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Messages FROM OUR LEADERS

Executive Director

As a first-generation college graduate myself, I am proud of the work that Capital IDEA has done over the last eighteen years to help low-income families access college. In recent years, we’ve been rethinking some of our assumptions about the college system and working closely with our partners at Austin Community College to imagine a new career pathway for our students. I’m proud to announce that these efforts led to the launch of the Career Expressway in 2015, a 100 seat pilot program offering 3 technology degree tracks. In 2016, we will continue development of the Career Expressway with plans to expand into healthcare and professional trade careers in the future. Our goal is to permanently break the generational cycle of under-education and underemployment.

Steve Jackobs | Capital IDEA Executive Director

Board Chair

2015 was an exceptional year for Capital IDEA. In addition to providing the assistance with educational fees and wrap-around counseling and career services that make Capital IDEA unique in Central Texas, a lot of hard work went into the development and kickoff of the Career Expressway, our newest partner program with Austin Community College. What’s most exciting about this new effort is the opportunity students now have to move through their degree programs quickly, build stackable credentials as they go, and enter into paid internships that prepare them with real-world experience. Students will exit the Career Expressway with the skills and experience they need to enter higher-paying, high-demand jobs. Our pilot group of students started classes in August 2015 and, this summer, they will be entering their first round of internships. We’ll be closely watching their progress so that we can share what we learn and continue to improve this innovative new program.

Juan Garza | Capital IDEA Board Chair | Austin Energy Retired

Austin Interfaith

Austin Interfaith is a non-partisan organization of more than 40 congregations, public schools, associations, and unions who work together to advocate for changes to improve the well-being of our families and neighborhoods. We profoundly believe that people can and will succeed if given the opportunity. We don’t just believe this, though—we take action to create opportunity. This past year, we worked to secure and increase support from major funders for Capital IDEA, helped recruit new students for the Career Expressway, and acted as spokespeople to the community. We were delighted to celebrate another year of partnership with Capital IDEA at this year’s Celebration of Achievements, and we join Capital IDEA staff in congratulating the graduates of 2015 and wishing the Career Expressway pilot group a successful first year.

Bob Batlan | Capital IDEA Vice Chair | Austin Interfaith Leader
In 2015 Capital IDEA served 996 low-income Central Texas adults, providing guidance and financial assistance to advance their efforts to earn college-level credentials and enter employment.

**2015 Demographics**

- **Ethnicity**
  - Hispanic: 50%
  - African American/Black: 26%
  - White/Anglo: 18%
  - Asian: 4%
  - Other: 2%

- **Gender**
  - Men: 24%
  - Women: 76%

- **Age**
  - 18-24 years old: 38%
  - 25-34 years old: 39%
  - 35-44 years old: 17%
  - 45+ years old: 6%

The graduates placed in 2015 came to Capital IDEA with an average annual income of $11,170.

In 2015, 106 Capital IDEA graduates entered employment at an average starting wage of $19.33/hr. As a group, the graduates placed in 2015 more than tripled their income, earning an average annual hiring salary of $40,206.

**FY2015 Financials**

This financial information was excerpted from the financial statements and independent auditors report prepared by Maxwell, Locke & Ritter LLP for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015 which includes Capital IDEA Houston through June 30, 2015. Capital IDEA Houston reached the goal of becoming self-administered and legally separated from Capital IDEA on June 30, 2015.

- **Revenue:** $5,028,315
  - City of Austin: $1,480,650
  - Travis County: $872,902
  - Foundation Grants: $1,104,344
  - Individual & Corporate: $101,735
  - Other Public Funds: $240,532
  - State ACE Fund: $878,205
  - Department of Labor: $92,329
  - Other Revenue: $257,618

- **Expenses:** $5,189,678
  - Program: $4,133,048
  - Administration: $817,055
  - Fundraising: $39,575
  - Houston: $200,000

- **Change in Assets:** -$161,363
  - Net assets start of year: $1,199,332
  - Net assets end of year: $1,037,969

**Leveraged Funds:** $1,965,713

Leveraged funds support our participants directly and come from Workforce Solutions child care and co-enrollments, utility assistance, Pell grants, and scholarships.
Celebrating ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2015

Feb. 5th Celebration of Achievements Luncheon

Each year, we set aside a day to celebrate the successes of the previous year. In particular we take this time to recognize our graduates who make numerous personal sacrifices and push themselves to overcome barriers that hold back many of their peers. When their hard work pays off, it’s time to celebrate!

