



GREATER TEXAS FOUNDATION

**Charitable Activities Committee
2015 Annual Report**

Total Grants Approved in 2015

Funding Principle	Number of Grants	Amount of Funding
Post-Secondary Education (preparation, access, completion and persistence)	26	\$4,156,330.87
GTF Educational Matching Grant Program	6	\$30,400
Other/Association Grants	2	\$3,750
2015 TOTALS	34	\$4,190,480.87

NOTE: For comparison, 2014 Totals: 30 grants for a total of \$3,934,329 in funding

Total Grants Paid in 2015

Funding Principle	Amount of Funding
Scholarship Programs for Higher Education ¹	\$70,320
Improving Math & Science Education ¹	\$19,000
Other (Association "Membership" Grants)	\$3,750
Post-Secondary Education (preparation, access, completion and persistence) ²	\$4,268,554.39
Math & Science for Post-Secondary Readiness	\$369,910.61
2015 TOTAL	\$4,731,535

¹ Inactive Funding Principle (used prior to 2010).

² Active Funding Principle (used since 2010).

NOTE: For comparison, 2014 Total: \$4,245,672.01

Total Requests Received & Declined in 2015

Type of Request	Number Received	Number of Declinations	Requested Amount Declined
Immediate Declination LOIs	8	8	\$850,248
Concept Papers	5	4	\$667,000
Letters of Inquiry	14	2	\$498,944
Proposals (includes GTF Matching Grants and Chair's Fund)	31	0	\$0
GTF Fellows Proposals	9	5	\$450,000
2015 TOTAL	67	19	\$2,466,192

NOTE: For comparison, 2014 Totals: 18 declinations at a requested amount of \$6,373,096

Total Active Grants in 2015

In addition to grants approved in 2015, the foundation maintains a portfolio of “active” grants that were approved prior to 2015, but still remain open. GTF staff continues oversight of these grants through reporting, monitoring, active correspondence, etc. The following chart contains an overview of the number and funding amount of the foundation’s Active Grants portfolio as of December 30, 2015.

Type of Grant	Number of Grants	Total Amount of Funding
General Grants³	29	\$13,522,492.87
Chair's Fund	1	\$2,500
Endowments	63	\$5,679,420
Indirect Grants⁴	1	\$800,000
2015 TOTAL	94	\$20,004,412.87

³ Post-Secondary Education, Math & Science for Post-Secondary Readiness, Opportunity Fund, GTF Educational Matching Grants, Association Memberships, or active grants from prior funding principles.

⁴ Re-grants made by intermediaries that GTF actively monitors.

NOTE: For comparison, 2014 Totals: 100 active grants at a total amount of \$20,115,165.38

GTF Approved Grantmaking since FY2001

Year	Grant Amount	Year	Grant Amount
2001	\$200,000	2009	\$4,808,317
2002	\$160,000	2010	\$3,795,658
2003	\$1,396,800	2011	\$6,202,077
2004	\$864,594	2012	\$1,329,623
2005	\$829,824	2013	\$4,097,559
2006	\$2,158,045	2014	\$3,934,329
2007	\$4,050,780	2015	\$4,190,480
2008	\$11,256,561	TOTAL	\$49,274,647

Grants Approved in 2015

<p>Post-Secondary Education (Preparation, Access, Completion and Persistence)</p>
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Chair’s Fund: Higher Education Conversation (\$5,000)

To support the first in The Texas Tribune's 2015 series of in-depth and thoughtful conversations that will be moderated by the CEO and Editor-in-Chief, Evan Smith. This discussion will cover the most pressing issues facing the state, and questions related to where we should be 5 years from now. *(Texas Tribune, Inc.)*

Community College Leadership Symposia for Institutional Change (\$110,000)

To support leadership symposia aimed at deepening the capacity of sitting community college presidents in Texas to effectively lead reform work on their campuses to improve student preparation, access, persistence, and completion. *(Achieving the Dream, Inc.)*

Higher Education Reporting (\$50,000)

To support The Texas Tribune's ongoing coverage of higher education in Texas. *(Texas Tribune, Inc.)*

Strengthening the Texas Community College Presidency (\$450,000)

To support the strengthening of the community college presidency by improving both presidential hiring and professional development. *(The Aspen Institute, Inc.)*

