



Social Impact Consultants

Discovering better ways  
to solve social problems

## South Texas Regional Overview

*Prepared for:*



GREATER TEXAS FOUNDATION



COMMUNITIES  
FOUNDATION  
of TEXAS

HOUSTON ENDOWMENT INC.

A PHILANTHROPY ENDOWED BY MR. AND MRS. JESSE H. JONES

**The Meadows  
Foundation**

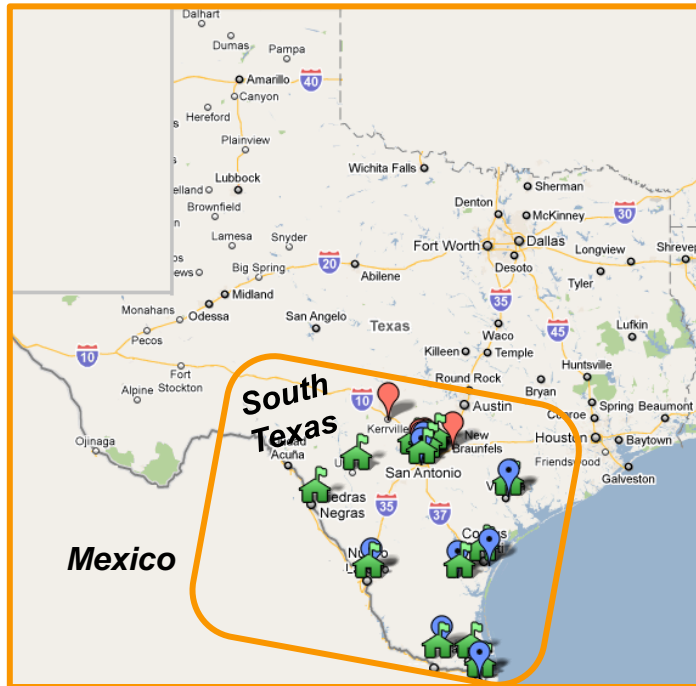
February 2011

## Executive Summary – South Texas

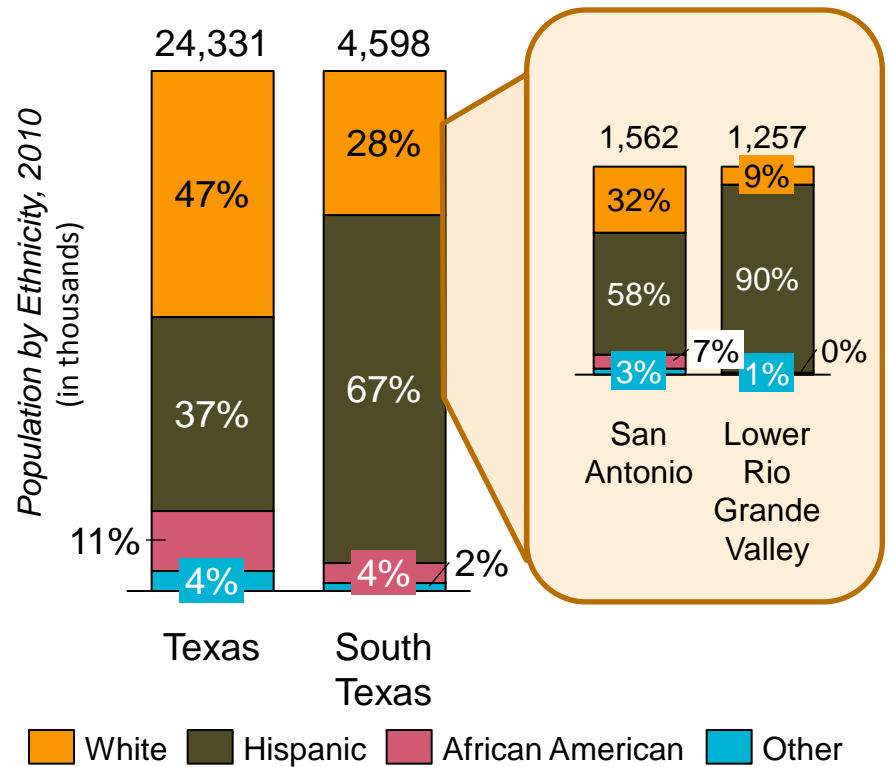
- South Texas is a large region with a number of subregions at considerable distances from each other, including the Lower Rio Grande Valley, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and Laredo. All **border regions have a significantly higher Hispanic student population** than the more centrally-located San Antonio, which **also benefits from a higher income** than border regions (28% higher)
- The **Hispanic student population is set to grow 25%** in the next 20 years. The region is **on par** with stage averages for **high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment** but **lags slightly in degree completion**. These regional levels of student achievement are remarkable when compared to those of similar sociodemographic groups
- The different subregions in South Texas have **varying degrees of challenges** with respect to demographics and education attainment. San Antonio's education outcomes do not reflect its more favorable demographic and economic situation and it lags behind the border region on most education outcomes
- The Border region provides **limited opportunities for collaboration** across metro areas and has **an underdeveloped college-going culture**. The region also has limited resources available for **student financial support and funding for college readiness and success programs**
- South Texas boasts committed leadership, **state and philanthropic investment, and a high level of community-wide collaboration**. A public-private partnership can play a critical role in leveraging the region's assets to further improve persistence and completion

