

## **Part I.**

Established in Kingsville, Texas, in 1925 as a public post-secondary institution, Texas A&M University-Kingsville has evolved into a Carnegie Research I-Intensive comprehensive regional institution. In South Texas, Texas A&M-Kingsville (TAMUK) is the most comprehensive and only predominantly residential university in South Texas and has always sought to “Close the Gaps” It offers over fifty degrees at the undergraduate and graduate levels including doctoral degrees.

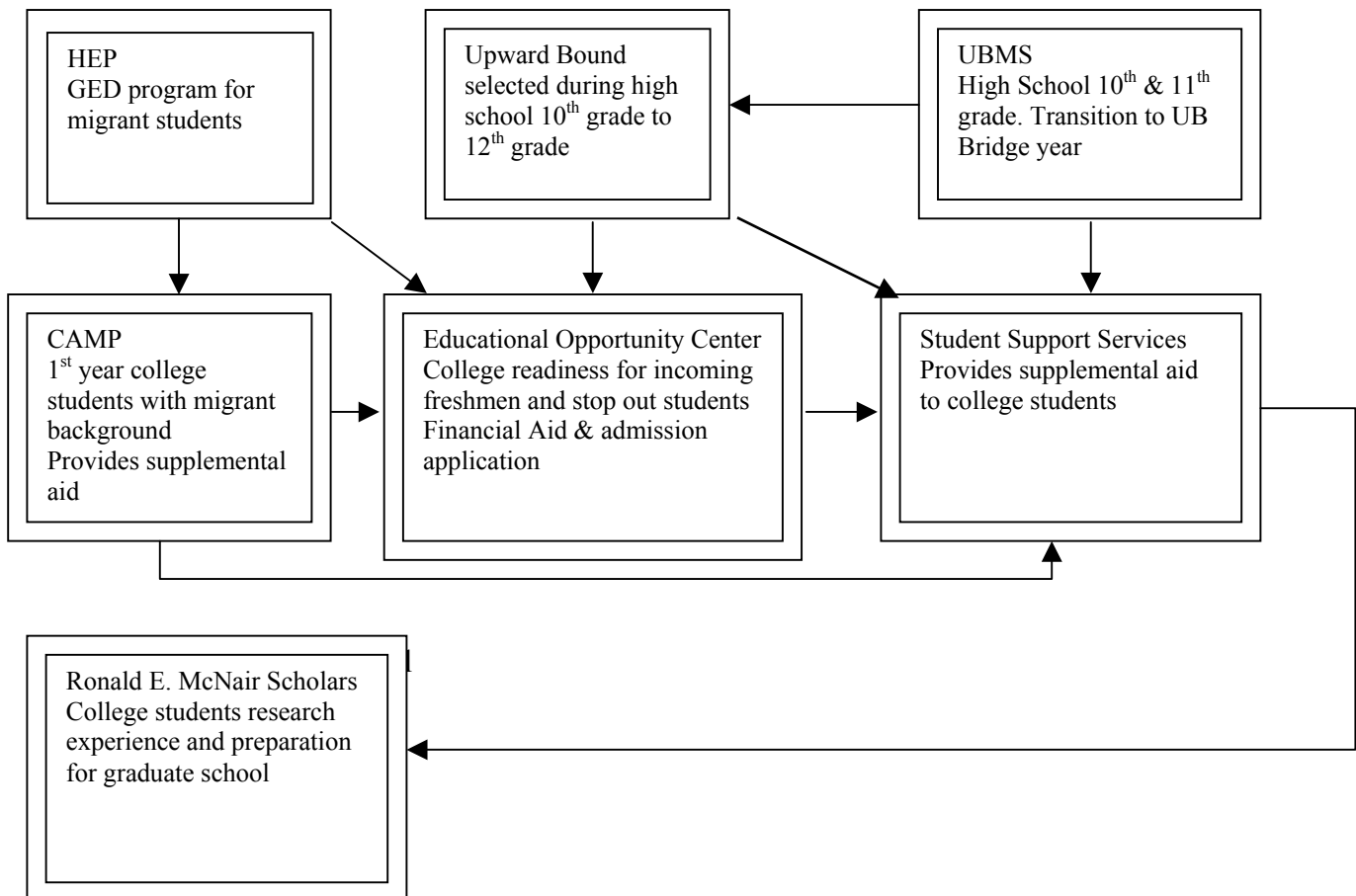
Texas A&M University-Kingsville is committed to its role in the South Texas area through teaching, research, and service. TAMUK and its faculty, staff, and administration have unequivocal commitment to assisting the large numbers of rural, low-income, minority and first-generation college students. This plan and commitment is further enhanced through the Department of Special Programs. A pipeline of educational opportunities has been implemented to bring pre-college students from their homes and communities and lead them to the completion of doctoral level work. A short description of each program is listed followed by a flowchart depicting the progression routes from one program to another.

