

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# C★PITAL IDEA



Pictured:  
Nathan Dixon, 2023 LVN graduate  
Brieahn LoMaglio, current RN student  
Christen Bettis, 2023 RN graduate

Photo by Brio Photography

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# New Records Achieved Through Partnership

As I reflect on the past year at Capital IDEA, I am struck by how deeply interconnected our work has become across education, workforce development, and community well-being. What begins as an opportunity for one student ultimately strengthens an entire region.

Throughout my career in nursing, I have seen firsthand how compassionate, highly skilled professionals transform lives. Nursing, like many of the careers Capital IDEA supports, is more than a job. It is a calling rooted in service, teamwork, and continuous learning. That same spirit defines the students and graduates we serve every day. Their commitment, persistence, and courage remind us what is possible when talent meets opportunity.

Across Central Texas, and across the nation, demand for skilled professionals, particularly in healthcare, continues to grow. Our communities are expanding, populations are aging, and the need for a strong, local workforce pipeline has never been more urgent. Capital IDEA plays a vital role in responding to this moment, ensuring that employers can rely on homegrown talent prepared not only with technical expertise, but with resilience and heart.

This year's accomplishments reflect both individual achievement and collective effort. **With a record number of graduates across healthcare, IT, trades, and advanced manufacturing, Capital IDEA participants are stepping into careers that power hospitals, strengthen local businesses, and support families throughout our region.** Their success is made possible through deep partnerships with funders, educational institutions, employers, and community leaders who share a commitment to long-term impact.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for believing in this mission. Together, we are building pathways that change lives today and shape a stronger workforce for tomorrow.

**Sally Gillam, DNP, MAHS, RN, NEA-B**  
Board Chair





# A Year of Significant Change & Perseverance

This past year and every year, I am filled with gratitude and pride for our participants who place their trust in us. Every day, they make the courageous decision to return to school, persist through demanding programs, and step into careers that strengthen their families. Their determination is a powerful reminder of why this work matters.

The impact of our mission to connect working adults to living-wage careers through education extends beyond individual success. When students complete their programs and enter high-demand fields, they help address critical workforce needs, support local employers, and generate meaningful returns for our communities and taxpayers.

This past year unfolded amid significant change—economic uncertainty, shifting funding landscapes, and the rapid emergence of AI. **While families and industries alike continue to adapt, the perseverance of our students and the strength of our partnerships remained steady drivers of opportunity.**

Notably, this past year we also strengthened how we connect with our community with the launch of our refreshed brand and website. This work created clearer, more accessible pathways for prospective students, resulting in strong engagement and reaffirming the ongoing demand for transformational career opportunities.

None of this work happens alone. It is made possible by the commitment of our participants, dedication of our staff, partnership of funders and educational institutions, and the trust of employers and community leaders who continue to invest in people year after year.

Together, we are building a stronger future for Central Texas.

**Alyssia Palacios-Woods, CFRE**  
Executive Director



# We Served 1,238 Participants

In 2025, Capital IDEA served 1,238 Central Texas adults. They received direct support to match their needs such as financial support, childcare, career guidance, and job placement.



## Career Placements

**169**

In 2025, 169 students were placed in employment.  
Note: Dec. grads are often placed the following year.



## Starting Wages

**\$33**

In 2025, the average starting wage for students placed in employment was \$33/hr, or about \$68,640/yr.

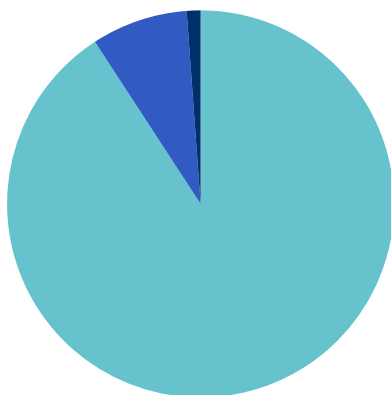


## Credentials Earned

**176**

In 2025, 176 students earned a degree or certification after an average of 3 years enrolled with Capital IDEA.

