



FORTY YEARS Intercultural Development Research Association 2012 Annual Report

# OPPORTUNITY MATTERS



## LETTER FROM IDRA PRESIDENT AND CEO

**Opportunity matters in America.** Today, nearly 50 million Americans, including 20 percent of our children, are living in poverty. As the nation pulls back from the brink of recession, we need to invest in effective paths out of poverty and in paths that lead to greater innovation, inclusion, discovery and prosperity.

High quality, accessible education is a sound investment. Our research shows that every dollar invested in education yields a nine dollar return. Around the world, nations that invest in education and in reducing inequality are, on the whole, more stable, prosperous and democratic.

At this critical moment, the question cannot be: *Do we invest in or cut public education?* or *Do we address or ignore inequity?* But rather, *How do we make public education work and work for all?* And *How do we sustain and create the commitment to bring this about?* On both scores—making education work for all and deepening commitment to a high quality education—there is great reason for optimism.

We have reason for optimism because investment in education is already paying off; because, more and more, educators are showing what works; and because many family, school, youth, civic and business leaders are willing—when they have the tools—to take bold risks.

If nothing else leaps from the pages of Opportunity Matters 2012, my hope is that this year's report leaves you with a sense of the possible. In the pages that follow, you will visit the five-state region served by IDRA's South Central Collaborative for Equity, where education leaders are working with us to reverse the trend of re-segregation and assuring that students have access to quality curricula. You'll learn about the network of organizations in South Texas and family leaders of the PTA Comunitario who are collaborating with IDRA to build capacity to amplify the voices of families and youth, and to create family-led school transformations. You'll meet school leaders like superintendent Dr. Daniel King and teachers Ms. Kerry Arrington and Mr. Chris Thelan, who are transforming school districts and classrooms through their dedication to excellence for all children. And you'll meet students like Dalila Pereira da Silva, from São Paulo, Brazil, who are teaching the value of valuing youth, by example.

Forty years ago—in 1973—IDRA was founded by Dr. José Angel Cárdenas, in San Antonio. It was on the West Side of this city that Hispanic families and community members took to the streets and to the courts—even to the U.S. Supreme Court—to demand an equitable public education for their children. That struggle, for educational equity and excellence for every student, was the driving force behind our founding.

And it is the thread that is woven across everything that we do today and will do tomorrow.

What makes that thread strong—unbreakable even—is that through it we are tied to a history of commitment for children's educational and civil rights. You can count on us at IDRA to keep faith with the past and to keep step with the present, fulfilling the promise of equal educational opportunities for all.

And because we are working together, we have great reason for optimism.

*Maria Robledo Montecel*

*“That struggle, for educational equity and excellence for every student, was the driving force behind our founding.”*

**FUNDERS WHO HAVE HELPED  
MAKE IDRA'S WORK POSSIBLE**

Administration for Children, Youth and Families  
 The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
 Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.  
 The Annie E. Casey Foundation  
 ASPIRA of New York  
 The AT&T Foundation  
 The Carnegie Corporation  
 The Challenge Foundation  
 Charles Stewart Mott Foundation\*  
 The Children's Trust Fund of Texas  
 Clemson University—NDPC  
 The Coca-Cola Foundation\*  
 The Coca-Cola Company  
 The Danforth Foundation  
 The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation  
 The Edward Hazen Foundation  
 The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
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 JP Morgan Chase Foundation  
 The Kresge Foundation\*  
 The Lilly Endowment  
 League of United Latin American Citizens  
 Marguerite Casey Foundation\*  
 The Mexican American Legal Defense  
 and Educational Fund  
 The National Coalition of Advocates for Students  
 The National Endowment for the Humanities  
 National Education Association  
 National Institute of Mental Health  
 The National Science Foundation  
 National Urban Coalition  
 The Primerica Foundation  
 The Rockefeller Foundation  
 Southwestern Bell  
 Texas Department of Community Affairs  
 Texas Education Agency  
 Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
 TG\*  
 U.S. Department of Education\*  
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
 U.S. Department of Justice  
 University of Houston  
 The W.K. Kellogg Foundation\*  
 Wachovia Foundation  
 Wells Fargo Foundation  
 The William Randolph Hearst Foundation

\* Grants during current period.

# 2012 IDRA Annual Report: OPPORTUNITY MATTERS

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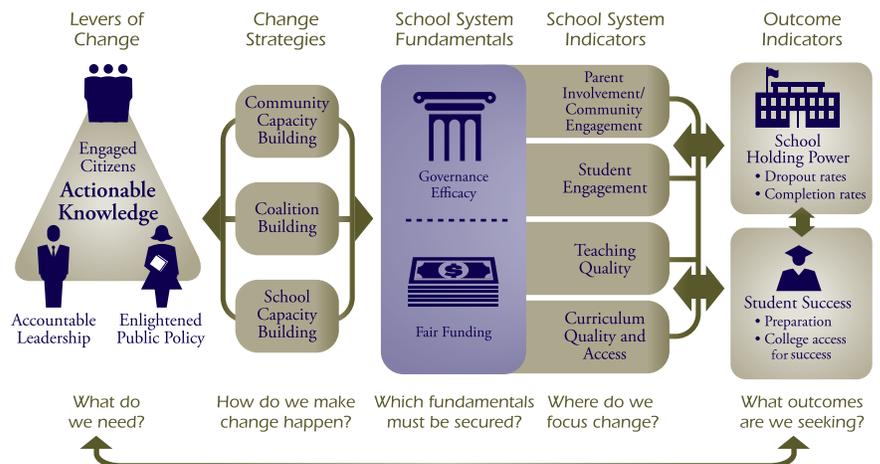
### P.18 FINANCIALS

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**ABOUT THE COVER.** Forty faces of students appear on the cover of Opportunity Matters 2012, in honor of forty years dedicated to educational excellence and equity for all children. Many of these students are part of IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, which, since 1984, has benefited more than 160,000 children in the continental United States, Puerto Rico, Brazil and the United Kingdom.

