



Robert C. Vackar College of  
Business & Entrepreneurship

# Office of Societal Impact and Sustainability

**RCVCOBE**

**Annual Report AY 23-24**

**[Impact@utrgv.edu](mailto:Impact@utrgv.edu)**

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

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Dear Colleagues, Students, and Stakeholders,

I proudly present the annual Societal Impact & Sustainability Report for the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship. At our College, the accurate measure of success extends beyond academic achievements and business acumen. It is also reflected in our positive impact on society and the environment.



Our commitment to societal impact is woven into the fabric of our institution. We strive to cultivate leaders who are skilled in their professions and dedicated to making a difference in their communities. This report highlights our initiatives, achievements, and the collective efforts of our faculty, students, and partners in driving sustainable and impactful change.

This year, we are proud to showcase several vital projects that exemplify our dedication to societal impact and sustainability:

- Center for Innovation and Commercialization (CIC) Programs
- Financial Literacy Program in the RGV
- Market Lab
- Adopt-A-Start-Up
- Meeting on Data and AI in Social Science (MDAISS) in Cameroon, Africa

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our mission. Together, we can build a better, more sustainable future.

Warm regards,

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**DR. GIORGIO GOTTI**  
**RCVCOBE DEAN**





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## Societal Impact

Societal impact is the effect that actions have on people, communities, and society. It is one of the key drivers of value creation for businesses and organizations, and according to a recent study by Deloitte Global, it can enhance brand differentiation, talent attraction and retention, innovation, operational efficiency, risk mitigation, and capital access and market valuation.

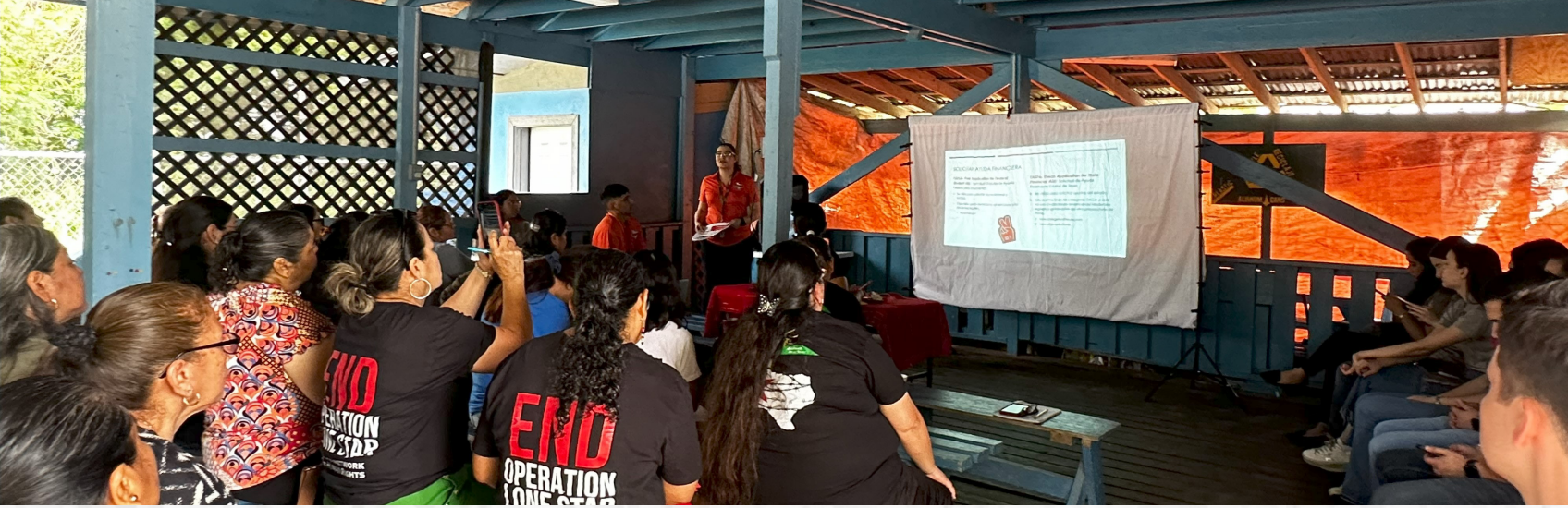
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The **AACSB** 2020 business accreditation standards require that business schools demonstrate how they align with the spirit and intent of making a positive societal impact. The AACSB standards are organized into **three categories**:

- Strategic management and innovation.
- Learner success and thought leadership.
- Engagement and societal impact.

The last category emphasizes the role of business schools in addressing the challenges and opportunities of society through teaching, research, and outreach activities.





## Societal Impact

The AACSB defines societal impact as “the ways in which a business school’s mission and strategic plan guide actions that positively influence society—at local, regional, national, or international levels”.

The AACSB 2020 business accreditation standards **require** that schools demonstrate how they align with the spirit and intent of making a positive societal impact.

Some of the **proposed** ways in which business schools can meet these objectives are:

- Incorporating societal issues and values into their curricula, research, and experiential learning opportunities.
- Engaging with diverse stakeholders and partners from industry, education, nonprofits, and government to address societal challenges and opportunities.
- Developing students who are aware, responsible, and capable of creating positive change in the world.
- Measuring and reporting on the outcomes and impact of their initiatives and activities on society.





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## **RCVCOBE VISION STATEMENT**

The Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship will positively impact its local and global stakeholders through the discovery, integration, application, and teaching of business-focused knowledge addressing the critical needs of society.

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## **RCVCOBE MISSION STATEMENT**

The Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship promotes student success and serves as a catalyst for innovation, knowledge discovery, and economic development in South Texas, Northern Mexico, and beyond. We do so by offering relevant academic programs, committing to impactful research, and fostering community engagement and sustainable partnerships in a way that supports the university's mission.





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# RCVCOBE CORE VALUES

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## Our Commitment to Excellence

- Invest in our students' success by offering high quality and relevant academic programs.

## Our Dedication to Thought Leadership

- Promote rigorous and high-impact scholarship.
- Improve the academic reputation of RCV through impactful engagement with the scholarly community.

## Our Passion for Empowerment and Impact

- Empower and support our students, faculty, and staff to make a difference in their communities through high-impact teaching and learning practices.

## Our Role as Agents of Transformation

- Cherish and support our positive role in the economic transformation of the Rio Grande Valley.



# RCVCOBE STRATEGIC GOALS

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**Elevate Academic Reputation of the College**

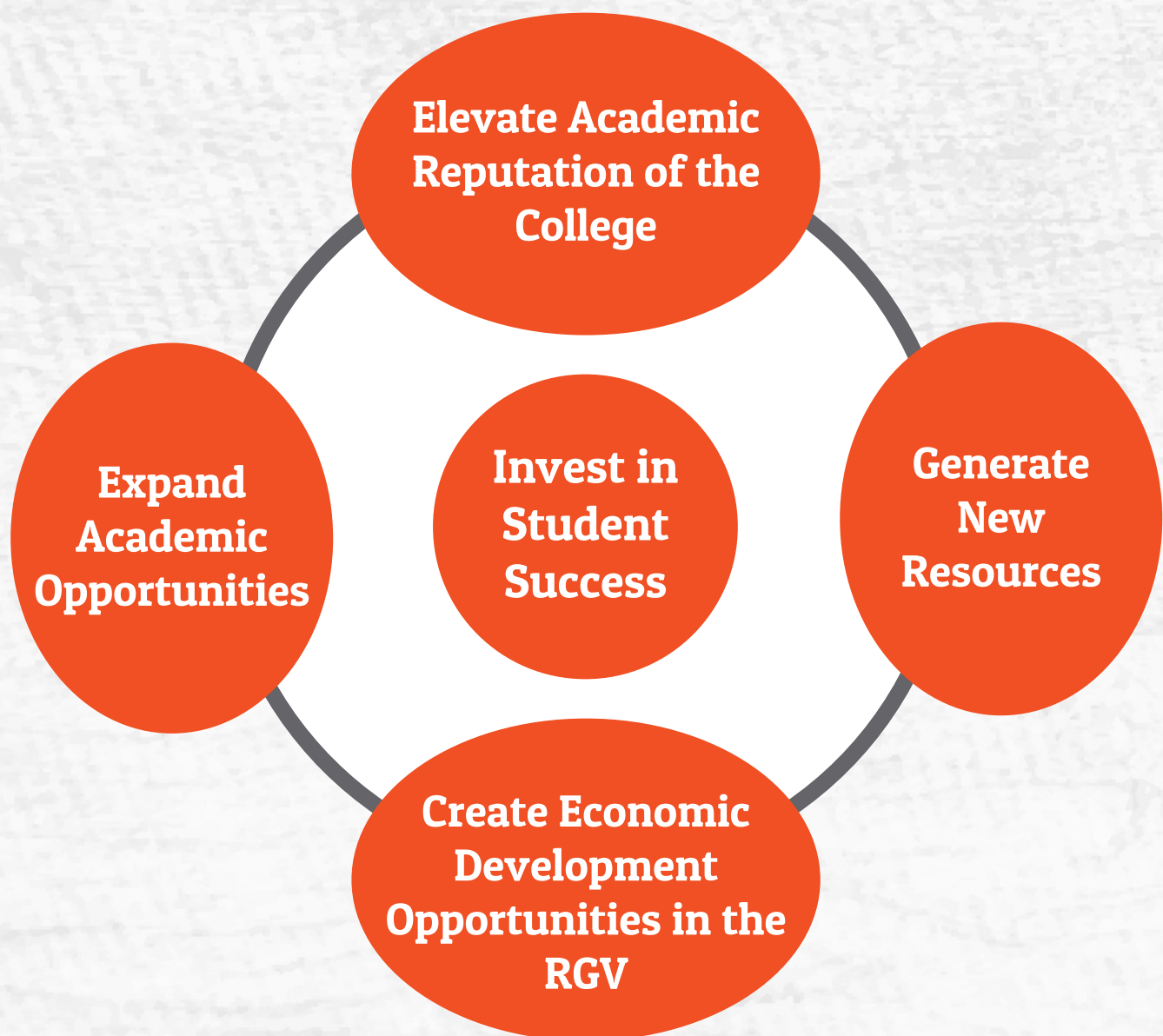
**Invest in Student Success**

**Generate New Resources**

**Expand Academic Opportunities**

**Create Economic Development**

**Opportunities in the RGV**



# RCVCOBE FOCUS AREAS FOR SOCIETAL IMPACT

Based on the socio-economic conditions in our region and the mission and strategic plan of RCVCOBE, we will focus our efforts on the following goals:

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## Focus Goal #1

We are committed to fostering sustainable economic growth and development through mutually beneficial partnerships with our stakeholders (U.N Sustainable Development Goal #8 Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Recognizing our responsibility to our students, staff, faculty, and the broader community, we emphasize initiatives that drive economic development, applied research, experiential learning, and high-impact curricular practices.

