CTN Congratulates Over 30 Ascender Fall Graduates

This holiday season the best gift of all is the gift of our CTN Ascender graduates. We know that a degree offers better career opportunities and job security, and that a degree is an investment in the future not only for themselves, but for their families and their communities. We know a college education extends beyond one generation and that the future is brighter for all of us because of their success.

Thirty-Two STC Ascender Scholars Receive Their Degree

Thirty-two STC Ascender scholars received their Associate’s degree this December. There were 14 graduates from Pecan campus including Ivonne Bravo in Business Administration; Zanaida Grijalva in Criminal Justice; Danny Amaya in Criminal Justice; Saide Garcia in Secondary Education; Karla Leal in Interdisciplinary Studies; Julia Cortez in Criminal Justice; Ashley Galloway in Kinesiology; Sergio Lopez in Criminal Justice; Berenice Paramo in Elementary Ed; Edgar Flores in Psychology; Saraid Herrera in Business Administration; Destiny N. Perez in Interdisciplinary Studies; Jazmin Castaneda in Elementary Education; and Kody Medina in Criminal Justice.

Nine Starr campus Ascender scholars included Julio Corro, Kinesiology; Ruth Hernandez, Criminal Justice; Briselly Lopez, Criminal Justice; Selina Perez, AAT-Elementary; Luis Salinas, Criminal Justice; Yaritza Trevino, Accounting; Hector Ali Ochoa, Associate of Applied Science; Erendira Garcia, Business Administration; and Yanira Flores, Criminal Justice.

“Keep your hope, your goals, and your dreams in clear focus. We need you more than ever to continue your schooling, to continue to succeed in your studies, to graduate and continue your studies in four-year institutions or go on to successful careers, to serve as role models to family members and friends to help them find the rewards of higher education, and to open doors of opportunity for your family and your loved ones.” - Message from CTN Board Chair, Rogelio Saenz
There were nine grads from Mid-Valley campus: Cyanna Cano, Lizbeth Betancourt, Rolando Najera, Benjamin Rangel, Samantha Aguilar, Julissa Infante, Yurani Villarreal, Michelle Carrizales, and Alexandro Saenz.

Two Ascender students from Austin Community College, Sandra Orduna and Joesly Alvarez, graduated on December 12th. Valeria Bravo, was San Antonio College’s first Ascender graduate since the program began on campus in 2018. She got her associate's degree in psychology and is currently applying to universities to earn her bachelor's and then her master's degree before continuing on to pursue her Ph.D.

Two Former Ascender Students Receive Bachelor’s Degree

Former PAC Ascender student from the 2017 cohort, Yailet Guadalupe Gomez, recently received her Bachelor’s degree in Healthcare Administration from Texas A&M University San Antonio. She commented, “While attending Palo Alto College, I joined the Catch the Next Ascender program, and I am glad I did because it helped me by guiding me towards accomplishing my goals. Catch the Next allowed me to meet many people that support the dreams of us students. It also made me feel confident that I could achieve anything that I proposed to myself. I appreciate everything Catch the Next provided me with and everyone that takes part in the program for their tremendous support.”

Former STC Ascender student from the 2017 cohort, Marco Espinoza, graduated with a Bachelor’s degree from STC in Organizational Leadership on December 12th. He commented, “The Ascender program made a huge impact in my life. This program motivated me to develop my talents and skills and use them not only in school but also in the outside environment. This program also motivated me to use my leadership skills, and I started another club called Campus Ministry International (Bible study club). Catch the Next also helped me to work as a team. Every semester Mrs. Esmeralda Macias would connect me with other Catch the Next students so that we could work together and achieve our goals. Finally, the motivation conferences that I attended in Austin and the amazing people who made the conference possible, really helped me achieve my goal to obtain my bachelor's. Being involved in this program made my college life easier and the most important thing was they made me feel like a family member.”
Austin Community College Hosts Virtual Posada
By Carmen Hernandez Garcia

ACC hosted a virtual Ascender Posada event on Friday, December 4th. The event’s hostesses, Alejandra Polick, Manager of Hispanic Outreach Projects, and Megan Diaz, the Outreach Specialist for the Ascender Program, both welcomed the Ascender students and mentors to the end of the semester by explaining the meaning and symbolism of the Posada. Alejandra described how religiously important the Posadas are to families who celebrate Christmas every year, and the symbolism it applies to the Ascender program’s students. “The Posada describes our students being able to knock door to door in search of opportunities,” Alejandra explained.

