

Major Policy Discussion

Star Awards 2025

Dr. Brandon Griggs, Assistant Commissioner
College and Career Advising

THECB Texas Higher Education
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Star Awards 2025: Overview

Aligned with our theme **From Classroom to Career: A Future-Ready Texas**

Highlighting Institutions of Higher Education in 3 strategic categories:

- Student Success
- Career Transitions
- Workforce Education



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How did we create these categories?

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Student Success

Celebrating institutions that demonstrate measurable improvements in student progress and credential completion.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated increases in credential attainment and program completion
- High-impact advising, coaching, or early alert systems supporting student persistence
- Scalable models that support transfer, adult, or returning students navigating postsecondary pathways
- Use of data-informed strategies to monitor student outcomes that led to institutional change—particularly those focused on affordability and demonstrated student success
- Innovative student success programs that embed career connection

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Star Awards 2025: Student Success



Lone Star College improved completion through data-driven advising, guided pathways, and wraparound supports. Programs like AutoGrad and CARE for Completion raised credential awards 12% since 2017, now totaling **12,822 annually**. Achievement gaps have narrowed, persistence improved, and career readiness embedded across advising.



UTA's Mavs RISE supports conditionally admitted students with case management, financial literacy, and career readiness. Serving nearly 1,000 students yearly—70% first-gen—it raised academic standing from **55% to 71%** and boosted retention. Over 90% meet with advisors, building academic and financial success.

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Career Development & Transitions

Celebrating institutions preparing students for a 21st-century workforce through innovative career development, employer partnerships, and the integration of emerging technologies such as AI.

Criteria:

- Creation or expansion of short-term workforce education and training programs in high-demand occupations
- Strategic use of AI tools or platforms to enhance students' career exploration, advising, job matching, or skills development
- Productive partnerships with local/regional employers, economic development corporations, workforce boards, or trade associations that led to institutional change in how students are supported on campuses
- Promotion of a culture of continuous learning and upskilling to help learners adapt to evolving technologies and remain competitive in a rapidly changing labor market
- Innovative course or program design that increases student affordability



Star Awards 2025: Career Transitions



South Plains College redesigned 65 technical courses with AI tools and open resources to lower costs and align with workforce needs. Across 170 sections, students saved **\$510,000 in textbooks** and 240+ faculty were trained. New simulations and role-playing boost engagement in fields like welding, automotive, and culinary arts, while stackable credentials speed entry into high-demand jobs.



UTSA's Najim Strategists Program connects students with paid consulting projects for local employers in IT, healthcare, and logistics. Over 200 students have participated since 2020, earning \$800 stipends and **achieving promising job placement**. Expanding through the College of Business, it will become a graduation requirement by 2026.



Workforce Education

Recognizing institutions enhancing workforce-aligned programs and pathways that lead to credentials of value.

Criteria:

- Creation or enhancement of workforce education programs aligned with high-demand occupations and regional labor market needs
- Partnerships with employers, workforce boards, or industry associations that informed academic program design and student placement
- Growth in delivery of short-term, stackable, or other credentials that increase workforce participation
- Integration of work-based learning opportunities (e.g., internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job training)
- Innovative course or program design that streamlines academic and career pathways
- Innovative course or program design that increases student affordability



Star Awards 2025: Workforce



MD Anderson's STARS program places students in paid clinical roles with tuition coverage and mentorship to address health workforce gaps. Enrollment grew from 10 to 30+, achieving **100% completion and job placement**. In FY 2024, it generated \$4.5 million and cut hiring time from 120 to under 30 days.

Kim Hoggatt Krumwiede, PhD, CMI
Dean, School of Health Professions
Professor and Distinguished Educator





Building a Sustainable Allied Health Workforce through the Student Talent Advancing Retention Success (STARS) Talent Pathway Program

Kimberly Hoggatt Krumwiede, Ph.D., Dean, School of Health Professions
kahoggatt@mdanderson.org

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School of Health Professions (SHP)

The School of Health Professions, in concert with the mission and vision of MD Anderson, is committed to the education of health care professionals, through formal academic programs that award degrees in health sciences.