### 2025 Graduates by Field



- Healthcare (90%)
- IT (8%)
- Trades & Other (2%)

### 2025 Participant Demographics

Gender			
Women	82%	Men	18%
Age			
18-24	30%	25-34	42%
35-44	21%	45 and older	7%
Race & Ethnicity			
Hispanic	55%	Asian	4%
African American/Black	25%	More than one race or other	2%
White	14%		

# Leadership Award



## Jason Lopez



*"Leadership is born from moments like these. It's built in hardship, choosing perseverance when quitting feels easier."*

*-Jason*



### ABOUT THE MARK MELLIAR-SMITH LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Mark Melliar-Smith Leadership Award was created to honor and cultivate the tradition of leadership among Capital IDEA's students and graduates. It is named for former Board member, Mark Melliar-Smith, whose level of involvement and dedication over his twelve years on the board serves as our example of excellence in leadership.

**The 2025 Mark Melliar-Smith Leadership Award was generously supported by long-time employer partner and Transformation Champion sponsor Ascension Seton.**

This year's recipient, Jason Lopez, has demonstrated purpose, perseverance, and a deep commitment to serving as an example to others. Growing up in Austin, Jason witnessed his parents work tirelessly despite never completing high school. Financial instability and family challenges shaped his early years, but they also clarified his resolve to change his family's trajectory and be an example for his younger siblings. With the support of Capital IDEA, Jason enrolled in Austin Community College's LAN Network Administration program. He balanced coursework and internships, graduating debt-free in 2019 with a job offer already secured. He went on to build a successful career in information technology, which enabled him to purchase his first home at age 21. Jason's leadership reaches beyond his professional success. He mentors peers, advocates for workforce education, supports financial literacy efforts, and consistently shares his experience to encourage others. Reflecting on his journey, Jason has said he wanted to become the person he needed when he was starting out—and today, he is exactly that leader.

> [Read Jason's Story Here](#)

# Spirit Award

*"For anyone who's struggling right now — find your community, find your people, and find the resources you need. They'll make a difference." -Ursula*

## Ursula Jaimes



**The 2025 Aurora Alworth Spirit Award was generously supported by long-time employer partner and Transformation Champion sponsor Ascension Seton.**

This year's recipient, Ursula Jaimes, reflects the spirit of the award's namesake through her persistence in the face of setbacks and her unwavering commitment to building a better future. Ursula first came to Capital IDEA as a young single mother determined to return to college after an earlier attempt fell short. Balancing parenthood, work, and self-doubt, she set an ambitious goal: to succeed academically while modeling perseverance for her daughter, Mia. With Capital IDEA's support, she pursued her calling in the dental field, drawing on resourcefulness she'd already demonstrated by teaching herself dental assisting skills years earlier. When COVID-19 brought loss, illness, and disruption, Ursula stepped back to regroup. Rather than give up, she built a long-term plan to repair her academic standing and reapply to Austin Community College's highly competitive Dental Hygiene Program. Her determination paid off. In May 2025, Ursula graduated and soon after secured employment as a dental hygienist. Reflecting on her journey, she shared, "Even through hardships, remember—it's all going to be worth it." Her story is a powerful testament to resilience, community, and the courage to try again.

[> Read Ursula's Full Story Here](#)



### ABOUT THE AURORA ALWORTH SPIRIT AWARD

The Aurora Alworth Spirit Award is named for one of Capital IDEA's earliest students whose perseverance and commitment to education shone brightly even in the face of cancer. Aurora passed away in 2002, but her legacy of resilience and determination continues to inspire us today.

# Workforce Champion Award



**The Workforce Champion Award** honors an exceptional ally who has played a pivotal role in enabling student-to-career outcomes that drive positive, lasting impact in the community. This year, that honor goes to St. David's Foundation.

Since 2009, St. David's Foundation has been a steadfast partner in Capital IDEA's mission to build a strong, equitable healthcare workforce across Central Texas. Their support has helped Capital IDEA grow its reach significantly—including an expansion into four surrounding counties that now accounts for more than 40% of total enrollment—and has helped more than 1,696 students access meaningful careers.

Their partnership reflects a deep belief that investing in people strengthens families, employers, and entire communities—and that belief is precisely what the Workforce Champion Award was created to honor.