## ALL WE DO IS BUILT ON A MODEL FOR SUCCESS

IDRA's Quality Schools Action Framework is an empirical and practical change model that can be used to link benchmarked standards with sustainable reform. The framework uses data not only for rear-view mirror assessments but to guide strategic actions that transform schooling for all.



# 1



**AT ISSUE.** Since the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling, great strides have been made to improve public education. But schools around the country still struggle with resource inequality, achievement gaps and, in some cases, re-segregation. The need to overcome inequity is especially pressing in the South and Southwest where minority and poor students are the majority.



**WHAT WE ARE DOING.** Through research that identifies solutions and guides practice, and via civil rights frameworks, forecasts, model programs and data, IDRA makes the case that equity and excellence in public education is not only desirable and necessary, but possible.

### WHERE WE ARE FOCUSING:

Capacity-building research, training, models and professional development that spotlight solutions to persistent educational problems.

**CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS.** IDRA's South Central Collaborative for Equity, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, works at the forefront of strategies to secure children's civil and educational rights across Federal Region VI (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas). Given the urgent need to end discrimination and expand educational opportunity across this broad region, IDRA SCCE is using a mix of both traditional and pioneering strategies to build high-impact partnerships; share key research, data and proven practices; and provide training and technical assistance that transforms education.

Last year, IDRA SCCE staff crisscrossed the region to provide capacity-building training in more than 450 schools. We worked with school and civic leaders in Arkansas and Louisiana to tackle the over-representation of minority boys in disciplinary referrals and to expand access to a high quality curriculum. We worked with education, family and community leaders in Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico to improve STEM teaching and learning—and to strengthen instructional services for children who are English language learners. And we partnered with public school districts and state agencies to meet their broad obligations to children; to fulfill the specific mandates from the U.S. Department of Justice for achieving unitary status; and to correct civil rights concerns, as required by the U.S. Office for Civil Rights. The IDRA SCCE also served as a resource to 10 equity assistance center regions and the federal Office for Civil Rights through annual gatherings, such as the Southern Minority Leadership Conference, the Leveraging Resources Conference and the Native American Pathways to Civil Rights Conference. IDRA also extended the reach and impact of these sessions with webinars, podcasts, online networks and e-letters designed for participants and tens of thousands of state, education, school and community leaders across Federal Region VI and nationally. Last year alone, visitors logged more than 17,500 monthly visits to IDRA's website, 39,100 downloads of IDRA's Classnotes podcasts, and tens of thousands accessed equity research and resources through IDRA SCCE e-letters and the IDRA SCCE Equity Hub.



### 2012 PODCASTS PUT DATA, RESOURCES INTO THE HANDS OF PEOPLE LEADING CHANGE

**Advancing American Indian Education—Episode 101**—Highlights the efforts of a consortium of federally-funded technical assistance providers to examine the status of Native American students in schools and promote use of more culturally-responsive and appropriate curricula.

**Creating a STEM-Focused School (2-Part Series, Episodes 105 and 107)**—Spotlights courageous leadership by educators in Federal Region VI who have dedicated themselves to overcoming barriers and bias and to promoting educational excellence.

You can hear these and other 2012 IDRA Classnotes podcasts at <http://www.idra.org/Podcasts/>.



## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING.

*“With this portal, SISD parents as well as parents across the state [will] be able to access comprehensible data on college participation, preparation and success, which are key to ‘connecting the dots’ and closing gaps between K-12 education and post-secondary outcomes.”*

**Fernando Vasquez**, Title I Specialist, Socorro Independent School District, Texas, 2011

## A CLOSER LOOK:

### NEXT GENERATION OF IDRA’S TEXAS OURSCHOOL DATA PORTAL FOCUSES ON COLLEGE ACCESS, SUCCESS



IDRA’s bilingual (English/Spanish) web portal ([www.idra.org/OurSchool](http://www.idra.org/OurSchool)) provides key data for Texas school districts and high schools, to foster and support family-school-community partnerships to improve schools. Designed around IDRA’s Quality Schools Action

Framework, the site includes key questions to promote community conversations and provides a framework that local partners can use to plan joint action to improve school holding power. This past year, IDRA expanded the OurSchool portal, with support from TG, to give cross-sector leaders a new level of high quality, accessible data focused on college-readiness and success. The portal now includes ACT/SAT test-taking and passing rates, developmental course-taking, and college-sending rates. With 2.0 interactivity, visitors can create a “my schools” portfolio, see “how to” and “best practices” video tutorials, conduct surveys and share results with local partners and policymakers. IDRA is rolling out OurSchool Portal 2.0 in gatherings with K-12, community, family and IHE leaders in Dallas, Houston, El Paso, Pharr and San Antonio.



# 1

### LONGITUDINAL DATA THAT KEEP DROPOUT ISSUES ON FRONT BURNER

There was a void of information in 1986, when at the request of the state of Texas, IDRA conducted the state's first-ever comprehensive report of dropouts. Results of that initial study spurred action and state policies. But a dropout problem of alarming magnitude continued to plague Texas. So IDRA carried on the research, publishing statewide and regional studies every year since then, using a consistent methodology that allows year-to-year comparisons of progress by county and student group. Our belief that no student is expendable is a driving force in the effort to reach 100 percent graduation today.

