Milestones in DIVERSITY and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

AWARDS, RECOGNITION and PROGRESS
THE DIVISION OF DIVERSITY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ADVANCES Socially JUST LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS THAT FOSTER A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE through diverse people, ideas, and perspectives. WE ENGAGE IN DYNAMIC COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS DESIGNED TO TRANSFORM OUR LIVES.
# Milestones in Diversity and Community Engagement

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As 2014 comes to an end, it is the perfect time to reflect on the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement’s (DDCE) milestones for the past year and share some of our many successes with you.

**DDCE’s efforts resulted in recognition for UT Austin.**

This past year has brought numerous awards and recognitions for The University of Texas at Austin, the division and our excellent staff. We are especially proud of three significant honors. The university received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award for the third consecutive year. Additionally, UT Austin was named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll and received the Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification. All three are gold standards for excellence in higher education.

**The DDCE has grown this year.**

We acquired the University of Texas-University Charter School (UT-UCS) which includes 14 campuses throughout Central Texas. Our success with the University of Texas Elementary School, our services for students with disabilities and our resources within the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health are all assets in helping improve educational outcomes for the 2,000 students the UT-UCS serves—most of whom are at risk and in the foster care system.

The DDCE also took on The University of Texas at Austin’s Advise Texas program, a Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board initiative that places recent college grads in partner high schools to help students research the best higher education institutions to meet their needs, provide information about financial aid, and complete college applications. Several of the Advise Texas locations are in the same cities as our UT Outreach Centers, helping us to deepen our work in Austin, Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley. And because Advise Texas is also in El Paso, we have the opportunity to expand DDCE’s services to far West Texas.

Just recently we announced the Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color, capitalizing on our continuing work to help young men of color succeed throughout the education pipeline, and helping to meet the call to action initiated by President Obama’s “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative. The campaign is a 10-year, $6 million initiative that combines efforts of Project MALES, the Texas Education Consortium for Male Students of Color and the African American Male Research Initiative. Additionally it draws from our partnerships with Sigma Pi Phi, Communities in Schools X-Y Zone, African American Men and Boys Harvest Foundation, and 100 Black Men to establish mentoring programs not just in Central Texas but nationwide.

**The DDCE continues to provide exceptional programming.**

Our partnership with the Provost’s Office on the four-year graduation initiative continues to refine academic programming within the Longhorn Center for Academic Excellence that includes the Gateway Scholars, McNair Scholars, Longhorn Link program, African American Male Research Initiative and Intellectual Entrepreneurship. Not only has Gateway Scholars doubled the number of students it serves during the past four years, our freshman retention rate in that program is higher than the university’s overall (98 percent compared to 94.5 percent), and the fall semester GPA is now at 3.24.

We took steps this year to more deeply connect community service and service-learning with the academic core. For
example, the Longhorn Center for Community Engagement has revamped The Project, traditionally known as the largest day of community service for UT Austin, attracting 1,800–2,000 volunteers each year. Now it is a 14-month program, truly building student leaders through academic coursework and experiences with community organizations.

The DDCE continues to change the campus culture and make a difference in the Austin community.

Our staff has earned a reputation for excellence on campus and in the community. Dr. Leonard N. Moore, senior associate vice president for academic diversity initiatives and student engagement, was asked this year by the Provost’s Office to help recruit more students of color. Dr. Moore has been on the road, visiting schools where there are many outstanding students who don’t traditionally consider UT Austin as an option. He also has provided leadership in developing recruiting materials for students of color.

Erica Sáenz, associate vice president for community and external relations, has played major roles in the Colony Park Sustainable Community Initiative and Restore Rundberg, both partnerships with the City of Austin to plan for the future.

Dr. Sherri Sanders, associate vice president for strategic initiatives, led the College of Fine Arts in developing and implementing its own diversity plan, a model for how we will work with colleges and schools across campus.

Dr. Miyong Kim, associate vice president for community health initiatives, has been awarded a National Institutes of Health grant for a community Center for Self-Management of Chronic Illness.

Our list of good works and good news could go on! But instead, I invite you to read about more of our milestones in diversity and community engagement and learn why the DDCE continues to serve as a model for other institutions of higher learning to address challenging issues around social justice, equity and education.

Dr. Gregory J. Vincent
Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement
W.K. Kellogg Professor in Community College Leadership
Professor of Law
The University of Texas at Austin has received a 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The classification is based on a framework provided by the Carnegie Foundation to document an institution’s activities around community engagement and public service.

The university is only one of six research universities designated by Carnegie as having very high research activity to receive a first-time Community Engagement Classification in 2015. Overall, it is one of 83 institutions to receive the classification this year for the first time, joining 157 other universities that have been re-classified.

