



## 2024 Award Recipient

### Alamo Colleges District

Alamo Colleges District (ACD), founded in 1945, serves 77,000+ students at its five community colleges in or near San Antonio, TX: St. Philip's College (SPC), San Antonio College (SAC), Palo Alto College (PAC), Northwest Vista College (NVC), and Northeast Lakeview College (NLC). ACD's 20 sites include Alamo Colleges Center of Excellence for Student Success (ACCESS). With a workforce of 5,586 and revenue of \$671.1 million (2023), ACD offers affordable—or tuition-free—associate degrees and workforce-oriented bachelor degree programs, transferrable credits for four-year universities, and workforce development and continuing education programs.

ACD previously earned a Baldrige Award in 2018; it is the first higher education institution to win the award twice. PAC, NVC, SPC, and ACD's District Support Operations unit also are recipients of the Baldrige-based Texas Award for Performance Excellence from the Quality Texas Foundation.

### Strategy and Supportive Programs Boost Student Success and Satisfaction

- Through AlamoPROMISE, a strategic initiative established in 2019, ACD covers any gap between students' financial aid and the overall cost for tuition and books. Enrollment of PROMISE students has increased from 2,958 in 2020 to 9,529 in 2023.
- ACD credits AlamoPROMISE with helping it sustain and improve the percentage of students who enroll in a four-year college or university within 16 months of completing courses at ACD. Despite a downturn from 2013 to 2021 in students attending college in Texas, ACD had the smallest decrease in enrollment statewide during that period and the greatest increase in enrollment in the subsequent 2021-2022 academic year.
- AlamoPROMISE students generally outperform other students for persistence—as measured by the percentage of students who stay enrolled from academic term to term until they achieve their educational goals, typically earning a two-year degree or other credential. In fall 2021, the persistence rate for PROMISE students was 70.5% compared to the non-PROMISE rate of 66.9%.
- AlamoADVISE—an ACD program that supports all students including those of age 25 or older, economically disadvantaged, academically disadvantaged, parenting, or attending fully online—provides personalized advising and resources to ensure that students' academic experience is successful. ACD credits AlamoADVISE with improving the average time it takes for students to complete a degree from 4.8 to 3.6 years over the 10 years of the program. Further, AlamoADVISE is credited with improving ACD's three-year graduation rate from 8% to 33%.



### Highlights

- Percentage of students who complete a course exceeds 90% over four years
- AlamoADVISE—a program for students who are economically or academically disadvantaged—improved the average time-to-degree from 4.8 to 3.6 years and the three-year graduation rate from 8% to 33%.
- AlamoPROMISE covers the gap between financial aid and tuition/books, guaranteeing that any student can afford to attend an ACD college.
- Highest-possible "AAA" bond ratings earned from both Moody's and Standard and Poor's, making ACD one of ten colleges in the nation that has earned the top ratings from both rating organizations



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- Students' ratings of the ACD educational experience as "good" or "excellent" show steady improvements from 2017 through 2021, and results continue to outperform state and national benchmarks. Further, student ratings for survey measures "faculty care about me," "college shows concern," "enjoyable experience," and "faculty fair and unbiased" show consistent improvements from 2018 to 2022. ACD also consistently surpasses the national average for community colleges on an industry inventory of student satisfaction.

### Key Operational Measures Prove Educational Effectiveness

- A critical measure of community college effectiveness is the ability of students to graduate and subsequently transfer to a four-year university or secure employment. The percentage of ACD technical students employed or enrolled has improved from 89.8% in fiscal year (FY) 2015 to 91% in FY2019, compared to a benchmark rate of 85%.
- Two other critical leading indicators that ACD regularly monitors are the course completion rate (percentage of students who complete a course) and the productive grade rate (percentage of students who earn a grade of A, B, or C). All of ACD's colleges have achieved completion rates exceeding 90% from 2019 to 2023. ACD's overall passing grade rate from 2019 to 2023 is approaching or exceeding the 80% mark, consistently above the 70% benchmark.

### Workforce Satisfaction and Engagement Indicators Beat National Comparisons

- Workforce satisfaction and engagement results on a national survey have trended favorably over the past three years. From 2022 to 2024, ACD's workforce results have improved for the satisfaction indicators of "pride" by three percentage points, "caring" by four percentage points, and "personal job" by three percentage points. Workforce engagement indicators also show improvement trends; for example, results for "work has special meaning" and "would recommend" have both improved by three percentage points from 2022 to 2024.
- Highlighting the sense of pride, level of satisfaction, and autonomy enjoyed by ACD faculty and staff members, results for the indicators "I'm proud to work here," "people treated fairly," "i want to work here a long time," "feel welcome here," "proud of my accomplishments," "layoffs as a last resort," "great place to work," and "lots of responsibility" also demonstrate improving performance from 2022 through 2024. ACD's results for all indicators exceed the survey's national norm.
- The faculty turnover rate improved from 6.6% in 2018 to 4.9% in 2022, while nonfaculty staff turnover improved from 10.9% in 2018 to 10.3% in 2022. The overall turnover rate has improved from 9.5% in 2018 to 8.5% in 2022, outperforming the Bureau of Labor Statistics standard of 16.8%.

### Strong Finances Promote Long-Term Success

- Cash reserves, which support ACD's continued operations, have increased each of the last four years and now are at an all-time high of \$80 million. For example, the operating fund budget reserve has improved from \$55 million in 2019 to \$75.6 million in 2023. The institutional reserve has increased from \$0.9 million in 2019 to \$1.1 million in 2023, and worker's compensation reserve has increased from \$3.2 million in 2019 to \$3.3 million in 2023.
- From 2019 to 2023, ACD has earned "AAA" bond ratings, the highest available, from both Moody's and Standard and Poor's. ACD is one of only three colleges in Texas and one of ten in the nation that has earned these top ratings from both rating organizations. In ACD's last bond referendum (2017), its service area citizenry passed the Capital Improvement Program proposal (\$450 million) with a 67% favorable vote, demonstrating citizens' widespread confidence in and support of ACD's strategic agenda.
- Total revenue generation has increased from \$505.5 million in 2019 to \$701.3 million in 2023. This increase includes grants and contracts, which rose from \$119.2 million in 2019 to \$224.9 million in 2023. ACD has consistently maintained a balanced operating budget.

### Value of Community Demonstrated in Giving Back

- Through ACD's Employees Giving Back Campaign, a major contributor to the community, donations increased from \$275.4 thousand in 2019 to \$379.2 thousand in 2023 for needed community projects and scholarship funding.
- Advocacy centers, located on each ACD college campus, have increased their estimated economic impact from \$1.1 million in 2021 to \$2.5 million in 2023. These centers include pop-up markets (increasing from 27 in 2021 to 45 in 2023). Households served have increased from 6,058 in 2021 to 14,459 in 2023. ACD has also distributed 759,889 lbs. of food through a partnership with the San Antonio Food Bank, serving 10,657 students.

#### For more information:

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#### Baldrige Performance Excellence Program

The Baldrige Program educates organizations of all sizes and from all sectors in organizational performance management and improvement. We also administer the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award®. Our key services are to identify and recognize role-model organizations, share best management practices, and help organizations achieve best-in-class performance levels. We are the only public-private partnership and Presidential award program dedicated to improving U.S. organizations.

#### For more information on the Baldrige Program:

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