Our focus is on:

- Successfully preparing students for the workforce.
- Supporting sustainable businesses, entrepreneurial activity, and key industry opportunities to drive growth in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond.

## Focus Goal #2

We are committed to focus our efforts on U.N Sustainable Development Goal #3 Good health and well-being because we recognize our responsibility to our community and our role as a vehicle for growth and good health by placing emphasis on initiatives that foster a healthy community.



# **RCVCOBE SOCIETAL IMPACT**

## **Societal Impact & Sustainability Initiatives**

### **Curriculum (Teaching)**

- **Service Learning**
- **Experiential Learning**
- **Sustainability-Designated Courses and Sustainability-Infused Courses**
- **Teaching Grants**
- **High-Impact Practices Embedded in the Curriculum**

### **Scholarship (Research)**

- **Conference Presentation**
- **Applied Research**
- **Publications & Presentations**
- **Field Work**
- **Research Grants**

### **Faculty/Staff Engagement**

- **Compensated Consulting**
- **Pro Bono Counseling**
- **Officer to Community Organizations**
- **Grants, Fellowships, Contracts**
- **Executive or Professional Education**
- **Board Service**
- **Economic Development Projects with External Connections and Community Partnerships**

### **Student Engagement**

- **Peer Mentoring (VOICE)**
- **Student Engagement through Student Organizations**
- **Student Engagement through UTRGV EZ or VLINK**
- **Internships & Fellowships**

### **Other VCOBE Sponsored Activities**

- **CIC Programs**
- **Other External Connections and Partnerships**

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**1** NO POVERTY



**2** ZERO HUNGER



**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



**4** QUALITY EDUCATION



**5** GENDER EQUALITY



**6** CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



**7** AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



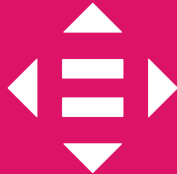
**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**10** REDUCED INEQUALITIES



**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



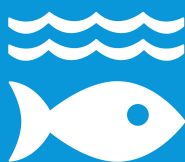
**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



**13** CLIMATE ACTION



**14** LIFE BELOW WATER



**15** LIFE ON LAND



**16** PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





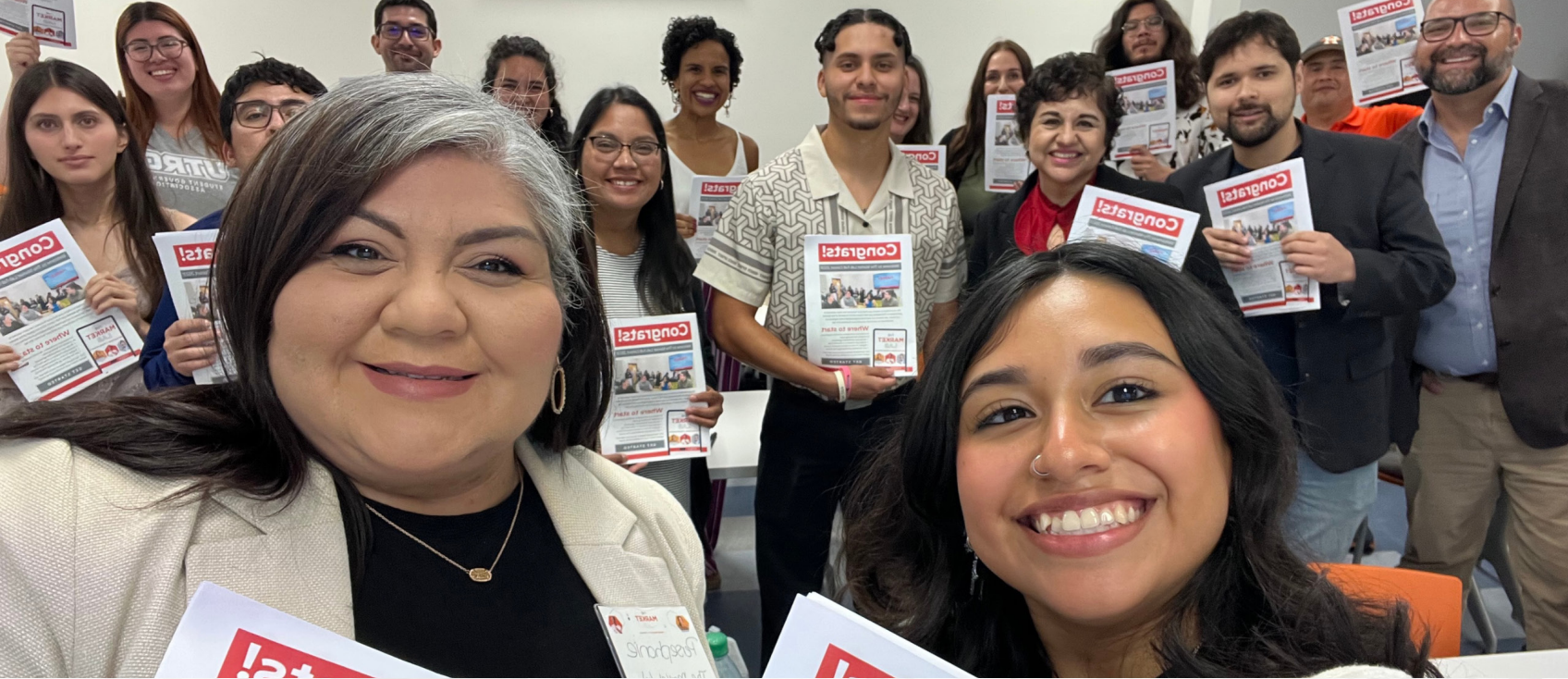
# RCVCOBE

## Highlighted Activities / Programs Related to Societal Impact Academic Year 2023 - 2024



**Market Lab**  
**Financial Literacy Program**  
**Adopt A Start Up Program**  
**Meeting on Data and AI in Social Science**  
**(MDAISS) in Africa**  
**CIC Entrepreneurship Programs**





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Persephonie Martinez**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Spring 2023

**Reach:**  
UTRGV Students  
& Early Stage  
Entrepreneurs

### Market Lab

In The Market Lab, entrepreneurs learn how to conduct their own market research, identify their target market, conduct focus groups, and test their products or services to determine the viability of their business idea.

- February 13, 2023 – Effective Strategies to Collect & Analyze Data for Your Startup.
- Market Lab Fall Cohort: July 21 – December 19, 2023
- Market Lab information session: July 11, 2023
- Intro to Market Research: August 3, 2023
- Intro to Market Research on Zoom: August 24, 2023
- Market Mix: Shaping the Future – A Dynamix Focus Group Experience – October 14, 2023
- Pitching Excellence unleashed: Join the Pitch Academy with David Norec – November 28, 2023
- TMAC Workshop: Tackling Your Top 3 Business Challenges with Director David Ortiz – November 30, 2023
- Ask me Anything Advisor Event- Empower, Inspire, Connect – December 1, 2023
- Battle of the Brands: Ultimate Marketing Challenge – December 8, 2023

**1000  
People  
Impacted**

**Program Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad, EDA  
University Center  
Grant, EDA Build to  
Scale Grant





## Departments of Management & Finance

**Maria Leonard & Dr. Jorge Vidal**  
Assistant Professors of Practice

**Date:**  
AY 23-24

### Financial Literacy Program in the RGV

**Reach:**  
Regional

Through corporate sponsorships, students at UTRGV from ALPFA and ENACTUS plan and coordinate events designed to teach our students and community about healthy financial habits. A Blackboard course at UTRGV covers savings and budgeting, acquiring and managing credit, avoiding fraud, principles of investments, mortgaging a house (financial milestones), paying for college. Additionally, the program offers:

- 8 speakers at UTRGV – Insurance panel, mortgaging panel, banking, budgeting and saving panel, principles of investments speaker.
- A Financial Literacy Summit hosting 500 high school students.
- "Fajitas for Finance" community outreach events reaching marginalized populations in the RGV.
- Blackboard course at UTRGV allowed 800 students to enroll during AY23-24 with Pre/post assessments are provided to measure retention and course effectiveness.

**1500**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:**  
State Farm &  
Wells Fargo

**Estimated**  
**Economic**  
**Impact:**  
\$150,000





## Department of Economics

**Jean Baptiste Tondji**  
Assistant Professor

**Date:**  
June 2024

**Reach:**  
International

## First Annual Meeting on Data and AI in Social Science (MDAISS)

The goal of the Annual Meeting on Data and AI in Social Sciences (MDAISS) is to create a sustainable platform in which students, researchers, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and practitioners put into practice theories and applications of data science (artificial intelligence or AI, machine learning or ML, big data) and social sciences for the well-being of the African continent. MDAISS's first edition will provide an opportunity for training and discussion and a pathway for the practical development of data-science-based projects to boost entrepreneurship skills and youth employment in sub-Saharan Africa.

