



CENTRAL TEXAS  
**Student***Futures*  
PROJECT

**Education and Work After High School:  
Findings from Multi-Methods Research in Central Texas**

April 16, 2009



# Project Partners



## A partnership of

- Ray Marshall Center, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin
- Skillpoint Alliance
- Ten independent school districts (ISDs) in three Central Texas counties

## Project funders

- TG
- Austin Chamber of Commerce



# Three Central Texas Counties



	Hays County	Travis County	Williamson County
<b>Median Family Income</b>	\$75,271	\$69,334	\$75,869
<b>Families with Children Under 18 Living in Poverty</b>	7.9%	14.7%	7.5%
<b>Hispanic Population</b>	32.0%	32.5%	20.8%
<b>Population with Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>	32.6%	42.4%	36.1%

Source: American Community Survey, 2007; U.S. Census Bureau State and County Quick Facts; TEA Lonestar

## Project Purpose

### Conduct longitudinal research on:

- what Central Texas graduates do after high school
- how educational, personal and financial factors are related to graduates' success in postsecondary education and the workforce

### Foster educational improvement through:

- identifying and sharing best practices
- workshops and seminars

# Research Questions



- What share of high school graduates **enrolled in postsecondary education** in the fall after graduation?
- What share of graduates was **employed** in the fall after graduation?
- What share of graduates was **both enrolled and employed** in the fall after graduation?
- Which **factors** are **significantly associated** with **initial enrollment** in 4-year colleges and universities?

# Data Sources



## Historical School Records

- Student demographics
- Courses taken
- Course grades

## Senior Surveys

- Family background/ influences
- High school experiences
- Preparation for life after high school

## Postsecondary Education Records\*

- National Student Clearinghouse
- UT-Austin and UNT directory information

## Employment Records\*

- Texas Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records

\* through 12/07



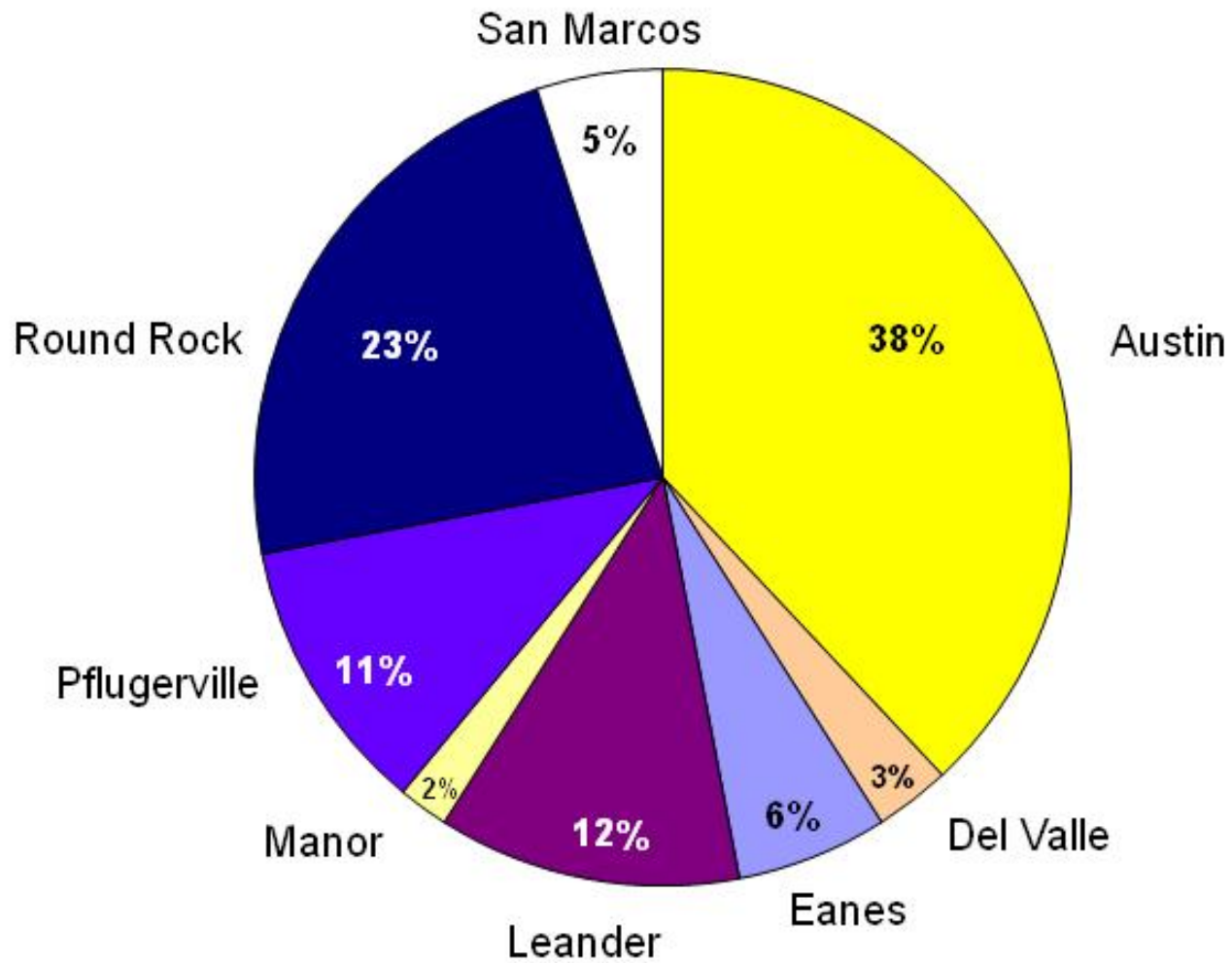
# Selected Characteristics of 2007 Graduates



