

**HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY FELLOWS PROGRAMS IN TEXAS**

**Higher Education Policy Fellows Programs in Texas**



**EVERY TEXAN – TEXAS EQUITY COALITION  
AND FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

**ABOUT**

Every Texan's Policy Fellowship Program provides selected students with the necessary resources, knowledge, and social justice framework to engage in and champion equitable higher education policies. Ten undergraduate students from across the state of Texas were selected to participate in the 2021-2022 fellowship cohort. Through the program tenets of empowerment, learning, and leadership development, fellows engage with and aid in the cultivation of their community through extensive policy training and participation in legislative briefings, hearings, grassroots advocacy events, and public forums. Fellows are also given the opportunity to work with Texas PACE, which consists of organizations from across Texas focused on improving equity in Texas higher education.



[everytexan.org](http://everytexan.org)

CONTACT: Simona Gabriela Harry, Policy Leaders of Texas Program Coordinator, at [harry@everytexan.org](mailto:harry@everytexan.org)



Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to learn more about the fellows and their work.



**INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATION - IDRA EDUCATION POLICY  
FELLOWS PROGRAM**

**ABOUT**

The IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program provides real-world training to advocates of color to influence state law in Texas.

IDRA's inaugural fellow cohort operated from November 2020 through July 2021 and will serve as mentors for the second cohort of Texas fellows in 2022. Two of the fellows supported by the Trellis Foundation grant focused on developing and leading higher education and COVID-19-responsive policy agendas during the 2021 Texas legislative session.

Fellows were supported by a network of experienced policy advocates to advance an equity-focused policy agenda and ensure that legislators and decisionmakers center the experience and perspectives of people of color.

**THE FELLOWS**

Early- and mid-career people of color interested in developing their policy and advocacy skills to effect state- and local-level policy change in education.

**FELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Engage in the Texas legislative process;
- Implement a communications strategy using traditional and new media tools;
- Coordinate coalitions of advocacy organizations;
- Craft engaging and impactful testimony, data analyses, issue briefs and infographics to influence the legislative process; and
- Use IDRA's family leadership in education framework to shape policies and ensure traditionally-marginalized communities play a role in creating equitable and excellent postsecondary public education opportunities.

[idra.org](http://idra.org)

CONTACT: Morgan Craven, National Director of Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, at [morgan.craven@idra.org](mailto:morgan.craven@idra.org)

**Every Texan: Texas Equity Coalition and Fellowship Program**

*With the funding from the Trellis Foundation, we hope to prepare current and future student leaders and advocates to tackle the Texas Legislature with a political toolbox they've assembled alongside their fellow peers. Our goal is simple: Equip our students and share our resources with the next generation. College students have every right to actively participate in the system that dictates their experience on their respective campuses, and we, at Every Texan are committed to making that happen. – Simona Gabriela Harry, Policy Leaders of Texas Program Coordinator at Every Texan*

- About: Every Texan's Policy Fellowship Program provides selected students with the necessary resources, knowledge, and social justice framework to engage in and

champion equitable higher education policies. Ten undergraduate students from across the state of Texas were selected to participate in the 2021-2022 fellowship cohort. Through the program tenets of empowerment, learning, and leadership development, fellows engage with and aid in the cultivation of their community through extensive policy training and participation in legislative briefings, hearings, grassroots advocacy events, and public forums. Fellows are also given the opportunity to work with Texas PACE, which consists of organizations from across Texas focused on improving equity in Texas higher education.

- The Fellows: Fellows are students at 2- or 4-year colleges or universities from across Texas (see graphic below) for a year-long program. The 2021-2022 cohort includes students from Central, North, East, and Southeast Texas. Meet the 2021-2022 Policy Leaders of Texas Fellowship Cohort here: [Education Fellowship – Every Texan](#)
- Fellow Responsibilities: Engage in policy training delivered by experts; attend learning sessions outside of weekly meeting times that will aid in the preparation for and execution of a co-written policy agenda; participate in a range of strategies to build momentum for a shared higher education policy agenda.
- Resources and Readings
  - Blog: [A College Students' Guide to Accessing Snap Benefits](#)
  - Policy Agenda: Guided by core tenets of equity and student voice, Texas PACE envisions a postsecondary education system in Texas that advocates for college access, affordability, completion, and student supports. Read their full policy agenda here [PACE+Policy+Agenda\\_new.pdf](#)
- Website: Every Texan's Policy Fellowship Program: [Education Fellowship – Every Texan](#)
- Partners:
  - Breakthrough Central Texas
  - Education Trust
  - Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)
  - Jolt
  - Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
  - Young Invincibles