The last three years of IDRA data show that public school districts and communities in Texas are making progress. But much work remains to achieve full graduation. The 2011-12 IDRA study takes up this charge with searchable, data-rich resources, trend graphs of high school attrition by county, a supplemental analysis for reaching a rate of zero, and podcast interviews and publications on action steps that community and family leaders can take to raise graduation rates. The research methodology has become a model for the nation.

### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING.

*"We talk about the fact that we live in a very data rich environment. But many times this data is Greek to parents. IDRA has set out over several years with their portal to really do it in a way that's usable to parents...Even myself as an educator who has access to AEIS and other websites, I find the portal and the way they organize the data very useful and very informative."*

**Dr. Daniel King**, Superintendent, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD, Texas, 2012

*"SCCE has always been very responsive to the needs of PCSSD and has always provided quality services support and resources."*

**Dr. Brenda Bowles**, Assistant Superintendent for Equity and Pupil Services  
Pulaski County Special School District, Little Rock, 2012

### WHAT WORKS: EVALUATION RESEARCH PROJECTS UNDERWAY IN 2012

In addition to the evaluation of our own programs, IDRA is conducting research studies and evaluations to build the body of knowledge in the field, including: an evaluation of the long-term impact of AVANCE's Parent-Child Education Program across generations; a meta-analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture – National Institute of Food and Agriculture programs serving Hispanic students from San Bernardino, California, to Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, through an agreement with Texas State University; an evaluation of the Teaching American History Project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, with San Antonio ISD; and an evaluation of Reach, AIM & SOAR, San Antonio ISD's new high school graduation initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Education.



**A CLOSER LOOK:  
TAKING A STAND FOR EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY:  
FAIR FUNDING NOW!**

When it comes to unprecedented cuts to public education, Texas’ 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislative Session in 2011 was one for the history books. During that term, the State of Texas—which already ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> in per pupil funding—cut \$6.4 billion from public schools, leaving a rainy-day fund untapped.

IDRA launched Fair Funding Now! to provide Texans with the information and platforms they need to take a stand for a just and appropriately-funded educational system. These tools include: searchable, interactive data maps on funding cuts for every county and public school district in the state; sample school board resolutions; bilingual (Spanish/English) presentations, infographics and litigation news; and a crowdsourced map (TexasSchoolFunding.crowdmap.com) for Texans to speak out about how funding cuts are impacting their schools.



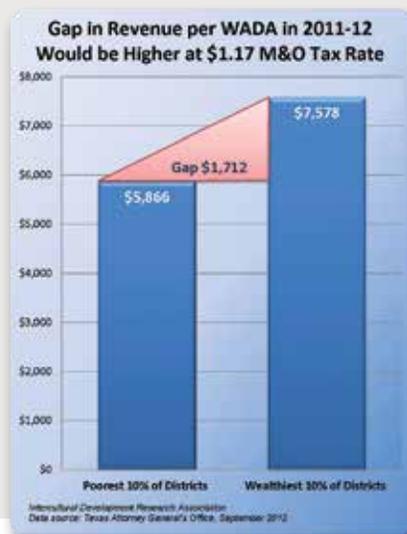
“We used to have afterschool tutoring, but we now do not have money for the bus drivers to take our students home. So our students do not get the help they need. We have teachers who want to help but do not have the students. So who loses? Our children.”

**Parent of middle school children, using Texas School Funding Crowdmap to report how funding cuts are affecting children in her school, Central Texas, 2012**



**FAIR FUNDING NOW! PARTNERS:** The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the Mexican American School Board Members Association (MASBA) and the Texas Center for Education Policy (TCEP) at UT-Austin.

In 2012, we co-convened sessions on school finance equity with the LULAC Women’s Leadership Conference, MASBA Annual Conference, Save Texas Schools, Texas Alliance for Black School Educators, and family leaders in Austin, Lubbock, San Antonio and across South Texas. Learn more at: <http://budurl.com/IDRAfairfund>.



IDRA is examining the status and impact of public school funding mechanisms through studies, such as “The Extent of Equity in the Texas School Finance System and Its Impact on Selected Student Related Issues” (2012). We are providing expert testimony in the lawsuit filed by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund on behalf of property-poor districts and families—part of what has become one of the largest challenges to inequitable and inadequate education in the nation’s history. And IDRA launched the School Finance Trial Dashboard to assure that communities around the state have in-depth analyses and up-to-the minute updates on the lawsuit. Drawing on and analyzing rich data sets enables IDRA to produce analyses that identify, for example, the association between insufficient resources and higher school attrition rates.

Since the award-winning IDRA Classnotes podcast series was introduced in 2006, there have been more than 181,000 downloads.

IDRA’s Graduation for All e-letter is one of the only e-letters in the country to provide comprehensive, bilingual information in English and Spanish on community- and school-based strategies to raise graduation rates. The e-letter regularly reaches 4,000 subscribers, with most issues re-posted to tens of thousands of readers nationally.

Graduation for All—Spotlight on STEM, 2012—provided a field notes guide to our partnerships with educators to improve STEM teaching and learning in Federal Region VI, sharing new publications, effective practices and stories of impact.

# 2



**AT ISSUE.** Where a patchwork of policies predominate—or people are divided by blame—children’s needs fall through the cracks. By contrast, wherever real gains are made, the bonds are strong among family, community and school; people feel valued; and students can connect the dots between what they are learning and the world they are growing into and shaping.



**WHERE WE ARE FOCUSING:**

Linking students to top-quality, culturally-rich curricula, from preK to college; eliminating silos, and creating continuity that brings about and sustains change.

