

Education

McAllen Independent School District

McAllen Independent School District is rooted in excellence and a tradition of success that spans more than a century.

The first McAllen school opened its doors in 1908 to welcome 20 children of all ages from the young community. Today, McAllen ISD is home to the 2009 Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year, an International Baccalaureate (IB) Program that consistently surpasses global test results, students and teachers who have earned state, national and even international acclaim plus an illustrious list of alumni that includes a Hollywood director, a novelist and even an astronaut.

The class of 2008-09 earned a record \$14.1 million in scholarship awards and set new records for numbers of students graduating as Texas Scholars, Tech Prep Scholars and under the Distinguished Achievement Program.

McAllen ISD was named a State Finalist in the 2008 HEB Excellence in Education Award for Best School District and serves as a national model for its IB Program. In just one year, four employees – one principal and three teachers – have been named state finalists in the HEB Excellence awards. One, in fact, is up for the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Recognized as a student-centered leader in education and embraced by a supportive community, the McAllen Independent School District's students and staff have consistently produced an impressive list of academic honors.

With 33 schools and 25,000 students, McAllen ISD has taken home more than 400 Gold Performance awards from the Texas Education Agency in the past five years. This level of success can only be accomplished in collaboration with parents, citizens, instructors, and the business community. In fact the district's Partners Program, known as Partners in Excellence, is one of the largest if not the largest in the state.

Each year, the district is among the region's leaders in national academic programs – the National Merit Program, the National Hispanic Merit Program, and the Advanced Placement Program. McAllen ISD has produced 225 AP Scholars in the past five years (2004-08). Among National Merit Scholar Semifinalists, the district leads the Valley with 12 over that same span. These are students who represent the top 1.1 percent of students in the nation.

The IB Program, known as the “Cadillac” of advanced academic programs, enjoys a 99.3 percent success rate since it began in 2001. That is among the highest diploma-earning rates in the world. It outdistances the success rate of 79.5 percent globally. All IB exams are graded in Geneva, Switzerland.

McAllen ISD not only offers the IB Diploma Program but also the Primary Years and Middle Years programs at seven elementary and three middle schools.

In the Fall of 2008, the district opened an Early College High School. Housed at South Texas College, the Achieve ECHS provides an opportunity for students to take their high school coursework in a college setting and utilizes STC's resources.

Recognized as a school district that sets the pace for educational change and innovation, McAllen ISD is an educational system committed to continuous improvement and responsive to the desires of this diverse community.

McAllen ISD has excellence to its core.

EXTRAORDINARY STAFF ACHIEVEMENT

- 2009 State Elementary Teacher of the Year title.
- 14 Regional Teacher of the Year titles in last 17 years.
- Principal and teacher nominated for state HEB Excellence in Education awards.
- Two teachers in last three years named Regional Science Teacher of the Year.
- Four schools (Milam, Rayburn, Cathey and Memorial High) honored by Texas Business and Education Coalition.
- MCCTI drop-out prevention program results in graduates.
- 8th Grade Transition Program produces 95 percent passing rate.
- Achieve Early College High School opens on STC campus.
- Newcomer Academy draws national interest for duplication.
- Micro-society Program at Sam Houston Elementary draws national interest for duplication.
- Six time winner of State Superior Achievement rating for School District Business Office.

EXTRAORDINARY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- 99.3 percent success rate for International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma candidates last 6 years – among highest rates in world.
- Two National Merit Semifinalists in 2008-09.
- One National Merit Finalist in 2008-09.
- 16 National Merit Scholar Semifinalists in last 6 years.
- Record \$14.1 million in scholarships awarded to 2009 graduates – 3rd year in row to surpass \$10 million and an all-time record.
- McAllen High graduate receives Lyceum Scholarship – one of five in Texas.
- Gates Millennium Scholar from Rowe High (and six from the district in recent years).
- 961 students graduate as Texas Scholars in 2009 – an all-time record.
- A record 1,021 Tech Prep Scholars in 2009.
- IB team wins Valley Masterminds competition for second time and competes nationally.
- State Champion Constitution Team in 2008-09.
- 14 State Champions for Constitution Team.
- 17 All-State music students in 2008-09.

-125 Duke Talent State Honorees and seven National Honorees in six years (middle school students whose SAT scores are compared to national high school standards).

-Memorial High football selected as this year's U.S. Army "Team of the Week."

-State Wrestling Champion from McAllen High.

-Garza Elementary raises \$5,400 for leukemia and lymphoma – most of any school in Valley.