Chair's Fund: Policy Workshop (\$2,000)

To support a consultant to plan and facilitate a policy workshop for the GTF Faculty Fellows at their study meeting on May 12, 2015. (*Excelencia in Education, Inc.*)

Chair's Fund: Data and Innovation in Education Philanthropy (\$10,000)

To support Grantmakers for Education's Data and Innovation in Education Philanthropy meeting on August 27, 2015 in Dallas, Texas. (*Grantmakers for Education*)

Chair's Fund: Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium

(\$5,000)

To support a consortium designed to be a forum and serve as a focal point for organizing philanthropic efforts to promote, protect and improve public education. (*Austin Community Foundation for the Capital Area*)

College Forward Partnership (\$294,810)

To support the implementation of a mentoring program that will build stronger regional collaborations to strengthen educational attainment. (*Sul Ross State University*)

Next Generation Early College: Solving the Problem of the 61st Hour in Texas (\$30,000)

To support research that will document the solutions to the 61st credit problem as worked out in El Paso. (*Jobs for the Future, Inc.*)

College for All Initiative (\$352,520)

To support the College for All Initiative which will allow PSJA ISD to continue sharing strategies and progress on key initiatives by serving as a demonstration site, providing teaching and learning experiences, enhancing faculty, staff and teacher effectiveness throughout the state, and enriching the quality of instruction and college opportunities for Texas students. (*Pharr - San Juan - Alamo Independent School District*)

Mathematics Trajectories from Preschool to Post Secondary (\$4,050)

To support a synthesis of longitudinal research related to mathematics to help policymakers and educators understand the longitudinal effects of mathematics performance and the necessity for adequate mathematics instruction across school settings. (*The University of Texas at Austin*)

Removing Educational Barriers (\$34,500)

To support need-based scholarships at Texas A&M University-Central Texas. (*Texas A&M University - Central Texas*)

GTF TAMU Advising Corps (\$160,000)

To support a full-time college adviser at each of the two Bryan High Schools for two years. (*Texas A&M University*)

Lee College Foundation – Dual Credit Institute (\$847,100)

To support the development of the Lee College Dual Credit Institute, which will allow high school students to access and complete a post-secondary credential prior to high school graduation as they would through the Early College High School but with modifications to the model making dual credit and the completion of credentials accessible to more students. (*Lee College Foundation, Inc.*)

Board Training for Student Success (\$527,731)

To support the planning and implementing of a Board of Trustees Institute that will engage the leaders of 26 Texas colleges over three years (2015-2017) in activities designed to promote student access, success, and equity (closing achievement gaps) in Texas Community Colleges. (*Texas Community College Education Initiative*)

Chair’s Fund: Alma Garcia Early College High School Scholarship Fund (\$1,000)

To support the Alma Garcia Early College Scholarship Fund at the Communities Foundation of Texas. (*Communities Foundation of Texas, Inc./Educate Texas*)

Strengthening Two- to Four-Year College Transfer Pathways in Texas (\$218,614)

To support research that will identify potential policy levers to help improve the rate and cost-effectiveness of baccalaureate attainment among Texas community college students. (*Teacher’s College, Columbia University*)

Ready Texas: Stakeholder Convening (\$37,006)

The purpose of the Ready Texas: Stakeholder Convening is to bring together policymakers, education, community, business and family leaders in Austin, Texas to discuss the current status of HB5 implementation, gather input on key questions about implementation to inform the design of a subsequent comprehensive study, and connect researchers who are studying facets of implementation. (*Intercultural Development Research Association*)

Texas Regional STEM Degree Accelerator Phase II (\$600,000)

To support and empower local institutions of higher education (two-year, four-year, and technical schools) to collaborate and design strategies that accelerate the number of students who graduate with STEM degrees within their own regions and across Texas. Greater Texas Foundation's support is for activities related to the West Texas rural partnership. (*Communities Foundation of Texas, Inc./Educate Texas*)

The Business Case for Racial Equity in Texas (\$60,000)

To produce an issue brief highlighting gaps in opportunity and life outcomes among racial and ethnic groups in Texas, and the importance to the business community and the state's economy of reducing these gaps. (*Altarum Institute*)