“The classification recognizes the university’s deep commitment to public service and engagement to enrich scholarship, research and creative activity, and enhance curriculum, teaching and learning. It also recognizes that UT Austin is dedicated to addressing critical societal issues and contributing to the public good,” said Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement at The University of Texas at Austin.

“It isn’t just the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement that contributes to the university’s community efforts,” emphasized Vincent. “All colleges and schools at The University of Texas at Austin have initiatives dedicated to meeting the university’s mission of service.”

“The importance of this elective classification is borne out by the response of so many campuses that have demonstrated their deep engagement with local, regional, national and global communities,” said John Saltmarsh, director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, which oversees the application process as a partner of the Carnegie Foundation. “These are campuses that are improving teaching and learning, producing research that makes a difference in communities, and revitalizing their civic and academic missions.”

Central to UT’s Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification is the estimated 1 million hours of community service that our students contribute.
A few examples of the university’s outstanding accomplishments in community engagement include the following:

• UT Austin’s many efforts and partnerships to improve Pre-K–12 education including the work of the DDCE’s UT Outreach Centers in underserved high schools around the state and the University Interscholastic League’s academic competitions and programs that reach every school district in Texas.

• Initiatives to improve healthcare including the establishment of the Dell Medical School and the establishment of the School of Nursing’s collaborative research center.

• UT Austin students’ dedication to and high level of participation in community service. It is estimated that 82 percent of our students provide 1 million hours of community service each year, much of which is coordinated through the Longhorn Center for Community Engagement in the DDCE.

• The university’s commitment to academic service-learning courses which now number 154, beyond the goal of 100 that President Powers set based on the Commission of 125 report.

UT Austin Receives 2014 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll

In December, The University of Texas at Austin was honored by the Corporation for National and Community Service with the 2014 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. It is the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement. The honor recognizes the university’s excellence in general community service and education-focused outreach initiatives.

The six campus-wide programs that helped UT Austin earn its spot on the honor roll are the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement’s The Project, UT Outreach, Academic Service-Learning, UT Elementary School, DDCE Faculty Fellows Program, and the School of Law’s Pro Bono Clinics.

Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement, said, “The national award further affirms the university’s commitment to strengthening community-university partnerships and increasing college pathways for underserved students in Texas and beyond.”
The University of Texas at Austin Receives 2014 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award

For the third consecutive year, The University of Texas at Austin has received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine. The award recognizes exemplary diversity and inclusion initiatives and an institution’s ability to embrace a broad definition of diversity on campus, including gender, race, ethnicity, veterans, people with disabilities and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. It honors institutions of higher education that recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion as integral to their campus culture, said Lenore Pearlstein, publisher of INSIGHT Into Diversity.

“The University of Texas at Austin is strongly committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive campus that promotes a robust exchange of ideas, cross-racial and cross-cultural understanding, and the opportunity for all to participate,” said Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement. Our third HEED award reflects the strength of our commitment and success in enriching the campus culture through innovative initiatives that serve to educate the campus community and strengthen ethnic, cultural and intellectual diversity.”

HEED award recipients are selected based on a lengthy application that examines not only student and faculty demographics, but graduation rates, course and degree offerings, student support services, diversity education initiatives, structures and policies that support diversity in all forms and cultural opportunities on campus, among other factors.

The university was featured along with other HEED recipients in the November 2014 issue of INSIGHT Into Diversity.

For more information about the university’s diversity initiatives, visit www.utexas.edu/diversity

UT Austin Ranked Among Top Universities Across the Globe

Times Higher Education recently ranked The University of Texas at Austin 28th among the world’s top universities based on teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook. The rankings use 13 performance indicators to evaluate the universities. Diversity is considered under the suite of indicators for international outlook. UT Austin has been ranked among the top 30 universities in the world within the past four years, and it is the only Texas university in the top 50 this year.

Black Graduation celebrates the efforts of African American students, including Multicultural Engagement Center Director Brandelyn Franks Flunder (right) who completed her master’s degree in 2014.
Court of Appeals Upholds Judgment in Favor of University of Texas in Fisher Case

On Tuesday, July 15, 2014, by a 2–1 vote, a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reaffirmed the District Court’s grant of summary judgment in favor of The University of Texas at Austin. The decision came more than a year after the U.S. Supreme Court made the decision to remand Fisher v. Texas to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The suit was filed by Abigail Fisher, who was denied admission to The University of Texas at Austin in the fall of 2007. Fisher was not in the top 10 percent of her graduating class from Sugarland, Texas, but in the top 25 percent. She graduated from Louisiana State University.

“We are very pleased with the Court’s ruling recognizing the constitutionality of the university’s admissions policy under the Supreme Court’s recent guidance,” University of Texas at Austin President Bill Powers said in a statement released after the Court of Appeals decision by three judges.