## **IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program**

*The diversity of students and families in our public schools is a great asset. Schools must be shaped by policies and practices that recognize and sustain these assets in order to ensure all students have access to excellent and equitable educational opportunities that prepare them to succeed in college. Yet, many of the people making education policy decisions do not come from and are not connected to these diverse communities, including communities of color. Through the Education Policy Fellows Program, IDRA hopes to expand the network of diverse advocates who are able to navigate state-level education policymaking arenas in order to shape policies and expand access to decision-making spaces for the communities of color that have traditionally and intentionally been excluded. – Morgan Craven, National Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Community Engagement*

- About: The IDRA Education Policy Fellows Program provides real-world training to advocates of color to influence state law in Texas. IDRA's inaugural fellow cohort operated from November 2020 through July 2021 and will serve as mentors for the second cohort of Texas fellows in 2022. Two of the fellows supported by the Trellis Foundation grant focused on developing and leading higher education and COVID-19-responsive policy agendas during the 2021 Texas legislative session. Fellows were supported by a network of experienced policy advocates to advance an equity-focused policy agenda and ensure that legislators and decisionmakers center the expertise and perspectives of people of color.
- The Fellows: Early- and mid-career people of color interested in developing their policy and advocacy skills to effect state- and local-level policy change in education. Meet IDRA's Inaugural Class of Education Policy Fellows here: [IDRA Education Policy Fellows](#)
- Fellow Responsibilities: Engage in the Texas legislative process; implement a communications strategy using traditional and new media tools; coordinate coalitions of advocacy organizations; craft engaging and impactful testimony, data analyses, issue briefs and infographics to influence the legislative process; and use IDRA's family leadership in education framework to shape policies and ensure traditionally-marginalized communities play a role in creating equitable and excellent postsecondary public education opportunities.
- Resources and Readings:
  - Evaluation Report: Key Themes from Interviews with IDRA Education Policy Fellows and Program Directors – [IDRA-Education-Policy-Fellows-Program-Evaluation-Report-2022.pdf](#)

- Podcasts: IDRA fellows – Dr. Altheria Caldera, Araceli García, Thomas Marshall III and Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz – share their powerful reflections through this four-part podcast series:
  - [\*Education Advocacy Hinges on Community Collaboration\*](#) – In this episode, IDRA fellows describe what attracted them to the fellowship and what they gained from it.
  - [\*An Inside Look at Advocating with Communities of Color\*](#) – In this episode, IDRA fellows describe their experiences advocating with communities of color in the Texas Legislature.
  - [\*Education Policy Fellows Get Things Done in the Suppression Session\*](#) – In this episode, IDRA fellows discuss the good, bad and ugly of the 87th Texas legislative session.
  - [\*The Future of Education Advocacy and Being Pushy\*](#) – In this episode, IDRA fellows share their thoughts on the future of advocacy, their advice from what they’ve learned, and their personal plans post fellowships.
- Projects and Contributions: Fellows worked with statewide coalitions of students and families to engage with legislative offices, attended hearings of the Senate and House Higher Education Committees and produced actional data analyses and materials to advance a policy agenda. Read fellows’ work here <https://www.idra.org/idra-fellows/>
- Website: [https://www.idra.org/education\\_policy/idra-education-policy-fellows-program/](https://www.idra.org/education_policy/idra-education-policy-fellows-program/)
- Partners:
  - Every Texan
  - Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
  - Postsecondary Advocates Coalition (PAC)
  - Texas A&M University—Commerce
  - Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC)
  - The Education CAFE network



credibility of AgriLife Extension's place-based county agents to facilitate partnerships with rural school districts to help improve the non-academic supports students and their families need to foster a college-going culture. See figure below to learn more about RSSI's participating districts.