# South Texas Is an Extensive Region With a Predominantly Hispanic Population

South Texas is the largest geographic region in Texas and contains 19% of the total Texas population



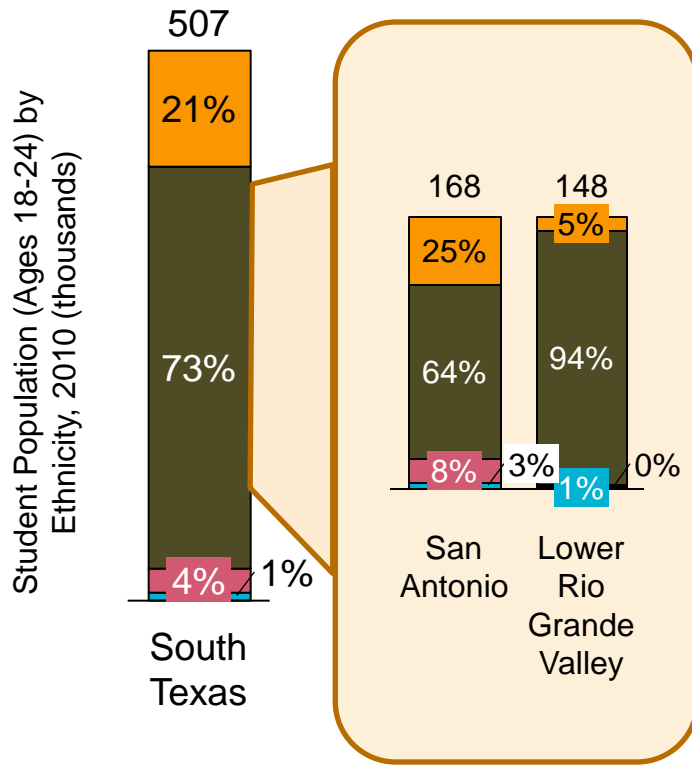
The Lower Rio Grande has a much larger Hispanic population than San Antonio



