Letter from the CEO

Dear Tejano Center Friends and Colleagues,

A new day brings new ideas and new energy to confidently meet the future head-on. That is how the Tejano Center for Community Concerns is approaching the many challenges of this new year, this new decade. In its 28-year history, the Tejano Center's mission has guided us in developing effective community institutions that empower people living at or below the poverty line to transform their lives.

Providing Successful Social, Health, and Educational Programs

By providing a broad range of social, health, and educational programs that have addressed the pressing needs of Houston's East End community, the Tejano Center has emerged as an important local resource for low-income Hispanic neighborhoods that seek self-sufficiency and hope for the future. And with our solid record of success, we are now ready to begin a new day in the Tejano Center, expanding our reach and making an even greater impact.

Accomplishing Positive Change In Our Community

I have the privilege of leading this strong, vibrant organization that has withstood many challenges over the past 28 years. With a dedicated staff and an actively involved community, we are proud of what we are accomplishing: stabilizing the lives of those in need of care and hope, opening the door for those seeking homeownership or shelter, helping victims face the devastating effects of Hurricane Harvey, providing a world-class college-preparatory program for underserved students, restoring our own financial health, and effectively navigating the competitive network of grant funding and partnerships so that we can continue to be an agent of positive change within our community. But I know that effective leadership requires progress, and with many hard-fought accomplishments behind us, I know we are ready to move forward.

Sincerely,

Adriana Tamez, Ed.D
CEO and Superintendent of Schools

Letter from the Chairman

Dear Friends of the Tejano Center,

As a brand new decade begins, service to others is still, and always will be, the reason that the Tejano Center for Community Concerns (the Tejano Center) exists. Founded in 1992, with an unshakable commitment to the families and neighborhoods of Houston’s East End, we have proudly created opportunities to improve lives and livelihoods and made it our business to help make this community viable, productive, and welcoming. The information in this annual report provides documentation of our record of progress and success.

Our accomplishments notwithstanding, we now approach a new day and a new expectation within the Tejano Center as we work to expand our reach and our influence throughout Houston and Harris County. This year, we are working toward a broad transformation of our service and support systems.

My colleagues on the Board of Directors and I share with the administration a commitment to overcome the issues and uncertainties that are dividing our society by strengthening our programs and services and building new ones—all to empower those in desperate need of comfort, housing, healthcare, safety, a good education, and more. We intend to accomplish this as we have before—with strong, resilient community and business partnerships and excellent staffing, but with even more focus and more urgency.

We enter the year 2020 with a great deal of hope for the future, and as we step forward into a challenging new era of community engagement and a recommittment to service, we are seeking your support and your engagement. We look forward to the future with you.

Sincerely,

David Corpus
Chairman
Board of Directors
Tejano Center for Community Concerns
Since 2013, the Head Start Program at the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success has taken a leading role in preparing preschoolers and their parents for the classroom environment and the learning process.
The Affordable Housing Program at the Tejano Center is dedicated to helping low-income individuals and families attain the American Dream by creating access to affordable, good-quality, and safe housing in Houston. It is a foundational goal to help neighborhood residents own their homes.

Since 2005, the Tejano Center’s Affordable Housing Program has created more than 2,700 new homeowners and 4,000 mortgage-ready homebuyers who did not have full access to traditional funding channels.

The ongoing, documented success of the Affordable Housing Program is based on a full range of services, including homebuyer counseling and education services, home repairs, and home-closing activities. By undertaking this mission of improving the economic status of Houston’s East End residents and transforming neighborhoods through affordable housing, more than 15,000 low-income individuals and families have been helped through its home-buyer education and one-on-one counseling program. As such, the National Council of LaRaza recognized the Tejano Center as one of the best nonprofit housing programs in the nation in 2012 for its outstanding work in stabilizing neighborhoods and the lives of those in need.

Adding to its impressive history of success, which includes building its first home in 1993, developing counseling in 1995, offering homeowner education classes in 2001, providing foreclosure intervention counseling in 2007, completing a Housing and Urban Development Section 202 senior apartment project in 2008, and developing a mortgage lending program in 2010, the Tejano Center’s Affordable Housing program immersed itself into the city’s massive recovery efforts following Hurricane Harvey.

