EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI) is the U.S Department of Labor Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) designated region devoted to developing a skilled and talented workforce and increasing the business momentum of the Rio South Texas Region. Ultimately, it will provide a transformational opportunity for the region to lead the nation and the world in advanced and rapid manufacturing.

VISION:

THE INTERNATIONAL GATEWAY

- Positioning North America as the World Leader in Rapid Response Manufacturing.
- Establish The Rio South Texas Region as a major North American logistics and distribution hub (3rd Coast) with global access through Mexico ports.

ULTIMATE GOALS

- Raise the standard of living by increasing and sustaining the total number of high skills, high wage manufacturing jobs from 17,428 to at least 25,000 positions by 2017.
- Create a world-class manufacturing workforce with skills to meet the demands of a complex manufacturing workplace.

The NAAMREI network consists of three major alliances. South Texas College (STC) is the corporate headquarters for the organization and is located at the STC Technology Campus in McAllen. To promote integration, the work of each alliance corresponds to a “Strategic Goal” in the overall WIRED Project:

1) North American Technology and Innovation Alliance (Lead Agency: University of Texas - Pan American (UTPA)
2) Rio South Texas Manufacturing College Alliance (Lead Agency: STC Institute for Advanced Manufacturing)
3) T-STEM Alliance (Lead Agency: Region One Education Service Centers (ESC))

Located on the border with Mexico and the Gulf Coast, the Rio South Texas Region is perfectly positioned for international trade. Trade between Mexico and the Region totaled nearly $162 million in 2007 up 28 percent since 2004. (Source: Texas Comptroller’s South Texas 2008 Report)
INTRODUCTION

The North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI) is a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development project devoted to developing a skilled and talented workforce and increasing the business momentum of the Rio South Texas Region. The WIRED Initiative, launched in November 2005, stresses the critical role talent development plays in creating effective regional economic development strategies.

WIRED goes beyond traditional strategies for worker preparation by bringing together state, local and federal entities; academic institutions (including K-12, community colleges and universities); investment groups; foundations; and business and industry to address the challenges associated with building a globally competitive and prepared workforce. Ultimately, it will provide a transformational opportunity for the region to lead the nation and the world in rapid response manufacturing.

The Rio South Texas region includes seven counties: Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb Willacy and Zapata. Historically, the Rio South Texas region has been identified as a rural, agricultural-based economy characterized by sporadic growth. In the past 10 years, the region has overcome a variety of challenges (high unemployment rates, low educational attainment and cultural bias) to become one of the fastest growing economic areas in the Unites States. The McAllen-Mission-Pharr Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Brownsville-Harlingen MSA and Laredo MSA are among the fastest growing metropolitan statistical areas in the United States.

In 2006, the region registered employment growth rates greater than the state average. A significant opportunity now exists to leverage the current economic vitality to profoundly and positively impact the region’s quality of life and long-term economic competitiveness.

Workforce development strategies are vital to achieving significant and sustained economic transformation. Regional talent development partnerships represent the foundation on which can be built a strong, sustainable, transformational strategy guiding the area toward economic prosperity in today’s global economy. The region currently boasts a strong workforce partnership network that is focused on addressing the challenges of developing the talent needed to compete in the global economy. These groups believe that the key to regional transformation is a coherent strategic plan integrating workforce, innovation and economic development in the region that will address the existing and projected need for skilled and trained workers, particularly in the advanced manufacturing sector.

Using an industry cluster analysis performed by Workforce Solutions, advanced manufacturing was identified as the sector offering the best fit for a plan to strategically position the region on a sustainable path to economic growth and prosperity. Leaders in education at all levels, government, economic development groups and industry have come together to focus on the concept of rapid response manufacturing (RRM) as a key platform to help transform the region into a global leader in advanced manufacturing. To achieve this objective, the region must come together in a broad-based effort to develop, coordinate, and strengthen ongoing initiatives committed to talent development. Providing the pipeline of skilled talent necessary to support and retain existing advanced manufacturing employers
INTRODUCTION

while developing the talent pool needed to attract new advanced manufacturing companies to Rio South Texas is vital to the area’s economic future.

The NAAMREI Consortium has developed a 10-year plan to transform the Rio South Texas Region into a recognized leader in advanced manufacturing. The plan is focused on expanding the advanced manufacturing employment base, and it will be implemented in three basic phases: Phase I: Assessment, Infrastructure Development and Talent Development; Phase II: Transformation and Revitalization; and Phase III: Sustained Growth and Prosperity.

The long term vision of the Plan is to establish a rapid response manufacturing infrastructure to reach the regional goal of raising the standard of living for citizens in the Rio South Texas Region by increasing and sustaining the total number of high skill, high wage manufacturing jobs from 17,428 to at least 25,000 positions by 2017. Along with promoting the growth of jobs in advanced manufacturing, the NAAMREI framework will help to build a pipeline of workers with the skills to meet the demands of an increasingly complex manufacturing workplace.
ASSET MAPPING REPORT

The region adopted the Council on Competitiveness asset mapping model. The initiative undertook an asset-mapping project to advance the regional efforts in building an innovation-based economy positioning the region as a world leader in Rapid Response Manufacturing. The results will determine the strategies that will need realignment to reflect any strengths or gaps revealed by the asset map.

The purpose of the Rio South Texas Asset Mapping is to assess development resources in the Rio South Texas Region in pursuit of economic and workforce talent. The Asset Mapping Team will be able to identify the skills and characteristics manufacturers need in their employees in order to satisfy industry’s demand. The Asset Mapping Team will be able to develop the talent manufacturers are currently seeking and will look for in the future, including current manufacturers’ employees, and workforce.

The Asset Mapping Team conducted a range of meetings, interviews and surveys with business and community leaders and educational institutions in order to obtain a better understanding of the region’s economic growth and development. In addition, the Asset Mapping Team will be looking for those leaders mentioned above to make suggestions and/or recommendations, based on their knowledge and expertise, to improve the quality of the Rio South Texas workforce talent.

The Asset Mapping Team obtained data from the region’s economic development corporations, Workforce Development Boards, universities and colleges, U. S. Census Bureau, state and federal agencies, and other sources.

The Asset Mapping team collected data regarding:

° **MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING**
  - Number of Manufacturers in the Rio South Texas Region
  - Manufacturers’ industry – NAICS Code
  - Manufacturers’ location, annual sales, and function within industry
  - Manufacturers’ number of current and projected employees (5-10 years)
  - Manufacturers’ current employment skills need
  - Manufacturers’ future (long-term: 5 – 10 years) employment skills need
  - Names and contact information of plant managers
ASSET MAPPING REPORT

* ECONOMIC OVERVIEW
  - Manufacturing employment
  - Employment and organization forecast

* RESEARCH, MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING ASSETS
  - Universities
  - Community Colleges
  - Faculty, Staff, and Students
  - Economic Development Corporations
  - Manufacturing Associations

* INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS
  - Labor force (number of available workforce, 18 years+)
  - Regional workforce (breakdown by occupation, income levels, and/or educational level)
  - Infrastructure
  - Business climate
  - Cost of living

Why is asset mapping important to the region? Plain and simple: economic growth that results in new businesses and new long-term jobs. To make the advanced manufacturing sector a reality, the region needs to coalesce around the development of the necessary infrastructure to help this industry flourish in this region. To do this, asset mapping is a necessary step.

Rio South Texas asset mapping sets the foundation for strategic planning and implementation. With asset mapping in place, the regional team can develop a better understanding of key regional systems and linkages. Developing a clear vision for the region’s future is essential in building stronger economies and prosperity. As the Rio South Texas region faces intense competition for businesses, skilled labor and investment resources, both private and public, asset mapping serves a number of strategic needs.

RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION

Asset mapping helps the Rio South Texas leadership team identify resources critical for the successful development and implementation of strategic initiatives. Without a complete understanding of the regional asset base, the leadership team will be unable to develop a successful strategic plan. If assets do not match the needs, then the implementation will be hampered and lead to limited success or even outright failure. It is essential to make the appropriate level of investment in time, effort and resources now than to have to come back in a few years to redo basic asset mapping.
ASSET MAPPING REPORT

FOUNDATION FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Asset mapping can be used in several ways for strategic planning and implementation. It can be the basis for new strategic plans as well as a tool to redirect or refocus existing plans. Additionally, it can be used to bring together and set common ground for multiple plans and/or efforts by various entities. An effective asset mapping process identifies the existing assets, disparities, duplication and inefficiencies. This helps the leadership team focus resources where they can be most effective and for the best return on investment. The initial asset map also provides the region with a baseline against which to measure progress over time.

DEEPENED UNDERSTANDING OF KEY REGIONAL SYSTEMS AND LINKAGES

An effective asset mapping process leads to a more complete view of the ways in which regional stakeholders coordinate and interact with each other and with entities outside of the region. With a sharper perspective of existing entities, the leadership team can more accurately assess the institutions’ real contribution to the regional economies. The leadership team can find ways to strengthen the entities, build linkages between them, and, ultimately, improve the regional innovation system.

CATALYST FOR PARTNERSHIP

Asset mapping brings together and disperses the knowledge possessed by a few individuals and makes it available to others who may conceive of new ways to leverage the assets. This also allows the individual members of the leadership team to see how their entities fit into and drive the regional economy. This can serve as a catalyst that allows members of the leadership team and others to find common interests and organizational links, leading to strengthen or form new partnerships. This, in effect, creates a critical mass of information and discussion that, in turn, leads to innovative approaches to economic development.

ORGANIZING AND MOTIVATIONAL TOOL FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The process of creating the asset map can have a positive effect in engaging community members in a regional development effort. The leadership team members can form a critical mass that becomes the basis for new and updated development goals and objectives.
ASSET MAPPING ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Rio South Texas asset mapping sets the foundation for strategic planning and implementation. With asset mapping in place, the regional team can develop a better understanding of key regional systems and linkages. Developing a clear vision for the region’s future is essential in building stronger economies and prosperity. As the Rio South Texas region faces intense competition for businesses, skilled labor and investment resources, both private and public, asset mapping serves a number of strategic needs.

The results of this venture have made clear where the region’s strengths lie. Specifically, this assessment has identified the following:

• While the entire country’s manufacturing base has undergone tremendous upheaval and loss/off shoring of jobs, Texas and the Rio South Texas region have fared better.
• Five corporate headquarters are located in McAllen, TX.
• 2010 Advanced Manufacturing Industry activities show a strong recovery. Santa Textiles in Edinburg, TX will create 800 new jobs in 2010.
• The McAllen-Edinburg-Mission-Pharr MSA is among only six metro areas in the nation to have regained their pre-recession peak level of output by the third quarter of 2009.
• Supply chain employment has proven resilient, showing growth from 2003 to 2009 in the state and Rio South Texas.
• The McAllen-Edinburg-Mission-Pharr MSA is the only metro area in the country to regain its pre-recession peak employment level.
• Supply chain employment in the state is approximately half as large as manufacturing employment. In contrast, supply chain employment in the Rio South Texas region is almost twice as large as manufacturing employment.
• Webb County accounted for slightly more than 50 percent of supply chain employment in the region with more than 11,000 positions.
• Advanced manufacturing employment in Rio South Texas, combining manufacturing and supply chain employment, has dropped less than seven percent overall.
• It is the counties where supply chain jobs grew the most that had the lowest unemployment rates in the Rio South Texas region.
• A comparison of average weekly wages for all industries and the advanced manufacturing industry at the state and regional level shows the relatively stronger earning power for workers in the advanced manufacturing sectors.
• The percent increase in wages from 2001 to 2008 shows that average weekly wages for manufacturing jobs has been larger (30 percent) than for all industries (27 percent).
• All counties reported overall increases in wages in both sectors from 2001 to 2008.
ASSESS MAPPING ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

- Zapata county has seen the most dramatic increase in wages in both sectors, 314 percent in manufacturing wages and 38 percent in supply chain wages from 2001 to 2008.
- The entire region can expect growth in manufacturing jobs.
- The region can expect 6,250 new supply chain jobs during the 2006-2016 period.
- The Rio South Texas population is expected to grow by more than 20 percent from 2008 to 2015.
- The existing Rio South Texas industry clusters encompass more than 2,500 companies.
- Of the traffic flowing through those four ports, 68 percent of the import products (in terms of product value) flowed through the Rio South Texas land ports. Likewise, 81 percent of export products (in terms of product value) flowed through the Rio South Texas land ports.

This assessment mapping report provides significant data and analysis that will help the leadership team develop its strategic plan. The data presented serves as the basis for the next step in the creation and implementation of the team’s strategic plan.

The asset mapping process was completed in May 2009 and is detailed in the report. The University of Texas Pan American is the host site for the website www.riosouthtexasassetmapping.com. The data in the report was updated in September 2010.
**REGIONAL TARGETED INDUSTRY CLUSTER STRATEGY**

The regional leadership identified Advanced Manufacturing as a key strategy to transform the economy in the region.

**Why manufacturing?**

Manufacturing brings wealth to a community. The manufacturing industry has a high indirect multiplier (261). This industry will bring high skill, high wages to the region. Per capita income drives economic prosperity in a community. Since the region’s per capita income is below the state and national average, this was a key factor in the development of a regional plan to target.