**100**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program Sponsor:**  
Operation to Support the Cameroonian Private Sector by the United Nations, the Cameroon's Government, and The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa





## Department of International Business & Entrepreneurship

**Sylvia Robles**  
Assistant Professor

**Date:**  
Ongoing

**Reach:**  
International

### Adopt a Startup

The "Adopt a Startup Program," aims to bridge the gap between academia and industry by fostering meaningful connections with the community by bringing startups together with passionate and talented students, offering guidance and mentorship to launch and develop sustainable businesses. This initiative provides invaluable support to students and RGV entrepreneurs, encompassing market research, sustainability-marketing-financial analysis, and entrepreneurial guidance.

The goal is to empower students and startups to craft sustainable business models, value proposition, and compelling pitches, enabling them to confidently compete in local and regional competitions for the funding they need to thrive.

**250**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Estimated**  
**Economic**  
**Impact:**  
\$320,000

10750  
service-learning  
hours



**Center for Innovation & Commercialization**  
**Notable Programs / Activities Related to**  
**Societal Impact**  
**Academic Year 2023 – 2024**



**Focus Area #1**  
**UN Sustainable Development Goal 8**  
**Decent Work and Economic Growth**





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Natalia de la Garza**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Ongoing

**Reach:**  
UTRGV Students  
& Early Stage  
Entrepreneurs

### Pitch Academy

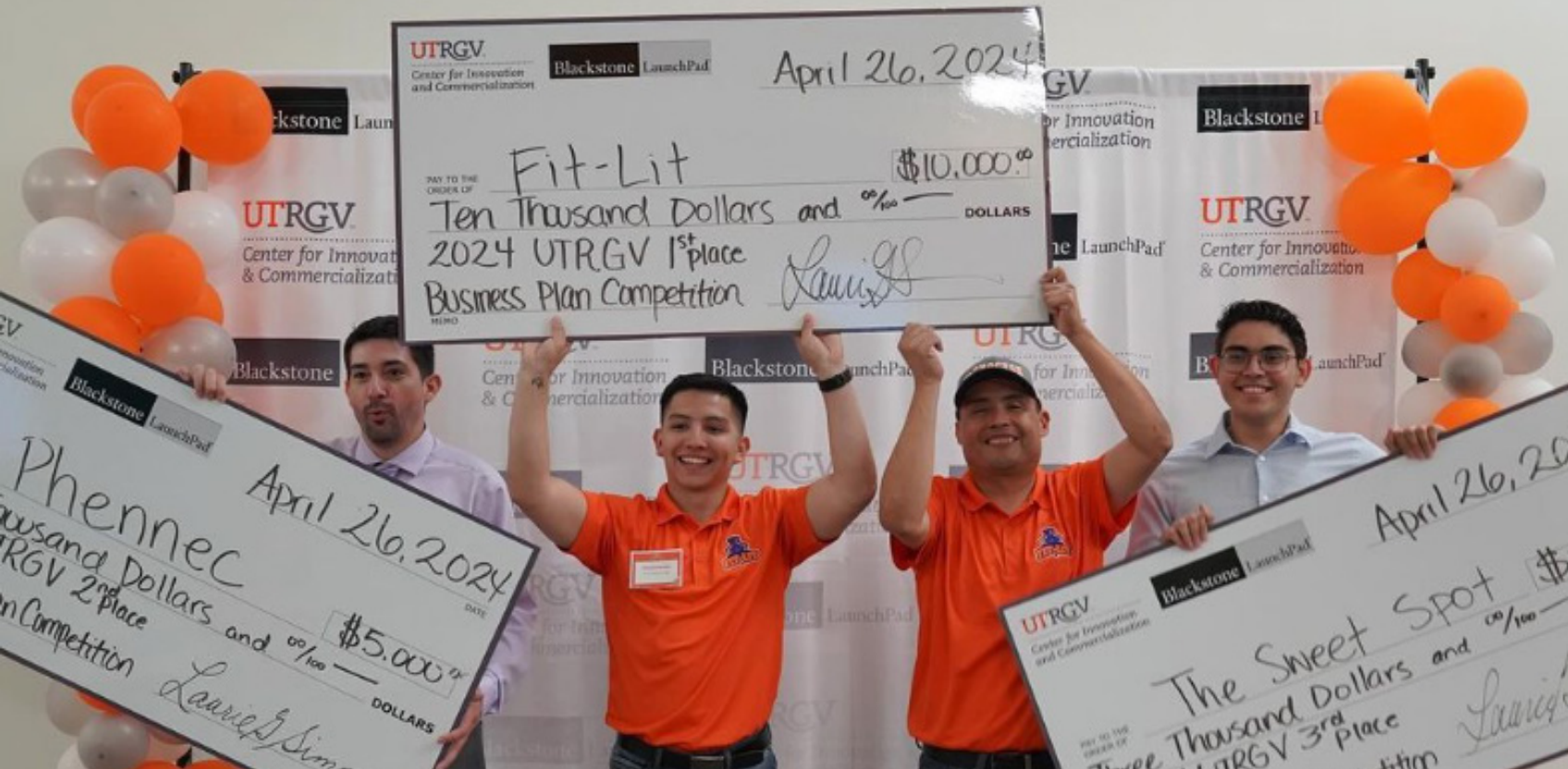
This is a four-day intensive workshop where entrepreneurs learn the essentials of raising capital and become pitch ready. The cohort of entrepreneurs go through a seven-week pre-academy where they learn the fundamentals of understanding and communicating their financial information and capital needs. During the conclusion of the program, entrepreneurs pitch to investors at the Rio Grande Valley Angel Network.

We will be offering two pitch academies per year.  
May 28 – 31, 2024  
Fall 2024 Dates TBD

**100**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:**  
EDA Build to  
Scale Grant





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Natalia de la Garza**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Ongoing

**Reach:**  
UTRGV Students

### Business Plan Competition

This is a four-day intensive workshop where entrepreneurs learn the essentials of raising capital and become pitch ready. The cohort of entrepreneurs go through a seven-week pre-academy where they learn the fundamentals of understanding and communicating their financial information and capital needs. During the conclusion of the program, entrepreneurs pitch to investors at the Rio Grande Valley Angel Network.

We will be offering two pitch academies per year.  
Ongoing – offered once a year  
In-person finale: April 21, 2023  
In person finale: April 26, 2024  
Spring 2025 TBD

**100**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad, Katusak  
Family Foundation,  
Sam's Club, Dr. Adams  
V.F. (Doc) and  
Gertrude Neuhaus  
Endowed Chair for  
Entrepreneurship





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Natalia de la Garza**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
2023

**Reach:**  
UTRGV Students  
& Community

### Lunch & Learn

Hour-long sessions featuring diverse speakers and topics aimed at providing entrepreneurial guidance, useful tips, and best practices for successful startup ventures.

- June 14, 2023 – Marketing vs. Advertising Smackdown: Which Strategy Reigns Supreme.
- June 21, 2023 – Breaking Through the Noise: Strategies for Social Media Success.
- June 28, 2023 – Swipe Right on Social Media: How to Create Content that Clicks.
- October 19, 2023 – Personal Finance Essentials for Aspiring Entrepreneurs.
- October 26, 2023 – Securing Startup Capital.
- November 2, 2023 – Financial Literacy for Startup Founders.

**554**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad, EDA  
University Center  
Grant, EDA Build to  
Scale Grant





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## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

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**Natalia de la Garza**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
2023

**Reach:**  
UTRGV Students  
& Community

### Ambassador Program

The CIC Student Ambassadors engage with students, staff, and faculty across campus, and the community to promote the UTRGV Blackstone LaunchPad and CIC activities.

**3000  
People  
Impacted**

**Program Sponsor:** Blackstone LaunchPad, EDA University Center Grant, EDA Build to Scale Grant





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## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

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**Natalia de la Garza**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Spring 2024

### **RGV LEAD Startup Challenge**

The RGV LEAD Startup Challenge is a yearly business plan competition for high school students in partnership with the Center for Innovation & Commercialization where students pitch their business ideas to receive seed funding to start their business. Students who compete get paired with an industry mentor and winners win up to \$1,000.

**Reach:**  
High School  
Students

**100**  
**People**  
**Impacted**





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Stephanie Mendez**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
2023

**Reach:**  
UTRGV Students,  
early-stage  
entrepreneurs, &  
community

### Startup Resource Expo

At the Startup Resource Expo, you'll meet innovative entrepreneurs, explore diverse resources for both aspiring and established businesses, and connect with like-minded attendees. This event connects entrepreneurs with organizations across campus and the RGV that offer entrepreneurial resources needed to help individuals start and grow businesses.

[Access StartUp Website](#)

**250**  
**People**  
**Impacted**





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Stephanie Mendez**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Spring 2024

**Reach:**  
UTRGV  
Students

### **Blackstone Launch Pad Career Readiness Workshops**

This Career Readiness Series explores best practices of three essential career elements. By attending these workshops, you will learn how to:

Present your experiences on a resume in a clear and compelling way, while demonstrating valuable innovation skills, prepare for upcoming internship and job interviews and perfect strategies for conveying innovation skills, and build an authentic personal brand and demonstrate an innovation mindset.

**100  
People  
Impacted**

**Program  
Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Stephanie Mendez**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
May 2024

**Reach:**  
UTRGV  
Students

### UTMB Innovation & Life Science Summer Camp

Immersive Summer Camp focused on innovation & entrepreneurship in the health and life sciences. This program is available to any higher education student in Texas, from the undergraduate through post-doc levels. Attendance for selected participants is fully sponsored (excluding travel) and attendees will engage in daily talks, workshops, and even engage in a collaborative innovation sprint.

**5**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad





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## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

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**Stephanie Mendez**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Spring 2023

**Reach:**  
UT System  
Students

### Bridge Venture Fellowship Program

The Bridge Venture Fellowship is a 3-week paid learning opportunity, hosted by the Texas LaunchPad Network, for historically underrepresented students to learn about venture capital - a form of investment for early-stage, innovative businesses with strong growth potential. This intensive program consists of a series of online sessions and culminates in an in-person reception in Dallas, Texas.

