

*Resolution honoring Dr. Shirley Reed with the  
Spirit of the Valley Award for Hidalgo County*

- Whereas* Dr. Shirley A. Reed, founding president of South Texas College, announced last year her decision to retire after a four-decade career in higher education; and
- Whereas* Dr. Reed’s retirement prompted communitywide reflection about the value of STC to the Rio Grande Valley. Part of that reflection was the realization that Dr. Reed came to South Texas in 1994 with the mission of developing an institute of higher education that was initially called South Texas Community College; and
- Whereas* that mission included making higher education accessible to all in the Rio Grande Valley with campuses to be located in Hidalgo and Starr counties; and
- Whereas* as a graduate of a community college herself, Dr. Reed understood the value of having a community college in an area previously unserved. Over the course of 26 years Dr. Reed, with strong community support, led an institution that has grown to a student enrollment of more than 28,000 with a faculty and staff of more than 2,700 people; and
- Whereas* she helped guide the growth of an institution that has expanded to five campuses in two counties and continues to expand to online learning. South Texas College now offers more than 137 degree and certificate programs; and
- Whereas* another measure of the value of STC is the fact that 63 percent of its students are the first in their families to attend college; and
- Whereas* in May of 2020, the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court created the Spirit of the Valley Award for Hidalgo County to memorialize not the dark days of a pandemic, but how the spirit of our community had emerged to give us all hope; and
- Whereas* in creating the Spirit of the Valley Award for Hidalgo County, Hidalgo County Commissioners Court declared this would be the highest honor bestowed by the government of Hidalgo County.

*Now therefore, be it resolved* that the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court bestows onto Dr. Shirley A. Reed its first Spirit of the Valley Award for Hidalgo County to thank her for her tireless efforts on behalf of higher education in Hidalgo County and to recognize that her dedication to the community is precisely the intent of the Spirit of the Valley Award for Hidalgo County and to wish her well in her retirement.

**Approved this 9<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021.**

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**RICHARD F. CORTEZ**  
County Judge

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**DAVID L. FUENTES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 1

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**EDUARDO “EDDIE” CANTU**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 2

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**EVERARDO “EVER” VILLARREAL**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 3

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**ELLIE TORRES**  
County Commissioner, Pct. 4

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**Attest: ARTURO GUAJARDO, JR.**  
County Clerk