“We remain committed to assembling a student body at The University of Texas at Austin that brings with it the educational benefits of diversity while respecting the rights of all students. This ruling ensures that our campus, our state and the entire nation will benefit from the exchange of ideas and thoughts that happens when students who are diverse in all regards come together in the classroom, at campus events and in all aspects of campus life,” said Powers.

Shortly after the Court of Appeals decision, the lawyers for Fisher filed a petition for a rehearing in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals en banc, which would require a full hearing by all 15 circuit judges. Only five of the 15 voted in favor of rehearing.

Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement said, “Universities have a special role as drivers of knowledge and change in society. As the Fisher case has demonstrated, the policies and actions of The University of Texas at Austin can have an important impact on diversity, access and equity beyond our campus.”

President Bill Powers addressed the media on July 15, accompanied by Student Government representatives and Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement.
Longhorn Center for Community Engagement: New Name, Renewed Vision

The Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement has changed its name and renewed its vision in the 2014–15 academic year. Now called the Longhorn Center for Community Engagement (LCCE), the unit has acquired the DDCE’s Community Engagement Center (CEC) as part of its portfolio.

The new LCCE focuses on initiating and stewarding ongoing mutually beneficial partnerships between UT Austin and its communities, in addition to its longstanding role as facilitator of civic and community participation among university faculty, staff and students. As part of the new mandate, there is a stronger focus on academic service-learning and research to inform service-learning practices.

According to Dr. Suchitra Gururaj, DDCE assistant vice president, the CEC, located at 1009 E. 11th Street, represents the “front porch” for community engagement at UT Austin. As such, CEC staff are passionate about forming and sustaining partnerships that serve the community and university in a variety of ways.

For example, the CEC incubator program has supported the development of nonprofits whose mission aligns with that of the DDCE. Successfully incubated nonprofits, including Free Minds, the African American Youth Harvest Foundation, Foodways Texas and the African American Cultural Heritage District, have all emerged as stable nonprofits with powerful missions.

The Social Justice Institute, led by DDCE Faculty Fellow Dr. Eric Tang, brings faculty, students, staff and community partners together around social justice-oriented projects including community collaborations, activist research grants, and the Abriendo Brecha conference. Other DDCE faculty fellows participate in the CEC’s community engagement efforts as speakers in the Community Engagement Dialogue Series.

The Regional Foundation Library located in the CEC for the past six years, has been a cornerstone of the center, attracting approximately 2,000 patrons each year and offering a full range of online and print resources to individuals and organizations seeking grants—many of them professors and students.

In addition to community engagement programming through the CEC, the new LCCE is committed to community-based learning and student engagement programming.

LCCE’s community-based learning program enables students to earn course credit as they complete service. There are 154 courses in 26 disciplines in every academic college at UT Austin that incorporate a service component and a curriculum that includes reflection upon that service. As well, community-based learning has been incorporated into select first-year programs, including the First-Year Interest Groups in the McCombs School of Business and first-year courses in the School of Undergraduate Studies. Through these two partnerships alone, LCCE works with 1,500 incoming freshmen, approximately 18 percent of that population.

Students in community-based learning courses at UT have also partnered with community-based learning students at neighboring Huston-Tillotson University and St. Edward’s University in a cohort of the Google Community Leaders Program and of the UT Service Scholars.

Student engagement programming provides students appropriate training so that they may engage in meaningful service outside the classroom. In addition to several days of service offered through the year, the LCCE hosts The Project, a 14-month, student-led community building initiative that enables students, community members, faculty and staff to discuss the priorities of a single underserved Austin-area community as well as plan and design a spectacular day of
service in February that hosts more than 2,000 volunteers. Project students undertake at least 15 hours of training—in cultural competence, facilitation, and team-building, among other topics—prior to the day of service. Their work annually creates more than a $200,000 economic impact on communities including the Rosewood, Dove Springs and Holly/East Cesar Chavez neighborhoods.

Similarly, LCCE staff involved with the newly launched Alternative Breaks (AB) program trains students and student leaders prior to taking them to communities outside Central Texas to undertake short-term service projects. During spring break 2015, AB students will travel to New Orleans to understand that city’s history and its challenges since Hurricane Katrina.

“We want to make sure that community service is more than just a casual volunteer experience,” said Gururaj. “We provide training and leadership-building experiences that ensure our students have a positive educational experience as they work in and learn about communities they serve.”
Longhorn Center for Community Engagement Partners with Google Fiber to Build Student Leaders, Address Community Digital Literacy

The Longhorn Center for Community Engagement (LCCE) in the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) and Google Fiber have forged a partnership that will address digital literacy needs in Austin by empowering students to educate and engage with some of Austin’s most underserved communities.

Forty students representing four academic colleges at The University of Texas at Austin have been selected for the Austin Google Community Leaders Program (CLP) in the inaugural year of the UT Austin partnership. The multi-stakeholder digital inclusion program—anchored by a co-op of Austin’s local universities, the City of Austin and Google Fiber—demonstrates the DDCE’s continued investment in developing and nurturing student leadership outside the Forty Acres.