The Posada event began with Megan going over the agenda, starting with this semester’s program overview. During this part of the presentation, she highlighted the main courses that Ascender students completed, including ENGL Comp 1301, INRW, and EDUC 1300 Learning Frameworks. She explained in detail the main events that they also attended, such as the Mentor/Mentee Matching Event, and Noche de Familia.

For the second part of our event, Alejandra and Megan provided the students with a list of tips and advice for the upcoming spring semester. They included main points on how to overcome procrastination, planning agendas and classes in the best ways to help students grow, how to use available resources, and most importantly, students rewarding themselves when achieving goals, no matter how big or small.

Next Megan gave the students a reflection activity, to concentrate on the things they liked the most about this semester as well as the things they thought they could improve on. Approximately four students and four mentors shared the ups and downs they experienced throughout the semester, including how they stayed motivated even during challenging times, individually as well as a group.

During the end of the Posada event, Megan went over important event dates for the Spring Semester of 2021 and finished off the presentation with a game of Kahoot and an Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest, which Ascender Student, Samantha, along with her adorable, dressed up pit bull, won.

SAC Ascender Student Wins SLAM Contest

SAC Ascender student Sophia Farias took first place in a Short Story SLAM contest with her short story: "Forever Young." Ascender’s Siobhan Mcgurk also participated with her own short story: "My First Love." To hear their stories, go to https://sacguide.libguides.com/LCR2020

Ascender students participated in writing workshops to prepare for the event where they gained professional and expert guidance on writing their own short story told in a way that engages their audience through inspiration, motivation, triumph, and perseverance. Guest judges for the Short Story SLAM included Chibbi, Eddie Vega, Florinda Flores-Brown, and Victoria Guerrero. Cash prizes were awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners of $500, $300, and $200, respectively. Competitors were judged on four criteria of performance, content, production, and duration.

The Short Story SLAM contest was held after San Antonio College Library held their first annual Fall 2020 Library Common Read of the Moth Radio Hour's book: Occasional Magic, True Stories about Defying the Impossible. Throughout the course of the semester, Ascender students engaged in vibrant and interactive discussions surrounding readings in the Occasional Magic book, which conjured
understanding for the human condition. Students connected with the various writers in the book, and to each other, as they read the stories. To add further inspiration to the event, Rio Grande Valley of South Texas poet and spoken word artist, Eddie Vega, also known as the Taco-Poet of Texas, gave participants an evening of sharing his expertise and moving stories.

To Provide Relief from the Effects of COVID

**CTN Creates SteppingStones to Student Success Manual**

Recognizing the needs of students negatively impacted by COVID-19, and in an effort to provide immediate relief assistance information for students enrolled in two-year colleges in Texas, Catch the Next, has created *The SteppingStones to Student Success* manual. The manual was created by PAC instructors, Dan Rodriguez and Yolanda Reyna, and translated into Spanish by CTN consultant, Alfredo Torres. This resource manual is designed for students who need access to, and would benefit immediately from services brought about as a result of the pandemic. Typically, students would use this resource manual to find links to campus financial resources (if any), other emergency financial resources or other “in-kind” resources provided by the community or distributed by the college, and finally, counseling or mental health resources.

Relief assistance information is a general concept, and can include emergency funds in the form of financial aid, community support, support from business and industry, community mental health resources, and counseling services provided by the college.

“Our tool kit is our gift to Texas students and their families to get through the possible hard times ahead with COVID,” commented Dr. Chavez, CTN CEO. *The SteppingStones to Student Success* resource manual can be found at [https://steppingstones.pressbooks.com/](https://steppingstones.pressbooks.com/) or in Spanish at [https://steppingstonesenespanol.pressbooks.com/](https://steppingstonesenespanol.pressbooks.com/)

**CTN to Host First Student Charla Zoom Session with Rodriguez & Reyna**

CTN will host the first of our new monthly student charla zoom sessions on January 28th at 1pm. This first session is titled “Steppingstones to Student Success: New Year; New Me.” PAC professors and counselors, Dr. Dan Rodriguez and Dr. Yolanda Reyna, will introduce CTN’s *Steppingstones to Student Success* manual which they created. They will explain the resources it includes and how to use the manual. There will also be an exercise and discussion on setting mental health goals, and door prizes. This is a first in a series of career and academic student zoom charlas.

