

**2013
Texas Higher Education
Star Awards**



**Texas Higher Education
Coordinating Board**

November 22, 2013

13th Annual Texas Higher Education Star Awards

Presented by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

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.theccb.state.tx.us.)

Criteria for the 2013 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.

Each year, the Coordinating Board receives applications submitted from throughout Texas. After an initial review by a Coordinating Board staff committee, a select group of applicants are named finalists.

A nine-member Texas Higher Education Star Award Selection Committee includes three members of the Coordinating Board, three Texas business and community leaders, and three out-of-state education experts. Winners are chosen from this review committee's highest rankings.

Texas Higher Education 2013 Star Award Selection Committee

Coordinating Board Members

- **Durga D. Agrawal, Ph.D.**, Member, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- **Janelle Shepard**, Member, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- **David D. Teuscher, M.D.**, Member, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Texas Business and Community Leaders

- **Laurie Bricker**, Vice President, Municipal Securities Group, Jefferies & Company, Inc., Houston, Texas
- **Molly Beth Malcolm, Ed.D.**, Special Assistant to the President, Austin Community College District, Austin, Texas
- **Michael Paris**, Vice President–Workforce Development, Wichita Falls Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Wichita Falls, Texas

Out-of-State Higher Education Experts

- **Dale Campbell, Ph.D.**, Professor, Educational Administration and Policy University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
- **Marshall A. Hill, Ph.D.**, Executive Director Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, Lincoln, Nebraska
- **Christopher J. Rasmussen, Ph.D.**, Vice President for Research & Policy Analysis, Midwestern Higher Education Compact

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Recipients



Brookhaven College

Brookhaven College Counseling Center SkillsShops

Lamar University

Students Advancing Through Involvement in Research Student Talent
Expansion Program (STAIRSTEP)

Temple College

Temple College – Texas Bioscience Institute



2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

Brookhaven College Counseling Center SkillsShops

Brookhaven College

In 2009, counselors in the Brookhaven College Counseling Center recognized a need to help students attend to their learning with greater diligence, so the counseling team began meeting and discussing ways they could contribute to students' skill and identity development within a single, core premise: Students who are the most successful in college are those students who attend class regularly, manage their time well, set goals, take notes, practice good study habits, think critically, remain motivated, have healthy relationships, communicate well, and manage their emotions. The counselors created a faculty survey to help identify the gaps identified in the classroom. Faculty almost unanimously wanted counselors to help students develop competence in motivational strategies, critical thinking skills, note-taking strategies, study skills, and test-taking strategies.

The Brookhaven College Counseling Center counselors created the SkillsShops Program, incorporating all the aforementioned topics into 13 SkillsShops offered in one-hour sessions during the fall 2009 semester. Only 96 students attended during the fall 2009 semester and 106 students attended during the spring 2010 semester. Counselors reached out again to faculty colleagues who began actively promoting the SkillsShops in their classes, online, and through email. Faculty involvement significantly increased attendance, and during the fall 2010 semester, SkillsShop attendance jumped to 228 students.

The increase in student participation continues, leading to a record number of attendees (339) during the spring 2013 semester. Statistics show that when compared to Brookhaven College Students overall, students who attended the SkillsShops Program completed their classes at a substantially higher rate. In 2010, students who attended the SkillsShops Program completed their classes at a rate that was 11 percent higher than those who did not (68 percent versus 79 percent); in 2011, it was 16 percent higher (66 percent versus 83 percent); and in 2012, it was 14 percent higher (68 percent versus 82 percent).

For additional information, please contact: Beverly Neu Menassa, Assistant Dean, Student Support Services, at bnmenassa@dccc.edu or (972) 860-4339.

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

Students Advancing Through Involvement in Research Student Talent Expansion Program (STAIRSTEP)

Lamar University

Lamar University's Students Advancing through Involvement in Research Student Talent Expansion Program (STAIRSTEP) is designed to increase the number of students receiving bachelor's degrees in five science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines: Chemistry, Computer Science, Geosciences, Mathematics, and Physics. The project is funded by a five-year, \$1 million grant from the National Science Foundation that started January 1, 2009. The project has three goals: to recruit students into these disciplines, retain them, and transition them upon graduation to careers or advanced study in STEM. STAIRSTEP targets talented at-risk students who are low income, first generation, and/or underrepresented in STEM, including females, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Alaskan Natives. Small teams of undergraduates are paid a competitive stipend to participate in research and outreach under the direction of a faculty mentor in their discipline. STAIRSTEP's goal is to retain at least 70 percent of its undergraduate participants in their STEM major.