The CLP provides resources and student assistance to neighborhoods with low Internet usage, exposing residents to the transformative and educational power of the Internet.

*Back row: (L to R) Google mentor, John Mauro, Cynthia Rodriguez and Matthew Ellis.*
*Front row: (L to R) Google mentor, Morgan Hegge, Maureen Ezekor, and John Ortiz.*
*Not pictured: Google mentor A. J. Angus and student team member Destiny Arteaga*
Students from UT Austin, Huston-Tillotson University and St. Edward’s University will continue these efforts throughout the school year, consulting with local nonprofits about technology access and developing comprehensive strategies to increase digital inclusion.

“This multi-disciplinary, multi-institution approach to community-based learning presents an incredible opportunity for our students to have an impactful experience beyond the Forty Acres and to play a meaningful role in working with community partners to change the landscape of Austin,” says DDCE Assistant Vice President Dr. Suchitra Gururaj.

UT Austin CLP students are currently enrolled in community-based learning courses offered in the Moody College of Communication, the McCombs School of Business, the Department of Computer Sciences and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. They will work with organizations as diverse as Breakthrough Austin, Skillpoint Alliance, the Girls Scouts of Central Texas, Habitat for Humanity, and The Thinkery. Google Fiber has agreed to grant $2,000 to each partner nonprofit with the expectation that students and nonprofits work together to decide how the funds will be applied. Assigning these types of responsibilities to students aligns with Google’s commitment to developing a generation of creative thinkers and LCCE’s mission to provide opportunities for students to interact with and learn from Austin’s diverse communities and people.

As members of a city-wide cohort, CLP student participants are required not only to undertake 20 to 25 hours of service with the community partner but also to convene on a monthly basis with their colleagues from the other universities, as well as representatives from Google Fiber and the City of Austin. Students are tasked with contributing to the conversation of budgeting and strategic planning for each nonprofit partner. Advised by service-learning faculty, community leaders, City of Austin staff, DDCE staff and Google mentors, students will develop skills in community building and facilitation.

“Our faculty, students and the LCCE staff are excited for and inspired by the partnership of Google Fiber,” Gururaj said. “I look forward to seeing what innovative ideas result from this collaboration between our students with their enthusiasm and digital expertise, and the communities that we serve. One of our biggest priorities is to provide experiences for students where they can make connections between their coursework and real-world situations. With Google’s help we believe they are gaining valuable exposure to public engagement.”
Soar in Four: Longhorn Center for Academic Excellence Spearheads Student Success Programs

The Longhorn Center for Academic Excellence (LCAE) serves as the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement’s anchor for academic diversity initiatives across campus. Led by Dr. Leonard N. Moore, LCAE staff seek innovative ways to help students succeed.

“Our primary focus has always been on creating structures to help first-generation students and students of color graduate from college,” said Moore, DDCE senior associate vice president and professor of history.

The innovations of Moore and his team have paid off. The Gateway Scholars program, which existed before the DDCE was formed, has grown from 65 students the first year it was in DDCE (2007–08) to 500 students, and is now part of the provost’s four-year graduation initiative led by Dr. David Laude, senior vice provost for enrollment and curriculum services.

Dr. Aileen Bumphus, assistant vice president for academic diversity initiatives, has been instrumental in expanding Gateway Scholars.

“Our vision for LCAE is to provide a world-class college success experience for all of the students who come into our center,” Bumphus said. “This means having all of our programs in the center aligned and linked to a set of commonly shared experiences.”

According to Bumphus, that alignment focuses on a menu of academic services and workshops that include one-on-one academic coaching, tutoring, small study groups and supplemental instruction.

Through participation in smaller learning communities and the academic services Bumphus described, combined with community service and social opportunities plus special events like the Distinguished Lecturer Series and study abroad, freshmen Gateway students are overwhelmingly successful. The average fall 2014 GPA was 3.24. Nearly all Gateway Scholars (98 percent) return for their sophomore year, which is higher than the university rate of 94.5 percent for all freshmen.

LCAE students have the opportunity to study abroad, which helps give them an edge when interviewing for internships and jobs. During the summer 2014, students visited Capetown, South Africa.
Because of the success of Gateway Scholars, Laude’s office asked LCAE staff to coordinate the
Summer Bridge program, an invitation-only program that provides incoming freshman with tools and resources to jumpstart their first year on campus. Along with funding for housing, food, books and a $1,000 scholarship stipend for students who maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout the program, students are provided with invaluable guidance for healthy study habits and academic success.

The provost’s office has also enlisted Moore’s help in recruiting students of color. Moore has taken recruiting to another level, visiting suburban districts that have high populations of students of color such as Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville and Lancaster in the Dallas area. Those events have included information sessions for students in the top 10 percent as well as their parents.

