

The South Texas Triangle

A look into an emerging geography



In many ways, the Gulf of Mexico is a parallel to the Mediterranean Sea

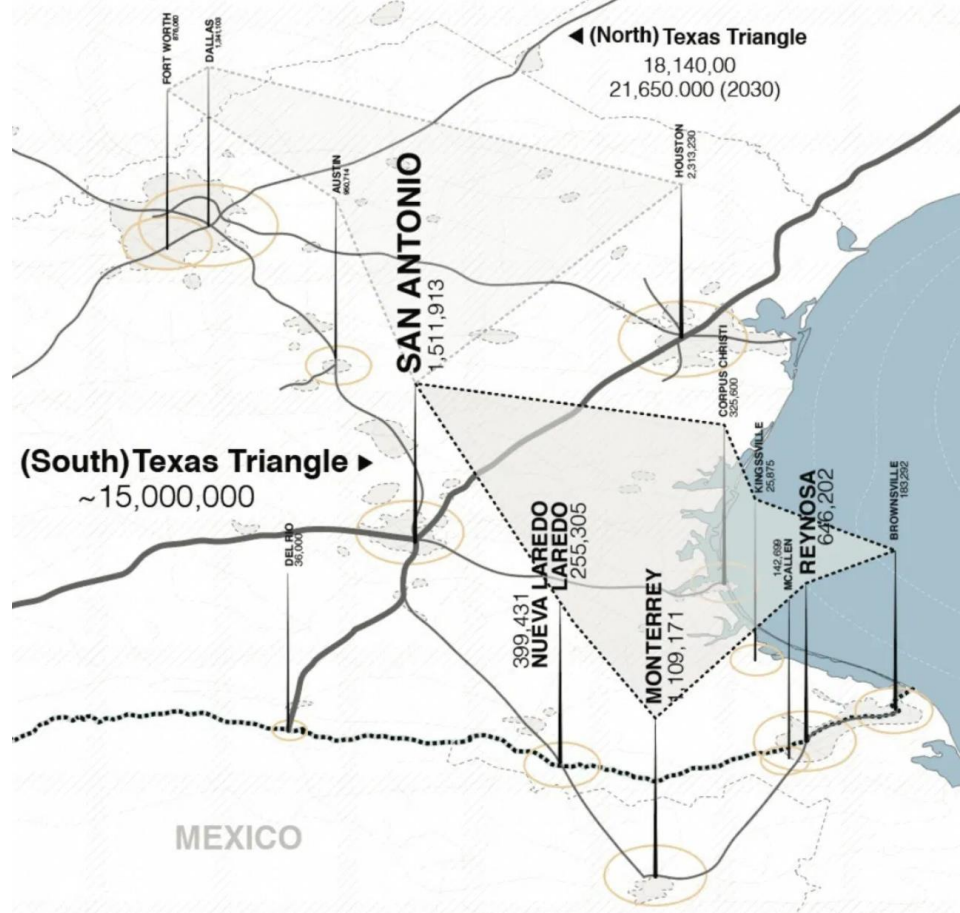
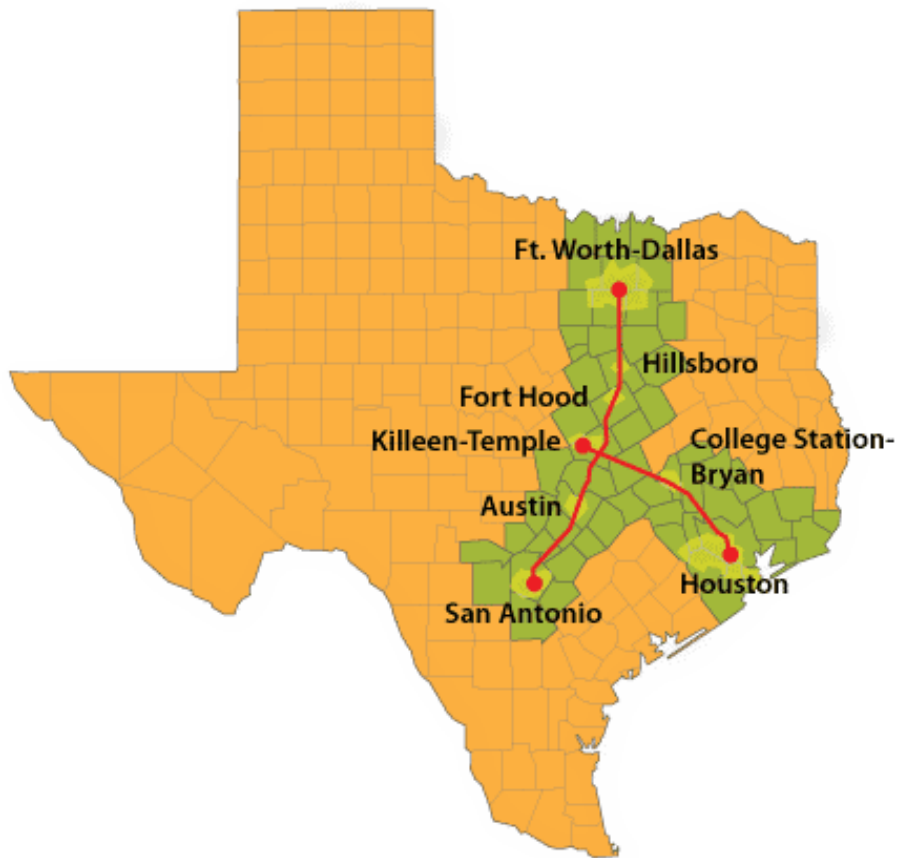
Gulf of Mexico, North & South Texas Triangles

