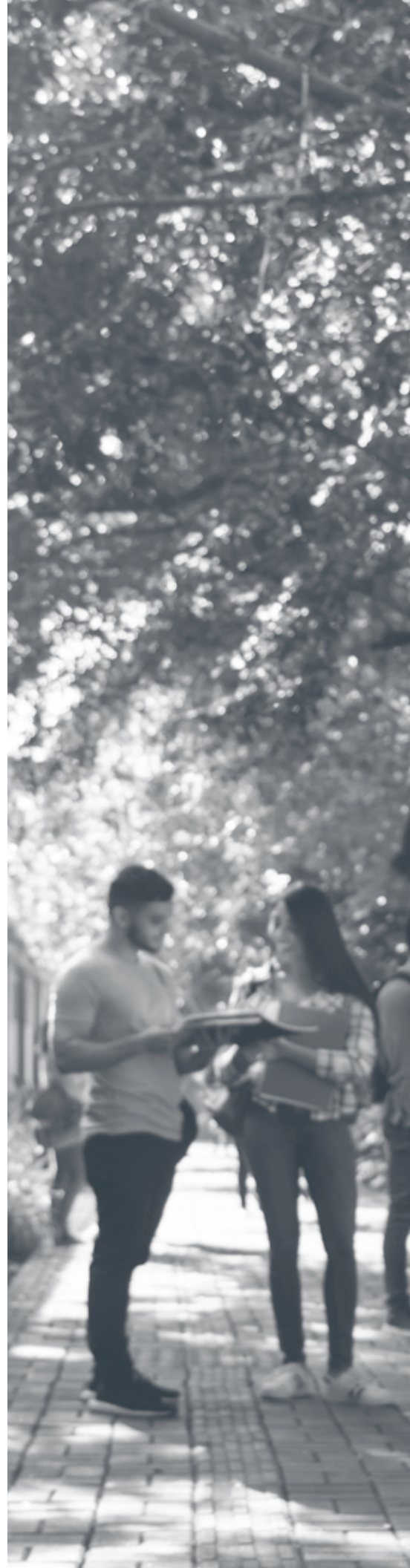


2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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Founded by Trellis Company (formerly TG), Trellis Foundation is a grantmaking public charitable organization built on a 40-year heritage of supporting students and families in Texas who are pursuing their educational and career dreams. We focus on improving attainment for low- to moderate-income students who may not otherwise have an opportunity to earn a postsecondary credential or degree.

From 2006 to 2016, Trellis Company committed more than \$400 million to help nonprofit organizations and higher education institutions improve the rates of postsecondary completion. The Trellis Foundation's priorities are guided by the experience and expertise of the company's prior funding efforts as well as the institutional knowledge of the organization's work in student debt and decision-making.

Trellis Foundation supports the innovation and growth of ideas and strategies that positively influence postsecondary attainment and affordability.

Our values include...





Transformative Power of Education

Education, particularly some form of postsecondary credential or degree, remains the most reliable method of increasing social and economic mobility. Postsecondary education serves both the private and public good.



Equity

All students deserve equal educational opportunities. That means that some students need, and should receive, additional benefits, support, and/or resources.



Integrity

Trellis Foundation's grantmaking processes, priorities, and policies are transparent and easy to understand.

Data-Informed Decisions

In its grantmaking and within its administration, Trellis Foundation will rely on quantifiable information to every extent possible.

Letter from the Board Chair

Richard Rhodes, Ph.D.

Just over two years ago, we launched the Trellis Foundation to support efforts and organizations that help students complete postsecondary credentials and degrees. The timing could not have been better.

In 2015, for example, the state adopted the 60x30 TX plan for higher education. Additionally, Governor Greg Abbott established the Tri-Agency initiative in 2016, bringing together the Texas Education Agency, Texas Workforce Commission, and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to incentivize collaboration across workforce and education programs.

So when the Foundation began making grants in 2017, there was a growing acknowledgement that we all serve the same students, and we all bear the responsibility to ensure their success through the pipeline. Our collective prosperity and the vibrancy of our students' lives depend on collective effort and shared goals.

