

December 20, 2024

Judge Richard F. Cortez
Office of County Judge Richard F. Cortez
County of Hidalgo
100 E. Cano 2nd Floor
Edinburg, Texas 78539

Dear Judge Cortez,

Thank you for the continued partnership between Hidalgo County and VIDA to provide customized financial assistance and wraparound support services to Hidalgo residents from low-income backgrounds. This partnership ensures Hidalgo residents have equitable education and workforce development opportunities in high-demand occupations for a more prosperous future.

As we initiate a new year, we hope you may review VIDA's proposed project as a valuable initiative for funding consideration. With Hidalgo's continued investment, VIDA will have the opportunity to provide essential services to our underserved demographic, ensuring career training persistence and completion. To highlight the positive outcomes and deliverables of our current grant project please find enclosed the following:

- Hidalgo County Grant Closing Report year-to-date for CY 2024
- VIDA's FY 23-24 Annual Report
- VIDA's Funding Proposal for CY 2025

A recent Economic Impact Study conducted by UTRGV demonstrates that VIDA's work has a positive incremental economic impact in the Rio Grande Valley. The study reports that for every \$1 invested in VIDA and its participants, there is a \$15.69 return on investment to our communities. This information translates to a return on the community's investment of \$51.9 million in additional jobs, income, taxes, and output in the local economy.

VIDA respectfully requests a continued investment of \$100,000 to serve a minimum of 20 Hidalgo residents in 2025. Your commitment to empowering our at-risk demographic with the necessary resources and tools to break the cycle of poverty and promote economic mobility is critical for enhancing employment opportunities and responding to the needs of local industry. We look forward to continuing our work in partnership with Hidalgo County to impact sustainable economic growth in the region, educating one life at a time.

Sincerely,



Felida Villarreal, CPA
President & CEO



Hidalgo County Closing Report CY2023

For every \$1 invested in VIDA's program, there is a return of \$15.69 to the communities we serve.

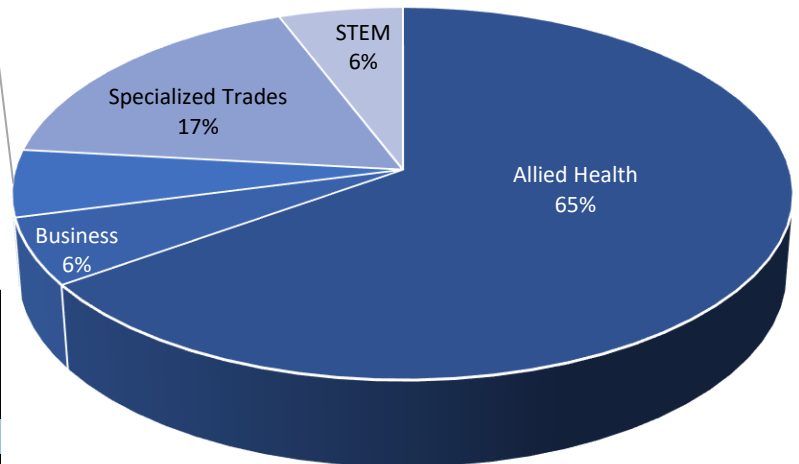
Economic Impact Study 2020 - University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Data & Information Systems Center.

Average Earnings Reported Upon Graduation: \$50,980 as of December 20, 2024

2024 AT-A-Glance	
53%	Between Age of 25-50
100%	Unemployed, Underemployed or Low Income
58%	1+ Dependent Child(ren) in the Household
88%	First Generation in College
Hidalgo County Investment: \$100,000	
Contractual Benchmark: 20	
Total Served: 86	
Persistence Rate: 91%	

Education / Social Services
6%

PROGRAM OF STUDY (BY INDUSTRY)



CREDENTIAL ANALYSIS

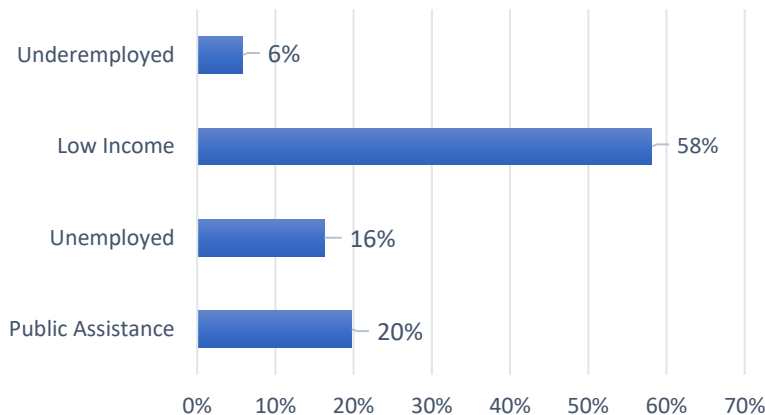
Graduates/Completers

Industry Recognized Credential	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor
	12%	49%	14%

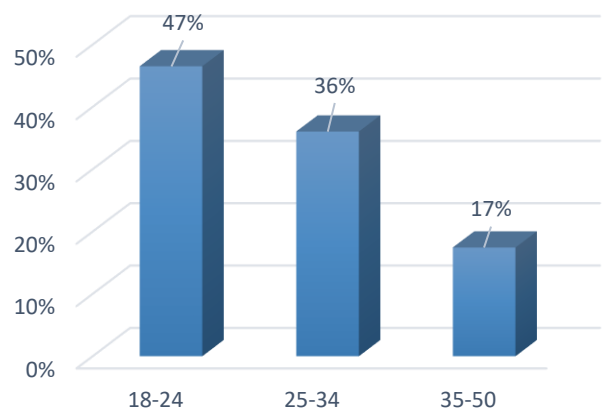
Active Students

Industry Recognized Credential	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor
	3%	59%	8%

Financial Eligibility



Participant Age

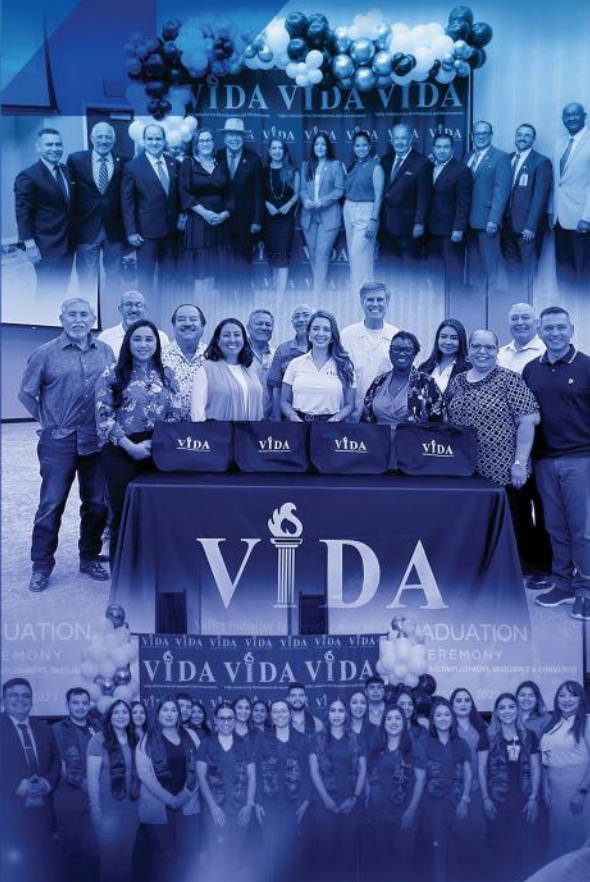


Some participants meet more than one eligibility factor.

VIDA

EDUCATING ONE LIFE AT A TIME SINCE 1995

Valley Initiative
for Development
and Advancement



IMPACTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

IN THE REGION...ONE VIDA AT A TIME



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023

INSIGHTS

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

In 1995, a group of Valley Interfaith leaders and industry leaders from across the Rio Grande Valley came together, formed a vision, and founded a nonprofit organization.

In FY 2022 – 2023, that organization, VIDA, served over 600 participants, all striving to become self-sufficient by earning degrees, certificates, and licenses in high-demand fields.