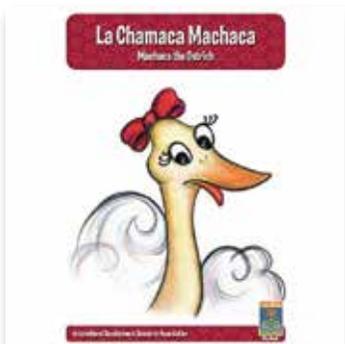
**WHAT WE ARE DOING.** From early childhood education to K-12 to higher education and from research to practice, IDRA works as a kind of border-walker, bridging gaps and building family-school-community connections to the benefit of all children.

**CONNECTING GREAT PEDAGOGY WITH CURRICULA THAT HONORS A CHILD’S HOME LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

**Semillitas de aprendizaje (Seedlings of Learning) early childhood curriculum.** Grounded in IDRA research on the key features that must be in place to create early childhood “centers of excellence,” IDRA’s *Semillitas de aprendizaje* is a bilingual (Spanish/English) supplemental early childhood curriculum based on the art of storytelling. *Semillitas de aprendizaje* focuses on the development of literacy and numeracy through culturally- and linguistically-relevant materials that children love, for preK to primary classrooms. With support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, this past year, IDRA provided technical assistance and training to early childhood classrooms, fostering stronger home-school partnerships and producing expanded new curricula and materials that nurture and catalyze learning. Combining these curricular materials and professional development with a focus on strengthening home-school connections, we and our partners are strengthening early childhood programs in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. In Oklahoma, in consultation with Dr. Della Warrior and in collaboration with tribal leaders and elders, we are fashioning a joint effort to translate selected editions of the *Semillitas de aprendizaje* math and self-concept series into select languages of Plains Indians.

In 2012, IDRA showcased *Semillitas de aprendizaje* at the annual National *La Cosecha* Dual Language Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and shared the curricula, in collaboration with IDRA’s SCCE, with 1,800 school districts in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. And we provided the curricula and materials to more than 500 teachers working to improve preK-3 education for underserved children.

We also shared *Semillitas de aprendizaje* at the Annual IDRA *La Semana del Niño* Parent Institute, one of the nation’s premier gathering places for educators and parents committed to strengthening early education for English learners. In 2012, more than 200 parents from school districts across Texas joined IDRA for this parent-led gathering, invigorated with new ideas from other family leaders about how to become stronger advocates, not only for their own children, but also for all children in their districts.



“1...2...cha-, cha-, cha-, tras-, tras-, cha-, cha-, cha.” The laughter is contagious. Children clap, stomp and sound out the new words and steps with the long-lashed Chamaca Machaca ostrich, as she moves from self-doubt to confidence. This year, IDRA has been incorporating this series of big books into professional development for preK teachers and staff in 15 school districts.



### THREE ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL PTA COMUNITARIO, GROUNDED IN IDRA'S FAMILY LEADERSHIP MODEL

- 1. Collective action by empowered families and parents
- 2. Sensitivity to community cultural and linguistic practices
- 3. Partnership and collaboration for academic success and college access

Sharing the leaping ostrich, Ms. Machaca, and the teaching hen, Mrs. Cluck, through *Semillitas de aprendizaje* big books: Blanca Castorena, her son and Sandra Carrillo (top) and Belén Cosino and her daughter (below) at a gathering of family leaders at ARISE PTA Comunitario in South Texas.

IDRA joined Texas State University in its symposium on early childhood education, a celebration of 2012 as the *Lady Bird Johnson Centennial*, to moderate practitioner and policy panels focused on the legacy and future of early childhood education. IDRA's President, Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel was interviewed by Emmy-award winning producer Robert Currie for the documentary video developed as part of the event.



Scan this code to see the video "Lady Bird Johnson & The Legacy of Head Start" or visit [www.education.txstate.edu/ci/news/lbj-event.html](http://www.education.txstate.edu/ci/news/lbj-event.html).



# 2

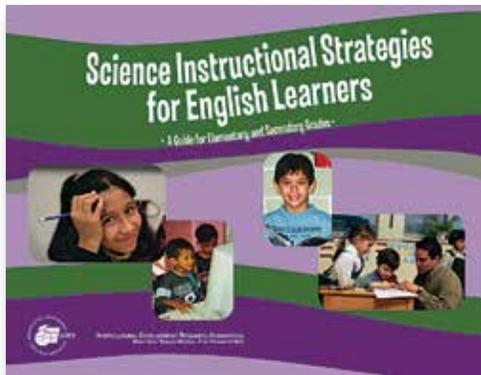
## CONNECTING STUDENTS TO HIGH QUALITY STEM SMART! TEACHING AND CURRICULA



From IDRA Quality Schools Action Framework (p.3)

In partnership with secondary campuses, school districts and universities, IDRA is working to improve access to and quality of STEM education. Continuing collaborative work with San Marcos CISD and Texas State University at San Marcos, we have been building a community of learners with instructional coaches to help teachers support one another as they strengthen their practice. The district is implementing an array of new resources developed by IDRA for teachers: *Community Engagement Series for Educators* to strengthen home-school relationships; *Helping Your Child Discover Science*, a bilingual (Spanish/English) tool for reinforcing science learning at home; *Science Instructional Strategies for English Learners*, with best practices in science teaching for English learners; *Coaching and Mentoring for Leadership*, a guide for continuous improvement, and *Achieve College ~ ¡Hacia Adelante! ~ A Guide for College Access*, a resource for parents, counselors and students to create a network of support and information that encourages graduation and a successful transition to college. Working in partnership with Keller Elementary in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, IDRA's professional development sessions are helping teachers incorporate in-class tools like Promethean boards for diverse classrooms as a seamless extension of the curriculum.

At Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD, where leadership and the commitment to achieving equity and excellence for all students also run deep, we are achieving tremendous gains. Through a multi-year collaborative partnership, we have worked together to provide professional development on sheltered instruction and engaging English learners in science, to implement IDRA's Math Smart! and Science Smart! models and to strengthen the bridge for students between high school and college. The efforts have improved differentiated assessment; STEM instruction; home-school collaboration; and infused math, science and English language strategies into lesson delivery, benefitting thousands of students across the district and resulting in dramatic improvements in science and mathematics.



### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING.

*"We saw significant growth in science scores as a result of our work with IDRA during our K-8 science initiative with TEA and Texas State University."*

**Pam Guettner**, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
PK-12, San Marcos CISD, Texas, 2012

*"With IDRA's assistance we have taken significant strides to meet the academic needs of at-risk populations. IDRA staff has always been supportive of Guerra Elementary... has modeled highly effective strategies and has been instrumental in increasing the level of classroom instruction."*

**Rebecca Sanchez**, Principal, Augusto "Gus" Guerra Elementary, Alamo, Texas, 2012

IDRA has teamed up with Gus Guerra elementary to bring core components of Math Smart! and Science Smart! to the district through professional development and lesson modeling for middle school teachers, and math and science camps for fifth graders.



**“There is no more important thing to be doing on a Saturday than hearing the perspectives of youth about education”**—Dr. William Truly, Mayor, Canton, Mississippi, 2012 (in photo, center left, with teacher and project coordinator, Ms. Firenza Anderson, far left, and participating students), joining Canton High School students for a community dialogue on expanding access to college. Students used documentary photography to examine civil rights promises, barriers and opportunities to expand access to college.

## PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE

In identifying ways to expand paths to graduation and college, the perspective of students themselves is indispensable. Through IDRA's Pathways project, funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, students from Canton Public Schools presented to members of the church and civic community, families and the mayor their vision for expanding pathways to high school graduation and college. Convened at South Liberty Missionary Baptist Church, the event was part of a broader set of community-based dialogues on fulfilling the promises of landmark civil rights decisions, like *Brown vs. Board of Education* and *Mendez vs. Westminster*. The project, led by IDRA in collaboration with the non-profit Critical Exposure, Canton Public School District and South Liberty Baptist Church, builds on a framework for community blueprint meetings that engage youth, community, families and school leaders in community-based dialogues and planning to improve public education.

## BUILDING BRIDGES: HIGH SCHOOL TO HIGHER EDUCATION

IDRA is working closely with the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo school district (PSJA) to make college completion a reality for more low-income, first-time-in-college students. Currently, PSJA is implementing a groundbreaking transition counselors program through which high school counselors are placed at South Texas College and the University of Texas–Pan American to ensure the retention of PSJA students through to college graduation. Through this program, PSJA counselors address the needs of students who might get lost, dealing with difficulties that arise from navigating a complex college and university system.

With a grant from TG, IDRA is building organizational capacity by developing and documenting a model based on PSJA's early college district program. The project will produce a fully documented model that: (1) builds bridges between secondary institutions and institutions of higher education; (2) incorporates college access for all students in both principle and practice; and (3) actively works to help all students to succeed as they transition to and complete college. Technology is a centerpiece of this effort—IDRA is collaborating with PSJA–STC counselors to develop a mobile app that will connect students with their counselors via smartphone.

The model, which will be developed in consultation with other institutions, will be designed to highlight best practices in replication, sustainability and stewardship. Building on a long, effective partnership between IDRA and PSJA, the project also will help IDRA build organizational capacity to provide technical assistance and leadership at the intersection of K-12, community and higher education that benefits students across our work.



## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING.

*“Wow, I left IDRA’s offices speechless—and that is rare for me. I see many opportunities to bring resources to our migrant families, their children and those providing their early childhood experience. All the thinking has been done. I will have the joy of witnessing the impact of the great minds at IDRA.”*

**Cleo Rodriguez, Jr.**, Executive Director, National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Association  
Washington, D.C., 2012



## 2012 STEM-RELATED PODCASTS

[Creating a STEM-Focused School \(four-part series\)](#)  
Episodes 105, 107, 110, 111

[Visual Literacy in Math and Science](#)  
Episode 112

[Learning with iPads for Diverse Students](#)  
Episode 114

# 3



**AT ISSUE.** Taking up leadership on behalf of all children takes courage, on the part of lawmakers pressing for equitable policies; school administrators being transparent and taking risks; business leaders investing in their communities; family and community members and students speaking out and taking up collaborative leadership.



**WHAT WE ARE DOING.** IDRA works to foster, amplify and spotlight courageous leadership, in ways that make it contagious.

### WHERE WE ARE FOCUSING:

Spotlighting, fostering and amplifying family, community, school and youth leadership to transform education in classrooms, on campuses and across regions.

### TEACHERS LEARNING AND LEADING, IN COMMUNITY

High-need schools require skilled, committed teachers, who are passionate about innovation and engaging all students. Through IDRA's Transition to Teaching projects, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, we are partnering with more than 20 K-12 schools, colleges and universities across Texas to meet this need. Together, we are preparing a new generation of teachers in math, science, bilingual/ESL and special education. IDRA's Caminos project prepares mid-career professionals and recent graduates as teachers with EC-6 bilingual/ESL certification, with an optional certification in special education. Through Math and Science Smart (MASS), we are preparing a critical mass of middle and high school math and science teachers with ESL supplemental endorsement for students in 10 high-need Texas school districts. Through Teachers for Today and Tomorrow (T<sup>3</sup>), IDRA is selecting, recruiting and retaining competent teachers in multicultural settings who have a passion for teaching and making a difference; is developing a curriculum to certify

teachers in bilingual/ESL and STEM subjects in mostly Latino communities; and is providing a comprehensive online and personalized support system to retain teachers for a minimum of three years. T<sup>3</sup> is also expanding the candidate pool to include paraprofessionals, a key feature of a "grow your own" teacher recruitment approach.