As of spring 2013, 86 undergraduates have participated in the STAIRSTEP program. Over 89 percent of the participants have been retained in their STEM major. A formal assessment shows that STAIRSTEP helps prepare students for a successful transition to their STEM fields. The goal is to transition at least 80 percent of graduates within six months of graduation. Eight of the 33 STAIRSTEP students who have graduated thus far received their degrees in May of 2013. Of the 25 STAIRSTEP students who graduated six or more months ago, 88 percent have successfully transitioned within that time frame. Ten of the 25 are pursuing graduate study in STEM. Thirteen of the 25 are working in STEM fields for Texas employers. Some are pursuing graduate study while working. STAIRSTEP is also helping to increase the number of well-prepared math and science teachers. Some of the graduates are teaching physics, math, geology, and science in high schools.

For additional information, please contact: Peggy Doerschuk, University Professor of Computer Science and Director of STAIRSTEP, at peggy.doerschuk@lamar.edu or (404) 880-8782.

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

Improving Accounting Student Success through Caring Behaviors

Richland College

Principles of Accounting I (ACCT 2301) is a gatekeeper course with high enrollment and historically low student success. For the five academic years ending 2008-2009, the average overall success rate (percent of students completing the course with a grade of A, B, or C) was 55.6 percent. Richland's challenge was to create the conditions for Closing the Gaps in student success in ACCT 2301.

During fall 2009, Richland began its Achieving the Dream initiative to address that pressing challenge. With a greater understanding of under-resourced students, faculty began to identify best practices for improving the learning environment and student success. In March 2010, Richland faculty and staff participated in professional development on Caring Behaviors with Dr. Barbara Coan, then Dean of Academic Affairs, Collin College. The basic premise was that faculty with high course retention and high student success rates exhibit similar Caring Behaviors and characteristics. The 13 Caring Behaviors include: Shows Empathy, Helpful, Role Model, Relaxed/Open-Minded, Competent, Motivating, Shows Sensitivity, Flexible, Encourages Students, Reinforcing, Available Outside of Class, Genuineness, and Respectful. Students' perceptions of their professors' Caring Behaviors were measured using surveys with a five-point Likert scale for each behavior. Survey results were used to identify faculty strengths and opportunities for improvement. After using this approach for three years, the average overall student success rate in ACCT 2301 increased to 65.3 percent compared to 56 percent for the six years prior to implementation.

For additional information, please contact: Dwight Riley, Associate Dean, at (972) 761-6726 or driley@dcccd.edu.

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

ELITE (Establishing Leadership In and Through Education)

Sam Houston State University

Sam Houston State University has developed a model of academic support and leadership development that appears to enhance the performance and retention of minority men. This program began in 2010 and is called ELITE, Establishing Leadership In and Through Education.

The program content includes: (1) weekly small-group workshops that allow close relationships to form and that cover topics such as study skills, classroom/business etiquette, money management, health and personal issues, and other relevant topics; (2) group seminars featuring guest speakers (also minority professionals) who educate students on a different topic each month (e.g., money management, professionalism, relationship management, health issues, etc.); (3) regular service projects; and (4) submission of mid-semester grade check forms to aid in providing additional enrichment/remediation activities. At the end of each semester, the data are collected and compared to that of all incoming freshmen. At the end of the first year (2010), the ELITE group had a retention rate that was higher than that of the comparison groups, and had a statistically significant higher mean GPA than the control group (2.76 compared to 2.45). In spring 2012, there were 14 members who earned GPAs over 3.0, 18 who earned GPAs between 2.0-2.9, and 3 whose GPAs were below 2.0. ELITE's GPA average was 2.8 as compared to first-time freshmen (2.42) and a matched control group (2.22). The retention rate for ELITE for the third year was 96.97 percent as contrasted to first-time male freshmen at 88.16 percent and the matched control group of 87.72 percent.

For additional information, please contact: Dr. William Fleming, Executive Director of Student Advising and Mentoring, at (936) 294-4450 or fleming@shsu.edu.