### Per Capita Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>$16,854</td>
<td>$17,390</td>
<td>$18,316</td>
<td>$19,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starr</td>
<td>$12,487</td>
<td>$13,074</td>
<td>$13,854</td>
<td>$15,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webb</td>
<td>$19,484</td>
<td>$20,262</td>
<td>$21,423</td>
<td>$22,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zapata</td>
<td>$15,381</td>
<td>$16,318</td>
<td>$17,637</td>
<td>$18,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Hogg</td>
<td>$23,573</td>
<td>$24,698</td>
<td>$27,298</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>$34,690</td>
<td>$36,794</td>
<td>$38,615</td>
<td>$40,166</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Texas Workforce Commission LMI (Per capita personal income: [www.bea.gov](http://www.bea.gov)*

Historically, the Rio South Texas Region has been identified as a rural, agricultural-based economy characterized by sporadic growth. In the past 10 years, the region, comprised of seven counties, has overcome a variety of challenges from high unemployment rates, low educational attainment and cultural bias to become one of the fastest growing economic areas in the United States. The McAllen-Mission-Pharr MSA, Brownsville-Harlingen MSA and Laredo MSA are among the fastest growing metropolitan statistical areas in the United States. In 2009, the region registered employment growth rates greater than the state average with developing counties Webb, Hidalgo and Cameron making a mark on the national scene. A significant opportunity now exists to leverage the current economic vitality to profoundly and positively impact the Region’s quality of life and long-term economic competitiveness.
REGIONAL TARGETED INDUSTRY CLUSTER STRATEGY

Talent development strategies are vital to achieving significant and sustained economic transformation. Talent Development and Innovation ranked as the number one driver of global manufacturing competitiveness in a study conducted by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu and the U.S. Council on Competitiveness. Regional talent development partnerships represent the foundation on which can be built a strong, sustainable, transformational strategy guiding the area toward economic prosperity in today’s global economy. The region currently boasts a strong workforce partnership network that is focused on addressing the challenges of developing the talent needed to compete in the global economy. These groups believe that the key to regional transformation is a coherent strategic plan integrating workforce, innovation and economic development in the region that will address the existing and projected need for skilled and trained workers, particularly in the advanced manufacturing sector.

Source: Deloitte and U.S. Council on Competitiveness 2010 Global Manufacturing Competitiveness Index
NAAMREI REGIONAL PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

NAAMREIADOPTS 2010-2012 STRATEGIC PLAN

The three alliances worked collaboratively to develop the 2010-2012 Strategic Plans for the region. A strategic planning workshop was held in September at the University of Texas Pan American to finalize the plan. The NAAMREI Core Leadership Team and Rio South Texas Economic Council participated in the workshop.

NAAMREI ATTAINED AN EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE RATING

NAAMREI successfully implemented 28 out of 30 of the USDOL/WIRED project. The region’s accountability framework identified 30 milestones in six categories:

1) Education/Training, 2) Entrepreneurship Training/Development, 3) Partnership Building, 4) Workforce Development, 5) Business Outreach and Engagement and 6) Capacity Building. NAAMREI surpassed/met 28 of the 30 milestones and made substantial progress toward the Business Outreach and Capacity Building categories that were impacted by the recession. The 2 milestones not attained by September 2010 have been incorporated in the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan. The regional transformation is evidenced by the region continually being ranked top in the nation in job growth. The leadership attributes the growth to the region’s focus on the expanding the Advanced Manufacturing workforce.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Surpassed Target</th>
<th>Met Target</th>
<th>*Substantial Progress</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship Training/Development</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership Building</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce Development</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Outreach Engagement</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Building</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Performance Rating: Exemplary 90-100, Recognized 80-89, Acceptable 70-79, and unacceptable 69 and below.
The formation of the Rio South Texas Workplace Literacy Council was a major initiative of the NAAMREI Implementation Plan. Laredo Community College and the NAAMREI Corporate Office worked with the three Workforce Development Boards (Lower Rio Grande Valley WDB, Cameron County WDB, and South Texas WDB). The Texas Workforce Investment Council invited members of the Council to present the mission and goals of the Council. They were very interested how the region aligned the plan with the stakeholders. The Council is led by the Workforce Development Boards in the Rio South Texas Region.

**NAAMREI Launches Rio South Texas Asset Mapping Website**
Regional Multi-Modal Center for South Texas

In spite of the economic downturn, the Rail Intermodal Project progressed well during the past three years. In the second quarter of 2009, the environmental clearance was completed. In the following quarter, MEDC worked in partnership with the City of McAllen to obtain a TIGER Grant for funding of the construction phase. Even though the TIGER Grant was not approved, in the second quarter of 2010 MEDC announced the going out to bid for Phase 1 of the project, which includes construction of the access road from 23rd St. to the McAllen Foreign Trade Zone. The bid for the first phase of the project was put out this quarter with hopes that Phase 1 will be fully operational by 2011. The following photos illustrate how the entire multi-modal project will operate and benefit the area.

Proposed Service Areas

RoadRailer® trailers provide a slack-free ride on the rail. Triple Crown dedicated trains can transport up to 150 trailers per train.
Auto Project

The project to locate an auto assembly plant in McAllen, TX has gradually progressed during the past three years. Although the entire project currently has been put on hold until further notice by the company, several milestones were accomplished to secure the plant. In the first quarter of 2009, several local McAllen delegates presented testimony before Texas State legislature to ask for incentive funding for the project. Hopes for the company were to break ground on a new “green” line of vehicles by October 2009. After the company secured funding for the project, the City of McAllen performed final due diligence in preparation to offer local incentives to the company. As incentive negotiations progressed throughout 2009, the McAllen Economic Development hoped to make a commitment announcement in 2010. In the first quarter of 2010, MEDC was made aware the entire project had been put on hold until further notice by the company. McAllen economic officials remain hopeful that with the economic recovery, the goal to locate an auto assembly plant in McAllen, TX will be reached more easily.

Designated Site for Auto Project
Alps General Manager/Director of International Business Division visits McAllen

On September 15, 2009 Mr. Kazuyoshi Saeki, the General Manager/Director of Alps International Business Division, visited McAllen, TX in preparation of an upcoming trip to Japan. A group of academic and economic development leaders planned to visit Japan to meet with the Chairman of Alps Electrics for a showcase of Alps Research and Development Facility along with their operation and educational training program. The goal of the visit was to learn and implement a similar model at the future Research Park in McAllen, TX.

Companies look to McAllen and U.S./Mexico border for refuge from recession

A local newspaper article, The Monitor, showed in effort to recover from the recession, companies such as ALPS Automotive Inc., Fujitsu Ten Corp. and Panasonic Electronic Devices Corp. are moving large portions of their businesses from the Midwest and the South to McAllen. By incorporating the strategic location of McAllen, TX, companies are hoping to save money, streamline operations and remain competitive and near customers.

McAllen ranks #1 among Forbes “Top Cities for Jobs”

The summer 2009 edition of Workforce Solutions showed McAllen ranked #1 among Forbes “Top Cities for Jobs” (mid-sized cities) based on 2008 job growth statistics. The article reports experts agree this strong foundation continues to make Texas the bright spot in the nation during these difficult economic times.

McAllen emerges from recession to recovery

On October 2009, the Moody’s Report announced McAllen as one out of seven cities in the state of Texas to emerge from recession to recovery. The report is calculated by a monthly Adversity Index, which uses data on employment, industrial production, housing starts and home prices. In the same month, the CNN Money Report ranked McAllen MSA among the top 25 metro areas for fastest small business growth and 16th among midsize metro areas for the best places to launch a small business in 2009.

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<th>Rank</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Madison, WI</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14.05%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: M.S. Census Bureau 2007 County Business Patterns*
Pentair Supplier Expo held at South Texas College

As a way to help companies recover from the economic downturn, the McAllen Economic Development Corporation joined with the South Texas College team to sponsor a one day supplier expo for Pentair, a global water systems and technology provider with more than 15,000 employees in 20 countries. Pentair sought to reduce costs by localizing its supply base by using services and ordering commodities from companies within a 24-hour delivery radius. During the one-day event at the STC Technology Campus, companies from throughout the Rio Grande Valley and Northern Mexico had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with supply managers from Pentair. Several people walked away with contracts and commented how crucial networking sometimes proves difficult when companies have headquarters located elsewhere.

Educators and Economic Development leaders travel to Japan and Korea

During the first week of November 2009, local economic officials and educators from the Rio Grande Valley traveled to Korea and Japan to visit with prospective companies and meet the leadership team at ALPS, a global leader in the manufacturing of electronic components and switches. Mr. Keith Patridge, President/CEO of McAllen Economic Development Corporation, stated, “This outreach strategy is critical to discuss the advantages of our region with the decision-makers face-to-face in their country.”

In addition to building new contacts, Mr. Kataoka, President of Alps Electric Co. LTD, hopes to start an exchange program for Rio Grande Valley students and instructors to study at the ALPS facility in Japan with potential job opportunities within the McAllen/Reynosa operations. He unveiled the idea to representatives from STC and UTPA during the visit. Overall, the visit resulted in promising opportunities for the near future of the Rio South Texas region.

Anzalduas International Bridge Inauguration

The President of Mexico, Felipe Calderon, and U.S. Trade Representative, Ron Kirk, officially inaugurated the Anzalduas International Bridge on January 11, 2010. The $168 million dollar bridge connects Mission and McAllen, TX to the industrial hub of Reynosa, Mexico. The bridge features technology that aims to speed safe crossings and is the first bridge to open along the
border in 10 years. Currently, the bridge serves only non-commercial traffic, but is expected to save visitors more than 45 minutes if they are coming from Monterrey or cities south. During the inauguration, local officials in the area advocated for the approval of commercial traffic. Managers of local manufacturing plants in McAllen/Reynosa have indicated that commercial on Anzalduas International Bridge would greatly reduce costs and will allow them to operate more efficiently.

Emerging Technology Fund Awarded to UTPA

During the first quarter of 2010, the State of Texas awarded more than $3 million to the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) for advanced rapid response manufacturing. The state continues to recognize the importance of remaining competitive in business. Governor Rick Perry visited the university to announce the $3.4 million award to UTPA and two South Texas businesses. The grant will be used to recruit researchers to establish and oversee a world-class advanced manufacturing center. The university and private investors will match the state’s contribution, making the total investment more than $9 million.

Rio South Texas Economic Council works with partners to market the region

On March 30-31, 2010 the Rio South Texas Economic Council (RSTEC) partnered with Bexar County Economic Development and the McAllen Economic Development Corporation to host a Chinese Delegation of 15 members. The purpose of their visit was to strengthen relations with other regional partners and market the Rio South Texas Region to potential Chinese investors. The Rio South Texas delegation hosted a “Texas-style” dinner followed by insightful morning presentations from RSTEC and the Chinese group.

$300,000 grant awarded for the America’s Third Coast Research and Education Park

On May 2010, Congressman Hinojosa’s office awarded $300,000 for the initial stage of the America’s Third Coast Research and Education Park. The funds will assist in developing the master planning process and establishing the design criteria for a series of interconnected University Centers of Innovation focused on Advanced Manufacturing in the Rio South Texas economic region.
Rio South Texas Region Landing on 'Best Places' Lists in a Number of Areas

According to an article in the PRNewswire, the Rio South Texas Region, a largely unknown and often overlooked area of the United States, is not only starting to get noticed, but is also earning national rankings as the place to live, get a job, go to college and start a business. The region is currently the third largest market in Texas, the 23rd largest market in the country and the largest U.S./Mexico border region in America. The article goes on to list some of the most successful rankings for the region such as: McAllen ranked 7th in the sixth annual ranking of safest cities (Farmers Insurance Group, December, 2009); University of Texas Pan American ranked No. 32 in the top 100 list for "America's Best Public Colleges" (Forbes.com, September, 2009); and the McAllen MSA ranked 7th as America's Best-Bang-For-The-Buck Cities (Forbes.com, November, 2009).

MEDC attends the Society of Auto Engineers show in Detroit

Members of the McAllen Economic Development staff, along with numerous communities from Texas, attended the Society of Auto Engineers (SAE) conference and expo in Detroit, Michigan in April 2010. The conference tailors to the auto manufacturing industry and helps connect the leaders in the industry. The staff met with several companies and engineers who showed an interest in the McAllen MSA. Attendance at the show created potential leads for the area.

NAAMREI receives Honorable Mention Award at the 2010 IEDC Annual Conference

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) awarded McAllen Economic Development Corporation with two awards of excellence at its annual conference held Sept. 26 to 29 in Columbus, Ohio. McAllen Economic Development Corporation received an Excellence in Economic Development Award for their New Media Strategy in the category of New Media for communities with populations of 25,000–200,000. In addition, McAllen EDC received an Honorable Mention for Excellence in Economic Development for the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research & Education Initiative in the category of Partnerships with Educational Institutions for communities with populations of 25,000–200,000.

“We recognize the McAllen Economic Development Corporation for providing successful strategies to promote new paradigms in economic development in this period of global recovery,” said William Best, IEDC chair. “Our awards honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in communities. The McAllen Economic Development Corporation is showing that they are at the forefront of the economic development profession and are using innovative and effective practices that can be replicated in other communities.”
INTRODUCTION TO ALLIANCES

The NAAMREI network consists of three major alliances from the Rio South Texas Region; North American Technology Innovation Alliance (changed to Rio South Texas University & Innovation Alliance), Rio South Texas Manufacturing College Alliance and Region One Education Service Center T-STEM Alliance.

CORPORATE MODEL

The network has established an organizational structure to manage the day to day operations. STC is the home of the corporate headquarters. Through the Alliances, the Strategic Plan’s strategic goals and activities are implemented. The NAAMREI Core Leadership Team is comprised of members from each alliance.
STRATEGIC GOAL ONE

The strategic goal of NATIA, the North American Technology and Innovation Alliance, is to strengthen the manufacturing and regional advanced technology base through Rapid Response Manufacturing (RRM) and targeted RRM-based industries to sustain economic growth and prosperity.