Special Programs has a unique concept of assisting first generation low-income students gain the opportunity to further their education. This would be further enhanced by encouragement to participate in various technological, instruction and matriculation into the university setting. Special Programs initially acquired an **Upward Bound Program** in 1989 targeting 10 area high schools and serving 75 students brought on campus at various times during the school year. A number of grants followed rapidly. The UBMS (**Upward Bound Math & Science Program**) recruits low income, first generation students from Austin to Brownsville providing them with opportunities in a

challenging subject matter while encouraging those attending to pursue programs that lead them to careers in math & science at the postsecondary level. **SSS (Student Support Services)** has as the primary goal to retain and matriculate students throughout their postsecondary education. **CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program)** provides a full year of supplemental assistance for the freshmen year for eligible migrant students. **HEP (High School Equivalency)** recaptures migrant students who have dropped out of high school and/or migrant adults who have not completed high school and prepares them for mastery of the high school equivalency examination. **CEP (College Exploration Program)** is a program that feeds into the SSS program. This project is financed by grants from the Workforce Investment Act and offers high school graduates within the state an opportunity to enroll and acquire college credit and gain valuable work experience. In 1995, Special Programs actively competed and was awarded a **Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program**. The program supports undergraduate students' scholarly activities throughout the academic year with an intensive summer research component. Students are exposed to graduate level research work through mentorship from faculty. The program prepares scholars for the admission and graduate level tests necessary for completion of graduate applications and admission.

As of June 2002, the department has once again demonstrated its success in "Closing the GAPS 2015" by the acquisition of an **Educational Opportunity Center** grant to commence September 2002 assisting up to 800 High School and/or "stop out" students matriculating to post-secondary educational institutions. Each EOC participant will be provided with individual counseling, client specific need assessments, and follow-up, with his/her road map to an appropriate education or training program. Opening the doors of both traditional and alternative learning programs and assisting our

predominantly Hispanic population take advantage of the variety of options that exist, and that can be available to them, will be an ongoing process. As indicated by “Commissioner of Higher Education Don W. Brown. The state must educate all of its people, he explained, including it’s large and rapidly increasing Hispanic population, which is severely underrepresented in Texas higher education.” The TAMUK-EOC Centers will form collaborative agreements and/or partnerships with well recognized public and social service agencies in the target area. The new grant will focus on six target areas throughout the lower part of Texas with four satellite offices. The center will actively work in collaboration with TAMUK’s Enrollment Management Office to assist first time freshmen and stop out student’s complete college and financial aid applications for our campus or any other desired campus. This is truly an indication of Texas A&M University-Kingsville’s efforts at “Closing the GAPS 2015” in Texas.



All the programs participate in many partnerships with school districts and other universities. The counties we reached out to are: Austin, Bee, Bexar, Cameron, Duval, Guadalupe, Hidalgo, Jim Wells, Kleberg, Nueces, and Starr. Schools include Alice, Banquete, Riviera, Benavides, Ben Bolt, Bishop, Falfurrias, and Kingsville.

**Success**-Consistent efforts are made and refined with experience through time to insure that all objectives of each program are met and often exceeded. Impressive examples are abundant in the McNair Program where over fifty undergraduates have submitted, and were accepted for publication, their summer research projects (mentored with faculty support from several of the leading researchers at TAMUK). One such article appeared in the major publication "Toxicology". Another success story occurred with the High School Equivalency Program where 522 students graduated in 2001 and 499 of those went on to programs in higher education.

**Excellence** - Of the fourteen Ronald E. McNair Scholars Programs in Texas, A&M- Kingsville's was the only one funded for a five-year period. The others were for a maximum of four years. Another outstanding example comes from the Summer 2002 chemistry research component of the Upward Bound Math & Science Program. Dr. Apurba Bhattacharya's group of high school students is awaiting patent approval for a one step procedure for the manufacture of ibuprofen.

**Research** – Over the past seven years, at a variety of meetings throughout the nation, our McNair scholars have fared extremely well with their research presentations. The secret for success lies in requiring initial presentation experiences at local forums before a critical audience of parents, faculty mentors and the university community. The preparation and support they receive from faculty and staff enables them to gain self-confidence and allow them to advance to regional and national conferences while

presenting in their disciplines. All McNair students publish their research experiences in the annual Texas A&M University-Kingsville McNair Scholars' Journal.

### Retention Information

Cohorts	College Exploration Program Experimental Cohorts		Non-College Exploration Program Control Cohorts	
	Retained after summer	Retained within 4 years	Retained after summer	Retained within 4 years
1999	90%	52%	95%	28%
2000	89%	46%	90%	35%

Comparison of Non-CEP and CEP groups retention/persistence rate

As indicated in the above comparison groups the College Exploration program with structured and intrusive services provided by the department were retained at levels above the similar cohort at the university.