- Constituencies Served: 8th – 12th grade students, parents/adult caregivers, rural school districts, AgriLife Extension agents
- Services Provided: Provide technical assistance to school districts, conduct college advising workshops, facilitate convenings of education stakeholders through local advisory board meetings, design data collection instruments to inform programming needs, co-design customized workshops for county extension agents, co-develop text messaging college awareness/advising campaigns
- Resources and Readings: [Paving the Path](#) – Read about the college-going work that the Rural Student Success Initiative is doing in rural communities in Texas
- Website: Rural Student Success Initiative: <https://rssi.tamu.edu/>
- Partners:
  - Collegiate Edu-nation
  - College Possible
  - Educate Texas
  - National College Attainment Network (NCAN)
  - Texas A&M University
  - Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)
  - Texas Rural Leadership Program (TRLP)
  - University of Virginia

## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES (AAC&U): TRUTH, RACIAL HEALING & TRANSFORMATION CAMPUS CENTERS

### American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) Campus Centers



Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to learn more about the American College's TRHT Campus Center.



#### PURPOSE

TRHT Campus Centers serve to prepare the next generation of strategic leaders and thinkers to build just and equitable communities and to promote transformational and sustainable change. In partnership with Alamo Colleges District (ACD), AAC&U is developing Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) Campus Centers to address the historic and contemporary effects of systemic and structural racism on college campuses. The TRHT Center at Austin Community College (ACC) is serving as a mentor to the Alamo Colleges District as they develop Centers on each of their campuses. Seeking to help communities embrace racial healing and eliminate conscious and unconscious beliefs in a hierarchy of human value, TRHT Campus Centers are tasked with developing and implementing a visionary plan to engage and empower campus and community stakeholders. The efforts of TRHT Campus Centers are guided by the five pillars of the TRHT Framework: narrative change, racial healing and relationship building, separation, law, and economy (see figure to the right).

#### CONSTITUENCIES SERVED

Campus leaders including presidents, administrators, faculty, staff, and community partners

#### GRANT ACTIVITIES

Attend AAC&U's Virtual Institute on TRHT Campus Centers to develop action plans that align with existing diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and strategic priorities for student success; participate in a preparation process to learn how to facilitate Re-Racial Healing Circles™; attend workshops led by existing TRHT campus leaders; collaborate with experienced TRHT Campus Center mentors; develop evaluation and assessment plans with the national evaluator for the TRHT Campus Centers.



CONTACT: Tia Brown McNair, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Student Success & Executive Director of TRHT Campus Centers, at [McNair@aacu.org](mailto:McNair@aacu.org)

[aacu.org](http://aacu.org)

*In partnership with Alamo Colleges, we hope to support higher levels of student success and engagement by the sharing of personal narratives, building relationships, and engaging in healing activities — all leading to institutional and community transformation for more just and equitable environments. — Tia Brown McNair, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Student Success Executive Director for TRHT Campus Centers*

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Centers on each of their campuses. Seeking to help communities embrace racial healing and eliminate conscious and unconscious beliefs in a hierarchy of human value, TRHT Campus Centers are tasked with developing and implementing a visionary plan to engage and empower campus and community stakeholders. The efforts of TRHT Campus Centers are guided by the five pillars of the TRHT Framework: narrative change, racial healing and relationship building, separation, law, and economy (see figure below).

