustments and improvements.

# University of Texas – Pan American, TX

**FY 2013 ABSTRACT**

The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) in deep-south Texas, ten miles from the U.S.-Mexico border, with 16,631 undergraduate and 2,403 graduate students enrolled in Fall 2011. The UTPA student body reflects the surrounding region, with a high proportion of students of Hispanic origin (88.7 percent of the student body), students who are first-generation college students (68.8 percent of undergraduate students), students who have financial need (79 percent of undergraduate students), and students whose primary language in the home is not English (at least 50.3 percent of undergraduate students). Unfortunately each of these characteristics is associated with increased risk of educational failure. Given the very high proportion of students at UTPA who are members of at least one of these risk groups, we are proposing an intervention designed to affect the entire undergraduate student body, including the curriculum of 100 percent of the academic majors offered at UTPA.

The focus of the proposed project is on integrating experiential learning throughout the undergraduate curriculum, including experiences such as service learning, undergraduate research, internships, and well-designed capstone experiences. These experiences increase students’ engagement with the university, their faculty, and other students and thus lead to improved retention and time to graduation. Such experiences may be particularly valuable for minority students, who may have more difficulty developing highly interactive relationships with other students and faculty on academic activities. This can affect their likelihood of successfully integrating into the university community, persisting to graduation, and connecting their academic studies with a rewarding career. However the success of experiential learning practices depends on the connection between the design of the experience and the student and institution’s academic goals. Experiential learning activities must be well designed, academically connected, and academically rigorous to have the optimal impact.

We propose to develop and implement experiential learning activities from the first year through the senior year designed to engage and retain students while guiding their ability to see connections between programs of study and career aspirations. The program will engage and develop faculty teaching at the first year level to incorporate service-learning components into first year courses. The program will support and expand undergraduate research opportunities and study abroad for sophomore and junior year experiences, and emphasize internships and capstone experiences in the senior year. The proposed comprehensive activities will require faculty development, faculty mentoring, and institutional support for student activities in these areas. The program will also expand the use of innovative technologies for tracking student activity in research and experiential learning that will enable students to record their work and faculty to monitor and assess that work. The Title V HSI grant would make this ambitious vision possible for increasing teaching effectiveness, enhancing student experience, spurring curricular innovation, and most importantly improving Hispanic student academic success.

# Laredo Community College, TX

# Texas A&M International University, TX

**FY 2012 ABSTRACT**

Laredo Community College (LCC), (total undergraduate enrollment of 10,076, 97 percent Hispanic, Fall 2011) a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) located in Laredo, Texas, requests funds to partner with Texas A&M International University (TAMIU), (total undergraduate enrollment of 7,037, 92 percent Hispanic, Fall 2011) a HSI also in Laredo, Texas, for the purpose of improving and expanding our capacity to improve the academic attainment of Hispanic students and other low income individuals and to reduce the costs of attaining a postsecondary degree. The overarching goal for both institutions is to focus on student success. The seven major goals include enhancing the academic quality of students’ educational experiences to increase retention, graduation, and transfer rates by developing coordinated linkages and faculty development; strengthen student academic support through the development of structured activities; increase faculty development, enhance community programs in service learning, increase and improve the collection, analysis, and use of data to inform decision making so that the institutions can more effectively track each student; and strengthen the transfer process between high school and college and college to the university. The seventh goal, which is paramount to the survival of institutions, is to carry out these activities so that the savings improve fiscal stability. This proposal includes an independent external evaluator, Dr. Ruth Lopez Turley, who has agreed to assess the project’s evaluation plan and activities to determine linkages between the proposed activity interventions and successful outcomes. The proposed Title V Cooperative Agreement Development Project is central to the institution’s plans of improving student retention in gatekeeper courses (LCC Strategic Plan 2012-2015: Focus on Student Success) and to TAMIU's Strategic Plan goals to increase overall student engagement and success; especially transfer students. LCC has addressed the three competitive preference priorities by designing the project to increase postsecondary attainment of needy students, use data to inform decision making and implement activities that will save money through shared faculty development, use of common transfer software and increase student success by reducing the number of students repeating courses.