11 State Migrant Students of the Year since 1994.

Regional Champs – Destination Imagination Team from Garza Elementary qualifies for state in 2009.

FINE ARTS

Nationally and state recognized fine arts program includes specialized performers like show choirs, mariachis, and even an elementary drum choir and a strings program for 1st graders.

-Nine students in All-State Choir from Rowe, Memorial and McAllen High – most in Valley.

-Two students in All-State Orchestra from McAllen High.

-Mariachi programs at all three high schools.

-Unique drum corps at Alvarez Elementary.

-Strings for Success - unique orchestra introduction program for McAuliffe Elementary 1st graders.

-Show choirs at Rowe and McAllen High.

-Superior Division I band ratings at Pigskin Jubilee for all 3 high schools.

ATHLETICS AND OTHER EXTRACURRICULAR

District title winning sports program includes playoffs in football, basketball, volleyball and the State Wrestling Championship. Two cheerleader squads are ranked among the top two in the nation. Rowe High School cheerleaders won their third consecutive Regional title, qualifying for State competition, while Lincoln Middle School cheerleaders won their seventh consecutive Regional title, qualifying for National competition.

Call (956) 618-6000 for more information.

Agape Christian School

Agape Christian School, Mission, Texas, has been making an eternal investment in the lives of Rio Grande Valley children since 1976. The caring, competent faculty sets high academic standards and uses biblical based curriculum. Pk 2 through sixth grade students are challenged to grow in God's love and word.

For more information call (956) 585-9773 or agape.love@hotmail.com.

Central Christian School

Central Christian Church founded Central Christian School, (CCS) as a mission project in 1979. The goals of this mission consisted of extending a Christian environment past the home in order to generate strong Christian character in children and providing children with a strong base for further learning in later schooling. To achieve these goals, Central Christian School has always put the student first, an ideal that we demonstrate through our strong curricula, our encompassing extra-curricular activities, and our wonderful staff.

Central Christian School supports a student body of children 3 years old to 5th grade, where we practice the advance A BEKA curriculum in the preschool (PK3 to K5) program as well as the BJU and ACSI programs in the grade school (1st-5th Grades). We also utilize the TEKS objectives, mandated by the state of Texas in public schools, to prepare our students should they want to enter the public school system. CCS, a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), has students take the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) to chart the progress of learning through the year. In addition, we enable students to expand past the classroom, using learning facilitators such as our library, music, art, and computer classes, physical education program, weekly chapel service, language classes, and academic meets. At Central Christian School, we also value the importance of extra-curricular activities. After school programs such as dance, art, sports, voice, piano and computers, support and encourage our students to expand past the classroom. Lastly, our teachers, facilitators, and support staff help our school run smoothly. Each staff member has high-quality training, a Christian background, a love for children, and a goal to provide the student with a Christian home at school as well as a solid education. Call (956) 682-6424 for more information.

Covenant Christian Academy

Covenant Christian Academy is a Bible based school that helps parents equip their children to become Christian men and women of character who excel academically, morally and spiritually in every area of life and society. Proverbs 22: 6 “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” CCA serves McAllen and the surrounding communities with a challenging, nondenominational curriculum for K3-8th grades. Over 25 churches are represented in the student body.

In addition to an exceptional curriculum we offer Spanish, Music, Art, Physical Education and Computer classes. To supplement our academic courses we offer Flag Football, Volleyball, Basketball, and Soccer. We have an open door policy and encourage families to call CCA at 956-686-7886 to schedule a tour.

Faith Christian Academy

Faith Christian Academy has been providing children with a quality, Christian education in a safe, secure setting since 1990. Located between McAllen and Mission in Palmhurst, TX, Faith Christian Academy is easily accessible from all points of the Rio Grande Valley. The school is at the intersection of Three Mile Line and Shary Rd.

It is the belief of Faith Christian Academy that parents are given the authority and responsibility for the training of children; therefore, FCA seeks to work with parents to train their children. It is our desire to assist students to reach their full potential.

Faith Christian Academy utilizes a decidedly Christian curriculum together with caring teachers to help meet the academic needs of the students. The focus of the academic program is on the core courses, but students are also involved in various music, drama, and athletic endeavors. Classes are offered for students beginning with a Pre-K4 up through 12th grade.

The students' social and physical needs are met through various activities and functions at Faith Christian, including physical education, drama, computer classes, foreign language, and athletics. The extracurricular activities are important tools as we seek to accomplish our goal of character development and academic instruction.

