

2014

Hispanic Austin Leadership



PROJECT FUTURO



**Greater Austin Hispanic
Chamber of Commerce**

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The Education Team

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Executive Summary

The Need for a Choice in Education

We live in a society that defines career success as one achieved in a professional, white-collar field. The unfortunate downside of this view is that a career path in a trade or blue-collar profession has developed a stigma of being of lower value, chosen by only those that are incapable of pursuing a white-collar position.

In reality, many of the skills most needed to compete in the global market of the 21st century are technical skills that fall into the technical/vocational area. The absence of a vocationally skilled workforce is costing the U.S. economically in the form of job loss to outsourcing. Vocational skills yield short-term as well as long-term benefits for individuals, employers, and society in general in the form of increased employment opportunities, higher earning potential and work satisfaction. Moreover, research shows that dropping out of vocational programs is less likely than out of a four-year college. (Hoeckel, 2008)

The Futuro Approach

The HAL Education Team, Project Futuro, established a partnership between a local high school and a vocation institution to introduce high school seniors to different fields in vocational education. Project Futuro carefully selected certification programs that have a current or projected demand for candidates in the local Austin market. The team developed a series of informative, interactive and creative showcases to engage students in vocational careers. The sessions provided potential career information, program description, time commitment, cost, and possible funding/scholarships per certification. Additionally, students had the opportunity to meet with current industry professionals, in order to hear firsthand the benefits of vocational careers. All professional guest speakers were individuals that had taken an untraditional route to their education and became successful in their respective fields.

Lastly, Project Futuro was able to forge partnerships between the high school and the vocational institution so that all high school staff can be trained and knowledgeable on vocation certifications and its benefits.



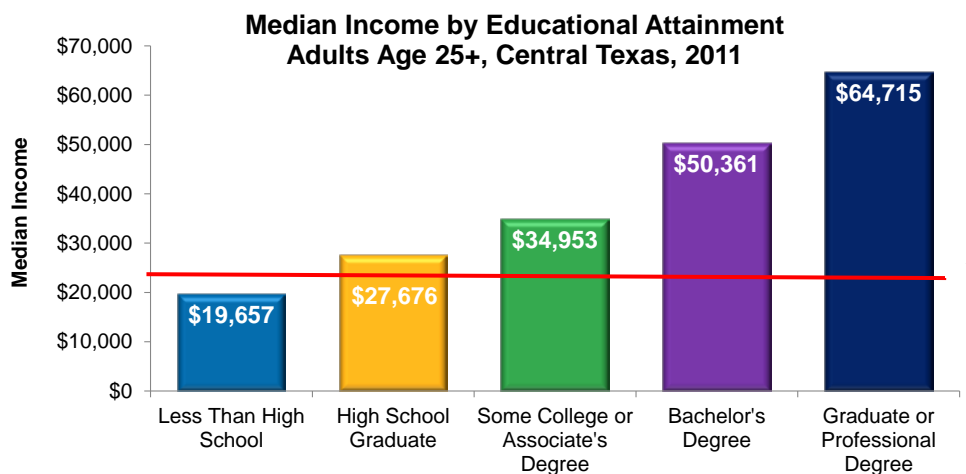
Project Details

Issue

Post-secondary education is instrumental to an individual’s success. A study completed by the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University reveals that, since 1973, jobs that require at least some college have exploded while opportunities for those with just a high school education have dramatically decreased. Only thirty-six percent of job openings available over the next ten years will be suitable for individuals with just a high school diploma (Harvard, 2011).

Many of the skills needed to compete in the global market of the 21st century are technical skills that fall into the technical/vocational arena. Vocational skills yield short-term and long-term benefits for the individuals, employers, and society in general. Examples of short-term benefits for individuals enrolled in vocational education programs include: an increase in employment opportunities, higher earning potential, and work satisfaction. Additionally, dropout rates from vocational programs are less likely than for those enrolled in traditional four-year college courses. Individuals who complete vocational education programs are likely to experience long-term benefits such as career flexibility and mobility (Hoeckel, 2008).

The lifetime earnings gap between a high school diploma recipient and a bachelor’s degree recipient is nearly \$1million dollars.



The chart above shows the mid-point on the earning scale for each educational level; however, according to research done by American Community Survey (2011) twenty seven percent of people with vocational certification earn more than the average bachelor’s degree recipient.



The importance of vocational education has not fallen on deaf ears and has reached the highest level of government office. President Barack Obama proposed the American Graduation Initiative to invest in community colleges and help American workers get the skills and credentials they need to succeed. The initiative would encourage partnerships between two-year colleges and local businesses to identify in-demand skills and develop courses that help build them. It would also finance online and in-person training for up to 600,000 aspiring entrepreneurs.

