

**1<sup>st</sup> in  
Texas**

LOWEST NET PRICE  
OF ATTENDANCE



**1<sup>st</sup> in  
Texas**

LEAST STUDENT  
DEBT



**1<sup>st</sup> in  
Texas**

PERFORMANCE OF  
PELL-ELIGIBLE  
STUDENTS

**1<sup>st</sup> in  
Texas**

AMONG ALL TEXAS  
UNIVERSITIES FOR  
SOCIAL MOBILITY

**UTRGV** |  **UT Health**  
Rio Grande Valley

# THE FUTURE OF TEXAS

Legislative Priorities  
88th Legislative Session

**2<sup>nd</sup> in  
Texas**

BEST PUBLIC  
UNIVERSITY



[utrgv.edu/88th](http://utrgv.edu/88th)



MESSAGE FROM

# Dr. Guy Bailey

President

The 2022–2023 biennium brought The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) much success. In 2015, UTRGV enrolled its first class of students, and seven years later, UTRGV is nationally known for providing affordable, high-quality education, accessible healthcare, pursuing and disseminating research, preparing an educated workforce, and engaging community partners in novel and impactful ways.

With an enrollment of almost 32,000, UTRGV is one of the nation's largest Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), serving the 150-mile Texas/Mexico border region known as the Rio Grande Valley (RGV). The RGV is a "medically underserved area" with one of the highest shortages of physicians and mental health providers in the nation. To meet numerous healthcare needs, UTRGV and its School of Medicine (SOM) engages in instruction, research, medical education, health care, and public service.

Affordability has always been a cornerstone of UTRGV's mission. We are proud to have been ranked:

- 1<sup>st</sup> in Texas and 2<sup>nd</sup> nationally for "Least Student Debt" by U.S. News and World Report
- 1<sup>st</sup> in Texas and 8<sup>th</sup> nationally by Forbes.com for "Top Colleges for Your Money"
- 1<sup>st</sup> in Texas and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation among public universities for lowest net price of attendance by Washington Monthly (2021)
- 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for "Most Economic Mobility" by Thirdway.org (2022).

The SOM welcomed its first class in 2016 and since then has graduated three classes of diverse and talented physicians. While young, the SOM has had a dramatic impact on increasing access to primary and specialty care in the RGV. The school continues to grow its clinical footprint across the Valley. The SOM is also conducting important research in diabetes, Alzheimer's, addiction disorders and various cancers as part of an ambitious plan to build a robust clinical trials program to translate research into tomorrow's cures.

UTRGV's Institute of Neurosciences (ION) is establishing a world-class center of excellence in brain health education, research, and personalized treatment. The School of Podiatric Medicine (SOPM) is the first podiatric medical school in Texas, and only one of ten in the nation. When the Cancer and Surgery Center opens in 2025, UTRGV will have the first comprehensive academic cancer treatment program in the region and will be positioned to rapidly expand its research portfolio in bio specimen and oncology clinical trials research.

UTRGV is a game changer for the RGV, and we thank you for your investment in UTRGV and our SOM. With your continued support, we look forward to what UTRGV will accomplish for the RGV and the State of Texas.



# School of Podiatric Medicine (SOPM)

The new UTRGV School of Podiatric Medicine (SOPM), the first podiatric school in Texas, will play an integral part in delivering health care services to local communities in the Rio Grande Valley. One of only ten schools of podiatric medicine in the US, UTRGV is ready to prepare students to provide the highest level of care focusing on the health, individual needs, and humanity of the patients.

Approximately 2.8 million people in Texas, or 14.2% of the adult population, have diabetes. Coupled with obesity and heart disease, the complications from these diseases can cause blindness and lead to amputations, often of the lower extremities. Including a podiatrist on a health care team can reduce a patient's risk of limb amputation by up to 85%. UTRGV's SOPM will collaborate with the UTRGV School of Medicine and the South Texas Diabetes Obesity Institute to improve and provide high-quality healthcare in South Texas through evidence-based practice, and medical research.