It took years to develop the relationships and partnerships that have brought us to where we are today. Those years of development included building a strong reputation of success. **This year, VIDA participants reached a persistence rate of 96%.** Think of that. Ninety-six percent!

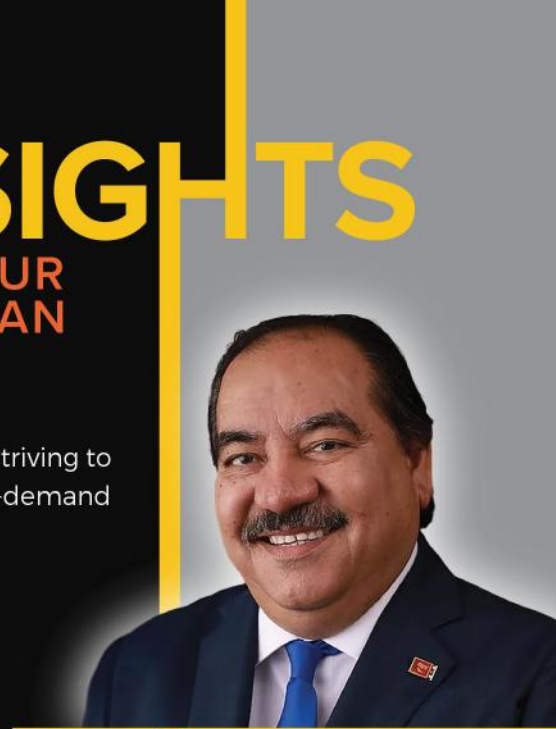
Consistent data like this has resulted in local, state, and national leaders recognizing the value of our strategic program model. They know, all too well, that while budgeting visionary projects is critical, we can't just pour money into our communities and sit back, waiting for them to flourish. Funders want to see a significant return on their investment.

VIDA accomplishes this through customized assistance based on each participant's needs. Our model keeps the participants as the foundation, adding financial assistance, individual and group counseling, industry speakers, and other supports to build them up so they can endure any challenges that come their way. The VIDA model also incorporates community service so our participants become actively engaged in communities throughout our region while showing our gratitude to these communities for sustaining us.

In 2022, Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez created the Hidalgo County Prosperity Task Force, designed to provide more County residents with the skills needed to lead prosperous, fulfilled lives while simultaneously growing the economic prosperity of our region with a skilled workforce that supports local industries and attracts new ones. Judge Cortez quickly identified VIDA as an essential partner for the Task Force because we have been fulfilling this mission successfully for close to 30 years.

Today, our VIDA staff and Board take our places at many tables, sitting alongside elected officials; members of city and county management; and education, industry, and civic leaders on a regular basis. ***VIDA is clearly recognized as a force for educational growth, job training and creation, and economic development.***

As many of you know, VIDA means "life" in Spanish. To sustain the work we do, we must rely on our investment partners. With the proper funding, we can educate even more of our people...one life at a time.



TONY AGUIRRE JR.

Managing Partner
Riverside Dvlp.
Services, LLC
McAllen City
Commissioner

VIDA

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR PRESIDENT and CEO

FELIDA VILLARREAL | CPA

As I reflect on my second year of serving as president and CEO of VIDA, I am filled with utmost gratitude and appreciation for the invaluable support and dedication of my entire team and board of directors toward advancing VIDA's mission. *I feel immensely proud of the monumental growth and accomplishments we have experienced in 2023, from being one of 25 organizations nationwide--and the only one in Texas--to secure a \$3 million Nursing Expansion Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to expanding our team to 18 individuals committed to workforce development across the RGV.* I am confident VIDA is poised for untold impact and success.



In addition to our internal growth, I am very pleased to witness an abundance of support from our community, strengthening existing partnerships and building new alliances. Thank you to all of our partners--local, state, and federal government; economic development entities; institutions of higher education; private foundations; employers; industry leaders; nonprofits; and community-based organizations--for your continued collaboration and trust in our program to accelerate student success, educating one life at a time. I strongly believe that, as a nonprofit organization with a more-than-29-year trajectory empowering learners from low-income backgrounds, we have incredible potential to continue impacting our communities; but working alongside our partners and through a collective effort, we can truly be limitless in promoting the economic development of our entire region through equitable education and workforce-training opportunities.

I am excited about the bright future ahead and look forward to the opportunity to unite efforts and resources that will continue to improve post-secondary educational outcomes for all while aligning career training with local industry demand.

We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. —Cesar Chavez

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS | 2022 - 2023



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2023 ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

BY THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY
Sai Mullapudi | Economic Development Research Manager

In March of 2024, researchers at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Data and Information Systems Center completed an economic impact study for the Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement. The summary of this study reads, as follows:

The economic impact analysis assesses the overall influence of VIDA on the local economy, primarily through its operational expenses and the wage increases earned by its graduates. **In the fiscal year '22-'23, VIDA allocated \$3.3 million toward its operating budget for administering programs and services. Additionally, VIDA graduates contributed \$25.2 million in wage increases.** These expenditures, both by VIDA and its graduates, generate a multiplier effect, creating and supporting additional jobs, income, taxes, and output in the local economy.

Collectively, the spending by VIDA on operating expenses and the wage increases of its graduates support 651 jobs, resulting in \$33.6 million in labor income, adding \$13.7 million to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and generating \$1.3 million in state and local taxes. This translates to a total economic output of \$51.9 million in the local economy.

Based on this economic output, for every \$1.00 invested in VIDA, there is a return of \$15.69 to the communities served. Table below provides a breakdown of the economic impact:

	EMPLOYMENT	LABOR INCOME	VALUE ADDED	OUTPUT
Direct Effect	651	\$ 26,512,042	\$ 1,001,157	\$ 28,706,821
Indirect Effect	7	\$ 336,844	\$ 547,436	\$ 1,280,245
Induced Effect	159	\$ 6,819,746	\$ 12,187,180	\$ 21,971,760
Total Effect	817	\$ 33,668,632	\$ 13,735,773	\$ 51,958,826
State and Local Tax				\$ 1,389,573

This comprehensive analysis demonstrates the significant positive impact of VIDA on the local economy, benefiting both the community and its residents.

METHODOLOGY

This study estimates the economic impact created by VIDA. With the local unemployment rate very high, an economic impact analysis of VIDA aims to help local leaders, the business community, and the investors gain perspective on how the funding invested in VIDA benefits the region. Using public information and audited financial data VIDA provided, this study estimates the aggregate value added to the local economy, plus direct and indirect jobs created by the program.

The economic impact study of VIDA was conducted using IMPLAN economic impact modeling software. The software captures the regional dollar flows from purchasers to producers using inter-industry transaction information for more than 500 industries. Production functions describing how much is spent in each industry (and the proportions) are created using inter-industry transaction data. A predictive model and the associated multipliers are then constructed to show how output changes with a change in final demand.

IMPLAN is used by more than 1,000 public and private institutions to enable users to make in-depth examinations

of state, multi-county, county, sub-county, and metropolitan regional economies. It is a nationally recognized, economic impact modeling software.

Final demand drives input-output models. Industries respond to meet demand directly or indirectly (by supplying goods and services to industries responding directly). Each industry that produces goods and services generates increasing demand for other goods and services for multiple rounds. These iterations generate multipliers, which are related to three kinds of effects:

- 1. Direct effects** are changes in the local economy caused by an economic change in the area.
- 2. Indirect effects** are changes in inter-industry transactions as supplying industries respond to increased demands from the directly affected industries.
- 3. Induced effects** reflect changes in inter-industry spending resulting from household spending. This spending comes from household income generated from the direct and indirect effects.

DEFINITIONS

- **Output** (gross sales)
- **Employment** (jobs)
- **Value Added** (gross regional product)

THE ONGOING DEMAND FOR VIDA

VIDA's official story begins in 1995, when community leaders from Valley Interfaith joined forces with private-industry leaders to address the significant number of underserved, underemployed, and unemployed residents in the Rio Grande Valley. The leaders recognized that by empowering these residents with tools, education, training, individual and group counseling, and personal development, they could thrive in their careers and in their personal lives.

