



Texas Coalition *for*  
Excellence *in* Higher Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, October 12, 2011

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## Young Texans for Excellence in Higher Education Forms; Current and Former Student Leaders Launch “Our Degree Matters” Campaign

**AUSTIN**—A committed and concerned group of current students and recent graduates of Texas universities today launched the Young Texans for Excellence in Higher Education. The Young Texans – a subgroup of the Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education – represents the next generation of Texas leaders who will continue to ensure that our public higher education system is among the best in the world and is constantly striving to improve. The Young Texans released the following statement:

“We call upon our elected officials and regents to work with university leadership to continue to support the dual mission of education and research at our flagship institutions, and furthermore, we encourage the continued development of excellence and accessibility throughout our higher education system. Rather than damaging the decades of work that have been put into making The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University what they are today, the state must focus on continued support of these institutions and the development of additional national research universities to strengthen Texas’ economy and create more opportunities for our growing population.”

“We are ready to engage in the discussion and creation of solutions that enable more cost-effective, transparent, and accountable institutions,” said Natalie Butler, current student body president at The University of Texas at Austin. “However, we are not willing to sacrifice educational quality.”

“If Texas is to succeed in the future, now is the time to make the investment,” said Keshav Rajagopalan, former University of Texas at Austin student body president. “Invest in our future. Invest in our students. Make Texas relevant. Make Texans competitive.”

The Young Texans is made up of current and former student leaders committed to driving excellence in higher education for all Texans. A full listing of the founding members can be found below:

### Founding Members

Paul Albrecht, Michael Appleman, John Arriaga, Minator Azemi, Ashley Baker, JJ Baskin, Kalize Bauer, Kate Beasley, John Black, Alli Bloom, Hannah Bock, John Brady, Abby Branigan, Dolph Briscoe IV, Erica Brody, Shauna Bubis, Natalie Butler, Billy Calve, Marcus Cenicerros, Brent Chaney, Sarah Classen, Leslie Daniel, Alyssa Davis, Jordan Davisson, Tyler Day, Bernadette De La Cruz, Ben De Leon, John deLorimier, Sameer Desai, Andre Esteva, Sydney Fazende, Brian Feld, Alex Ferraro, Nicholas Garcia, Madison Gardner, Michael Ginnings, Sara Grabowski, Neshell Graham, Elliot Greenberg, Jamie Grossbard, Dustin Haley, Brian Haley, Ryan Harrison, Holly Heinrich, Sarah Hobson, Drew Jacoby, Zack Jamail, Priti Joshi, Emily Jung, Sally Jung, Zuhair Khan, Lauren Kraut, Jordan Kreft, Aakashdeep Kumar, Abbey Laclede, Corey Leamon, Samuel Leonard, Michelle Lin, David Loewenberg, Sara Loewy, Kendra Loftice, Reid Long, Amanda Lopez, Cecilia Lopez, Edilsa Lopez, Ryan Manack, Janette Martinez, Cesar Martinez, Kati McGee,



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Meridith McGraw, Allie Medack, Berenice Medellin, Rachel Meyerson, Annie Holand Miller, Milam Miller, Michael Morton, Juliet Mullins, Stephen Myers, Milam Newby, Carisa Nietzsche, Robby Nunez, Annalisa Ortiz, Keval Patel, Jesus Payan, Matt Portillo, Taylor Pousson, Preston Powell, Alex Prescott, Chelesa Fosse Rajagopalan, Kartik Rajagopalan, Keshav Rajagopalan, Katina Rajunov, Lisa Henken Ramirez, Lauren Ratliff, Lauren Robbins, Holly Roche, Patrick Rodriguez, Daniel Rosen, Danielle Rugoff, Tameka Sadler, Sarah Sanders, Zach Schneider, Alyson Schulman, Elana Schulman, Nathan Seitzman, Ruchy Sharda, Frankie Shulkin, Gabriella Sicher, Jason Silverstein, Andrew Solomon, Andrew St. Jean, Justin Stein, Sharilyn Stone, Bailey Tomson, Andrew Townsell, Felicia Travieso, Nicole Trinh, Benjamin Trotter, Roberto Valle, Marlen Whitley, Michael Whitworth, Erika Willrodt, Philip Wiseman, David Wogan, Conner Wood, John Woods, Shannon Yoachum, Crystal Zhao

**About the Young Texans:**

The Young Texans for Excellence in Higher Education is a subgroup of the Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education. The group is comprised of current and future alumni of Texas public higher education institutions who believe that their education is a means to shape the future of the state, country and world. Great public teaching and research universities are proven incubators of innovation, knowledge and creativity and engines for economic growth. Higher education prepares our young people to lead the world in the new global economy and is critical to keeping Texas and America competitive. Follow the Young Texans on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/OurDegreesMatter>

***For more information on the Coalition and information on higher education in Texas, please visit:***  
[www.TexasEducationExcellence.org](http://www.TexasEducationExcellence.org)

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