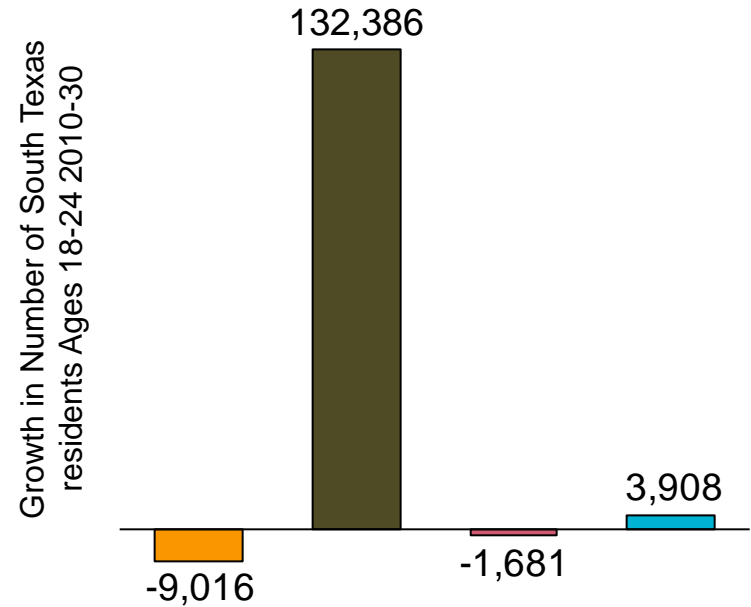
Notes: \*South Texas is a THECB-defined region which we adopted for ease of data analysis. This presentation also examines selected sub-regions within the THECB-defined region. South Texas data is for all of South Texas. San Antonio data is for Bexar County. Lower Rio Grande Valley includes the following counties: Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr and Willacy Counties;  
 Source: 2008 U.S. Census Bureau, Texas State Department Populations Projection data

# Hispanic Students, Who Already Make Up the Majority of the Student Population, Will Drive Most of the Region's Student Body Growth

The student population in South Texas reflects that of the total population