Through its Home Repair Collaborative, a partnership with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Fifth Ward CRC, Habitat for Humanity, and Rebuilding Together Houston, the $1.7 million program has helped to make storm-damaged homes safe and habitable. Seventy-seven displaced families so far have returned home, with work on more homes in progress. And reaching out even further, the program’s Disaster Case Management component has helped storm victims secure resources and programs through direct referrals for appliances, furniture, mattresses, clothing, and housing assistance, as well as help in addressing home ownership issues, property taxes, and financing.

The Affordable Housing Program is a HUD-certified Housing Counseling Agency and a City of Houston-certified Community Housing Development Organization. We are proud to be affiliated with numerous corporate, governmental, and nonprofit partners that include major banking and insurance institutions, NeighborWorks America, the Greater Housing Community Foundation, UnidosUS, and LISC to ensure a wide range of resource opportunities for as many individuals and families as possible.

“\nI still cannot believe you did so much for me and my family, I will always be grateful, because you have given us our home back.”

— TRACY CARMODY

“If it weren’t for the Tejano Center, my home would never have been built, you guys are heavenly sent, you are our angels.”

— MELISSA HOUGHTON
The Baylor College of Medicine Teen Health Clinic at the Tejano Center opened its doors in the Spring of 2013 with the idea that health care is as intrinsic to the well being of students as is their education. Better-educated, healthy, and drug-free teens are more likely to stay in school, demonstrate responsible social behaviors, avoid the criminal justice system, and become contributing members of society. By collaborating with the Tejano Center to locate the clinic on the campus of the Raul Yzaguirre School for Success (RYSS), the Baylor College of Medicine—along with other community-minded organizations, such as the Simmons Foundation and Community Health Choice—offers comprehensive health care services at no cost to low-income students ages 13 to 24. These services include medication, immunizations, sports physicals, primary care, family planning, and social services including case management, peer support groups and even health care career training. The high level of care and attention have also earned the confidence of students’ parents whose required consent is essential to the clinic’s success.

The clinic, which is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., is funded through a combination of state grants and private philanthropy. Its arrangement with the Tejano Center and RYSS ensures students spend less time away from their classrooms and helps parents with their children’s healthcare in a convenient location. The number of visits and immunizations administered each year reflects the significant need that the Baylor College of Medicine Teen Clinic addresses to ensure the good health and physical development of young people within the community.

"The clinic is important to me because I can’t afford to go to the doctor to receive services that I need." – JOSE, 10TH GRADE

"The staff at Baylor Clinic provided excellent care to my son, each of the staff was courteous, professional and made the visit an exceptional experience. I am very pleased to have such quality care close to home." – LIZETTE MORENO, PARENT
The success of Nueva Vida Elderly Apartments is a testament to the Affordable Housing Program’s commitment to its mission, particularly as it relates to the community’s low-income elderly population. This independent-living facility for seniors, age 62 and over, is a 65-unit complex located in Houston’s East End that the Tejano Center began in March 2008 through federal Housing and Urban Development funding (PRAC 202). The funding subsidizes approximately 70% of the residents’ rent.

From the beginning, Nueva Vida has maintained full occupancy of 65 units, with a waiting list of approximately two years or more. This level of success can be attributed to an accessible, professional staff that prides itself on ensuring a clean, safe, and secure living environment for a vulnerable population, all made possible with an annual operating budget of $353,000, comprising of rental income and federal subsidies.

Because its residents may need a little help in their daily living, the Nueva Vida staff also serves as a community advocates for them. Collaborations with Metro, the Houston Furniture Bank, the City of Houston’s Public Library, the Community Energy Assistance Program, St. Joseph Medical Center, Meals on Wheels, and Harris County Constable Chris Diaz all have made low- to no-cost senior services more accessible, such as transportation, furniture, computer literacy, health screening, utility payments, safety seminars, and meals. Nueva Vida also coordinated with Catholic Charities to help two residents earn their citizenship. These accomplishments, notwithstanding, Nueva Vida continues to seek additional collaborations for dental and vision services as well as counseling, since the majority of its elderly residents live alone.