Chair's Fund: Solving the Problem of the 61st Hour in Texas – Dissemination (\$2,500)

To support the report production, blog/op-ed writing, social media, and email blast for the documentation of the 61st credit problem as worked out in El Paso. (*Jobs for the Future*)

2016 Education Grantmakers Institute Case Study (\$35,000)

To support the development of a case study for the 2016 Education Grantmakers Institute: *Rethinking Accountability in Education within the Context of Decentralization* scheduled for April 5-6, 2016 at Harvard University. The case study will explore the unique role of philanthropy in driving systemic change by leveraging public policy. (*Grantmakers for Education*)

GTF Faculty Fellows Program Initiative. The Purpose of GTF Faculty Fellows is to build research and teaching capacity for Texas faculty working in areas related to the foundation's mission and strategy. The following four research grants were awarded in 2015:

- **Exploring the Choice Sets and Decision-Making Processes of Texas Community College Students Intending to Transfer to Four-Year Institutions** (\$90,000)
To support a research study that will examine where community college students in Texas--focusing on those who are first-generation college-goers, low-income, or students of color--decide to pursue postsecondary education. (*The University of Texas at Austin*)
- **Engineering their Career: The Academic and Professional Experiences of Latino Engineering Students Who Enroll in an HSI with Dual Credits** (\$49,568)
To support research that examines the academic and social experiences of Latino students enrolled in engineering programs who enter a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with dual credits. (*The University of Texas at Arlington*)
- **The Quest for College Readiness for All Students in Mathematics Begins with Elementary Teacher Preparation** (\$89,931)
To support a research project that will focus on evaluating the effects and impact of the University of Houston's EC-6 teacher preparation program with an eye toward revising the elementary mathematics methods courses and corresponding student teaching experiences. (*The University of Houston*)

- **English Language Learners on the Texas-Mexico Border: An Ethnographic Study Examining State Education Accountability Policies** (\$90,000)
To support a three-year ethnographic study in public high schools along the U.S./Mexico border to examine how state education accountability policies in the form of standardized testing affect English Language Learners (ELLs). (*The University of Texas at El Paso*)

GTF Educational Matching Grant Program

GTF Educational Matching Grant Program 2015 (\$30,400)

This program is meant to encourage giving by Greater Texas Foundation officers, board members, committee members, and employees to education institutions or organizations supporting education. The foundation will match contributions up to \$5,000 on a 2:1 basis. (*Baylor University, Tyler Junior College (2), Texas A&M Foundation, Texas A&M University-Commerce Foundation, Communities Foundation of Texas, Inc./Educate Texas*)

Other

Association/Membership Fees (\$3,750)

(*Grantmakers for Education, Grants Managers Network, Inc.*)

Additional 2015 Initiatives

Strategic Planning Update & Mid-Year Interviews

In 2009, Greater Texas Foundation underwent a six-month strategic planning process in partnership with FSG, in which the foundation examined current and projected educational needs in Texas and how the foundation's efforts might be best aligned to address those needs. This strategy led to the adoption of the foundation's focus on postsecondary preparation, access, persistence, and completion in the state of Texas. Since then, through administering grants, creating relationships, and convening stakeholders, the foundation has deepened its understanding of the postsecondary landscape in Texas and sharpened its ability to create positive change.

In 2014, after five years of executing this strategy, the foundation again partnered with FSG to undertake a strategic review of its work. Throughout this process the foundation maintained its focus on postsecondary preparation, access, persistence, and success in Texas – but also explored how it might increase its positive impact in a quickly-changing postsecondary landscape.

GTF's resulting strategy includes the following key tenets:

1. Support for *regional*-level work so that regions across Texas can better collaborate, share information, and align systems that support the success of all students.
2. A focus on specific *issues* that provide leverage points for improving postsecondary outcomes across Texas (e.g. high school to postsecondary transitions, rigor and alignment in math, transfer pathways, and improving the success of rural students).
3. The use of multiple *roles* to achieve greater impact, including roles related to grantmaking, research, convening, and policy advocacy.

2015 was the first full year of implementation for the revised plan. Staff focused strongly on the issue area of transfer and developed a plan for this issue area, which was presented to the board, and which includes connections to research, policy, regions, and practice. Staff intends to continue to develop and refine the issue areas for math, transition, and rural in a similar fashion. In addition, in coordination with the board, staff continues to refine its strategy with respect to its new role of policy advisor.