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

Student Engagement Grant Program

St. Philip's College

The Student Engagement Grant (SEG) Program at St. Philip's College (SPC) is a scholarship program designed to assist students financially and academically by granting scholarships for participation in special projects at the college or in the community while maintaining academic standards. The SEG Program focuses upon student success; the specific focus is upon student retention and supporting students in science, technology, engineering, and math fields. The SEG Program accomplishes this by inviting faculty, staff, and administrators from across the college to create SEG Projects that engage students in extracurricular and co-curricular activities. The SEG Projects create opportunities for students to become involved with projects, personnel, and other students who share common interests. SEG students develop mentor-mentee relationships with project directors and have the opportunity to work collaboratively with other students as peers and student leaders.

The SEG Program was started in 2008 - 2009 and has a history of five years of successful implementation. The Program has grown from 5 Projects with 25 students in 2008 - 2009 to 21 projects and 66 students in 2012 - 2013. Since the beginning of the program in 2008 - 2009, 160 full-time equivalent students have been served. St. Philip's College Institutional Research has gathered retention data for SEG students from the first year of implementation, 2008 - 2009. Each year the data have shown that the retention rate of SEG students exceeded the retention rate of the general population of St. Philip's College students. Specifically, fall-to-fall semester retention of SEG students compared to all other St. Philip's College students were as follows: 2009/2010: 80.4 percent SEG retained versus 44.7 percent SPC retained; 2010/2011: 67.9 percent SEG retained versus 42.2 percent SPC retained; and 2011/2012: 88.9 percent SEG retained versus 41.5 percent SPC retained. These substantially different retention rates are similar when broken out by race/ethnicity.

For additional information, please contact: Mary A. Kunz, Professor and Department Chair, Department of Tourism, Hospitality, and Culinary Arts, at (210) 486-2315 or mkunz@alamo.edu.

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

Academic Recovery Program

Tarrant County College, Northwest Campus

Tarrant County College Northwest Campus has developed a number of strategies, interventions, and programs designed to support and increase student success and graduation rates at the community college level. A spotlight program, yielding positive results in student retention, is the Academic Recovery Program which was implemented in 2007. The Academic Recovery Program allows academically at-risk students to experience academic success, many for the first time. It is the result of a collaborative effort between the Vice Presidents of Teaching and Learning, the Vice President of Student Development Services, and the Advising and Counseling Department. The goal of the program is to close the success gap by providing clear guidelines and support for at-risk suspended students that enables them to waive the required suspension period and remain in school. Each student who successfully achieves a 2.0 semester GPA in their first semester in the program is considered a success. Achieving a 2.0 semester GPA means the student will be able to continue their education without interruption, increasing retention and the likelihood of achieving students' academic goals.

The Academic Recovery Program is accomplished with existing staff and does not require any additional funds from the college budget or from grants. Faculty mentors volunteer for the program and meet with their students during their regular office hours. Based on salaries and the time spent with each student, the estimated cost for the Academic Recovery Program is \$28.00 per student. Of the 823 students who have completed the program since its inception in 2007, 62 percent have achieved a semester GPA of 2.0 or better.

For additional information, please contact: C. Ricks Edmondson, Director of Counseling, at (817) 515-7726 or charles.edmondson@tccd.edu.

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

Temple College – Texas Bioscience Institute

Temple College

The Temple College (TC) Texas Bioscience Institute (TBI) is an innovative program model sustained by Temple College that promotes scholarship and student success for undergraduates majoring in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Housed in the heart of the Scott & White medical research campus in Temple, the Temple College-TBI program is increasing STEM graduation rates through targeted recruitment of four distinct audiences.

The first audience is high school juniors and seniors studying in residence at The Texas Bioscience Institute's (TBI) "Middle College" (a unit of Temple College-TBI). Students enroll in a STEM intensive college curriculum that also satisfies high school graduation requirements. Students are counseled and encouraged to enroll in sufficient transferable STEM courses such that they receive a STEM-intensive associate degree along with their high school diploma. Upon graduation, they are encouraged to pursue a STEM baccalaureate degree.