- Constituencies Served: Campus leaders including presidents, administrators, faculty, staff, and community partners
- Grant Activities: Attend AAC&U's Virtual Institute on TRHT Campus Centers to develop action plans that align with existing diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and strategic prioritize for student success; participate in a preparation process to learn how to facilitate Rx Racial Healing Circles™; attend workshops led by existing TRHT campus leaders; collaborate with experienced TRHT Campus Center mentors; develop evaluation and assessment plans with the national evaluator for the TRHT Campus Centers
- Resources and Readings
  - Framework: The efforts of TRHT Campus Centers are guided by the five pillars of the TRHT Framework: narrative change, racial healing and relationship building, separation, law, and economy. More information about the TRHT Framework can be found here [Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation \(healourcommunities.org\)](https://healourcommunities.org)
  - Guide: TRHT Racial Healing Circles offers people, organizations and communities the opportunity to take collective action for a more just and equitable world through dialogue. (You can learn more about Racial Healing Circles here [Microsoft Word – NDORH ConversationGuide 2019 V6 12-10-18 FINAL proofed.docx \(d38xzozy36dxrv.cloudfront.net\)](https://d38xzozy36dxrv.cloudfront.net/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20NDORH%20ConversationGuide%202019%20V6%2012-10-18%20FINAL%20proofed.docx))
  - Alamo's National Day of Racial Healing event on January 28, 2022 introduced the Alamo Colleges community to their plans for racial healing activities across all 5 Colleges and the District Support Offices. Racial Healing Circle facilitator Mee Moua and Alamo's Chief DEI Officer, Dr. Eric Castillo, discussed the practice of racial healing circles and how they can impact our relationships with each other. Chancellor Flores and President Robert Vela gave welcome remarks, and there was also a special performance by San Antonio poet laureate Andrea Vocab Sanderson.
  - Guide: Gail C. Christopher's Rx Racial Healing: A Guide to Embracing Our Humanity provides individuals an overview of the methodology, tools, and resources to facilitate and engage in the Rx Racial Healing approach for

transformational change in colleges, organizations, and communities. Read the excerpt and explore the table of contents here [Rx Racial Healing: A Guide to Embracing Our Humanity | AAC&U \(aacu.org\)](#)

- Website: <https://www.aacu.org/initiatives/truth-racial-healing-transformation-campus-centers>
- Partners:
  - Alamo Colleges District
  - Austin Community College
- Contact: Tia Brown McNair, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Student Success & Executive Director of TRHT Campus Centers, at [McNair@aacu.org](mailto:McNair@aacu.org).










## THE REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM INNOVATION FOR RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING COHORT

### The Regional Ecosystem Innovation for Reskilling and Upskilling Cohort

Formed in 2021, the upskilling and reskilling cohort is comprised of nine regional partners across Texas (see graphic below). The focus of this cohort is to encourage, expand, and learn about regional collaborative efforts that lead to greater opportunities and outcomes for displaced workers and students in Texas.

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to learn more about how each partner partner is working to align education with regional workforce needs and help closing gaps.



 <p><b>AMARILLO COLLEGE</b> Project WIN: Workforce Innovation Network</p>	 <p><b>SAN ANTONIO EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP</b> Upgrade: Reskilling and Upskilling the Workforce</p>
 <p><b>EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS</b> Upskill Coastal Bend Partnership: Upskilling &amp; Reskilling Rural Residents</p>	 <p><b>TEMPLE COLLEGE FOUNDATION</b> Next Step</p>
 <p><b>FOUNDATION COMMUNITIES</b> The Coalition for Advancing Reskilling Education and Employment opportunities for Returning Learners (CARLEER)</p>	 <p><b>WEST CENTRAL TEXAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD INC</b> Big Country Career Coalition - Never2Late</p>
 <p><b>GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION</b> Houston Back on Track Job Recovery Initiative</p>	
 <p><b>GREATER WACO COLLECTIVE IMPACT INITIATIVE</b> Upskill Waco</p>	
 <p><b>PROJECT UNITY</b> One For All Collaboration</p>	

CONTACT: Trellis Foundation at [info@trellisfoundation.org](mailto:info@trellisfoundation.org)

[trellisfoundation.org](http://trellisfoundation.org)

Formed in 2021, the upskilling and reskilling cohort is comprised of nine regional partners across Texas (see graphic below). The focus of this cohort is to encourage, expand, and learn about regional collaborative efforts that lead to greater opportunities and outcomes for displaced workers and students in Texas.