**4**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad





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## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

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**Stephanie Mendez**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Ongoing

**Reach:**  
UT System  
Students

### Blackstone Career Catalyst Program

Through our partnership with Blackstone LaunchPad, Career Catalyst is a matchmaking program that connects first-generation U.S. college students and/or Pell grant recipients to paid internships in the Texas innovation entrepreneurship ecosystem.

UTRGV has been given four spots in the program. This means that we can subsidize up to \$3,500 per student (4 UTRGV students) for an hourly rate of \$20/hr. If an employer doesn't match with additional funds, the student can work 175 hours for that organization.

**4**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad





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## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

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**Natalia de la Garza**  
Program Coordinator

**Date:**  
Ongoing

**Reach:**  
UTRGV Students

### Be Your Own Boss

The Be Your Own Boss workshop is an event where students from across all UTRGV disciplines who want to be their own boss one day – start a business or open a practice in their field of study – can learn what it takes to make that happen. This workshop provides hands-on experience where you work with a team to come up with an idea, design a business around that idea, and pitch it to others. This is a unique opportunity to network with and even work with other students (who could even become your future business partners or collaborators!), enter a giveaway to win exciting prizes, and engage with a panel of experts from a variety of fields who have started their own businesses in the Rio Grande Valley.

[View Application](#)

**100**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad,  
EDA University  
Center Grant,  
EDA Build to  
Scale Grant





## Center for Innovation & Commercialization

**Laurie Simmons**  
Director

**Date:**  
February 2023

**Reach:**  
UTRGV  
Students

### **Blackstone Career Catalyst Program**

TBHF recognizes entrepreneurs across various categories, including undergraduate and graduate students, veterans, corporate leaders, innovators, and high school students. Recipients are awarded \$15,000 and become a permanent part of their statewide network with access to events, programming, and more.

To learn more about the awards and which category you should apply for, please visit <https://lnkd.in/giAPjNsm>

**1**  
**Person**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:**  
Blackstone  
LaunchPad



# RCVCOBE

Notable Programs / Activities

Related to Societal Impact

Academic Year 2023 - 2024



Focus Area #1

UN Sustainable Development Goal 8

Decent Work and Economic Growth



# ROBERT C. VACKAR

## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### OFFICE OF THE DEAN



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## Department of Economics

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**Dr. Diego Escobari**  
Professor

**Date:**  
November 2023

## **Bolivian Conference on Development Economics**

**Reach:**  
International

The Bolivian Conference on Development Economics was held November 9 and 10, 2023, in La Paz, Bolivia. It had presenters from Argentina, different regions in Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the USA. We had four keynote speakers and 36 paper presentations.

Sponsors included Sociedad de Economistas de Bolivia (Society of Bolivian Economists), INESAD, SDSN Bolivia, Inter-American Development Bank, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, CAF -banco de desarrollo de América Latina y el Caribe-, British Embassy in Bolivia, and Swisscontact.





## Department of Economics

**Dr. Andre Mollick**  
Professor

**Date:**  
AY 23-24

**Reach:**  
Local

### Social Impact Activities

Through CBEST, an economic conference was held in October, 2023: RGV Economic Outlook Symposium CBEST and a Vackar TalkX event. Major activities focused on the invitation of speakers, Drs. Roberto Coronado of Dallas Federal Reserve and Jesus Gustavo Garza Garcia of EGADE Business School, to deliver presentations to our UTRGV and local RGV community.

**50-100  
People  
Impacted**

Social impact is also present when we contribute to scholarly activities in various capacities. A presentation was delivered to Ph.D. students entitled "Dissertation, Publication & Building a Research Agenda" on March 29, 2024, as part of a 3 speaker series on how to develop academic research in Business fields.

Ongoing research covers sectors and specific business fields. In some cases, areas of social impact are particularly visible, such as entrepreneurship and the role of government to alleviate financial crisis.





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## Hospitality and Tourism Management Program

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**Eva Paschal**  
Adjunct Lecturer

**Marcel Fortuin**  
Lecturer I

**Date:**  
October 2023

### Sommelier Course

In this two-day course, students, local business owners and restaurateurs studied the major wine regions and beverages of the world, gained experience tasting, described, and evaluated wine, and learnt about hospitality and proper wine service standards. All courses are taught exclusively by Master Sommeliers and culminate in a written, 70-question multiple-choice examination.

**Reach:** Local

**30**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

**Program**  
**Sponsor:** Court  
of Master  
Sommeliers





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# Hospitality and Tourism Management Program

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**Dr. Arjun Singh**  
Professor / Department Director

**Date:** 2023

## Research and Economic Impact Study

**Reach:** Local

Research on Consumer Behavior and Economic Impact of Winter Texans to the Rio Grande Valley.

**People Impacted:** Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Rio Grande Valley.

**Estimated Economic Impact:** Impact of Winter Texans – \$761 Million (Calculated).





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## Department of International Business & Entrepreneurship

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**Russell Adams**  
Department Chair

**Date:**  
AY 23-24

**Reach:**  
Local

### NSF I-CORPS

Trained over 70 faculty students and community members to bring their business ideas closer to launch.

**Estimated Economic Impact:**  
\$50,000

**70**  
**People**  
**Impacted**





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## Department of Marketing

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# Jose Garza Lecturer I

Date:

June 2024 - Present

Reach:

UTRGV Students

**Weslaco Chamber of Commerce**  
Work-Based Experiential  
Learning Partnership

Additional Success Metrics:  
21st century Skills, Industry  
Partner Engagement,  
Municipal Impact Effort

**40**  
**People**  
**Impacted**





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## School of Accountancy

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**Dr. Christian Sobngwi**

Associate Professor / Interim Director

**Date:**

Ongoing

### **School of Accountancy Committee**

Organized biannual meetings of the School of Accountancy Advisory Committee. The committee consists of 18 accomplished professionals who volunteer their time and efforts to help the School accomplish its strategic objectives.

**Reach:**

International

**950**  
**People**  
**Impacted**





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## Center for Border Economic Studies at RCVCOBE

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**Armando Lopez**  
Faculty Research Fellow

**Date:**  
September 2023

**Article on Immigration Flows  
into the US**

**Reach:**  
Regional / State

Produced the article for CBest Border Business Briefs Fall 2023 v19, n1 "A snapshot of Immigration Flows into the US". The goal of this publication is to educate and inform the local community about the important issue of immigration.

Published online on September of 2023. Available at  
<https://www.utrgv.edu/cbest/publications/index.htm>



# RCVCOBE

Notable Programs / Activities

Related to Societal Impact

Academic Year 2023 - 2024



Focus Area #2

UN Sustainable Development Goal 3

Good Health and Well-Being





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## Department of Marketing

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**Michael Flores**  
Lecturer I

**Reach:**  
Regional & State

**Date:**  
April – August  
2024

### Maternal Health Awareness Campaign

Maternal Health Research Center, School of Medicine and RCVCOBE Marketing Department Awareness Campaign, 2024. The RCVCOBE marketing department has partnered with the SOM to promote a newly-funded grant for the Maternal Health Research Center. This includes a student logo competition, creating social media posts across several channels, and designing promotional materials for on-site activations.

**340,000  
People  
Impacted**

**Program Sponsor:**  
UTRGV School of  
Medicine



# RCVCOBE

**Notable Programs / Activities  
Related to Societal Impact**  
Academic Year 2023 - 2024



**Student Organizations**  
**Reported Activities / Initiatives**





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## Accounting Society (ASOC)

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### Activities Reported:

**Entrepreneur Talk:** Hosted speaker from FourLokoMX.

**Entrepreneur Talk:** Hosted speaker from Texas Senate (LaMantia).

**158**  
**People**  
**Impacted**

## Association for Information Technology Professionals (AITP)

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### Activities Reported:

**AITP Speaker Event:** Hosted Tom Byrum from Texas National Bank.

**AITP Speaker Event:** Hosted Jose Pena from City of Pharr.





## Association of Latino Professionals For America (ALPFA)

### Activities Reported:

Vaqueros stand up against domestic violence:

Hosted domestic violence awareness presentation.

**JP Morgan Chase Meeting:** Hosted a JP Morgan Chase & Co Speaker.

**VackarTalkx:** Panel discussion with Sam's CFO.

**VackarTalkx:** Panel discussion about business and entrepreneurship.

138  
People  
Impacted





## Beta Alpha Psi (BAP)

### Activities Reported:

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**CPA Information Session:** Tax presentation, controversy, Audit, consulting and 15 careers at BML.

**Accounting Career Symposium:** A presentation featuring a panel composed entirely of women, discussing and highlighting the significant contributions of women within the accounting industry.

**Vita:** Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and counseling for the elderly service activity with United Way of South Texas from Jan - April.

**Tax Presentation:** Audit presentation and careers at CRI.

**Banking Presentation:** Finance and banking presentation with Texas Regional Bank.

**Mock Interviews:** Mock Interviews with local CPA firms to provide feedback to members and students at RCVCOBE.

**AICPA BAP Meeting:** Online meeting with AICPA regarding CPA paths professional experience.

# 579 People Impacted

**Accounting Career Symposium:** Panelist with local accounting cpa and big four firm professionals to discuss the accounting industry outlook.

**Audit Info Session - Whitley Penn:** Audit career outlook and opportunities by Edmond Martinez.

**Meet The Accounting Professionals:** Accounting Career expo made in collaboration with SOA.

**Real Estate Presentation with Edwards Abstract & Title Co.:** Real estate title insurance presentation to RCVCOBE students.

**Tax Presentation - Haynie & Co.:** Tax presentation with Edgar Tobar.

**Tax Presentation - CRI:** Tax presentation, controversy, and outlook by CRI - Sandra Rios.

**Texas State Board Member of Public Accounting Presentation:** CPA license & Exam Qualifications Presentation.





## Brownsville Accounting Association (BAA)

### Activities Reported:

**Guest Speaker Meeting:** Hosted UTRGV Alumni/PwC associate and PwC's UTRGV campus recruiter who spoke on internship opportunities

**Texas Regional Bank Speaker Meeting:** Hosted TRB; They performed a financial literacy workshop for members.

**SEC Guest Speaker Meeting:** Dr. Sparger hosted the Associate Chief Accountant for the SEC. He spoke on processes of the SEC and about his experience.