BACKGROUND

NATIA led the WIRED Strategic Goal One action team. NATIA is a research and development alliance led by The University of Texas Pan American. The alliance focused on reversing the critical loss of high-paid technical engineering and manufacturing jobs in North America to other parts of the world. NATIA collaborated with companies to foster rapid-response, service-based design and production to address customer demands to compete with organizations in the global competition for economic development.

NATIA accomplished its goal through the development and support of three Action Teams:

1. Industry and Talent Development Action Team
2. Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Action Team
3. North American Advanced Manufacturing and Education Park Action Team

The Industry and Talent Development Action Team was composed of representatives from the manufacturing industry and from the universities of the Rio South Texas Region. There were 22 companies, five universities, three regional colleges, and the Region One Education Service Center that had representatives on the ITD Action Team. This team worked to innovate interactions that would lead to stronger interactions between industry and academia in order to reach the goal of establishing the Rio South Texas Region as the hub of Rapid Response Advanced manufacturing.

The Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Action team was formed from the Technology Based Entrepreneurship Action team and the Economic Development Action Team in order to bring the entrepreneurs and key regional leaders of economic development to facilitate the establishment of new businesses.

The North American Advanced Manufacturing and Education Park Action Team supported the development of the planning for the North American Research and Education World Premier Park on 280 acres in McAllen, Texas. The industrial park will house a regional center for Rapid Response Manufacturing. The park will play a key role in positioning the region as the “Third Coast” for international trade and major distribution hub for North America.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Ricardo Gutierrez, was on hand April, 4, 2008 for the RRMC grand opening. Some 350 people from the community, including leaders such as Congressmen Hinojosa, Cuellar, and Ortiz along with University President Blandina Cardenas attended the ceremony.

- The RRMC hosted a visit in May, 2008 from the president of ALPS Automotive, which resulted in ALPS relocating their North American headquarters from Michigan to the Rio South Texas Region.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- The center worked with Zella and Brian Hannum of NovaSearch Consultants to develop a strategic plan for the technology based entrepreneurship program for the Rio South Texas Region. The RRMC was a party to all three entrepreneurship boot camps that were held during the period. They were well attended and the RRMC has subsequently worked with many entrepreneurs over the course of this program.

- Lean Master Academy and Six Sigma training was conducted. 84 students were trained during this program and many local companies have benefited from the projects.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- $3,842,492.25 was collected as leveraged funds through the NATIA members.
- STEM camps were held in conjunction with Region I Educational Center. Camps benefitted students, teachers and counselors.

INTEnD Classes have continued to grow and flourish, presenting students with the challenges and experiences of working on dispersed teams, and facing geographical, time, culture, language, and other obstacles, while working together on industrial projects. During the period of the grant, our partner with UTPA has been Shan Dong University in China.

- Asset mapping of the Rio South Texas Region was complete, listing critical functions and processes by location, size, capability, and can be accessed by both EDCs and organizations looking to relocate to the region.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Incubated Fiberio Technology, the first UTPA commercialization of research. Fiberio is a start-up company that is working to produce nano fibers.

- Conducted 112 company outreach visits during the project, resulting in several company relationships and learning experiences for UTPA students.

- Initiated several communication venues, including a website and Facebook profile.
North American Technology & Innovation Alliance

SUCCESS STORIES

- Helped to launch businesses throughout the Rio South Texas region.
- Completed several industrial projects that have benefitted both companies and students. Projects have included factors in process, quality, product, industrial, medical, and entrepreneur.
- Acquired new technology, such as rapid prototyping, hand scanning and full body scanning to benefit local companies and students.

- Used technology to overcome border issues and travel bans to Mexico to work virtually with companies into Mexico. Also focused on US-based manufacturers, to maintain steady project work with manufacturing companies.
- Working with SUNY, Stony Brook on a wireless technology project to innovate the medical tissue transport evaluation process.
- Worked collaboratively with partners throughout the Rio South Texas region from Laredo to Brownsville on a number of projects. Contacts remain in place and will be called on for many years into the future.
SUCCESS STORIES

- In January 2010, Governor Perry visited UTPA to announce that the university was awarded $3.25M from the Texas Emerging Technology Fund. The money is to be part of a larger pool of funds which is expected to total over $9M and will be in support of the Rapid Response Manufacturing Center, its faculty, and drive its ability to have a major leadership impact on the economic power of Texas as a world leader in Advanced Manufacturing. The fund will enable UTPA to bring in world class researchers in the various aspects of Advanced Manufacturing, and to create a vibrant culture of innovation in advanced manufacturing.

- Global leadership in Rapid Response Advanced Manufacturing is the ultimate goal for the Rapid Response Manufacturing Center. We wrote and published a white paper on the concept of Rapid Response Advanced Manufacturing. We were successful in getting copy to the White House Office of Science and Technology for information in support of their upcoming report on Advanced Manufacturing. We are proud that we are indeed reaching the highest levels of strategic planning in North America.
North American Technology & Innovation Alliance

TESTIMONIALS

SPI GO GREEN:

South Padre Island Dec 04, 2010

To whom it may concern

SPI Go Green LLC is a full integrator of renewable energy technologies for residential and commercial application.

We operate in the Rio Grande Valley and the Rapid Response Manufacturing Center has been an extraordinary resource of information and network opportunity.

Thanks to the Rapid Response Manufacturing Center, we were able to meet our partner and open a corporation in McAllen under the name Valley Total Management Inc.

Best regards

Gianluca Ferrario
Owner

BETTCHER INDUSTRIES:

Bettcher Manufacturing is excited about continuing to work with the UTPA Rapid Response Prototype Manufacturing Team on continued development of the Digital Scanning software that allows us to reverse engineer many of our tool and die components. When fully developed, this will be a resource that will be available in the Rio Grande Valley that does not exist at this time. The UTPA team has made great progress and I am confident that you are close to being ready to commercially introduce this service to local businesses.

Regards

Phillip Rimes
President
Bettcher Manufacturing LLC
TESTIMONIALS

BLACK AND DECKER

The Rapid Response Manufacturing Center has been very beneficial to the factories in the Rio Grande Valley / Mexico area. We have received help from students in terms of projects related to dielectric testing for professional DeWalt power tools. We are also going to use training support from RRMC in the upcoming months.

Regards,
Kavit Antani

Director of Manufacturing Engineering
Stanley Black & Decker
Reynosa, Mexico / McAllen, TX
P: 888-567-3670 Ext. 5244

KING’S PROSPERITY

KING’S PROSPERITY INDUSTRIES LLC
PLASTIC MOLDING

December 3, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:
King’s Prosperity Industries of Texas would like to thank the Rapid Response Manufacturing Center for the support it has provided in the past. Recently; with the assistance of the INTEnD group King’s Prosperity Industries of Texas implemented the Statistical Process Control in our operations which will enable us to monitor our production process.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact me at (956)631-1115.

Sincerely,

Jose L. Garza
King’s Prosperity L.P.
General Manager
STRATEGY TWO

Develop a globally competitive manufacturing workforce through a regional customized manufacturing training system that uses innovative curricula to credential the skills and knowledge needed to compete in a global economy in a sustainable manner.

This goal will be achieved through a system that uses innovative curriculum to increase the skill level of incumbent and new workers that will provide the labor supply needed to attract and expand the manufacturing base in the region.

BACKGROUND

The Rio South Texas Manufacturing Alliance is charged with leading implementation of this strategic goal. The Alliance was established in 2000 to implement a regional apprenticeship programs for tool and die, industrial maintenance, machining and plastics. South Texas College is the lead agency. The Alliance includes representatives from The University of Texas-Brownsville/Texas Southmost College, Laredo Community College, Texas State Technical College, Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center, WorkFORCE Solutions, Cameron Works, South Texas Workforce Board, South Texas Manufacturers Association, Harlingen Manufacturers Association and Brownsville Area Manufacturers Association.

The Alliance has established four manufacturing institutes across the region and has leveraged over $9M in federal, state and local funds to implement a regional customized manufacturing training delivery system.

Leaders in the Alliance meet monthly online via Cisco WebEx to collaborate, share best practices and to ensure compliance with the region’s strategic goals.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Established four regional manufacturing training institutes: South Texas College, Laredo Community College, Texas State Technical College and The University of Texas-Brownsville/TSC.

- Established the Rio South Texas Workplace Literacy Council. The Council has created a regional action plan for implementing a literacy center on every college campus within the region. Laredo Community College is the lead college in this initiative.

- Provided cross-industry facilities maintenance training to 104 employers and 181 trainees.

- Developed three skills credentialing training programs: Industrial Maintenance, Facilities Maintenance and Quality.

- Trained 2,403 individuals through the Texas Workforce Commission Skills Development Fund Program.

- 422 new/incumbent workers attained skills certification in the following content areas: Leadership, welding, industrial maintenance and apprenticeship.

- 994 new/incumbent workers received an industry skill certificate through employer contract customized training programs.

- Created a consistent online medium for conducting regional alliance meetings.
STC, TMAC provide Six Sigma to area manufacturers

South Texas College’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and the Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center at The University of Texas-Pan American has graduated a Six Sigma class in early June. Through this partnership, STC and TMAC have offered world-class training to Maquila manufacturing employees from ALPS Automotive, EMU Plastics, GE Engine Services, Motorola and Springs Global that have lead to savings of thousands of dollars at each company.

For his Six Sigma project, Supplier Quality Development Engineer Alejandro Castillo of ALPS Automotive reviewed the shipping/receiving activities at Alpine with the intention of cutting freight costs by at least 25 percent and saving more than $600,000. By consolidating shipments between the company’s Asian facilities, Castillo significantly dropped freight costs to the company’s California location.

Castillo rerouted East Coast and Midwest shipments, saving even more money. He asked for new quotes from freight lines and found a better price. Coordinating with local manufacturing managers in his Six Sigma class, Castillo helped arrange consolidated shipments in the US.

“We all share common ship to and from locations so overall, we could see a total yearly savings after project implementation of around $1.25 million,” said Castillo. “That’s better than a 50 percent reduction in freight costs and money the company can use to make improvements in another facet of our business.”

At Springs Global, Mike Hill took a different path when applying Six Sigma to the textile maker and distributor.
SUCCESS STORIES/TESTIMONIALS

“We expect to use the methodology to improve the cash receipt cycle with our Reynosa facility.” He explained. “By speeding cash receipts, we bring an immediate cash flow to the company and avoid borrowing costs.”

Hill plans other projects that directly affect cash flow at Springs.

“Six Sigma projects are geared to reducing the cost of poor quality” said Gary Steele, TMAC’s Six Sigma instructor. “The emphasis is on doing things right the first time. A key part of Six Sigma is the DMAIC method: define, measure, analyze, improve and control. Participants in the 160-hour class selected projects that would reduce variation in their respective companies’ products or services to save money.”

Students complete year-long intense training program

Four local manufacturing employees have been awarded a plaque for successfully completing an intense year long program offered through a partnership with South Texas College’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing (IAM) and the University of Texas Pan American’s Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center (TMAC).

The APICS – CPIM program was designed to prepare these students for a national certification in the areas of operations management, production, inventory, supply chain, materials management, purchasing and logistics.

“This is the first time the college and university have partnered together to offer this type of high-level training to area manufacturers,” said Ricardo Olivares, project training specialist for IAM.

STC understands that companies in the Rio South Texas region are in need of employees with APICS training.
SUCCESS STORIES/TESTIMONIALS

“APICS - CPIM is the most popular program because of the great demand by many manufacturing companies in the McAllen and Reynosa areas,” said Neil Christiansen APICS instructor and senior manufacturing specialist for TMAC.

“It’s great to see employees increase their value and use their newly acquired skills to stay competitive in today’s tough job market,” said Carlos Margo regional manager for IAM.

“Our department is continuously expanding the courses offered through our partnerships and is aggressively utilizing innovative curriculums to service the region’s employers,” added Margo.

This is another successful program made available to the region’s manufacturing companies through the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI).

The Rio South Texas Manufacturing College Alliance continues to develop new and innovative ways to provide world-class technology training to its consortium partners throughout the region. The Alliance is a model in its proactive approach to training techniques that have led to great results. Currently, several companies are requesting onsite training to accommodate a heavy work schedule while receiving training.

As part of TSTC Corporate College's continuing efforts to provide relevant skills training, TSTC's Engineering Department and Workforce Solutions Cameron have joined forces to provide real-world training in deconstruction training.

Laredo continues to serve as the lead institute for the Rio South Texas Workplace Literacy Council. The two other centers, South Texas College (McAllen, TX) and the University of Texas-Brownsville/Texas Southmost College (Brownsville, TX) continue to develop their workplace literacy projects.
SUCCESS STORIES/TESTIMONIALS

Rio Grande Pak Foods employees learn fire safety

Fifteen employees from Rio Grande Pak Foods earned a certificate in fire safety through South Texas College’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing. The onsite training consisted of understanding the elements that can start a fire and what prevention methods are used to combat and safely put out a fire.

“This was the first time for Rio Grande Pak Foods provide this type of training,” said Leticia Cisneros, supervisor for Rio Grande Pak Foods. “It was very educational and I’m reassured that my employees will know what to do in case of a fire.”

With chemical processing and controlled substances being used every day at manufacturing facilities, a fire can break out at anytime and employees need to be aware of fire danger signs and what measures to take to control and end a fire. During the intense heat of the summer months, facilities also see increased risks of fires erupting.

