



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Breakthrough Central Texas and Texas State University Partner to Help
First-Generation Students Succeed On and Off Campus**

Central Texas Nonprofit and University Support 20,000 First-Generation Students

Austin, Texas – During the Fall 2022 semester at Texas State University, more than 2,068 first-generation college students are enrolled in University Seminar to acclimate to the college experience and environment. Of these, 19 students are from Breakthrough Central Texas, an Austin-area nonprofit organization helping create a path to and through college for students who are first in their family to earn a college degree. Together, the organizations currently support nearly 20,000 Central Texas students who aspire to become first-generation college graduates.

Texas State's Undergraduate Academics Center offers University Seminar as a transition from high school to college, especially for students who are pioneering the college experience. Instructors support students academically and personally, while helping them develop skills such as time management, goal setting, note taking, test taking, career exploration, and networking.

Breakthrough Central Texas and Texas State alumna Claudia Ochoa relates to University 101 students by sharing her own experience as a first-generation college graduate. Ochoa guides students through the curriculum and encourages students to plug into a community of individuals with like-minded interests and pursuits while on campus to create a sense of belonging.

"Representation matters," says Ochoa. "Rarely do students have the opportunity to be in a class of only first-gen students and be taught by an instructor who is also from that community. It allows students to feel comfortable and be understood. Being able to relate to someone who knows your experience and where you come from is super important."

Now in its 20th year, Breakthrough Central Texas promotes a vision that all Central Texas children have the opportunity to realize their potential through the life-changing power of a

college degree. Courses like Texas State's University 101 help address the unique challenges first-generation students face and break down systemic barriers to their success.

"My hope is that I can save students some time and share resources I wish I had known about as a freshman," says Ochoa. "I am thankful to Breakthrough and to Texas State for helping me realize my own college dreams. It is a gift to have a career in teaching that I love, all while continuing to develop myself, as a first-generation professional. You never stop being first-gen and this is all part of my journey."

Since 2011, more Breakthrough Central Texas high school graduates have enrolled in Texas State University than any other college or university. To date, the organization has helped nearly 300 students earn their college degree, with 32 of them earning degrees from Texas State.

"There is no doubt that programs like University Seminar make a difference in students' trajectory," says Ochoa. "The message for students is, 'You belong here. You earned this. You can do this.' Once they are Texas State graduates, they can do anything. I am living proof."

ABOUT BREAKTHROUGH CENTRAL TEXAS

Breakthrough Central Texas is a nonprofit that creates a path to college for students from under-resourced communities. From sixth grade through college, the organization offers out-of-school learning experiences, leadership skills, and comprehensive advising to students. The organization makes a long-term commitment to students and their families to guide them through the process of preparing for, enrolling in, and completing college. This model ensures the success of students and families from middle school to high school graduation to college diploma and beyond. Join the conversation on Twitter [@BreakthroughCTX](#), Instagram [@BreakthroughCTX](#) and at [Facebook.com/BreakthroughCTX](#). To learn more, visit www.breakthroughctx.org.

ABOUT TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1899, [Texas State University](#) is among the largest universities in Texas with an enrollment of 38,376 students on campuses in San Marcos and Round Rock. Texas State's 221,000-plus alumni are a powerful force in serving the economic workforce needs of Texas and throughout the world.

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