To that end, the Foundation has prioritized support for statewide impact and institutional change. Likewise, we have valued opportunities to collaborate with other funding partners, understanding that our learning and impact are amplified when we work with those who share a similar vision for Texas.

It has been a rewarding first two years for Trellis Foundation, and we look forward to continued engagement with our grantees, colleagues and stakeholders to create an even brighter future – for our students, our communities and our state.



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Rhodes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial 'R'.

Richard Rhodes, Ph.D.
Chairman, Trellis Foundation Board
of Directors

Letter from the Executive Director

Kristin J. Boyer

Thank you –

- To the 1.5 million students determined to earn a credential or degree in Texas and to contribute to the vibrancy of their communities and our state. Your determination inspires Trellis Foundation to work harder and more effectively to help ensure your success.
- To the educational institutions willing to transform their policies, practices, and cultures to improve degree completion and affordability for students. We see the difficult decisions as well as the progress you are making, and we are proud to share this mission with you.
- To the nonprofits, network organizations, supporting agencies, and technical support providers aligning efforts that help students navigate the pathways to and through higher education. Your understanding of the reality of students' lives informs our priorities and keeps our focus on the need to eradicate barriers to success that increasingly include hunger, homelessness, childcare, transportation, and other basic needs.
- To the foundation and funder colleagues who share this important mission with us. Your generosity and willingness to share your time, insights, and resources have helped us to connect with new partners and to expand the impact of the most promising educational attainment work in the state.

And especially, we want to thank Trellis Company and the Trellis Company Board of Directors, whose initial vision for the future of Texas clearly identified a need to invest in the future for students and families. Trellis Foundation is proud to reflect and build on a legacy of supporting access, affordability, and attainment in higher education.



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristin J. Boyer'.

Kristin J. Boyer
Executive Director, Trellis Foundation

2018 Summary of Grant Commitments

ORGANIZATION/PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT	CATEGORY
Amarillo College <i>No Excuses 2020: Building an ARC</i> This project aims to understand the academic impact of connecting underserved and underprepared students with services that help them overcome the poverty barriers hindering success and attainment.	\$209,865	Direct Impact
Communities Foundation of Texas <i>Bridge to College and Career Success Implementation Phase</i> In collaboration with Houston Community College and other local non-profits, this project serves young adults who have "stopped-out" of college to re-engage them in their studies.	\$250,000	Strategic Impact
Con Mi MADRE...Mothers and Daughters Raising Expectations <i>Expansion of Con Mi MADRE Education and Support Services</i> For program expansion of college persistence supports to Fort Worth and El Paso.	\$49,966	General Operating Support
Education Equals Economics Alliance <i>"College Enrollment Challenge" Pilot for the Greater Austin My Brother's Keeper Initiative</i> A planning grant to design coaching and institutional capacity change support to increase college enrollment and completion rates for young men of color.	\$25,000	Direct Impact
Graduate Network <i>Bridging the Talent Gap</i> The project will enhance capacity in several communities in Texas to understand and respond to the needs of small and mid-sized local employers for better educated employees. Current communities are Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Austin, Irving, Ft. Worth, and Longview.	\$350,000	Strategic Impact
Temple University <i>Evaluation of Amarillo College's Advocacy & Resource Center</i> To conduct a formal evaluation of Amarillo College's Advocacy and Resource Center.	\$100,000	Research
Texas Community College Education Initiative <i>Texas Pathways: 5-Year Implementation</i> Texas Pathways is an integrated, system-wide approach to student success based on intentionally designed, clear, coherent and structured educational experiences at community colleges statewide.	\$1,000,000	Strategic Impact
Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium <i>Guided Pathways Policy Work Group 2018-19</i> TEGAC is a statewide consortium of private, corporate, and community foundations working together to promote, protect, and improve public education in Texas by empowering Texas philanthropy to invest and engage in effective public policy and advocacy.	\$25,000	Strategic Impact
University of Texas at Austin - Center for Community College Student Engagement <i>The Working Learner</i> Through this project, the Center for Community College Student Engagement will investigate the connections between students' working and educational lives and examine the impact working has on student engagement.	\$300,034	Research

