



# 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Harlingen Economic Development Corporation

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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GARZA  
CHAIRMAN/PRESIDENT



MICKEY  
BOLAND  
VICE PRESIDENT



MICHAEL  
LAMON  
TREASURER



DR. GILBERT  
LEAL  
SECRETARY



ELISEO  
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# FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

About 15 years ago, I began working on a huge project in Laredo. After what seems to be years of negotiation, the company I worked for and the City of Laredo reached an agreement on the acquisition of almost 90 acres of land for a mixed-use development known as Laredo Town Center. The property was located directly across from the Laredo International Airport and in front of Lake Casablanca. It was the perfect spot for a massive open-air power center and a new lifestyle center with a high-end boutique hotel as an anchor.

There were some challenges that we needed to overcome prior to making the project a reality. We had a strong equity partner who was willing to put in more than \$20 million cash into the over \$100 million project (it isn't easy to find that type of partner). We had to acquire other properties with improvements on them. We had to move over 300,000 cubic yards of dirt to balance the site, and we had to move a manmade detention pond to a new location onsite. We acquired the two warehouse buildings and tore them down. We removed tons of concrete and rebar — actually, even crushed the concrete to be used as base later. We moved lots of dirt and stockpiled a huge mound to be used later as fill for the detention pond to be moved. Additionally, we had to deal with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and 12,000 signature petitions against the project, and a nervous City Commission. Being across from the airport, we had some FAA issues that were overcome. We were able to purchase additional land nearby to help with mitigation of the man-made detention pond, and we obtained a 404 permit from the USACOE, much to the chagrin of some opponents to the development. But time was our enemy, and the market changed dramatically in 2008.

Many of our commitments dried up. Others were leery of building new stores when the country was headed into one of its worst economic times in history. And so, Laredo Town Center was placed on the backburner. As developers and real estate brokers, we worked on other deals and moved forward on projects that didn't rely on retail at that time. Today, that property does have some retail and will eventually be a nice mixed-use development.

For the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation, 2018 was like my experience in Laredo in the early 2000s. We had the promise of a new 900,000 SF distribution center for Cardone Industries coming to Harlingen with a groundbreaking held in December 2017. That development promised hundreds of jobs during the construction period and then hundreds more once the facility was operational. So, after months of working with their development team and chasing after prospects that would be great compliments to Cardone's operations, we had to work



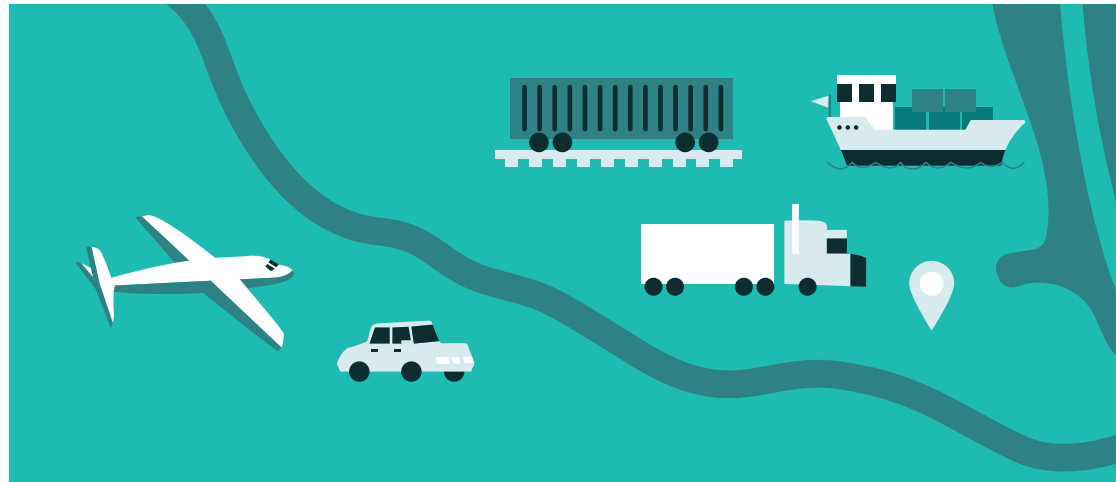
on reversing the transaction. Much had gone into obtaining an incentive package that included the State, County, City and the EDC as well. As you can imagine, having to deal with deflated hopes and dreams of more prosperous beginnings dashed wasn't easy.