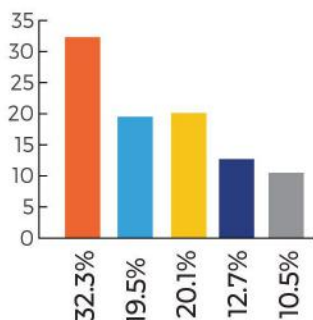
VIDA founders also recognized the impact would reach far beyond the individuals to their families, their communities, and the entire region by increasing the buying power of the individuals, reducing the number of people in need of government assistance, providing existing employers with a highly skilled workforce, and attracting new industries to the region.

“The VIDA Effect” can be felt in homes and communities throughout our region and beyond, and the need for VIDA persists. Breaking generational patterns of poverty and teaching people how to surmount obstacles they face as they endeavor to do so takes an unflinching commitment. We remain steadfast in fulfilling our philosophy and our mission as we serve our people.

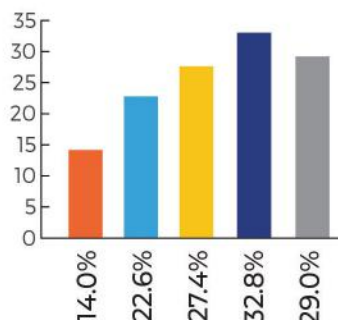
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

● Texas	\$ 73,035
● Cameron Co.	\$ 47,435
● Hidalgo Co.	\$ 49,371
● Starr Co.	\$ 35,979
● Willacy Co.	\$ 42,839

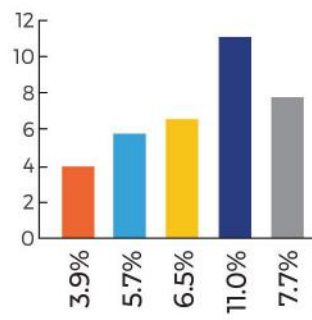
ADULTS 25+ WITH BACHELOR'S DEGREE (2018-2022)



PERSONS IN POVERTY



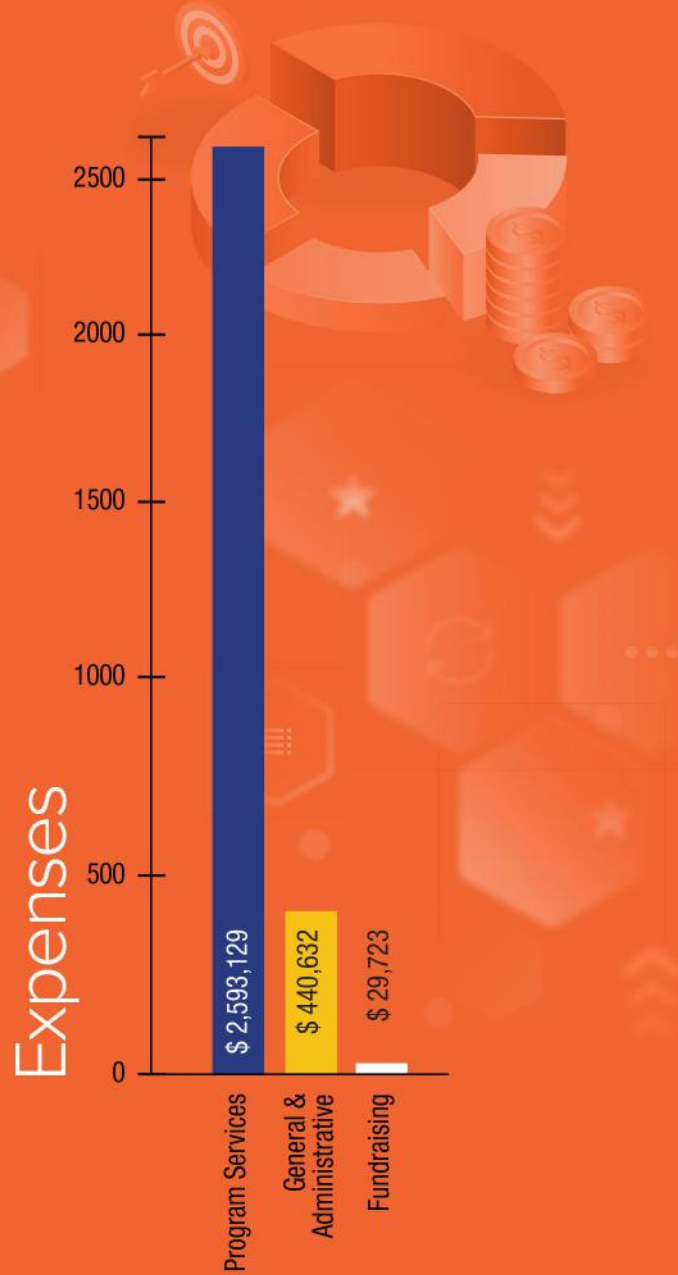
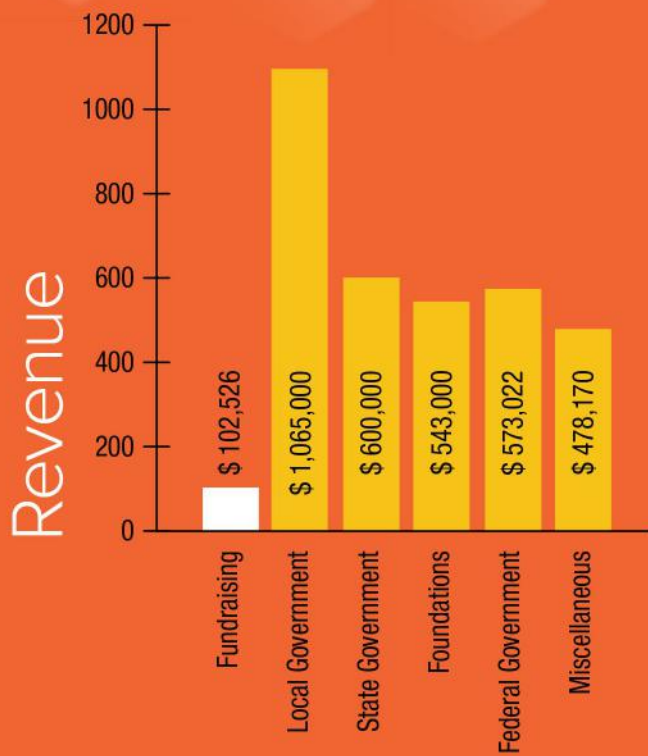
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (OCTOBER 2022)



Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts

REVENUE & EXPENSES

*Impacting Sustainable Economic Growth in the Region...
One VIDA at a time*



TOTAL REVENUE > **\$3,361,718**

TOTAL EXPENSES > **\$ 3,063,484**



CHANGE IN
NET ASSETS

> **\$298,234**

*The opposite of success is not failure...
it's being stuck. You have a unique gift
that's meant to be shared. When fully aligned
with this everlasting gift, an unshakable
confidence becomes real!*

—Jennifer Villarreal

EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Through active engagement, alongside our dedicated participants, we illuminate various avenues of community service. This collaborative effort not only allows us to express gratitude to the numerous entities, institutions, corporations, and individuals who have sustained VIDA's mission for nearly 29 years but also emphasizes the transformative power of service in shaping our society.

Within VIDA, our team and student volunteers enthusiastically embrace community involvement by sharing our time and talents while receiving the inherent satisfaction that comes from serving others.

We nurture individuals who embrace the principle of giving back and endeavor to enact meaningful change within their communities and beyond, igniting a beacon of hope for a better tomorrow.





A MOTHER'S LEAP LEADS TO A BETTER VIDA

ESTHER CARREON

Palmview single mom Esther Carreon had several goals in mind when she applied to the Valley Initiative for Development in Advancement after hearing about the nonprofit organization from a friend. Already a licensed vocational nurse and a first-generation college graduate, Carreon knew she wanted to remain in the field of nursing, but she yearned to further her education in the field. She set her sights on a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Earning her BSN will allow Carreon to fulfill her professional goal but she has two other goals as well: serving as an example to her 13- and 15-year-old children, and providing a better life for them with the increase in salary and job opportunities she can expect.

As a single mother of two and a student, the costs associated with college, on top of her monthly bills, became daunting.

"I was interested in financial assistance for school and learning from the counselors in the program to assist in planning for success during and after college," Carreon said of VIDA.