**Catch the Next Receives Invest in Others Grant for Change**

Catch the Next was the recipient of one of six grants awarded by the Invest in Others Charitable Foundation (“Invest in Others”) in December. Grants were available to organizations that are working to create and enhance opportunities for communities of color, providing essential services to causes such as social justice, employment and education—with the goal of leveling the playing field and providing life-changing opportunities to underserved communities. Lillian Gray, Assistant Vice President, Community Relations Manager at Bank of
America Merrill in Austin, applied for the grant to support Ascender, which received $25,000 in funding from Invest in Others.

The Invest in Others Grants for Change Program was introduced in 2020 with the goal of funding specific programs or projects for nonprofits that display a measurable commitment to corporate, social, and community contributions that enhance opportunities for Black people and other underserved groups. Nearly 300 applications were received and recipients were selected based on the impact the grant would have on the nonprofit and the community it serves.

About the Invest in Others Charitable Foundation

The inspiration for the Invest in Others Charitable Foundation came directly from the financial advisors who invest in others by giving back to their communities with overwhelming generosity and dedication. Since its founding in 2006, Invest in Others has amplified these efforts by providing a platform for advisors and other financial professionals to increase awareness, visibility, and funding to their favorite nonprofits. Over the past 14 years, IiO has given more than $3 million to 300+ charities across a variety of causes, including health and wellness, education and youth programs, arts and culture, hunger and poverty prevention, military and veterans and more. For more information, visit investinothers.org or follow Invest in Others on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

Catch the Next Receives Hispanic Impact Fund Grant

Catch the Next was one of 12 nonprofit organizations selected as this year's Hispanic Impact Fund grant partners. CTN received $5,000 in the Job Skills and Entrepreneurship category. Other recipients in this category included Con Mi MADRE, E4 Youth and Grameen America.

The Hispanic Impact Fund exists to support the economic security and advancement of Hispanic Central Texans, an essential priority for the future of the region. By leveraging the assets, resilience and strength of the Latino community, the investment is in the potential of future leaders and entrepreneurs.

The Hispanic Impact Fund is part of Austin Community Foundation which was created through the generosity of one woman, Fannie Gray Files Leo. She wanted a way to provide for her favorite charities and upon her death, she earmarked five percent of her estate ($30,000) to create Austin Community Foundation.

Emily Rodriguez Completes CTN Internship

Emily Rodriguez completed a fall internship for Catch the Next during which she was able to assist in the organization's fall fundraising efforts and learned more about the organization's missions and values.

Emily is a Certified Advisor with San Antonio College. She is currently pursuing a Master in Higher Education Administration. She received her AA in Liberal Arts from Palo Alto College. During her time at Palo Alto, she was a member of the Shutterbugs photography club, and was a graduate of the Student Leadership Institute (SLI) for the Alamo colleges. After PAC, she transferred to UTSA where she graduated in 2018 with her Bachelor of Public Administration, minor in Nonprofit Management. Before working at San Antonio College, Emily worked as a Content Moderator with TaskUs. Emily was also peer advisor at the Alamo Colleges, where she worked closely with TRiO. Her role with TRiO was to assist students and the public with information regarding processes for enrollment. She then left her role with TRiO to work as a Technical Support Advisor for Apple. During her time working with Apple, she assisted
various customers with technical issues on their iOS, and MacOS devices. Lastly, she interned at UTSA as part of the UT Center for Enhancing Philanthropy’s summer internship. During this time, she received hands-on experience in higher education fundraising, working with various departments within UTSA’s External Relations. Emily has a passion for reading and is an avid book collector.

CTN College News

San Antonio College Offers New Four-Year Nursing Program

San Antonio College will soon offer a new program leading to a bachelor’s of science degree in nursing. The first of its kind at Alamo Colleges, the “RN to BSN” program will enable licensed registered nurses who already have a two-year associate degree to complete a course of study resulting in a bachelor’s degree.