Bachelor of Science

- Medical Laboratory Science
- Cytogenetic Technology
- Cytotechnology (closes Summer 2026)
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Diagnostic Medical Sonography
- Healthcare Analytics and Advocacy
- Histotechnology
- Medical Dosimetry
- Molecular Genetic Technology
- Radiation Therapy



Master of Science

- Diagnostic Genetics and Genomics
- Radiologic Sciences
- *Medical Dosimetry (Spring 2026)*
- *Cytotechnology (Fall 2026)*

Certificate

- Advanced Technical Certificate in Mammography
- *Molecular Genetics Technology Certificate Program (Summer 2026)*



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School of Health Professions (SHP)

Students
(Fall 2025)

362 undergrad
38 grad

400

10:1

Student to faculty/instructor ratio

SHP students routinely score
in the top 25% on national
certification exams

25%

56

SHP Faculty and Staff

Full-time Faculty


23

30%

Approximately 30% of SHP
graduates are employed at MD
Anderson annually

Student Talent Advancing Retention Success (STARS) Program

- ✓ **Workforce alignment:** STARS targets occupations with projected 18% growth in Texas, including radiologic technologists and medical laboratory scientists.
- ✓ **Employer partnerships:** The program’s design is informed by clinical leadership and operational needs, ensuring relevance and immediate impact.
- ✓ **Credential advancement:** Students progress from technologist assistants to certified radiologic technologists, with 100% credential completion and employment rates.
- ✓ **Work-based learning:** Participants engage in 20-hour/week clinical roles, gaining hands-on experience while supporting patient care operations.
- ✓ **Innovative design:** The program integrates mentorship, leadership development and flexible schedules to streamline academic and career pathways.
- ✓ **Affordability:** MD Anderson provides tuition assistance for STARS participants, removing financial barriers and increasing access to high-value credentials.



2024 STARS Outcomes – DI and PLM

Student info
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students per cohort <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DI: 20 (10 Technologist Assistant (TA) & 10 Radiologic Technologist (RT)) PLM: 8 (Medical Laboratory Scientist, Histology Technician, Cytogenetics Scientist) Retention -number hired by MDA after program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DI: (10) 100% hired; 10 continued to the second year as RTs PLM: (8) 100% hired

ROI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total institutional Tuition and Salary expenditure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DI: \$824,788 PLM: \$274,190 Net patient revenue generated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DI: \$4,567,660 Institutional savings (recruitment costs, onboarding, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DI: \$30,014 PLM: \$139,000

- Workforce retention 100%
- Reduced recruitment time from 120 days to between 21 and 28 days
- Achieved ROI rates up to 653%¹

AY25 and AY26 STARS – DI and PLM

Diagnostic Imaging (DI)
<p>AY25: 10/10 100% - DI – STARS offered jobs at MD Anderson as Radiologic Technologist (RT) in CT, MRI & VI 10 transitioned as Technologist Assistant (TA) for second year in program</p> <p>AY26: 10 selected for onboarding in the STARS program as Radiologic Technologist (RT) 10 selected for onboarding as Technologist Assistant (TA)</p>

Pathology Laboratory Medicine (PLM)
<p>AY25: 7/10 70%– PLM - STARS offered jobs at MD Anderson as Technologist 1 MLS student declined offer because decided did not want to work in Hematology 2 Histotechnology Lab decided they were not a good fit did not extend offer</p> <p>AY26: 10 selected for onboarding as Assistant: Medical Lab Scientist, Cytogenetic Technologist, Histotechnologist, Molecular Genetic Technologist Assistant: Medical Lab Scientist, Cytogenetic Technologist, Histotechnologist, Molecular Genetic Technologist</p>

School of Health Professions

Student Talent Advancing Retention Success (STARS) Program

- ✓ **Partnership** between SHP and clinical divisions (DI, PLM) at MD Anderson
- ✓ Supports student skills development
- ✓ Supports student mentoring, professional identity formation, and workforce community
- ✓ Provides financial assistance for student tuition
- ✓ Provides opportunity to retain students after graduation
- ✓ Streamlines the academic-to-career transition
- ✓ Facilitates workflow in clinical operations
- ✓ Provides staffing cost reduction
- ✓ Generates clinical revenues for MDACC