Economic development and real estate are not professions for the faint of heart. They are not predictable. They require a high degree of risk, patience, and perseverance. One of the takeaways from the Cardone exercise was that we now have a large tract of land that is fully entitled, meaning all infrastructure necessary to support vertical development is either at the site or in extremely close proximity, and the property is now that much more marketable.

So, that was the elephant in the room for 2018. Cardone didn't build the huge facility everyone expected. But others did come into Harlingen in a great way! Texas Regional Bank opened a 40,000 square foot multi-story corporate headquarters. The City negotiated a great deal with residential developers to rehab the Baxter building into the Baxter Lofts residential tower. New retail developments came in on the west side of town, while older properties were being renovated. Our unemployment rate continued to decrease, retail sales continued to increase and still be the third highest in the RGV, construction activity was brisk, and the groundwork for new projects was being laid as well. In the education and healthcare industries, growth because of the UTRGV School of Medicine was evident all around Harlingen, and Harlingen CISD continued to make huge strides towards educating our future workforce while TSTC was upgrading current employee skills and training tomorrow's workers as well.

*Raudel Garza*

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



## HUB CITY

### AIRPORT, INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE, PORT, LOCATION MAKE HARLINGEN THE HEART OF THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY

A port with an annual cargo tonnage of 1 million each year. An international bridge with expert personnel and facilities ideal for protecting produce from the Texas heat. An airport with six carriers to connect people to anywhere in the world.

Exciting growth and an ideal location make Harlingen not only the hub city of the Rio Grande Valley, but also the region's vibrant heart. The Harlingen Economic Development Corporation brought the leaders for the Port of Harlingen Authority, the Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios, and Valley International Airport together to reflect on their recent growth.

"By definition alone, a hub is the center of the wheel and really when you look at the Rio Grande Valley both from a geographical standpoint and from a population standpoint, Harlingen is located smack dab in the middle of the Rio Grande Valley," said Marvin "Marv" Esterly, director of aviation for Valley International Airport.

Walker Smith, executive port director of the Port of Harlingen Authority, agrees.

"Harlingen is a hub city — it's the center of the Rio Grande Valley," he said. "It has access to all four modes of transportation by rail, road through I-69, U.S. 77 and 83, by air, and also by water through the Port of Harlingen."

According to the Port of Harlingen Authority's website, the port occupies more than 2,000 acres of land that includes 650 feet of dry cargo wharf, 100 feet of dry bulk wharf, and five docks. The port has seen growth recently, particularly in its role to aid the trade of petroleum.

"There's been a significant increase in demand for fuels in the area and we've been a part of that supplying most of the fuel for the region," Smith said.

That growth translates to a boost for Harlingen itself, a recent economic impact study found.

"It shows 525 direct jobs, a total of 1,200 jobs," Smith said. "Close to \$100 million in revenue for the businesses in and around Harlingen, as well, so the port's had a significant impact on Harlingen."

Valley International Airport's growth has also positively affected Harlingen, a Texas Department of Transportation survey shows.

"It had an impact of 4,500 jobs that equaled \$150 million in salaries," Esterly said. "The total output of Valley International Airport: around \$430 million."

The airport recently added Frontier Airlines, which has direct flights to Chicago and Denver, as well as a direct American Airlines flight to the Dallas-Fort Worth airport.

"Boy, it's pretty staggering the growth that's going on at Valley International Airport right now both from a passenger standpoint and also a cargo standpoint," Esterly said, adding that passenger traffic had increased 19 percent in the past few months. "With the growth that we're seeing at the airport, that again is a direct indication that the economy of the Harlingen area is doing pretty good."

Josue Garcia Jr., the Cameron County bridge system director, has seen traffic pick up at the Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios in the last year for both commercial and vehicular traffic, likely due to the improvements that have been completed on the crossing.

The bridge has two USDA entomologists and one plant pathologist to keep an eye on harmful insects and plant diseases, respectively, that might be present in produce crossed into the United States. It's the only port in the country to have that kind of scientific oversight, Garcia said.