Moore has also—somewhat unconventionally—held recruiting events at Dave & Buster’s in Austin and Houston to attract targeted students and has helped develop new recruiting materials for students of color.

Both Moore and Bumphus acknowledge their success with students lies with a cohesive team of professionals.

“LCAE’s success is highly dependent on a team that is equipped and willing to take on multiple roles in the center,” explained Bumphus. “Team members work collaboratively and are ready to do whatever it takes to ensure student success. That is critical. Our staff is a ‘dream team’ because they embody all of these values and traits.”
Dr. Miyong Kim, DDCE associate vice president for community health engagement and a faculty member in the School of Nursing, will lead the newly established Center for Trans-Disciplinary Collaborative Research in Self-Management Science (TCRSS) funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). NIH awarded $2.4 million to The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing for the collaborative research center designed to improve the health of individuals, families and communities.

Serving as a national model, the center will include a community engagement core to facilitate meaningful participation of community organizations and other health care institutions to solve multiethnic, community-based health care problems.

According to School of Nursing Dean Dr. Alexa Stuifbergen, the school is only one of two schools of nursing selected for this award. She said, “This five-year award will allow us to provide important infrastructure dedicated to facilitating trans-disciplinary collaborative research among investigators in nursing and other disciplines in order to improve self-management science.” Stuifbergen said that Kim “led this truly collaborative effort that represents more than 40 faculty in 14 different academic units across the university.” Individuals from 14 agencies in the greater Austin community also are key collaborators.

“The U.S. population is growing older and becoming more diverse. Technological advances are spreading rapidly and widely, and the core conditions of people’s daily lives are changing dramatically. Our goal is to develop, test and disseminate innovative solutions that acknowledge and incorporate these changes in order to improve health outcomes.”

Much of the research will focus on patient self-management strategies, which are designed to help people with one or more chronic conditions, such as hypertension and cardiovascular diseases, understand how their health problems affect their lives and gain confidence in controlling their symptoms and achieving good health-related outcomes.

Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement, applauded the efforts of Kim who joined the university in 2013 as a thematic faculty hire, an initiative which is administered through the DDCE. “Dr. Kim’s passion for community-based participatory research is an asset to the university’s commitment to transform medical education and healthcare delivery. We were pleased to be involved with her recruitment to UT Austin from Johns Hopkins University.”

In a personal note to Vincent, Stuifbergen wrote, “Please know how much I appreciate the support of your office in helping us recruit Dr. Kim to UT Austin—as you can see, she is making an impact. Your support to our school has made an important difference for us—and for the university.”
New UIL Competitions Help Attract Students with Diverse Interests

At age 104 the University Interscholastic League (UIL) continues to attract new student populations to its academic, sports and music competitions. It also continues to maintain its relevance, and ensure students acquire the skills they need for academic and life success. During the past few years, UIL has added competitions that help meet all of those goals.

With a focus on original research in local communities and the use of primary sources, the Barbara Jordan Essay Competition and the Latino History Essay Competition enrich community histories while encouraging a diversity of student interests. The 2014 competitions offered an array of entries ranging from stories of hometown heroes of South Texas working to transform the medical care of the Latino community, to the retelling of legendary firsts for African Americans in the fields of medicine and aerodynamics.

The following four new pilot competitions will be added to the roster of UIL activities during the 2015–16 school year:

- a robotics event involving mechanical and software engineering, computer programming and mathematics;
- a computer science contest;
- a 15-minute copy editing contest that will boost skills in grammar, spelling, punctuation and Associated Press style; and
- a state mariachi contest.

The robotics and computer science contests will help students strengthen all-important STEM skills and foster collaboration and critical thinking skills, said Dr. David Stevens, UIL academic director.

Similar to the essay competitions, the state-level pilot for mariachi recognizes an important part of the historical and cultural fabric of Texas.

“All of us at UIL are excited about the opportunity to create a state level pilot event for mariachi, a growing music offering in our member schools, said Dr. Brad Kent, UIL director of music. “The pilot could increase the visibility of our schools’ mariachi programs as well as possibly encourage their growth and development, which in turn could create more student engagement in music.”
UT-University Charter School Move to DDCE is Beneficial for All

On May 1, 2014, the University of Texas-University Charter School (UT-UCS) became part of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) with Dr. Melissa M. Chavez at the helm. Chavez is the associate vice president for diversity and community engagement and superintendent of the University of Texas Charter School System.

The charter district serves more than 2,000 students each year in alternative educational programs, kindergarten through grade 12, and includes 14 campuses around the state located in a variety of settings. For example, campuses include residential treatment centers, a shelter for families escaping domestic violence and an elite gymnastics program. About 90 percent of the students are in state care and 96 percent are considered at risk of dropping out.