If you would be interested in receiving more information concerning Faith Christian Academy, you are invited to visit our office at 4301 N. Shary Rd. in Palmhurst. You are also invited to call us at 956.581.7777 or to visit us online at <http://www.faithbaptistministries.org/fca>.

IDEA Public Schools

During their stint as Teach for America corps members, Tom Torkelson and JoAnn Gama founded the IDEA Academy, the first IDEA Public School, in Donna, Texas, in 1998. It began as an after-school program to help combat some of the major educational deficiencies they saw in their students, and it focused on student achievement and college readiness.

With the motto of "No Excuses!" the program saw quick success, and the state granted a charter to IDEA in 2000. Beginning with only 4th-8th grades, the original flagship campus in Donna has expanded to become a K-12 campus. Today, IDEA Public Schools operates six campuses across the Rio Grande Valley in the cities of Donna, Brownsville, McAllen/Edinburg, Mission, San Benito, and San Juan (opening August 2009).

IDEA Public Schools' mission is to ensure that students from underserved communities are prepared to succeed in college and citizenship. In a region with a high school dropout rate that hovers at fifty percent, IDEA's battle cry of "College for all children - No excuses!" rings loud and clear. Upon entering their senior year, all IDEA students have visited approximately 25 colleges and universities across the country. To date, 100% of IDEA's high school graduates are attending college; 75% of these alumni being first-generation college students.

In 2005, IDEA Public Schools launched an ambitious expansion plan, titled "The 2012 Plan," after its goal of launching 22 IDEA schools in 11 communities by the year 2012. When all the schools reach full scale, IDEA will serve 15,000 students and is projected to send 1,000 students to college every year by 2018.

Among IDEA's accolades are its "Recognized" distinction by the Texas Education Agency in 2008 and the H-E-B Excellence in Achievement Award for Best Small School District in the state in 2009. IDEA College Preparatory Donna was named top high school in the Rio Grande Valley, #2 high school in Texas, #6 charter school in the nation and #19 high school in the nation ("Best High Schools 2009," US News and World Report). Recent achievements by IDEA's top leadership include the Peter Jennings Civic Award and CEO Tom Torkelson's nomination to the TIME 100.

For more information about IDEA Public Schools, visit www.ideapublicschools.org.

Mid-Valley Academy

Mid-Valley Academy-McAllen is an open enrollment state supported charter high school serving students in Grades 9-12th funded through the Texas Education Agency. The McAllen campus is one of three Mid Valley Academy campuses located in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of South Texas. Other valley campuses are located in the communities of Mercedes, and San Benito, Texas. The charter holder is Student Alternatives Program, Inc. (SAPI), a non-profit organization based in San Antonio, Texas. SAPI also has charter high schools through-out the State in the communities of El Paso, Laredo, and Lubbock, Texas.

Mid-Valley Academy offers educational programs in a community-based, non-traditional setting where the teaching philosophy centers on the belief that all students have the desire and ability to achieve their full potential as successful, productive and caring members of the local and global community. Both students and teachers must realize that obstacles are not excuses. The student must acquire skills to be able to cope with difficulties in an appropriate manner. He/she must learn to be self-disciplined, considerate to others, and be self-motivated. Teachers must find a balance between being strict when enforcing rules, yet understanding enough to make appropriate allowances for each student's unique situation. The school offers a core high school curriculum and elective courses through a student-centered, competency-based program with small student-teacher ratios which allow for individualized instruction. While emphasis is on teacher-directed instruction, some courses may be taken through self-passed modules and/or through computer assisted instruction (CAI). Students attend a flexible 4-hour daily schedule in either a morning or afternoon session which allows them the opportunity to attend dual enrollment classes at the college or university and/or the opportunity to work. For more information call us at (956) 618-2303, or (956) 618-2323 (fax) and/or visit our website at www.stdsapi.com and follow the links to our campus. Our address is 200 N. 17th St. McAllen, TX.

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church

Our Lady of Sorrows School is located in the heart of McAllen and has an established tradition of excellence that spans over 60 years. Approximately 600 students are enrolled. The school provides a Catholic faith-based, educational preparatory program that includes a Montessori pre-kindergarten and kindergarten program, a comprehensive elementary program for first through fifth grade, and a quality junior high school sixth to eight grade program. It also provides a well-rounded athletic program, an after-school program, a summer school program and an academic support program that includes: online access to school information, faculty homework pages, online homework websites, and one-on-one and group tutorial support from teachers.