“I taught students about the classes of fire, explained the difference between the types of fire extinguishers on the market and what class of fire each type of extinguisher can put out,” said Ricardo...
SUCCESS STORIES/TESTIMONIALS

Olivares, STC IAM instructor. “It is important to know what type of extinguisher to use in the different classes of fire.”

At the end of the training, students were tested on ability to recall the different types of fires and what extinguishers to use. STC’s IAM will now collaborate with Rio Pak to design and implement a fire prevention plan and escape route.

According to OSHA, even with modern firefighting techniques, accidental fires still remain a leading cause of destruction, disability and death. Each year more than 5,000 people are killed by fires, more than 80,000 people are injured by fires, and businesses are impacted by more than 11 billion dollars in fire-related damage.

“These employees now have the knowledge of what to do in case a fire breaks out. Safety, especially in today’s global, fast-paced economy, should be the number one priority for all businesses,” concluded Olivares. “And we are making it easier than ever for companies to train employees in the proper techniques to handle a variety of crisis situations by offering these types of trainings on-site.”

This is another successful project funded by the Texas Workforce Commission Skills Development Grant under NAAMREI.

Machining courses proving vital for local employees

South Texas College’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing has seen a boost in the number of employees taking machining courses at its Technology Campus in McAllen. Several manufacturing companies under the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative Skills Development Grant are utilizing funds to obtain highly specialized training.

Merardo Contreras, parts processor for GE Engine Services of McAllen, learns how to operate a surface grinder from Douglas Schelbert, STC training Specialist.
SUCCESS STORIES/TESTIMONIALS

GE Engines Services, King’s Prosperity, EMU Plastics are sending employees for machining courses to gain a fundamental understanding of shop safety, setup, tolerancing and machine operation.

“Machining is one of the most important material removal methods and is a collection of material-working processes in which power-driven machine tools, such as lathes, milling machines, and drill presses are used with a sharp cutting tool to mechanically cut the material to achieve the desired geometry,” said Douglas Schelbert, STC training specialist. “Our students gain an understanding that all these elements are crucial to manufacturing a quality product.”

STC’s Technology Campus houses more than 30 pieces of high-tech machinery commonly found in manufacturing companies across the Rio South Texas Region. The training allows companies to send students to learn required skills without having to outsource or hire a consultant to train employees, which can be costly.

“With the institute strategically located in the McAllen Foreign Trade Zone, it makes training convenient for employees from manufacturing companies to learn skills and gain valuable hands on experience,” said Rick Olivares, STC IAM project training specialist.

“I am excited that I had the opportunity to improve my skills at STC and now I have what it takes to move up within the company,” said Celestina Gomez, a GE Engine Services employee.

“STC is proud to be the premier manufacturing training institution in the region, helping employees upgrade their skills right in their back yards,” said Carlos Margo, STC IAM regional training manager. “We will continue to provide innovative trainings to ensure area employees are prepared to compete in a global market.”
STRATEGIC GOAL THREE

T-STEM Alliance

The T-STEM Alliance’s main goal is to meet the statewide goal of developing the nation’s leading innovation economy workforce by aligning middle and high school curriculum, and post-secondary education with admission requirements of competitive colleges and the STEM qualifications for 21st century careers.

BACKGROUND

The T-STEM Center of South Texas (El Centro Del Futuro) was established in 2007 with the premise that STEM education is the foundation on which America’s leadership in innovation and its economic prominence rest. El Centro del Futuro serves teachers, administrators, and students of T-STEM Academies and non-STEM districts (37 school districts) and its main initiatives are to:

- concentrate state and local efforts for improving math and science achievement among Texas students;

- ensure that Texas students thrive in the 21st century economy by studying and entering into STEM fields;

- maintain a focus of providing on-going and sustainable STEM staff development that focuses on the integration of technological tools or resources, the engineering design process, and math and science content standards for teachers and administrators, and

- Expose students to STEM careers through summer programs or internships so students discover the relevance of a STEM education as it relates to the global workforce.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS/SUCCESS STORIES

- Provided staff development training for over 1500 teachers, administrators, and central office staff per year from Regions One and Two within the last three years on Problem Based Learning, Math and Science Proficiency sessions, working with English Language Learners in a STEM environment, Robotics for Elementary and Secondary Coaches/Teachers, Capstones, and Internships, and Connecting Math and Science, TI-NSPIRES, TI-Navigators, Labquest, and other technological applications.

- Developed a STEM-focused, four-week Intensive Summer Program for La Joya ISD middle school students featuring engineering practices and hands-on activities in Robotics, Rocketry, Construction, Wind Energy and Space

- Provided STEM Best Practices camps for teachers and students (e.g., Engineering 101, Health and Science Med-Ed Camp, Robotics, Engineering is Elementary, Engineering Design Process, Six Sigma, Engineering for Girls, Boys in Health Careers, Gender Equity. etc...)
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS/SUCCESS STORIES

- Developed systemic STEM-focused professional development for Migrant teachers to enhance Mathematics and Science content and students putting technology into the students’ hands and expanding the curriculum to include hands-on technological activities
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS/SUCCESS STORIES

- Hosted 2nd Annual STEM Best Practices Conference at South Padre Island for districts across the state in collaboration with five other T-STEM Centers in January 2009. STEM teachers and administrators networked and learned best practices in educating students in STEM curricula.

- Presented Best Practices Pedagogy at statewide STEM conferences.

- Collaboratively developed and planned with GEAR UP at Region One ESC and UTPA to deliver professional development to 44 school districts on Math and Science Initiatives.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS/SUCCESS STORIES

- Provided elementary and middle school students with STEM curriculum lessons at the STEM Center and pre-arranged tours of the Engineering Building at the University of Texas at Pan American, Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center (TMAC), and Rapid Response Center (RRC) or at the International Museum of Science (IMAS).

- Arranged a STEM Mentor Program between the College of Engineering at the University of Texas at Pan American and the T-STEM Center for STEM Academies that participated competitively in First Robotics, BEST Robotics, or Lego Robotics Competitions across the state.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS/SUCCESS STORIES

Designed STEM Camps in collaboration with the MED-ED Program at the University of Texas at San Antonio Rio Grande Valley Program, Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center, Rapid Response Center and the Engineering Department at the University of Texas at Pan American to target the career clusters of (Health and Science, STEM, Engineering, and Manufacturing).

- Participated with the South Texas Engineering Alliance Meetings in order to promote and host local and regional engineering and design competitions in the South Texas Region.
- Participated in the NAAMREI Leadership Meeting to strategically plan for systemic change in the region that promotes advanced manufacturing within the region.
- Provided STEM Camps to non-STEM districts.
- Participated in Robotics and Teacher Days during UTPA HESTEC Week.
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS/SUCCESS STORIES

- Collaboratively and cooperatively planned and designed Problem/Project Based Learning staff development to the participants in the STEM Cluster Trainings offered to STEM Academies across the state to encourage and empower teachers to become innovative in the methodologies for teaching STEM courses. Dr. John Lloyd, Rapid Response Center Director and Mrs. Lisa Cavazos, MED-ED Program Director assisted in planning the training for the teachers.

- Provided wrap-around support for the twelve STEM Academies assigned to the T-STEM Center of South Texas (e.g., instructional coaching, customized professional development, technical assistance)

- One of our local STEM Academies (Valley View High School STEM Academy/ECHS) was recognized by winning the Magna Award (National School Board Award).

- Participated in STEM Tours across Ohio and learned about the STEM Fellows Program/HUB Network that invites community participation to increase partnerships and develop STEM awareness and understanding across the state of Ohio
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS/SUCCESS STORIES

The NAAMREI Wired Network has evolved into an innovative culture that combines creative talents and strategies to deliberately plan strategic directions that will develop and support the economic workforce in this region. We have grown to respect, trust, and work as a five star team to support and enhance each others’ contributions and performance towards the common vision of developing the Rio South Texas Region’s advanced manufacturing infrastructure. It is through our efforts and partnerships that we have gained uncommon results that improve educational access and success for all of our students thus, further impacting the region in a positive manner.
Performance Rating: Exemplary 90-100, Recognized 80-89, Acceptable 70-79, and Unacceptable 69 and below.
## A. GRANTEE IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantee Name:</th>
<th>State of Texas Office of the Governor South Texas College (Fiscal Agent/Regional Lead)</th>
<th>Grant Number:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WR-15999-07-60-A-48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## GRANTEE RESULT: Progress Report Planning and Development Milestones (Year 3 Cumulative)

### Category 1: Education/Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1, 2 &amp; 3 Targets</th>
<th>Year 3 Previous Cumulative /QTR</th>
<th>Year 3 Current/QTR Date</th>
<th>Year 3 Cumulative Grant to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. 90% of 100 students participating in the INTEND and Lean Sigma academies will obtain course credit, attain a industrial certificate and upon graduation from UTPA will enter the workforce or pursue graduate studies</strong></td>
<td>90 Students</td>
<td>56 engineering students enrolled in INTEnD. 54 completed the course and attained Industry Certificate.</td>
<td>21 UTPA Students enrolled in INTEnD program. 21 anticipated to complete course in December 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Milestone: 1.2 (h)**

- 84 engineering students enrolled in the Lean Master Course and 83 completed course/attained Industry certificates.
- Enrolled: 161
- Active: 21
- Completion Rate: 98%
- Employment/Graduate Studies Rate: 100%
- Surpassed Target

### Category 2: Establish The Rio South Texas Manufacturing Alliance to provide oversight of the WIRED/TWC Skills Development training program.

|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Milestone: 2.1 (a-c)**

- Council Meetings held: Council met on March 2, 2010 June 8, 2010
- Council Meetings held: Council met on October 14, 2010
- Leveraged: $650,000.00
- Centers Established: Laredo Job Corps Center Goodwill Store in Laredo (training will begin in November)
- Established 4 Workplace Literacy Centers:
  - Laredo Community College
  - Laredo Job Corps Center South Texas College
  - *Goodwill Store in Laredo, TX*
  - Leveraged: $650,000.00
  - Surpassed Target

### Category 3: Rio South Texas Workplace Literacy Council will leverage $2 million dollars to establish three workplace literacy centers in the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organize a Rio South Texas Workplace Literacy Council; Laredo Community College will serve as the lead agency.</th>
<th>Council Meetings held: Council met on October 14, 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Milestone: 2.1 (d)**

- Council met on March 2, 2010 June 8, 2010
- Leveraged: $650,000.00
- Centers Established: Laredo Job Corps Center Goodwill Store in Laredo (training will begin in November)
- Established 4 Workplace Literacy Centers:
  - Laredo Community College
  - Laredo Job Corps Center South Texas College
  - *Goodwill Store in Laredo, TX*
  - Leveraged: $650,000.00
  - Surpassed Target
NAAMREI PERFORMANCE METRICS REPORT 2007-2010 (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 1: Education/Training</th>
<th>Year 1, 2 &amp; 3 Targets</th>
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<th>Year 3 Current/QTR</th>
<th>Year 3 Cumulative Grant to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Establish two Regional College Advanced Manufacturing Training Institutes and two Satellite Centers to provide Training to a minimum of 25 employers in the Rio South Texas Region/provide cross industry; training, (Facilities Maintenance) for related jobs and transferable Skills to manufacturing jobs.</td>
<td>a) 75 employers C) 2 Institutes 1 Satellite Center d) 150 New/Incumbent Workers</td>
<td>a)104 employers c) 4 institutes are operational STC, TSTC, LCC, TSC d) 181 attained Industry Certification</td>
<td>a)No new employers c) 4 institutes are operational STC, TSTC, LCC, TSC d) No training conducted this quarter.</td>
<td>a)104 employers c) 4 institutes are operational STC, TSTC, LCC, TSC d) 181 attained Industry Certification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Milestone: 2.2 (a-d)

5. Curricula developed or revised based on the occupational profiles for the three skills credentialing training programs by 2010.

Milestone: 2.2 (e)

6. Secure $3,000,000 of Skill Development Funds through Texas Workforce Commission and local matching funds to found the WIRED/NAAMREI regional customized training program through which 1,600 new and incumbent workers will complete and attain an industry skills certificate and be employed 90 days upon completion of the training contract be paid equal or greater than prevailing wages.