97% of student population growth in the next 20 years will be fueled by Hispanics



White Hispanic African American Other

White Hispanic African American Other

Notes: South Texas data is for all of South Texas. San Antonio data is for Bexar County. Lower Rio Grande Valley includes the following counties: Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr and Willacy Counties

Source: 2008 U.S. Census Bureau, Texas State Department Populations Projection data

# South Texas Is a Low Income Region with a Median Household Income 14% Lower than Texas Average

**Median Household Incomes by Ethnicity  
(in thousands), 2008<sup>1,2</sup>**



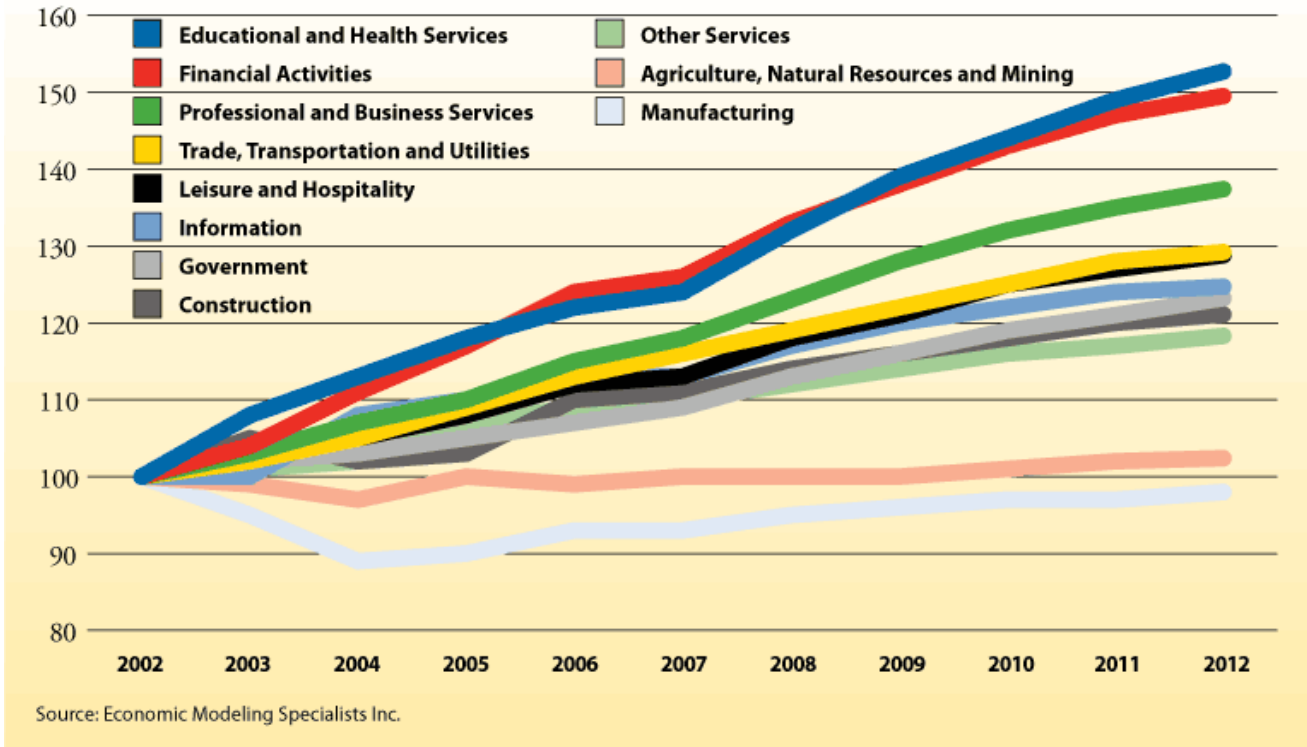
**San Antonio's median household income (\$45K) is 50% higher than that of the Lower Rio Grande Valley (\$30K)**