A New Geography

HemisFair 1968: A Confluence of
Civilizations in the Americas

We are still in the early days of this
“New World”. **As planners, how
will we influence its
development?**





Our “Mediterranean” – The Texas Triangles

South Texas: A Human Compounding Engine

Growth in Hidalgo County, TX 1890-1950

- 1890 Population: **6,534**
 - Ranching dominant industry producing 71,176 cattle; 20,906 sheep gave 41,074 pounds of wool
- 1900 Population: **6,837**
- 1910 Population: **13,728**
 - Emergence of agricultural industry (citrus, cotton, and corn)
 - “Border Raids” - Open Anglo-Mexican American race violence
- 1920 Population: **38,110**
 - Segregation and wealth gap increases as more Anglos move to the area. Creation of cycle of self-perpetuating poverty for Hispanic population.
- 1930 Population: **77,004**
 - Agriculture becomes dominant
 - First producing oil well in 1934. Oil & Gas quickly emerges as a leading industry.
- 1940 Population: **106,059**
- 1950 Population: **160,446**



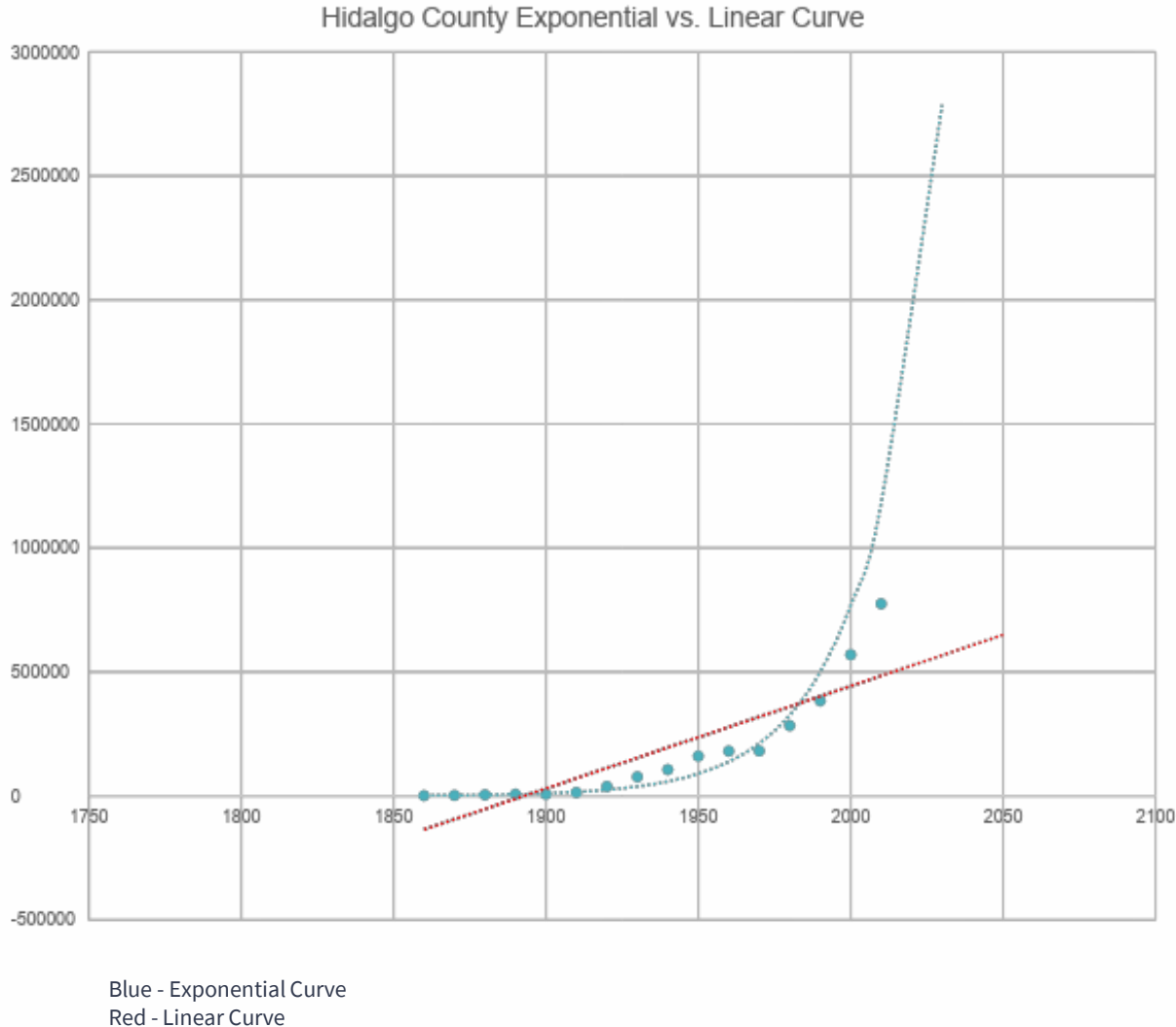
Hidalgo County con't – 1960–1980



- 1960 Population: **180,604**
 - Immigration from Mexico drastically increases
 - Chicano Movement mobilized the Hispanic population and increased participation in politics
 - The term *Chicanos* was originally used as a derogatory label for the sons and daughters of Mexican migrants
 - New generation of Mexican Americans were viewed by both sides of the border as not "American", yet not "Mexican"
- 1980 Population: **283,229**

Hidalgo County Growth In Overdrive!

- 2017 Population **860,661**
- County has never decreased in population
- Majority of population are children or of childbearing age which suggests that the county is well positioned to continue growing
- Important issues in the future:
 - K-12 Education and Higher Learning
 - Workforce opportunities
 - Retention of young, educated population



McAllen, TX

Population Analysis

Largest city in Hidalgo County

Young, Booming Population

- Median age is 29.2 and 28% of the population is under 15 in 2017
- 91.8% Hispanic with 27% being foreign-born