**Coffee and Careers:** Collaborated with the Career Center. Topics of event included "investing in yourself" and "unlocking professional potential".

**Accounting Symposium:** hosted Accounting Symposium on the Brownsville Campus.

55  
People  
Impacted





## Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO)

### Activities Reported:

**Toy Drive Event:** Held a toy drive for children in hospitals, local communities, and immigrant families awaiting trial.

**Pitch Competition:** Members have developed public speaking, time management, networking skills, and more.

### Entrepreneur Talks Series:

- Hosted Yaw Sam, CEO of Brand Geniuz
- Hosted CEO of "I Love Chamoy" Annie Leah
- Hosted CEO of Veggy Dog, Arnold Ramsey
- Hosted CEOs of Howell Enterprises
- Hosted Dr. Esmeralda Adame
- Hosted CEO of BBQ Jank, Lamar Jones
- Hosted CEO of Fork to Fit, Alex Velasco

**277**  
**People**  
**Impacted**





# Enactus

## Activities Reported:

Attended the Enactus National Expo 2024 and were crowned **National Champions**, advancing to the World Cup Expo in Astana, Kazakhstan.

# 2635 People Impacted

**SOAR:** Soar aims to teach neurodivergent individuals the job readiness skills necessary to obtain a summer job/internship.

**Cansgiving:** Our Enactus team provided Thanksgiving meals to 1000 families in need, raising \$23,930 and investing over 236.1 hours of hard work.

**Rise:** This project trains 60 students to create socially impactful business plans through theoretical instruction, practical application, and peer-to-peer learning.

**Resume Workshop:** Hosted Workshop in collaboration with SHRM for our members.

**VackarTalkx:** In collaboration with CEO, hosted wearsos.

**VackarTalkx:** In collaboration with another student organization, hosted Sam's club.

**Guest Speaker Meetings:** Hosted CEO of Meet! Application. Hosted Jan Jones from Fortress to give a resume workshop.





## The Association of Accountants and Financial Professionals in Business (IMA)

### Activities Reported:

**General Meeting:** PwC Recruiter: Members learned more about internship and career opportunities with Lisa Goll, a talent acquisition recruiter.

**General Meeting:** BML, CPA Firm: IMA Joined us with Melinda Bosquez, Human Resources Manager of BML, to gain insight into the firm, how it operates, and some potential career and internship opportunities they had to offer.

**General Meeting:** Dell Mentoring Informational: IMA co-hosted with Economics and Finance Society and the Career Center. A Dell recruiter gave details about Dell's mentorship program.

**Attended IMA Student Leadership Conference in Detroit.**

56  
People  
Impacted





## Internal Audit Student Association (IASA)

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### Activities Reported:

**Conference Attendance:** The 2024 Internal Audit Student Leadership Conference includes:

- An interactive case study competition for students with prizes.
- Resume building resources and review services.
- A professional headshot booth.
- Networking with internal audit leaders and students from around the world.
- Interviewing opportunities with potential employers on-site.
- Receive information from Gleim (CIA study materials) representatives.

**4**  
**People**  
**Impacted**



# RCVCOBE

Programs / Activities / Research  
Related to Societal Impact

Academic Year 2023 - 2024



**Data Summary**

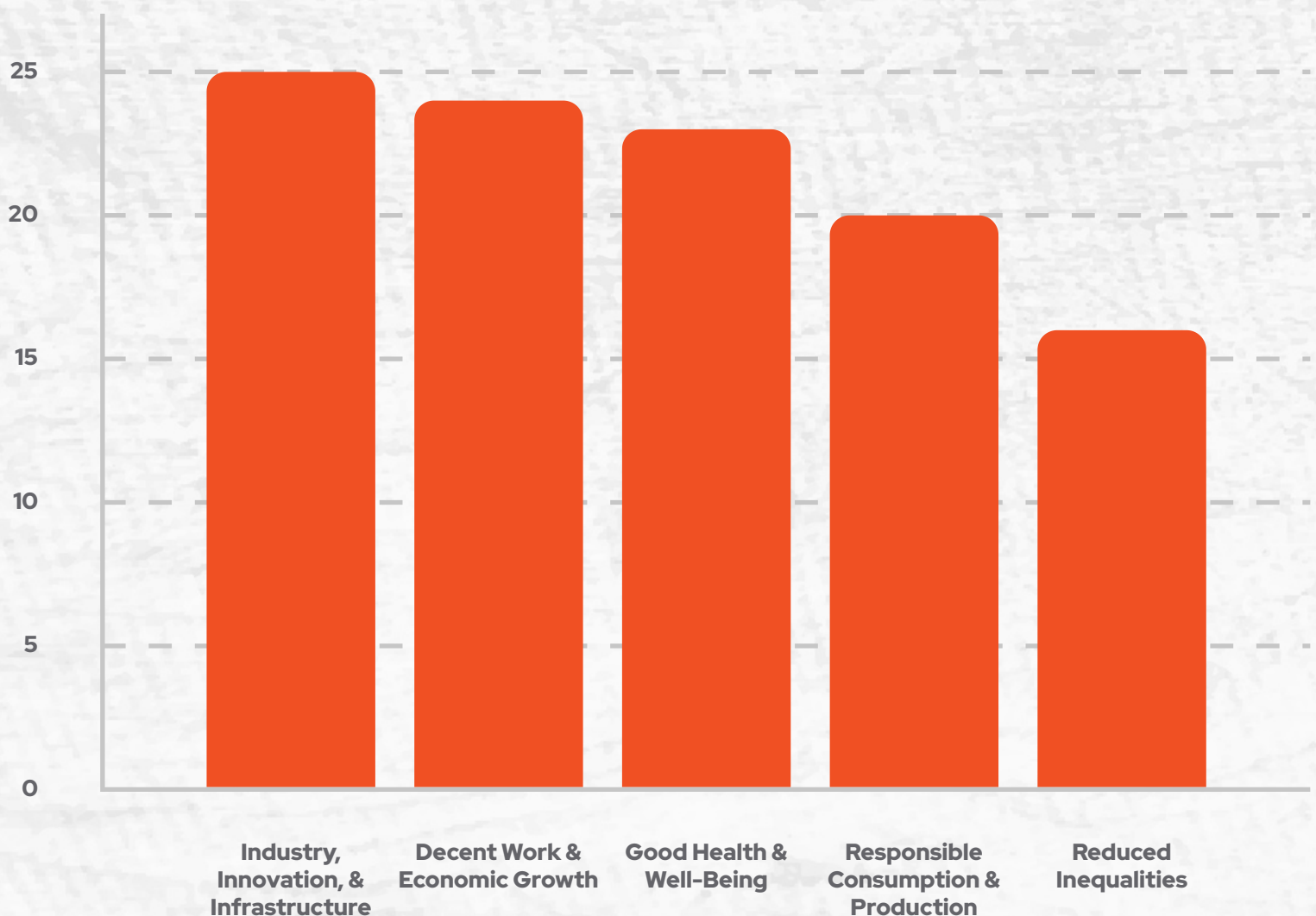
**Cited UN Sustainable Development  
Goals**





**Goal 9:  
Industry, Innovation,  
and Infrastructure**

# Goals Most Frequently Cited In Research





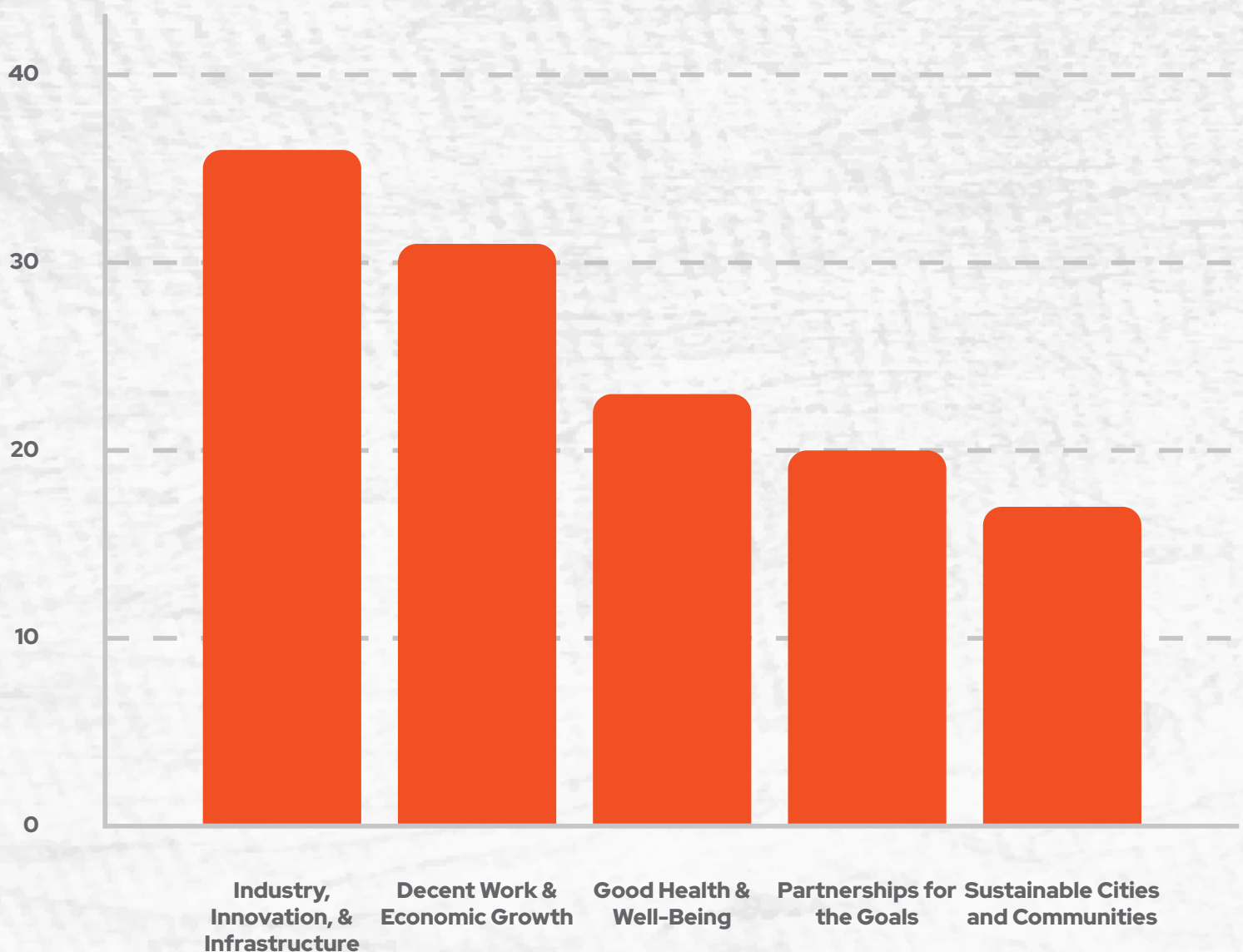
# Research - Sustainability and Social Impact Journal Contributions Summary Table 2023-2024