Continuing its tradition of "excellence in education," the school instills in children Catholic values, a strong academic preparation, critical thinking skills, and inculcates active community service responsibility at the middle school level. The curriculum is designed to insure strong academic expectations and the development of the whole child's unique social, physical, emotional and academic needs. It meets the standards of the State of Texas - Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and is aligned with National Benchmarks and Stanford Achievement Test Objectives.

The faculty is a strong support to students, allowing them to take risks and assume personal responsibility. A variety of enrichment classes and programs are provided that support students' learning allowing them to pursue academic excellence within their individual potential. Consistently,

students perform above grade level and have received numerous awards at local and state level competitions. OLSS graduates are also well known in the community for their academic achievements at the high school level and beyond.

The school is fully accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department sanctioned under the state-approved Texas Private School Accreditation Commission under the auspices of the Texas Education Association. Other memberships include the National Catholic Education Association, the National Middle School Association and the South Texas Junior High League.

For more information, an application or to take an online virtual tour visit our website at www.olsschool.org or call (956) 686-3651 to schedule an appointment.

South Texas Christian Academy

Education at South Texas Christian Academy (STCA) promotes the spiritual, academic, social, emotional, and physical development of its students. The faculty and staff members of STCA are dedicated individuals who profess a deep commitment to Adventist Education and the development of each child according to his/her God-given talents. Never before has there been a greater need for Adventist Education. We believe that we teach more than just academics. In all daily tasks, we strive to provide opportunities which will assist the students to possess solid Christian values as well as a strong moral and character formation. We will provide an atmosphere which will encourage them to become life-long learners and to strive to work cooperatively in a multicultural, ever-changing society.

A Prek-4 thru 12th grade school.

Featuring:

- Large Library
- Accredited
- Accelerated Reader
- ESL Program
- Large Computer Lab
 - English in a Flash
 - Kidspiration
 - Microsoft Office Suite
- Sports
- Music/Band
- Guidance Counselor
- 1 teacher per grade level
- Bible/Weekly Worship Assembly
- Rossetta Stone Classroom (12 languages)

- Uniforms
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) testing
- Security Cameras
- Star Math, Early Reading, & Reading Testing
- United Streaming by Discovery
- School Reach for parent contact via phone, cell, email
- Cameras for security

For more information call: 956-682-1117 or visit online at: www.stca.ws

St. John's Episcopal Day School

St. John's Episcopal Day School has served McAllen and surrounding counties for over 50 years. Currently the school has over 200 students. The school also offers an after-school Day Care Program.

The goal of St. John's Episcopal Day School is to offer a thorough academic program that meets the needs of the students in a Christian environment. Students are enrolled from 2 years old through 5th grade in small classes so that the students may receive the individual attention they need to excel. All of this is done in a religious and patriotic environment.

The core curriculum consists of reading, math, grammar, spelling, science, social studies, handwriting, music, physical education and Spanish. A computer lab allows the students to enhance their learning experience. For more information call (956) 686-0231 or visit www.stjohnsmcallen.org online. Laying the foundation for a bright future through challenging educational opportunities combined with religious, spiritual and moral values, St. John's Day School is a "good place to grow."

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School

St. Paul Lutheran Church, School and Childcare have been serving the people of McAllen and South Texas for nearly 100 years. As a community of faith, we help people to grow spiritually, emotionally, physically, and intellectually by connecting the wonder of children with the wisdom of God revealed in creation and, more importantly, revealed in Jesus Christ and the Holy Bible. The people of St. Paul gather for worship each week to hear God's Word, receive His Sacraments, and to grow as God's children. We are a diverse congregation, from many cultures, worshipping in different musical styles at various times, offering Christian Education for all age levels, along with Junior and Senior Youth activities, and opportunities for service and mission. We are a member congregation and mission partner of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (www.lcms.org). St. Paul Lutheran Church also owns, operates, and oversees two nonprofit, educational ministries: a school and a childcare.

St. Paul Lutheran Childcare assists growing families to provide a safe and loving place for their toddlers and preschoolers to learn and grow. The Childcare has a Director, Assistant Director, and 17 teachers that oversee classrooms where children receive individual attention while participating in group learning, fun activities, chapel, singing, snacks, and naptime. When a child is 4 years old, on or by September 1, the parents may keep their student at the Childcare or they may apply for enrollment at St. Paul Lutheran School.