## UT Health RGV Cancer & Surgery Center

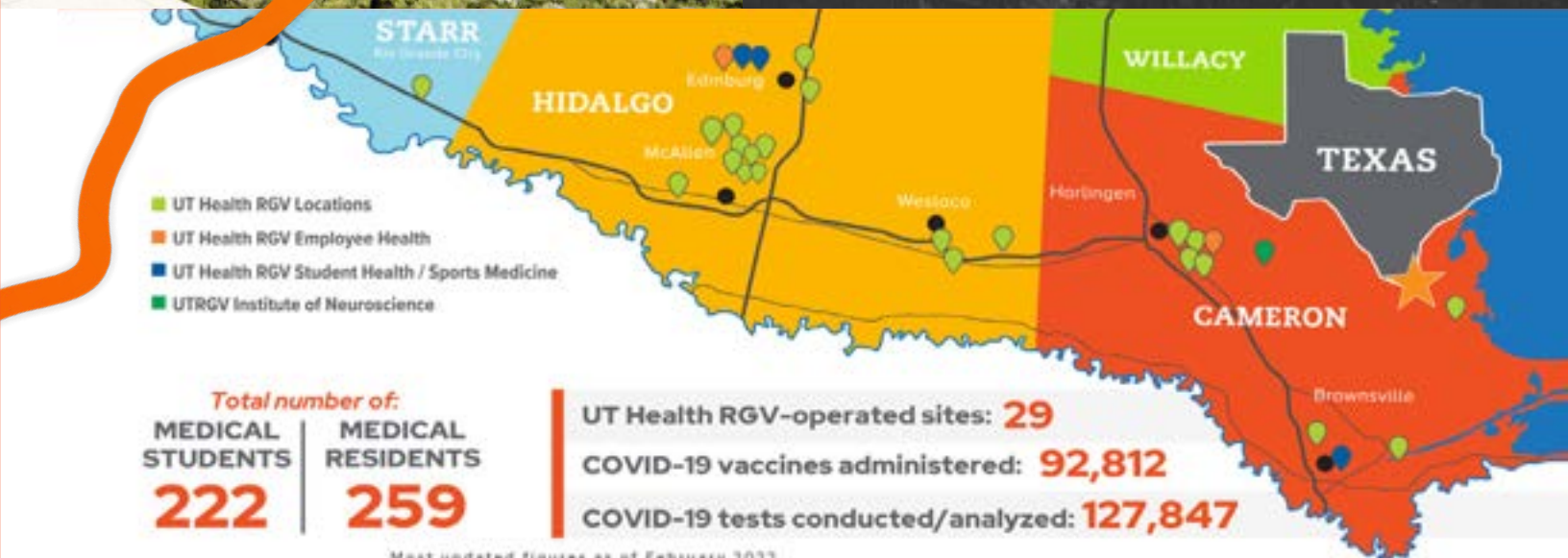
UT Health RGV is expanding its healthcare offerings in South Texas with a new Cancer and Surgery Center, with oncology advisory services provided by The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. The UT Health RGV Cancer Center and Surgery Center will provide our patients in South Texas with access to state-of-the-art facilities and world-class doctors.

### WHY?

The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) along the Texas-Mexico border is a medically underserved and low resources community with an extremely high cancer rate and a lack of access to specialty care. Cervical cancer incidence and mortality rates are approximately 55% higher in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) compared with the average rates in the US. Currently the nearest Cancer and Surgery center is approximately 300 miles away in San Antonio. Nearly 2 million people live south of this facility in deep South Texas and the population is expected to grow by 10% over the next 10 years while the number of cancer cases are projected to grow by 15% over the same period.