The second and third targeted audiences are traditional community college students enrolled at the TBI in the associate of applied science degree program in Biotechnology and the Apprenticeship for Laboratory Animal Technicians certificate program. In both the associate of applied science and certificate programs, students are encouraged to enroll in additional STEM courses that are transferable to STEM baccalaureate of science programs.

The fourth targeted audience is recent and soon-to-be veterans from the armed services. Students participating in the Temple College-TBI program model are being partially supported by "The Central Texas 2-STEP" project funded by a \$1.2 million STEP grant ("Science Talent Enhancement Program") from the National Science Foundation. This grant focuses on supporting a number of measures ("best practices") shown to increase student interest and persistence in STEM fields. Undergraduate research opportunities, seminars with practicing STEM professionals, meaningful career counseling, and peer-to-peer tutoring in STEM "gateway" courses are all project components designed to retain students and to prepare them for careers in STEM related fields.

The TBI has made a significant impact on increasing numbers of traditionally first generation college students, underrepresented minorities, and women pursuing associate degrees in STEM-related undergraduate studies and also transitioning them into baccalaureate programs at major universities and colleges. The Texas Bioscience Institute-Middle College currently has served over 714 full-time equivalent students (2006-2013). One hundred and eleven "Middle College" students were enrolled at The Texas Bioscience Institute during the 2012-2013 year. Data reflect that 84 percent (42 of 50) of the "2nd year senior Middle College" students received a STEM-intensive associate degree from Temple College in May 2013, while simultaneously fulfilling all of the degree requirements to receive their high school diplomas. During the three preceding years of TBI Middle College activities (2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012), 88 of the 120 (73.3 percent) "2nd year senior Middle College" students earned a STEM-intensive associate degree. In the three years prior to the presence of the NSF STEP grant's activities, only 30 of the 102 (29.4 percent) "2nd year senior Middle College students" opted to acquire enough additional elective credits to earn a STEM-intensive associate degree.

For additional information, please contact: Daniel L. Spencer, Associate Vice President for Academic Outreach and Extended Programs, at (254) 298-8619 or daniel.spencer@templejc.edu.

2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists

Texas Woman's University ATPE/Barnes & Noble Reading Program

Texas Woman's University Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)/
Barnes & Noble Partnerships

The Texas Woman's University (TWU) Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)/Barnes & Noble Reading Program is an investment in the participation and success of students enrolled in EC-12 and higher education throughout TWU's local service area. In the fall of 2009, teacher candidate students approached the faculty sponsors of their ATPE student organization to inquire about whether an opportunity to work with students in the community could be organized. Contacts were made with the business community, and the resulting partnership was a summer reading program for students in early childhood through Grade 12 at the Denton Barnes & Noble Bookstore, with its first program on June 2, 2010. The initial program structure delivered summer-only sessions to area students at the local Barnes & Noble; sessions were organized around a theme, a selected book, and specific literacy support activities. In fall 2010, the TWU ATPE/Barnes & Noble Summer Reading Program changed to a year-round format by adding a monthly reading session during the school year. The program was renamed the TWU ATPE/Barnes & Noble Reading Program to reflect the year-long calendar. This schedule continues today with monthly sessions August through May and weekly sessions during June and July. The TWU ATPE/Barnes & Noble Reading Program is guided by two primary goals: 1) increase the number of opportunities for TWU teacher candidates to work with EC-12 students in a community setting; and 2) increase the number of opportunities for EC-12 students to develop literacy skills in a comfortable, interactive environment.

The program has increased participation of minority teacher candidates to be more reflective of the ethnicity of the State of Texas. Children and parents within the community have access to collegiate students and faculty to discuss college and college options. Initial attendance information indicates that teacher candidates participating in the program at least 80 percent of the time in one semester graduate in a timely manner. Eighteen of the 20 identified high participation candidates completed a bachelor's degree, resulting in a 90 percent graduation rate for this identified group. This outcome is contrasted with the Texas university 6-year undergraduate graduation rate of 56 percent. Further research to examine any relationship between teacher candidates' participation rate and success in university degree completion is planned for the 2013-2014 academic year.

For additional information, please contact: Dr. Rebecca Fredrickson, Assistant Professor, at (940) 898-2238 or rfredrickson@twu.edu; or Dr. Sarah McMahan, Assistant Professor, at (940) 898-2828 or smcmahan@twu.edu.