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| <p><b>Systematic Intervention<br/>by all programs in department</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Academic &amp; Scheduling Services</li> <li>• Intrusive Advisement</li> <li>• Career Awareness</li> <li>• Financial Aid Assistance</li> <li>• Enrichment &amp; Enhancement Leadership Skills</li> <li>• Psychology of Self Development and Personal Growth</li> <li>• Enhance Research Study Skills</li> <li>• Enhance Professional Communications and Presentation Skills</li> </ul> |
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<b>SPECIAL PROGRAMS</b>	
Department Accomplishments in a Snapshot	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Served 1,300 migrant students since 1993</li> <li>• 54% of students graduated (G.E.D.)</li> <li>• 83.3% of students have transitioned to higher education and job placement</li> <li>• 60% of students have enrolled at Texas A&amp;M Kingsville and other junior colleges</li> </ul>	
<b>UPWARD BOUND (10<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> graders)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Served 322 participants since 1989</li> <li>• 89% of participants received G.P.A. of 3.0 or better</li> <li>• 91% of participants transitioned to higher education for past two years</li> <li>• Past two years retention rate of 65% at the</li> <li>• University level</li> </ul>	
<b>UPWARD BOUND MATH &amp; SCIENCE (11<sup>th</sup> &amp; 12<sup>th</sup> graders)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruited 50 students per fiscal year strong in Math &amp; Science throughout Texas since 1999</li> <li>• 100% of students advanced to next grade level</li> <li>• 92% of senior level students transition to post-secondary education</li> <li>• 75% retention after 1<sup>st</sup> year 2001</li> </ul>	
<b>COLLEGE ASSISTANCE MIGRANT PROGRAM</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 participants financial aid supplemented and support services per fiscal year</li> <li>• 86% live on campus</li> <li>• Student's averaged a 2.8 G.P.A. vs. all students at university level of 2.4 G.P.A.</li> </ul>	
<b>STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of participants retained 2000-2001 academic year</li> <li>• 72% retention and matriculation rate for student's served</li> <li>• 50% of entering freshmen mastered the TASP</li> <li>• 40% of students served for past 10 years graduated vs. university 25%</li> </ul>	
<b>COLLEGE EXPLORATION PROGRAM</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 804 students served for past 10 years</li> <li>• 60% 10 year matriculation and retention while 40% have graduated</li> <li>• Past 2 years retention of 82 % of students served by best practices for bridge programs</li> </ul>	
<b>RONALD E. MCNAIR SCHOLARS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 99 students served since 1995 with 98% graduation from with baccalaureate degree</li> <li>• 70% of students into graduate programs</li> <li>• 12% of students into doctoral programs vs. national rates of 7%</li> <li>• 100% of students completion of intensive summer research experience</li> </ul>	
* All numbers and percentages extracted from data and summary reports submitted to the U.S. Department of Education and continuous student tracking	

The primary responsibility of the Department of Special Programs is to provide educational opportunities for low-income first generation disadvantaged eligible

participants. The entire department is structured to collaborate with area school districts and other universities as a “partnership community” providing a variety of student support services that help retain students in education and facilitate their academic transition toward an upward level of educational attainment. The Department of Special Programs at A&M-Kingsville is committed to providing a systematic intervention that increases students’ retention through participation and involvement in the campus life and culture of academia.

Extensive coordinated efforts are utilized to unite, in a collaborative manner, the outreach recruiters and counselors from all department programs at the university in order to reach out to more community schools and offer our services. In other words, to aid in “closing the gaps” .The networking of united services to outreach areas provides a sincere effort on the part of our university to improve academic achievement of our area students. This networking also proves that we are true agents of change having the additional ability to collaborate with other educational institutions and agencies of the area communities. Just this summer (2002), the Department of Special Programs was awarded, through Department of Education, an Educational Opportunity Center. This center will offer extensive assistance in transitioning 800 high school seniors into higher education.

#### Additional Information

A university’s most important assets are its students. The Department of Special Programs supports A&M-Kingsville’s vision for a student-oriented university. The department:

- Established to provide students with quality academic and professional support.

- Grant-funded, and survives only if students take advantage of the support services offered
- Strives to touch the lives of as many students as possible
- Represents A&M\_ Kingsville with honor, dignity and integrity
- Encourages students to attend tutoring, workshops, career awareness sessions and various cultural/educational events.
- Plays an active role in communicating with students.
- Works to “close the gaps” for residents of the State of Texas

Coming together as a team, the staff’s efforts and accomplishments have resulted in a higher overall student success rate.