

TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION STAR AWARD 2012 APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDELINES

Purpose

The Texas Higher Education Star Award, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in 2001, recognizes exceptional contributions toward meeting one or more of the goals of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, the Texas higher education plan adopted by the Coordinating Board in October 2000. The plan establishes four goals – to close the gaps in student participation, student success, academic excellence, and research. (See *Closing the Gaps by 2015* at: www.thecb.state.tx.us.) In addition to a custom-designed award, recipients receive public recognition for their efforts. Up to 12 awards are presented annually.

Changes for the 2012 Star Award

1. The length of time for a program, project, activity, group, organization, or partnership to have been in operation has been increased from two to three years.
2. For 2012, only those categories that are specifically related to the goals of *Closing the Gaps* in higher education have been retained. The two new categories for the Star Award that were added in 2011, cost efficiency and teaching excellence, have been eliminated for 2012, given the very low number of applications received for these categories in 2011.
3. When applications are reviewed, a higher scoring weight will be allocated to applicants that demonstrate a particularly efficient cost/benefit ratio per student for purposes of being replicable.
4. The individual award category has been eliminated due to the challenges of comparing the contributions of single persons with the contributions of multiple persons involved in programs, projects, and activities. Instead, Coordinating Board staff will be developing a special "Unsung Hero Award" specifically for individuals to be identified at the Commissioner's and Board's recommendation.

Categories for the 2012 Star Award

1. Programs, projects, and activities at Texas institutions of higher education;
2. Groups and organizations in Texas (such as those that help promote a college-going culture); and
3. Partnerships (among higher education institutions, public/private schools/districts, businesses, or the community).

Eligibility for the 2012 Star Award

1. Programs, projects, and activities at Texas institutions of higher education that are helping to meet one or more of the goals of *Closing the Gaps*, including those at:
 - public and independent two- and four-year colleges and universities;
 - public technical and state colleges;
 - public and independent health science centers; and
 - degree-granting career colleges and schools.

2. Groups and organizations in Texas that are helping to meet one or more of the goals of *Closing the Gaps* (such as those that help promote a college-going culture), including:
 - businesses; and
 - community organizations.
3. Partnerships in Texas that are helping to meet one or more of the goals of *Closing the Gaps*, including partnerships among:
 - public and independent higher education institutions as noted in eligibility category #1;
 - public and private schools or districts;
 - businesses; and
 - community organizations.

Criteria for the 2012 Star Award

1. Programs, projects, and activities must:
 - have been in operation for at least three years;
 - demonstrate successful outcomes in areas of student participation, student success, academic excellence, or research that are attributable to the program, project, or activity;
 - demonstrate an efficient cost/benefit ratio per student; and
 - clearly demonstrate improvement and excellence over time through the use of benchmarks and other comparison data that allow progress to be monitored and evaluated.
2. Groups and organizations must:
 - have been focused on helping to meet the goals of *Closing the Gaps* for at least three years (such as promoting a college-going culture);
 - demonstrate successful outcomes in areas of student participation, student success, academic excellence, or research that are attributable to the efforts of the group or organization; and
 - clearly demonstrate improvement and excellence over time through the use of benchmarks and other comparison data that allow progress to be monitored and evaluated.
3. Partnerships must:
 - have been in existence for at least three years;
 - demonstrate successful outcomes in areas of student participation, student success, academic excellence, or research that are attributable to the partnership;
 - demonstrate an efficient cost/benefit ratio per student; and
 - clearly demonstrate improvement and excellence over time through the use of benchmarks and other comparison data that allow progress to be monitored and evaluated.

Review Process

Step One – Announcement and Call for Nominations

The 2012 Star Award Program is announced by May 7, 2012. Coordinating Board staff will send the announcement and call for Star Award nominations to the following groups:

- Public and independent institutions of higher education (chancellors and presidents, chief academic officers, instructional officers, institutional research directors, deans of education, workforce deans, technical deans, registrars, reporting officials, continuing education officers, and public relations officers);
- Degree-granting career colleges and schools (presidents and executive officers);
- Local government and business organizations (African-American Chambers of Commerce of Texas, Texas Association of Business, Texas Regional Council of Governments, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas, Texas High School Project, Texas Association of Mexican-American Chambers of Commerce, Texas Municipal League, and Texas City Management Association); and
- Chambers of Commerce of Texas' larger cities.

Step Two – Nominations

To be considered for the 2012 Star Award, completed nominations (including self-nominations) must be received at the Coordinating Board's offices by 5:00 p.m. on June 1, 2012.

Nominations, including at least one letter of recommendation, must be submitted electronically as a pdf file via email to the following address: StarAwards@theccb.state.tx.us.

Step Three – Notifications to Nominees

Coordinating Board staff will notify nominees that they have been nominated for a Star Award and that a formal application must be received by the Coordinating Board in order for the nominee to be considered for a Star Award.

Step Four – Applications for Star Award

A formal application form must be completed for (or by) each nominee for the Star Award. To be considered for the 2012 Star Award, completed applications must be received at the Coordinating Board's offices by 5:00 p.m. on July 6, 2012. Applications must be submitted electronically as a pdf file via email to the following address: StarAwards@theccb.state.tx.us.

Step Five – Internal Staff Review Panel Reviews All Applications

A Coordinating Board Internal Staff Review Panel will review all applications to determine if the requested information is complete and adheres to application requirements. The Internal Staff Review Panel will forward a list of recommended finalists to the Commissioner of Higher Education on the basis of criteria established for the 2012 Star Award. The Commissioner will recommend finalists to the Chair of the Coordinating Board. The Commissioner and Chair of the Coordinating Board will make actual finalist determinations.

Step Six – External Committee Reviews All Finalists' Applications

An External Review Panel, consisting of three Coordinating Board members, three Texas business and community leaders, and three out-of-state higher education experts, will review the applications of all finalists and determine which of these finalists will be honored with the Star Award on the basis of criteria established for the 2012 Star Award.

Step Seven – Notification to Finalists

Coordinating Board staff will notify finalists by early September and invite them to attend a special ceremony during which Star Award winners will be announced and honored.

Step Eight – Awards Presentation

The 2012 Star Awards will be presented on October 4, 2012, at the Coordinating Board's annual Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference/State of Higher Education Luncheon.

Timeline for the 2012 Texas Higher Education Star Awards	
Dates in 2012	What Occurs
May 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application forms and supporting materials are posted to the Coordinating Board's website
May 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Announcement of the 2012 Star Award Program• Call for Star Award nominations
June 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nomination deadline
June 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nominees notified
July 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application deadline
July 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal Staff Review Panel Planning Meeting
July 11 – July 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal Staff Review Panel reviews all applications
July 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal Staff Review Panel ballots due
July 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal Staff Review Panel Meeting
July 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal Staff Review Panel recommends finalists to the Commissioner of Higher Education
July 30 – August 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Commissioner recommends finalists to the Chair of the Coordinating Board; actual finalists are determined
August 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalists' applications are sent to the members of the External Review Committee
August 10 - 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External Review Committee reviews all finalists' applications
August 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External Review Committee ballots due
August 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External Review Committee holds telephone conference
September 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalists are notified and invited to attend the State of Higher Education Luncheon
October 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2012 Star Awards presented at Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference/State of Higher Education Luncheon