On February 5, 2016 over 200 guests joined us for our annual Celebration of Achievements luncheon, hosted by our long-time employer partner and event sponsor Seton Healthcare Family. The achievements of the past year include 83 Capital IDEA graduates who completed their programs and walked the stage in May, August, and December of 2015. A full list of graduate names and the degrees they earned can be found on p. 8-9.

Capital IDEA staff Ron Modesty and Suzanne Baker capture a selfie with ACC District Board Trustee Jeffrey K. Richard on their way in to the Celebration of Achievements Luncheon.

Thanks to Our Event Sponsors

Pictured above: Capital IDEA Spring 2016 College Prep Academy class joined in the Celebration of Achievements on Feb. 5th.

Capital IDEA staff greet guests at the sign-in table. From left: Sister Ane Nguyen, Teresa Soto, and Lia Paschal.
Graduate Story: Coby Carter

"19 years ago, I came to Texas from Missouri at age 19 to be with my sick father. When he recovered, I decided to stay. I had always been a good kid and a star student growing up, but somewhere in high school I decided to try something else. Here in Texas I worked various jobs at DPS, private industry, and in sales. But in the back of my mind, I had a dream to be an IT badass!

So I started at ACC 10 years after dropping out of high school. I took one or two classes a semester while working full-time. When I did the math, I realized that it would take me seven years to finish my two-year degree. At my age, that was just too long. But I didn’t know how else it could be possible.

In 2011, things fell apart. I had worked for a company for 10 years, and quit to take what I thought would be an exciting opportunity. But I found I couldn’t start the new job because of a non-compete clause. There I was, unemployed, and denied unemployment benefits because of the nature of my unemployment.

That was when I heard about Capital IDEA. In fact, it was a gentleman at the Texas Workforce Commission that directed me there. With Capital IDEA paying my tuition, fees, and books and, above all, teaming me with my Career Navigator James, I began taking a full load of classes each semester. So now, rather than graduating in seven years, I had under two years to go.

Then things started to fall apart again. After the last exam of my second-to-last semester, my wife told me she wanted a divorce. Two weeks later, my father had a heart attack and died. It really knocked me out. I talked with James and took off the summer semester to pull myself back together. When I started again in the fall, I had new energy, and we used the final two semesters to distract me from the other parts of my life. Focusing on the goal of a degree and a career saved me.

Today, I am proud to stand here as a graduate of ACC and Capital IDEA. My struggles are not over, especially with a career in IT where everything changes all the time. I’m still studying, I am still staying up late, and I am still learning and mastering new skills and knowledge. But now I am on the other side, and that’s a good place to be. Thank you."
Aurora Alworth Award: Kimberly Rodriguez

"My family is from San Antonio, and at an early age I witnessed addiction, crime, and violence. We came to Austin when I was 13 for a safer, more hopeful life. I attended Johnston, Lanier and Garza High Schools, and came to Capital IDEA right after I completed my GED. I was 22 years old with a small child, and without money or direction in life. I knew I needed to change for his sake. I didn’t want him to grow up in the future I saw for us if I didn’t get a degree: one of low-paying jobs and not enough money. I needed to believe in my potential, to see beyond my past and to envision a positive future. That’s when Capital IDEA came into my life.

Right from the start, I threw myself into my studies. I knew that my grades were stepping stones towards becoming a college graduate, and then a nurse. To ensure success, I surrounded myself with like-minded individuals and stuck to my rigorous study schedule.

Due to my GPA, I was able to get into the RN program the first time I applied. Unfortunately I was not ready for the high amount of work and stress that go with the program. Check off after check off, test after test, not to mention the mountains of homework involved, I found myself overwhelmed. I left the program three months pregnant with my daughter and unsure about my future once again.

I took a two-year break from school to start raising my daughter, but was pulled back in to the program by my desire to provide stability for my children. I wouldn’t have continued without also having the VERY strong encouragement of my counselor Maria who spoke with me at the start of every semester.