#### AMARILLO COLLEGE – PROJECT WIN: WORKFORCE INNOVATION NETWORK

*One aspect of Amarillo College’s Strategic plan is to transform our local economy by building a sustainable pipeline of graduates that meet the demand of local and regional business and industry partners. We are achieving this goal by revising our employer engagement strategies and focusing on infusing work-based learning into all our programs for students to have meaningful career exposure, work experience, and hands-on training opportunities. Through the Trellis Foundation we have received support to put this into*

*action for selected CTE programs. This initiative has enabled the college to foster discussions around the role work-based learning can play in addressing the skills gap and in developing a more diverse talent pipeline. Through the foundation that this grant has established, we will be able to build an infrastructure that will enhance our business partnerships and maximize student success in the workforce. – Barbara Joelle Wahi, Senior Director Work-based and Experiential Learning at Amarillo College*

- Purpose: Project WIN aims to transform the Amarillo economy through a scaled work-based learning program that allows students to learn while they earn a paycheck in their field of study. Project Win focuses on four career paths: machining, industrial, maintenance, automotive and construction.
- Constituencies Served: Adult learners, first-generation students, rural communities
- Services Provided: Workforce development training and related supportive services, tuition/fees and state support and appropriate safety equipment and personal protective equipment
- Partners
  - Amarillo College CEO Council (50 local industry leaders)
    - Ex: Jorge Ramirez, Architect/Firm Principal, Höhe Design Group, currently employing an AC apprentice
  - Panhandle Workforce Development Board
  - Panhandle Regional Planning Commission
- Website: Earn and Learn Webpage: <https://www.actx.edu/EarnAndLearn/index.php>

**EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS – UPSKILL COASTAL BEND PARTNERSHIP: UPSKILLING & RESKILLING RURAL RESIDENTS**

*The UpSkill Coastal Bend Partnership is a collaborative effort of workforce development, education and economic development experts working together to drive long-term system change and improve equitable access to career opportunities for residents in the rural areas of the region. Our end goal is to ultimately align partner strategies and programming around workforce centers in each of the counties that we are serving, for the purpose of stimulating regional economic growth in the Coastal Bend. – Jeff West, Executive Director of Education to Employment Partners*

- Purpose: The UpSkill Coastal Bend Partnership aims to align regional efforts and improve the Coastal Bend region’s economic vitality by increasing the educational and job attainment of rural adults to address workforce needs. The project aims to re-engage adults in career pathways related to healthcare and professional services.
- Constituencies Served: Rural adults, especially those who are Hispanic and have low-income backgrounds
- Grant Activities: Engage in crosswalk mapping to identify the overlaps and gaps between the skills, competencies, and credentials associated with industries in decline and those required for success in areas with strong employment growth; analyze data collected and create an awareness of the programs, services and opportunities, for both residents and employers; develop education/career pathways posters to high demand regional jobs through partnerships
- Website: UpSkill Coastal Bend <https://www.upskillcoastalbend.org/>
- Partners:
  - Aransas County Workforce Training Center (ACWTC)
  - Better Business Bureau (BBB)
  - Coastal Bend Council of Governments (CBCOG)
  - Coastal Bend College (CBC)
  - Coastal Compass Education and Career Resource Center
  - Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation (CCREDC)
  - Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)
  - Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend (CTCCB)
  - Del Mar College (DMC)
  - Education Service Center Region 2 (ESC2)
  - Nueces County Inclusive Development Network (NCIDN)
  - Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMUCC)
  - Texas A&M University-Kingsville (TAMUK)
  - Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend (WFSCB)

**Foundation Communities – The Coalition for Advancing Reskilling Education and Employment Opportunities for Returning Learners**

*During the pandemic, Foundation Communities supported many individuals and families with accessing rental assistance, as well as, several other vital financial services (housing, tax preparation, financial coaching, signing up for health coverage). We are able to leverage*

*these existing client relationships to share information about reskilling and upskilling opportunities newly available in the greater Austin area. In January 2022, we launched our sign-up form, a five-minute survey designed to learn more information about each client to better share curated information. Grassroots marketing has yielded 160+ individuals to sign up for the CAREER Project in the first six weeks since the launch. As we begin the next segment of the CAREER Project, we look forward to supporting these individuals through exploratory conversations about pathways available to them, ongoing marketing and information sharing through our text message platform and self-paced Red Kite database, and support with enrollment in partner programs like PelotonU, Austin Community College's Career Scholars earn and learn program, and Workforce Solutions. – Gabriela A. Caballero, CAREER Project Manager and Succeed Coach*