“This is a major milestone for us,” said SAC President Dr. Robert Vela. “RN to BSN will further enhance SAC’s reputation as a leader in nursing education and help us to be even more intentional in our mission to serve the San Antonio community.”

The bachelor of science in nursing degree program has received approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The commission has authorized a substantive change committee to visit the institution. The first cohort is projected for Fall 2021.

Founded in 1967, SAC’s nursing program is the largest in San Antonio, offering students a two-year course of study to earn an associate of applied science degree in nursing. (https://www.alamo.edu/sac/news-events/)

PAC Receives Sizable Contribution from MacKenzie Scott

Palo Alto College is the recipient of an eight-figure gift from author and philanthropist, MacKenzie Scott. This marks the largest one-time donation in the college’s history. This sizable contribution is a game-changer for Palo Alto College – a Hispanic-Serving Institute – which has emerged as a difference-maker in the community, impacting the lives of over 150,000 students in its 35-year history.

Teaching and Learning for Student Success Webinars

January’s Webinar To Feature

January’s webinar is scheduled for January 21st at 3 pm and will feature Dr. Cristobal Salinas. His presentation is titled “The Use of the Term “Latinx.”

If you have any questions, please email Erin Doran at erin.doran@catchthenext.org.
In case you missed previous sessions or would like to review the resources, check out our Teaching and Learning for Student Success Monthly Webinar playlist on the Catch the Next YouTube Channel.
“I am deeply humbled by Ms. MacKenzie Scott’s generosity and thank her for entrusting and empowering us to accelerate progress,” said Dr. Robert Garza, president of Palo Alto College. “This gift is a testament to the impact of Palo Alto College in the community and will allow us to enhance support for students in three different areas including scholarship assistance, student and community advocacy, and continued access to higher education.”

The College will allocate the unrestricted funds to three areas of need: 1) scholarships for AlamoPROMISE students – an Alamo Colleges District program, which eliminates financial barriers to higher education, making a college degree a reality; 2) programming provided through the S.H.A.R.E. Center, an on-campus resource that helps address students’ basic needs, like food and healthcare; and 3) Educate South – a Palo Alto College-led initiative to be announced in early 2021, that will focus on beginning educational awareness at the earliest years by building public and private partnerships that create and sustain a college-going culture.

“I would like to congratulate Dr. Garza and the entire Palo Alto College family for being recognized with this very generous gift. In this season of giving and joy, is provides all of us at Palo Alto College and the Alamo Colleges District a very special reason to be thankful and hopeful for the future, at the end of a year when hope and faith in our future is sorely needed,” Alamo Colleges Chancellor Dr. Mike Flores.

Jackson Joins THECB as Assistant Commissioner of Workforce Ed

Dr. Tina Marie Jackson recently accepted the position of the Assistant Commissioner of Workforce Education at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. In this role she works with all aspects of career and technical workforce initiatives and programs, including administration of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Most recently she served as the District Director of Developmental Education at Collin College. In this role she worked district wide on issues related to developmental education, completion and guided pathways to careers. She also presented at Catch the Next professional developmental trainings.

In March 2019, Jackson’s Developmental Education Program received the “2019 Promising Program Award” by the National Association of Developmental Education. In July 2018, Jackson was one of only 20 individuals across the United States selected for the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE) Leadership and Mentoring Institute. Dr. Jackson worked as the statewide coordinator of Community College Programs at the University of Texas at Austin for five years. Helping to redesign developmental math throughout all 50 community colleges in the state of Texas. Jackson also served as Associate Dean of Science Technology Engineering & Math (STEM) at Dallas County Community College District. In 2013, Tina was named a Jackson Scholar by the University Council for Educational Administration. In 2012, Jackson was awarded a Community College Leadership Fellowship from the University of Texas at Austin. In 2012, she also received an award from the Association for the Study of Higher Education to continue her research on STEM Workforce Development in Community Colleges focusing on students of color. Jackson serves as Vice President of Programs on the state board for the Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education overseeing legislative issues impacting higher education. Dr. Jackson holds a Bachelor’s
Degree in Science, a Master’s Degree in Education from the University of Minnesota and a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Texas at Austin.