Milestone: 2.3 (a)
### NAAMREI PERFORMANCE METRICS REPORT 2007-2010 (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Year 3 Current/QTR Date</th>
<th>Year 3 Cumulative Grant to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 7. 50 New and incumbent workers will attain either an USDOL journeyman’s certificate or skills credential certificate. (Industrial Maintenance) | 50 New/Incumbent Workers will attain skills certification:  
- Leadership  
- Welding  
- Industrial Maintenance  
- Apprenticeship | 422 Attained Skills Certification | No classes conducted in this quarter | 422 Attained Skills Certification |
| Milestone: 2.3 (b) | | | | Surpassed Target |
| Milestone: 2.3 (c) | | | | Surpassed Target |
| 9. 75 teachers will enroll to interact with and learn from researchers, instructional leaders and professors recruited by Center so that teachers can increase their content knowledge and improve teaching skills | 75 Teachers | 396 Teachers | 240 Teachers | 935 Teachers |
| Milestone: 3.2 (b) | | | | Surpassed Target |
| 10. 90 Administrators will enroll in professional development activities. | 90 Administrators | 141 Administrators | 78 Administrators | 219 Administrators |
| Milestone: 3.2 (c) | | | | Surpassed Target |
| 11. Leverage $250,000 to expand the Lean Sigma Academy and INTEND program to integrate the P-12 TSTEM Initiatives for Goal Three through more extensive educational opportunities for 20 teachers and 80 P-12 students. | a) 20 Teachers  
b) 70 Students | a) 76 Teachers  
b) 517 Students | a) 26 Teachers  
b) 61 Students | a) 102 Teachers  
b) 578 Students |
<p>| Milestone: 3.2 (d) | | | | Surpassed Target |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 2: Entrepreneurship Training Development</th>
<th>Year 1, 2 &amp; 3 Targets</th>
<th>Year 3 Previous Cumulative /QTR</th>
<th>Year 3 Current/QTR Date</th>
<th>Year 3 Cumulative Grant to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Design the entrepreneurship framework which will include the education program, technical assistance program for technology based entrepreneurs, angel investor network and establish fund by 2010</td>
<td>Identify/Engage Consultant</td>
<td>The Technology Based Entrepreneurship Curriculum has been defined, and will be approved at the next Entrepreneurship Action meeting.</td>
<td>The Technology Based Entrepreneurship Curriculum was defined, at the Fall NATIA (RSTUIA) strategic planning meeting by Dr. Miguel Gonzalez.</td>
<td>Surpassed Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestone: 1.7 (a-b)</td>
<td>Develop Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Conduct two academies to implement entrepreneurial concepts in the educational system with a goal of reaching 100 students.</td>
<td>100 Students</td>
<td>353 Students attended three academies held in 2008-2010</td>
<td>No new activity to report</td>
<td>353 Students attended three academies held in 2008-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestone: 1.7 (c)</td>
<td></td>
<td>A series of joint meetings between UTPA and STC were held to plan Continuing Education Entrepreneurship courses for 2010-2011.</td>
<td></td>
<td>A series of joint meetings between UTPA and STC were held to plan Continuing Education Entrepreneurship courses for 2010-2011.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Category 3: Partnership Building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1, 2 &amp; 3 Targets</th>
<th>Year 3 Previous Cumulative QTR</th>
<th>Year 3 Current/QTR Date</th>
<th>Year 3 Cumulative Grant to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Establish the NAAMREI Consortium</td>
<td>Establish NAAMREI Consortium</td>
<td>Established NAAMREI Consortium 2007</td>
<td>USDOL/Upjohn Institute Evaluation Team identified NAAMREI as one of the top six Gen II &amp; III WIRED projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milestone: 1.1 (a-b)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Category 4: Workforce Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1, 2 &amp; 3 Targets</th>
<th>Year 3 Previous Cumulative /QTR</th>
<th>Year 3 Current/QTR Date</th>
<th>Year 3 Cumulative Grant to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Execute NAAMREI Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of five corporate CEOs identifying rules and responsibilities /will address the workforce needs of the region.</td>
<td>Execute 5 MOU’s by Year 3</td>
<td>The CEO’s of the 5 corporations have joined to Industry and Talent Development Action Team. Success story: Two of the 5 corporations have formed a new joint venture.</td>
<td>The CEO’s of the 5 corporations have joined to Industry and Talent Development Action Team. Success story: Two of the 5 corporations have formed a new joint venture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 5: Business Outreach &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>Year 1, 2 &amp; 3 Targets</td>
<td>Year 3 Previous Cumulative/QTR</td>
<td>Year 3 Current/QTR Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. NAAMREI website will receive 1,000 visitors per month. <strong>Milestone: 1.1 (d)</strong></td>
<td>1000 Visitors per month</td>
<td>1,327 monthly average visitors</td>
<td>1,200 Monthly average visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Conduct two annual employer outreach activities. <strong>Milestone: 1.2 (f)</strong></td>
<td>6 Outreach Activities</td>
<td>102 Employer Outreach activities completed</td>
<td>10 outreach activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Develop Manufacturing Profile map that identifies RRM links for talent development and other services. <strong>Milestone: 1.2 (g)</strong></td>
<td>Secure USDOL Funds</td>
<td>Website activated as of September 20, 2009 USDOL Product Inventory</td>
<td>2009-2010 Asset Mapping Data updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. McAllen Economic Development Corporation in collaboration with Rio South Texas Economic Council (RSTEC) will secure commitment to locate an Auto Assembly Plant in the region by 2010. <strong>Milestone: 1.5 (a)</strong></td>
<td>6 Site Selection Prospects</td>
<td>Entire project has been put on hold until further notice by the company.</td>
<td>Entire project has been put on hold until further notice by the company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Rio South Texas Economic Council will recruit six auto suppliers and create 1,200 new jobs in the region by 2010. <strong>Milestone: 1.5 (d)</strong></td>
<td>a) Create 1,200 new jobs.</td>
<td>a) 648 New Jobs Report only includes Hidalgo County. Final Report will include all counties in the Rio South Texas Region. b) Prior prospects continue to visit McAllen, TX. Several companies are close to closing in the next two quarters. (Rio South Texas Region includes NAFTA Auto Suppliers)</td>
<td>a) 591 New Jobs b) 1 New Job Manconix, an existing automotive supplier company in McAllen, TX, added one new job during the quarter. c) Trico 34 New Jobs d) NAFTA Auto Suppliers in Reynosa, Mexico 406 New Jobs. e) Project Twin in McAllen, TX-150 New Jobs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**NAAMREI PERFORMANCE METRICS REPORT 2007-2010 (CONTINUED)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 6: Capacity Building</th>
<th>Year 1, 2 &amp; 3 Targets</th>
<th>Year 3 Previous Cumulative /QTR</th>
<th>Year 3 Current/QTR Date</th>
<th>Year 3 Cumulative Grant to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. Establish center for RRM and complete fifteen RRM projects in which student participants get hands on experience that provides a global competitive advantage for careers in advanced manufacturing. Milestone: 1.2 (a)</td>
<td>15 Projects</td>
<td>41 Projects completed 2 projects in progress</td>
<td>1 project completed 6 projects in progress 4 projects in negotiation</td>
<td>42 projects completed 6 projects in progress 4 projects in negotiation Surpassed Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Obtain funds to build a center for Rapid Response Manufacturing /NAAMREI Office Headquarters. Milestone: 1.3 (d)</td>
<td>Obtain Funds By 2010</td>
<td>Awarded$300,000.00 Master Planning Grant. Land secured to build facility.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Awarded$300,000.00 Master Planning Grant. Land secured to build facility. Target Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. The FTZ International in McAllen, TX will be fully operational by 2010 for the multi-modal network. Milestone: 1.4 (a-e)</td>
<td>FTZ Fully Operational by 2010</td>
<td>Construction Phase will begin Sept. 2010. Project to be completed by 2011.</td>
<td>Bid has been published for Phase I of the Rail Intermodal Project. This includes construction of the access road portion of the project.</td>
<td>Construction of Phase I will begin 2011. Construction to be completed by 2011. New timeline included in 2010-2012 Strategic Plan. Substantial Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Leverage $250,000.00 to expand the Lean Sigma Academy and INTEND programs. Milestone: 1.2 (k)</td>
<td>$250,000.00</td>
<td>Total Leveraged Funds $599,214.00 None reported</td>
<td>None reported</td>
<td>Funds Leveraged: $599,241.00 Surpassed Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Establish a Regional-TSTEM Alliance that includes partners of NAAMREI. Milestone: 3.1 (a-e)</td>
<td>Quarterly Meetings</td>
<td>Quarterly meeting held on: May 6, 2010</td>
<td>Quarterly meeting held on: September 24, 2010</td>
<td>Quarterly meetings December 2009 February 2010 May 2010 September 2010 Target Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Open a T-STEM Center to better incorporate T-STEM in the K-12 educational curriculum in sustainable matter. Milestone: 3.1 (f)</td>
<td>Open Center</td>
<td>Center Opened 2007</td>
<td>Center Opened 2007 Established 12 TSTEM Academies</td>
<td>Center Opened 2007 Surpassed Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. 540 teachers will enroll in the Professional Development Academies. Milestone: 3.2 (a)</td>
<td>540 Teachers</td>
<td>2,947 Teachers</td>
<td>1,341 Teachers</td>
<td>4,288 Teachers Surpassed Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. 25 school districts will implement curriculum that integrate technology and engineering education with science and math curriculum. Milestone: 3.2 (e)</td>
<td>25 School Districts</td>
<td>81 School Districts/Campuses/STEM Academies</td>
<td>4 New Schools Districts/Campuses/STEM Academies</td>
<td>85 School Districts/Campuses/STEM Academies Surpassed Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. $600,000.00 in funding will be obtained through public and private funds to support T-STEM activities. Milestone: 3.2 (f)</td>
<td>$600,000.00</td>
<td>$2,203,705.00</td>
<td>$17,500.00 Workforce Solutions Robotics Camp</td>
<td>$2,221,205.00 Surpassed Target</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## NAAMREI Leveraged Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Obligated</th>
<th>Who Provided The Funds?</th>
<th>Funds Were Used For.....</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$6,000,000.00</td>
<td>Texas Workforce Commission</td>
<td>Provide Customized Training to 1,600 incumbent and new manufacturing workers. $3,000,000.00 Skills Development Training Fund $3,000,000.00 Employer/Match (Wages).</td>
<td>2007-2010</td>
<td>Q4-Oct-Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$209,176.00</td>
<td>City of McAllen</td>
<td>Expand training capacity for existing and future workforce development training activities conducted by the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing at STC. Train 150 new and incumbent workers.</td>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>Q4-Oct-Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$39,462.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>UTPA/T-STEM Project to support teacher workshops (School of Engineering and Computer Science). Workshops were designed to provide a more extensive understanding of the various Engineering fields and how to introduce real-world concepts into the classroom.</td>
<td>2007-2010</td>
<td>Q2-Apr-Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$247,000.00</td>
<td>Texas Workforce Commission</td>
<td>The STC/NIMS project will provide outreach and technical assistance to local manufacturing businesses to educate on the NIMS standards, NIMS accreditation, NIMS certifications, NIMS Competency-Based Apprenticeship, and NIMS structured on the job training system.</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>Q2-Apr-Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>UTPA/T-STEM is a WIRED Partnership Initiative which provides 100 female students from the area Middle Schools site visits to the UTPA School of Engineering and Computer Science. Students toured the labs, and conducted various hands-on experiments.</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>Q2-Apr-Jun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### NAAMREI Leveraged Resources (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Obligated</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,790,000.00</td>
<td>City of McAllen</td>
<td>This represents 40 Acres of land that has been donated by the City of McAllen, Texas for the purpose of constructing a facility for the UTPA Rapid Response Manufacturing Center and for NAAMREI headquarters.</td>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>Q2-Apr-Jun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| $11,174,250.00   | McAllen Economic Development Corporation/City of McAllen | The MEDC Regional Multi-Modal Center for South Texas at the McAllen Foreign Trade Zone has allocated approximately 26 acres for the project. The access road will run from 23rd across the FTZ property and exit to Ware Road.  
- Facility Cost: $5,995,000  
- Design: $899,250  
- Land: $3,100,000  
<p>| $127,777.00      | UTPA/Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center | UTPA/TMAC Lean, APICS and Six Sigma training and implementation services to manufacturers through the STC Skills Grant. The revenues collected from the services rendered are $127,777.00. Together with State Funds, University Funds and Other Program Income, the monies collected from STC are being leveraged to draw down Federal Funds from NIST/Department of Commerce to continue to provide services and increase the competitiveness of the Rio South Texas manufacturing and extended manufacturing companies. | 2007-2008  | Q2-Apr-Jun    |
| $500,000.00      | City of McAllen         | The City of McAllen NAAMREI Partnership Initiative with STC will provide customized training to 375 new/incumbent workers to support job creation and retention activities under this initiative. | 2008-2009  | Q3-July-Sept  |
| $2,400,000.00    | U.S. Department of Education | An integrated STEM Pathways Support Initiative for the Rio South Texas Region. A major activity will grow and support pathways to STEM fields between STC and UTPA. UTPA is the grant recipient. | 2008-2010  | Q3-July-Sept  |
| $5,544.00        | UTPA Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center | Provided funds for instructional materials for the INTEnD Program. | 2008-2009  | Q3-July-Sept  |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$ 500,000.00</td>
<td>Texas Education Agency</td>
<td>Enrolling students in online high school courses to meet the new high school graduation requirements. Qualify teachers to provide online instruction to high school students within their content area. Grant recipient is Region One ESC.</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Q4-Oct-Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,000,000.00</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Labor</td>
<td>To build regional workforce investment system capacity to support careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Grant recipient is UTPA.</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>Q4-Oct-Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 10,000.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>T-STEM Funds</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 2,278.00</td>
<td>COSE Dean's Office</td>
<td>Two computers plus additional computer memory</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 5,000.00</td>
<td>UTPA Provost Office</td>
<td>RRMC Operating funds</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 10,000.00</td>
<td>UTPA Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center</td>
<td>Provided Lean, Six Sigma &amp; APICS Training</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>Q2-April-Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 10,000.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Center</td>
<td>UTPA/TSTEM is a Wired partnership initiative which provided 200 female students from area middle schools to visit the Girls in Engineering Program at Region One. Students and their teachers learned about engineering and performed hands on experiments in electric device design.</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Q2- April-Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 62,818.00</td>
<td>UTPA Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center (NIST)</td>
<td>Provided lean, Six Sigma, and APICS training</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>Q2-April-Jun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## WIRED REGION: Rio South Texas

