

## Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board announces four 2017 Star Award winners

**Dec. 1, 2017, Austin, Texas** – Today at its annual Leadership Conference luncheon, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board announced the names of four 2017 Star Award winners for exceptional contributions toward meeting one or more of the goals of the Texas higher education plan, *60x30TX*.

This year's winners are:

- Austin Community College District – Accelerated Programmer Training
- Odessa College – Eight-Week Terms: A Pathway to 60x30TX
- University of Houston – UH in 4
- University of Houston-Downtown – The Gateway Course Innovation Initiative



“The Coordinating Board is proud to recognize these four institutions and programs that support Texas students and the state’s *60x30TX* plan,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes. “There were many excellent Texas programs to choose from among this year’s eight Star Award finalists.”

The Coordinating Board received 44 nominations and 41 applications for this year’s Star Award program. Eight finalists were announced in late September and included Coastal Bend College for its Pathways to Success for Students in Allied Health program, St. Philip’s College for its Automotive Technology program, The University of Texas at Dallas for its Undergraduate Success Scholars program, and The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley for its 15 to GRAD: Tuition Plan, Advising, & Outreach to Support 15 Hour Enrollment program.

The Star Award program recognizes exceptional contributions toward meeting one or more of the goals of *60x30TX*:

- Increasing the postsecondary educational attainment level of the state’s 25- to 34-year-old population (The Overarching Goal).
- Increasing the number of students completing a certificate, associate, bachelor’s, or master’s from an institution of higher education in Texas (Completion Goal).
- Increasing the number of programs with identified marketable skills at Texas public institutions of higher education (Marketable Skills Goal).
- Implementing programs or cost efficiencies that help to ensure that undergraduate student loan debt will not exceed 60 percent of first-year wages (Student Debt Goal).

The [Star Award](#) was established in 2001. Winners are selected by a review committee consisting of Coordinating Board members, out-of-state higher education experts, and Texas community leaders. Representatives of institutions, organizations and groups from all over Texas have been recognized for their efforts to develop and implement the state’s most successful programs, projects, activities and partnerships.

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### **THECB Mission Statement**

*The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is to provide leadership and coordination for the Texas higher education system and to promote access, affordability, quality, success, and cost efficiency through 60x30TX, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.*