Garcia, Director of RGV Mentorship Program, Publishes Book

Thomas Ray Garcia, mentor to STC graduate and Yale senior Victoria Quintanilla, and his partner, Matt Eventoff, are working on a children's book project on public speaking. The first book, *Speechless*, is currently in English, Spanish, and Portuguese and they are working to publish their second book and have the series in more languages. The goal of this book series is to provide books completely free to children and make these books as accessible as possible. Moreover, helping children get over their fear of public speaking and eventually adding characters in this book series reflective of their heritage and in a language they speak with loved ones at home, also drives this project.

In *Speechless*, eight-year-old Amelia Martinez is terrified to deliver a speech at the Grand Oratory. However, when the intolerant Mr. Rhetorick steals the village’s voices, Amelia must use her public speaking skills to save Voz from eternal silence. On her quest, Amelia gains confidence at every turn, from speaking to forest animals to finding her own voice. *Speechless* combines the fantastical and pragmatic in a tale that inspires children to stand up and speak!

Garcia is a writer and poet from Pharr, Texas. At Princeton University, he received the Ward Mathis Short Story Prize for his U.S.-Mexico borderlands fiction. He is a Gates Millennium Scholar and Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow whose research focuses on mobility in American Literature. He is also the founder and Executive Director of the College Scholarship Leadership Access Program (CSLAP), which hosts college access events and provides near-peer mentorship to students in the Rio Grande Valley.

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### Student Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>Scholarship</td>
<td>Calling high school and college students! Invest in your future, and apply for one of our Texas Farm Bureau scholarships today! Deadline is March 5, 2021. Learn more about the scholarship: <a href="https://texasfarmbureau.org/tfb-scholarships-available-to-high-school-college-students/">https://texasfarmbureau.org/tfb-scholarships-available-to-high-school-college-students/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>Texas Internship Challenge</td>
<td>#Students! Need an #Internship? Check out the Texas Internship Challenge at <a href="ow.ly/RFbA50CQrT1">ow.ly/RFbA50CQrT1</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>TAMU Opportunity</td>
<td>AMU Law Students: Gain a global perspective, and apply for a Texas A&amp;M Law Global Lawyering Field Course. The deadline is January 18, 2021. Visit <a href="https://hubs.li/H0CvXTb0">hubs.li/H0CvXTb0</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>Scholarship Program</td>
<td>The @StDavidsFDN's scholarship program offers comprehensive support to Central Texas students pursuing health professions. Students receive financial assistance for</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>Research Opportunity</td>
<td>up to seven years as well as mentorship, tutoring, and mental health services. Apply here: buff.ly/2KPdfog</td>
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<td><a href="https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/reu/">https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/reu/</a></td>
<td>NSF REU Site: Research Institute in Sociology and Social Inequality</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Dates: June and July, 2021</td>
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<td>Stipend, room, board, and program travel provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>Scholarship Opportunity</td>
<td>Undergraduate Students! Application Deadline for the 2021 Ernest F. Hollings</td>
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<td>Undergraduate Scholarship is February 1, 2021! For eligibility requirements &amp; to apply online</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/hollings-scholarship">https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/hollings-scholarship</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>Our friends @CodingItForward just launched applications for their 2021 Civic Digital Fellowship. They’re looking for students with tech skills to modernize government technology! Learn more and apply for #CDF21 by 1/24: <a href="http://cdf21.com/about">cdf21.com/about</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>DACA Scholarship</td>
<td>The scholarship will cover tuition and fees to a maximum of $16,500 for an associate degree and $33,000 for a bachelor’s degree at one of more than 70 partner colleges. Some recipients will also receive an additional $1,000 per year for books, supplies, and transportation. SAC is a college partner of TheDream.US program.</td>
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<td>Applications close Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021. For more information and to apply, visit <a href="https://www.thedream.us/scholarships/national-scholarship/guidelines/">https://www.thedream.us/scholarships/national-scholarship/guidelines/</a></td>
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**Dept of Education Extends Student Loan Relief Due to COVID-19**

On Dec. 4, the Department of Education announced the federal student loan administrative forbearance and 0% interest rate have been extended to Jan. 31, 2021, to provide relief during the COVID-19 emergency. Back in August, Secretary DeVos directed Federal Student Aid (FSA) to extend student loan relief to borrowers through Dec. 31, 2020. Borrowers with federally held student loans now will have their payments automatically suspended until the end of January 2021 without penalty. Borrowers will continue to have the option to make payments if they so choose. Doing so will allow borrowers to pay off their loans more quickly and at a lower cost. This action continues to extend the actions taken by Secretary DeVos at the start of the national emergency and maintained under law by the CARES Act, which allow borrowers to temporarily defer their payments without accruing interest.