"We're considered a full-service bridge because we have everything that is needed for the consumer to use or requires and CBP [Customers and Border Protection] requires," Garcia said.

That includes the cold storage facility at the crossing, which has been in operation for about a year.

"Since the cold storage room opened up, we have seen a 15 to 20 percent increase in our commercial traffic," Garcia said, adding that the increase was seen in produce. "The users have commented that they really like this one in particular because the storage

maintains the degree of the temperatures that are required for the produce to stay frozen, so they're using our port more and more because it's a good service that we're providing."

Garcia looks to the future, knowing that the bridge has room to grow. Bids will soon be opened on adding a third northbound lane specifically for commercial traffic.

"This will greatly enhance the wait times to almost no wait time for commercial traffic coming north," he said.

With all of the vital commerce flowing through Harlingen's various veins — roads, flights, rails, and waterways — the city is poised for an even brighter future.

"Residents, businesses, business owners should be excited about what's going on in Harlingen," Smith said. "We're getting a lot of looks from industries outside of Texas wanting to come into the Rio Grande Valley and Harlingen specifically because of the connectivity that we provide as well as the multimodal infrastructure that we can provide."

For more on the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation, go to [harlingenedc.com/](http://harlingenedc.com/). Learn more about the Free Trade Bridge at Los Indios by visiting [www.co.cameron.tx.us/bridge/free-trade-international-bridge/](http://www.co.cameron.tx.us/bridge/free-trade-international-bridge/). Read more about the Port of Harlingen Authority at [portofharlingen.com/the-port/](http://portofharlingen.com/the-port/). To learn more about Valley International Airport, go to [www.flythevalley.com/](http://www.flythevalley.com/).





# LIFE PRESERVER

## HARLINGEN EDC HELPS BUSINESSES WITH RESOURCES TO KEEP THEIR HEADS ABOVE WATER AFTER DISASTERS

When it does rain in the Rio Grande Valley, sometimes, it pours.

Take the two historic rain events that occurred nearly a year to the day apart this past June and in June 2018.

Harlingen was just one community hit hard by this year's flooding. Based on records from the National Weather Service, the city received 6.29 inches of rain in a 24-hour period. Frontage roads north of Interstate 2 — and the neighborhoods and businesses on them — were inundated, the drainage systems overwhelmed.

"One of the things that Harlingen Economic Development Corporation tries to do in a small business environment is to be a resource for small businesses here in Harlingen," said Raudel Garza, manager and CEO the Harlingen EDC. "Many times, when people are looking for answers to questions related to what happens now after a significant flood event or a significant natural disaster, they may not know who to turn to."

They can turn to Harlingen EDC, he said.

"We will tap into resources such as FEMA, SBA, even state agencies and some other local agencies that can help try to get people back on their feet and try to get businesses open again," Garza said. "That's our role when it comes to economic development



and helping small businesses in a disaster area."

The U.S. Small Business Administration — SBA — is a federal organization that helps businesses start, grow, expand, and recover.

"One of the things that folks don't know about the SBA or may not know is we provide disaster assistance — therefore, the 'recover' at the end of the motto," said Angela Burton, district director for the SBA's Lower Rio Grande Valley district.

No one can control the weather, but there are steps to take to be better prepared in the event of a flood or other natural disaster.

"Make sure you have a list or you know all of your employees' phone numbers and addresses," Burton said. "Your human capital is probably your most important aspect of your business, so we want to make sure your employees and their families are safe."

Ensuring you have the appropriate insurance coverages is also essential. If you rent your business space, it is still important to get flood insurance to cover your office equipment, inventory, and other items. There are also protections that help your company in the case of an interruption of business.

Burton recommends that businesses examine their suppliers and logistics, identifying alternatives to turn to in case of an emergency. Businesses should also practice a continuation plan with employees well ahead of the storm.

Elizabeth Vargas, public information officer with the SBA's Office of Disaster Assistance, emphasized that the SBA is available to assist business owners after a catastrophe.

"We're going to be here in the area wherever the disaster strikes, helping them recover in not only short term, but long term," she said. "SBA offers low interest loans for physical damage to repair or replace their inventories, real estate, supplies, and any damage that the disaster causes. Also, businesses may apply for a loan up to \$2 million for economic injury. These loans are working capital loans to help businesses stay in business through a disaster."