“I did not like where I lived before. There was no security and very little attention to the condition of the complex. Nueva Vida provided me with a sense of security. Everything is nice and well kept. I have lived here for almost four years now.” – LUIS, AGE 69

“I feel happy and secure like never before. Where I lived before, I was always afraid and was robbed. There was no security. Nueva Vida does not make exceptions to any person—everything is equal and even.” – GLORIA, AGE 67
Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success

As one of the first open-enrollment charter school districts established in Texas, the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) continues its commitment to the specific educational needs of students who reside within the predominantly Hispanic, economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in Southeast Houston. By establishing RYSS in 1996, the Tejano Center sought to raise the academic expectations of traditionally underserved students by providing a rigorous educational experience that would make college attendance a reachable goal. From its modest beginnings in a small rental facility with an enrollment of 100 students, RYSS has expanded its operation and its course offerings for a current enrollment of 1,300 students in two cities: the main campus in Houston (Kindergarten to twelfth grade) and an additional campus in Brownsville, Texas (Kindergarten to eighth grade).

Through the years, RYSS has raised the bar even higher to make a student’s college or university enrollment the norm and not an exception. To do that, RYSS established a comprehensive college-preparatory curriculum emphasizing STEM and literacy instruction with the highest expectation that students will be actively engaged in project-based learning, graduate on schedule, and enroll in an institution of higher learning. Increasing college and career opportunities for those who may not otherwise have access to them continues to drive the RYSS faculty and staff to this day.

With its focus on a demanding course of study, RYSS has made significant academic progress through the years, as measured by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). In the 2018-2019 school year, the district earned a TEA accountability rating of “A” (Exemplary Performance), with the Brownsville Raul Yzaguirre STEM Scholars Preparatory earning, for the fourth consecutive year, an “A” rating along with all applicable Distinction Designations. At the same time, the Houston Elite Primary Academy and the Houston STEM Early College Middle School raised their ratings to a solid “B” (Recognized Performance).

Progress also has also extended to program offerings. TEA designated the Houston T-STEM Early College High School as a Pathways in Technology and Early High School (P-Tech), which allows students the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while simultaneously earning tech industry certification and/or an associate degree at no cost to the student. In addition, San Jacinto College awarded a grant emphasizing the RYSS’s STEM curriculum.

RYSS’s total operating budget of $16.7 million clearly signifies that it has evolved well beyond its modest beginnings. With nearly 81% of its funding allocated by the state, it is essential that the district demonstrate its total commitment to meeting or exceeding state standards. With that clearly in mind, RYSS will be building on its solid record of student success with efforts to close the digital divide among students, address equity in educational opportunities, increase even more the current 99% graduation rate, secure more career pathways and dual credit programs, and strengthen Bilingual Education and Special Education programs. RYSS also seeks to improve teacher and leadership quality, enhance instructional focus in the classroom, and fully implement personalized learning.

“A-Rated”

Texas Education Agency – District Rated “A” 2019
Consistent with the mission and goals of the Tejano Center, Project GRAD Houston (GRAD) exists to improve lives by helping individuals develop and achieve their educational aspirations.

The GRAD partnership with the Tejano Center’s Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success was formed in 1992 to provide a continuum of services to high school students as they transition to college. With funding from AT&T in 2016, GRAD expanded its services to provide Houston T-STEM and Early College High School with GRADuation Aspirations programming where advisors located on campus provide coaching and programming services to motivate students to plan for college and careers. All students, regardless of GPA, test scores, and other life factors can participate with GRAD. Students and their families access advising in English and Spanish at no cost.

GRAD programming results in a greater awareness of college and career options and an increase in the completion of financial aid and college applications, ensuring that students graduate from high school are better prepared for post-secondary education, which would lead to meaningful, high-demand employment. Through GRAD’s Badge Up program, RYSS students earned more than 100 badges, each signifying the completion of important activities related to college and career readiness, such as career planning, college investigation, academic excellence, leadership, community service, team/networking, soft skills, college preparation, and college transition. GRAD and Houston T-STEM & Early College High School successfully met an annual goal to achieve 80% on-time promotion to the next grade level among students identified as being significantly at risk of insufficient credit accumulation during their ninth-grade year.

To date, with GRAD’s support, more than 150 students have received assistance in completing their financial aid and college applications. An added benefit has been the increased student and parent confidence in the application process.

GRAD’s Lunch & Learns provide students with career information from community volunteers. To date, students have heard about careers, ranging from engineering, broadcasting and journalism, technology, entrepreneurship, education, and nonprofits. Similarly, GRAD’s College and Career Institute gives students a week-long experience on a college campus that is designed to provide an immersive experience focused on college and career exploration and readiness. More than 100 students have attended the institutes, and college readiness and success indicators increased an average of 40%.