White
  Hispanic
  African-American
  Federal Poverty Level, 2008, 3-person household

Notes: (1) Median Household Income by Ethnicity calculated using the median household income per county and weighting by 2008 county population, (2) Federal poverty level for a 3 person household was \$17,600 for 2008  
 Source: 2008 American Community Survey; FSG analysis

# South Texas Has Benefited from Strong Economic Growth Primarily Through Occupations That Require a Postsecondary Degree or Credential

*South Texas Region Industrial Employment Indices, 2002-2012*



Note: Data after September 2009 are projected.

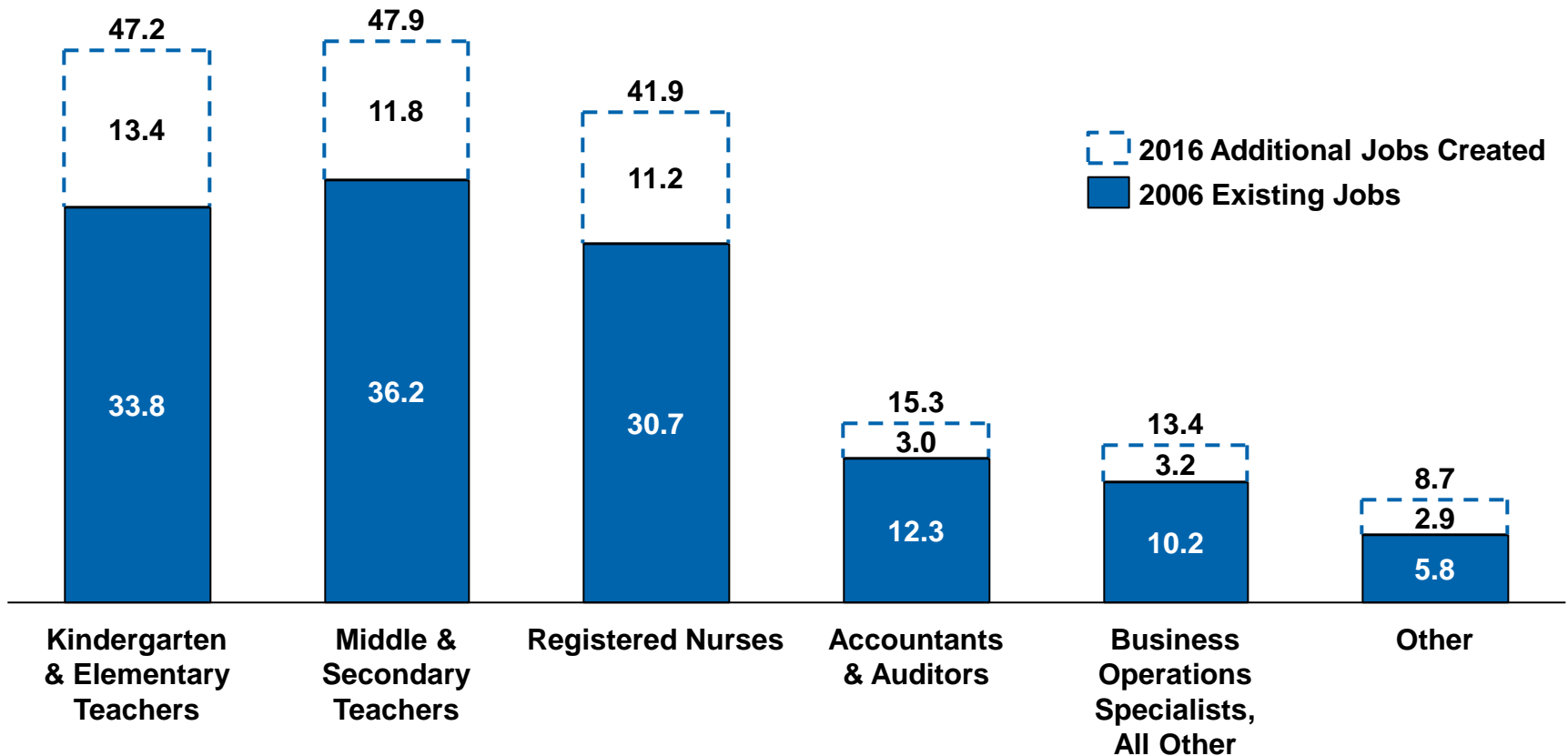
Sources: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. and Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

Note: The Industry Employment Indices Graph above only includes the 28 counties, closest to the border: including the cities of Corpus Christi, Brownsville, Laredo, Del Rio, McAllen, Eagle Pass and Harlingen, but DOES NOT include San Antonio and counties bordering Central Texas and Gulfcoast regions

Source: Window on State Government <http://www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/tif/central/ecodevo.php>

# By 2016, the Fastest Growing Occupations Will Require a Postsecondary Degree and Their Demand for Graduates Will Grow by 35%