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>Paid for the STEM academies to participate in the Robotics competition during HESTEC week.</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3-July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$9,000.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>TSTEM Funds-(Navigator systems)-Valley View, PSJA, Freer ISDs STEM Academies</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3 -July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,750.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>Freer ISD TSTEM New Teacher Academy-4 Day Training</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3 -July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,655.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>Rodriguez Elementary –Harlingen, Texas Podcast Training</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3-July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,056.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>Valley View ISD Elementary is Engineering Training</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3 -July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,910.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>Lasara ISD STEM Academy PBL Training</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3- July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One Education Service Center</td>
<td>Valley View ISD Rigor in the Classroom Training</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$480,000.00</td>
<td>City of McAllen</td>
<td>This award will provide customized training for 375 new and incumbent workers and will support job creation and retention under the U.S. Department of Labor WIRED initiative. STC is the grant recipient.</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3- July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$193,945.00</td>
<td>UTPA Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center</td>
<td>UTPA/TMAC Lean, APICS and Six Sigma training and implementation services to manufacturers through the STC Skills Grant. The revenues collected from the services rendered together with State Funds, University Funds and Other Program Income, the monies collected from STC are being leveraged to draw down Federal Funds from NIST/Department of Commerce to continue to provide services and increase the competitiveness of the Rio South Texas manufacturing and extended manufacturing companies.</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q3-July-Sept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NAAMREI Leveraged Resources (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$3,250,000.00</td>
<td>State of Texas Emerging Technology Fund-Talent Acquisition Grant</td>
<td>Funds will be used to attract two additional World Class research faculty members to support the endeavor in advanced manufacturing, and to reach a superior level of talent. UTPA is the grant recipient.</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q4-Oct-Dec</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| $85,000.00       | Laredo Community College In kind Contribution | Equipment donated to the LCC Light Manufacturing, Institute from local manufacturers, Modine, Milco International and Branson/Emerson.  
- Motorman manufacturing Robot  
- Milling machine  
- Industrial Ultrasonic tool cleaner | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $4,662.00        | Texas State College Motivation Education training | Texas State Technical College AMIST transferable skills training / Electro-Mechanical Maintenance. | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $1,000.00        | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Technical Assistance provided to the following districts: Santa Rosa HS and Harlingen HS | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $1,600.00        | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Facilitated Texas Instruments Conference @ TAMIU-Laredo | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $1,600.00        | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Provided TI Nspire/Navigator Training for | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $800.00          | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Provided Engineering is Elementary for TRC teachers | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $800.00          | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Math/Technology THSP Fall Cluster meeting | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $2,400.00        | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Presented @ Gear Up College for All Conference Fall (McAllen Convention Center) | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $800.00          | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Presented ELL Strategies for CTE Students workshop for CTE Teachers | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $800.00          | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Presented Teaching Geometry using TI Nspire Graphing Calculator | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
| $800.00          | Region One ESC TSTEM Center | Hosted Lasara 5th graders Science event @ TSTEM Center | 2009-2010  | Q4-Oct-Dec   |
### WIRED REGION: Rio South Texas

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$4,500</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>UTPA/Region One ESC Robotics Mentorships –three university mentors for the STEM academies to assist the coaches and teams.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$59,095</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Gear Up Project @ Region One ESC &amp; UTPA Math/Science Initiative</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Q1 Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2600</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Gear Up Makeup Science Sessions</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>PBL Training Harmony Science Brownsville, Laredo and Corpus Christi</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Rodriguez Elementary Harlingen ISD Technical Assistance</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>La Villa HS Training-La Villa ISD Technical Assistance</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1750</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Sinton HS and MS Sinton ISD</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1750</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Harmony Science Laredo –Technical Assistance</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4800</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Technical Assistance-UTPA Gear Up-PSJA North, Raymondville, Idea STEM Academy, Gear Up Summer Planning, Harmony Science Laredo</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Robotics Mentors/Coaches Saturday Training</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400</td>
<td>Region One T-STEM Center</td>
<td>Engineering is Elementary Training Donna Advance Academics Program</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$49,598.00</td>
<td>UTPA-Rapid Response Manufacturing Center Employer Contracts</td>
<td>Projects included medical, industrial and research activity. Industrial partners included Bissell, GE, Motorola, Corning, Life Science, Woodcrafters, and Fresenio’s.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>TSTC</td>
<td>Bafesa Waterbuild AMIST Transferable skills training, electro-mechanical maintenance training program. Programmable Logic Control.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
<td>TSTC</td>
<td>Equipment donated to TSTC Machining Technology program from local manufacturer United Launch Alliance, metrology equipment and precision manufacturing.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000.00</td>
<td>US Department of Commerce</td>
<td>MEDC secured funds to develop a Master Plan for the Americas Third Coast Research and Education Park.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q1-Jan-Mar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## NAAMREI Leveraged Resources (Continued)

### WIRED REGION: Rio South Texas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Obligated</th>
<th>Who Provided The Funds?</th>
<th>Funds Were Used For.....</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$715.89</td>
<td>Savcor Face LTD</td>
<td>Rapid Prototype of new products</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,012.50</td>
<td>Fresenius</td>
<td>Rapid Prototype of new products</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
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<tr>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>SUNY Stony Brook</td>
<td>Prototype of Medical Tissue Transport Device</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$63,804.80</td>
<td>UTPA Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center</td>
<td>Lean and 6 Sigma Classes</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$57,004.80</td>
<td>UTPA Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center</td>
<td>6 Sigma Class</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Camp Marketing</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Camp Marketing</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Camp Planning</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Meeting - Shannon M</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Prep Robotics Camp</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Day 1 - Robotics Camp</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Day 2 - Robotics Camp</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Day 3 - Robotics Camp</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
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<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Day 4 - Robotics Camp</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
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<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Online Recruiting</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Online Recruiting</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$800.00</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>STEM Workforce Solutions Youth Conference</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$9,600</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>PBL Institute for STEM Academies in Dallas, Texas.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8,693.50</td>
<td>STC/Customized Training Contracts</td>
<td>Training provided to: Del Monte Foods, USC Cargo, McAllen Bolt &amp; Screw, Azteca Milling, Temple Inland and 4 Frontes.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000.00</td>
<td>Texas Education Agency</td>
<td>Region One ESC received an award from TEA to continue services through the TSTEM Center. Grant may be extended through 2013.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q2 Apr-June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## WIRED REGION: Rio South Texas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Obligated</th>
<th>Who Provided The Funds?</th>
<th>Funds Were Used For.....</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$6,400</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Engineering Student Camp</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>$9,600</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Science GEAR UP Initiative Makeup Training</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$19,200</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>TSTEM Academy visits</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>$400</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Valley View TSTEM Academy</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,600</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Freer HS TSTEM Academy</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,600</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>GEAR UP Science Initiative Makeup Labquest Training</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>$800</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Lab Quest Training</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>$16,500</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>TI Calculator Training for STEM Academies</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
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<tr>
<td>$28,800</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>PBL Training for STEM Academies</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Sinton ISD- Engineering is Elementary</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400</td>
<td>Region One ESC</td>
<td>Idea Public College Preparatory-Mission What is a STEM School Training</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8,559.00</td>
<td>Puente Roofing Contractor</td>
<td>Prototyping Hide-A-Rack Project</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
<td>Kings Prosperity</td>
<td>INTEnD Projects</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$108.63</td>
<td>Designs Assembly Testing</td>
<td>SLA Prototype</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>Alps Automotive</td>
<td>3 projects- 2 INTEnD Projects 1 NSF GOALI Proposal Seed Funds</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
<td>Bettcher Manufacturing</td>
<td>1 INTEnD Project</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$108.63</td>
<td>Austin Star Detonator</td>
<td>SLA Prototype</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$480,000.00</td>
<td>City of McAllen</td>
<td>STC received an award from the City of McAllen to continue skills training for employers through the NAMMREI/ Institute for Advanced Manufacturing.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q.3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000.00</td>
<td>Texas Workforce Commission</td>
<td>Rio South Texas Region, Houston and San Antonio are pilot sites for the TWC/Manufacturing Institute Sed de Saber Language Acquisition Initiative.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
<td>US Small Business Administration</td>
<td>LCC was awarded funds to support the LCC Business and Industry Workplace Literacy Center.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Q3 July-Sept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$31,493,159.00
TOP TEN STORIES

South Texas College under the leadership of the Public Relations Department implemented a very successful outreach program. NAAMREI has been reported in over seventy publications across the United States and around the world.
State awards UTPA $3.25 million from TETF funding
2010-01-28 13:26:44

Administrators, faculty and staff of The University of Texas-Pan American joined Texas Governor Rick Perry Jan. 5 as he announced the awarding of a $3.25 million Texas Emerging Technology Fund (TETF) Research Superiority Acquisition Award that will go toward helping the University hire top-notch researchers who will enhance the establishment of a world-class advanced manufacturing center.

This monetary award is part of a larger pool of funding allocated by the state legislature this past year as part of the state’s efforts to invest in emerging technology and boost the economy with new jobs. The emerging technology funds will be leveraged by the University and a private company bringing the total UTPA investment to more than $9 million.

The TETF awards, which were created to develop and diversify the Texas economy by expediting innovation and commercialization of research and bringing world-class researchers to the state, will go toward expanding the endeavors of UTPA’s Rapid Response Manufacturing Center (RRMC). The RRMC is a university center devoted to the research and talent development in rapid response manufacturing and has assisted more than 20 companies since April 2008.

“The Rapid Response Manufacturing Center is the kind of facility where new ideas take place,” Gov. Rick Perry said. “This investment is intended to create a culture of innovation in the Rio Grande Valley and the state.”

UTPA President Dr. Robert S. Nelsen said the award establishes the University as a major player and contributor to the economic future of Texas.

“The University is committed to developing advanced technology in the state of Texas. Receiving this TETF award is a major achievement,” Nelsen said.

Dr. Miguel Gonzalez, principal investigator of the grant and associate dean of the College of Science and Engineering, said the funds will be used to establish the foundation and infrastructure to establish a world-class hub for advanced manufacturing.

“The execution of this project will basically provide the resources needed to achieve a superior level of research in an area that is of the utmost importance for the competitive edge that the United States has had for a long time but is, at best, not maintaining. Success of these endeavors will go a long way in establishing a competitive edge for advanced manufacturing for the region, the state and the nation,” Gonzalez added.
The TETF award will be used toward the recruitment of two world-class researchers who will oversee the RRMC and work closely with University faculty, upper-level students and representatives from ALPS Automotive, Inc. – a leading global manufacturer of electronic devices – among other companies, to come up with new technology that will help corporations improve operations and productivity. The corporation has already committed to the partnership and is relocating its North American operations to the Rio South Texas Region.

"The students will also benefit as there will be increased opportunities for research and learning in areas that are of great importance to the region and the community-at-large will benefit as this will make the region that much more attractive to companies. In addition, an environment that will also create technology-based companies and entrepreneurial activities will be developed and expanded," Gonzalez said.

Edi Sanjoto, engineering manager for ALPS Automotive, said he is excited to be partnering with the University because of the students.

"Twelve years ago we hired students from UTPA and they are still at our company. There are such great students here," Sanjoto said. "The students have a tremendous drive, they want to learn and they want to grow professionally. They are very open-minded and we really like working with them."

The University of Texas System Assistant Vice Chancellor for Commercial Development Cathy Swain said the investment will build UTPA’s research capacity and stature.

"Manufacturing in the Rio Grande Valley is one of Texas’ many great strengths. This investment is an opportunity for UT Pan American to build on its capacity in rapid response manufacturing and in engineering education to lead in developing economic and employment opportunities for Valley residents," Swain said.

Other individuals responsible for securing the TETF award include Dr. John Lloyd, RRMC director and research professor of manufacturing engineering at UTPA; Dr. Douglas Timmer, manufacturing engineering associate professor; Dr. James Li, manufacturing engineering assistant professor; Dr. Wendy Lawrence-Fowler, vice provost for research and sponsored projects; and Jacquelyn Michel, director of innovation and intellectual property.

The RRMC is one of several strategies, including workforce recruitment and training, of the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research Initiative (NAAMREI), a network of 47 partners from K-12 and higher education, business, economic development, Industry, finance and government focused on offering manufacturers across North America, and globally, access to proprietary, world-class advanced and rapid response manufacturing.

To learn more about the RRMC and its services, visit www.utpa.edu/rrmc.

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FUTURE OF MANUFACTURING

A good advertising agent will tell you it is all about the ‘brand.’ What is it that you want to be known for, what will people think about when they hear your name? A coalition of educational institutions and economic development corporations covering eight counties from Brownsville to Laredo has its own branding goal in mind.

See COVER STORY, pages 6 - 8
Cover Story

RAPID RESPONSE MANUFACTURING
A PART OF VALLEY’S FUTURE

By Kevin Knoth

A good advertising agent will tell you it is all about the 'brand.' What is it that you want to be known for, what will people think about when they hear your name? A coalition of educational institutions and economic development corporations covering eight counties from Brownsville to Laredo has its own branding goal in mind. When people hear "Rio Grande Valley" they want them to connect it with "rapid response manufacturing!"

The phrase 'rapid response manufacturing' (otherwise known as 'RRM'), packs a punch, so it takes some explaining. But the group, numbering nearly 69 organizations, has a plan to develop the concept and create research centers that ultimately will include a research park. Such a complex should propel our region into the forefront of advanced manufacturing.

The driving coalition is the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI).

Are you having a hard time getting your mind around 'rapid response manufacturing?' An explanation is in order and there is no better way to get it than through a hypothetical example. McAllen Economic Development Corporation President Keith Patridge is a founding member of the NAAMREI which is headquartered at South Texas College's Technology campus in McAllen. Patridge lays out an example of the benefits of rapid response manufacturing.