### SERVICES OFFERED:

- Ambulatory Surgery
- Clinical Laboratory Services
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Infusion Pharmacy
- Infusion Therapy
- Outpatient Cancer Care
- Outpatient Orthopedic Care
- Radiation Oncology Rehab and Physical Therapy



# General Academic Unit

## **FUNDING FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENHANCEMENT**

**RETAIN \$16.2 MILLION IN CURRENT FUNDING; ADD \$6.4 MILLION IN EXCEPTIONAL ITEM FUNDING**

Request to increase Institutional Enhancement (IE) funding to expand educational opportunities to students at the bachelors, masters, and doctoral levels. Until such time as sufficient formula funding is generated, UTRGV seeks the additional funding for five programs within its IE line item; each of the programs will address an urgent national need of diversifying the scientific and healthcare workforce by preparing graduates from the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) for careers. RGV based, there will be a natural focus on the diseases and conditions that disproportionately affect minority populations:

- Ph.D. in Physics
- Ph.D. in Human Genetics
- Doctorate in Physical Therapy (DPT)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
- Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD)

## **ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR BORDER ECONOMIC & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT**

**RETAIN \$1 MILLION IN CURRENT FUNDING; ADD \$150,000 IN EXCEPTIONAL ITEM FUNDING**

Exceptional Item Request to allow UTRGV's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to add two business advisors (BAs). BAs play a vital role in the prosperity of the region by providing no-cost, 1-on-1 BA services.

## **FULLY FUND ENROLLMENT GROWTH**

Requesting that the State fully fund enrollment growth.

## **CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE PROJECTS (CCAP)**

Should the Legislature consider funding for CCAP, UTRGV requests funding support for a new Science, Engineering & Arts Building for the Brownsville campus.

## **ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR STARR COUNTY UPPER-LEVEL CENTER (ULC)**

**RETAIN \$55,230 IN CURRENT FUNDING ; ADD \$100,000 IN EXCEPTIONAL ITEM FUNDING**

Funding would allow expanded services in one of the most chronically underserved areas of Texas. With this modest investment, UTRGV can broaden services provided to include components of its social work programs and health and mental wellness trainings.

## **CONTINUE FUNDING SUPPORT FOR COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES (CRUs)**

Continued support for the state's CRUs is vital to universities that educate a disproportionate level of At-Risk students such as UTRGV.

## **POLICY PRIORITIES**

### **ENHANCED FUNDING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

TEXAS Grants and work-study programs.

### **TUITION**

Preserve tuition set-asides and the current tuition-setting process.

### **RESEARCH**

Research investments are a critical component of operations and broadly benefit the state.

### **HAZLEWOOD**

Provide funding for the increasing cost of the Hazlewood tuition benefit.

### **CONTINUE EXPANSION OF BROADBAND COVERAGE**

Will benefit students' transition to online education across the state and in the Rio Grande Valley.

# School of Medicine (SoM)

## **TOP PRIORITY**

### **MEDICAL SCHOOL NON-FORMULA START-UP FUNDING**

**RETAIN \$39.9 MILLION IN CURRENT FUNDING**

The UTRGV School of Medicine's highest priority is the continuation of the Non-Formula Support used to deliver medical education to the full complement of medical students. The SOM's practice plan, while robust, is still young and is providing care to a largely uninsured and Medicaid population without the benefit of a healthcare district. Appropriations are needed to meet curriculum requirements, to support new hires and to reach full accreditation.

## **EXCEPTIONAL ITEM FUNDING**

### **SCHOOL OF PODIATRIC MEDICINE START-UP**

**\$12 MILLION IN EXCEPTIONAL ITEM FUNDING**

The THECB in October 2020 approved a request to create a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree for the UTRGV School of Podiatric Medicine (SoPM), the first school of podiatry in Texas. Start-up appropriations are needed to support operating costs until full formula funding materializes, and would fund key faculty, staff, and other programmatic costs.

