



## **IDRA Research for College Access and Success**

Written in April 1984 by IDRA's founder, Dr. José A. Cárdenas, this 30-year-old statement could have been written today: "As a high-tech, faced-pace economy is emerging, the relatively abysmal state of education in Texas will only hinder the workforce... [including] the low percentage of Texans who are college graduates (16 percent), the equally alarming rate of Texans who graduate from high school (61.4 percent), and the generally low scores made by Texans on their SATs... unless something is done, Texas will not be able to keep up with the demands of a high-tech economy." ("Texas, Taxes, and High-Tech," IDRA Newsletter, April 1984)

For decades, IDRA has researched the critical transition between high school and college access and success, particularly for minority and low-income students. IDRA's research provides critical insights and solutions, such as our studies of a community college that yielded strategies that improved its recruitment and retention of Hispanic, low-income students, and students who were the first in their families to attend college. In 2007 when the Texas Legislature was considering limiting the number of students offered automatic admission under the [Top Ten Percent Plan](#), IDRA compiled and analyzed data on students entering the University of Texas at Austin and all the Texas high schools that contributed graduating seniors to those incoming freshmen classes between the years of 1995 and 2006. In another example, IDRA's [Alianza](#) project and research helped several universities improve their teacher preparation programs, increasing the number of teachers prepared to teach English in bilingual and multicultural environments. IDRA's [InterAction](#) initiative focused on improving college access and success of Latino students and building lasting linkages among K-12 schools, higher education, and the community and business sectors. IDRA's research set the context for action with the resulting 31 policy solutions informing state policy. In a [survey IDRA conducted](#) among minority and low income students, 95 percent of high school seniors said they want to go to college. And just a couple of months ago, IDRA released [College Bound and Determined](#), a report showing how a school district is changing how we think about college readiness. More examples and resources from IDRA's curriculum quality research work are online at [www.idra.org/Research/IDRA\\_Research](http://www.idra.org/Research/IDRA_Research).