Because parent participation is essential to program success, GRAD has engaged nearly 300 parents since 2016 through workshop events and one-on-one advising visits. Parents have also had the opportunity to attend student workshops, as well as parent workshops that help them with college planning, senior-year guidance, and financial aid.

While AT&T has provided the majority of funding, the Tejano Center, JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, the Brown Foundation, the Vivian L. Smith Foundation, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, and others have also provided support. This funding will be important in strengthening GRADuation Aspirations programming. GRAD will continue to develop meaningful student and family-focused relationships with a community of learners. GRAD also continues to offer additional support for graduated students through community-based cafes and a mobile unit during evenings and weekends to provide guidance in both English and Spanish.

Now that I am in Project GRAD, I learned of ways to pay for college, the endless options out there, and the differences between them.” – ROBERTO ORTIZ, SOPHOMORE

“Ms. Buss invited me to an all-girls field trip to Macquarie, where they informed us about careers in software and computer science. Thanks to that field trip, I was inspired to perhaps pursue software engineering as my major for college. I am truly thankful for Project GRAD for bringing upon my life amazing people who have changed my life completely.” – DANIELA GUZMAN, CLASS OF 2018, NOW AT TEXAS A&M
Nova Academy for Adult Education

For the Tejano Center for Community Concerns, everyone is deserving of a helping hand to reach their goals and build a successful life. For that reason, the Tejano Center has continued its affiliation with the Houston Community College System’s (HCC) NOVA Academy for Adult Education to provide high-quality, innovative, and personalized educational courses focusing on English as a Second Language, GED, and EL Civic.

The adult education program has been in existence since 2012 at the campus of Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success, partnering with the University of Houston and Houston Community College System. Both institutions have provided high-quality professional development to our experienced, state-certified instructors. Course topics have included: English as a Second Language (beginning, intermediate, and advanced); Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency for native and non-native speakers who want to improve language skills and gain mastery of core academic skills needed to obtain a HSE diploma; and Integrated EL Civics that enables adults who are English Language Learners to achieve English-language competency, acquire the skills needed to function effectively in the United States and know the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. Participants pay a nominal fee for each of the courses that are held three evenings per week each semester.

Child Placing Agency and Foster Home Certification Program

Ensuring the safety and security of children is a guiding principle of the Tejano Center. It is a given that too many children are victimized by neglect and/or abuse and are in desperate need of a safe, nurturing home environment. The Child Placing Agency of the Tejano Center oversees the foster care program that was licensed in 2001 to provide stable foster homes to children who have been removed from abusive families or unsafe households. The Child Placing Agency staff works with Child Protective Services to match children with qualified, licensed foster families. Identifying and selecting potential foster parents who meet the required licensing criteria is the responsibility of the agency in addition to conducting home inspections, so that all involved help improve children’s lives. For the past three years, the agency has placed an average of 143 children into a foster environment. In those three years, there have been an average of 18 foster homes participating in the program, and many more are needed in the immediate future to fulfill the mission. In addition to identifying foster parents, the staff provides those individuals with 35 required hours of training in areas such as addressing child abuse and neglect, understanding trauma care and triggers, handling grief and loss, managing behaviors and discipline, all of which gives foster parents the necessary tools to help and support those in their care.

Caseworkers also maintain an active schedule of crisis counseling, group sessions, and legal assistance to those children who require such services. The Tejano Center’s Foster Care Agency is funded by the State of Texas, with an annual budget of $540,000. With the continuing need to place children, the Tejano Center is working to expand the number of licensed foster homes available and to secure the additional financial resources.

I have been with TCCC Child Placing Agency for 8 years. The most rewarding thing about what I do is our commitment to ensure children are placed in a safe environment with a loving family. Our goal is to assist, support and guide foster parents so they can meet the children’s needs. Those needs include basic, psychological, emotional, medical, and educational needs.” – BRENDA NAVARRETE
LNESC Upward Bound
Opportunity begins with an open door, and the Upward Bound Math and Science (UBMS) Program offered by LULAC National Educational Services Centers, Inc. (LNESC) is helping economically disadvantaged students at the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) to step through that door to find amazing possibilities for the future. The program at RYSS is a five-year, $1.2 million initiative designed to strengthen math and science skills, encourage higher education pursuits, and reinforce interest in STEM careers. It is in keeping with LNESC’s long history of providing high-quality educational programs that help Hispanic and disadvantaged students. The LNESC Upward Bound partnership, funded by the United States Department of Education, began in 2018, with positive results already evident.