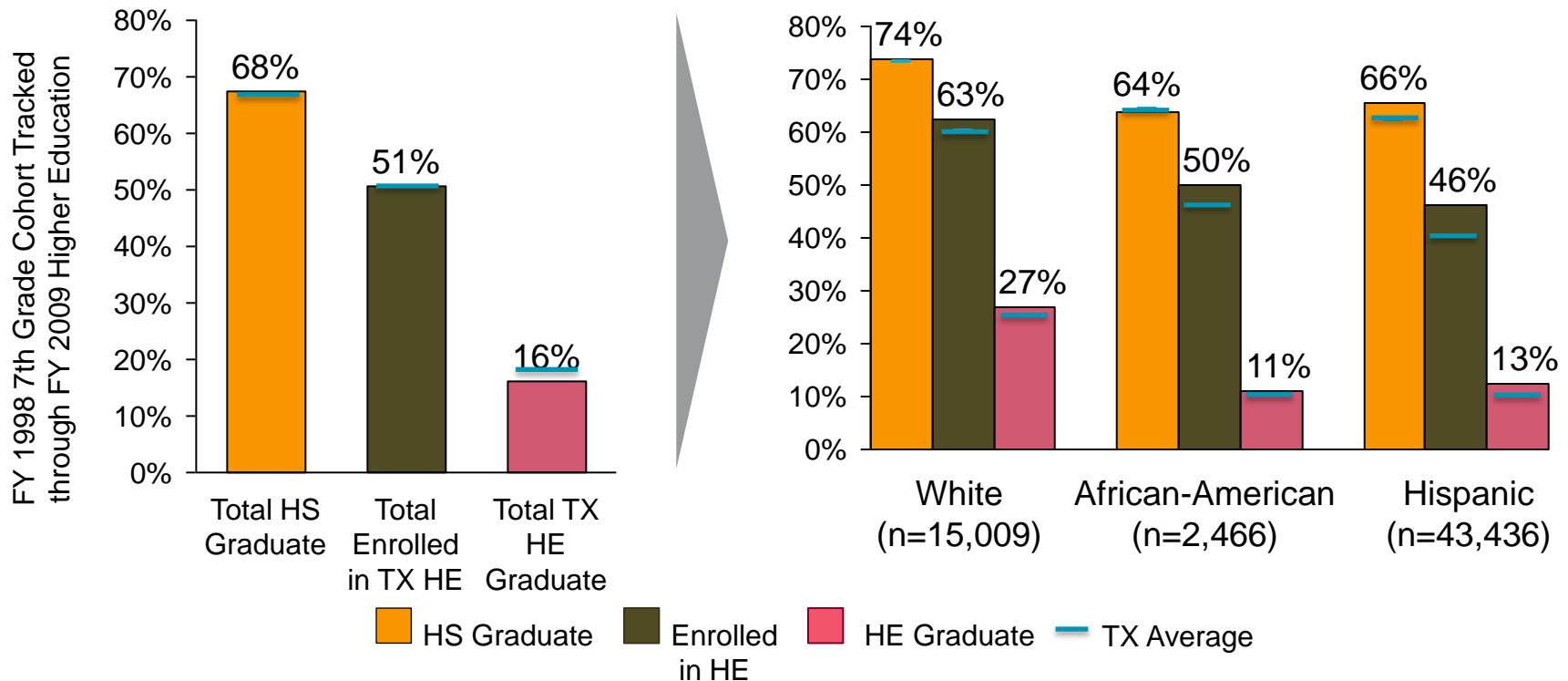
## Job Growth in Fastest-growing Occupations in South Texas, 2006-2016 (thousands)



# South Texas Is Outperforming Texas Averages for Educational Attainment Across All Demographics

South Texas performs at the state level for postsecondary enrollment but below for completion

All demographics outperform state averages for that specific demographic, but because the Hispanic population is large, the region as a whole underperforms