**Federal Student Aid Enhances Two Online Tools**

Federal Student Aid (FSA) has enhanced two online tools: the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Help Tool and the Loan Simulator. The redesigned PSLF Help Tool features a modernized interface and revised format to help borrowers more easily determine their eligibility for the PSLF Program, including a new, single PSLF Form combining the employment certification form and the forgiveness application. The new Loan Simulator has a “Borrow More” feature that allows borrowers to determine how taking out additional federal student loans — for continuing in their current programs of study or enrolling in a new one — will affect their monthly payment amount. Throughout 2021, more features and tools will be introduced to improve customers’ understanding of and interactions with Title IV aid programs.
Department of Education Releases Free FAFSA Form

The Department of Education has released the 2021-22 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form. Students and parents can easily complete the form via fafsa.gov on a desktop or mobile device. This year, enhanced help topics provide even more guidance through the form, and, as a result of user feedback, many financial help topics on fafsa.gov now feature images of the forms with relevant line numbers visually highlighted to help applicants navigate the FAFSA form.

The Internal Revenue Service Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) remains the fastest way for applicants to enter tax return information accurately on the FAFSA form.

The Department provides other tools and resources designed to help students complete and submit the FAFSA form and make informed choices. The Annual Student Loan Acknowledgment provides links to the College Scorecard, where students can estimate their post-completion starting salary based on the school they plan to attend and the program in which they will enroll. The Department’s Homeroom blog also contains posts with helpful information, including:

- 7 Things You Need Before You Fill Out the 2021–22 FAFSA® Form
- 8 Steps to Filling Out the FAFSA® Form

DHs and USCIS Accepting Initial Requests for DACA Again

DHs and USCIS have updated their websites to indicate that they will start:

- “Accepting first-time requests for consideration of deferred action under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) based on the terms of the DACA policy in effect prior to September 5, 2017, and in accordance with the Court’s December 4, 2020, order;
- Accepting DACA renewal requests based on the terms of the DACA policy in effect prior to September 5, 2017, and in accordance with the Court’s December 4, 2020, order;
- Accepting applications for advance parole documents based on the terms of the DACA policy prior to September 5, 2017, and in accordance with the Court’s December 4, 2020, order;
- Extending one-year grants of deferred action under DACA to two years; and
- Extending one-year employment authorization documents under DACA to two years.”

Students Can Find Resources on Get Schooled Website

Get Schooled, a national non-profit organization dedicated to helping young people get to college, find first jobs, and succeed in both, has several resources on their website. There are articles, videos, and downloadable resources to help students start strong and create a solid foundation for the upcoming months. From distance learning tips to learning how to ask for help, these resources are created for students to help them succeed in college. https://getschooled.com/journey/future-focused-tx-content/creating-a-successful-first-semester/
Texas A&M Offers Summer Research Opportunity

The purpose of Texas A&M College of Medicine’s Summer Research Program is to give undergraduate students from any institution who have an interest in pursuing a future career in biomedical research the opportunity to work in a laboratory and perform a research project during the summer. The 10-week program consists of students working closely with Texas A&M University College of Medicine faculty on research projects in basic or clinical science disciplines. Selected participants are matched with a faculty mentor in their area of interest and will assist with a research project gaining insight into the development and implementation of biomedical research.

The Summer Research Program application is located on the Texas A&M University Health Science Center's BAMF system. Select applications then add Admissions - Summer Research Program 2021. Undergraduate student applicants are required to submit official transcript(s) and two letters of recommendation in addition to submitting the online application. The deadline for receipt of the application, transcript(s), and letters of recommendation is Feb. 9, 2021.

It is the applicant's responsibility to have official transcript(s) and two recommendation letters (signed and on letterhead) sent to the following email or address by Feb. 9, 2021.