St Paul Lutheran School is a nationally accredited member of the nation's second largest private, educational system. The school is led by a Principal and 15 Full-time and Part-time Faculty, who are excellent educators and who teach from a Lutheran, Christ-centered perspective, up through 8th grade. The average student/faculty ratio is 16:1. In addition to computer skills, art, music and daily Bible study, St. Paul Lutheran School has extracurricular activities, such as sports and yearbook. Students are encouraged to participate in local, state, and national academic and athletic competitions, as well as weekend Christian worship services. The educational process is a creative and collaborative partnership between the students, parents, teachers, and church. Therefore parents participate in the development of their student through homework supervision, special projects, field trips, and fundraising, which is coordinated by the School Board and the Parent/Teacher League.

St Paul Lutheran Church, School, and Childcare runs a year-round Foodservice that sells hot, nutritious meals for students, Faculty, and Staff. Our campus is located at the corner of Pecan Blvd. and Col. Rowe (2nd Street) at 300 W. Pecan Blvd., McAllen, Texas, 78501. For more information, call 956-682-2345 or visit St. Paul's website at www.stpaulmcallen.org

The Discovery School

The Discovery School is the most established Montessori School in the upper Valley. It was founded as a parent cooperative, non-profit organization in 1974. The Montessori Method is an individualized, educational approach that offers a unique program of instruction to its students. Teachers travel to special training centers to receive Montessori training in order to become certified Montessori Guides (teachers). The Discovery School is home to over 200 students ranging in age from 18 months to 12 years old. Its new campus was specially designed to enhance this child-centered approach to life. Each classroom is equipped with its own microwave, refrigerator, kitchen sink and bathroom. All classrooms also have their own backyards with garden plots. Additionally, there are over five acres of fenced playground with three large man-made hills, mesquite trees, and even a wildlife habitat. This outdoor environment is a crucial extension of the Montessori classroom. Curriculum is designed to fit each child's individual needs while incorporating traditional educational objectives in all academic areas. Specialists teach Spanish, music and physical education as well as topics of special interest. For more information about this unique school, please call (956) 381-1117.

South Texas College

Since opening its doors in 1993, South Texas College (STC) has grown to educate more than 22,000 students with a faculty and staff of more than 1,800 working across three campuses in McAllen, one campus in Weslaco and one campus in Rio Grande City.

The college offers more than 100 degree and certificate program options, including in the fields of liberal arts, social science, science, technology, business, nursing and allied health. And STC offers a Bachelor of Applied Technology (BAT) degree in Technology Management, as well as a BAT in Computer and Information Technologies. The college is one of only three Texas community colleges accredited to offer a BAT degree and the only community college in Texas accredited to offer two bachelor's degrees.

“STC has given me a great opportunity to reach my goal of earning a bachelor's degree and it has been a stepping stone in my journey toward earning a master's degree in electrical engineering,” said Robert Saldana, 2009 Bachelor of Applied Technology in Computer and Information Technologies graduate. “I recommend the program to anyone interested in the field of technology. You learn an array of skills that are needed in the workforce.”

Of its degree options, eight degrees can be earned completely online. In addition to its all online degree, the college provides a wide variety of course scheduling options with flexible hours to include evening and weekend classes and Web-based courses. However, the college goes well beyond these options to meet the higher education needs of the communities it serves.

For those students who wish to continue their education beyond an associate's degree, STC has more than 60 articulation agreements in place with colleges across the country, as well as with major universities in Mexico.

“There is no doubt that STC is the premier provider of higher education and workforce training in the Rio Grande Valley,” said STC President Shirley A. Reed. “In our short 15 year history we have shown tremendous commitment to providing the solid academic preparation and skills training to fuel one of the fastest growing economies in the United States. As a result, our students out perform their peers at traditional four-year colleges and universities, and are going on as alumni to take high-ranking positions with companies and agencies across the Valley, state and nation.”

STC has instituted a variety of dual enrollment programs, including early college high schools, drop-out recovery programs and other unique initiatives with high schools throughout Hidalgo and Starr counties. The programs allow eligible students to take college courses while attending high school. Combined, more than 7,000 students enroll in these programs per fall and spring semesters.

The college has also developed two intensive academic programs for students interested in pursuing degrees in the medical and engineering fields. The Dual Enrollment Medical Science Academy and the Dual Enrollment Engineering Academy consist of concentrated two-year programs of study and internship opportunities for qualified students to pursue an Associate of Science degree during their junior and senior years in high school.