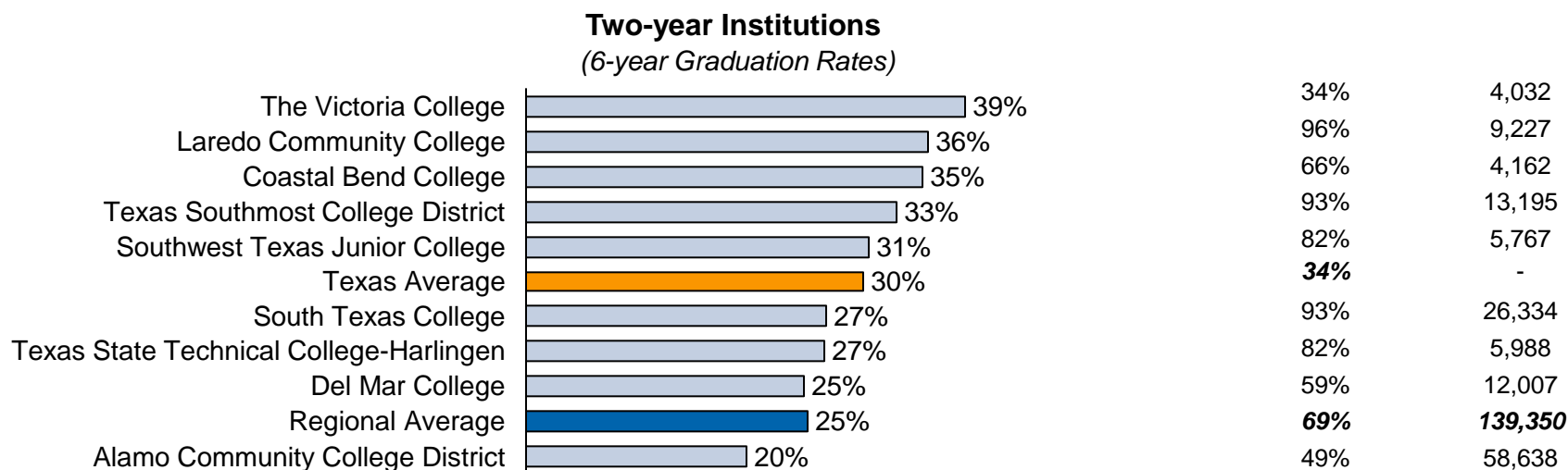
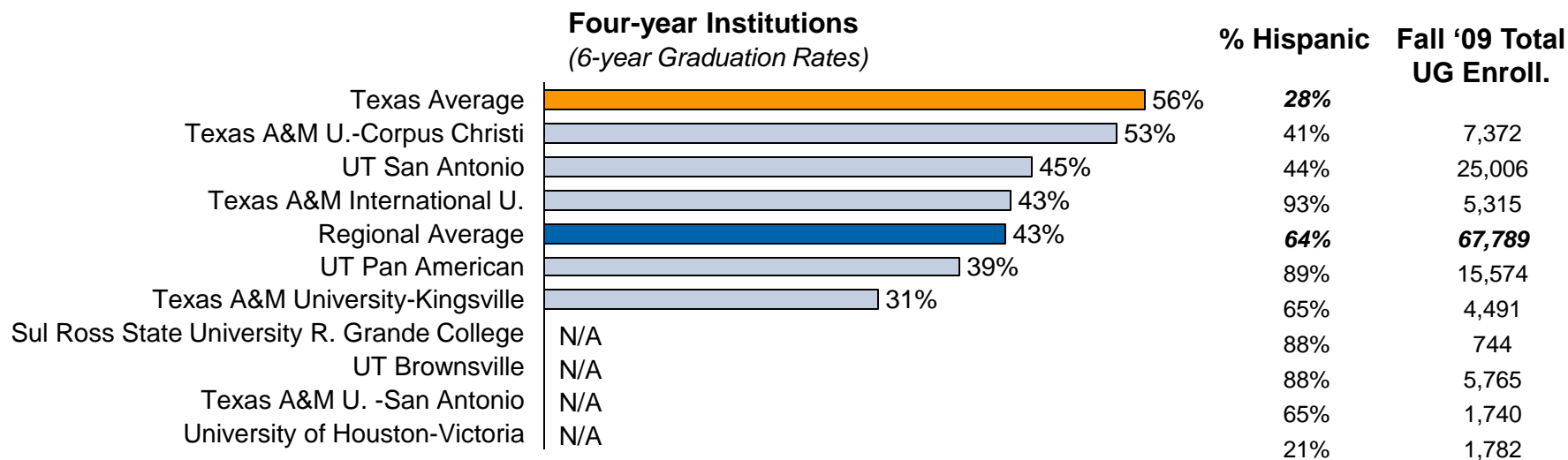


***The much smaller proportion of White students in the region (half of the Texas average) drives the slight overall underperformance of the region***

Note: 'n' refers to the starting number of students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade cohort for that specific year

Source: THECB 1998 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Cohort Tracked through Higher Education by Region, <http://www.txhighereddata.org/reports/performance/regions/>