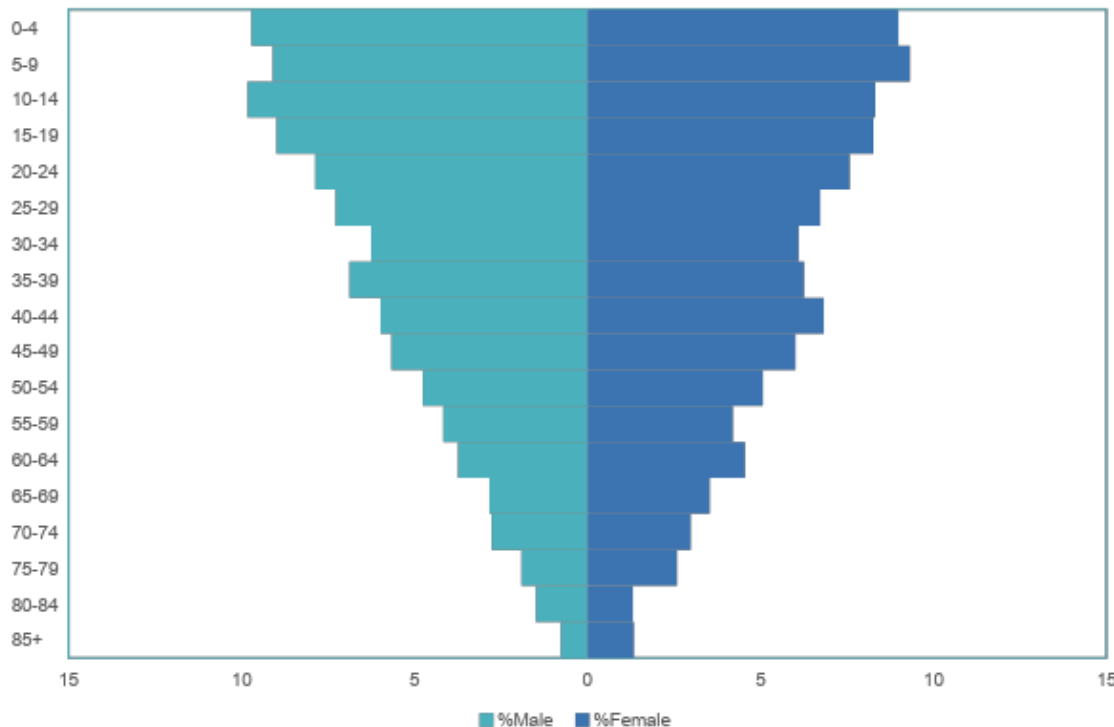
Low Historic Educational Attainment Levels

- 35% of the population over 25 years does not have a high school diploma (~2x Texas average)
- 10% population have received a bachelor's degree

Low Historic Income Levels

- In 2016 over 31% of the population lived below the poverty line
- Median household income in 2017 was \$37,106, compared to Texas' average of \$59,206.

2017 Population Pyramid



Closing the Gaps: The Texas Higher Education Plan (2000–2015)

- 15-year higher education plan adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in 2000
- Ambitious goals to increase minority participation in higher education
- In 2000, 45.3% of Hispanic high school graduates were given a college admission exam, of which only 11.1% met the criterion score
- This compares to 69.9% of White graduates who were tested, 36.4% who met the criterion score

Outcomes:

- Appropriated \$3.3b of grant funding
- 2015 Fall higher ed enrollment was ~605,000 higher than in 2000
- 137% increase in Hispanic enrollment
- Completion of bachelor/associate degrees and certificates increased 4x for Latino and 3x for African American students during the period

CLOSING *the* GAPS

THE TEXAS HIGHER
EDUCATION PLAN



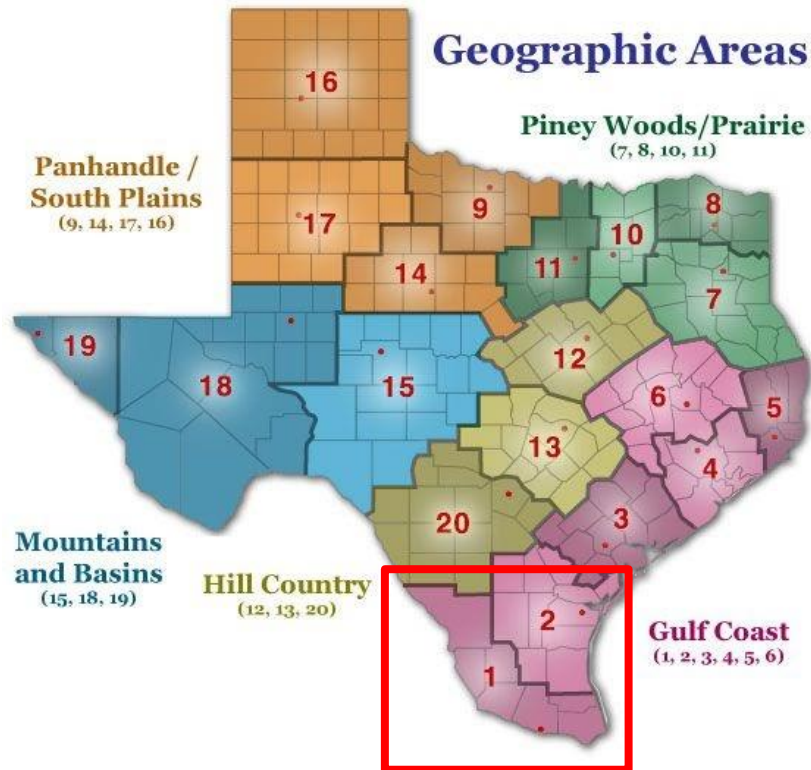
8th Grade Class of 2008

The Texas Tribune tracked the 8th grade class of 2008, who are now 25 years old.