After a flood, help is there. Before, preparation and prevention are key — including understanding that nearly one-third of all claims are not in a flood zone.

*Learn more about the Harlingen EDC by visiting [harlingenedc.com](http://harlingenedc.com). Read more about the mission of the U.S. Small Business Administration at [sba.gov](http://sba.gov). For more on FEMA, the National Flood Insurance Program, and other flooding resources, visit [floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov).*

## TRB OPENS NEW CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

Texas Regional Bank opened their doors today on a new corporate headquarters and banking center in Harlingen, Texas. Located on I-2 (Expressway 83) and Stuart Place Road, the four-story, 40,000-square-foot building boasts an eye-catching cantilever roof and a brick facade that pays tribute to the first commercial buildings of the Rio Grande Valley. "Building a corporate headquarters anchored by a TRB banking center has been a goal since we began in 2010," said Michael Scaief, chairman of Texas Regional Bank. "Our plan then was to be building a facility like this by 2020 but the economies in the markets we are in are doing so well that we are ahead."

The first floor of the building will house a full-service banking center. Customers will have access to deposit and loan services as well as the bank's suite of specialty services like Wealth Management, Mortgage, and Private Client Services. The second



floor will be devoted to marketing, finance and credit departments, along with team members who provide operational support. The third floor has lease space up to 10,000 square feet. The TRB Executive team will occupy the fourth floor.





## NEW \$50 MILLION, 920,000-SQUARE-FOOT DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS HARLINGEN, TEXAS

### OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR HARLINGEN AREA INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY EXPLORED

This new episode of The Big Opportunity from the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation (HEDC) looks at: construction of Cardone Industries' new \$50 million, 920,000 square foot Harlingen distribution center; industrial property availability in the Harlingen Industrial Park; the Park at Roosevelt; and The Harlingen Aerotropolis. We'll see how interest in industrial property in the Harlingen area is on the rise, and why Harlingen and the Rio Grande Valley of south Texas is the most exciting place to start, relocate, or expand a business in America today.

The Big Opportunity podcast is hosted by Raudel

Garza, CEO of the HEDC, and Kayla Thomas, commercial development and marketing manager of the HEDC.

"It's a really smart time for site selectors to be looking at industrial property in Harlingen," says Garza. "The new Cardone facility is going to have a huge impact on the Harlingen Industrial Park."

Cardone Industries, a leading global supplier of remanufactured and new automotive parts, broke ground on its newest distribution center in the Harlingen Industrial Park in December 2017. Founded in 1970, Cardone is a privately held, family-owned and family-operated company with over 5,000 employees at facilities in Philadelphia, Texas, Mexico, and Canada. Cardone Industries selected Harlingen, Texas as an ideal location that will ensure the future

success of the company.

A previous episode of The Big Opportunity featured the Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios. This international crossing between Mexico and the United States allows manufacturers in the maquiladoras located in the northern Mexican cities of Matamoros, Reynosa, and Monterrey to quickly and easily bring goods into Texas and the Harlingen Industrial Park for easy distribution by rail, land, air, and sea.

"Our goal is to try to help business leaders and site selection consultants to better understand and appreciate this region," explains Garza. "Once these decision makers really see what makes Harlingen and this Texas-Mexico border region powerful, they're going to want to be here."

"We try to explore the kind of features and benefits that matter most to businesses," adds Thomas. "We want to help companies find the right solutions that will assist them in becoming more successful."



***There is so much growth and construction going on here in the Rio Grande Valley, and The Big Opportunity is showing business leaders why.***

- KAYLA THOMAS



The latest episode of The Big Opportunity is now live. You'll find it on the Harlingen EDC website at [www.harlingenedc.com](http://www.harlingenedc.com), and on iTunes and other popular podcast outlets. *For more information, contact the Harlingen EDC at 956-216-5081.*

## SERIES GIVES INFO TO LOCAL DECISION MAKERS ON GROWTH AND CONSTRUCTION

A discovery series called The Big Opportunity from Harlingen EDC is helping both business leaders and site selection consultants better understand and appreciate what makes Harlingen and the Texas-Mexico border region such a great place by exploring the features and benefits that matter most to businesses.