But he prefaced his product sample stating, "We have been working towards a group of rapid response manufacturing centers. The centers would be focused on a different area of advanced manufacturing in different cities, and each city in the NAAMREI network would select a focal point. Generally these are in conjunction with an institution of higher education. Our plans are to build centers of excellence in a particular area of advanced manufacturing, after which all of these centers will be interconnected into a regional advanced manufacturing cluster."

Patridge discussed one such center that has been developing at the University of Texas/Pan American for several years. "The center focuses on two things: taking a product from the concept to the market place, in as short a time and at the lowest possible cost. Patridge qualifies there are other cities that are concentrating on segments of the concept but adds, "We are really the first in the world that I know of to focus on the total process."

"What that does is give us the potential to do the same things the space program has done for innovation in new products over the last several decades," He emphasized.

Patridge poses a hypothetical question, "When you come up with an idea how do you take it from idea to produce in as fast a time as possible?" Replying to his own query he says "You start removing constraints."

He goes on, "If you build a product that has a plastic part it requires you to melt the plastic and then inject it under very high pressure into a mold. That is what these injection molding companies do... they build plastic parts." Summarizing he stated when you take a product from start to finish it can take about eight to 18 weeks to build one of the molds.

"We have a company here that wants to get to a 30-day design cycle... meaning they want to go from concept to delivery of the first product to the customer in 30 days." He readily admits that is physically impossible right now. "But at this point we are focused on integrating technology with process to make this possible."

Then the MEDC President gave a glimpse into the future. "What we have going on at the university (University of Texas/Pan American) is the process of learning how to use nano technology and other types of new emerging technology to build a replacement for the plastic mold. This process can literally build a mold in hours versus the usual eight to 18 weeks. Now we are getting closer to that 30-day window."

He continued, "The computer engineering department can now create and write specialty programs allowing an idea to go through a virtual reality model testing on super computers. This would take literally days versus actually building a product. The whole concept of rapid response lends itself well to coming up with new technology to revolutionize manufacturing."

Patridge has some words for those who lament something they feel the United States has lost in recent years... our knack for outstanding innovation in manufacturing. "RRM will allow the United States to regain manufacturing capabilities for our market. We will..."
produce customized products and get them to a customer in a very short period of time. If we can do this in 48 hours, then how could a facility in China compete with us? They couldn’t! Rapid response can literally cut the rest of the world out as competitors. Others could never produce current generation products in the market because the changes would be so quick.”

This isn’t theory or science fiction. UTPA Rapid Response Manufacturing Center has been working with companies in solving these kinds of time to market problems for a few years now. Dr. John Lloyd explains the range of the centers operations. “First off companies are our customers, so there is always a need for a customized solution.”

He related how the center would fulfill a company’s needs. “We will bring in emerging technologies, and we will bring in the latest and greatest in manufacturing processes to help produce high quality products as agilely as we possibly can. It is possible to do customization of products for individual customers.”

Continuing, “We work with companies so they can do it. We could come up with a prototype.” He also added that they also make recommendations that streamline the manufacturing processes. The company takes the suggestions and implements them at the factory level.

Gonzalez explains that UTPA’s engineering program, which launched in 1995, graduates engineers in the disciplines of mechanical, electrical, manufacturing, computer engineering, and computer science. Since the beginning more than 1,000 engineers have graduated, and a civil engineering program is about to commence. “Hopefully there is opportunity for them all, both in terms of employment and projects.”

Dr. Gonzalez emphasized the foundation of today’s NAAMREI success can be traced to the work and cooperation of three alliances in the area. “They are the North American Technology and Innovation Alliance, Rio South Texas Manufacturing College Alliance, the Region One Education Service Center and the T-Stem Alliance. This cooperation lead to the grants that started NAAMREI.”

In 2007, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded $3 million to support the NAAMREI’s Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) project. Another $3 million came from the Texas Workforce Commission to fund employee training. “This is about building the right infrastructure to make this sort of economic development take place in the region,” Gonzalez stressed.

NAAMREI’s Executive Officer is Wanda Garza of South Texas College, and she knows the alliance has a lot of work to do in the next year. The group recently received $300,000 for design and planning of America’s Third Coast Research and Education Park. Garza explained the design plan has to be submitted within a year.

“We have to submit the application, negotiate the contract and within the next 90 days the master planning will begin. We have exactly 12 months to produce the document.” Garza confirmed that UTPA’s Rapid Response Manufacturing Center will be the anchor facility for the park.

Research parks are nothing new in the U.S. and have developed between private sector businesses and universities for decades. NAAMREI received a short course in planning and building successful research parks in 2009 by visiting the Research Triangle in North Carolina, as well as the Centennial Research Park at North Carolina State University...both of which impressed many in the alliance leadership.

The plan for the Valley’s new park calls for the use of 80 acres donated by the City of McAllen on south Ware Road just north of STC Technology Campus. Additional adjacent property would increase the physical size of the planned research park and talks are under way to include the property in the park boundaries.

Congressman Ruben Hinojosa worked on securing the funding for developing the research park master plan. Hinojosa has been a long-time supporter of the project, for a variety of reasons.

“Our area is one of the fastest growing places in the entire country. I have always supported this project because it is a logical step for South Texas. We have the work force in place, the educational institutions to train them and the perfect place geographically to support a major research center for rapid product innovation and advanced manufacturing. We must always stay a step ahead in order to keep the United States first in the global economic scene.”
NAAMREI members celebrate another successful year

Posted on 07 April 2010 by STC Public Relations

NAAMREI members from Brownsville to Laredo celebrate another successful year. Members of the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI) celebrated another successful year of operations at a recent networking event in March 2010. Members from companies, colleges, school districts and businesses from across the eight counties represented by the consortium attended to share success stories and plan for another year of developing the region’s rapid response manufacturing infrastructure.

“The 2009/2010 academic year was another success with a variety of benchmarks being met,” said Wanda Garza, executive director for NAAMREI. “South Texas College, Laredo Community College, Texas Southmost College and Texas State Technical College trained more than 2000 employees in a variety of skill sets; UTPA’s Rapid Response Manufacturing Center has made contact with businesses throughout the world for customer contracts and has incubated one of the hottest technology companies in the nation.

“More than 50 companies visited with our economic development corporations and municipalities and many of those prospects are very excited about possibly relocating their operations to the Valley,” she continued. “But our biggest success comes from recruiting new companies to our skills development grant, which brings in new innovative approaches in training companies to move to the next level of world class status.”

In addition to NAAMREI partners, advisors from the U.S. Department of Labor were on hand for the event, following an annual visit to track NAAMREI’s development and progress. NAAMREI’s operations were originally funded from a $5M WIRED Grant from the USDOL, which is complemented by a $3M Skills Development Training Grant from the Texas Workforce Commission.

NAAMREI brings together diverse education partners from across the Rio South Texas Region to develop and recruit the skilled talent needed to grow an advanced manufacturing infrastructure. With access to a wide network of educational facilities and programs and customized training programs, businesses can be sure that the Rio South Texas Region will be the first and only sustainable provider of rapid response manufacturing anywhere in the world.
Rio South Texas companies partner with Manufacturing Institute, TWC to launch initiative to prep advanced manufacturing workers

Posted on 24 June 2010 by STC Public Relations

South Texas College has partnered with The Manufacturing Institute, the Texas Workforce Commission and other regional partners to implement an English language proficiency program to boost literacy, educational attainment and career advancement for workers in the Rio South Texas Region.

The English for Manufacturing and the Skilled Trades Initiative is an English acquisition program targeting underemployed and unemployed workers across Texas. Through the program, participants will develop core English language skills required for entry-level careers in the region’s developing rapid response, advanced manufacturing workforce.

“In order for U.S. manufacturers to stay competitive in today’s complex global economy, we must remain committed to developing the talent and skills of the manufacturing workforce and create strategies for each challenge they face,” said Emily Stover DeRocco, president of The Manufacturing Institute. “Foundational skills such as English language communication and applied math and science are necessary for all careers in manufacturing, and a worker who faces barriers in these areas will not be able to advance in the workplace.”

Rio South Texas cities McAllen and Mission join initiative pilots already underway in Laredo, San Antonio and Houston. In total, 350 Texas workers will be trained through the initiative. STC’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing, representing the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative, will manage the trainings for 45 workers from McAllen- and Mission-based companies including Palmer Steel Suppliers, AM-MEX and Hi-Tech Plastics, to name a few.

“We are always excited to create new pathways for learning that will benefit the regional goal of leading the world in advanced, rapid response manufacturing,” said Carlos Margo, regional manager for STC’s IAM. “Upon completion of the training, participants will be well-positioned to pursue additional career
and academic trainings. By participating in this ground-breaking initiative, we continue to lead the nation in planned workforce sustainability, thus increasing our global competitiveness.”

The initiative training consists of an interactive, technology-based curriculum derived from the proven and innovative language learning program, Sed de Saber. The program ensures efficient and functional acquisition of workplace communication skills, such as understanding directions and important health and safety measures, using proper manufacturing vocabulary, and reading and interpreting administrative forms.

“We have several production floor operators that understand and speak some English; however they rarely use it due to a lack of confidence. I am sure this not only affects them in the workplace, but also in the community,” said Kevin Coleman, production and distribution manager for Smead Manufacturing. “This program offers an opportunity to those that see their weakness in the language, have a desire to learn, but have no time or means to attend formal classes to improve their skills. With this initiative, they can work at their pace at home or work, comparing notes and progress with co-workers. This will certainly boost the desire to learn more and results will be evident.”

Dignitaries from across the Rio South Texas Region gathered at STC’s Technology Campus in McAllen to celebrate the local launch of the initiative. Special guests included TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Andres Alcantar and Senior Vice President for The Manufacturing Institute Jennifer McNelly.

“The Texas Workforce Commission supports collaborative initiatives that provide Texans with the skills and competencies for success in the workplace,” said Alcantar. “We are pleased to be a part of this regional partnership that combines adult literacy and skills attainment in the manufacturing industry.”
Texas Comptroller visits South Texas College to receive update on WIRED Project

Posted on February 2007 by STC Office of Public Relations

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs visited with members of South Texas College’s administration, as well as representatives from The University of Texas-Pan American, in early February to learn more about the status of work on the region’s Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Project to build a rapid response manufacturing (RRM) facility, three Training Institutes for Advanced Manufacturing and a sustainable premier manufacturing infrastructure in South Texas’ Rio Grande Region.

In Feb. 2007, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) committed $3M in training funds to bolster support for the WIRED Project. The TWC Skills Development funds are committed to support trainings for 1,600 new and incumbent workers in a variety of industries related to RRM including automotive, electronics, consumer goods and health care products just to name a few. There are 24 manufacturing companies participating in the project. The trainings will be provided through the Rio South Texas College Manufacturing Alliance composed of South Texas College, Texas State Technical College and Texas Southmost College.

During the briefing, representatives from both STC and UTPA provided a status report on the trainings and initiatives currently in place to support the RRM ramp-up in the Valley. STC’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing kicked off the trainings for the project with several leadership and welding courses.

Currently there are 14 approved manufacturing companies in the McAllen area with employees participating in 30 and 48 hour courses for welding training, covering a variety of topics including usage of arch, mig, tig and torch assemblies. Additionally, employees from these companies are also participating in leadership training courses through STC. These trainings area geared to first-time supervisors transitioning into management, allowing students to gain the necessary tools to become successful in their new management positions within the local RRM industry.

Other members of the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative (NAAMREI), which are comprised of more than 100 members across the Rio South Texas Region, provided updates as well.

“I am very excited with the work that has been started for this initiative,” said Comptroller Combs. “A well trained and educated workforce is of utmost importance to our state’s prosperity in a diverse and competitive economic climate. The team at South Texas College is developing innovative strategies to address this vital issue.”

In addition to the funds committed by the TWC, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded STC, UTPA and NAAMREI $5M as a foundational support for the project.
“It was a pleasure to meet with Ms. Combs and hear her feedback first hand on our current work and our roadmap for the future of this landmark endeavor for the betterment of the entire Valley,” said Wanda Garza, executive officer for Workforce Development and External Affairs for South Texas College. “STC, UTPA and every member of NAAMREI have been working long and hard to get this project off to the right start and her confidence in our work has reinvigorated our commitment.”

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs visited with members of South Texas College’s administration, as well as representatives from The University of Texas-Pan American, to learn more about the status of work on the region’s Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Project. From left are Dr. Miguel A. Gonzalez, associate dean of the College of Science and Engineering and director of the School of Engineering and Computer Science for The University of Texas-Pan American; Susan Combs; Wanda Garza, executive officer for Workforce Development and External Affairs for South Texas College; and John Lloyd, director of the Rapid Response Manufacturing Center and research professor of engineering for The University of Texas-Pan American.
Around Campus: Comptroller team highlights Institute for Advanced Manufacturing

Posted June 2008 by STC Office of Public Relations

Staff members from the office of the Texas Comptroller visited STC’s Technology Campus on June 11th to learn about the college’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and the trainings it offers to support NAAMREI’s Wired Grant Initiative. Karen Hudgins and Karl Wolfson, writers for the comptroller’s newsletter, comptroller photographer Barbara Schlief and KVNO videographer Don Ramirez were given a presentation by STC regional manager Carlos Margo and met with other STC staffers to discuss the college’s work with local manufacturing companies to train new and existing employees to meet the challenging demands of the manufacturing sector. The four-member team will use the knowledge and materials gained during their visit to shed light on the important role that South Texas College is playing in the long-term vision of NAAMREI to develop a sustainable advanced manufacturing sector in the Rio South Texas Region.
Local officials visit Asia to learn about world-class manufacturing; international training opportunities

Wednesday, December 16th, 2009

**Texas Border Business**

During a week-long trip in early November, economic development officials and educators traveled to Korea and Japan to visit with prospective companies and meet the leadership team at ALPS, a global leader in the manufacturing of electronic components and switches.