Of the **26,668 students** in **Region 01** who began eighth grade that year:

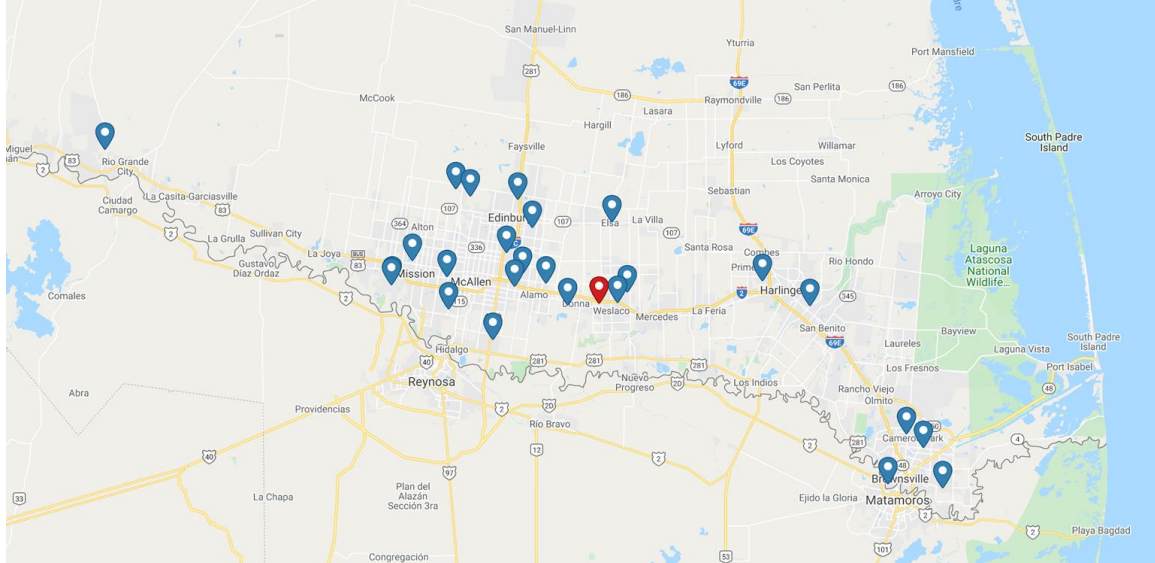
- 25,765 were Hispanic
- 14,238 enrolled in college
- 5,617 (21.8%) have graduated with a higher education degree

[Source: Texas Tribune](#)



IDEA Public Schools

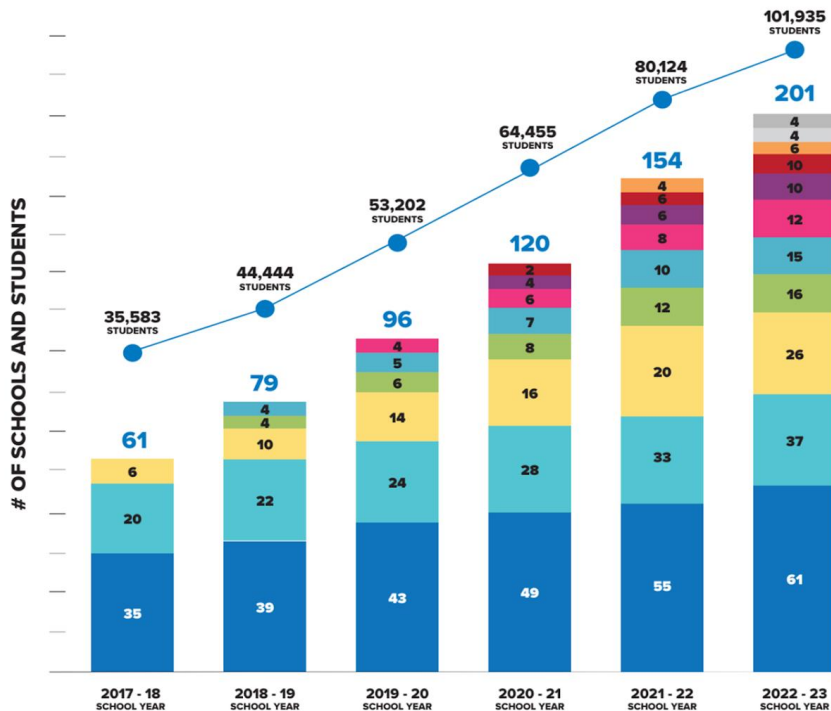
- Founded in Donna, TX in 1998 as an after-school program
- In 2019, IDEA graduated more than **1,185 seniors**, 752 of which were first generation college students
- 100% of seniors have been accepted to college for 13 consecutive years
- Currently serving 31,000 students across 52 schools in the RGV