"We've learned that the more businesses learn about Harlingen and the entire Rio Grande Valley of South Texas, the more they want to be here," says Raudel Garza, CEO of the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation and co-host of The Big Opportunity. "We decided to create a discovery series that would explore the most important features businesses get excited about in greater detail."

The Big Opportunity's premiere episode explores the Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios. This international crossing between Mexico and the United States allows manufacturers in the maquiladoras located in the northern Mexican cities

of Matamoros, Reynosa, and Monterrey to quickly, easily bring goods into Texas and the Harlingen Industrial Park for easy distribution from rail, land and air, as well as sea. A new cold-storage inspection facility is going up at the border crossing so fresh produce from farms in Mexico stay fresh while undergoing inspection at the port of entry.

"This series is delivering exactly the kind of information that decision makers are looking for," says Kayla Thomas, commercial development and marketing manager at the Harlingen EDC and co-host of The Big Opportunity. "There is so much growth and construction going on here in the Rio Grande Valley, and The Big Opportunity is showing business leaders why."

The first episode of The Big Opportunity is now live. You'll find it on the Harlingen EDC website and on iTunes. *For more information, contact the Harlingen EDC at 956-216-5081.*





UTRGV SCHOOL OF MEDICINE BRINGS NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE TO HARLINGEN

CHIEF OF STAFF SOFIA HERNANDEZ FEATURED ON HEDC'S THE BIG OPPORTUNITY PODCAST

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) School of Medicine is expanding its footprint across the entire Rio Grande Valley at a fast pace. Part of that expansion now includes the Institute for Neurosciences that will be built adjacent to their existing campus in Harlingen, Texas.

Neuroscience is a growing and dynamic field that deals with the health and well-being of the brain and nervous system. The new 60,000-square-foot Institute for Neurosciences will house research, clinical and administrative functions and will bring many new opportunities to Harlingen.

“It’s really exciting to develop the Neuroscience Institute,” says Sofia Hernandez, Chief of Staff of the UTRGV School of Medicine. “It means new talent, amazing scientists and cutting-edge research to better understand disease and new treatments. The Institute will also bring an important economic benefit to the community.”

Harlingen is already home to the School of Medicine’s Clinical Education building, the Graduate Medical Education office, and a Smart Hospital, a 15,000-square-foot, 20-bed simulation hospital that provides an opportunity for students to do hands-on training. The Smart Hospital features a fully equipped operating room and ICU unit.

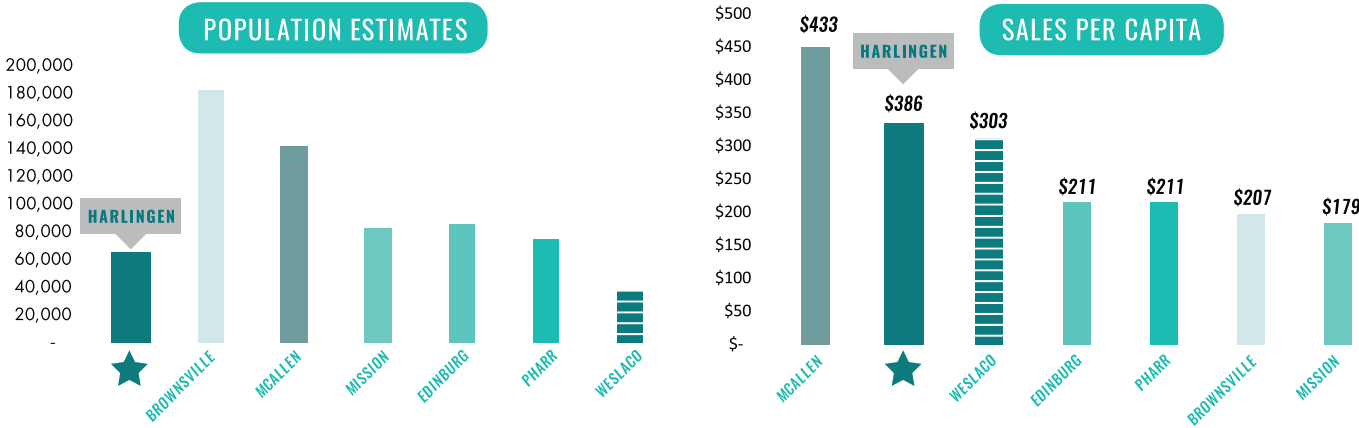
“Healthcare and medical development are a very important target industry for Harlingen,” says Raudel Garza, CEO of the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation (HEDC). “This industry creates new opportunities and higher paying jobs that are key to improving the quality of life here in Harlingen.”