2019 Summary of Grant Commitments

ORGANIZATION/PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT	CATEGORY
Communities Foundation of Texas <i>General Operating Support, Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium</i> <p>TEGAC is a statewide consortium of private, corporate, and community foundations working together to promote, protect, and improve public education in Texas by empowering Texas philanthropy to invest and engage in effective public policy and advocacy.</p>	\$25,000	General Operating Support
EduGuide <i>Texas Persistence Partnership: Rigorous Evaluative Capacity Building</i> <p>To conduct a robust evaluation of the program as well as establish baseline data and data infrastructure for continued tracking of outcomes and monitoring fidelity to the model as the program expands.</p>	\$250,000	Organizational Impact
Genesys Works <i>Evaluating Completion Barriers for College Stop-outs</i> <p>The project will examine why the program's Houston alumni are no longer enrolled and what supports could be put in place to re-engage them. This project is for data gathering and analysis, along with recommendations for program pieces to pilot.</p>	\$150,000	Organizational Impact
Graduate Network <i>Bridging the Talent Gap</i> <p>The project will build or enhance capacity in six communities in Texas to understand and respond to the needs of small and mid-sized local employers for better educated employees.</p>	\$101,135	Strategic Impact
Lee College District <i>Lee College Huntsville Center Scholars</i> <p>Provide two years of tuition and fees funding for associate's degrees for a cohort of 10 students currently incarcerated at the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville.</p>	\$50,000	Direct Impact
Paso Del Norte Community Foundation <i>El Paso Victims Relief Fund, Educational Support and Attainment Sub-Fund</i> <p>This grant supports the work of the Foundation and the community's response to the tragic shooting in 2019.</p>	\$25,000	Direct Impact
Project ARRIBA <i>Project ARRIBA</i> <p>Project ARRIBA promotes a working partnership between community-based organizations, training institutions, and corporate partners to assist economically disadvantaged individuals in gaining the education and job skills needed for demand occupations in El Paso, Texas.</p>	\$100,000	General Operating Support
Project MALES/Texas Education Consortium for Male Students of Color <i>Texas Education Consortium for Male Students of Color</i> <p>To provide ongoing support for the work of Project MALES and the Consortium to improve postsecondary outcomes for male students of color throughout Texas. Project MALES (Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success) is a multi-faceted research and mentoring initiative.</p>	\$100,000	General Operating Support
Roscoe Collegiate ISD <i>The 80% Solution: Building the Pathway to Bachelor's Degrees for Non-Traditional Students in West Texas</i> <p>To develop a pathway for graduates of RCISD and its partner districts (Hamlin and Throckmorton ISDs) who are low-income, first-generation college students to earn a bachelor's degree in their communities.</p>	\$300,000	Direct Impact
Temple University <i>#RealCollege Sponsorship</i> <p>To build community among postsecondary professionals working to meet college students' basic needs while they study—including food and housing solutions.</p>	\$25,000	Organizational Impact
Texas Tribune <i>Public Events and Related Coverage of Postsecondary Issues in Texas</i> <p>To support the Tribune's coverage of higher education issues in Texas, including support for the Tribune's statewide public events on higher education/workforce development and a sponsorship of the higher education panels at The Texas Tribune Festival.</p>	\$100,000	Strategic Impact
University of Texas at Austin - Charles A. Dana Center <i>Texas Transfer Alliance: Improving Transfer and Applicability</i> <p>The Alliance is spearheading Texas' portion of a three-state project to codevelop a three-year plan for improving transfer pathways regionally from community colleges to universities.</p>	\$400,000	Strategic Impact

Grant Highlights

As the Foundation constructs a long-term portfolio of grants, we are crafting processes in grantmaking to align with our mission and best practices in the field. Through the historic giving of TG/Trellis Company, we have built ongoing relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs) across the country. Our giving was focused primarily on direct service grants with CBOs and colleges and universities. Over the years we have shifted to include a focus on partnerships among organizations and on policy and system-change levers. This section highlights three grantee partners exemplifying the Foundation's current array of grant structures and partners.