**Activity: Focusing on Student Success**

LCC and TAMIU will use grant funds to improve academic attainment with one Activity with four components - Component 1: Ensuring Success at Intake and Transfer; Component 2: Focusing on Student Success in gatekeeper courses and faculty development; Component 3: Developing and Implementing a Model Transfer Program; and Component 4: Using data to improve decision making and increase student success.

**Measurable Objectives**

1. Percentage change, over the five-year grant period, of the number of full-time (FT) degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled at LCC and TAMIU.
2. Percentage of first-time FT participating students who continue to second year at LCC and TAMIU.
3. Percentage of FT participating students from LCC graduating within three years of enrollment.
4. Percentage of FT LCC transfer students retained and graduating with a Bachelor’s degree within four years of enrolling at TAMIU.
5. Reduction of cost for undergraduate degrees at LCC and TAMIU through the efforts in the proposed project.

# The University of Texas at El Paso, TX

# Drexel University, TX

**FY 2012 ABSTRACT**

Fusing Green Energy into Manufacturing Engineering Education to

Cultivate Technical Success and Leadership Excellence among

Hispanic Engineering Students

This project is designed to integrate green energy and manufacturing courses using an information and technology-based, real-world problem-solving-focused educational strategy in a new manufacturing engineering curriculum. This project will train Hispanic and female students to be at the forefront of emerging technologies, as energy technology is one of the most promising fields for the first half of the 21st Century. There are a number of challenges facing green energy manufacturing from an industrial perspective.

First, green energy manufacturing is a complex and technology-concentrated set of processes; therefore, it requires a very specialized and experienced workforce. Second, upgrading traditional manufacturing education to green energy manufacturing education is extremely expensive given that a huge up-front investment on special equipment and training; operation and maintenance cost must also be considered. The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) has invested a great amount in developing an advanced manufacturing research facility.

In this project, we will formulate two geographically separated virtual teams at UTEP and Drexel University (DU), collaborating on a green energy-manufacturing project over the internet. Implementing a mixed method of research design, students and faculty involved in the project will be assessed in formative and summative formats to measure the efficacy of the project. The project is aimed at integrating green energy into the manufacturing engineering curriculum and to cultivate leaders in the field among minority and female engineering students. Successful completion of the project will lead to excellence in green energy and advanced engineering education.

# Galveston College, TX

**FY 2012 ABSTRACT**

Galveston College (GC), a two-year publicly supported college in Galveston, Texas, serves more than 2,200 students (the majority low-income, 29 percent Hispanic) in an island community, still struggling to overcome the devastating impact of Hurricane Ike. The proposed project, “Modern Strategies for Student Success,” is designed to address the needs of a highly underprepared student population, with two-thirds requiring remediation in basic skills. These high-risk students are faltering at the “starting line,” failing to master developmental education courses in reading, writing, and math and/or successfully transition into college-level gateway courses.

Meanwhile, weaknesses in instructional and advising strategies, lab and classroom facilities, the technological infrastructure, and fiscal resources have prevented GC from implementing modern, effective strategies that could help its students succeed. The end result is that too many GC students are failing to complete a college credential – thus limiting their potential earnings and quality of life.

The goal of this Title V project is to increase the percent of Hispanic students (and all students) who earn a degree or certificate by (1) enhancing instructional strategies in developmental education and high risk gateway courses; (2) modernizing labs/classrooms for developmental and gateway instruction; (3) integrating new advisement tools; and (4) strengthening the technological infrastructure.

GC will address the three competitive preference priorities by increasing the success of high need students; enabling more data based decision-making (through the technological renovation and related technology-based strategies); and increase productivity by reducing down time and inefficiencies created by the outmoded infrastructure, weaknesses in course design, and the inability to use time-saving technologies.