The expansion of the UTRGV School of Medicine has been dramatic since the 2016 opening, and communities across the Rio Grande Valley are getting involved. First- and second-year students attend classes at the Education Building in Edinburg. Third- and fourth-year students are at the Clinical Education building in Harlingen, with third year students doing clinical rotations at area clinics and hospitals.

“Having a distributed model is a huge plus,” says Hernandez. “It really allows us to deliver the education program’s clinical care in a thoughtful way across the entire region.”

Hernandez recently joined Garza and Kayla Thomas, HEDC Commercial Development and Marketing Manager, as a special guest on the most recent episode of The Big Opportunity podcast series. Hernandez shared other exclusive details about the growth and direction of the Rio Grande Valley’s new medical school.

*For additional exclusive details about the growth and direction of the Rio Grande Valley’s new medical school, listen to the full podcast or read the full transcript at [www.HarlingenEDC.com](http://www.HarlingenEDC.com). You can also find the show on iTunes, Google Play and Stitcher. For more information, contact the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation at 956-216-5081 or visit the UTRGV School of Medicine website at [UTHealthRGV.org](http://UTHealthRGV.org).*



MORE SAVINGS

The Council for Community and Economics Research (C2ER) has named Harlingen the Least Expensive Urban Area among participating communities Savings 20% below the National Average cost of basic necessities.

2010-2014

#1 MOST AFFORDABLE URBAN AREA IN THE US

HARLINGEN, TX

2018

#1 MOST AFFORDABLE URBAN AREA IN THE US

HARLINGEN, TX

2018 COST OF LIVING INDEX BY THE COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC RESEARCH (C2ER)			
	HOUSTON	AUSTIN	HARLINGEN
Wine	\$6.71	\$6.38	\$5.92
Dentist	\$95.89	\$108.00	\$79.50
Yoga	\$19.40	\$21.75	\$15.00
Dry Clean	\$10.85	\$10.44	\$9.45
Haircut	\$51.60	\$45.17	\$6.00
Toothpaste	\$2.22	\$2.06	\$1.34
Beauty Salon	\$51.60	\$45.17	\$16.67
2 PC Chicken	\$3.25	\$3.15	\$2.99
Pizza	\$11.00	\$9.41	\$9.00
Ibuprofen	\$8.30	\$8.98	\$7.97

HARLINGEN COST OF LIVING INDEX			
INDEX	HARLINGEN	TEXAS	NATIONAL
Cost of Living	74	91	100
Goods & Services	74	97	100
Groceries	82	90	100
Healthcare	91	96	100
Housing	55	81	100
Transportation	88	95	100

This simple outline of the cost of living index was formulated using prices of: goods and services (weighted 33%), housing prices (weighted 30%), groceries (weighted 13%), utilities (weighted 10%), transportation (weighted 9%), and health care (weighted 5%).





- Texas Regional Bank Corporate
- Orangetheory Fitness
- Wing Barn
- Headquarters
- Raising Cane's
- Taco Palenque
- Bandera Coffee Shop
- Kohnami Restaurant
- Panda Express
- Vision Works
- Jackson Street Antiques





# HOME SWEET HARLINGEN

## OFFICIALS WELCOME NEW BUSINESS TO CITY WITH LOCAL BENEFITS, ADVANTAGES

When it comes to the question of why Harlingen, some of the best sources for the answer are the people and businesses who have relocated there.

Just ask Michelle Lopez.

“We chose Harlingen to stay permanently once our work days are over because the cost of living here is very desirable,” she said. “People here have been fantastic — very friendly, very approachable, and easy to form relationships with. The overall culture in the community has really hit home for us.”

Lopez, the area director of sales for Courtyard by Marriott Harlingen, said that her hotel has directly benefited by its location in the city.