	2007 Graduates	Surveyed Graduates
<b>N</b>	<b>9,394</b>	<b>3,061</b>
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Asian	6%	5%
Black	11%	10%
Hispanic	29%	31%
White	53%	53%
<b>Family Income Status</b>		
Low-income	21%	21%
Not low-income	76%	79%
Unknown	3%	0%
<b>Special Education</b>		
Yes	10%	6%
No	88%	94%
Unknown	2%	0%



# District Composition of 2007 Graduates





What share of Class of 2007  
high school graduates  
**enrolled in postsecondary  
education** in the fall after  
graduation?



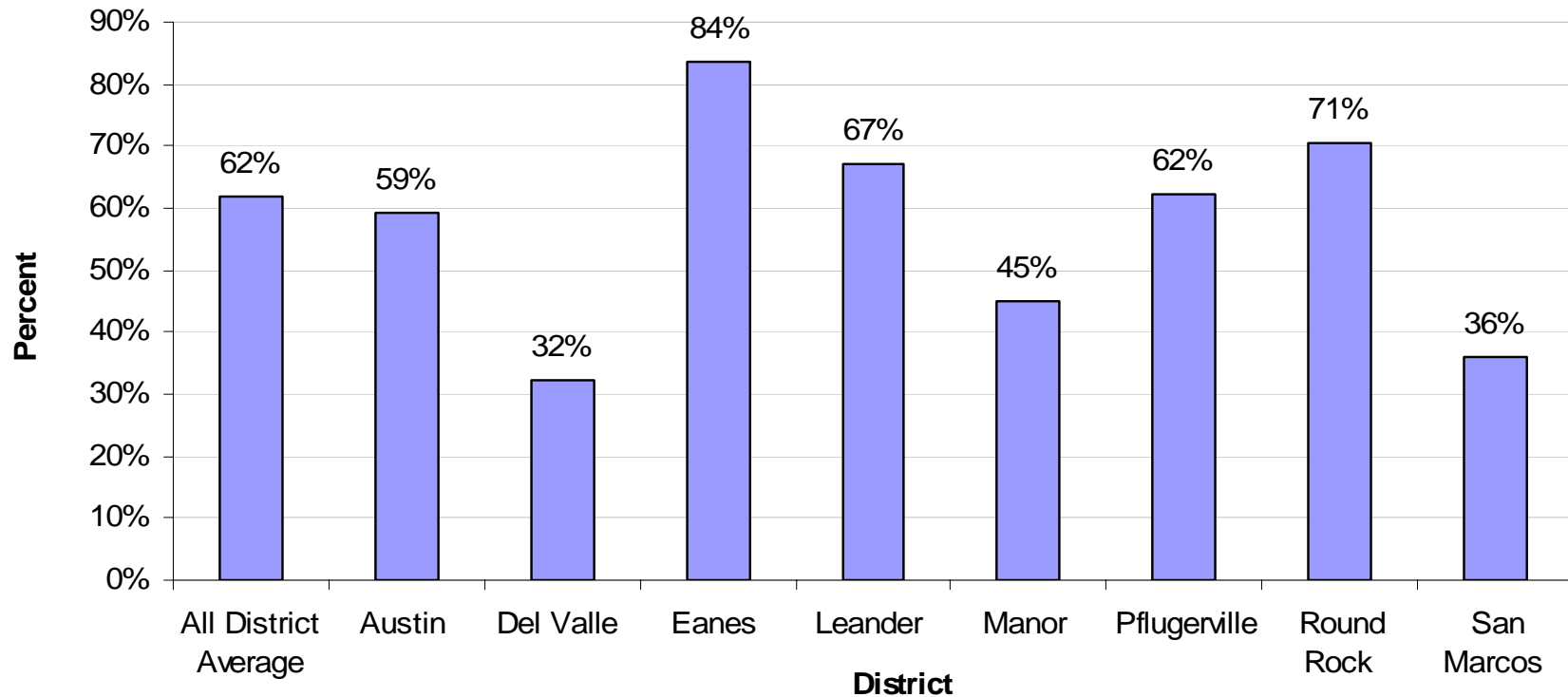
## Postsecondary Enrollment of 2007 Graduates in Fall 2007