“We have been following STC closely to understand its mission and vision, and have found that, although it is a large institution, it feels small and is very community oriented,” said Debi Crouch, a Mission, Texas resident and mother of two teenagers. “The plan is that our daughters will start taking classes at STC's Pecan Campus soon and we are confident they will get the foundations they need to succeed at the out-of-state universities they hope to attend later on in their academic careers.”

STC's Partnership for Business and Industry Training offers employers customized training that will upgrade the skills of current employees and prepares new employees for a variety of industries. And its Continuing and Professional Education Program provides opportunities for lifelong learners to upgrade their skills, change careers or seek personal enrichment.

The college is also a lead agency, the fiscal agent and home of the executive offices for the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI). STC serves as the Regional Institute for Advanced Manufacturing linked to all the community and technical colleges in the region. The college has taken the lead in helping train the workers to fuel a regional manufacturing economy and to support innovations in rapid response manufacturing.

"A well-trained and educated workforce is of utmost importance to our state's prosperity in a diverse and competitive economic climate," said Texas Comptroller Susan Combs. "The NAAMREI team is developing innovative strategies to address this vital issue."

STC is also taking a leading role in the region's art scene, putting together exhibits from leading artists across the globe. In fact the college's Library Art Gallery Program exhibits regional, national and international artwork, exploring new visions and theories of creativity, and introducing innovative artistic expressions to the region. The program has brought in artwork from artists from South America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

"South Texas College brings great art exhibits throughout the year to all of its various campuses and I personally think STC is on the right track in giving so much visibility to the visual arts in the Rio Grande Valley," said Virginia Gause, local art proponent.

So when you think of South Texas College, remember that with all it offers, it is affordable and close to home, but it's far from ordinary.

For more information about South Texas College call 956-872-8311 or visit www.southtexascollege.edu.

The University of Texas-Pan American

The University of Texas-Pan American is located in Edinburg, just seven miles north of McAllen. UT Pan American is the fifth largest campus of The University of Texas System and the 10th largest public university in Texas.

More than 86 percent of UT Pan American's 17,534 students are Mexican-American, giving UTPA the highest number of Hispanic students in the state and second highest in the nation. Many of the students represent the first generation of their families to go to college, and it is not uncommon for students, upon graduation, to triple their earning power compared to their parents.

UTPA offers 57 bachelor's degrees and 57 master's degrees in more than 50 fields of the arts and humanities, business, education, health and human services, science and engineering, and social and behavioral sciences. The university also offers three doctorates -- Business Administration with an emphasis in International Business, Educational Leadership and Rehabilitation Counseling. UT Pan American also offers

two cooperative degree programs, a doctorate in Pharmacy and a Doctorate in Spanish. In addition, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio Regional Academic Health Center (UTHSCSA RAHC) Medical Research Division is located on the UTPA campus. This collaborative relationship provides leading edge laboratory space and equipment for scholars and scientists to conduct research on critical health problems of the South Texas/Border Region.

Founded in 1927, UT Pan American has seen tremendous growth. Since 1990, the university has added numerous programs supported by new buildings with state-of-the art facilities and computer laboratories. The university makes innovative use of new technology to prepare students for careers and life in the 21st century. It is a leader within the UT System in its use of interactive video telecommunications and other information resources.

A \$23 million Engineering Building, which opened in 1996, and a \$26 million Science Building, which opened in 1997, provided UTPA one of the best facilities for undergraduate science and engineering in the United States. The International Trade and Technology Building opened in 1998 and provides high end conferencing and meeting facilities.

The university also offers A 44,000 square-foot, \$7 million Student Union, featuring a 500-seat theater, convenience store and food court. The UTPA campus also features a \$17.2 million General Classroom/Computer Center Building and a 156,000 square foot, 26 million dollar Wellness and Recreation Sports Complex which includes a variety of high-tech weights and cardio equipment, basketball and racquetball courts, an indoor walking/jogging track, a 34 foot climbing wall which is believed to be the tallest South of San Antonio, aerobics and samba studios, tennis and sand volleyball courts and an outdoor swimming pool.

Research efforts at UTPA include special centers that focus on international business, education, aging, economic development, coastal studies, rapid response manufacturing and speech and hearing. Outreach centers assist area businesses, manufacturers and local government districts.

Less than 20 miles from the U.S.-Mexico border, UT Pan American has cooperative agreements with Mexican universities in Tamaulipas state and Monterrey. It is the only university in the United States to serve as a satellite office of INEGI, the Mexican equivalent of the U.S. Census Bureau.

For more information on The University of Texas-Pan American, call (956) 381-2741, or visit the Web site at <http://www.utpa.edu>.