“We are the district of choice for students who are unable, for a period of time, to benefit from a traditional school setting,” Chavez said. Chavez has brought not only her considerable management experience but her passion for educating all children, regardless of their background or abilities, to UT-UCS. Under Chavez's leadership UT-UCS has made great strides in achieving state recognition for financial accountability and focusing on a strategic plan to help ensure students will achieve academic, social and emotional success.

After several years of low rankings for financial accountability, this fall UT-UCS received superior rankings for accountability and management practices from the Texas Education Agency’s Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas.

The school system's business model was evaluated based on 20 financial indicators such as fiscal responsibility, student/teacher ratio and budgeting. The purpose of the rating system is to ensure that school districts and open-enrollment charter schools are held accountable for the quality of their financial management practices.

Dr. Melissa Chavez’s goal as superintendent of the University Charter School System is to provide all students in the system as high quality of an education as UT Elementary School students receive.
In the past, the school received substandard rankings due to criteria that didn’t particularly fit within its unique business model.

Due to the school’s unique structure, some of the quotas for indicators such as student/teacher ratio and student enrollment can never be met, Chavez explained. To show how the school is far surpassing its former substandard status, she and her staff submitted appeals for several of the indicators. All of the appeals were approved, landing UT-UCS in the top financial rankings.

“We do specialized education in specialized settings, so our business model does not match that of other schools,” Chavez said.

Chavez has also brought an upbeat, cohesive management approach to the UT-UCS team. Dottie Goodman, a veteran AISD principal who is now principle of two UT-UCS campuses said that Chavez’s positive influence is appreciated throughout the system. She tells the story of the first meeting of the school year: “After hearing Dr. Chavez for the first time at the kick-off meeting for the beginning of this school year, one of my teachers remarked to me, ‘I have worked for UT-UCS for three years and this is the first time I have left an opening meeting with the feeling that I am appreciated and valued for the job I do each and every day for my students. I am truly inspired!’”

Soon, the UT-UCS administrative team will office on the UT Elementary School campus, allowing the two DDCE charter schools to collaborate.

Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement believes UT-UCS has found the right home in the DDCE. “Our division’s work with students with disabilities, and the mental health expertise available through our Hogg Foundation for Mental Health will be assets to the charter school’s administration,” he said. “The upcoming administrative move will enable UT-UCS and UT Elementary School to share resources and allow for a greater synergy between the schools which will benefit the students and administration at each school.”

Dr. Melissa Chavez and her team have adopted strategies on all campuses to make sure the needs of every student are met.
New Campaign Aims to Bridge Opportunity Gap for Men of Color

In response to President Barack Obama’s nationwide “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative, the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) has launched the Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color, a ten-year, $6 million campaign aimed at addressing academic and opportunity gaps for young men of color.

“UT Austin has been dedicated to serving young men and women of color for some time, but the call to action of ‘My Brother’s Keeper’ inspired us to advance that objective for young men, as they face unique educational and social challenges,” said Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for diversity and community engagement. “The result is Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color, a hub for our research and mentoring efforts in order to make a local, state and national impact. At the same time, we are redoubling our support for programs for young women of color too, such as our Fearless Leadership Institute and our community partnership with Con Mi MADRE.”

Although more African Americans and Latinos are attending college than ever before, racial disparities in U.S. graduation rates still loom large. This is especially true for young men. National statistics show that African American and Latino males consistently lag behind their white counterparts in graduation rates and test scores. They are also expelled, suspended or drop out of schools at much higher rates, according to data from the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education.

To lead a more positive trend in education, the Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color aims to enhance a range of programs that focus on mentoring and recruitment strategies, such as Project MALES (Mentoring to Achieve Latino Educational Success) and the African American Male Research Initiative (AAMRI).

Launched in 2010, Project MALES includes about 40 UT Austin undergraduate mentors who serve as positive role models for young Latinos in Austin school districts. Mentors are trained in a service-learning course, where they learn how to motivate young men to finish high school, prepare for college and ultimately pursue a better future.

The model for Project MALES is informed by Dr. Victor Sáenz’s research on successful college pathways for Latino males in education. Sáenz is an associate professor in the Department of Educational Administration who has published widely on the topic of Latino males in higher education.

“It is so important for young men of color to have positive role models in their lives, and our mentoring efforts help to connect them to peers who are successful college students,” said Sáenz, who serves as executive director of Project MALES and...
“UT Austin has been dedicated to serving young men and women of color for some time, but the call to action of ‘My Brother’s Keeper’ inspired us to advance that objective for young men, as they face unique educational and social challenges.”

UT Austin graduate student Devin Walker (far right), an advisor in the Longhorn Center for Academic Excellence, catches up with colleagues from Iowa State University and University of Wisconsin during the Black Student-Athlete Conference.

The DDCE partners with Sigma Pi Phi and the University of Wisconsin-Madison on numerous initiatives supporting men of color. The division also supports philanthropic and community programs, such as 100 Black Men, the African American Youth Harvest Foundation and Communities in Schools, to foster the intellectual, social and economic empowerment of young men of color.