One of the most compelling chapters of this partnership began in 2021, when St. David's Foundation funded a pilot expansion grant of a Dental Hygiene program at Austin Community College. The results were remarkable across every measure, and the expanded seats are now a permanent part of each cohort. [> Read more about the Workforce Champion Award](#)



"Our mission at St. David's Foundation is to advance health equity—to do this, we must have a thriving, diverse, and locally rooted healthcare workforce. We are committed to investing in training and education pathways that open more doors to more people. We are honored by this recognition and appreciate the important work of Capital IDEA and our partners across the public, private and community sectors to expand access to education and opportunity."

– **Dr. Edward Burger**, President and CEO of St. David's Foundation.

# Healthcare 2025 Employers & Graduates

## Healthcare Employers

### HIRING PARTNERS

Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health  
Apex Dental Studio  
ARA Diagnostic Imaging  
Ascension Seton - Dell Children's  
Medical Center  
Ascension Seton - Medical Center  
Austin  
Ascension Seton - Medical Center  
Hays  
Ascension Seton - Medical Ctr.  
Ascension Seton Williamson Hospital  
Ascension Seton - Other  
AT Staffing  
Austin Independent School District  
Austin Radiological Association  
Austin Regional Clinic  
Austin State Hospital  
Bastrop Lost Pines Nursing and  
Rehabilitation Center  
Baylor Scott & White Medical Center  
BB Imaging  
BLVD Dentistry and Orthodontics  
Bright Smiles Family Dental  
Caraday Healthcare  
Carus Dental  
Central Texas Periodontics  
Clear Springs Family Dentistry  
Council Oak Perio  
Elgin Rehabilitation and Long-Term  
Care  
Endless Health Inc  
Encompass Health Rehabilitation  
Hospital  
Forest Family Dentistry  
Gracy Woods II Nursing Center  
Greenview Manor  
Healing Tooth - Comprehensive  
Family Dentistry & Orthodontics  
Heart Hospital of Austin  
Heartland Dental  
Ignite Medical Resort  
Meridell Achievement Center  
Methodist Hospital

Nexion Health  
Pacific Dental Services  
PAM Health Rehabilitation  
Hospital  
Riverside Nursing and  
Rehabilitation Center  
Sedona Trace Health & Wellness  
Smile Brands  
Smile Creations  
S.P.J.S.T Senior Living  
St Davids - Georgetown Hospital  
St Davids - Medical Center  
St Davids - North Austin Medical  
Center  
St Davids - Other  
St Davids - Round Rock Medical  
Center  
St Davids - South Austin  
Medical Center  
Strive Health Services, LLC  
Swish Dental  
Texas Health and Human  
Services  
The Center at Parmer  
Toothio Dental Staffing  
University of Florida Health  
Urology Amercia  
US Air Force  
XYZ Laboratory



## Healthcare Careers

### HIRED GRADUATES

April Albarran  
Rand Almusawi  
Cameryn Alviar  
Jocelyn Amaya  
Milca Andrade-Cantu  
Lisbeht Araujo  
Amanda Barrera  
Kyla Batres  
Anna Benitez  
Clarissa Besa  
Amanda Boutourline-Travis  
Lashonda Brown  
Gabriella Brown  
Jennifer Brown  
Brittney Bunkley  
Hector Caraballo  
Donna Castillo  
LaToya Connally  
LeTeshia Cook  
Shibre Dana  
Christinaa Daniels  
Alejandra De Alba  
Teresa de la Garza  
Sarah Dela Torre  
Deyanara Deleon

continued...

# Healthcare 2025 Employers & Graduates

Khadija Dieng  
Emily Dobbs  
Jaden Donalson  
Danielle Doneson  
Jessica Dumas  
Reginald Ekeh  
Ariadna Estrada  
Kimberly Flores  
Dana Flores  
Danielle Fuentes  
Alexis Gaona  
Patrick Garcia  
Gabriela Garcia  
Senait Gebrekidan  
Brittany Graves  
Meyanna Green  
Raghad Hassan  
Danyelle Heil  
Maria Hernandez  
Serena Hernandez  
Paloma Hernandez  
Toni Hernandez  
Yamile Hernandez  
Garcia  
Luis Herrera  
Alona Herring  
Alyssa Hilgar  
Alyssa Hoyer  
Eleanor Hudson  
Diana Ibarra  
Chinedu Iwudike  
Cara Jackson  
Raenesha Jackson  
Esperansa Jada  
Ursula Jaimes  
Veronica Jaimes  
Victoria Jaimes  
Ana Jimenez  
Christina Jimenez  
Kaleigh Koch  
Morlai Koroma  
Chelsea Krajisnik  
Julion Landry  
Citlalitl Lara  
Kelly Leach  
Ashley Levrier  
Analia Lombrano  
Ashley Lopez-Hernandez  
Jordan Lytle  
Emelyn Macias