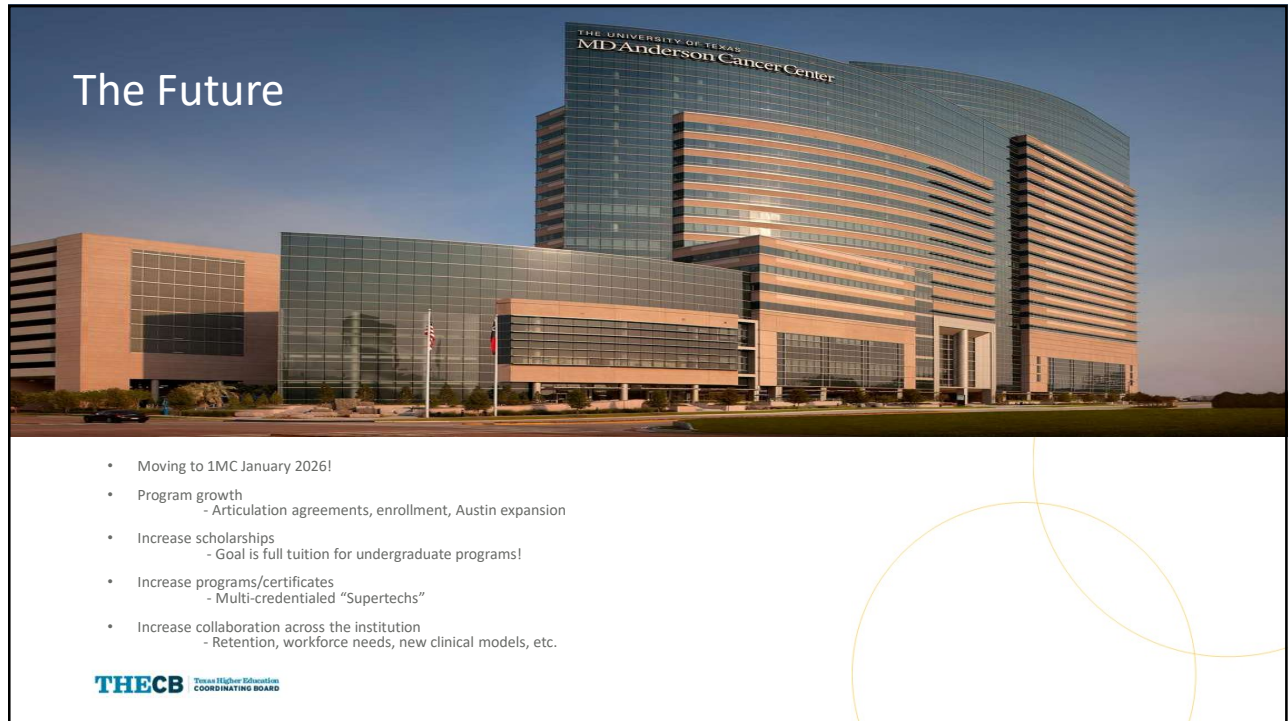
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STARS Workforce Retention Model

- ✓ STARS is a model of **innovation, affordability, and workforce alignment**
- ✓ Presented the STARS at state, regional and national conferences
- ✓ Published on the STARS model in the *Journal of Allied Health*, a national academic interdisciplinary allied health periodical¹, and are working on an additional publication with a healthcare administration focus

¹ Undie W, Miller D, Benamar A, Hu P, Bodurka D, Hoggatt Krumwiede K, Tannir H. Partnering academic and clinical operations to build a sustainable allied health workforce: The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center experience. *Journal of Allied Health*. 2025 Jun; 54(2):e199-e204. PMID: 40493938.