Project ARRIBA

This grant to Project ARRIBA serves as an example of the Foundation's growing portfolio of general operating grants. We find that general operating funds, when coupled with specific learning goals for reports, allow us to continue actively learning and growing with our partners, while providing for more flexibility and less administrative burden in our processes.

Project ARRIBA is a workforce and economic development initiative founded two decades ago to promote long-term economic prosperity and quality of life in El Paso, Texas. Their mission is to assist economically disadvantaged individuals in gaining the education and job skills needed for in-demand occupations that pay a family-sustaining, living wage in El Paso.

Project ARRIBA performs several outreach and recruitment efforts to an underserved population interested in pursuing training for long-term career progression. Outreach and recruitment are aimed at community agencies, housing complexes, local churches, and job fairs. Project ARRIBA also uses intensive case management and wrap-around support services to increase academic retention and graduation rates for at-risk students in training. At the completion of training, participants have fulfilled the requirements for a bachelor's degree, associate's degree, or licensed certification in a high-demand occupation and are job placed.

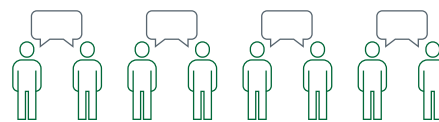
So far, Project ARRIBA has connected 1,439 individuals seeking a higher education with local employers who need a skilled workforce and training providers who need help retaining at-risk students. Job-placed graduates no longer depend on government subsidies and are earning over \$49,000/year. While the individual success stories are tremendous, the economic impact the program has had in their region, based on the class of 2018, is equally notable. Program graduates will add \$710 million in income to El Paso's economy and are estimated to pay an additional \$171.31 million in taxes over the remainder of their work years due to their higher earning potential.



PROGRAM GRADUATES WILL ADD
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PROJECT ARRIBA HAS CONNECTED **1,439 INDIVIDUALS**



SEEKING A HIGHER EDUCATION

WITH LOCAL EMPLOYERS WHO NEED A SKILLED WORKFORCE AND
TRAINING PROVIDERS WHO NEED HELP RETAINING AT-RISK STUDENTS



Participant Profile
Jesus Morales

Jesus Morales became a participant of Project ARRIBA in Fall of 2018. He applied for assistance after being accepted into the Registered Nursing Program at El Paso Community College. Jesus had a medical background as a medical assistant and had a well-paying job outside of El Paso. His goal was to come back home, finish his degree, and be closer to his family.

After starting nursing school, Jesus was forced to quit working to devote his time to his studies. Soon after, his father became ill, and Jesus faced yet another struggle. He was in his first semester of nursing school, trying to make ends meet; he was also taking care of his ill father. His world turned upside down when—right before the end of his first semester—he lost his father. He pushed through the pain and reminded himself that he promised his father he would graduate as an RN.

Jesus is almost done with the third semester of nursing school. It has been tough, but he is proof that it is not impossible. He will graduate in the spring of 2020 with an associate's degree in nursing. He looks forward to the change this journey will bring him and his family and most of all keeping the promise he made to his father.



Executive director Román Ortiz addresses Project ARRIBA staff and participants at a Vision, Initiate & Perseverance (VIP) meeting. VIP meetings provide participants with resources to develop within the workplace.



Project GRAD Houston: Bridge to College and Career Success

This grant represents a growing emphasis at the Foundation on pairing our state-wide expertise and resources with funding colleagues at the national and local level to complement each other's work and maximize our impact and collective learnings.

The Bridge to College and Career Success (BCCS) works to connect Opportunity Youth and young adults in Houston into customized pathways leading to college completion and career entry. Opportunity Youth are youth ages 16-24 who are not currently enrolled in education or formally employed.

Through Trellis Foundation support, Project GRAD and Houston Community College (HCC) joined a cohort of partnerships focused on serving Opportunity Youth. With support from JPMorgan Chase, Educate Texas launched the BCCS with a focus on establishing regional partnerships between community organizations, community colleges, training providers, and employers, seeking partnerships that created customized programs to attract, stabilize, and place OY on a path to postsecondary success and high-demand careers. The three additional partnerships included: Baylor Teen Health Clinic –Baylor Medical School; Capital IDEA – Houston Community College Southeast; and SER Jobs for Progress – Gutier Construction.