“Those of us in higher education must be steadfast in our commitment to address the opportunity gap for young men of color,” said Vincent. “Because DDCE’s commitment to close the opportunity gap includes both academic initiatives and partnerships with community and philanthropic organizations, the Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color is able to engage young men of color across the entire educational spectrum, from Pre-K to Ph.D.”

the Texas Education Consortium for Male Students of Color, a Pre-K–16 consortium for student success that evolved from Project MALES.

“The students we mentor often lack quality access to information and resources they need to get to and excel in college. That’s why our mentoring strategy utilizing near-peer mentoring with a curriculum focused on college-readiness is on target,” he said.

AAMRI, led by Dr. Leonard N. Moore, senior associate vice president for academic diversity initiatives and student engagement, is a faculty-led initiative designed to increase the four-year graduation rate for young men and includes a mentoring component as well.

Division of Diversity and Community Engagement • The University of Texas at Austin
Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color Launched During Black Student-Athlete Conference

The Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color was officially launched January 7, 2015, when athletes, coaches, researchers and university leaders from universities across the nation convened at the Black Student-Athlete Conference. The conference was held on The University of Texas at Austin campus, as part of the Heman Sweatt Symposium on Civil Rights. About 200 attended the conference hosted by the DDCE and two of its units—the African American Male Research Initiative and the Longhorn Campaign for Men of Color. Senior associate vice president Dr. Leonard Moore led the conference planning team.

Ricky Williams, former Longhorns running back and Heisman Trophy winner, and Roosevelt Leaks, UT Austin’s first Black All-American, were among the many big-name speakers who shared insight into the challenges and opportunities facing Black student-athletes in colleges and schools across the country.

The conference was an overwhelming success with crucial conversations around the challenges and opportunities for both male and female Black student-athletes and how to ensure their academic success.

Female athletes and former athletes spoke about a range of topics of importance to women.
1. Retha Swindell, the first African American female athlete at UT Austin who played under Rod Page and Jody Conradt in the 1970s, talked about her experiences coming to UT Austin from East Texas.

2. 1998 Heisman Trophy winner Ricky Williams talked about his career and education. Williams has returned to UT Austin to complete his degree.

3. Participants enjoyed lively discussion between sessions.

4. Former Longhorn women’s basketball coach Jody Conradt discussed integration of sports at UT Austin.

5. Daron Roberts, the founding director of the newly created Center for Sports Leadership and Innovation, discussed character reform among student-athletes.
Since graduating from The University of Texas at Austin in 1988, Byron Anderson has been an active and enthusiastic alumnus. He is a present member of the Texas Exes Houston chapter, has served on the Texas Exes Advisory Council, and has served two terms as chair of the Texas Exes Black Alumni Network. However, it was the work of the DDCE that eventually attracted his focus, contributions and loyalty.

“When Dr. Vincent first came to UT we met and he shared his vision,” Anderson recalled. “It was so positive and impactful, and it made me want to get involved more and work with him to achieve his goals...cultivating a space where global education, diversity and inclusion is celebrated is so important. I am most proud to be a part of a group of people who are truly a voice for the university.”

Anderson is a fan of many of the DDCE programs, including the Gateway Scholars program, which supports first-generation college students and students from low-income backgrounds once they are enrolled at UT Austin. “Your experience has a lot to do with your success at the school, and so it’s wonderful to help these students get integrated and set goals early on,” Anderson said.

A member of the DDCE Advisory Council since 2010, Anderson has served as an advisory council ambassador for the Project Worldwide, a partnership between the DDCE’s Longhorn Center for Community Engagement and the Texas Exes. Anderson has not only given his time and talent—he is also a sustaining member of the DDCE Vice President’s Excellence Fund. He recently made one of the first planned gifts to the division. Through planned giving, Anderson hopes to build a legacy that exceeds the notion of “time, talent and treasure,” and is decisively transformative. “If you give service that is dependent on your time and efforts, then it stops with you, but with planned giving, the impact keeps on going even when you’re gone.”

“DDCE Advisory Council members believe in planned giving to help future generations of Diverse Longhorns”

This past year two Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) Advisory Council members have made generous gifts that will help the DDCE continue its good work for years to come. Such gifts are considered crucial in helping The University of Texas at Austin become the best public research university in the nation, providing discretionary funds, scholarships, program endowments and chairs and professorships.

Why UT Alum Byron Anderson Believes in Planned Giving

Since graduating from The University of Texas at Austin in 1988, Byron Anderson has been an active and enthusiastic alumnus. He is a present member of the Texas Exes Houston chapter, has served on the Texas Exes Advisory Council, and has served two terms as chair of the Texas Exes Black Alumni Network. However, it was the work of the DDCE that eventually attracted his focus, contributions and loyalty.