In addition, as recommended in the foundation's strategic plan, staff conducted mid-year external interviews with select partners to gauge perception of the foundation's successes and challenges with respect to its strategy. In addition, the interviews served as a sensing mechanism to potentially inform the emergent component of the foundation's strategy. All interviewees were asked a series of questions under three broad themes: trends and opportunities in postsecondary education in Texas; perspectives on GTF in general, and perspectives on GTF's role as policy advisor. Summarize feedback from the interviews was presented at the August meeting of Charitable Activities Committee. Overall, staff found this a very productive and helpful exercise. Our partners emphasized the foundation is on the right track and provided helpful

guidance and feedback.

Finally, the strategy aligns with a broader state and national conversation around creating “guided pathways” for students. Staff continues to participate, and in some cases, lead conversations exploring the connections between different initiatives focused on creating pathways for Texas students. This work will continue in 2016.

GTF Faculty Fellows – Third Cohort, Extension of Program, and Evaluation

In 2015, the foundation welcomed its third cohort of fellows to bring the program to a total of 12 fellows from eight (8) public institutions of higher education in the state. In addition, the board approved a plan to extend the program to three new cohorts of up to four fellows per cohort. The selection process for the fourth cohort began in October and will conclude with a recommendation to the board in March 2016. Finally, with board approval, staff initiated a process to select an evaluator for the GTF Fellows program. Based on a proposal and interview process, a recommendation for an evaluator will be presented to the board in January 2016.

GTF Scholars – Regional Convening

As a result of the relationships formed through GTF Scholars and the corresponding evaluation, GTF – in partnership with Educate Texas and the GTF Scholars institutions – continues to find itself in a unique position to catalyze the sharing and use of information regarding the successes and challenges of graduates of Texas early college high schools as they transition to four-year institutions of higher education. For example, in 2013, GTF and Educate Texas staff co-presented (with GTF Scholars institutions and evaluators) at one state and one national conference about lessons learned from GTF Scholars and how those lessons impact early college high school practices. In 2014, GTF coordinated a presentation at the National Early College Conference hosted by Educate Texas and Jobs for the Future. In 2015, GTF, Educate Texas, and a GTF Scholars evaluator presented to a national audience via JFF’s Communities of Practice Webinar platform and also presented at the national PSJA College for All Conference.

The conferences and other opportunities to present provided important platforms to begin sharing the lessons from GTF Scholars; however, all participating institutions continue to express interest in using the GTF Scholars platform to form and sustain more intentional dialogue with Texas early college high schools, particularly those in the respective institutions’ major feeder patterns/regions.

Based on lessons learned to date and an expressed need to bring institutions together, with the board’s approval, the foundation hosted a convening in conjunction with the PSJA College for All conference with the following focus:

By succeeding in rigorous high school and community college courses, ECHS students gain the knowledge, skills, confidence, and motivation to succeed at a four-year institution. How can we, as stakeholders invested in the success of early college students, ensure a smooth transition to a four-year institution and beyond? Drawing from a range of experiences with GTF Scholars, a scholarship program for graduates of Texas ECHSs, participants will engage in conversation about challenges and successes of this transition, including findings from the first three years of a comprehensive external evaluation. By focusing on topics from transferability of credits to general adaption of ECHS students to the four-year campus (through academic engagement, social engagement activities, and financial guidance and support) the solutions-oriented convening will center around lessons with implications for all ECHS students.

The goal of the one-day regional convening was three-fold: 1) share the lessons learned from the GTF Scholars evaluation and program with a broader audience; 2) bring together regional teams (led by GTF Scholars institutions) to devise regional action plans to address some of the challenges associated with transfer; and 3) inform Greater Texas Foundation's broader transfer strategy.

Although the convening was a good first conversation with some new partners, it reinforced the need to hold regional conversations with stakeholders at a place physically located in/near the GTF Scholars institutions. For example, bring ECHS representatives, community college representatives, and university representatives from Houston together at the University of Houston. We feel that may be a better strategy to bring the right partners to the table and create a sustainable conversation within the regions. Staff will continue to work on and refine the strategy around this work in 2016.