# Texas State University, San Marcos, TX

**FY 2012 ABSTRACT**

Mentoring and Academic Coaching:

Foundations for Student Success at Texas State University

Texas State University serves 34,000 students in Central Texas and is located between Austin and San Antonio. Thirty-five percent of Texas State University students are of minority descent and the university achieved its institutional goal of becoming a Hispanic-serving institution in fall 2010. This commitment to access and opportunity is also reflected in Texas State University’s recognition as the 14th ranked college for awarding bachelor’s degrees (N = 1098) and 30th ranked college for awarding master’s degrees (N = 210) to Hispanics in 2010 by Hispanic Outlook.

**Activity 1**: Enhancing Student Success through Mentoring.

Activity 1 projects have been designed to enhance student retention and persistence during the first year of college. To improve academic achievement in the freshman year, mentoring will be provided to students who would benefit from an academic “nudge”. This program will target students identified according to information provided at admission, which estimates their likelihood of academic success. In addition, this new initiative will receive CRLA International Mentor Training Program Certification as programs and services are aligned with best practices standards.

**Activity 2**: Strengthening Achievement and Developing Financial Literacy through Academic Coaching. Activity 2 has been designed to enhance student persistence and retention during the first year of college. Academic coaching will help students assess their personal strengths and weaknesses and develop a plan for academic recovery, which will allow them to be retained to the sophomore year. Supplementing academic coaching with participation in a comprehensive financial education program for first year students will improve their awareness and understanding of budget and financial planning, overspending, dealing with debt and credit card, and preventing identity theft and other topics.

**Measurable Outcomes**: Project evaluation will assess achievement of the following TXST

MAC goals: Academic achievement of participants [participant aggregate GPA supported by mentoring / academic coaching compared to non-participating peers]; Persistence to the second year for activity 1 and 2 participants [total number of aggregate semester and cumulative GPA / semester credit hours completed annually following participation (goal = 2.5 percent improvement) compared to peers; Retention to the second year for activity 1 and 2 participants [percent retained compared to percent not receiving services retained (goal = 2.5 percent improvement)]; Increased academic recovery and continuation of financial aid for at-risk groups [ percent return to good standing and eligibility compared to percent not receiving services (goal = 2.5 percent improvement); Attitudinal changes (student satisfaction) associated with program implementation [obtained via internal surveys of participants (goal = 10 percent improvement in student response over five years)].

This Individual Development Grant proposal supports all three competitive priorities identified within the program announcement. These are: (1) Increasing Postsecondary Success, (2) Enabling More Data-Driven Decision-Making, and (3) Improving Productivity.

# University of Houston, Downtown, TX

**FY 2012 ABSTRACT**

Project STAR (Student Transition and Retention)

The University of Houston Downtown (UHD), a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) with an enrollment of 12,900 students, ranks 33rd among the nation’s institutions of higher education awarding bachelor degrees to Hispanic students. With 61 percent of UHD’s students receiving need-based federal financial aid, 39 percent Hispanic enrollment, and about 70 percent of its incoming first-year students and 50-70 percent of its graduates as first-generation college students, HSI funds will enable UHD to significantly improve its support systems for first-year students, especially the first-generation college students, and thus increase student achievement, persistence, and graduation rates.

Challenges facing UHD include low retention rates for first time in any college (FTIAC) students (60.94 percent for all freshmen; 67.91 percent for Hispanics), a 100 percent commuter campus, limited student knowledge about how to access UHD’s academic support and other resources, a high (80 percent) population of FTIAC students who are not college ready, as evidenced by their need for remediation courses upon enrollment, and a low six-year graduation rate (14.26 percent).

Project STAR proposes to address student needs and the HSI goals through three major activity components: 1) Summer Fast Track Institutes (Intensive ACCUPLACER Test Prep); 2) Welcome Institutes; and 3) College Acculturation and Personal Success (CAPS) Program, which consists of a) College Success Program; b) Supplemental Instruction (SI) Tutoring; c) Workshops (online and face-to-face) with built-in incentives for completion; d) Mentoring (by faculty, staff, peer/students); and e) Engagement (membership in co-curricular/activity groups and attendance at UHD events/activities). This project addresses and meets all three competitive preference priorities as indicated in program guidelines.