“DDCE Advisory Council member Byron Anderson rallied alumni to participate in The Project Worldwide.”

“Byron Anderson has been an active and enthusiastic alumnus.”
Carolyn Goldston Demonstrates the Impact of Legacy and Planned Giving

DDCE Advisory Council member Carolyn Goldston came to The University of Texas at Austin from a small town in West Texas in 1953. She quickly grew smitten with the Capitol City and the open-minded culture cultivated by the university.

Although she didn't graduate from UT Austin, she did marry into the burnt orange bloodline. Because her husband was a graduate of the UT Law School, Goldston recalled that most of their friends were alumni and university faculty, driving a social life that revolved around campus conversation.

Inspired by such an environment, Goldston launched her civic ambition and contribution to community advocacy by assuming leadership roles. She became a board member of UT Austin’s YWCA/YMCA, establishing her life-long commitment to community engagement and social justice. Goldston has since served on many other boards and commissions benefitting Austin and Travis County residents.

This lifelong consideration for the community encouraged Goldston to allocate part of her estate to the DDCE. The choice of planned giving was done with thoughtful intent, mandating that her gift be allocated to the advancement and education of men of color. She has been part of the effort to foster their success since her days of giving to the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc., which supported Thurgood Marshall’s efforts in the field in the 1950s and 1960s. Goldston's gift will be entrusted to DDCE’s initiatives focused on men of color to ensure that the often-overlooked and underserved population will always have her support.

“As I am a card-carrying feminist, this specific gift may come as a surprise to some,” Goldston said. But given her commitment and history with the university and passion for the work of the DDCE, it comes as no surprise that she has planned her impact and influence.

“Planned giving just made sense,” Goldston said. “The DDCE has a pantheon of good work, and there’s a perfect match for everyone.”
GOOD NUMBERS, GOOD NEWS

Campus Culture

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
32 social justice and diversity presentations made by Diversity Education Initiative

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY
40 workshops and presentations reached 1,040 students, faculty and staff
19,627 students, faculty and staff reached through Academic Diversity Initiatives programs

GENDER AND SEXUALITY CENTER
2,778 persons served by 112 educational programs
1,231 advising sessions
1,185 attended Gender and Sexuality Center programs

MULTICULTURAL ENGAGEMENT CENTER
2,200 attended Multicultural Engagement Center events

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
13,000 accommodation letters printed for students
2,104 students registered with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)
500 trained by SSD’s disABILITY Advocate Program

Community Engagement

THE PROJECT
1,859 volunteers during one day of service
$294,300 in economic impact for the Holly Street neighborhood

AMERICORPS VISTA
21 AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers at UT
13 organizations served in five cities

HOGG FOUNDATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH
$10 million awarded to Houston area providers to meet the needs of transitioning youth ages 14 to 25

HEARTS OF TEXAS CAMPAIGN
$615,865 raised by the Hearts of Texas

UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE
2.6 million students participated in University Interscholastic League activities, 2013–14 school year
591 scholarships given by UIL
$1.2 million in scholarships issued
Education Pipeline

LONGHORN CENTER FOR SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

98% of SPURS participants matriculated to a post-secondary institution

100% of SPURS and ChemBridge teachers found workshops prepared them to teach college-level curriculum to students

454 in-school workshops conducted by UT Outreach–Austin

96% of seniors from UT Outreach–Rio Grande Valley admitted to four-year institutions

98% of Gateway freshmen return as sophomores (compared to 94.5% of all UT freshmen)

3.24 Average overall GPA of fall Gateway freshmen

UNIVERSITY CHARTER SCHOOL

2,000 students served annually by UT-University Charter School

Help Raise Our Numbers

TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF DDCE VISIT:

ddce.utexas.edu/giving

TO MAKE A GIFT BY PHONE, CALL:

(512) 232-2930

TO MAKE A GIFT BY MAIL, SEND CHECKS (PAYABLE TO UT AUSTIN) TO:

The University of Texas at Austin
Division of Diversity and Community Engagement
Office of Development
2304 Whitis Avenue, G4600
Austin, TX 78712

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US BY EMAIL:

ddce@utexas.edu

Unless noted, all data presented here is for the 2013-14 academic year.
### STRATEGIC GOALS from the DDCE Strategic Plan 2011–2016

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<td>Advance efforts to create an inclusive, accessible, and welcoming culture on campus.</td>
<td>Cultivate mutually beneficial community-university partnerships that further the mission of the university to serve Texas and beyond with an emphasis on historically and currently underserved communities.</td>
<td>Create a successful pathway for first-generation and underrepresented students as they progress from Pre-K through graduate and professional school.</td>
<td>Serve as a national model for the creation of knowledge about and best practices for diversity and community engagement through innovative scholarship, teaching, policy development, programs, and services.</td>
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