In 2018, 30 RYSS seniors—more than half the senior class—participated in UBMS activities that included tutoring in higher-level subject matter; counseling on course selection, financial aid, and career opportunities; and field trips to local, state and out-of-state colleges as well as to museums and cultural performances. These activities are provided at no cost to the students or the school. In addition, RYSS students have participated in a unique LNESC leadership program in Washington, D.C., also at no cost, and in a free six-week summer STEM program to further their college and career aspirations.

With 70% of UBMS’s 2019 graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution, LNESC is working to make the program even better by tracking these graduates for six years. For the time being, RYSS and LNESC will collaborate to increase awareness and knowledge of the program among students and families, seek more parent participation in encouraging students to take advantage of UBMS, encourage more teacher participation and collaboration, and secure more hands-on program advisors to ensure that every student is actively engaged with program offerings.

“I am officially a UHD Gator thanks to you ... you supported me and saw the true potential that I had.” – RICARDO ORTIZ, UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON, DOWNTOWN

“College is not that scary after all. If you prioritize your education, everything else just rolls around perfectly.” – SULEYMI MENDOZA, UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

“After the first week of classes, I realized I was nervous and anxious for no reason. The preparation it took to get here helped a lot.” – ALEJANDRA RANGEL, HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Thank you LNESC Upward Bound and Ms. Janet for believing in me when I would go to your office with no hope of getting accepted anywhere.” – LITZY CAMPOS, UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON, DOWNTOWN
Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Outreach and Support Program

When life becomes a constant experience of terror through domestic violence, human trafficking, and/or sexual abuse, victims need to know that support, safety, and advocacy do exist for them.

The goal of The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Outreach and Support Program of the Tejano Center for Community Concerns is to provide direct services to victims through a systemic approach that expedites recovery, both physical and emotional. The trained, professional VOCA staff assists survivors in stabilizing their lives, first by offering safety and security, and then by providing crisis counseling and support groups, mentoring, advocacy, aid through the legal process and court system, and shelter. The program’s casework is comprehensive, helping hundreds of victims and survivors each year through the VOCA process. In Houston, the need is especially acute since the city leads the nation in human trafficking cases.

Although the program’s $343,095 operating budget is federally funded, the VOCA staff also works with local partners to help recognize and address victimization through education and assistance in obtaining governmental assistance. Partners include the Harris County Juvenile and Adult Probation Departments, the Star of Hope, and YMCA International.

Going forward, the VOCA Outreach and Support Program is working to increase its financial resources to provide more emergency housing for victims and their families as they transition to permanent placement.

When someone goes through physical abuse, all you want to do is run away. I thought I was stuck in this situation forever. The VOCA staff made me feel safe. They heard my story without judging me. This program has helped me so much in all aspects. They made me feel alive again. I was able to get my own place to live and a job. I am no longer afraid to speak up and stand up for myself.”

– CARMELA

I was physically, mentally, and sexually abused by my own husband … I believed he would change for the sake of our daughter … It took for me to be hospitalized and in critical condition for me to leave. I was terrified … I realized that it wasn’t just my life anymore. I had to also keep my daughter safe … My family was living in Honduras. I felt alone and helpless … Tejano [VOCA] helped develop a safety plan and provided emergency shelter … With the help of the Tejano Center and the VOCA staff, my daughter and I are safe, healthy, and happy.”

– NAME WITHHELD

VOCA
Number of Victims/Survivors Provided Shelter = 279 Clients Sheltered

1,981
VOCA
Number of Victims/Survivors Seeking Services Who Were Served = 1,981 Survivors/Victims
# Tejano Center for Community Concerns, Inc.

**Statement of Financial Position August 31, 2019**

## ASSETS

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<th>2019</th>
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<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>Construction in progress – Charter school program</td>
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<td>Other receivables</td>
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## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

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<td>Notes payable, current portion (Note 5)</td>
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<td>Bonds payable, current portion (Note 6)</td>
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<td><strong>Total current liabilities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Long-term liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>Notes payable, net of current portion (Note 5)</td>
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<td><strong>Total long-term liabilities</strong></td>
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