The mission of VIDA, founded more than 25 years ago through the efforts of Valley Interfaith and business leaders in the Rio Grande Valley, focuses on helping residents in the region rise out of poverty and into high-demand, higher-paying jobs, which also has a significant impact on the communities where they live. VIDA does this by providing financial assistance with tuition, books, child care, equipment and tools, gas and other expenses that would otherwise build barriers from earning the degree or certificate sought.

"Leaving your job to focus on school 100% is not an easy decision," Carreon said. However, taking this leap made her goal possible.

VIDA's founders knew financial assistance, though critical, only impacted one graduation barrier. They added case managers — who also serve as college counselors — to provide individual and group counseling to students to help them manage stress, learn time management, and develop study skills. When they meet with VIDA

participants, case managers also counsel them on other issues that arise. San Juanita Sanchez serves in this role for Carreon.

"I want to thank Ms. Sanchez for being a great counselor and for helping me and other students to never give up," Carreon said. Sanchez is a VIDA graduate who gratefully accepted a job with the nonprofit to show current participants she understands their challenges because she lived through her own. "Ms. Sanchez shared her story with us and makes us feel welcome and heard," Carreon added. "The program has allowed me to manage my time and my stressful situations. The weekly meetings have helped me stay on track with my goals and have kept me motivated."

Carreon said her two teenage children are understanding of the time she must take to study; her example will have an invaluable impact on their futures, as well.

As Carreon looks toward her May 2023 graduation and passing the national exam that will give her the title of registered nurse, Carreon lovingly reflects on her parents.

"My mother only completed high school and my father, middle school in Mexico," she said. "I come from a hardworking family that has always been there for me and supports me."

With this support from her parents, her children, and VIDA, Carreon will walk the stage at her UTRGV graduation in two months.

"VIDA is important because it supports students like me following our dreams," Carreon said. "It also helps our community prepare future professionals who are willing to make a difference."

Esther's story first appeared on the Valley Business Report website, valleybusinessreport.com, in March 2023.



STUDENT'S VIDA JOURNEY GOES INTERNATIONAL

RHONDA DIAZ

Every month, VBR publishes a story about a current Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement participant or one who has already earned a certificate or degree, altering the trajectory of his or her life.

This month, we feature Rhonda Diaz, who will graduate from The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in December with a bachelor's degree in computer science.

"Before VIDA, I was attending college part time; with VIDA's help, I was able to attend full time," Diaz said. In addition to attending school full time, she has been working as an Apple Support College Program at-home advisor, providing technical support to Apple customers.

Graduation in December will not be the end of the journey for Diaz. Her next destination is a master's degree. "I also plan to continue my career with Apple while actively searching for a role that complements my degree," she said.

VIDA has changed countless lives in the Rio Grande Valley for nearly three decades. Rather than having a traditional story written about how VIDA has changed her life, Diaz chose to write a letter to VIDA.

As I approach my graduation at the end of this year, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on my remarkable journey with VIDA and share my heartfelt appreciation for the support that has shaped my academic path.

My name is Rhonda Diaz, and I've had the privilege of being a recipient of VIDA's support over the past few years. I cannot express enough gratitude for the impact the program has had on my education and personal growth.

One of the most transformative experiences during my academic journey was the opportunity to study abroad in London, U.K. As a computer science major, the course "The History of Computing" I took during my time in London was not only relevant but profoundly enriching. It allowed me

to connect the past with the present, in my field of study, providing me with a profound understanding of the evolution of technology.

VIDA's unwavering support with my college tuition and books made this study abroad experience a reality. Without the program's assistance, I wouldn't have been able to immerse myself in a new culture, gain a global perspective and further my education in such a meaningful way. VIDA not only lightened the financial burden but also empowered me to attend college full time, enabling me to pursue opportunities that have broadened my horizons.

I'd also like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Ms. San Juanita (Sanchez), my VIDA counselor. Her guidance and encouragement have been instrumental in my academic journey. Ms. San Juanita's dedication and belief in my potential have motivated me to strive for excellence.

As I prepare to graduate, I look back with immense gratitude for VIDA's continued commitment to helping students like me achieve our educational dreams. The opportunities VIDA has provided have not only shaped my academic journey but have also contributed significantly to my personal and professional growth.

I am honored to have been a part of the VIDA family and I eagerly anticipate the bright future that lies ahead. I look forward to using the knowledge and experiences gained through VIDA's support to make a positive impact in the world.

Once again, thank you, VIDA, for being an integral part of my educational journey. Together, we have achieved greatness, and I am excited to embark on this new chapter with the skills and confidence VIDA has nurtured.

Warmest regards, Rhonda

Diaz' contemplative letter acknowledges the impact the organization has had on her life and on her future. This impact is possible because of the generosity of VIDA's collaborative, educational, fundraising and investment partners.

Rhonda's story first appeared on the Valley Business Report website, valleybusinessreport.com, in October 2023.



JOINING FORCES

WITH THE HIDALGO COUNTY PROSPERITY TASK FORCE

Our prosperity as a nation depends upon the personal financial prosperity of each of us as individuals.
— George Clason, *The Richest Man in Babylon*

The mission of the Hidalgo County Prosperity Task Force, established in 2022 by Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez, is to provide a strong safety net for Hidalgo County's most vulnerable residents and to move a sizable percentage of our economically disadvantaged residents out of poverty. With our mission so closely aligned, VIDA President and CEO Felida Villarreal and VIDA Board Chairman Tony Aguirre actively serve on this Task Force.

Their involvement allows VIDA to contribute invaluable historical insight while also offering a present-day perspective of how lives can be transformed through collaborative partnerships; strategic workforce development; and comprehensive social, emotional, and financial assistance. Through our collective efforts, we aim to foster a more prosperous and equitable future for all residents of Hidalgo County.

The Hidalgo County Prosperity Task Force has outlined several key initiatives aimed at addressing poverty and promoting prosperity within our community, including...

- **Enhanced Support Services:** We are committed to identifying ways in which the county can better serve individuals living in poverty. This includes implementing financial literacy programs to equip residents with the knowledge and skills needed to manage their finances effectively. Additionally, we



recognize the urgent need to address health and wellness concerns, particularly the high rates of obesity and diabetes among our population.

- **Investment in Human Capital:** One of the primary goals is to create pathways to success through vocational training and higher education. We are dedicated to removing any barriers that may hinder individuals from completing their education or training programs.
- **Job Creation and Economic Development:** We recognize the importance of job creation in fostering economic growth and opportunity within Hidalgo County.

Through these and other strategic initiatives, the Hidalgo County Prosperity Task Force is committed to fostering economic empowerment, promoting educational attainment, and improving the overall quality of life for all residents within our community, and VIDA intends to play a significant role in helping the Hidalgo County Prosperity Task Force achieve these goals.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

AND THE RIPPLE EFFECT

*You want to be the pebble in the pond
that creates the ripple for change.*

— Tim Cook

VIDA serves residents in a four-county region, which includes (from east to west) Cameron, Willacy, Hidalgo, and Starr counties. The support of local governmental entities attests to their clear understanding of the ripple effect that reverberates throughout the region as the education level of its populace rises. VIDA gratefully acknowledges the unwavering support of the following local governmental entities:



- City of Alamo
- City of Brownsville
- City of Edinburg
- City of Harlingen
- City of La Feria
- City of McAllen
- City of Mercedes
- City of Pharr
- City of Port Isabel
- City of Weslaco
- Hidalgo County

GRADUATES' AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE

Pre-VIDA > \$5.70
Post-VIDA > \$22.96

VIDA GRADUATES' AVERAGE SALARY

Upon Graduation > \$47,756

VIDA TRAINING PROGRAMS

Industry	Number of Participants	Percentage of Total
Allied Health	392	63%
Business	30	5%
Educational Social Services	37	6%
Specialized Trades	138	21%
STEM	30	5%
TOTAL	627	100%

FY 2022 - 2023

IN REVIEW

WHO VIDA SERVES

"You are perfectly cast in your life. I can't imagine anyone but you in the role. Go play."