ALPS already have several manufacturing operations in McAllen/Reynosa. Representatives from the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, Mission Economic Development Authority, Hunt Valley Development, South Texas College and the University of Texas-Pan American used this trip as an opportunity to promote the area as the place for advanced manufacturing given the strategic border location, labor force and educational programs.

The trip started in Korea, where the group met with more than 20 companies that expressed an interest in the McAllen/Reynosa area. “We already have several Asian companies doing business in McAllen and Reynosa, so we use this opportunity to promote the area as an ideal location for manufacturing and business and follow-up with existing clients,” said Keith Patridge, President/CEO of the McAllen Economic Development Corporation.

“This outreach strategy is critical to discuss the advantages of our region with the decision-makers face-to-face in their country.” After the seminars and company visits in Korea, the group traveled to Japan thanks to a personal invitation from Mr. Masataka Kataoka, President/CEO of ALPS. Since the early 1990s, ALPS have had a presence in McAllen/Reynosa and has partnered with STC and UTPA to provide training and educational opportunities for local employees. Over the years, ALPS have hired several UTPA and STC graduates to work within all divisions of the company.

Mr. Kataoka, along with other ALPS executives, has visited McAllen several times and invited the McAllen team to see first-hand the company’s new technology and to announce that they are creating 40 more jobs and relocating an additional division to McAllen.

Mr. Kataoka hopes to start an exchange program for Rio Grande Valley students and instructors to study at the ALPS facility in Japan with potential job opportunities within the McAllen/Reynosa operations. He unveiled the idea to representatives from STC and UTPA.

“During our time in Korea we made contacts with very high-level universities with strong programs for commercialization of research and technology, and it is our intent to develop these relationships for the benefit of regional technology-based entrepreneurship endeavors” said Dr. Miguel Gonzalez with UTPA. “The opportunity to meet with the ALPS leadership in Japan was priceless as we saw and experienced cutting-edge advanced manufacturing technology at all levels in their operations. This trip will translate to new lessons and techniques in our manufacturing and engineering classes at UTPA.”

Officials from South Texas College, who have worked closely with ALPS for several years on trainings and grants, were also pleased to hear the news of additional jobs and exchange programs.
“After touring the world-class manufacturing operations for Alps in Japan, it is clear to me the Rio South Texas region can be equally world-class,” said Dr. Shirley A. Reed, President of South Texas College. “Public schools, higher education, and economic development must work in tandem to compete with the best in the world and to make this region the advanced manufacturing hub for North America. We can do it and this region can be the national leader in rapid response advanced manufacturing for North America.”

Patridge echoed Dr. Reed’s sentiment. He said educators and economic development officials must integrate programs to create a pipeline of talent in the Rio South Texas region for existing companies and new clients. Cesar Aranda and Juan Salina started with ALPS as summer interns in 1998 and after graduation, came to ALPS full-time. Two UTPA interns, Carlos Velasquez and Jose Navarro, now work in the engineering division. Through the years, more than 100 students have trained, worked and learned valuable skills at ALPS. In 2004, UTPA recognized ALPS Automotive as its Employer of the Year.

“Asia was an extremely busy trip, but the commitment from ALPS to add more jobs in McAllen and work with STC and UTPA to develop world-class advanced manufacturing training in our local economy is invaluable,” Patridge said. “And we have already heard back from several interested Korean companies. 2010 has the potential to be a positive year.”
STC honors region's manufacturing community
Posted October 1st 2008 by STC Public Relations

South Texas College is celebrating its 15th anniversary and, in an effort to reflect on its successes, took the opportunity to thank its partners in education and in the workforce for partnering together to fuel a thriving local high-tech manufacturing industry. Since 1996, STC has been fully committed to supporting and enhancing the workforce pool and infrastructure for the region’s manufacturing industry.

"If you look up and down Military Highway here in McAllen and across the surrounding communities, you see tremendous growth with a variety of big name manufacturers calling the Rio South Texas Region their home," said Mike Allen, chair of STC's Board of Trustees and retired president and CEO of the McAllen Economic Development Corporation. "We are here today to honor all of these companies for their contributions to the community and our economy, which have both thrived with your help."

Several key partners were honored at the event including Ron Owens, director of LG Electronics and South Texas Manufacturers Association president; Gerald Stinson, manager of STC's NIMS Center; Mike Willis, director of the STMA; Bonnie Gonzalez, CEO of Workforce Solutions; Doug Ridge, director of the Office of Employer Initiative for the Texas Workforce Commission; Janie Ramos, vice president of business development for MEDC; and Brent Branham, assistant city manager for the City of McAllen.

Also honored were many business and community leaders who have committed time and resources to STC's training programs over the years including John Della Maggiora of JD Solutions; Dr. Mike Barrera, assistant superintendent of McAllen ISD; Yvonne Garza of GE Engine Services; Julian Cervantes of Mission Hospital; Rene Borrego of International Paper; and Dennis Herbst of Southwest AMT. STC honored three students for their commitment and excellent track record in its training programs including Raul Gutierrez.
STC honors region's manufacturing community (continued)

of GE Engine Services, Rodolfo Carrizales of Kings Prosperity Plastics and Guadalupe Quintanilla of Humanetics.

During the event, the college also took the opportunity to highlight many of its initiatives to support the region's manufacturing industry. Tribute was paid to the STC staff that support the executive direction of the North American Advanced Manufacturing and Research Education (NAAMREI) initiative, which is a consortium of more than 60 companies, colleges and other industry partners working together to drive the growth of advanced, rapid response manufacturing in the Valley. Several educational partners for this program were honored at the event including Laredo Community College, Texas State Technical College, The University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College and The University of Texas-Pan American

STC's Institute for Advanced Manufacturing develops and executes customized training programs to support advanced, rapid response manufacturing. It also provides customized training programs to meet employer needs from facilities maintenance to leadership skills.

Additionally, the college's NIMS Center assists companies and other education institutions in earning National Institute for Metalworking Standards accreditation and certifications. STC's Precision Manufacturing Technology Program trains students to handle the complex manufacturing tasks driving high-tech manufacturing.

"With your help, we have trained more than 42,500 students to support the growth of the region's businesses and industries and we have secured more than $30 million in grants to help fund our initiatives and trainings," said Wanda Garza, executive officer for the NAAMREI initiative and former executive director of workforce training for STC. "All of this has been accomplished in less than 15 years and it certainly wouldn't have been possible without your support and dedication. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts and promise to continue our commitment to manufacturing well beyond our next 15 years."
LCC creates Light Manufacturing Institute
Posted 5/12/2008 by the Laredo Morning Times

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

The first step to establish a Light Manufacturing Institute at Laredo Community College has been made with the recent hiring of Saul Gonzalez Jr. as the manufacturing training manager.

Gonzalez, who has 30 years of experience in the manufacturing industry, is overseeing the creation of the institute, which is expected to be located at the Hachar Vocational Building at the Fort McIntosh Campus.

The institute is part of a larger South Texas endeavor — the North American Advanced Manufacturing Research and Education Initiative.

NAAMREI is the result of a Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) project made possible through a $5 million U.S. Department of Labor grant. The project also received $3 million in training funds from the Texas Workforce Commission.

“NAAMREI is devoted to developing a skilled and talented workforce, and to increasing the business momentum of the Rio South Texas region, which includes the counties of Webb, Zapata, Jim Hogg, Starr, Hidalgo, Willacy and Cameron. Ultimately, it will help the region become a national and global leader in rapid response manufacturing,” Gonzalez said.

Unique collaboration

Through this unique collaboration, LCC is receiving $360,000 during a three-year period to serve as the lead agency for the Rio South Texas Manufacturing College Alliance — one of three alliances comprising the NAAMREI Consortium.

Under the LCC Economic Development Center, the institute will be an active partner in the consortium, develop and implement programs aligned with rapid response manufacturing, and meet the requirements as noted in the implementation plan for Strategic Goal Two in the overall WIRED project.

The strategic goal for the alliance at LCC will be to develop a globally competitive manufacturing workforce through a regional customized manufacturing training system that uses innovative curricula to award credentials for the skills and knowledge needed to compete in a global economy in a sustainable manner.

The first year of the institute will be a period of discovery.

“Research will be conducted to identify current and future manufacturing industry in the region,” Gonzalez said.

Programs and curriculum to address the manufacturing industry’s training needs will be developed during the second year.
And by the third year, the institute should be ready to implement its training programs.

To fulfill its goals, the institute will be working closely with the Laredo Manufacturers Association, the Laredo Development Foundation, Workforce Solutions, the Chamber of Commerce and the local school districts, among other entities.

“There must be flexibility built into the system,” Gonzalez said. “Some manufacturers will want to focus on quick courses usually eight to 30 hours in length. Others will request certifications that will require months or up to a year to accomplish. Finally, others will require associate degree-level training. LCC is prepared to meet the training needs of all manufacturers.” To further strengthen its ties with the consortium, LCC sent a delegation of city, county and college leaders to Edinburg for the opening of the Rapid Response Manufacturing Center at the University of North Texas-Pan American on April 11.

**First of its kind**

The center is the only one of its kind in the world and it already has garnered attention from China and other countries. It is destined to make the Rio South Texas region become a model for manufacturing competitiveness.

Among those attending were Webb County Commissioner Jerry Garza; Laredo Councilman Johnny Rendon; Laredo Hotel and Lodging Association President Bob Zachariah; LCC President Juan Maldonado; Blas Castañeda, chief external affairs/economic development officer; and Jose Reyes, LCC Economic Development Center director.
STC shows off world class, premier institution status at Alps visit

Posted on 12 July 2010, STC Public Relations

By: STC Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs

Recently, South Texas College served as host to the president and CEO of Alpine Electronics, Inc., Seizo Ishiguro. Alpine Electronics Inc. develops, manufactures and sells audio products for automobiles and information and communication products, with headquarters in Tokyo, Japan.

Wanda Garza, executive director for NAAMREI, and Juan E. Mejia, STC vice president for academic affairs, hosted Ishiguro and a company delegation during their visit to manufacturing plants in south Texas, which included a stop at the college’s Technology Campus.

Along with Joyce Dean, executive vice president of the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, Janie Ramos, vice president of business retention and expansion for MEDC, and Miguel Gonzalez, associate dean of engineering at UTPA, the executive team was provided information on the numerous partnerships within the south Texas region that serve to provide the workforce development for companies such as Alpine.

“We will contribute continuously, in cooperation with the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, UTPA and STC,” said President Ishiguro.

“It’s because of the exceptional leadership of Keith Patridge, the president and CEO of the McAllen Economic Development Corporation, and his ongoing work regarding attracting world class companies to the region that Alpine is so interested in our region. Also, Dr. Shirley A. Reed, STC president, has brought to fruition a tremendous vision in STC of a world class and premier institution of higher learning that will create the next-gen workers needed to meet the needs of advanced manufacturers like Alpine,” said Juan Mejia.
FibeRio receives $1.5 million grant

*The Monitor* story headlined “UTPA receives $1.5M grant for FibeRio” in the Sept. 15 edition on page 1A requires clarification. The grant mentioned in the article was awarded to FibeRio, a private company. The term “Force spinning” should have been capitalized for trademark purposes. The lab mentioned at the University of Texas-Pan American is a university lab.

September 14, 2010 11:55 PM Ana Ley the Monitor

EDINBURG — the University of Texas-Pan American’s first regional technology startup company has received more than $1.5 million in grant money to commercialize its nanotechnology.

The Texas Emerging Technology Fund awarded the funds to FibeRio Technology Corp., a private company that markets nanofiber production technology. The McAllen Chamber of Commerce also gave the business a $10,000 Innovation Grant Award during a ceremony at the school’s International Trade and Technology building Tuesday morning.

“What you see happening today is a first-class operation,” said Steve Ahlenius, president and chief executive officer for the chamber. “If you create something here with local people; those jobs and those companies will stay here.”

Nanofibers, strands of material that are thinner than a human hair, have led to breakthroughs in medicine, textiles and nearly every other industry.

The conventional process to create the fibers is expensive, time-consuming and uses a lot of electricity. But researchers at UTPA created a new process dubbed “Force spinning” to eliminate electricity use and speed up fiber production.

The grant will help researchers design equipment to spin tiny particles together on a spindle to create the nanofibers using centrifugal force.

Conventional methods yield less than half a gram of fibers per hour, said Karen Lozano a mechanical engineering professor at UTPA and one of the technology’s creators. The FibeRio process makes about 8 grams per minute.

“It’s cheaper, and it’s higher quality,” said Lozano, who also serves as chief technology officer of FibeRio. “Nanofibers are expensive.”

At a university lab on Tuesday, students tinkered with a prototype while Lozano looked at Petri dishes filled with colorful strands of tiny nanofibers.

“As an undergrad, I was always interested in Dr. Lozano’s work, especially nanomaterials,” said Richard Patlan, now a second-year master’s student at UTPA who helps the professor in the lab.
FibeRio receives $1.5 million grant (continued)

Patlan, 27, is focusing his graduate thesis on his work with Lozano.

The grant money will be added to private financing the company has already received from El Paso-based Cottonwood Technology Corp.

Researchers said the new production process will revolutionize nanofiber fabrication, putting the Rio Grande Valley on the map for high-tech companies.

By 2014, FibeRio expects to create 110 jobs and generate about $84 million in net revenue. UTPA has an equity share in the business.