IDEA'S 2022 GROWTH PLAN.

In the 2019-2020 school year, we will serve **53,000** students.
IDEA will operate **201** schools by **2022**.

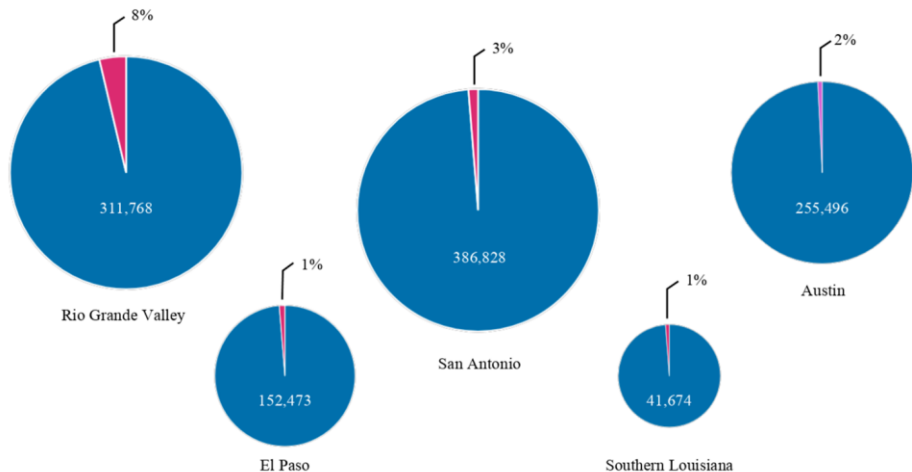
SCHOOL COUNT BY REGION



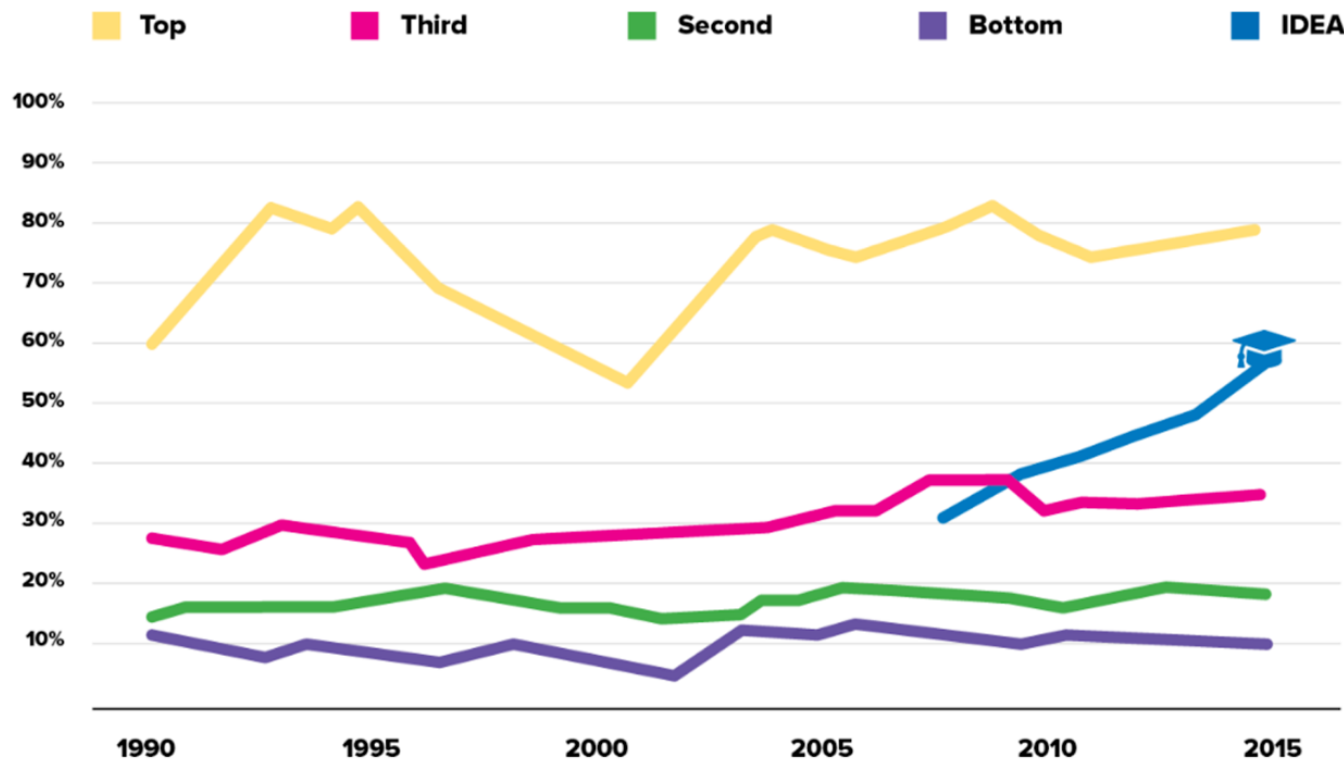
In 2000, the RGV had **zero** of the top 100 performing public high schools in Texas.