Through IDRA's online Teacher Network, we are complementing in-person professional development sessions and coaching and mentoring with an online professional learning community. One hundred and eighty members strong, this cross-disciplinary network of teachers earning certification in bilingual/ESL, STEM, mathematics and special education is a place for exchanging resources, curricula, proven practices and stories of success.

### 2012 TRANSITION TO TEACHING PARTNERS:

Dallas ISD (Texas Woman's University and University of North Texas); Eagle Pass ISD; Ector County ISD; Edgewood ISD (in San Antonio); Fort Worth ISD (Tarleton State University); Harlandale ISD (in San Antonio); Houston ISD (St. Thomas University); Lamesa ISD; Lubbock ISD; Pasadena ISD (St. Thomas University); Pearsall ISD; Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD; Plainview ISD; Poteet ISD; Presidio ISD; and Rio Grande CCISD. In addition, two San Antonio academies (George Gervin Academy and Higgs Carter King Charter School) are partners. Additional high-need districts in San Antonio and the Laredo area are being served based on their need for math and science teachers. Partnering IHEs include Texas Tech University, Our Lady of the Lake University, Alamo Colleges, South Texas College and Texas State University.

"ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS IS SEEING THE **PRIDE** IN THEIR FACES."

Louanne Rintala



"I WANTED TO HELP STUDENTS MAKE A **CONNECTION**

FROM REAL WORLD APPLICATIONS TO TAUGHT CONCEPTS. I KNEW MATH COULD BE FUN AND EXCITING, AND I WANTED TO HELP STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THAT AS WELL. THIS PROGRAM HAS EQUIPPED ME WITH THE TOOLS NEEDED TO TEACH ALL STUDENTS."

Kerry L. Arrington



"MY CHILDHOOD **DREAM** HAD ALWAYS BEEN TO BECOME A TEACHER."

Martha Alonso



"THIS PROGRAM HAS HELPED EQUIP ME FURTHER BY BUILDING A MORE

**DIVERSE**

'KIT' BAG. EACH SESSION GIFTED ME AND MY STUDENTS WITH BETTER IDEAS, CALMER SOLUTIONS AND A GREATER ABILITY TO RELATE MATHEMATICAL CONTENT."

Chris Thelan



**Louanne Rintala**, a graphic designer who worked in advertising for 11 years joined the TTT program because she wanted to make a difference. Today, as a bilingual teacher, she is combining creativity and commitment to second graders at San Antonio

"I FEEL LIKE I AM REALLY MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MY STUDENTS' LIVES, NOT ONLY ACADEMICALLY BUT ALSO **TEACHING** AND MOTIVATING THEM TO SEE THAT THEY CAN BE SUCCESSFUL. I WAS RAISED IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD, SO I CAN RELATE TO MY STUDENTS."

Marlene Alonso



ISD's Beacon Hill Elementary. **Kerry L. Arrington** is pursuing a general education and LEP certification through Dallas ISD and combining her training with a love of learning and a commitment to all students' success. **Chris Thelan**, who is working to become a teacher with Dallas ISD, following five years of active military service, is committed to learning as that fulfills the potential of every child in his classroom. He is proud to bring the kind of leadership and respect for people of all backgrounds to work on behalf of children that not only connects them to math but also to a world of possibility. Sisters **Marlene** and **Martha Alonso** had both originally set off on different career paths. Marlene earned an MBA and had gone to work in the banking industry. Martha earned a degree in accounting and became an internal auditor for San Antonio ISD. But with a true passion for teaching, both decided to leave their earlier careers and pursue certification through IDRA's TTT program. Today, Marlene Alonso is a fourth grade bilingual teacher at Bowden Elementary in San Antonio ISD, Campus Lead Bilingual Teacher and chair of the Community Involvement Committee at her school. Martha Alonso is in her third year at Rhodes Middle School in San Antonio ISD teaching sixth through eighth grade ESL. As the only ESL teacher at Rhodes MS, she serves all 60 ELL students on campus, connecting with core content teachers and her students' families, and tutoring her students in math and science before and after school. But she is not stopping there. Next up is a PhD in organizational leadership at the University of the Incarnate Word.

# 3

### SCHOOL-COMMUNITY-FAMILY LEADERSHIP FOR REGIONAL TRANSFORMATION

In the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, IDRA has partnered with school superintendents and teachers, CBOs, and family and youth to transform the quality of public education. As we share a vision of educational excellence and equity for children across the region—and help build capacity to realize it—we and our partners are increasingly able to connect the dots across these efforts.



### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING.

*“Our families are asserting their leadership roles all across the Valley. They are attending school board meetings, participating, advocating and contributing to changes that positively impact their families and communities. As a child’s first teacher, parents must have an equal voice... At the end of the day, the goal is to create an inclusive process in which parents and families participate—something we would like to see all across the country.”*

**Jose Medrano**, Project Development / START Center and Co-Chair,  
Equal Voice - RGV Education Working Group, 2012



### ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN TEACHER PREPARATION (2012)

- 120 highly qualified teacher candidates have been recruited to become certified bilingual and bilingual special education teachers through Caminos.
- 150 teachers of record in secondary math and science classrooms in partner high-need school districts through MASS.
- 25 teachers have already been recruited and are currently in their first year of teaching through T<sup>3</sup>.
- We are preparing highly-skilled bilingual teachers in mathematics, science and special education in high poverty schools where their skills are needed most.

