



PRESS RELEASE
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**UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO AWARDED \$725,000 FROM
EDUCATE TEXAS FOR TEXAS REGIONAL STEM DEGREE ACCELERATOR
INITIATIVE**

El Paso, Tx– Today, Educate Texas announced the grantees for the Texas Regional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Degree Accelerator initiative.

Over the next decade, Texas is projected to have the second highest percentage of the nation's future STEM job opportunities (approximately 10%). The purpose of the Texas Regional STEM Degree Accelerator (STEM Accelerator) initiative is to address this growth by strategically increasing the number of underrepresented students earning STEM degrees throughout the state.

Five institutions of higher education have been selected to receive STEM Accelerator grants, which range from \$550,000 to \$800,000 over three years. Each has convened a regional consortium that includes: two-year colleges, four-year colleges, K- 12 partners, and workforce partners. The consortium have examined regional workforce data, identified the STEM pathway(s) in which they plan to work, and have begun engaging faculty and workforce to: (1) redesign gateway courses in STEM majors and ensure alignment to workforce needs and (2) provide professional development for faculty to improve teaching and learning in STEM fields. The lead grantee for each consortium and the selected regional pathways include:

- **Dallas County Community College**
STEM Pathway: Computer Science
Grant: \$800,000
- **Lee College**
STEM Pathway: Petrochemical
Grant: \$750,000
- **South Texas College**
STEM Pathway: Nursing & Computer Science
Grant: \$800,000
- **University of Texas El Paso**
STEM Pathway: Engineering
Grant: \$725,000
- **Western Texas College**
STEM Pathway: Energy
Grant: \$550,000

In order to increase the number of students who graduate from college with STEM credentials, regional and local collaborations are critical. "The Texas Regional STEM Degree Accelerator motivates our education and workforce partners to collaborate at a regional level to develop and refine STEM pathways," said John Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of Educate Texas. "These pathways will result in an increased number of students across the state earning STEM degrees that meet regionally-identified workforce needs. We are proud to be working with a strong public-private coalition of national and state foundations, corporations, local business groups and the state of Texas on this pioneering initiative."

STEM Accelerator presents an opportunity for institutions of higher education to proactively engage faculty and employers to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills to succeed in their careers. "UTEP is pleased to receive support from the Texas Regional STEM Degree Accelerator," said UTEP President Diana Natalicio. "With this investment in our students, Educate Texas and their generous partners have demonstrated a strong commitment to the Paso del Norte region. This grant empowers UTEP and other members of this region's consortium to expand our efforts to prepare a young, dynamic and diverse workforce in STEM fields."

One of the major funders of this project is a national foundation, The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. "Texas – projected to hold many of the future STEM job opportunities in the U.S. – is a crucial state to meet our country's goals for new STEM graduates," said Ryan Kelsey, Program Officer of the Helmsley Charitable Trust's Education Program. "We are thrilled to see the El Paso region stepping forward with a clear plan that will benefit thousands of students in their community and serve as a terrific model to help the state of Texas and our nation restore upward social mobility and economic competitiveness."

"A strong Texas economy requires a workforce with STEM skills and students who are well prepared for the careers being created by Texas employers," said TWC Chairman Andres Alcantar. "The collaboration through this initiative between key stakeholders in public education, workforce development and higher education will benefit graduates and strategically develop the talent needed for employers to compete and succeed."

"Our goal in the 60x30TX plan is for 60 percent of Texans age 25-34 to have a certificate or degree by 2030," said Higher Education Commissioner Raymund Paredes. "The STEM Accelerator project will help us meet statewide objectives by increasing the number of graduates in critical fields and helping Texas prosper as a leader in the global economy."

"At CREEED, we believe that our investments should prepare our region's students to thrive in college and be competitive once they join the workforce—especially within sectors, such as STEM, which show promising job growth and opportunities for advancement," said Richard Castro, Board Chairman of CREEED. "That's why we are proud to partner with Educate Texas, the Helmsley Foundation and other investors to fund the Texas Regional STEM Degree Accelerator initiative which will prepare students in our region, and across the state, to fill the STEM careers of the future and will make our institutions of higher education much more attractive and competitive."

"The Texas STEM Accelerator take a collaborative approach to higher education that will benefit the regional workforce. By providing opportunities for workforce and education to build partnerships, the STEM Accelerator will result in innovative, new approaches that support students, faculty and employers."

STEM Accelerator is developed in alignment with priorities for education and workforce outlined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Workforce Commission. It is funded through the generosity of The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, Greater Texas Foundation, CREEED, JP Morgan and Chase, and The W.W. Caruth, Jr. Foundation.

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The Council for Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development: <https://www.facebook.com/CREED.org/>



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About Educate Texas

The Educate Texas public-private partnership includes: The Texas Education Agency; Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; Texas Workforce Commission; Office of the Governor; Texas Legislature; Communities Foundation of Texas; Ford Foundation; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Greater Texas Foundation; The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust; Houston Endowment; IBM; The Kresge Foundation; Lumina Foundation; The Meadows Foundation; TG Texas Guaranteed; and Texas Instruments Foundation. For more information, please visit: www.EdTX.org.

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