SDG	ACCT	ECON	FINA	HOST	INFS	IBE	MARK	MGMT	TOTAL
No Poverty	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
Zero Hunger	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
Good Health and Well-Being	0	0	0	0	1	8	2	0	11
Quality Education	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	6
Gender Equality	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
Clean Water and Sanitation	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Affordable and Clean Energy	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3
Decent Work and Economic Growth	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	7
Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	5	2	2	1	10
Reduced Inequality	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Sustainable Cities and Communities	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	4
Responsible Consumption and Production	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	6
Climate Action	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Life Below Water	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Life on Land	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Partnerships for the Goals	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Total	3	3	2	0	6	38	13	8	73





# Goals Most Frequently Cited In Conferences





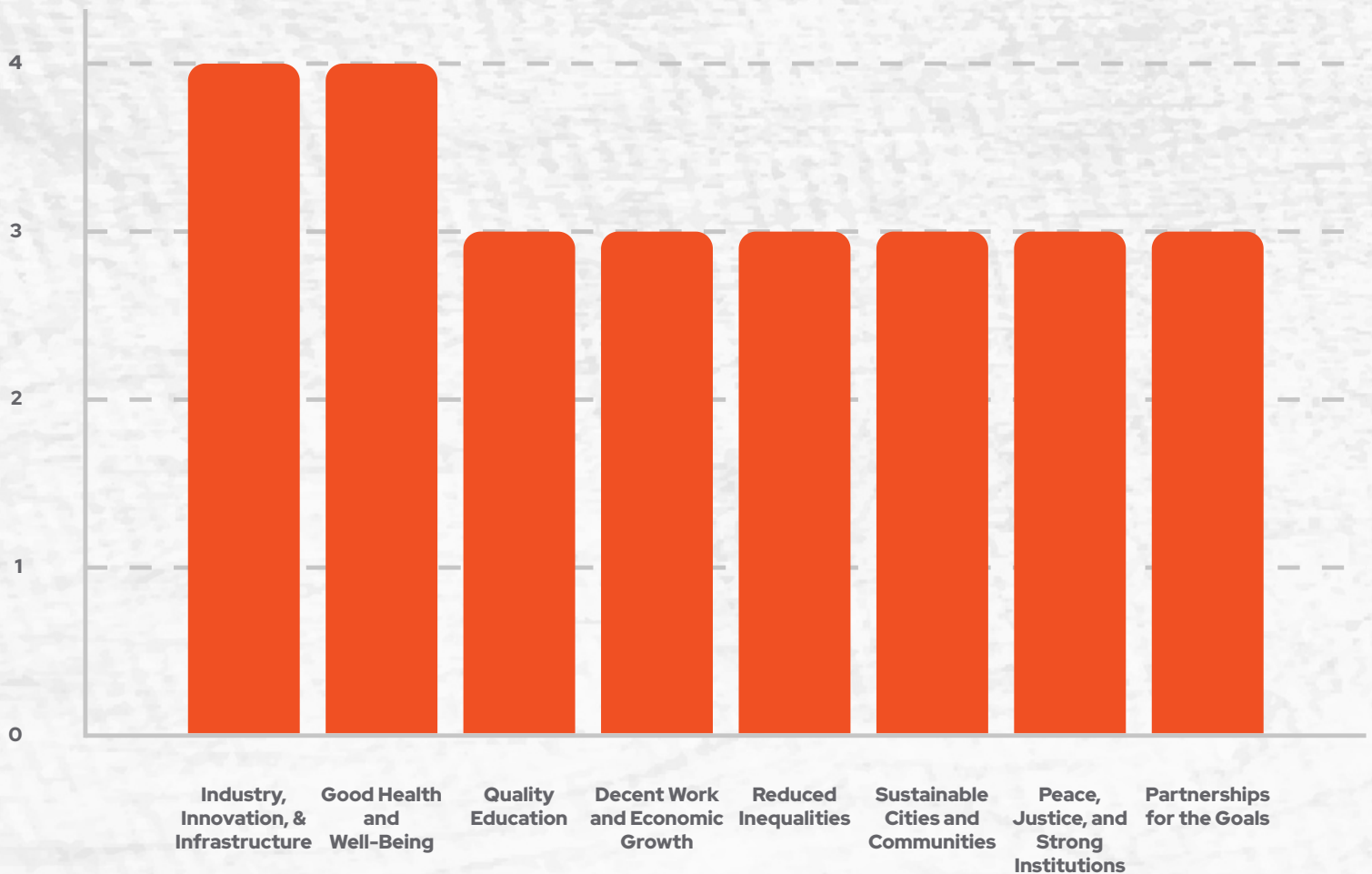
# Research - Sustainability and Social Impact Grants Contributions Summary Table 2023-2024

SDG	ACCT	ECON	FINA	HOST	INFS	IBE	MARK	MGMT	TOTAL
No Poverty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zero Hunger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Good Health and Well-Being	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Quality Education	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Gender Equality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clean Water and Sanitation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Affordable and Clean Energy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Decent Work and Economic Growth	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Reduced Inequality	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Sustainable Cities and Communities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Responsible Consumption and Production	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Climate Action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Life Below Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Life on Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Partnerships for the Goals	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	6





