Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board announces eight Star Award finalists

Sept. 15, 2014 – Austin, Texas – The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board announced today the names of the eight finalists for its 2014 Star Awards for exceptional contributions toward meeting one or more of the goals of the Texas higher education plan, Closing the Gaps by 2015. Star Award winners will be revealed on Nov. 21 during the annual State of Higher Education luncheon. The luncheon and Star Awards ceremony will be held in conjunction with the 2014 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference entitled Planning Educationally for a Competitive Global Economy.

The Coordinating Board received 33 nominations and 28 applications for this year’s Star Award program.

This year’s finalists are:

· Lee College and Goose Creek CISD – Gulf Coast Partners Achieving Student Success

· Odessa College – Drop Rate Improvement Program (DRIP)

· San Antonio College and San Antonio Independent School District – San Antonio College GED to College Transition

· Texas A&M University and Blinn College – Texas A&M – Blinn TEAM Program

· Texas A&M University-Commerce – Office of Hispanic Outreach and Student Programs

· Texas A&M International University – First Year Experience Program

· University of Houston-Downtown and Project GRAD – UHD & Project GRAD Partnership

· The University of Texas at El Paso – Developmental Math Program

“These finalists represent the state’s most effective efforts for closing the education gaps that challenge our state,” said
Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund A. Paredes. “The Coordinating Board is proud to recognize the people and the institutions that develop and implement these programs, as well as the organizations and others who support them. We look forward to announcing the winners in November.”

The Star Award was established in 2001. Representatives of institutions, organizations and groups from all over Texas have been recognized for their efforts to develop and implement the state's most successful programs, projects, activities and partnerships. These efforts are helping Texas close the gaps in student participation and success in higher education, excellence in programs and services, and research development and expansion.

The Coordinating Board’s annual Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference, scheduled Nov. 20-21 in Austin, is designed to bring together regents, trustees, chancellors, presidents, and other higher education leaders to share information on topics of interest, such as board governance, accountability, accelerating progress in meeting the goals of Closing the Gaps by 2015, and increasing the affordability of higher education for both students and the state.

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**THECB Mission Statement**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s mission is to work with the legislature, governor, governing boards, higher education institutions, and other entities to help Texas meet the goals of the state’s higher education plan, Closing the Gaps by 2015, and thereby provide the people of Texas the widest access to higher education of the highest quality in the most efficient manner.

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