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## Central Texas Awarded \$150,000 National Science Foundation Grant

*Grant will strengthen engineering pipeline from middle school to  
career for Central Texas Students*

AUSTIN – A business/education partnership led by the E<sup>3</sup> Alliance has been awarded a \$150,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to strengthen and expand engineering pathways for students in Central Texas as part of The Blueprint for Educational Change™.

“This exciting grant offers a unique opportunity for Central Texas to work together across school district, college and business boundaries to provide more and better opportunities for our students and teachers and to build a stronger engineering workforce for our future,” says Susan Dawson, president of E<sup>3</sup> Alliance, a regional collaborative formed to align regional educational systems from early childhood through college and career.

The grant provides teacher professional development opportunities, business mentors for middle school robotics teams, and money to support engineering programs to 10 area school districts with high school-level engineering.

“As one of the primary engineering employers in this region, we are always looking for ways to strengthen the pipeline of engineers coming through our schools. This grant is a huge win for Central Texas, as it supports the whole engineering pipeline in a collaborative effort of multiple districts and colleges. It’s a win-win for students, teachers, schools, colleges, and employers,” says Ray Almgren, vice president of academic relations at National Instruments

The groups involved in this ground-breaking initiative include the E<sup>3</sup> Alliance, Austin Community College, Texas State University-San Marcos and The University of Texas at Austin Cockrell School of Engineering programs, and business partners Skillpoint Alliance, Texas Technology & Education Executive Council (TEEC), National Instruments and other recruited business partners.

“By attracting more and more diverse students into the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) pathways in middle and high school and strengthening and expanding high school programs, we create a mutually-reinforcing supply chain for engineering in the region,” stated Gary Madsen, the P-16 Initiatives Director at ACC. “Strengthening those pathways and our industry partnerships, will foster economic growth in Central Texas.”

(MORE)

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Central Texas Awarded \$150,000 Engineering Pipeline Grant (CONTINUED)

As principal investigator on the grant, the E<sup>3</sup> Alliance will manage and oversee grant execution, lead STEM research efforts, and work with high school and higher education partners to build on ground-breaking efforts that have already yielded engineering articulation pathways for students to three colleges.

ACC, Texas State University and The University of Texas at Austin will work with school districts on new course articulation opportunities. In an unprecedented collaborative effort, all three institutions will be co-investigators on research hosted at Manor Independent School District's New Tech High. The research will identify best practices from Manor's Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (TSTEM) campus that can be transferred to other schools. The University of Texas at Austin will also host three teachers from the region in its DTEACH summer educator program for high school engineering teachers.

Skillpoint Alliance TEEC will play critical roles in three areas:

- 1) Recruiting and supporting business mentors to work with students participating on FIRST Lego League middle school robotics teams to interest them in science, math and engineering pathways,
- 2) Hosting teachers from across the region in Summer Educator Institutes – summer training programs for teachers in “real world” engineering environment created with partnering businesses, and
- 3) Planning and operating *Designing Your Own Future*, a new event hosted at Texas State University to introduce students to college and career opportunities in engineering.

### **About the E<sup>3</sup> Alliance**

The E<sup>3</sup> Alliance is a regional collaborative to create a research-based “blueprint” that will allow us to align our education systems to better fulfill the potential of every citizen and in turn, increase economic outcomes for a stronger economic future for our region. Founded by partners the Austin Area Research Organization, The University of Texas at Austin, and Austin Community College District; the E<sup>3</sup> Alliance acts as a catalyst for change, and is the P-16 Council for the Central Texas region.

### **About Skillpoint Alliance**

Established in 1994, Skillpoint Alliance is a non-profit whose mission is to build partnerships among industry, education and the community, leading to college and career success for Central Texans, while meeting employers' needs for a qualified workforce. The Technology & Education Executive Council (TEEC) is a consortium of technology leaders hosted at Skillpoint Alliance.

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**E<sup>3</sup> ALLIANCE**

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