Palo Alto is a key contributor to South Side prosperity

The San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the first business organization of its kind in the United States, was founded in 1929 based on the principles of economic prosperity, organizational excellence, and the evolution of Hispanic business and Hispanics in business. Texas is a resilient and resourceful state that has not only weathered the economic recession, but is growing in the recovery. The state is home to eight of the 15 most rapidly growing large cities in the United States. If Texas were a country, it would be the world’s 14th largest economy, with a Gross Domestic Product of over $1.2 trillion. Across economic measures, job growth will continue apace in the near-term and long-term, attracting and producing new business and opportunities.

To continue this positive growth, it is pertinent to encourage public and private entities to uphold a high standard of organizational effectiveness, the promotion of human capital and sustainability. A prime example of this distinction is Alamo colleges — Palo Alto College, the recipient of the 2015 Texas Award for Performance Excellence (TAPE) by the Quality Texas Foundation. Palo Alto College demonstrates trends in performance excellence principles and concepts and is recognized for placing students first, the organization’s high level of transparency, and innovation. These indicators are a clear gateway to the future potential of this thriving community college, and its contributions to the social and intellectual prosperity of a thriving Texas.

Having strong managerial practices, a strong academic staff and a commitment to enhancing educational opportunities inadvertently addresses the persistent under-education of even a small segment of Texans. In the long-term, lack of a quality education can result in dramatic losses of purchasing power, foregone earnings, and losses of corporate sales and profits and tax revenue.

The Hispanic Chamber has seen firsthand Palo Alto’s commitment to advancing the educational opportunities for our community. Previously, the college’s president Mike Flores has co-chaired the Hispanic Chamber’s Education Committee, which hosts the largest Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) conference and expo in the Central Texas Region, serving some of the area’s most economically disadvantaged school districts. This year, the Hispanic Chamber is proud to announce that Palo Alto College will host a CORE4 STEM Family Day during San Antonio STEM Week, which is free and open to the public.

Furthermore, under Flores’ leadership, Palo Alto College remains a pillar of the South Side and is dedicated to providing a high-quality education for the community. Since 1985, the college has served over 100,000 individuals throughout the San Antonio, Bexar County, and surrounding areas.

In 2014, the Hispanic Chamber authored a white paper titled, The Impact of Education on Economic Development in Texas. The study indicates that Latinos will increasingly drive the future of the Texas population. Latinos already comprise the majority group of college-age (18 to 24) adults in Texas; between 2010 and 2050, the Latino population of young adults is expected to climb from 43 to 61 percent.

Thus, it is important that more public entities demonstrate the traits and contributions of excellence like Palo Alto College. Based on the prestigious award that Palo Alto College received, the college joined the ranks of organizations committed to excellence, social impact and the ability to change the outcome of what our Texas will look like for generations to come.

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