	Number	Percent
Total Number of Graduates	<b>9,394</b>	
Total Enrolled in Fall 2007	5,858	62%
<b><i>Type of Institution</i></b>		
4-Year College/University	3,743	40%
2-year College/Technical School	2,115	22%
<b><i>Location of Institution</i></b>		
In-state	5,098	54%
Out-of-state	760	8%



# Percent of 2007 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2007, by District

(N=9,394)





What share of 2007 graduates  
**was employed** in the  
fall after graduation?



# Percent of 2007 Graduates Employed in Texas in Fall 2007



	Total Employed	Only Employed
<b>All Graduates (N = 9,394)</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Asian	30%	9%
Black	53%	27%
Hispanic	53%	30%
White	43%	17%
<b>Income Status</b>		
Low-income	53%	33%
Not low-income	44%	18%
<b>Special Education Status</b>		
Special Education	56%	43%
Not Special Education	45%	19%



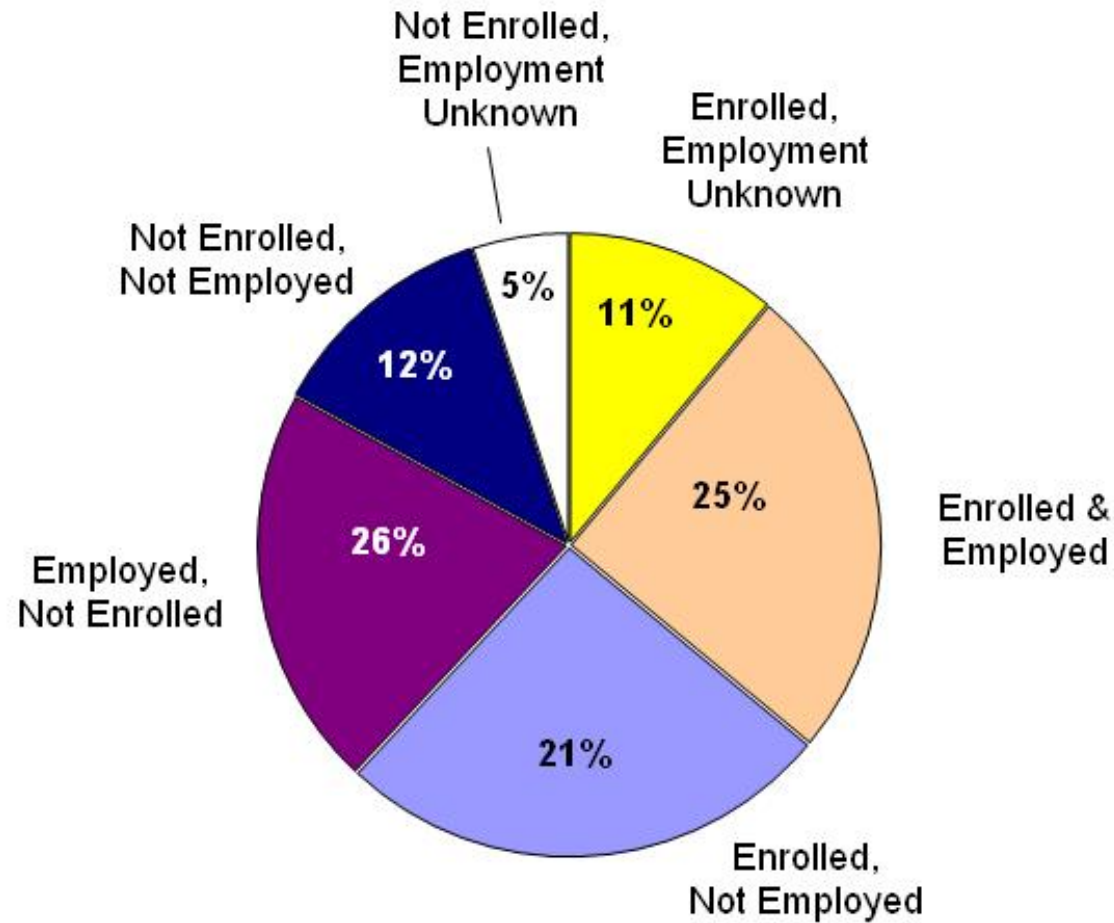
What share of 2007 graduates  
was **both enrolled  
and employed** in  
the fall after graduation?



