



Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025

Contact: Media@EdExcelencia.org

18 Colleges and Universities Taking Responsibility for Students' Educational and Economic Success Earn the Seal of *Excelencia*

*Institutions Earning the Seal of Excelencia Go Beyond Enrollment to
Intentionally Serve Latino, and All, Students,
and Display a Level of Excellence*

WASHINGTON – Today, *Excelencia* in Education, a national leader in catalyzing institutional transformation for student success in higher education, announced that 18 institutions have earned the Seal of *Excelencia* in 2025. These institutions are part of a group of nearly 50 colleges and universities that are taking responsibility for improving Latino, and all, student success.

Seal of *Excelencia* certified institutions produce outsized impact on student outcomes — representing less than 1% of all colleges and universities in the U.S., yet enrolling 16% and graduating 18% of Latino students nationwide, as well as enrolling 7% and graduating 8% of all students.

Institutions earn the Seal by going beyond enrollment to intentionally serve Latino, and all, students, and by taking responsibility and accountability for providing access to excellence. The Seal framework aligns data, practice, and leadership to move institutions beyond isolated programs toward systemic change and investment providing institutional value to students, their families, and their communities. This year, *Excelencia* is introducing the Intentionally Thriving Institution (ITI) designation, that extends the impact beyond the educational pathway and recognizes positive impact in preparing students for, and connecting them to, the workforce.

“Seal of *Excelencia* certified institutions are investing in transformation, ensuring access to excellence, and becoming places where Latino, and all, students thrive,” said Deborah Santiago, co-founder and CEO of *Excelencia* in Education. “These institutions have made demonstrable efforts to ensure students’ return on investment in a degree while cultivating talent that fuels our country’s future.”

The Seal is a rigorous, data-driven certification, not an award or ranking. This year, five institutions have earned certification for the first time, five have earned recertification, and eight have earned *Excelencia*’s new ITI designation.

“*Excelencia* is proud to continue to catalyze and support colleges and universities that earn the Seal of *Excelencia* for their impact and intentional efforts to deliver on the promise of

higher education for all students. Through our collaboration, we build talent for our country's workforce and civic leadership," said Sarita Brown, co-founder and president of *Excelencia* in Education.

The five newly certified Seal of *Excelencia* institutions are:

1. California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt (CA)
2. Dalton State College (GA)
3. Rutgers University-Newark (NJ)
4. San José State University (CA)
5. University of Nevada, Las Vegas (NV)

The five recertified Seal of *Excelencia* institutions are:

1. Mercy University (NY)
2. San Antonio College (TX)
3. University at Albany (NY)
4. University of California, Santa Cruz (CA)
5. The University of Texas at Arlington (TX)

The eight colleges and universities that are the first to earn the Intentionally Thriving Institution designation are:

1. Arizona State University (AZ)
2. Austin Community College District (TX)
3. California State University Channel Islands (CA)
4. Florida International University (FL)
5. Grand Valley State University (MI)
6. South Texas College (TX)
7. The University of Texas at El Paso (TX)
8. University of Arizona (AZ)

Latinos are the only growing college student population and represent a post-traditional student body, often navigating multiple paths through higher education while balancing work, family, and other responsibilities. As more students fit this profile, piloted efforts that work for Latino students — like those being implemented at Seal institutions — can also serve other students.

Learn more about institutions that earned the Seal of *Excelencia* certification, recertification, and Intentionally Thriving Institution designation this year:

EdExcelencia.org/seal/seal-excelencia-certified-institutions

###

About *Excelencia* in Education

[Excelencia in Education](#) leads a national network of results-oriented educators and policymakers transforming higher education to tap the talents of the Latino community and address the U.S. economy's needs for a highly educated workforce and engaged civic leaders. With this network, *Excelencia* ensures access to excellence by promoting student achievement, informing educational policies, and advancing evidence-based practices to more intentionally serve Latino, and all, students.