Texas Higher Education Star Awards Past Recipients

2012

Alamo Colleges

Alamo Area Academies

South Texas College

Dual Enrollment Medical Science Academy

The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Academic Partnerships

UT Arlington-Academic Partnerships BSN Completion Program

West Texas A&M University

Gateway Project

2011

In-House Online Tutoring

Houston Community College System

IDEA Public Schools

IDEA Public Schools

Students Together, Involving, Networking, and Guiding (STING)

The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College

Gateways to Excellence in Math and Science (GEMS)

The University of Texas at Dallas

UTMB Integrated Medical Curriculum

The University of Texas Medical Branch

Uplift Education

Uplift Education

2010

Learning Frameworks

Brazosport College

College of Nursing Undergraduate Nursing Weekend Program

Texas Woman's University T. Boone Pickens Institute
of Health Sciences, Dallas Center

Joint Admission Medical Program (JAMP)

Created by Senate Bill 940 of the 77th Texas Legislature

Modeling Excellence in Collaborative Teacher Education

University of Houston Downtown
Lone Star College-Kingwood
Lone Star College-CyFair

2009

Mathematics Outreach Center

Amarillo College

College, Career & Technology Academy

South Texas College/Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District

Partnership

Texas A&M University-Commerce and Mesquite Independent School District

Partnering for Teachers

Texas Woman's University and Dallas Independent School District

Late Intervention Program

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Providing Access to Success: Emerald Eagle Scholars Program

University of North Texas

2008

Online Teacher Preparation Program for Paraprofessionals

Stephen F. Austin State University

UTEP-EPCC Transfer Scholarship Program

The University of Texas at El Paso

Second Degree Accelerated BSN Program

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

Collegiate Challenge Program

Spring Branch Independent School District

University-wide Enrollment Management

University of North Texas

College of Education Partnership

South Plains College/Texas Tech University

Student Employment Initiative

The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College

2007

LULAC Parent/Child Scholarship Program

Alamo Community College District-San Antonio College

Developmental Education Initiative Title V Project

El Paso Community College

UT TeleCampus

The University of Texas System

Student Money Management Center

University of North Texas

2006

College Connection Program

Austin Community College

Academic Assistance and Resource Center

Stephen F. Austin State University

SureStart Program

Tarrant County College District

Chemistry Peer Leader Program

The University of Texas at El Paso

YES College Preparatory Schools

YES College Preparatory Schools

2005

Graduates and Completers Projects

Houston Community College System

Summer Bridge Program

North Harris Montgomery Community College District-North Harris College

Navarro College Partnership

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS)

University of Houston

Model Institutions for Excellence Initiative

University of Texas at El Paso

Gulf Coast Consortia/Keck Center

University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston

2004

Community Link

Amarillo College

College Assistance Migrant Program

St. Edward's University

College of Science & Technology Scholars Academy at UH-D

University of Houston-Downtown

Law School Preparation Institute

The University of Texas at El Paso

2003

Community Education Centers

Alamo Community College District

Strategies for Success

Alamo Community College District – San Antonio College

Rising Star Program

Dallas County Community College District

The Academy for Collegiate Excellence and Student Success

Prairie View A&M University

Pathways to Success in Science

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

South Plains Nursing Education Community Coalition

Texas Tech Health Sciences Center, South Plains College, Lubbock Christian University, and Covenant School of Nursing, in partnership with University Medical Center, Covenant Health System, WorkSource of the South Plains, and American State Bank

Entering Student Program

The University of Texas at El Paso

Increasing the Success of the Most Economically Disadvantaged Students

West Texas A&M University

2002

Premedical Honors College

Baylor College of Medicine

The Monitored Probation Early Intervention Program

Lamar University

HomeGrown Teacher Education Program

San Jacinto College-North Campus

Nursing Success Program

Texas Woman's University

The Mother-Daughter Program

The University of Texas at El Paso

Texas Prefreshman Engineering Program

The University of Texas at San Antonio

University Scholars

The University of Texas-Pan American

2001

First-Year Learning Communities Program

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Virtual College of Texas

Texas Association of Community Colleges

Mathworks Summer Program

Texas State University-San Marcos

The University Writing Center

Texas Tech University

Jesse H. Jones Academic Institute

University of Houston-Downtown