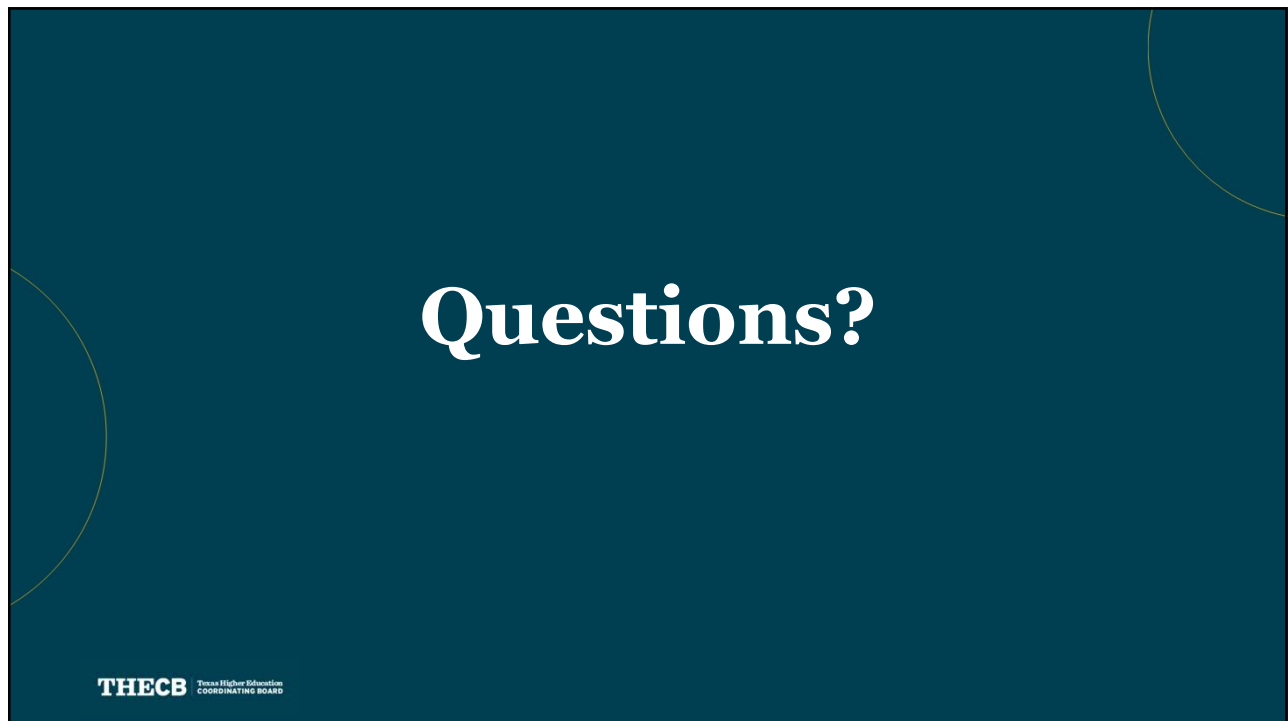
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The Future

- Moving to 1MC January 2026!
- Program growth
 - Articulation agreements, enrollment, Austin expansion
- Increase scholarships
 - Goal is full tuition for undergraduate programs!
- Increase programs/certificates
 - Multi-credentialed "Supertechs"
- Increase collaboration across the institution
 - Retention, workforce needs, new clinical models, etc.

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Questions?

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Star Awards 2025: Workforce



San Jacinto College created Texas’s first biomanufacturing training program with \$10 million in state funding and NIBRT partnership. Offering stackable credentials and corporate training, it’s supported by \$3.5 million in industry equipment and internships. Since 2024, 1,000+ workers trained and students secured jobs pre-graduation.

Dr. Christopher Wild
Assistant Vice Chancellor/Vice President Biotechnology



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nibr
NIBRT Global Partner

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE
Center for Biotechnology

Training Talent at the Speed of Industry: How an Industry-Aligned Global Training Model Is Helping to Position Texas as the Next Hub for Pharmaceutical Manufacturing

Christopher Wild, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice Chancellor/Vice President
Biotechnology - Biomanufacturing
Christopher.wild@sjcd.edu

HOUSTON, TEXAS - The next pharma manufacturing hub

#4 largest city in the United States (most diverse and 3rd youngest)
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

#1 largest Chemical complex in U.S.
Source: CBRE Research

#1 U.S. port For waterborne tonnage; \$906B in U.S economic value
Source: PortHouston.com