I began the LVN program with renewed dedication and awareness of the rigorous caseload ahead of me; I graduated from the LVN program in the Spring at the top of my class and was awarded the Pat Rechek award for academic excellence. I then began the RN program the following Fall. I worked full time, raised my children, and was able to maintain an A/B GPA.

Without the support of Capital IDEA, I could not have completed the program. I finally reached my goal of being a person my children can look up to and be proud of. I am here today not just because of my own determination, but also thanks to my Career Navigator Maria, my fellow students, my professors at ACC, and everyone at Capital IDEA. I am honored to receive this award, and am looking forward to continuing to be a role model to my children and a support to my colleagues as we continue our nursing careers together. Thank you."

About the Aurora Alworth Award

Aurora was one of Capital IDEA’s first students. While enrolled, she was diagnosed with cancer. Aurora stayed committed to her education, and encouraged others with her upbeat personality. Although Aurora lost her battle with cancer in 2002, her spirit continues to inspire us.
Mark Melliar-Smith Emerging Leader: Michael Holman

"Any recognition or award I receive has to be shared with my amazing family. I would not have been able to complete this degree, or have the future I’m currently looking forward to, without their support and love.

When I was 15, I ended up in the emergency room with an injury, and was blown away by the compassionate and attentive care I received from my nurses during that hospital stay. Since then, I have known that I wanted to be a nurse and help people in distress the way I was helped that day.

Having been homeschooled from kindergarten through high school graduation, coming to ACC was an adjustment. But I stayed dedicated to my goal, and my family pulled together around me to make sure that I could keep my focus on my education.

As a result, I will be graduating this December as a registered nurse, and plan to get a position as a trauma nurse. I am proud not only to be so close to my goal, but also to be part of an organization like Capital IDEA that does so much for others. I look forward to being a proud graduate of the Capital IDEA program, and to being able to turn around and help others achieve their goals the way I was helped to achieve mine. Thank you."

About the Mark Melliar-Smith Award

To cultivate a spirit of leadership among our students and graduates, each year Capital IDEA selects a Mark Melliar-Smith Emerging Leader.

This award is named for founding Board member Mark Melliar-Smith. Mark’s level of involvement and dedication over his twelve years on the board, serves as our example of excellence in leadership.

I graduated from high school with that goal in mind, but living in a family of eight making less than $40,000/year made getting the necessary training for achieving my nursing goal a serious financial challenge. My mother and I planned to both pick up other jobs to help fund a program at Temple College, but I heard about Capital IDEA from a friend. I applied and was lucky enough to be accepted to pursue an RN degree at Austin Community College.
Accounting Technician
Ferroudja Rahab

Automotive Technologist
Jose Aviles
Efrem Beraki
Casey Deriso
Mark Finger
Evelyn Guerra
Victor Piedra
Robert Porter
Tonia Ross

Biotechnologist
Isabel Jaimes

Computer Aided Design
Shavanna Acosta Choucron
Ruby Guzman
Patrice Mallard
Ike Nnanna

Dental Hygienist
Kortney Keshian
Jeena Yancy

Diagnostic Medical Imaging Technologist
Marisa Morales
Sugey Regalado
Electronics
Eddie Torres
Mathew Tyrell
Juan Moncada
Ross Ott

Game & Visualization Programmer
Geoffrey Chambless
Jesus Diaz
Health Information Technologist
Deidre Dolifka
Alan Shepherd

Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Technologist
Christopher Castillo
Ronnie Kirby
Sahit Reyes
Licensed Vocational Nurse
Ana Chia
Mariama Diarra
Anastacia Erebia
Alejandra Garcia
Alma Guzman
Eboni Hargis-Bell
Alyce Hernandez
Angelika Jada
Barbara Jammers
Dahlia Lopez
Laura Pellerin
Mayte Perez
Christen Urban-Calabrese
Abigahil Villeda
Medical Lab Technologist
Jodi Parra

Network Administrator
Mustafa Al-Bayati
Samira LaGraich
Jose Mojica
Abderrahmane Rguigue
Guadalupe Sifuentes
Sandjaja Utama