During a speech at a manufacturing facility in Wisconsin earlier this year, President Obama stressed the importance of closing the existing educational gap:



“I’m just saying you can make a really good living and have a great career without getting a four-year college education as long as you get the skills and the training that you need.” –President Barack Obama, 2014

Action

Austin is a technology hub that continues to grow. Austin hosts the largest semiconductor equipment manufacturing plant in the world, Applied Materials. There are also four semiconductor fabrication plants located here. All four of the largest banks in the U.S. have a strong presence in Austin and the city’s utility company, Austin Energy, is the 8th largest municipality in the nation. Due to all these facts, Project Futuro wanted to assure that all vocational fields showcased were relevant to the local market.

We set out to establish a program that would not only offer students viable opportunities for a better *futuro* but also provide local employers (in the immediate future) with the skilled workforce needed for the continuity of our economic growth. And in the process, change the face of vocational education from “quick and dirty” to “fast and effective” as participants would

Project Futuro



receive the right training from programs ranging from a few weeks to a few months for a fraction of the cost of a university program.

Partnerships

Project Futuro partnered with Travis High School and Austin Community College (ACC) to create vocational educational showcases for students. The showcases were designed to inform students of the vast economic, educational, and social benefits to pursuing a vocational career. We empowered students with the knowledge of alternate higher education routes in order to obtain skills and knowledge to be competitive in the workforce. Our goal was to showcase vocational programs as a viable option for student's careers.

Travis High School was selected due to its Title I status, its high population of Hispanic students, 82.4% (Texas Tribune, 2014), and its focus on career and technology education.



ACC was brought in due to the fact that their Continuing Education Division provides the community with easy access to a wide range of noncredit courses, workforce development programs, and customized training at a low cost. Additionally, there is no admission process required for continued education classes and most do not require prerequisite coursework.





Program Showcases

Showcases Highlights

Project Future presented two, fifty-five minute showcases. Each showcase featured specific careers in each category as well as provided information on potential job earnings and current demand in the local workforce. Lastly, ACC was brought in to give students information on any vocational path they might be interested in enrolling in.

We focused on the following vocational fields:

- Advanced Technology
- Information Technology
- Business
- Trades

Additionally, professionals that took a vocational route were brought in to provide students with insight on their specific careers. Each speaker had time to talk to the students about their individual career path as well as give advice and answer any questions the students might have.

ACC was brought in for both sessions to discuss the time commitment for each program, cost, and possible financial aid available.



Advanced & Information Technology

The focus for this showcase was on the growing demand for careers in the technology industry in Austin including a PC and Electronic Technician. Speakers were brought in from a local IT company as well as from a local semiconductor equipment manufacturing company.



Facts about certified PC Technician

- Average hourly wages: \$18.53
- Job market growth: +22% a year
- Time commitment for certification: 3-6 months

Facts about certified Electronic Technician

- Average hourly wages: \$27.93
- Potential local employers: Apple, Google, Samsung
- Time commitment for certification: 12 months

Professional Guest Speakers:

- Raymond Miculob, Vice President of Operations, Notonsite
- Rei Montiel, Manufacturing Engineer, Applied Materials

Business & Trades

The focus was on careers as a utility line-worker and bank teller. Speakers were brought in for the local utility company and from a national banking institution.



Facts about Utility Lineworker

- Starting hourly wage: \$15
- Job market growth: +9% a year
- Time commitment: 3-6- months

Facts about Bank Teller

- Potential hourly wage \$16 within a year
- Top 5 in the economy growth rate
- Wells Fargo largest bank employer in Austin

Professional Guest Speakers:

- Ray Cook, Technical Trainer, Austin Energy
- Edwin Thomas, Power System Engineer, Austin Energy
- Triana Romero, Store Manager, Wells Fargo



Impact

At the end of each session two \$250 scholarships were raffled off to those students that committed to sign up for a vocational program through ACC.