#1 largest medical center in the world – TMC (regional life science jobs @ 394,500+)
Source: Greater Houston Partnership

2 international airports

45,000 students
Houston

Biomufacturing Advisory Committee

Chair: Laine Linden
*Head of Technical Operations
CTMC*

Co-Chair: Derick Faulkner
*Head of People and Culture
FujiFILM Diosynth Biotech*

An Equal Opportunity Institution

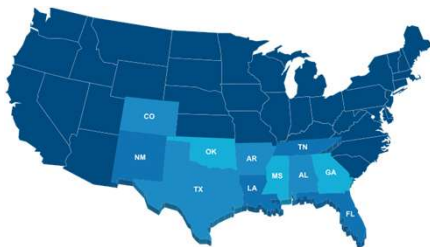
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE & NIBRT ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP AND THE CENTER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY



In partnership with



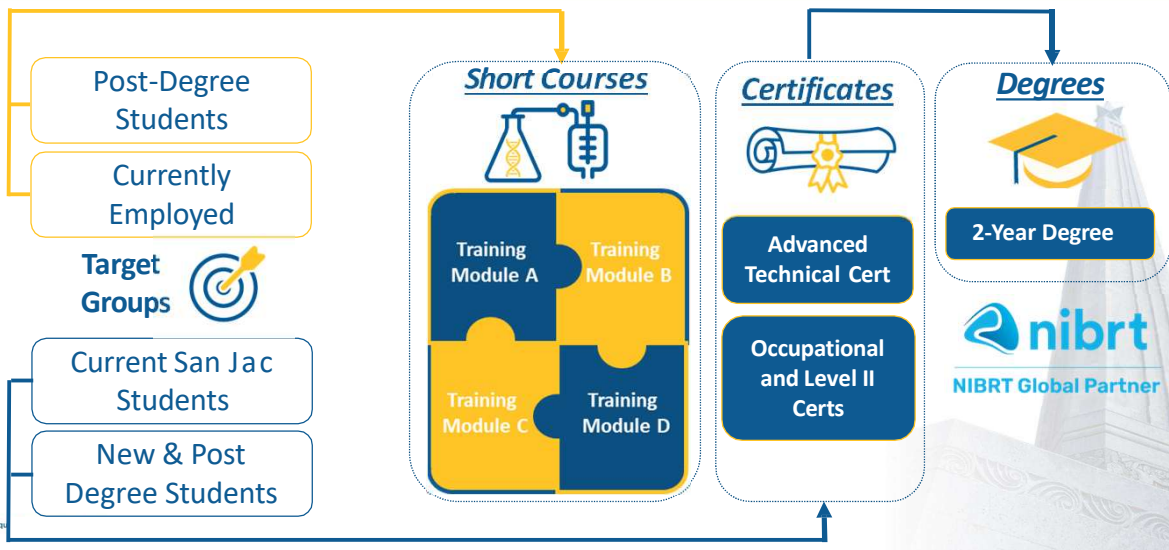
National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training



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Biomanufacturing Training Multiple Entry – Multiple Exit



2024-2025 Notable Achievements



- 1st biomanufacturing-focused credit training program in Texas
- 1st community college to offer NIBRT training in nation
- 1st biomanufacturing dual credit program in Texas (Sheldon ISD)
- Approved, stackable credit program
 - ~80 students to date
 - Internships secured and FT offers made in first year
- 1,000+ trainee hours (custom corporate training)
- Training consultant for multi-national corporation
- \$10 million in state funding secured



2024-2025 Notable Achievements



- Training provider for Texas Space Commission Award (Project Zephyr – Intuitive Machines)
- 2 national summer workshops
- Awarded ~\$1 million by NSF ATE to create nation's 1st advanced therapy manufacturing training program
- Lead institution for National Biotech Education Center (InnovATEBIO) Advanced Therapies
- National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing eXperience program training site
- Chosen to partner with BioMADE to cross train chemical operators in biomanufacturing
- ~\$4 million in secured donations (equipment and supplies)
- Workforce lead on site selection team that helped secure Eli Lilly \$6.5 billion investment (pharmaceutical manufacturing campus)



Questions?