# Goals Most Frequently Cited In Grants Obtained



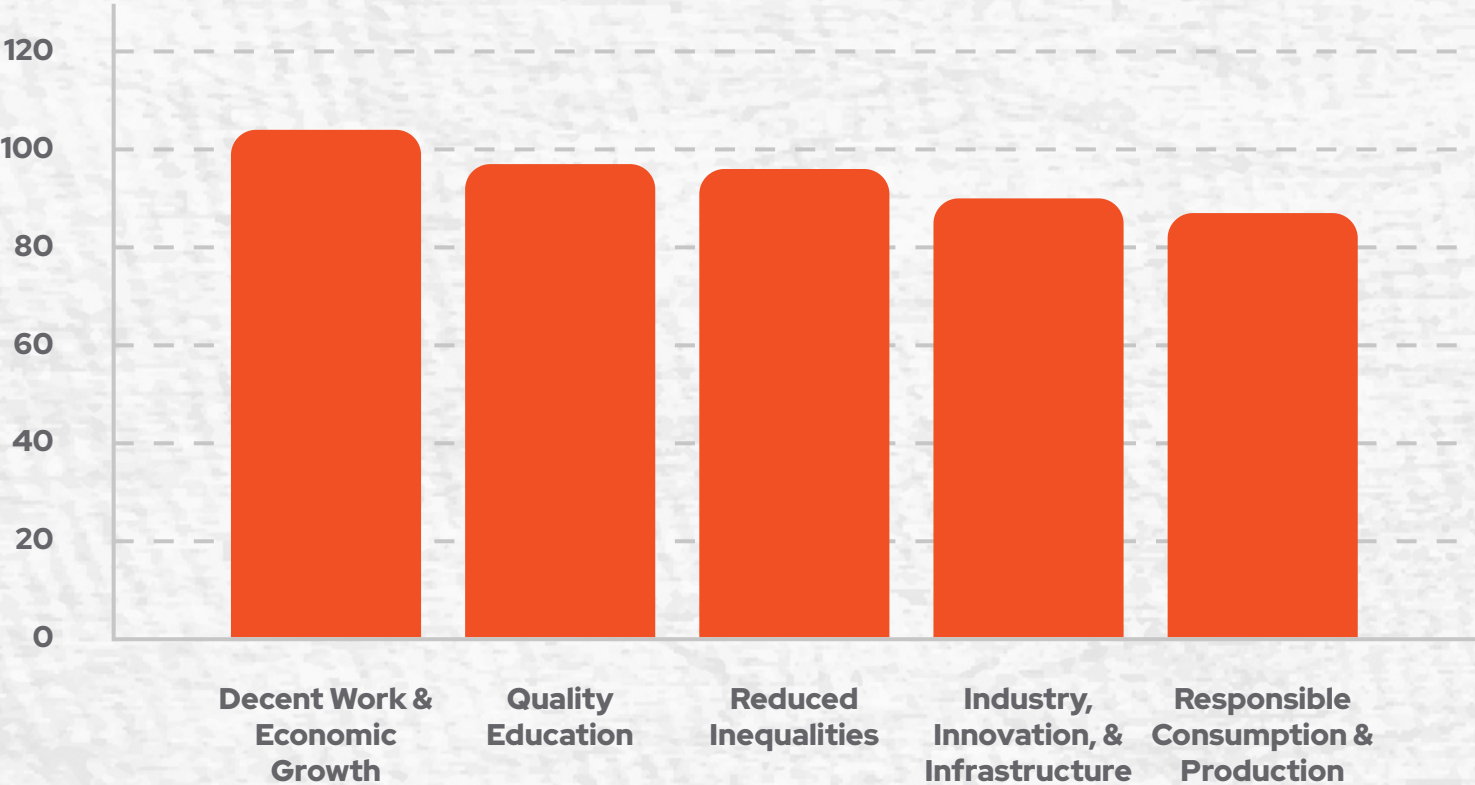


# Teaching - Sustainability and Social Impact Contributions Summary Table 2023-2024

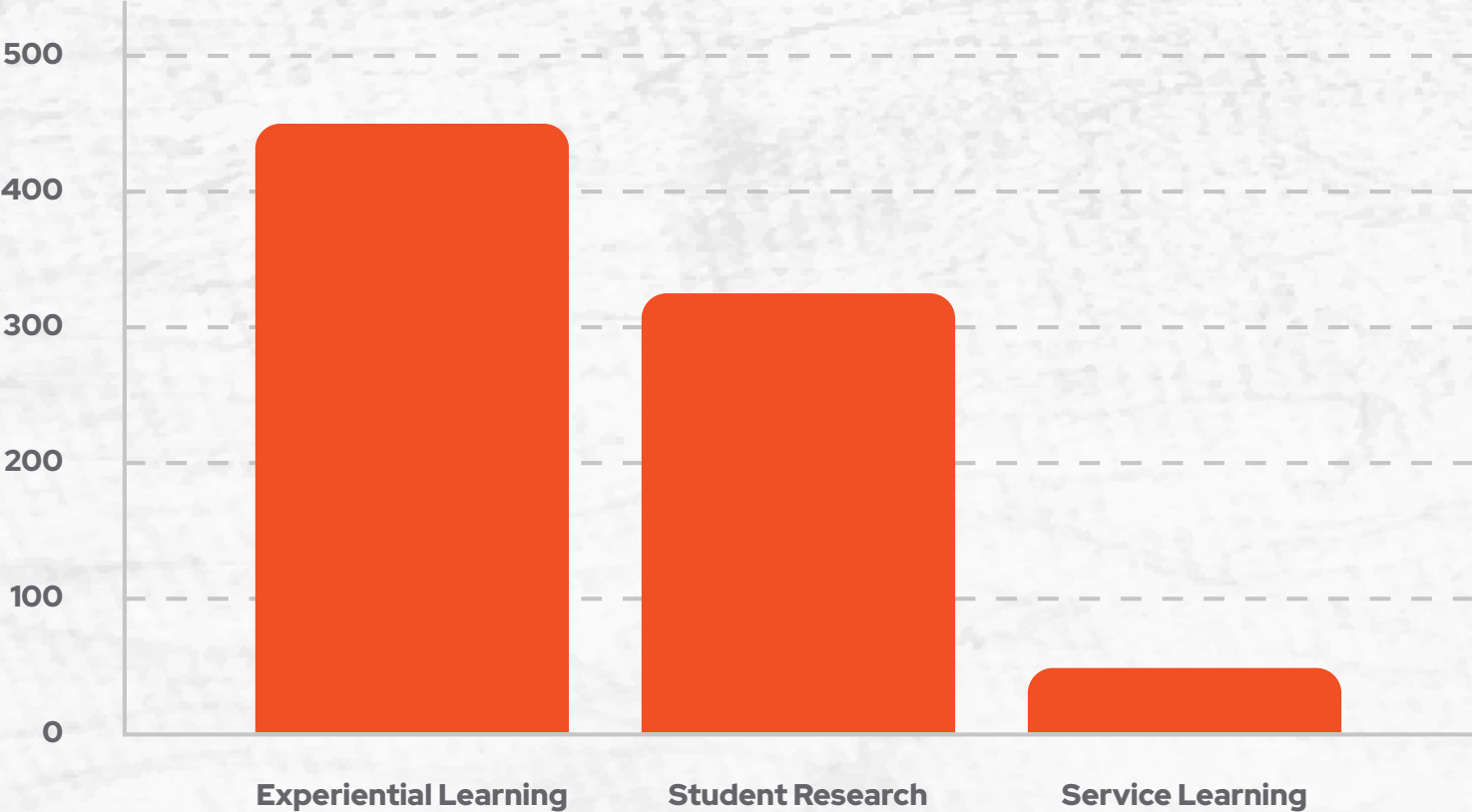
SDG	ACCT	ECON	FINA	HOST	INFS	IBE	MARK	MGMT	TOTAL
No Poverty	0	2	0	0	0	11	3	0	16
Zero Hunger	0	1	0	0	0	9	0	0	10
Good Health and Well-Being	0	2	0	1	2	12	11	1	29
Quality Education	9	3	0	1	1	17	16	9	56
Gender Equality	0	0	0	0	1	11	11	11	34
Clean Water and Sanitation	0	0	0	1	0	10	6	1	18
Affordable and Clean Energy	0	2	0	0	0	13	2	0	17
Decent Work and Economic Growth	6	4	0	0	3	17	8	9	47
Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	3	1	1	1	6	20	3	6	41
Reduced Inequality	1	3	0	0	1	11	16	10	42
Sustainable Cities and Communities	1	0	0	1	1	13	11	3	30
Responsible Consumption and Production	2	0	0	1	2	13	9	8	35
Climate Action	0	0	0	1	0	10	2	3	16
Life Below Water	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	6
Life on Land	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	0	7
Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	5	0	0	0	0	6	5	2	18
Partnerships for the Goals	2	1	0	1	0	12	2	8	26
Service Learning (designated by the office of Engaged Scholarship & Learning)	1	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	8
Experiential Learning Courses	15	9	0	0	20	17	24	28	113
Student Research Courses	17	4	0	0	21	14	21	8	85
Collaborative Online International Learning	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	6	10
Study Abroad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>664</b>



# Goals Most Frequently Cited In Teaching



## Activities





# Service-Learning Designated Courses

## Service-Learning Course AY 2023-2024

Department	Professor	No. of Service-Learning Designated Courses	Total No. of Student Volunteer hours reported	Estimated Economic Impact*
Management	Martha Lovett	4	1677	\$56,174
Accountancy	Delia Sanchez	2	1395	\$51,942
Accountancy	Linda Acevedo	1	840	\$28,131
International Business and Entrepreneurship	Sylvia Robles	6	6143	\$232,554

\*Estimated Economic Impact based on volunteer hours

## Faculty who received training to start Service-Learning Courses in AY 24-25

Information Systems	Marketing	School of Accountancy	VCOBE	Management
Ana Canedo	Eloy Garza	Jimmie R Limon	Joo Jung	Maria Leonard
Hong Qin	Esi A. Elliot			
Punit Ahluwalia	Xiaojing Sheng			
Xuan Wang				