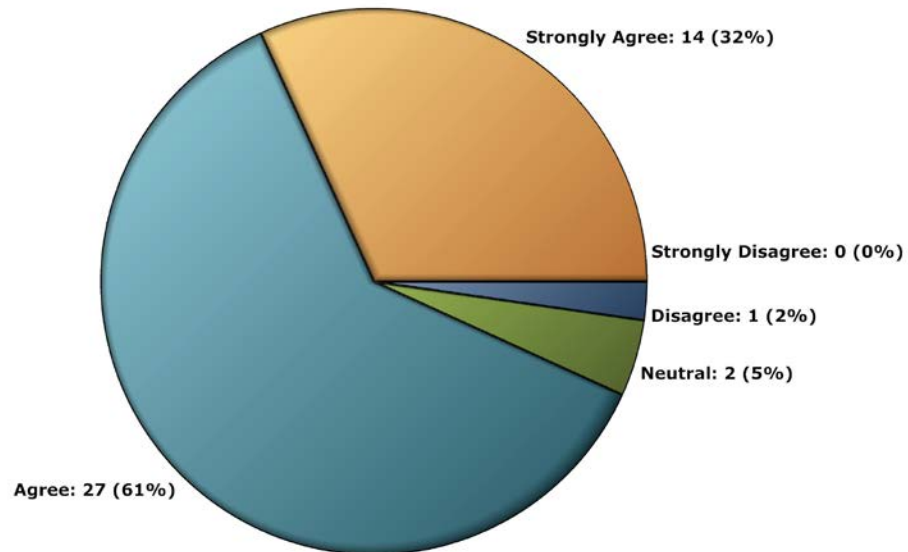


Measure

Fifty-nine high school seniors attended the vocational showcases. All students participated in both the AT/IT and business/trades showcases. At the conclusion of showcases students were asked to participate in a survey to collect feedback. Surveys included Likert scale and open-ended questions for individual response. Of the fifty-nine students that participated, forty-four surveys were collected. The full survey is listed in the Appendix.

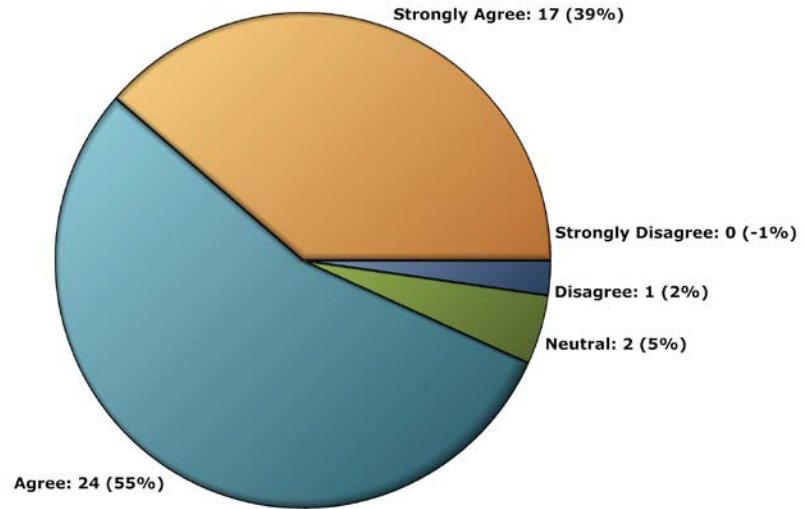
Survey Highlights

- 93% of students surveyed felt the seminar was informative

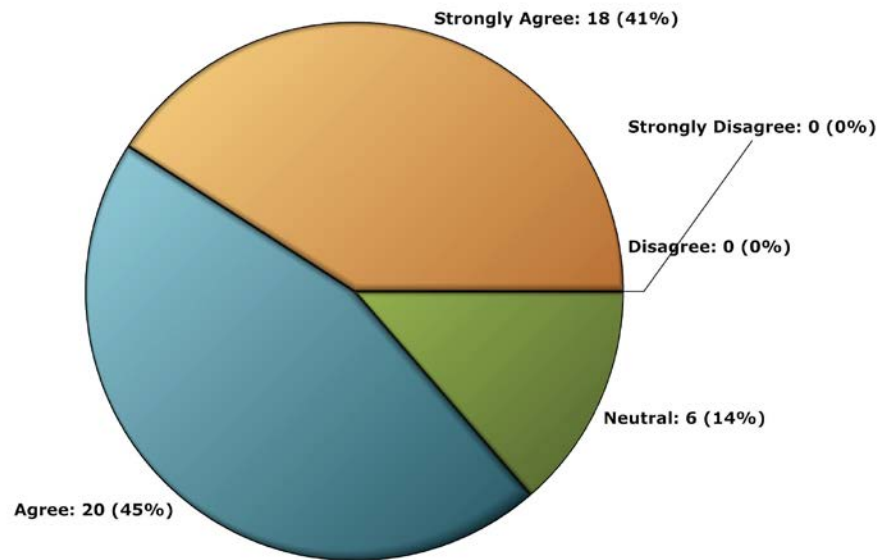




- 94% of students learned new information about vocational careers



- 86.4% of students felt the speakers were interesting and informative





Student Testimonials

"It was very informational."