— Lin-Manuel Miranda

PARTICIPANTS SERVED **627**

TOTAL VIDA GRADUATES **231**

PERSISTENCE RATE

96%

Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
Hispanic	603	96%
White	10	2%
Asian	5	1%
Other (Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Highlander)	9	1%
TOTAL	627	100%

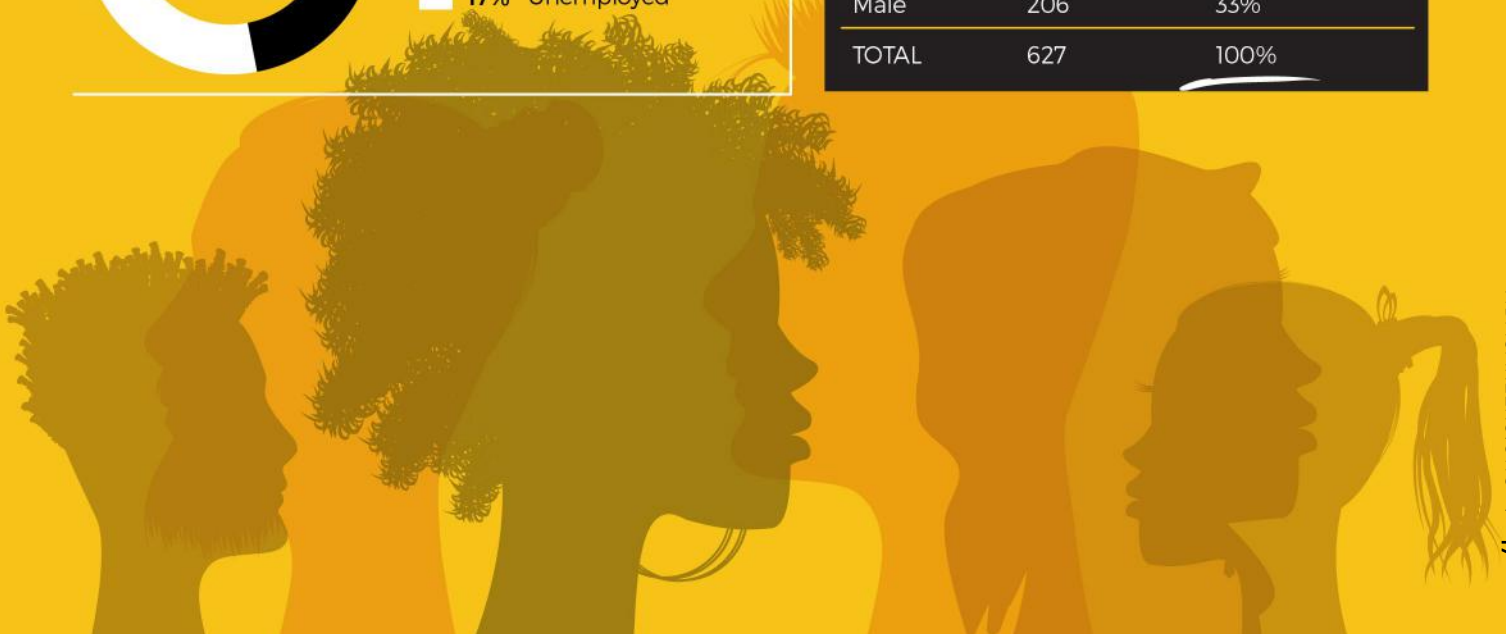


Average Age of Participants: 28



- 47% Low Income
- 30% On Public Assistance
- 6% Underemployed
- 17% Unemployed

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	421	67%
Male	206	33%
TOTAL	627	100%





WINTER WONDERLAND

Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement commemorated our accomplishments and honored our Partners of the Year at our third annual gala December 16, 2023, at the McAllen Convention Center. Our theme for 2023 was A Winter Wonderland.

J. Chris Coxon, managing director of Educate Texas, Communities Foundation of Texas, delivered an inspiring keynote address. Texas Workforce Commissioner Alberto Treviño III presented VIDA with the Texas Talent Connection Grant, allowing us to continue empowering RGV residents to achieve economic prosperity.

Guests enjoyed an enlightening cocktail hour with an enchanting violinist and a photobooth to memorialize this special evening, as well as dinner, music, and a live auction with renowned auctioneer Joe Brown.

Our partners are like shining stars, providing invaluable resources essential for serving VIDA participants each and every day. Their generosity fills us with gratitude and embodies the spirit of the holidays.

OUR 2023 PARTNERS OF THE YEAR

- **2023 Legacy Award:**
Texas Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa
- **2023 Community Partner of the Year Award:**
Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez
- **2023 VIDA Graduate Recognition for Outstanding Academic Achievement:**
David Serrano, RN

VIDA remains committed to providing exceptional student-support services to economically disadvantaged residents, resulting in improved higher-education outcomes and workforce-development success. Our unwavering focus centers on empowering Rio Grande Valley residents to achieve economic prosperity through market-driven training, resources, and career pathways.



▶ ▶ ▶ **A WINTER WONDERLAND**
would not have been possible
without the generosity
of our sponsors. *

DIAMOND SPONSORS

South Texas College
South Texas Health System

GOLD SPONSORS

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Socialife Magazine
State of The City—McAllen Mayor Javier Villalobos

BRONZE SPONSORS

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Quintanilla, Headley & Associates, Inc.
RGV Focus
Texas School of Health Sciences
Trillavision Media
Valley Business Report

VÍDA

EDUCATING ONE LIFE AT A TIME SINCE 1995



TESTIMONIALS

IMPACTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE REGION...ONE VIDA AT A TIME



Dr. Rodney H. Rodriguez

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE, VICE PRESIDENT | STC FOUNDATION

“To the Esteemed Members of VIDA and Felida,

I write this testimonial filled with deep gratitude and admiration for the significant impact VIDA has had on our community under your thoughtful leadership and the dedicated efforts of the Board members. Over the years, our partnership has been a beacon of hope and a pillar of support for both our STC students and the broader adult population we serve.

VIDA’s collaboration has been nothing short of transformative. Through your generous resources funneled via the STC Foundation, you have opened doors to education that many believed were forever closed to them. Your commitment to providing scholarships across an array of educational pathways embodies the principle of “educating one life at a time” in the most profound way.

It is because of VIDA that countless individuals have been able to pursue their dreams and achieve their educational goals. You have not only supported them financially but have also inspired them to believe in their abilities and to aspire for greatness. The impact of your contributions extends beyond the individuals and into their families and communities, creating a ripple effect of positive change and opportunity.

Felida, your leadership has been instrumental in making all of this possible. Your vision, passion, and dedication have propelled VIDA to new heights, making it a cornerstone organization others look up to. Under your guidance, VIDA has truly become synonymous with hope, opportunity, and empowerment.

As we reflect on the years of fruitful partnership, we are filled with gratitude and look forward to continuing this journey together, making a difference in the lives of many more individuals. Your unwavering support has been a key factor in our success, and we cannot thank you enough.

Mil Gracias, VIDA! Here’s to many more years of impactful collaboration and changing lives for the better.”

Senator Morgan LaMantia

TEXAS SENATOR | DISTRICT 27

“Thank you, VIDA, for serving as a bridge between aspiration and achievement. VIDA’s personalized support services and industry-relevant training enable our community members to overcome challenges and pursue fulfilling careers contributing to our local economy. This ripple effect of opportunity and prosperity continues to support new generations of change-makers in the Rio Grande Valley through transformative actions.”





Mayor John Cowen Jr.

HONORABLE MAYOR | CITY OF BROWNSVILLE

I am proud to express my unwavering support and advocacy for the vital work being carried out by VIDA, an esteemed organization dedicated to empowering the people of the Rio Grande Valley. VIDA's mission--to facilitate economic prosperity through market-driven training, resources, and career pathways--is not just commendable; it is essential for the growth and well-being of our community.

The pursuit of economic prosperity is a journey that requires dedication, resources, and support. VIDA has been at the forefront of this journey, offering invaluable services that transform lives and build futures. By focusing on market-driven training, VIDA ensures that the skills and knowledge imparted to its participants are relevant, sought after, and ultimately, transformative. Their commitment to providing access to resources and career pathways is a testament to their understanding of the diverse needs of our community and their unwavering resolve to meet them.