Simpi Marasinee  
Eliana Marquez  
Brittney Maxwell  
Gabriela Maya  
Stephanie Medrano  
Lizeth Mendez Gonzalez  
Veronica Mendoza  
Aurora Mojica  
Alisha Moore  
Leslie Muzquiz  
Faridullah Nasrat  
Ladene Nelson-Elliott  
Britaney Nutt  
Katelyn Nutt-Mcleod  
Marie Nyuyseni  
Oluwayemisi Oderhohwo  
Alexandra Orozco  
Rosemarie Ortega  
Sirisa Panthi Ghimire  
Julia Perdomo Cenicerros  
April Perez  
Amanda Perez  
Thu Huong Phan  
Camnhung Phan  
Paige Phillips  
Devanee Pizana  
Yesenia Pocock  
Patricia Pompa  
Druzella Purkey  
Roxana Ramirez  
JaDonna Rankins  
Jacob Reed  
Ayana Reid  
Kimberly Reyes  
Kasandra Rivera  
Patricia Rivera Benitez  
Josefina Rodriguez  
Socorro Rodriguez Acosta  
Kayle Rosales  
Daisy Ruiz  
Damaris Ruiz-Deheza  
Rachel Rutt  
Cecilia Salinas Mora  
Mairany Sanchez  
Raquel Serrano  
Reem Sheikh  
Imari Shelton  
Julia Sindrey-Lopez  
Paige Swanton  
Michelle Talley

Claude Tefang  
Maria Tisdale  
Alicia Torres  
Maribel Tovar  
Vy Tran  
Candice Van Eaton  
Ana Vasquez  
Samantha Vazquez  
Lizbeth Vazquez  
Perez  
Brandy Vega  
Leslie Velazquez  
Janie Villarreal  
Tuan Vu  
Logan Warren  
Kaitlyn Whatley

Cerese Williams  
Rosha Williams  
Caseechayn Williams  
Kay Wine  
Mohammad Zahir  
Jacqueline Zarate Zavala



**"Capital IDEA offered financial stability by covering the costs of my tuition. My Career Navigator, Lia, helped me stay calm and constantly reminded me that my hard work was paying off!"**

**Druzella Purkey**  
Capital IDEA alumni, RN

# IT and Other Professional Career Fields 2025 Employers & Graduates



**"Once I started college, I realized I'm more capable than I had thought. I am smart. I didn't have much confidence in the past, but over time, I developed into a confident person. I now actively assist in the Advanced Manufacturing department!"**

**Julio Gutierrez**

Capital IDEA alumni,  
Advanced Manufacturing

## Information Technology

### HIRING PARTNERS

Applied Materials  
Austin Community College District  
City of Austin  
Curitive Health Insurance  
Eagle Eye Networks  
IEnergizer  
Key Essentials to Behavior Management Corp  
LifeWorks  
Scale Computing  
Texas Department of Emergency Management  
Visa Technology and Operations LLC  
Volt Technologies (Flextronics)  
Whole Foods Market Global Support  
Wipro (META)  
Wipro Technologies-USA management LLC

## Other Career Fields

### HIRING PARTNERS

Air Conditioning Specialists  
Austin's Automotive Specialists  
LightParts  
Otsuka ICU Medical  
Premier Project Management  
Texas State University

## Information Technology

### HIRED GRADUATES

Roza Arinova  
Ell Ash  
Danielle Ashmeade  
Jourdan Brightman  
Joseph Brooks  
Isaiah Castillo  
Francky Dilane  
Gothue Kamaga  
Mekides Kasse  
Joshua Medina  
Fadi Menacer  
Daniel Bang Mankong  
Blagica Nikolovska  
Bridgette Parker  
Thaonhung Phaned  
Michael Rodriguez  
Cody Schwartz  
Joshua Sebillla  
Mikhail Varshavskiy