### **CANCER IMMUNOLOGY CENTER / CANCER**

**RETAIN \$1.9 MILLION IN CURRENT FUNDING AND ADD \$3.1 MILLION IN EXCEPTIONAL ITEM FUNDING**

The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) has long been a medically under-served area with wide gaps in specialty care and research; cancer research and cancer care are among the most critical shortages. The UTRGV SoM has built the first South Texas Center of Excellence on Cancer Research housing 6 investigators and 10 lab personnel from diverse fields.

In addition to maintaining the \$1.9M appropriation to continue research to develop advanced diagnostic, imaging, and therapeutic modalities for combating cancer in the RGV, UTRGV seeks \$3.1M to support the operations of a new Cancer Center opening in 2025 in McAllen, the first comprehensive academic cancer treatment program in the region.

## **OTHER SIGNIFICANT FUNDING & POLICY PRIORITIES**

### **TEXAS CHILD MENTAL HEALTH CARE CONSORTIUM (TCMHCC)**

Continued adequate funding is vitally important to support telehealth care in schools, to train primary care providers and improve the delivery of child and adolescent mental health services.

### **ENHANCE THECB'S GME EXPANSION PROGRAM**

Retain and increase GME Expansion Program funding for medical residents and fellows.

### **CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS (CPRIT)**

Continue funding to support its mission to invest in the research prowess of Texas universities and research organizations and enhance the potential of breakthroughs in prevention and cures.

### **MEDICAID 1115 WAIVER**

Support the Texas Incentives for Physicians and Professional Services, the program that Texas Health and Human Services has proposed as a successor supplemental payment program to DSRIP.



## About UTRGV

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) was created by the Texas Legislature in 2013 as the first major public university of the 21st century in Texas. This transformative initiative provided the opportunity to expand educational opportunities in the Rio Grande Valley, including a new School of Medicine, and made it possible for residents of the region to benefit from the Permanent University Fund – a public endowment contributing support to the University of Texas System and other institutions.

UTRGV has campuses and off-campus research and teaching sites throughout the Rio Grande Valley including in Boca Chica Beach, Brownsville (formerly The University of Texas at Brownsville campus), Edinburg (formerly The University of Texas-Pan American campus), Harlingen, McAllen, Port Isabel, Rio Grande City, and South Padre Island. UTRGV, a comprehensive academic institution, enrolled its first class in the fall of 2015, and the School of Medicine welcomed its first class in the summer of 2016.

**TOP  
10** BEST VALUE  
FOR YOUR  
MONEY

Source: Forbes.com, 2021

**#3**

**BEST COLLEGES IN  
AMERICA FOR VALUE,  
AMONG TEXAS SCHOOLS**

Source:  
Money.com, 2022

## Workforce & Economic Development

Through a comprehensive portfolio of programs, UTRGV serves local businesses, entrepreneurs, and individuals to enhance workforce & economic prosperity throughout the region.

### ECONOMIC IMPACT:

- 1,885 Jobs Created & Retained
- 160 Businesses Started & Expanded
- \$11,865,034 Capital Investments
- \$56,103,004 Sales & Contract Awards

### WORKFORCE & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:

- 410 Training Events & Courses
- 5,770 Training Participants
- 2,126 Clients Consulted

*Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Statistics\**

*(Data Information & System, Entrepreneurship & Commercialization, Procurement Technical Assistance, Professional Education, Small Business Development, & Veteran's Business Outreach)*

UTRGV's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) promotes economic development throughout the 4-county region by providing comprehensive business advising, training, and technical assistance services to start-up and existing businesses.

### ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT:

- 425 Jobs Created
- 990 Jobs Retained
- 134 Businesses Started & Expanded
- \$10,103,634 Capital Formation Created
- \$36,571,753 New Taxable Sales Generated
- 155 Training Sessions to Businesses
- 1,338 Training Participants
- 852 Clients Consulted

**"Building the Texas Economy One Business at a Time"**

*Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Statistics\**

*(Small Business Development Center)*