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**STATEMENT FROM CREEED ON CHAIRMAN RICHARD A. CASTRO RECEIVING
THE 2021 TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**

El Paso, TX - Today, Richard A. Castro, Chair of the Council on Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development (CREEED) Board was awarded the 2021 Texas Higher Education Distinguished Service Award. This statewide award was presented by members of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas (ICUT), in partnership with the Council of Public University Presidents and Chancellors (CPUPC) and the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC), during a virtual celebration. Nominated by several Texas higher education leaders, the award recognizes Castro for his extraordinary work as an educator and his positive impact on the education of Texans through philanthropy, leadership, and service. Castro is just the second El Pasoan to receive this prestigious honor. Eddie Rodriguez, Executive Director of CREEED, issued the following statement on Richard's accomplishment:

"We are proud to congratulate Richard Castro on this significant award, and for the statewide recognition it embodies. For over 30 years, Richard has been dedicated to increasing educational attainment in El Paso, across the state and nationally. As an educator and businessman, Richard has made significant contributions to education; including setting up a scholarship fund that has awarded more than \$35 million in scholarships to over 17,000 Hispanic students pursuing a college degree and founding nonprofits dedicated to improving educational attainment in El Paso. In 2014, he helped to establish CREEED and, with every step, amplifies our mission of helping more El Paso students graduate from high school equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to attend and succeed in college. As Board Chairman, Richard has also led our organization in increasing dual-credit and early college enrollment across El Paso school districts, bringing new, high-caliber academic options for students and parents, and establishing transformative partnerships with higher education institutions to improve educator development and student preparation for post-secondary success without remediation.

It is our privilege to congratulate Richard on this high honor. The CREEED Board of Directors, but most importantly, students and educators across the region, are grateful for his leadership and generosity to our community.”