- Purpose: The CAREER Project aims to create a network of postsecondary and employment support for individuals in Central Texas impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by building out widescale infrastructure.
- Constituencies Served: Unemployed, underemployed and displaced adults, specifically women of color within the Central Texas region looking to leverage this moment to reskill or upskill
- Services provided: Ease of access to opportunities, pathways counseling, financial support, and access to resources like affordable and reliable childcare, transportation, and technology
- Resources:
  - Foundation Communities launched a free, new initiative called THE CAREER Project. Their goal is to connect individuals with job training and college programs that can boost their skills and are designed for people supporting families or navigating busy scheduled. If you or someone you know may be interested in this opportunity, check out their interest form to get started: <http://bit.ly/2ZPNSuo>
  - Learn more about THE CAREER Project here: <https://youtu.be/28W3NoobG1U>
- Website: Foundation Communities: <https://foundcom.org/> and more specifically [collegehubatx.com](http://collegehubatx.com)
- Partners:
  - Austin Community College (ACC)
  - Austin Chamber of Commerce

- College Hub
- E3 Alliance (Education Equals Economics)
- PelotonU
- United Way for Greater Austin
- Workforce Solutions Capitol Area

### **GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION – HOUSTON BACK ON TRACK JOB RECOVERY INITIATIVE**

*My work with Houston Back on Track began with the idea that collaborating with like-minded organizations would allow us to make a significant impact in a short time. After just a few months of working closely with our partners, this idea has become a reality. I have seen the delight in the faces of people we are empowering with greater access to good jobs, heard the gratitude in their voices. We are making a difference and the Trellis Foundation provides important resources that make it possible for us to be of service to others. – Carl Salazar, Director, Regional Workforce Recovery Greater Houston Partnership*

- Purpose: The Back on Track initiative supports an inclusive economic recovery by mobilizing partners in the Houston region to create an employer-driven, jobs-first effort to equitably and rapidly train, support and guide displaced workers into sustainable occupations. Houston Back on Track’s initiative focuses on four career paths: medical, transportation, customer service and energy transition.
- Constituencies Served: Adult learners, unemployed, and underemployed adults
- Services provided: Career coaching and wraparound services and supports to address basic needs and emergencies, education program access (including LinkedIn Learning), job readiness and preparation, financial coaching and capability, and virtual hiring expos
- Resources and Readings
  - Greater Houston Partnership Persona Presentation: Over the summer, Greater Houston Partnership Foundation interviewed about 30 jobseekers from the Houston region who were looking for better career opportunities because of the pandemic. Using these data, they created four personas that were representative of the goals and challenges of the region’s jobseekers. The personas are being used by community partners to improve the delivery of services and supports for clients. In addition, some of their employer partners are adjusting their recruiting activities to ensure they are sensitive to

the issues identified in the personas. You can review their presentation here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76m9XGkTVQY&t=11s>

- Website: Houston Back on Track: <https://www.houstonbackontrack.org/>
- Partners:
  - Change Happens
  - Dress for Success Houston
  - Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions
  - HCA Houston Healthcare
  - Houston Area Urban League
  - Houston Community College
  - Houston Food Bank
  - Houston Methodist
  - LISC Houston
  - Lone Star College
  - Mustang Cat
  - Primary Services
  - San Jacinto College
  - Silver Eagle Distributors
  - The WorkFaith Connection
  - United Way of Greater Houston
  - Wesley Community Center

#### **GREATER WACO COLLECTIVE IMPACT INITIATIVE/PROSPER WACO – UPSKILL WACO**

*We have learned the importance of cultivating our role as an intermediary. It takes time, patience, and intentionality to build trust with our partners and understand where everyone’s goals align. This process was instrumental in helping us implement our first collaborative workforce training pilot project through the UpSkill Waco initiative. We still have work to do, but it has been positive to see the willingness of our partners to commit to new and better ways of upskilling and reskilling underserved members of our community. – Tiffany Gallegos Whitley, Director of Workforce Initiatives, Prosper Waco*

- Purpose: The UpSkill Waco initiative seeks to increase education-to-workforce system alignment and build McLennan County’s capacity to provide equitable skills training, credentials, and job placement support in high demand occupations across the county. UpSkill Waco focuses on three career paths: healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and construction trades.