# South Texas' Four-Year Universities Underperform State Average Graduation Rate While Half of the Region's Two-Year Colleges Exceed It



## 16 out of 17 Public PSEs in South Texas are Minority-Serving Institutions

Notes: Data from THECB for Fall enrollment – credit students, Minority Serving Institution is defined as having 25% or higher Hispanic enrollment or being designated as a Historically Black University, N/A in above graphs indicates 6-year graduation rate data is not available because of conjoint 2-4 year program (UT Brownsville) or conjoint campuses (SulRoss University of Houston) or cohort not yet graduated from new PSE (Texas A&M San Antonio)

Source: THECB, FSG analysis

# However, South Texas Still Faces Substantial Cultural, Financial and Geographical Obstacles to Improving Completion Rates

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Description</i>
<p><b>Limited opportunities for regional collaboration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because South Texas subregions (Lower Rio Grande Valley, San Antonio) are so distant from one another, it is difficult for IHEs in different subregions to collaborate or specialize</li> <li>• Students in each subregion tend to enroll in the local postsecondary institution.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of student related financial support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most students are first-generation, low-income students who must work full time jobs limiting their engagement on campus</li> <li>• South Texas students, especially Lower Rio Grande Valley students, have limited financial support, a major reason why they drop out without completing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of college-going culture</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because most students are first-generation, they and their parents often do not understand the rigor and time commitment demanded by postsecondary studies</li> <li>• Students who do enroll in postsecondary education often face resistance from family members</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of college readiness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Texas has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest dev ed requirement rate in the state (52% of students enroll in developmental education)</li> </ul>

# The Region Can Build on Its Long Tradition of Collaboration And Commitment of Its Leadership to Further Attract State and Philanthropic Funders And Increase Graduation Rates

## *Key Regional Assets*

### State and Philanthropic Investment

- Long-term **national and state focus on providing Hispanics** along the U.S./Mexico Border with **access to postsecondary education**
  - Over the **past 10 years enrollment has grown by over 60%** in the region.
- Because South Texas looks like the future of both Texas and the US, it is an **excellent environment in which to develop and pilot initiatives** that can be scaled up both at the state and national level. This, as well as strong results and a commitment to change have attracted a high level of philanthropic investment.

### Committed Leadership

- Leaders at all levels, in the Lower Rio Grande Valley as well as San Antonio, have been **committed to improving educational outcomes**.
- Postsecondary institution leadership in the Lower Rio Grande Valley is **aligning systems to create a seamless pipeline** between high school, two-year and four-year education.

### Community-Wide Collaboration

- South Texas has **seven P-16 Councils** – more than any other region
- Two-year schools have collaborated closely with local ISDs through **early college high school** models and “**college-going culture**” campaigns
- UTB/TSC has begun to develop a **collective impact approach to education reform** along with ISDs, the business community and community leaders through a Gates Foundation “Partners for Postsecondary Success” grant

# A Public Private Partnership Could Help South Texas Better Direct Its Existing Assets to Address Critical Gaps

ILLUSTRATIVE

## *Preliminary Opportunities for the Region*

### Scale up and share lessons from successful innovations

- Scale up college readiness programs that have proven to be most successful for students in the region
- Share learnings from innovative models across the region
- Invest more resources in programs that aim to transform the “part-time” student culture to a full-time one such as:
  - Programs that engage students on campus through on campus jobs or research with faculty
  - Financial and non-financial support for students

### Focus on removing policy barriers

- Focus on the removing policy barriers that stand in the way of scaling or replicating successful programs (e.g., financial aid policies that hinder progress of ECHS graduates)
- Address counterproductive state policies (e.g., Texas encouragement of students transferring from a two to a four-year program as soon as possible instead of after completing a two-year degree)

### Continue to invest in regional infrastructure

- Projected student population growth in the region will require investment in increasing both postsecondary education capacity and quality