As the largest city in the Rio Grande Valley, Brownsville continues its successes in economic development and community empowerment. These are shining examples of what is possible when organizations, such as VIDA, are helping to pave the way.

I wish VIDA continued success in their noble mission. The impact of their work is a beacon of hope and a blueprint for how targeted, community-focused initiatives can create lasting change.

Together, we can build a future where every resident of the Rio Grande Valley can thrive, succeed, and contribute to our region's dynamic growth.

There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.
— John Holmes



- Felida Villarreal | PRESIDENT AND CEO
- Irma Garcia | CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER
- Isidro Ramos | DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- Veronica Montemayor | DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
- Amanda Rodriguez | DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS
- Honesty Martinez | PROGRAM SERVICES ANALYST
- Priscilla Alvarez | CAREER ADVISOR
- San Juanita Sanchez | SENIOR CAREER COUNSELOR/CASE MANAGER
- Kathia Martinez | CAREER COUNSELOR/CASE MANAGER
- Felicia Adamas | CAREER COUNSELOR/CASE MANAGER
- Claudia Martinez | CAREER COUNSELOR/CASE MANAGER
- Marevelyn Salvador | CAREER COUNSELOR/CASE MANAGER
- Joanna Delgado | ACCOUNTING SUPPORT SPECIALIST
- Celina Maldonado | OUTREACH/INDUSTRY SPECIALIST
- Marylou Saenz | CASE AIDE/INTAKE SPECIALIST
- Arianna Zamora | INTAKE SPECIALIST
- Cristina Yanes | INTAKE SPECIALIST
- Sabrinna Infante | INTAKE SPECIALIST

Every year, more and more local employers seek the opportunity to hire VIDA graduates, recognizing the valuable soft skills and professional development our program instills--alongside their academic studies. We are incredibly grateful for our new and existing employer partnerships, which offer our graduates a professional pathway to economic prosperity and long-term advancement.

— Felida Villarreal

EMPLOYERS WHO HIRED

FY 2022 - 2023 VIDA GRADUATES

ABC Dental
Abri at Edinburg
Ageless Living Home Health
Alamo Country Club
Amtex General Contractors, LLC
Art's Electric
Austin Independent School District
AutoZone Auto Parts
Aveanna Healthcare, LLC
Beachwood Services
Bella Terra, LLC
Bella Vida Senior Services, LLC
Big State Electric
Blattner Energy
Bobcat Power
Brownsville ISD
Cache Valley Electric
Cameron County District Attorney's Office
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conceptions
Central Lighting and Energy, LLC
Chem-Pruf Fiberglass Door Company
Cintas Corporation
City of Brownsville
CSL Plasma
D&F Industries
DHR Health
DHR Health Women's Hospital
DHR Health Rehabilitation Hospital
Dr. William Long Elementary
Driscoll Children's Hospital
Edinburg Regional

Elite Functional Health
Express Employment Professionals
Fisk Electric Company
Fox Hollow Post Acute
Gulf Stream Marine
H&S Constructors, Inc.
Halliburton
Harlingen Medical Center
HMG Healthcare, LLC
Keppel AmFELS
Knapp Medical Center
Law Office of Antonio Martinez, Jr., P.C.
Maximus
McAllen Transitional Care Center
Medical City Plano
Mercedes ISD
Mike's Plumbing, Electrical & AC
Mission CISD
Mission Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
Parra Furniture & Appliance
Pas Home Care, LLC
PB Materials
Penske Truck Rental
People, Inc
Perdue Premium Meat Company
PSJA ISD
Rancho Viejo Police Dept
Rental World
Rio Grande Regional ER 24/7
Rio Grande Regional Hospital
Rio Grande State Center

Rio Grande Surgery Center
San Benito Police Department
Senture
South Texas Clinical Lab
South Texas Health System
South Texas Health System Behavioral
South Texas Health System Heart
Southern Careers Institute
Spectrum
Spirit Truck Lines
Superior Alarms
Target
Texas State Veterans Home
The Blake
The Dove's Nest
Treasure Hills Healthcare and
Rehabilitation Center
Tri-County Healthcare
Universal Plant Services
U.S. Customs and Border Protection -
Through Loyal Source
Valley Baptist Health System
Valley Regional Medical Center
Valley View ISD
Veranda Rehabilitation and Healthcare
Von'd Kids
Weslaco Air Conditioning, LLC
Willacy County Sheriff's Office
Women Together/Mujeres Unidas
Xpress Dental
Zitro Electric, LLC

Thank you!

Collaboration is the essence of life. The wind, bees, and flowers work together, to spread the pollen.

— Amit Ray, Indian author and spiritual master

THANK YOU VIDA PARTNERS!

► COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Alton Recreation Center
Angels of Love
Aurora House Foundation
Bailey H. Dunlap Memorial Library
Bob Clark Social Services Center
Cameron County Workforce Solutions
Christian Manor RGV
Consulate General of Mexico
Cornerstone Regional Hospital
DHR Health
Donna Public Library
Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley, Inc.
Dr. Hector P. Garcia Memorial Library
Goodwill Industries of South Texas
Harlingen Housing Authority
Harlingen Public Library
Hidalgo County Head Start Program
Hidalgo County Precinct 2
 Advancement Center
Hidalgo County Precinct 2 Community
 Resource Center
Hispanic Executive
JO-NIC BLOOM Pregnancy
 and Wellness Studio
Knapp Medical Center
KRGV-TV
La Unión del Pueblo Entero
Mayor Joe V. Sanchez Public Library
McAllen Housing Commission
McAllen Public Library
Mercedes Housing Authority
Mission Regional Medical Center
Nexstar Media
Nuestra Clinica del Valle
Office of Border Public Health
Pharr Housing Authority
Pharr Memorial Library
Proyecto Azteca, Inc.
Region One Education Service Center
Rio Grande Regional Hospital
Salvation Army
San Juan Memorial Library
Sgt. Fernando De La Rosa Memorial Library
South Texas Health System
South Texas Literacy Coalition
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
Telemundo 40
Texas A&M Colonias Program
 Hidalgo County

Texas Border Business
Texas Southmost College
Texas State Technical College
The GEO Group, Inc.
The Literacy Center of Harlingen
The Monitor
Trillavision
Unidos Con La Diabetes
Unidos US
Valley Baptist Health System
Valley Business Report
Valley Interfaith
Valley Regional Medical Center
Weslaco Housing Authority
Women Together/Mujeres Unidas
Workforce Solutions

► EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

Brownsville CISD Adult Education
Cameron County Education Initiative
Lower Rio Grande Valley Academy
Region One Education Service Center
Rio Grande Guardian
Rio Grande Valley Laredo Electrical JATC
South Texas College
STC Metal Trades
Texas School of Health Sciences
Texas Southmost College
Texas State Technical College
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

► FUNDRAISING PARTNERS

AT&T
Bert Ogden Auto Group
Breakaway Cruises
Brownstone Consultants
Bubba's 33
Carr, Riggs & Ingram
City of Edinburg
City of McAllen
Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages
ConZepto Magazine
Cynthia's Creations
Decibel Communications
DHR Health
Dr. Ruben Aleman & Associates
Edinburg Economic Development Corporation
ELIVATE DRIP SPA
Glam Up with Ashley
IBC Bank
Kendra Scott La Plaza

Lone Star National Bank
Melden & Hunt, Inc.
Nufo Salinas Photography
Pharr Economic Development Corporation
Pharr Housing Authority
Quintanilla, Headley & Associates, Inc.
Red Rock Development
RGV Focus
Rio Grande Valley Laredo Electrical JATC
Socialife Magazine
South Texas College
South Texas Health System
Texas School of Health Sciences
Wagoner Real Estate
Weslaco Economic Development Corporation

► INVESTMENT PARTNERS

Adult Career Education (ACE) Program
Alamo Economic Development Corporation
American Electric Power Foundation
AT&T
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas
City of Alamo
City of McAllen
City of Mercedes
City of Port Isabel
Department of Labor –
 Nursing Expansion Grant
Edinburg Economic Development Corporation
Greater Brownsville Incentives Corporation
Harlingen Economic Development Corporation
Hidalgo County
Knapp Community Care Foundation
La Feria Economic Development Corporation
Mercedes Economic Development Corporation
Methodist Healthcare Ministries of
 South Texas, Inc.
Pharr Economic Development Corporation
South Texas Health System
Texas Mutual Insurance
Texas Talent Connection
The Meadows Foundation
The Trull Foundation
Trellis Foundation
Union Pacific Foundation
United Way of Southern Cameron County
Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation
Weslaco Economic Development Corporation

VIDA ARCHITECTS OF POSSIBILITIES

FY 2022-2023 NEW GRANT PARTNERS

I make myself a relentless architect of the possibilities of human beings.