- Constituencies Served: Unemployed and underemployed adults, Opportunity Youth, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students
- Services Provided: Offer upskill training courses, deliver technical and soft skills training and credentials based on employer needs, and provide ongoing coaching and support after participants obtain employment to promote employee retention
- Website: UpSkill Waco <https://www.upskill-waco.org/>
- Partners:
  - Antioch Community Church
  - Baylor University
  - Caterpillar
  - Capstone Mechanical
  - Cen-Tex African American Chamber of Commerce
  - Cen-Tex Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
  - Christian Women's Job Corps.
  - City of Waco
  - Community Bank & Trust
  - Communities in Schools of the Heart of Texas
  - Education, Talent, & Workforce Alliance
  - Grassroots Community Development
  - Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce
  - Heart of Texas Goodwill Industries
  - McLennan Community College
  - McLennan County
  - Prosper Waco
  - Rydell Realty
  - Texas State Technical College
  - Texas Workforce Commission
  - Triple Win
  - Total Placements
  - Waco Business League
  - Waco ISD
  - Waco Employer Resource Network
  - Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project

### **Project Unity – One For All Collaboration**

*Trellis Foundation is giving Project Unity the opportunity and resources to pull groups in the community together to have discussions around why low-income adults and adults of color have so many challenges to successful career pathways through secondary education. The end goal will be for workforce, educational, and support service systems to align in ways that give greater access and opportunities to low-income adults and adults of color in our community. – Jeannie Mansill, President/CEO, Project Unity*

- Purpose: Project Unity’s One For All Collaboration Project seeks to align regional workforce and educational systems to prioritize the pressing needs and career pathways for low-income adults and adults of color in light of COVID-19 and other inequitable conditions in the Brazos Valley region.
- Constituencies Served: Low-income adults, adults of color, justice impacted adults and entry-level workers
- Grant Activities: Host multi-hour workgroup meetings to align system elements that will reduce fragmentation, expand access and improve efficiencies; conduct focus groups to identify barriers and obstacles using appreciative inquiry and creative problem-solving; finance scholarships for target population adults to enroll in associate degree programs; assist working adults in finding more effective and efficient pathways
- Website: Project Unity: <https://www.projectunitytexas.org/>
- Partners:
  - Blinn College District
  - Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG)
  - Bryan ISD Career and Technical Education
  - Texas A&M University

### **SAN ANTONIO EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP – UPGRADE: RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING THE WORKFORCE**

*Our goal is to provide access to education and job mobility opportunities for populations with the highest needs. In turn, we can help end generational cycles of poverty and improve the economic vitality of the San Antonio community. – Elizabeth Velarde, Program Manager, Upgrade*

- Purpose: San Antonio Education Partnership’s Upgrade program aims to create opportunities and access to career pathways to support adult students seeking to

re-skill and upskill in the workforce. The Upgrade Program will focus on three main career pathway sectors: IT, healthcare and manufacturing.

- Constituencies Served: Adult learners, non-student adults, unemployed adults
- Services provided: Career exploration; academic advising; college transcript/transferable credit review; college research and applications; financial aid applications; scholarship resources and referrals to government agencies, higher education institutions and community-based organizations for wraparound services
- Website: <https://saedpartnership.org/upgrade/>
- Partners:
  - Alamo Colleges District (ACD)
  - City of San Antonio-Economic Development Department (EDD)
  - Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
  - H-E-B
  - Project Quest
  - SA Works
  - The Graduate! Network
  - The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA)
  - TX Fame
  - Workforce Solutions Alamos (WSA)
  - UTSA – The Office of Extended Education

#### **TEMPLE COLLEGE FOUNDATION - NEXT STEP**

*Temple College's goal is to eliminate poverty and help advance the lives of students and their families through education, training, and post-secondary credentials that lead to high paying careers. The Trellis Foundation is supporting this work by allowing us to connect with broader audiences, supporting adult learners, leveraging reskilling funds, creating resources for underserved populations, and supporting Temple College in advancing the mission of community colleges. Together we will continue to make a differences in people's lives. – Dr. Christy Ponce, Temple College President*

- Purpose: The Next Step Project recruits and expands supports for adults, ages 22 and over, who want to return to college and complete an unfinished degree or credential. The project also targets graduates who could benefit from additional training or community member who became unemployed because of the pandemic.