# Overall Outcomes for 2007 Graduates in Fall 2007



(N=9,394)





Which **factors** were **significantly** associated with enrollment in **4-year postsecondary education** for the Class of 2007?

# Overview of Logit Regressions



- Logistic regression results are based on the sample of all surveyed graduates, not all graduates. See report for discussion of sample differences.
- Results apply to all Central Texas surveyed graduates, regardless of district attended.
- Results are observational and do not imply causation.
- Logit regressions were computed for four groups of surveyed graduates: all, Hispanic, low-income, and those who would be first generation to attend college.

# Major Factors Linked to Increased 4-Year Enrollments



## All Surveyed Graduates

- Completion of Distinguished Achievement Program or Recommended High School Plan was strongest (+345%)
- College placement exams, Top 10% and FAFSA completion (all +100%)
- HS math in 8th grade, G/T, visiting college campus, high school sports ( all +50%)

## All Groups

- College entrance exams, Top 10%, HS math in 8th grade (+50% for all groups)

*Major factors increased enrollment odds by 50% or more. No factors reduced enrollment odds by more than 50%.*

# Logistic Regression Highlights for Selected Populations



- ***Hispanic graduates:*** many key factors the same but strength varied; strong curriculum & FAFSA very important; males more likely; parent education & visiting campuses not significant
- ***Low-income graduates:*** far fewer significant variables; curriculum & top 10% most important
- ***First generation graduates:*** Top 10% increased odds by 400%; college entrance exams, 8th grade math credit also important; curriculum not significant for this group

*Uncertainty about borrowing money for college  
reduced enrollment odds for all groups*



# **Initial Exploration of Hierarchical Linear Modeling**



# Information on Campus-Level Variation



	Minimum	Maximum	Median
<b>Number of Students Enrolled on Campus</b>	309	2805	1976
<b>Percent of Students on Campus that are:</b>			
Mobile	5.4%	79.9%	19.4%
Black	0.6%	33.2%	12.2%
Hispanic	2.5%	83.5%	30.7%
White	5.7%	82.1%	35.7%
Asian	0.0%	18.3%	2.7%
Economically Disadvantaged	1.8%	85.1%	46.7%
<b>Percent of Teachers on Campus who (are/have)</b>			
Beginning Teachers	3.1%	22.8%	7.2%
One to Five Years of Experience	15.0%	43.0%	28.0%
Six to Ten Years of Experience	4.9%	29.7%	20.6%
Eleven to Twenty Years of Experience	12.4%	31.1%	21.4%
More than 20 Years of Experience	7.9%	35.9%	19.8%

# Conclusions



- The largest, most consistent influences associated with increased odds of initial 4-year college enrollment are related to academic achievement and engaging in specific college preparation activities.
- Low family income is an important and substantial inhibiting factor for graduates seeking to pursue postsecondary education.
- Uncertainty over financing appears to play an important role in students' decisions about whether or not to enroll in college.

# Conclusions



- Strength and importance of specific variables differ for Hispanics, low-income and 1st generation college-going graduates
- Capturing campus-level effects in a random intercept term in the logistic model specification shows significant variation in postsecondary outcomes across schools.

## Future Plans

- Measure effects of school differences
- Use more sophisticated statistical techniques to test robustness of findings



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For more information about the Student Futures Project,  
visit the Project's website:

[www.centexstudentfutures.org](http://www.centexstudentfutures.org)

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