Ophthalmic Technician
Mina Zahrouni

Pharmacy Technician
Tyresha Branch
Richard Guerrero
Maria Miranda

Photo Voltaic Technician
Marvis Watson

Registered Nurse
Hanan Ali
Nicole Bartley
Chloe Choi
Alpha Diallo
Carmelite Duhan
Emily Eisaman
Cynthia Faught
Dorolosa Fussi
Lauren Glass
Tiffanie Griffith
Maria Loredo
Brandi Meyer
Leria Pansy
Maria Razo
Charlene Robinson
Kimberly Rodriguez
Angelica Salazar
Rachel Seelye
Irma Valdez

Registered Nurse Cont’d
Angela Vallejo
Alicia Warren
Lenore Wolkovich

Surgical Technologist
Robert Booth
Vinh Do
Nelly Guzman
Ashley Rodriguez

Video Game Art
Kelly Martinez
Caterina Villatoro
Texas Economic Development Council Workforce Excellence Award

In 2015 Capital IDEA was honored to receive the Workforce Excellence Award which recognized the successful partnership between the City of Austin Economic Development Department and Capital IDEA. Together we are building workforce pathways and creating a bright future for all Central Texans.

About the Workforce Excellence Award

The Texas Economic Development Council’s Workforce Excellence award recognizes the exceptional contributions of Texas communities who have implemented successful workforce initiatives. Criteria for evaluation include: innovativeness, transferability, and community commitment.

Participant Survey May 2015 Results

At the end of each school year, Capital IDEA conducts a survey of current participants. In 2015, 327 students responded to our survey. To the right are some of the results.

- **Overall satisfaction**: 99% replied 'Yes,' they are satisfied with their experience in Capital IDEA.
- **Participant commitment**: 98% rated their commitment level to finishing their program as either 'Excellent' or 'Good'.
- **Breaking the cycle**: 64% reported they will be the first generation in their family to graduate from college.
- **Our participants recommend us**: 99% selected 'Yes,' they would recommend Capital IDEA to their family and friends. One participant even wrote in:

  "I love that everyone that I have referred over there has gotten assistance from you guys. I’ve already sent 12 students and all of them got help from Capital IDEA."

Amplify Austin March 2015

In March 2015, Capital IDEA participated for a third year in Amplify Austin, a day of giving hosted by I Live Here, I Give Here. Capital IDEA received $8,388 in match-eligible donations, $1,100 in non-match eligible donations, $510 pledged as recurring donations, and $3,074 in "bonus dollars" from the St. David's Foundation match, for a total of $13,072. Thank you to all of our supporters! Capital IDEA’s Amplify Austin profile is available year round at: [https://amplifyatx.ilivehereigivehere.org/capitalidea](https://amplifyatx.ilivehereigivehere.org/capitalidea)
A Visit to the White House in July

On July 29, 2015, Capital IDEA Executive Director Steve Jackobs was selected to join a delegation to the White House led by Austin Community College President Dr. Richard Rhodes. The delegation joined a round table discussion with Secretary of Education Arne Duncan about increasing access to community college education, and the potential for that education to be free to responsible students, following the example of Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam. The bipartisan group had a productive conversation, brainstorming methods for increasing Americans’ access to higher education through community college.

Career Expressway Launches with Tech Careers

Building on the momentum of 2014 and the opening of ACC Highland Campus, Capital IDEA and ACC took another step forward in our partnership with the launch of the Career Expressway. This joint initiative combines accelerated instruction for three select in-demand tech careers: Computer Support Specialist, Network Administrator, and Software Tester, with plans for other careers to be added as the program builds capacity.

With financial assistance from Capital IDEA and guaranteed internships incorporated into the program, the Career Expressway aims to attract low-income and underemployed individuals to the growing field of tech. Graduates of the Career Expressway will have the skills they need to perform in high demand careers, plus the real world experience employers are looking for. As one student put it, "I really wanted to do something with computers, and now I’m motivated to actually pursue that dream and not look back."
Supporters  OUR INVESTED COMMUNITY

2015 Funders and Donors

**Public Funders**

**$1,000,000+**
City of Austin

**$500,000+**
Travis County

**$100,000+**
State of Texas (ACE Fund)

**$50,000+**
U.S. Department of Labor

**Employer Investors**

SAM Inc.
Seton Healthcare Family
St. David’s HealthCare

**Philanthropic Funders**

**Champions $250,000+**
St. David’s Foundation

**Advocates $50,000+**
Austin Community Foundation
Episcopal Health Foundation
Georgetown Health Foundation
Topfer Family Foundation