In this initiative, Project GRAD is addressing the needs of the stop-out population, alleviating the barriers that prevented them from attaining a postsecondary education, supporting their success, and developing or furthering a working partnership with local postsecondary institutions to capture data that contributes to the design and implementation of improved student support systems. Project GRAD combines a brick-and-mortar college advising center with a mobile center to serve high-need neighborhoods and places advisors at high schools to provide the neutral advising and support resources Houston students need.

GRAD advisors help students craft individual action plans that focus on employment opportunities and financial aid planning, as well as coaching students on their education plans and aspirations. Project GRAD and HCC train their advising staff to provide seamless and personalized support.

Embedded in these practices is prioritizing youth voice to inform the program delivery and ongoing improvements. By refining services with student feedback, Project GRAD and HCC are meeting students where they are.



Project GRAD's impact can already be seen within the community. Retention rate for those actively engaged with the program is 81%. Project GRAD has also served 322 Opportunity Youth with one-time or specialized assistance such as college and financial aid applications. Project GRAD participants have even started referring friends and family on their own to the program. Ultimately, Project GRAD and its partners will address the challenge of preventing disconnection from education through an improved systemic structure.



PROJECT GRAD
HAS ALSO SERVED



322

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH
WITH ONE-TIME OR
SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE
SUCH AS COLLEGE AND
FINANCIAL AID
APPLICATIONS

"This project has enabled both Project GRAD and HCC to provide an effective pathway for opportunity youth to access and succeed in their re-entry to a post-secondary education. Both organizations can optimize resources and leverage one another's assets: HCC is able to provide stop-outs an opportunity to re-engage with their schooling, and Project GRAD is able to advise these individuals in order to ensure their success throughout HCC programming.

In addition, Project GRAD can add value to HCC's design of new systems of student advising and support by providing data from Project GRAD's advising, which will help to develop best practices for student engagement and retention. This ultimately results in a seamless transition from Project GRAD services to Houston Community College and entry into a good career. This sustainable and collaborative model captures students who are most likely to return to school, thus providing a solution to the community college stop-out problem. An enhanced system of support will not only bring individuals back to their education, but it will also strengthen our workforce."

Adriana Estrada Wilson,
Director of Programming and Innovation,
Project GRAD Houston



Photo (left page): Opportunity Youth student, Lucero, in front of the GRADcafé on the Go! mobile unit. Photos (this page; top to bottom): GRAD Community Engagement Manager and Advisor, Ramiro Fonseca, meeting with students at cafécollege Houston. GRAD Advisor, Dania Higuera, advising a student and parent at cafécollege Houston. Opportunity Youth student, Zhane, along with GRAD staff at a Project GRAD event.



Texas Success Center: Texas Pathways 5-Year Implementation

This third project highlights the largest grant we have given—our support to the Texas Guided Pathways work totals \$1 million over five years. We joined multiple national funders in a collaborative project that will total over \$10 million and has the ability to affect every community college student in the state of Texas.

The Texas Pathways Initiative is focused on solving systemic educational problems impeding student success that result in too few Texans prepared for meaningful careers. From the initial concept, this effort was designed to address regional Pathways issues, such as transfer, high school college readiness courses, and dual credit. The Texas Pathways Initiative has already engaged 49 of the 50 Texas community college districts. These colleges serve 99% of the more than 730,000 community college students in the state. The initiative includes funding partners such as Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Greater Texas Foundation, along with Trellis Foundation support.

Texas Pathways is designed to help meet the state's 60x30 goal, where 60% of 25- to 34-year-old residents hold a quality certificate or degree by 2030. The Pathways initiative promotes this goal by building the capacity of community colleges so they can redesign the student experience from high school through the completion of a credential to the attainment of employment or further education.

In order to scale reform at Texas community colleges, Texas Pathways uses research and awareness to increase student success across the state.