### COMMUNITY CAPACITY-BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP

The network of community-based organizations that comprise Equal Voice Network - Rio Grande Valley, all grantees of the Marguerite Casey Foundation, is working to address critical service gaps in health, housing, employment, immigration law, and education and is creating a movement of working families, committed to the economic health and well-being of South Texas families and communities. And as part of the Equal Voice for America’s Families national platform and regional priorities, these organizations are committed to strengthening public education for children across the region.

With funding from the Marguerite Casey Foundation (MCF), IDRA has been providing key resources and technical assistance to the 10 individual MCF grantee organizations and the EV-RGV Network; strengthening the network by providing capacity-building support for strategic planning, technology tools for evaluation, development of web-based networks and communications, and policy tools and analyses for the network’s education advocacy campaign. Over time IDRA’s MCF-funded work has evolved from strengthening organizational capacity to an emphasis on strengthening leadership. We are developing the Equal Voice Leadership Curriculum and leadership training for families and CBO staff. We are providing policy advocacy tools and key research distilled into tangible and practical information for families. And we are developing, for the foundation and other grantees, a rich description of the genesis of two regional networks, and factors critical to sustaining an Equal Voice for America’s Families’ network of community-based organizations. Working together with MCF, we are studying two networks selected by MCF as examples of networks that have been effective in raising voices at the grassroots level and are producing collective impact in building a movement of families: the Equal Voice Network of the Rio Grande Valley (EVN-RGV) and the Mississippi Delta Network (MS Delta).

IDRA’s ABOGAR (“advocate”) project, funded by the Kresge Foundation, leverages our work with community organization networks. The project grew from organizational assessments and comprehensive environmental scans of human services and educational needs in South and Central Texas. Through ABOGAR, IDRA is partnering with CBOs in South Texas to strengthen their capacity for sustaining impact in moving people out of poverty in the areas of organizational development, program development, collaboration, community engagement and evaluation of effectiveness.



**LEFT PHOTO:** Third anniversary of the ARISE PTA Comunitario (left to right): Lourdes Flores (president of ARISE Support Center), Eva Carranza (ARISE South Tower volunteer & first president of ARISE South Tower PTA), Andrea Landeros (president of ARISE Muñiz), Emilia Vega (president of ARISE South Tower), Andrea Olvera (president of ARISE Las Milpas)

**RIGHT PHOTO:** Maria Melchor, ARISE Muñiz Board Member & resident (standing) at ARISE South Tower PTA Comunitario meeting with Donna ISD administrators at Dolores Huerta Center. Through gatherings with school administrators at community-based centers, PTA Comunitario is building family-school bonds around a shared vision to provide excellent schooling for every child in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in South Texas.

## THE POWER OF FAMILY LEADERSHIP: PTA COMUNITARIO

In communities stretching along the South Texas border with Mexico, about a half-million people live in colonias—poor, unincorporated areas that lack access to basic infrastructure. Historically, in the colonias, where residents include about 100,000 children, dropout rates have hovered at about 50 percent and, on average, only 10 percent of those who graduate go to college. Here, starting three years ago with just 35 families, IDRA partnered with Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD and the non-profit, ARISE, to successfully implement the nation’s first PTA Comunitario.

Centered on a *promotoras*, or peer organizing model, and housed in a community organization, PTA Comunitario would engage and support family leaders in the colonias, not to play auxiliary or fundraising roles in schools, but to examine data on how their own children, and children across the region, were doing and partner with their schools to expand educational opportunity. That first cohort of 35 families report that all of their children, mostly children learning English as a second language, who were in high school and scheduled to complete their studies, graduated and those of college age went on to higher education.

There are now 75 PTA Comunitario families working with leaders in PSJA to monitor the academic success of their children and other neighborhood children. Based on this success, in late 2012, IDRA was selected by the U.S. Department of Education to expand development of the PTA Comunitario model in five communities in Central and South Texas, through the i3 Initiative.



**On a mild October evening**, dozens of students (many, the children of ARISE members) and their families joined IDRA for a briefing and conversation on the state of public school funding for South Texas public schools. From sixth graders to college freshmen, the students examined how funding cuts are affecting Donna ISD and Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD—where most of them attended school—and what they and their peers can do to improve funding equity. Building on a history of intergenerational projects in the lower Rio Grande Valley, IDRA is working with youth and families to support their efforts to expand educational opportunity and equity for all children in the RGV. In late 2012, the University of Texas announced its intention to restructure and expand higher education availability in South Texas that includes establishing a medical school.

# 3



*“Education is still the best way out of poverty.”  
“If you’re working with IDRA...you will be learning  
how to become an advocate for your children.”*

**María Del Rosario “Rosie” Castro, 2012,** director of the Center for Academic Transitions at Palo Alto College (shown left) in her keynote address, “Bilingual Education Paves the Road to College,” at the parent institute of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education annual conference led by IDRA.

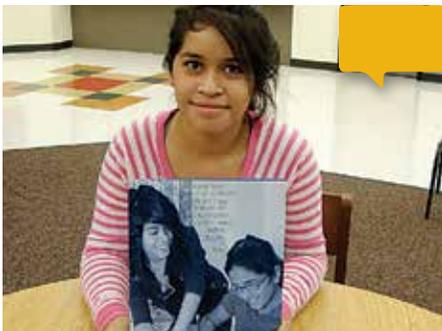
Mrs. Castro, mother of San Antonio Mayor Julián Castro and U.S. Representative Joaquin Castro, spoke of the role of education in raising her sons. On October 24, 2012, one hundred parents joined IDRA for the institute, participating in sessions on parent leadership and advocacy for quality bilingual education and college preparation for all children. To see a video of remarks: <http://vzaar.tv/1110170>.