- Constituencies Served: Returning adult learners, ages 22 and over; unemployed adults; stop-out students
- Grant Activities: Recruit and assist adult students who have stopped out of college, develop curriculum for the Adult Student Orientation to help situate students into and back into the academic environment, provide professional development programs for Temple College faculty to increase their understanding of adult students, and pair returning adult students with faculty mentors for additional support
- Resources and Readings:
  - Adult Orientation Presentation: [Spring 2022 Adult Learner Orientation \(Google.com\)](#) and [Follow-up Presentation for Students \(Google.com\)](#)
  - Best Practices for Teaching Checklist: The purpose of this peer review process is to promote collaboration among faculty, empowering faculty to continuously refine the use of best practices and innovative practices. The results of this checklist are not meant to have any punitive impact on tenure or on a faculty member's standing. [CTL Temple College – Best Practices for Teaching Checklist \(Google.com\)](#)
  - Next Steps Mentoring Program: The program is designed to provide interaction with mentees beyond academics to help establish successful practices and habits that will help them accomplish their goals. [CTL Temple College – Next Steps Mentoring \(Faculty Mentoring Students\) \(Google.com\)](#)
- Website: Circle of Support: <https://www.templejc.edu/resources/circle-of-support/>
- Partners:
  - BBVA Bank in Temple
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - City of Temple
  - H-E-B
  - Temple and Belton Economic Development Cooperation
  - Temple Community Clinic
  - Temple Industrial Foundation
  - Texas A&M University Central
  - Workforce Solutions of Central Texas (WSCT)

## **WEST CENTRAL TEXAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD INC. – BIG COUNTRY CAREER COALITION – NEVER2LATE**

*Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas through the Never2Late initiative aims to increase access and improve opportunities for upskilling/reskilling and entry into better jobs that pay family sustaining wages by focusing on pathways for manufacturing and retail. One of the first steps was to organize a Steering Committee of key community and business leaders to closely look at the systemic barriers and issues facing the underserved and underemployed workers of West Central Texas. The resulting solution was to collaborate with the Social Work Department of Abilene Christian University and secure the services of a Master Level Social Work Candidate Intern. Our Intern has been conducting interviews of clients, customers and referrals of our community agencies, collecting data, stories and causes of why people continue to struggle. Digging deep in our communities and listening to their perceptions and barriers will give the Steering Committee insight to the cultural and system wide issues that don't allow for equitable movement and advancement into these pathways. Education and training will likely be what is tackled in the near future. – Bill Dean, Director of Business Services of Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas*

- Purpose: Develop a regional model built on core competencies identified by industry leaders that offers equitable access, accelerates learning, and promotes entry into economically stable employment.
- Constituencies Served: Adult learners, workers negatively impacted by Covid-19, Opportunity Youth, and individuals with disabilities.
- Grant Strategies: Identify potential career pathways related to manufacturing and business/retail; examine the existing landscape of education and workforce alignment to identify barriers that restrict access or inhibit successful advancement and completion; analyze data collected to develop and implement clear pathways for adult learners
- Website: Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas: <https://wfwswct.org/>
- Partners:
  - 2-1-1 A Call for Help/United Way of Abilene
  - Abilene Christian University – Steering Committee Members
  - Abilene ISD Adult Education
  - Arrow Ford
  - Christian Service Center
  - Cisco College
  - Development Corporation of Abilene

- Goodwill of West Central Texas
- International Rescue Committee
- Texas State Technical College
- USG Corporation

**Commented [M11]:** Please add "About Trellis Foundation" section. See previous reports and the word doc in the logos and brand folder.