Increasing student success through Texas Pathways is guided by four dimensions:

1. Clarify paths to student end goals
2. Help students choose and enter a pathway
3. Help students stay on their pathway
4. Ensure students are learning



TEXAS PATHWAYS
HAS ALREADY ENGAGED

49 OF THE **50**

TEXAS COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICTS



THESE COLLEGES SERVE 99%
OF THE MORE THAN

730,000

COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS
IN THE STATE

"To improve student success, Texas Pathways colleges are rethinking how they teach and support students throughout their entire college experience, including important reforms to students' earliest experiences."

The Texas Pathways model redesigns the ways students access program paths through improved onboarding processes, early advisement, career counseling, and teaching and learning in gateway core courses and introductory programmatic courses that are critical to first semester 'light the fire' experiences.

In practice, Texas Pathways colleges are improving. Between 2013 and 2017, the percent of students earning six or more credits in their first term increased from 54% to 60%. During that same period, the percent of students completing college math, reading, and writing in their first year increased from 17% to 22%."

Cynthia Ferrell, Ph.D.,
Vice President,
Texas Success Center



Participants at a recent meeting for the Texas Pathways Initiative.

Introduction of Staff

Kristin Boyer, Executive Director

Ms. Boyer leads Trellis Foundation's efforts to improve postsecondary outcomes for low- and moderate-income students and families. Prior to her appointment as executive director for the Trellis Foundation, Ms. Boyer directed the philanthropic program and activities for Trellis Company (formerly TG). She currently serves as an Advisory Committee Member for the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, the Co-chair for the Latino Student Success Funders Group, and as a member of the Texas Student Success Council. She also serves on the steering committee for The Postsecondary Access and Attainment Funders Group, and the Austin Opportunity Youth Collaborative under the Workforce Solutions of the Capital Area.

Jenny Achilles, Director of Partnerships & Programs

Ms. Achilles joined Trellis Foundation (then Trellis Company/TG) in 2013 with nearly a decade of higher education service in various capacities, including student affairs and study abroad advising. Ms. Achilles serves on the Central Texas Education Funders Network steering committee and as co-chair for the Grantmakers for Education Data Impact Group. She previously served on the Membership Committee for the National Scholarship Providers Association from 2015-2017. She also leads the board of directors for a nonprofit dance and wellness studio in Austin.

Lakya Lewis, Grants Administrator & Operations Assistant

Ms. Lewis joins Trellis Foundation following her passion to advocate for and serve at-risk populations through education. She began her career as a Youth Specialist for the Department of Family and Protective Services. In 2014, Ms. Lewis made the transition to the nonprofit sector. Her work focused on education retention and recovery for current and former foster youth. Ms. Lewis serves as a committee member for the Texas Youth Permanency Research Council and continues to advocate for at-risk populations through volunteer work.

Alyse Gray Parker, Graduate Fellow

Ms. Gray Parker is currently a third-year Ph.D. student at The University of Texas at San Antonio in Educational Leadership and Policy, with an emphasis in higher education. Her current research interests include higher education policy, access, equity, and affordability issues, and understanding how special-mission institutions such as minority-serving institutions and land-grant universities have a role in the success of underrepresented student populations. Previously, Ms. Gray Parker has interned at the Lumina Foundation through the Archer Fellowship program.



Left to right: Kristin Boyer, Lakya Lewis, Jenny Achilles, and Alyse Gray Parker

Introduction of Board Members

Richard Rhodes, PhD, Board President

Dr. Rhodes joined the Austin Community College District as President in September 2011 and has worked to improve pathways into higher education and give students the tools to accomplish their goals. He also serves on the boards of many national and local organizations including Trellis Company, the Carnegie Foundation, the Educational Testing Service, National Community College Advisory Council, and as a member of the STEM Higher Education Council.

Dora Ann Verde, Board Secretary

Dora Ann Verde is a Certified Public Accountant with a private practice in San Antonio serving a variety of nonprofit clients, prior to which she served as Chief of Internal Audit for the San Antonio Water System and partner in a public accounting firm. Her community involvement currently includes board service for many nonprofit organizations including ACE Academy in Northeast Independent School District, National Association of Corporate Directors, WINGS, San Antonio 100, and Trellis Company. She also serves as a corporate board member and chair of the audit committee for a privately held corporation.