As of 2019, the RGV has **14** of the top 100 performing public high schools in Texas. **4** of which were IDEA schools.

MARKET SHARE



DIFFERENCES IN BACHELOR'S RECEIPT BY AGE 24 BY FAMILY INCOME



RGV Higher Education

- ❖ 25 years ago, Brownsville's Texas Southmost College was the only higher education institution in the RGV.
- ❖ South Texas College opened in 1993 and today has 6 campuses and awards 6,000 degrees annually.
- ❖ UTRGV was created in 2013 and the School of Medicine opened in summer of 2016. In Fall 2019, 29,113 students were enrolled.

Ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	951	3.3%
Black	224	0.8%
Hispanic	26,027	89.4%
Asian	432	1.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	11	0.0%
International	774	2.7%
Unknown or Not Reported	598	2.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	26	0.1%
Two or more Races	70	0.2%

Gender		
Male	12,211	41.9%
Female	16,902	58.1%

Residency Distribution - Rio Grande Valley		
Hidalgo County	17,769	61.0%
Cameron County	8,111	27.9%
Starr County	902	3.1%
Willacy County	148	0.5%
Total Rio Grande Valley	26,930	92.5%

Residency Distribution - Out-of-Valley		
Other Texas Residents	1,138	3.9%
Other U.S. Residents	213	0.7%
Mexican Nationals	542	1.9%
Other Foreign Nationals	290	1.0%
Total Out-of-Valley	2,183	7.5%

Pell-Recipient Undergraduates		
61.6% of all undergraduates or		
81.3% of undergraduates receiving aid		

UTRGV Fall
2019
Enrollment
Breakdown

THE FUTURE

- Investments in Public Education:

- IDEA Public Schools founded in Donna, TX in 1998 and educates 31,000 students in Rio Grande Valley, sending 100% to college
- The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley opened in 2013 in Edinburg