**Benefactors $25,000+**

Seeds of Strength Foundation
United Way of Williamson County

**Leaders $10,000+**
Charles and Beth Avery
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Long Foundation
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**Patrons $5,000+**
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Hindu Charities for America
Steve Jackobs and Betty Weed
Samsung Austin Semiconductor
Women’s Independence Scholarship Program

**Scholars $1,000+**
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PMG... Your "Off-Site" Personnel Department!
Paul Skeith and Minerva Camarena-Skeith
Texas Methodist Foundation
Fr. Joe Tomei, CSC
Amy Webberman
George White

**Patrons $5,000+**
First United Methodist Church of Georgetown
Hindu Charities for America
Steve Jackobs and Betty Weed
Samsung Austin Semiconductor
Women’s Independence Scholarship Program

**Fellows $2,500+**

Austin Community College District
Lesley Blessing
C.J. Kellerman
Rhonda and John Dirvin
Jesus and Quen Garza
Sanford and Cynthia Levinson
Nyle and Nancy Maxwell
The Rachel and Ben Vaughan Foundation
St. David’s HealthCare

**Graduate Donors**

Mirjana Antelj
Fady Asaad
Xueyan Bai
Cara Crumley

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Enrique Duran
Hoda Fadl
Teresa Garza
Angeline Germain
Heriberto Gonzalez
Gloria Ann Guzman
Adela Hernandez
Paula Iwenofu
Ziad Katay
Tiffany King
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Jessica Rosuello
Elizabeth Savercool
Imani Shanklin
Clayton Skidmore
Andrea Smithheart
Erica Taney
Justin Tigrett
Stephen Wolf

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Thank you to all of our graduates who gave generously in 2015. You set a new record for alumni gifts.
## 2015 Fiscal Oversight & Strategic Guidance

The Capital IDEA Board of Directors is comprised of 16 members, 8 leaders of Austin Interfaith, 7 leaders from the business community and 1 representative of Capital IDEA’s Alumni.

* Began Board Service in 2015  
** Completed Board Service in 2015

| Board Chair | Juan Garza  
| Retired, Austin Energy |
| --- | --- |
| Board Vice Chair | Bob Batlan  
| Retired, IBM  
| AIF Leader  
| Temple Beth Shalom |
| Board Treasurer | Angela Baker  
| AIF Leader  
| St. Albert the Great Catholic Church |
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| HR Director, Seton Insurance, External Affairs & Clinical Systems Divisions, Seton Healthcare Family |
| Board Secretary | Melynda Caudle  
| President  
| Cooper Consulting |
| Board Member* | Joe Canales  
| Vice President, HR  
| Seton Healthcare Family |
| Board Member** | Ben Eynon  
| Sr. Director, Engineering Development  
| Samsung Austin Semiconductor |
| Board Member** | Oralia Garza de Cortés  
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| Pastor and AIF Leader | Rev. Fred Krebs  
| Prince of Peace Lutheran Church |
| VP of Technology Financial Services Online | Jim O’Quinn  
| AIF Leader  
| Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church |
| Director B2 Management & Consulting, LLC | Holly Coe |
| Business Development Director B2 Management & Consulting, LLC | |
| Sr. Director, Engineering Development Samsung Austin Semiconductor | |
| AIF Leader | Michelle Adamolekun ** |
| HR Director, Seton Insurance, External Affairs & Clinical Systems Divisions, Seton Healthcare Family | |
| President Cooper Consulting | Melynda Caudle |
| Associate Rector and AIF Leader St. David’s Episcopal Church | Rev. Katie Wright ** |
| AIF Leader Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church | Robert Williams ** |
| Project Manager Water Asset Management | Lynn Sherman ** |
| Registered Nurse Case Manager Girling Hospice | Eloina Serna |
| Vice President Seton Healthcare Family | Joe Canales |
| Business Development Director B2 Management & Consulting, LLC | Holly Coe |
| Sr. Director, Engineering Development Samsung Austin Semiconductor | Ben Eynon |
| AIF Leader | Michelle Adamolekun ** |
| HR Director, Seton Insurance, External Affairs & Clinical Systems Divisions, Seton Healthcare Family | Melynda Caudle |
| President Cooper Consulting | |
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