Ms. Verde also served as Board Chair for Texas Public Radio and SAY Si and treasurer for ACCIÓN Texas, and the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Josh Hunt

Josh Hunt is Executive Vice President and Member of the Board of Directors for Hunt Companies, Inc. Mr. Hunt is also President of the Hunt Family Foundation and serves on several other Hunt governance boards and committees.

In addition to his duties at Hunt Companies, Mr. Hunt is a board member of the Borderplex Alliance, member of the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) President's Athletic Advisory Council, chairman of The Hospitals of Providence Governing Board, a founding board member and current chairman of the new El Paso Children's Museum, chairman of the Medical Center of the Americas Foundation Board, and a member of the Texas Tech Foundation Board. Mr. Hunt is a member of the Young Presidents Organization (YPO) El Paso/Juarez and Aspen Chapters, Urban Land Institute, and International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC).

Mark Milliron, PhD

Dr. Mark Milliron is Co-Founder and Chief Learning Officer of Civitas Learning, which brings together emerging technology, data science, and design thinking to help students learn well and finish strong.

In previous roles, Dr. Milliron served as the Deputy Director for Postsecondary Improvement with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; founding chancellor of WGU Texas; Endowed Fellow and Director of the National Institute of Staff and Organizational Development at The University of Texas at Austin; Vice President for education and medical practice with SAS; and President and CEO of the League for Innovation in the Community College. He is a member of numerous boards and advisory groups.

Suzanne Walsh, JD

Suzanne Walsh is the current President of Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina. She was most recently Deputy Director of Postsecondary Success for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, leading and developing a team and a portfolio of over \$70 million in postsecondary investments in institutional transformation in the United States. She previously served in leadership roles with the Lumina Foundation for Education and The Heinz Endowments.

Suzanne has her juris doctorate and master's in social work from Case Western Reserve University, a bachelor's degree from Cornell University, and an associate's degree in applied science from Hudson Valley Community College.

Welcome Wilson, Jr.

Welcome W. Wilson, Jr., is President and Chief Executive Officer of Welcome Group, a real estate development firm specializing in single-tenant office buildings and industrial buildings including lab, warehouse, and manufacturing facilities.

He currently serves on the boards of the Alamo Endowment, the Alamo Trust, and Trellis Company, as well as with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission, and the Texas Business Hall of Fame. In addition, he is also Chairman of the Board of the Southwest Houston Redevelopment Authority and is Chairman of Houston's Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #20.

Looking Ahead

When the Trellis Foundation launched in 2017, the Board of Directors and staff relied heavily on the 12 years of philanthropic support that Trellis Company/TG had provided for nonprofits and higher ed institutions working on college access and success. During that time, we were fortunate to learn from grantees, as well as from our partners and collaborators in Texas and across the country, about both the systemic and the individual obstacles to student success and educational attainment.

A few of the insights that have shaped our thinking include:



Partnerships and collaboration greatly increase the potential for sustainability and scale of funded projects.



Leadership matters.



The learning that happens in an initiative is often the most important outcome.

TRENDS AND ISSUES WE'RE TRACKING

Access	Addressing decreases in college enrollment rates, even as high school graduation rates are increasing in Texas
	Countering public skepticism about the value of higher education
Affordability	Raising awareness of the rising levels of unmet financial need (the remaining balance after ALL sources of aid, including federal student loans, have been applied) for postsecondary students
	Exploring opportunities that help students balance work and learning
	Acknowledging and alleviating poverty for an increasing number of students in higher education
Attainment	Continuing the momentum of early positive outcomes from guided pathways work in community colleges
	Building on improvements in degree completion rates statewide
	Increasing efforts to connect regional workforce needs with credentials and degrees

Trellis Foundation takes an optimistic approach to its work. In all that we do, we're continually in awe of the students we meet who dream, plan, persist, and persevere – in spite of having to navigate systems that were not designed for them or for today's workplace needs. We take our inspiration from them and will work diligently to support and promote the changes in systems, policies, and practices that help students succeed.



About Trellis Foundation

Founded by Trellis Company (formerly TG), Trellis Foundation is a newly established grantmaking public charity focused on helping low- and moderate-income students increase their ability to access, afford, and complete a postsecondary education.

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