“The increasing demand of business professionals and visitors keeps our business growing,” she said. “We have a fantastic pool of talent to choose from. We see a variety of skills that come through with

each candidate — and dedication and willingness to provide to our community.”

For Raudel Garza, manager and CEO of Harlingen EDC, Harlingen has numerous advantages for businesses that set up shop in city limits.

“Harlingen is located in the center of the Rio Grande Valley,” he said, explaining that businesses can easily access the rest of the region, state, country, and world via Interstates 2 and 69, rail, the Port of Harlingen, Valley International Airport, and the Free Trade International Bridge at Los Indios.

Elizabeth Gonzalez of Texas Plating and Polishing Solutions said that her business is in the process of opening a chrome polish and nickel shop in Harlingen — and that the city’s location was key in the decision to move there.

“We’re 15 minutes from the border and that gives us fast, easy access to go into Mexico, where 90 percent of our job will come from,” she said. Gonzalez also lives in Harlingen. “Harlingen is a nice, tranquil place with honest, hardworking people. We just wanted to contribute to the community by creating employment opportunities.”

In the process of creating those jobs, Gonzalez’s business has also benefited.

“We have 10 employees,” she said. “They’ve been with us for many, many years. They’re hardworking people, honest, coming in every morning willing to work, willing to learn whatever we have new that we



want to share with them or any new process that we want to implement.”

The cost of doing business in Harlingen is one of the most attractive things to companies, Harlingen EDC’s Garza said.

“The thing about South Texas and Harlingen specifically is that we have a lower cost of living than most of the country,” he said. “We are at about 20 percent lower than the average in the United States, and if you really look at the cost of buying groceries, the cost of renting or buying a home, the cost of just turning on the electricity, and the cost of operating a business, you find that Harlingen and South Texas are very competitive.”

Business owners have the chance to cash in on savings when it comes to their operating costs.

“We have a great labor force that is still very affordable at this time for employers because of the affordability of everything else,” Garza said.

Harlingen also has many educational and training resources to help develop that workforce.

“Harlingen has access to one of the best technical

colleges in the state. Texas State Technical College has a campus here in Harlingen,” Garza said, adding that Wayland Baptist University and Texas A&M University – Kingsville have campuses there. “We’re also home to the school of medicine for the UT Rio Grande Valley and obviously that opens up a lot of opportunities for healthcare education and a better healthcare environment for the community.”

TSTC also has access to the Texas Workforce Commission’s Skills Development Fund, a special job-training program.

“They have access to those funds and will allow companies and help companies go through the process of applying for those funds — and then actually going through the training and implementing training programs for those companies,” Garza said.

Location, training opportunities, and quality of life — all are answers to the question of why Harlingen.

“There’s always something to do in Harlingen,” Garza said. “It’s something that really makes it well worthwhile for people to spend the weekends out there and be outdoors and enjoy Harlingen.”

## TSTC TO OFFER NEW DEGREE PLAN, ANOTHER RANKED 7TH IN NATION

The Emergency Medical Services program at Texas State Technical College will soon be offering certificate and associate degrees — a move that will help the increased demand for skilled paramedics in the region and the state.

The new accreditation will allow eligible students to use financial aid for tuition, books and supplies.

“This is a way for us to better meet student needs and industry demand,” said Salvador Acevedo, TSTC EMS program director and advanced coordinator. “So this is a great move for our program.”

Welding Technology was recently ranked number seven in 2018 as one of the best welding programs in the U.S. by Washington Monthly, a bimonthly nonprofit magazine based in Washington, D.C. that focuses on the United State Government.

Welding Technology and Precision Machining

Technology Lead Instructor Isaac Gonzalez calls this distinction a great honor.

“We have a great team in place that is experienced and well educated in the welding field,” said Gonzalez. “Instructors give 110 percent of themselves every day to ensure that our students are successful and this recognition goes to show how their work and dedication has paid off.”

Based on an article in the © 2018 Washington Monthly, “Introduction: A different kind of college ranking,” by Kevin Carey, which can be found at <https://washingtonmonthly.com/>, the magazine rates schools based on three equally weighted criteria: social mobility, research and public service, and awards colleges based on the number of students they accept, help graduate and earn a good living without too much debt.