### YOUTH LEADERSHIP: LEARNING TO LEAD, LEADING TO LEARN

**Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in the United States** Designed by IDRA and piloted with schools in San Antonio, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has been implemented in schools across the United States as well as Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom, and Brazil. In this research-based dropout prevention program students at risk of dropping out tutor younger children who are also struggling. In every district where it has been implemented, students, when valued and supported, step into leadership roles. It is through valuing youth, building home-school bonds, and the spirit of service and leadership, that schools and students have the chance to chart a new course. Since its inception in 1984, the program, carried out with funding from The Coca-Cola Foundation and in partnership with schools in the United States and internationally, has impacted 721,000 students, parents, teachers and administrators. In the United States, during the 2011-12 school year, the program was implemented in 48 schools in Georgia, North Carolina and Texas and benefited more than 2,000 students (tutors and tutees). Across all sites, the program maintains a less than 2 percent dropout rate.

In 2012, through student leadership days, college tours and the national essay contest, the program expanded opportunity for youth to design and co-facilitate sessions for their peers, conduct informational interviews to plan for college and careers, and reflect on the role of service learning and leadership in shaping their experience in school.

Leveraging the program’s success, beginning in 2013, IDRA will broaden implementation of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program across the United States to benefit students in new regions: Northwest (San Francisco), West (Los Angeles), Midwest (Chicago), Great Lakes (Detroit) and Northeast (New York City).



*“The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program made a difference in my life, and I was able to return the favor by impacting the lives of younger students.”*

**Arlette Calderón,** former tutor from Memorial Middle School, who now attends Palmview High School (La Joya ISD, Mission, Texas), holding up the program folders she had autographed. Students inscribed their folders with inspirational messages that will be framed and displayed at their schools, districts and IDRA’s offices.



## FROM RIO TO SÃO PAULO

**“Respeito é uma lição que todos devem aprender...  
Respeito é magnânimo e contribui para a concretização de sonhos”**

**(“Respect is a teaching we all must learn...)**

**Respect is magnanimous, helping us realize our dreams”)**

—Excerpt from *O Respeito (Respect)* by Dalila Pereira da Silva, a tutor at the Michel Pedro Sawaya School in São José do Rio Preto, São Paulo, read at IDRA’s Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program graduation.



## IN 13 YEARS IN BRAZIL, THE COCA-COLA VALUED YOUTH PROGRAM...

- Benefited more than 36,536 students, improving their self-concept, dedication to their educational goals, and a renewed outlook about life and the future. The program, according to parents, also kept many youth from the risks of the streets.
- Kept participating students in school, with an average 2.2 percent dropout rate, compared to nationally estimated 6.9 to 13.5 percent.
- Influenced 86 schools in 22 cities in nine states toward adopting a more student-centered curricula, grounded in the program’s valuing philosophy.

# COCA-COLA VALUED YOUTH PROGRAM BRAZIL

Eleven schools in four states participated in the program this year: Antônio de Baptista, Michel Pedro Sawaya, and Ayrton Busch in São Paulo; Vitor José de Araujo, Antonio Lopes Fontes Boa and Tabelaio Augusto Costa in Goiás; Durival de Britto e Silva, Omar Sabbag and Aracy Soares dos Santos in Paraná; and Centro de Atenção Integral à Criança and Novo Horizonte in Tocantins. The main force behind the program in Brazil was Coca-Cola Brazil in Rio de Janeiro. The program also has enjoyed the support of many local bottlers, including PANAMCO/Spal, RENOSA, REMIL, Refrescos Guararapes and Bandeirante.

Along with leadership development and academic supports organized by the teacher coordinator who created a “home room” anchor for participating students, students from Bauru went to Museu Histórico Municipal de Bauru Sistema Nacional de Aprendizagem and the Universidade do Sagrado Coração, where they visited the radio and television laboratory in the school of communication. Tutors from Goiás in central Brazil visited university Faculdade Alves Faria (ALFA), and tutors in from Paraná took part in *Fotografe Curitiba com um Novo Olhar*, combining photography with presentations on science and cultural studies.

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

August 31, 2012

Assets	
Total current assets	\$ 1,320,180
Assets designated for development and research	15,259,723
Other assets	110,516
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>16,690,419</b>

Liabilities and Net Assets	
Total current liabilities	102,384
Net assets–undesignated	147,692
Net assets–designated for development and research	15,259,723
Net assets–temporarily restricted	1,180,620
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 16,690,419</b>

# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended August 31, 2012

Support and Revenue	
Foundations and governmental	\$ 3,325,017
Program revenue	1,053,092
Interest and other	138,351
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>4,516,460</b>

Expenses	
Program services	3,887,261
Management and general	121,103
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>4,008,364</b>

Change in net assets	508,096
Net assets, beginning	16,079,939
<b>Net assets, ending</b>	<b>\$ 16,588,035</b>

The Statement of Financial Position as of August 31, 2012, and Statement of Activities for the year ended August 31, 2012, are part of IDRA's financial statements. The complete audited financial statements are available upon request to IDRA.



# ABOUT IDRA



The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, private non-profit organization dedicated to improving equal educational opportunity for every child. IDRA strengthens and

transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs. Each year, IDRA works hand-in-hand with thousands of educators, community members and families. All our work rests on an unwavering commitment to creating self-renewing schools that value and promote the success of students of all backgrounds.

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