Organization Offers Resources for Financial Literacy

Annuity.org believes when students learn financial literacy at an early age it helps them to make astute decisions about their personal finances, smart financial behavior leads to financially secure lives. Now, more than ever, is a great time for students to hone in on this skill while they are learning from home. Their site covers things like: Budgeting - Filling out a FAFSA request for college; How Student Loans Work; and Financially planning for your future and more. Please take a look at our student resource here: www.annuity.org/financial-literacy/students/

Professional Opportunities

The following professional development opportunities highlight grant and funding opportunities, conference opportunities, and information for theory, research and practice. I encourage you to forward any information that would provide wonderful opportunities to our team or students by emailing me at stacy.ybarra@catchthenext.org.

Thank You,
Stacy Ybarra Evans
Catch the Next

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Activity Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>12/22/2020</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td><strong>ATTN: TEXAS TEACHERS</strong> Beginning in February, @humanitiestexas will hold a number of free professional development webinar series covering central topics in U.S. history, Texas history, and English language arts. Register now at bit.ly/38rz5GL! #htxedu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12/22/2020 Call for Proposals @TXDigLibrary’s Texas Conference on Digital Libraries 2021 Call for Proposals is now available. Submissions due January 29. [https://www.tdl.org/tdl-events/tcdl/2021-tcdl/](https://www.tdl.org/tdl-events/tcdl/2021-tcdl/)

12/22/2020 Call for Proposals Call for Chapters: Impact of School Shootings on Classroom Culture, Curriculum, & Learning Proposals Submission: February 23, 2021 Full Chapters Due: April 8, 2021 Contact Dr. Gordon Crews University of Texas Rio Grande Valley gordon.crews@utrgv.edu [https://www.igi-global.com/publish/call-for-papers/call-details/4441](https://www.igi-global.com/publish/call-for-papers/call-details/4441)

12/22/2020 Call for proposals The University of Texas Medical Branch #RCMAR (UTMB) announce their call for #pilot proposals request for applications. Applications are encouraged from faculty who are interested in conducting #research on #health of older #minority adults. Learn more: ow.ly/Vib550Ch8xK

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**Report Provides Best Practices for Financial Literacy**

The U.S. Department of the Treasury released a report on behalf of the Financial Literacy and Education Commission (FLEC). The report, *Best Practices for Financial Literacy and Education at Institutions of Higher Education*, provides recommendations for higher education institutions to deliver effective financial literacy education and resources to help students make informed decisions and avoid pitfalls associated with financing education. [Read more](#)

**Opportunities for Fully Funded Masters and PhD Scholarships**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Scholarship Name</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Fulbright Scholarship</td>
<td>Masters &amp; PhD</td>
<td>Multiple Universities</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>Feb-Oct of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Austrian Scholarships</td>
<td>Masters &amp; PhD</td>
<td>Multiple Universities</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>January of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Aga Khan Foundation Scholarship</td>
<td>Masters &amp; PhD</td>
<td>Multiple Universities</td>
<td>Aga Khan Foundation</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>March of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Chevening Scholarships</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>All Universities of UK</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>November of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Endeavour Scholarships</td>
<td>Masters &amp; PhD</td>
<td>Multiple Universities in Australia</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>June of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>OFID Scholarship</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Any accredited University/College around the world</td>
<td>Any Country</td>
<td>Science and development</td>
<td>May of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Australian Development Scholarships</td>
<td>Bachelors &amp; Masters &amp; PhD</td>
<td>Multiple Universities</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>April of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Swedish Scholarship</td>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>Swedish Universities</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>Jan-Feb of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>VLSI-UOS Scholarships</td>
<td>Training &amp; Masters</td>
<td>Belgian Flemish university &amp; university college</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Multiple Fields</td>
<td>October of every year</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>NZAID Scholarship</td>
<td>Masters &amp; PhD</td>
<td>Multiple Universities</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Multiple Fields</td>
<td>March of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>DAAD Scholarship</td>
<td>Masters &amp; PhD</td>
<td>German Universities</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>Aug-Oct of every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Singapore-Industry Scholarship</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Top Universities of Singapore</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>All Fields</td>
<td>March of every year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
South Texas College
Mid Valley Campus, Weslaco
Pecan Campus, McAllen
Starr Campus, Rio Grande City

Alamo Colleges, San Antonio
Palo Alto College
Northeast Lakeview College
San Antonio College

Austin Community College, Austin
Highland Campus
Riverside Campus
Hays Campus
South Campus
Northridge Campus

About Our Newsletter

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