"It motivated me. I think it was pretty good."

"Thank you for coming and thank you for all the information."

"Good job! You guys should do this more often."



"I really enjoyed this talk. I definitely appreciate your time leading us to our future."

"The speakers were informative."



"I liked that they gave us a lot of information and opened our eyes to a lot of opportunities."



Next Steps

Project Futuro and the career showcases were essentially a catalyst for dialogue to students revolving around vocational education as a viable alternative to a traditional four-year university degree plan. The continuity of this dialogue is vital to the continuity of Project Futuro.

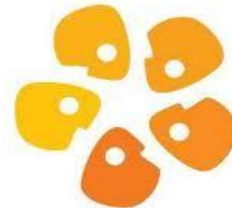
The right channels of communication will be maintained by the partnerships we have built to practice the methodologies used in Project Futuro. We introduced key individuals from Austin Community College Continuing Education and Travis High School Career Technology Education who will work together and build upon what Project Futuro has begun.

Beginning in the fall of 2014, ACC will be offering training sessions on all the vocational certifications they have to Travis High School counselors. This will prepare high school staff to open the dialogue to students on vocational careers as a viable option. Additionally, Project Future team members will make themselves available to present showcases to students.



Acknowledgements

Project Futuro would not have been possible without the support of:



Greater Austin Hispanic
Chamber of Commerce
Expanding Business Culture



Project Team

Sandra Castillo works at Austin Energy as a Community Services Coordinator. Sandra coordinates the programs geared towards assisting Austin Energy's low income customers. As the Financial Leader she oversaw the team's financial efforts, including fundraising and budget.

Ann Eaton served as the Project Manager and acted as lead contact for the team.

Brenda Mellado has worked for Wells Fargo since 2005. She started as teller then was promoted to lead teller, customer service representative, banker, service manager and currently is currently store manager in the south east area of Austin. She served as the Project Administrator and was responsible for keeping the team organized and oversaw the final production of the project binder.

Reiberto Montiel is a senior manufacturing engineer at Applied Materials where he has held different positions in engineering and project management. Rei served as the Marketing Leader overseeing the development of program materials, project talking points, and conducting outreach.

Sergio Pellicano is Senior Staffing Specialist at Goodwill Staffing Group where he focuses on placing individuals diagnosed with medical conditions in temporary assignments at state agencies. Sergio served as the Information Leader conducting research and gathering data to aid in the formation of the project.





Project Budget

Contributions Balance Sheet

Name	Description	Contribution	Expense
Sandra Castillo	Cash donation	\$ 50.00	
Ann Eaton	Cash donation	\$ 50.00	
Brenda Mellado	Cash donation	\$ 50.00	
Rei Montiel	Cash donation	\$ 50.00	
Sergio Pelicano	Cash donation	\$ 50.00	
Juan Quesada	Cash donation	\$ 40.00	
Applied Materials	Matching Contribution	\$ 290.00	
GAHCC	Seed Money	\$ 56.32	
Project Futuro	Scholarship (2x)		\$ 500.00
Brenda Mellado	Snacks for Shoecases		\$ 90.00
Sergio Pellicano	Posters		\$ 19.47
Ann Eaton	Posters		\$ 19.47
Sandra Castillo	Water bottle cases		\$ 7.18
Totals		\$ 636.32	\$ 636.12

Non-Cash Contributions

Name	Description	Value
Wells Fargo	Giveaway Ready for College Magazines, Cool Chairs, Music CD's, Coffee Mugs.	\$ 300.00
Austin Energy	Giveaway backpacks and pens	\$ 175.00
Big B Graphics	Education Team T-Shirts	\$ 60.00
Grand Total		\$ 535.00



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Appendix



Student Survey

Name _____ Email _____
 Address _____ Phone _____

Would you like to be contacted further about vocational careers? Yes___ No___

Are you interested in participating in a future site visit to learn more about careers? Yes___ No___

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey so we may improve our program in the future.

1. The vocational education seminar was very informative.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I learned new information about vocational careers.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. The guest speakers were interesting and informative.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. The vocational education program provided new information I did not know previously.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. The vocational educational program motivates me to learn more about pursuing a vocational career.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. There are many paths to career success other than a four-year college degree.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. I plan to pursue a vocational career post high school graduation.

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. What did you like most about the vocational education program?

9. What did you like least about the vocational education program?

10. Please feel free to provide comments on how we could further improve our program.