— Benjamin Zander

As we reflect on the accomplishments and milestones over the past year, we are filled with immense gratitude for our donors' unwavering support of VIDA's mission. Their generosity has been instrumental in driving positive change and empowering lives in our community.

In the pages of this VIDA Annual Report, we aim to provide a glimpse into the profound impact our donors' contributions have made. From funding life-changing projects to supporting vital programs, your belief in our vision is the catalyst for transformation. Throughout the year, your grants have enabled us to expand our reach and deepen our impact. Whether it's providing access to education or economic opportunities, these investments have opened doors and unlocked potential for countless individuals.

These partnerships have not only provided essential resources but have also inspired hope and resilience in the face of adversity. In times of challenge, your support has served as a beacon of light, reminding us of the incredible difference we can make when we come together with a shared purpose.

As we celebrate countless achievements over the past year, we do so with profound appreciation for your generosity and your commitment to our mission. Your belief in the power of transformation fuels our determination to continue striving for a brighter, more equitable future for all.

We look forward to the journey ahead, knowing that—with your support—we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve!

FY 2022 – 2023 New Grant Partners

- ▶ American Electric Power Foundation
- ▶ AT&T
- ▶ Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas
- ▶ Knapp Community Care Foundation
- ▶ Methodist Healthcare Ministries
- ▶ The Meadows Foundation
- ▶ Texas Mutual
- ▶ Texas Talent Connection
- ▶ Trellis Foundation
- ▶ U.S. Department of Labor



I tell students that the opportunities I had were a result of having a good educational background. Education is what allows you to stand out.

— Ellen Ochoa

THE VIDA PHILOSOPHY

At the heart of VIDA philosophy lies a steadfast commitment to the well-being of the individuals we serve. Central to this commitment is our unwavering focus on fostering socioeconomic development across the Rio Grande Valley. Recognizing that economic growth hinges on a skilled workforce, we have developed a robust model that guides participants toward targeted, high-demand careers offering competitive wages. At VIDA, we understand that merely securing employment marks just one milestone on the journey to sustainable prosperity.

True success lies in ensuring job retention; it is through this stability that our communities truly flourish. By retaining their positions, our graduates not only achieve self-sufficiency but also contribute as active, taxpaying members of society, providing for their families while bolstering the companies they serve. Through our investment in human capital, we empower residents of the RGV to break free from the cycle of unemployment and reliance on public assistance, enabling them to play an integral role in fostering a vibrant and thriving economy.

THE VIDA MISSION

At VIDA, our mission is fulfilled by empowering Rio Grande Valley residents to achieve economic prosperity through market-driven training, resources, and career pathways.

OUR STRATEGIC PROGRAM MODEL

Within the Rio Grande Valley, numerous challenges—including poverty, limited support networks, financial stress, and the complexities of balancing academic pursuits with familial responsibilities—continue to hinder the path to success for many residents. These formidable barriers have historically obstructed the achievement of industry-recognized certifications and degrees, perpetuating socioeconomic disparities. It is precisely these circumstances that VIDA aims to address through its unique program model, targeting underserved demographics for empowerment and workforce development.

Through our strategic program model, VIDA has achieved a remarkable 96 percent persistence rate this fiscal year, a testament to our participant-centered approach. Each facet of our wraparound support services is meticulously crafted to address the specific challenges faced by our participants.

Our dedicated career counselors engage with participants individually, providing guidance on

budgeting, financial planning, time management, and coping with personal stressors during weekly counseling sessions. In group settings, participants receive soft-skills training, including interview preparation, resume building, and effective study habits. Additionally, guest speakers enrich our program through their expertise in various fields, broadening participants' knowledge and life skills.

Recognizing that financial hurdles extend beyond tuition, VIDA offers tailored assistance with textbooks, transportation, childcare, and other essential expenses, made possible through the generous support of local and state governments, private foundations, and individual donors. While education forms the cornerstone of workforce development, it is our community partnerships and collaborative efforts that ensure accessibility to higher education through our comprehensive student-support approach, which epitomizes the Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement.

TEEING OFF FOR VIDA



1ST ANNUAL VIDA GOLF TOURNAMENT

Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA) held its 1st Annual VIDA Golf Tournament at Los Lagos Golf Club July 8, 2023. This event was a resounding success.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this fundraiser an unforgettable experience. Our sincerest thanks go out to all of our sponsors, student volunteers, dedicated staff, esteemed board members, and golfers. Your unwavering support and commitment played an integral role in the success of this event, and we are truly thankful for your generosity and dedication.

A special acknowledgment is owed to Lone Star National Bank (LSNB) for the invaluable contribution as our Title Sponsor. LSNB's sponsorship served as the cornerstone of this tournament, and we are deeply grateful for our partnership.



Additionally, we would like to express our gratitude to our Gold, Silver, and Proud Sponsors, whose generosity helped make this event possible:

- AT&T
- Bert Ogden Auto Insider
- Bubba's 33 - McAllen
- Carr, Riggs & Ingram
- City of Edinburg
- Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages
- ConZepto Magazine
- Dr. Ruben Aleman & Associates - Family Medicine and Obstetrics
- Edinburg Economic Development Corporation
- Glazer's Beer and Beverage RGV
- Judge Rudy Gonzalez
- Los Lagos Golf Club
- Pharr Economic Development Corporation
- Pharr Housing Authority
- Rio Grande Valley Laredo Electrical JATC
- South Texas College
- South Texas Health System
- Tony Aguirre - McAllen City Commissioner, District 1
- Villalobos Law Firm
- Yildirim Durak

Your support not only contributed to the success of this fundraiser, but it also directly impacts the lives of individuals in our community, empowering them to achieve economic prosperity and to fulfill their potential.

We are already looking forward to seeing you at our 2nd Annual VIDA Golf Tournament!



VIDA DEPENDS ON
**GENEROUS
DONORS
LIKE YOU**

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, VIDA relies solely on our local, state, and federal government; grants; private foundations; and donations from generous individuals and companies across the Rio Grande Valley. As you can read in the Economic Impact Study inside this Annual Report, **each \$1.00 invested in VIDA converts to a return on investment of \$15.69.** And we've made it easy to donate! Just go to vidacareers.org and click on the "Donate" button. You can use PayPal or a debit/credit card. Your generosity allows us to continue fulfilling our mission of educating one life at a time.

Going to work is a joy every day when your entire team works collaboratively to fulfill its mission. That joy can be seen on the faces of Irma Garcia, chief program officer; Felida Villarreal, president and CEO; Isidro Ramos, director of workforce and economic development; and Veronica Montemayor, director of finance.



Photo by Cass Davis, Hispanic Executive

VIDA OFFICES

Mercedes Administrative Office | 417 S. Ohio Ave | Mercedes, TX 78570 | [956-903-1900](tel:956-903-1900)

McAllen Library | 4001 N. 23rd St. | McAllen, TX | [956-681-3000](tel:956-681-3000) | [956-903-1900](tel:(956)903-1900) ext. 135

McAllen Satellite Office

STC Nursing Allied Health Campus | Building A | Office #128 | 1101 E. Vermont | McAllen, TX 78503


Brownsville Satellite Office


TSC Campus | Lightner Center Building | Office #100U | 80 Fort Brown | Brownsville, TX 78520 | [956-295-3670](tel:956-295-3670)


[WWW.VIDACAREERS.ORG](https://www.vidacareers.org)



 facebook.com/vidacareers

 [vida_careers](https://instagram.com/vida_careers)

 [VIDA_Careers](https://twitter.com/VIDA_Careers)

 Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement - VIDA



CY 2025 FUNDING PROPOSAL

December 20, 2024



Project Name

Career Training in High Demand Occupations for Low-Income City of Hidalgo Residents

Funding Request

\$100,000 for calendar year 01/01/2025 – 12/31/2025

Project Details

At least twenty City of Hidalgo residents will be supported through VIDA's program model through the fiscal year January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025. 100% of students assisted under this grant must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Participant must be a City of Hidalgo Resident.
2. Participant must be 18 years of age or older.
3. Participant must be eligible to work in the U.S.
4. Participant must be under 200% of the federal poverty guidelines, underemployed, or unemployed.