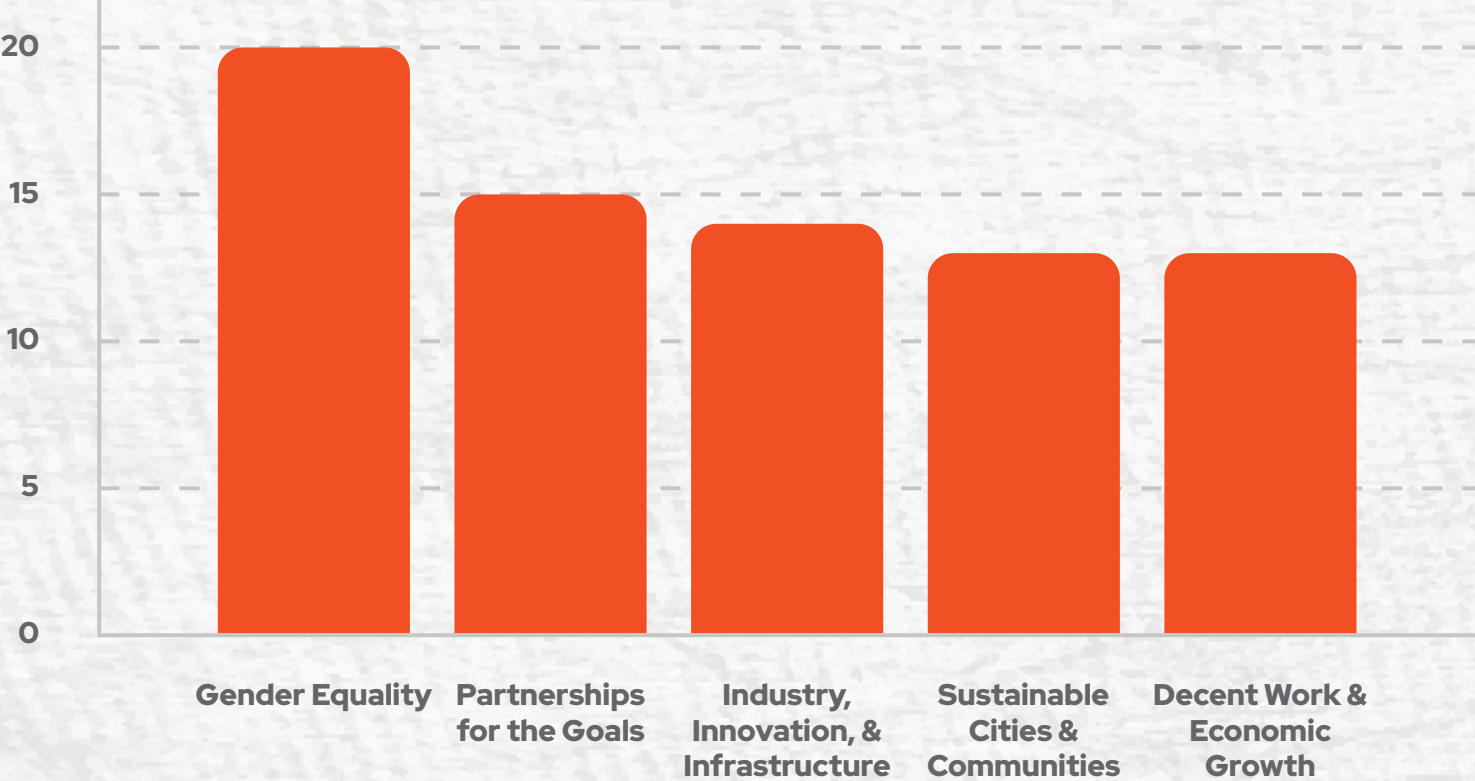


# Service - Sustainability and Social Impact Contributions Summary Table 2023-2024

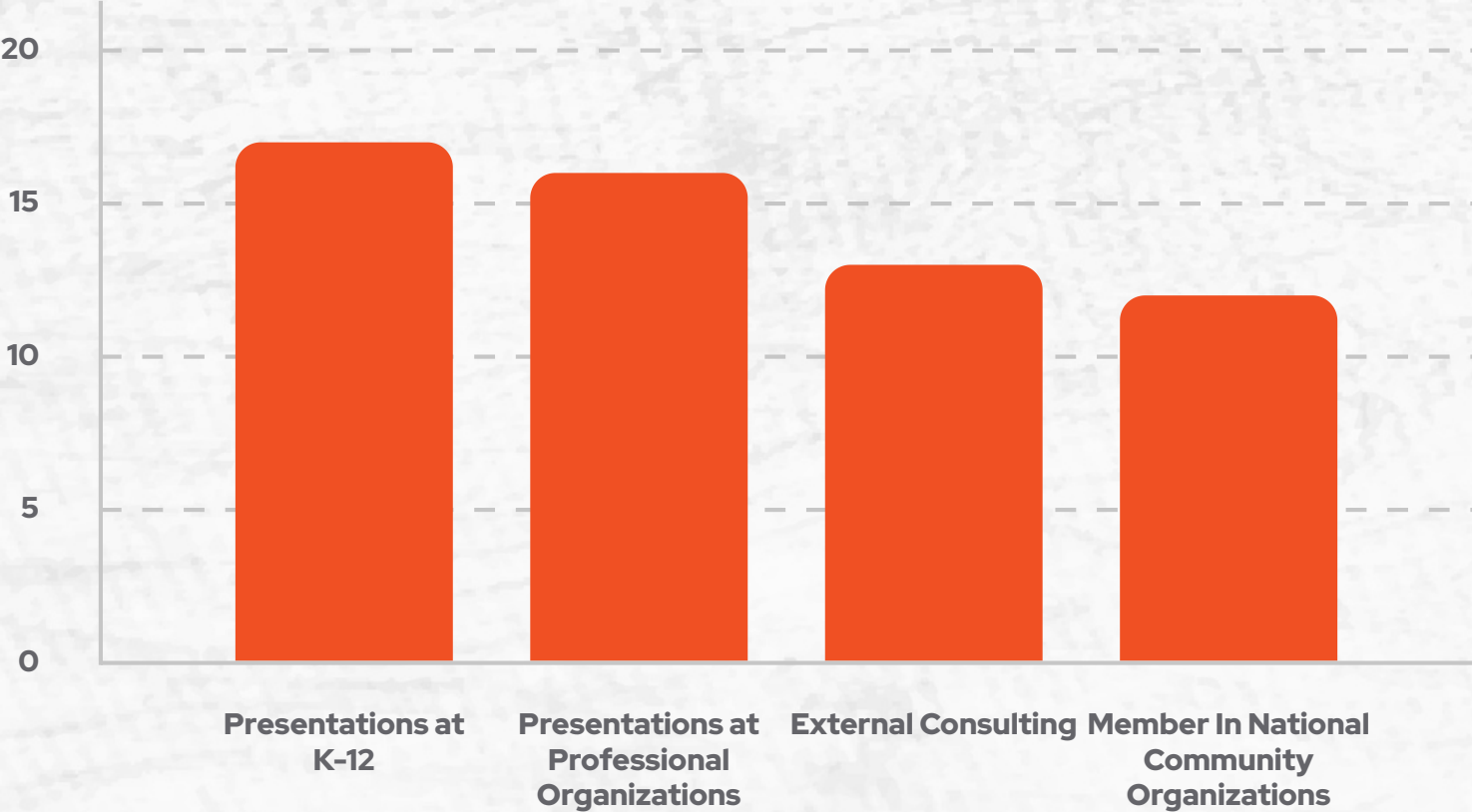
SDG	ACCT	ECON	FINA	HOST	INFS	IBE	MARK	MGMT	TOTAL
No Poverty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Zero Hunger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Good Health and Well-Being	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Quality Education	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	3	9
Gender Equality	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	4
Clean Water and Sanitation	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Affordable and Clean Energy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Decent Work and Economic Growth	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Reduced Inequality	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Sustainable Cities and Communities	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	5
Responsible Consumption and Production	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Climate Action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Life Below Water	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Life on Land	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Partnerships for the Goals	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	4
Executive or Professional Education	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	4
External Consulting	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	3	7
Leadership in Professional Organization	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Leadership in Community Organization	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	5
Presentation at Professional Organization	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
Presentation at K-12 Schools	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	3
Member Service in Professional Organization	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
Member Service in National Community Organization	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Economic Development Projects with Community Partners	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>66</b>



# Goals Most Frequently Cited In Service



## Activities







Robert C. Vackar College of  
Business & Entrepreneurship

# Office of Societal Impact and Sustainability

**RCVCOBE**

**[Impact@utrgv.edu](mailto:Impact@utrgv.edu)**



# Office of Societal Impact and Sustainability

## Overview

The office of Societal Impact supports RCVCOBE's efforts to align its mission, vision, and values with the AACSB business accreditation standards, particularly the ones related to societal impact. This office works closely with the dean, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders to develop, implement, and evaluate initiatives that demonstrate the college's commitment to creating positive change in society.

## Office Responsibilities

- **Conduct** an assessment of the current state of the school's societal impact activities, including curriculum, research, outreach, partnerships, and culture.
- **Identify** gaps and opportunities for improvement based on the AACSB business accreditation standards and best practices from other accredited institutions.
- **Develop** an action plan for enhancing the college's societal impact performance in alignment with the college's mission, vision and strategic goals as well as with the AACSB standards, in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- **Coordinate** and oversee the implementation of the plan, including managing budgets, timelines, resources, and communication.
- **Monitor** and report on the progress and outcomes, using appropriate metrics and indicators.
- **Facilitate** and promote a culture of societal impact awareness and engagement among faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external partners.
- **Represent** the college in external events and networks related to societal impact, such as conferences, workshops, webinars, awards, etc.
- **Stay updated** on the latest trends and developments in societal impact education and research.



# Office of Societal Impact and Sustainability

## Steps:

To develop an action plan for enhancing RCVCOBE's societal impact performance and alignment with the AACSB standards, the following steps need to be followed:

- **Identify** focus goal(s)
- **Identify** issues and initiatives in our college that relate to societal impact. These could be based on the 17 Social Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations, or on other frameworks that are relevant to your stakeholders.
- **Develop** initiatives that set our college apart when addressing these issues. These could be curricular or co-curricular programs, research projects, partnerships with external organizations, or community engagement activities. For each initiative, we should define the objectives, outcomes, indicators, and metrics of social and economic value brought by these efforts.
- **Involve** faculty, advisory boards(s), staff, students, alumni, and other stakeholders in the design, implementation, and evaluation of initiatives. The purpose is to infuse the whole organization with a sense of purpose and enthusiasm for societal impact and good governance.
- **Integrate** societal impact into our strategy and operations, rather than treating it as a separate function.
- **Align** societal impact initiatives with accreditation standards and processes, such as eligibility criteria, self-evaluation reports, peer review visits, and continuous improvement reviews.
- **Communicate** regularly with stakeholders about the college's societal impact performance by using data and narrative accounts to show how we are meeting the societal impact and sustainability objectives. We should also seek feedback and recognition from external sources, such as ratings agencies, rankings publications, awards programs, or media outlets.



# Office of Societal Impact and Sustainability

## Recording Societal Impact Initiatives:

It is very important to record the specific initiatives that our college has undertaken or plans to undertake to address one or more societal challenges or opportunities.

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For each initiative, the following information should be provided:

- **Description:** A summary of what the initiative is, why it is important, who is involved, and what are the expected outcomes and benefits.
- **Alignment:** A clear explanation of how the initiative aligns with the school's mission, vision, values, and strategic objectives, as well as with the AACSB 2020 standards and expectations.
- **Goals:** A set of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals that define what success looks like for the initiative.
- **Measures:** A set of indicators and metrics that track the progress and impact of the initiative over time. These measures should be aligned with the goals and reflect both quantitative and qualitative data.
- **Resources:** A list of the resources (human, financial, physical, technological, etc.) that are needed or available to support the initiative.
- **Challenges:** A recognition of the potential challenges or risks that may hinder or limit the implementation or effectiveness of the initiative.
- **Action Plan:** A detailed plan of action that outlines the specific steps, tasks, responsibilities, timelines, and deliverables for executing the initiative.





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## Office of Societal Impact and Sustainability

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### Evaluation and Reporting:

This section explains how the school will evaluate and report on the results and impact of its societal impact initiatives.

### It should include the following information:

- **Evaluation Methodology:** A description of the methods and tools that will be used to collect, analyze, and interpret the data from the measures.
- **Evaluation Frequency:** A specification of how often the evaluation will be conducted (e.g., annually, biannually, quarterly, etc.).
- **Reporting Format:** A description of the format and content of the reports that will be produced to communicate the findings and recommendations from the evaluation.
- **Reporting Audience:** A identification of the internal and external stakeholders who will receive or have access to the reports (e.g., faculty, staff, students, alumni, partners, donors, accreditors, etc.).





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## Sources:

- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/deloitte/2019/01/22/societal-impact-moving-from-nice-to-consider-to-business-imperative/>
- <https://www.aacsb.edu/media-center/news/2020/08/connected-for-better-aacsb-focus-on-positive-social-impact>
- <https://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/documents/accreditation/aacsb-and-societal-impact.pdf>
- <https://www.utrgv.edu/cobe/about/mission-strategy/index.htm>