## Other Career Fields

### HIRED GRADUATES

Tedla Betsuan  
Dylan Ferguson  
Armando Jimenez  
Sharon Lopez  
Jayden Vega

# Funders, Donors & Supporters



## Public Funders

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

**\$500,000 +**  
Travis County

**\$200,000 +**  
State of Texas  
(ACE Fund)

**\$50,000 +**  
Hays County

**\$10,000 +**  
City of Round Rock

## Employer Partners

Ascension Seton  
Community Care  
St. David's Healthcare

Long Foundation  
Round Rock Woman's Club  
St. David's Foundation  
The Campbell Foundation  
The Sooch Foundation  
Topfer Family Foundation  
United Way for Greater Austin  
W.D. Kelley Foundation

## Philanthropic Funders

### FOUNDATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Austin Community College  
District  
Austin Community  
Foundation  
Hindu Charities for America  
(HC4A)  
I Live Here, I Give Here  
Lola Wright Foundation

### CORPORATE FUNDERS

Bank of America  
Baylor Scott & White Health  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas  
Frost Bank  
Gray & Becker P.C.  
H-E-B  
Insperity  
St. David's HealthCare  
Texas Mutual



**699% ROI**  
for every \$1 invested,  
\$6.99 is returned to  
our community.



# Funders, Donors & Supporters



## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Hector Aguilar  
Fannie Akingbala  
Jenna Akridge  
David Albert  
Mary Bray  
Stacy Britton  
Daniel Brooks  
Nichole Bustos  
Mona Carver  
Steven Christopher  
Florecita Colmenero  
Diane Cook  
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Jeffrey Thompson  
Mary Helen Tijerina  
Jonathan Tyner  
Irma Valdez  
Beth Vaughn  
Alex Watkins  
Monica Williams  
Jeanie Youngblood



# Financial Report



This financial information is an excerpt from the financial statements and independent auditors report prepared by Montemayor Britton Bender PC, certified public accountants.

Revenue		Expenses	
	<b>\$7,376,103.27</b>		<b>\$6,281,561.82</b>
Public Funding	\$3,325,794.66	Program	\$5,475,080.43
Private Funding	\$3,378,055.20	Administration	\$691,025.67
Employer Partners	\$160,500.00	Fundraising	\$115,455.71
Other Revenue	\$511,753.41		
		Change of Assets*	\$1,102,047.96
		Net assets start of year	\$3,701,263.88
		Net assets end of year	\$4,803,311.84

\*Per financial reporting requirements, change in net assets is due to multi-year grant awards recognized in FY25



# Providing Oversight & Leadership

Central Texas Interfaith (CTI) and business leaders founded Capital IDEA in 1998. Today, the board is comprised of Central Texas Interfaith leaders, business leaders, and representatives of Capital IDEA's Alumni network.



**Sally Gillam**  
Chair,  
Baylor Scott &  
White Health



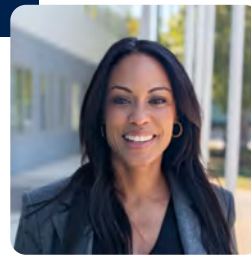
**Carlota Garcia \*\***  
Vice Chair,  
Central Texas  
Interfaith



**Toni Swinton**  
Secretary,  
HCA Healthcare



**Jeff Thompson**  
Treasurer,  
Central Texas Interfaith



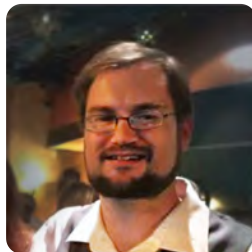
**Katherine Kirby**  
Member & Alumni,  
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MedTech



**Edie Clark\***  
Member,  
Central Texas Interfaith



**Sammy Hall, Sr.\*\***  
Member,  
Central Texas Interfaith



**Trenton  
Henrichson\*\***  
Member,  
Central Texas Interfaith



**Jay Huckabee**  
Member,  
Ascension Texas



**Charles McCoy\***  
Member,  
St. David's Medical  
Center



**Lydia Moore\***  
Member,  
Central Texas Interfaith



**Enrique J. Saenz**  
Member,  
Central Texas Interfaith



**John Sapp**  
Member,  
Texas Mutual

\* Began board  
service in 2025

\*\* Completed  
board service in  
2025



# C★PITAL IDEA

Proudly Serving Central Texas



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