Mission

VIDA's mission is to empower Rio Grande Valley residents to achieve economic prosperity through market-driven training, resources, and career pathways. Our continued focus includes formulating new institutional relationships in the RGV that simultaneously address employers' needs for skilled workers, while linking the area's unemployed and underemployed with high-skill, high-wage jobs identified in the region. Our vision is to build and sustain a highly skilled and highly educated workforce, which will not only be ready for tomorrow's jobs, but will have an opportunity to live a more prosperous and healthy life.

History

The concept for VIDA began in 1995 with Valley Interfaith, a community-organizing group in the Lower Rio Grande Valley affiliated with the national Industrial Areas Foundation. Valley Interfaith observed a need for education and training to secure family sustaining wage employment, as the region experienced elevated levels of unemployment from many plant closures and layoffs in the textile industry due to foreign competition. Meanwhile, businesses and economic development boards seeking to attract and retain employers in the region reported a need for a more highly skilled and educated workforce. As a result, collaborative efforts between Valley Interfaith and industry leaders sought an opportunity to meet the needs of both Valley residents and employers through the creation of VIDA, a workforce training model committed to providing both economic and social supports to low-income residents, to ensure successful completion of post-secondary education training and secure competitive employment. Throughout the years, VIDA has remained relevant and innovative by collaborating with regional institutions of higher education and industry leaders to assess employment needs and align career pathways with local industry demand.

Currently, more than half of our student population enrolls in allied health careers such as registered nursing, licensed vocational nursing, diagnostic medical sonography, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, radiography, medical billing & coding, surgical technology, and more.

As we continue to recover from the long-term effects of a global pandemic, it is critical to assess and respond to both the regional and national shortage of healthcare professionals. As a result, VIDA continues to promote training and higher education credentials in the healthcare industry in efforts to enhance health equity across the Rio Grande Valley. The remaining student population pursues training in high demand occupations in fields of study such as STEM and the skilled trades – all of which provide an opportunity for self-sufficiency and long-term career advancement.

Core Services

VIDA primarily funds training for one-year certificates, two-year associate degrees, or the last two years of bachelor level degrees. VIDA provides customized financial assistance for training in fields of allied health, STEM, and specialized trades. In addition, VIDA's program provides intensive case management and weekly counseling services to address academic and social barriers. VIDA counselors become key mentors in the lives of our participants, coaching and guiding them to advance in their appropriate career pathways. VIDA regularly updates the occupational training it supports based on feedback from economic development boards and local employers to ensure students pursue careers in high demand occupations relevant to our economic climate. South Texas College, Texas State Technical College, Texas Southmost College, and UT Rio Grande Valley are VIDA's primary training partners. We collaborate extensively with these institutions for outreach, student support and progress, enhancing career pathways, and more.

In 2023, VIDA served 627 students with an average persistence rate of 96%! 100% of our student population is identified as unemployed, underemployed, or low-income, based on 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. During 2023, a student enrolled as a VIDA participant with an average wage of \$8.43 per hour but graduated as a VIDA participant and secured employment with an average wage of over \$22.96 per hour following program completion. The average age of VIDA participants in 2023 was 28 years old and 84% of our participants identified as first-generation college students.

Consequently, this demographic faces a multitude of challenges that represent risk factors for college persistence and graduation. Oftentimes, our participants are first-generation college students, lacking a dedicated support system at home, which VIDA addresses with ongoing one-on-one career coaching and mentoring. VIDA recognizes our participants face language barriers and family responsibilities that interfere with successful completion or satisfactory performance of coursework. As a result, VIDA counselors meet regularly with participants on an individualized basis and in group sessions with other VIDA participants to help them overcome prominent challenges such as time management, stress, emotional triggers, conflict resolution, and promote overall mental health. VIDA counselors share extensive knowledge and expertise in fields of psychology, social work, and education, facilitating strong relationships with participants and effectively building bonds of accountability, maintaining our students focused, committed, and encouraged. Moreover, VIDA's customized financial assistance for tuition, textbooks, tools, uniforms, childcare, and transportation further promotes students' full-time enrollment while breaking economic barriers to education success.

VIDA organizes speaker series workshops on a monthly basis, in which we collaborate with local industry partners to share their expertise with our participants collectively. For example, our community partner, JP Morgan Chase, hosts financial literacy workshops with VIDA participants as a group to educate them on valuable topics such as banking, lending, credit scores, financial planning,

investments, retirement, and more. In turn, VIDA participants develop and enhance life-long skills for both professional and personal success, learning the importance of fiscal responsibility and personal budgeting. This type of soft skills development model effectively complements the students' traditional classroom coursework to build a more well-rounded individual, better prepared to achieve career success with a competitive and diverse skillset.

Outcomes & Results

VIDA's outcomes are primarily measured by higher persistence rates, graduation rates, and number of certificates awarded:

1. 85% or more of VIDA participants will graduate from an educational/training program within 3 years.
2. 80% or more of VIDA graduates will receive job placement with competitive compensation.
3. 90% or more will persist in their education from year to year.
4. 100% will attend mandatory counseling sessions to ensure program retention.

VIDA has a well-established capacity to track extensive information in a secure, comprehensive, Social Solutions database. Detailed demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are maintained and accessed on a regular basis for reporting and quality control. VIDA measures the academic progress of each participant through grade reports, case notes from the counselors and other program staff, and supportive services received - all of which are documented in Social Solutions. Participants entering employment are tracked for three years post-graduation, and their wages, positions, and employers are reported in the database.

A recent economic impact study conducted by UT - Rio Grande Valley, reports that for every \$1.00 invested in VIDA, there is a return on investment of \$15.69 to the communities we serve. Additionally, the Institute for Women's Policy Research featured VIDA in a report on innovations to address unmet needs in job training programs. The report states: "case management can have the added effect of creating a sense of accountability to the program that increases persistence and completion among trainees. Having a primary point person who participants can go to for advice, support, and to access program resources lead them to feel a greater sense of responsibility or commitment to their program...the relationships that case managers establish with participants create bonds of accountability that enhance participants' chances of success within their programs."



**Hidalgo County Project Budget
20 Participants/Students**

Post-Secondary Occupational Training (PSOT):

Allied Health, Specialized Trades, Accounting/Finance, and STEM

Associate Degrees, College/Industry Recognized Certificates, Bachelor Degrees (last 2 years only)

BUDGET ITEMS	01/01/25 – 12/31/25 PROJECTED EXPENDITURES
<p>Curriculum Based – Training Expenses</p> <p>South Texas College (STC); University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV); Texas State Technical College (TSTC); Texas Southmost College (TSC); Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition & Fees, Textbooks, Exam Fees, Equipment • Tools, Uniforms, Transportation Assistance, Child Care Assistance, Other <p>Direct Program Services Intensive Career Counseling & Case Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Outreach, Profile Assessment, & Aptitude Testing • Peer learning, effective studying skills, & test taking strategies • Soft Skills Training: Guest Speaker Forums, Professional Development Workshops, Financial Literacy, Time Management, Stress Management, Mental Health, etc. • Employability Skills: Conflict Resolution in the Workplace, Resume Writing, Business Etiquette, Job Search, & Interview Preparation • Individualized Career Coaching and Academic Advisement • Individual and Group Counseling Sessions • Job Placement Services & Career Tracking three years post-graduation • Building Accountability - Monitoring Academic Performance and Progress for Intervention and Completion • Direct Program Related Expenses 	
Training & Direct Program Expenses	\$ 85,000
General & Administrative Costs	\$ 15,000
Total Project Budget	\$ 100,000
<i>Hidalgo County Funding Request</i>	<i>\$ 100,000</i>