## VALLEY BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER-HARLINGEN PARTNERS WITH TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR JOB TRAINING GRANT

Valley Baptist Medical Center-Harlingen has partnered with Texas State Technical College (TSTC) to provide job training using a \$301,238 Skills Development Fund grant from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The grant will benefit workers in the Workforce Solutions Cameron area.

Photos from the event can be downloaded from TWC's Flickr page.

“Texas is fortunate to have Valley Baptist Medical Center-Harlingen and TSTC collaborating to provide workforce training with the assistance of this Skills Development Fund grant,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Julian Alvarez. “This partnership reflects the state’s ongoing commitment to employee development and helping Texas workers increase their skill sets, which leads to successful and rewarding careers.”

This grant will be used to provide custom training to 155 incumbent workers for industry-related topics with focused instruction on health care and social assistance. Trainees will include certified nursing assistants, registered nurses and nurse managers. Upon completion of training, the workers will receive an average hourly wage of \$34.37.

Since its inception in 1996, the Skills Development Fund grants have created or upgraded more than 356,744 jobs throughout Texas. The grants have assisted 4,356 employers with their customized training needs. The Legislature allocated \$48 million to the Skills Development Fund for the 2018-19 biennium. Employers seeking more information about the Skills Development Fund may visit the TWC website at [www.texasworkforce.org/skills](http://www.texasworkforce.org/skills).

## TSTC NAMES NEW INTERIM PROVOST



Cledia Hernandez has been named interim provost of Texas State Technical College. The Brownsville native is also TSTC's associate vice president of Workforce Development since 2013.

Hernandez has worked in higher education for nearly two decades, five of those years at TSTC. Her career includes that of secretary, coordinator and program director, as well as director for continuing education at UTB/TSC. Her role at UTB/TSC, now UTRGV, had its beginnings in a work study position with the Department of Continuing Education.

"It all started with a work study job," she said. "I can personally relate to the students I serve. Although

the road is never easy, perseverance can make dreams happen.”

While working with TSTC while at UTB, Hernandez said she “immediately saw the value a technical education has for families and the industry.”

"I decided to take the leap and accept my new position at TSTC to create new opportunities for students and help fill the skills gap in the state," she said.

Hernandez is a first-generation college student and first-generation Mexican immigrant. She earned her bachelor's degree in Computer Science from UTB/TSC in 2005. She then earned her master's degree in Leadership in Higher Education in 2014 from Northcentral University.

In the coming months, Hernandez will be out in the community meeting with local leaders and elected officials as she takes on her new role.

## Assets

September 30, 2018

<b>GENERAL CAPITAL ASSETS</b>		Cash	\$1,974,607
Land	\$4,294,807	Investments (Texpool)	3,067,895
Building	31,902,903	Accounts Receivable/Miscellaneous	443,722
Improvements Other Than Buildings	4,795,863	Miscellaneous/Notes	475,430
Accumulated Depreciation	(7,759,267)	Prepaid Expenses	2,111
		Investments (Land)	-
		FY 15 Projects	555,686
		FY 18 Projects	31,933
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$33,234,305</b>	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$6,551,384</b>

### Liabilities & Fund Balance

LONG-TERM LIABILITES		LIABILITIES	
Accrued Expenses/ Interest Payable	\$66,005	Other Payable	\$5,000
Compensated Absences	26,142	Accounts Payable	15,828
Notes Payable/ Frost Bank Loan	1,390,000	Salaries Payable	11,744
Notes Payable/ 77/83 Property BPS Land	2,012,346	83/77 Developer Payable	37,567
2010 A Tax Exempt Bonds	14,960,000	Due to City of Harlingen	241
2010 B Taxable Bonds	10,700,000	Deferred Revenue	-
2010 A Tax Exempt - Bond Discount	(53,872)	TIFRZNo. 3	366,416
2010 B Taxable - Bond Discount	(168,681)	Miscellaneous	131,707
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$28,931,942	TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$568,503
		FUND BALANCE	\$3,393,151
		Unrestricted Fund Balance	2,000,000
		Reserve for Debt Service	589,731
		Nonspendable	5,982,882
		TOTAL FUND BALANCE	
NET ASSET			
Invested in General Capital Assets	\$4,302,363	TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE	\$6,551,384





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