- U.S. – Mexico Relations

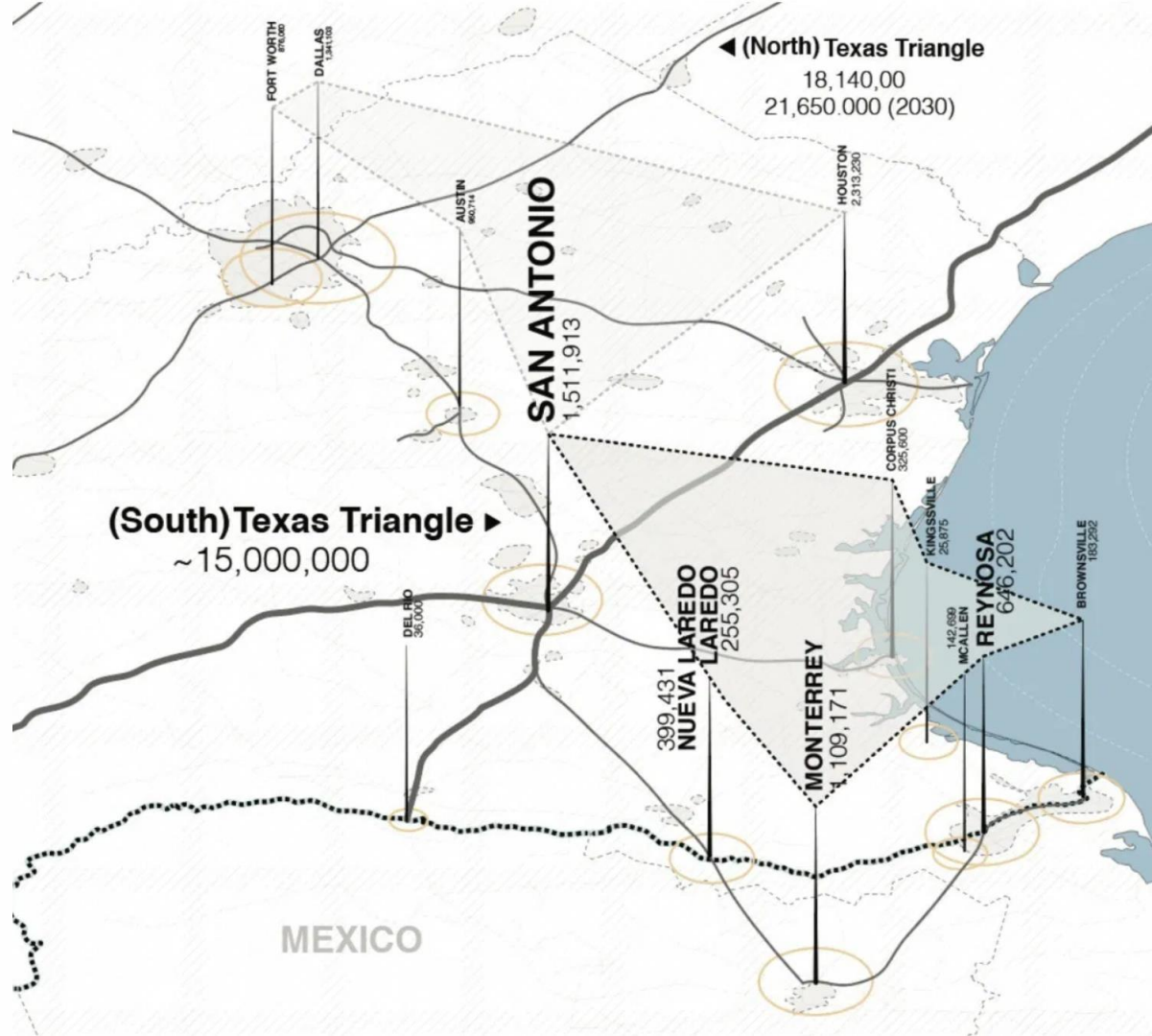
- Population was deeply affected by President Trump's immigration policies
- Local economy relies heavily on trade with Mexico

- Healthcare Growing

- UTRGV Medical School
- Overall healthcare wages in McAllen were significantly lower than elsewhere in the country
- 40% of the healthcare workers work in home health care services and are unlicensed, non-medical caregivers.

- Development of the South Texas Triangle

- Credit-based economies in the North vs. cash-centric economies in the South



Future Meditations

- How will improved public education affect economic development in the South Texas Triangle?
- What percentage of students being educated in South Texas/San Antonio have immigrated from Mexico?
- Where does San Antonio's college students come from?
 - Origins of the student population of UTRGV, South Texas College, etc.
 - Origins of the student population of UTSA, A&M San Antonio, Alamo Colleges, St. Mary's University, etc.
- Where do graduates go?
 - Have there been changes in migration patterns between South Texas and San Antonio due to the improvement of education?
 - Do students stay in the region or do they leave after college? If they leave, do they eventually come back and bring new skills **OR** does improved education opportunities lead to increased brain drain?

