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# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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BUILDING GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL  
PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN TEXAS  
AND THE WORLD



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Like the rest of you, I look back on 2020 with a mix of pride, gratitude, pain, and worry for all that we endured and overcame. I am never one to let a good crisis go to waste, and that was most definitely TIEC's informal motto in 2020. As we look forward to a resumption of international travel and robust internationalization activities in 2021, I know international education is forever changed. The past year has brought many organizations to their brink, and the tragic reality is many will not recover. At the same time, those of us who invested in remote programs have found opportunity there. While we at TIEC look forward to resuming in-person programming in 2021, we are heartened by our success leaning into the moment, going virtual, and strengthening our mission during this crisis.

Building our capacity to run larger and better international programs was a goal accomplished this year, even in the face of the pandemic. We also achieved our topline objective of centering our programming on our consortium members, building the opportunity we have in this network, and launching a new member model that is more inclusive, active, and results oriented.

I am grateful to the TIEC board of directors for sharing my vision for a Texas-based, globally engaged university consortium. We enter 2021

with new members in Texas and around the world. The great irony is that COVID may have been a help to achieve our goal of a more interactive and engaged consortium. We need each other in crisis, and TIEC was there to provide a network for members to share experiences and advice. We have been strengthening that role ever since.

In 2021, please stay in touch with us. I assure you, the year will be full of engaging and thoughtful member programming, a larger membership in Texas and internationally, more virtual exchange, more higher education capacity-building around the world, and more long-term partnerships facilitated by TIEC.


With warm wishes,

Robin J. Lerner  
President & CEO  
Texas International Education Consortium



# TEXAS BASED GLOBALLY ENGAGED

**OUR MISSION:** The Texas International Education Consortium is committed to creating lasting relationships between Texas higher education and counterparts around the world through collaboration, co-creation, and the sharing of knowledge and values.





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# BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE

The TIEC we know today has evolved in significant ways from its origins, or even from a few years ago, to adapt to new global realities and the needs of the consortium.

During these past few years, TIEC has shifted its business model away from the delivery of intensive English programs as its primary focus toward a greater diversity of partnerships and programs. With the additional challenges of this past year, TIEC has proactively sought international projects involving staff and faculty from across multiple universities and provided opportunities for peers to network through interactive webinars and discuss trending topics with subject-matter experts.

This past year has also brought with it a new membership model that encourages active collaboration between member institutions. This model is the foundation of building a community of internationally minded peers across Texas universities as well as abroad. Instead of going it alone, the burden of risks inherent in new ventures can be shared between TIEC and interested universities. Members, through their engagement in the consortium, bring to the table their unique expertise and experiences, new program ideas, and interest in supporting international research collaborations and faculty exchanges. TIEC allows a means for open communications with the goal of creating strong partnerships built from the peer-to-peer relationship, between faculty of different institutions, and through events and joint projects.

The appetite for students and faculty for international collaborations has not diminished. We are looking ahead to a new year of partnerships and camaraderie, and we thank you all for your continued engagement and support.

With my best regards,



Lawrence Schovanec



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**SHARED  
RISK  
SHARED  
REWARD**

## 2020 SNAPSHOT: TIEC'S IMPACT



**613** participants trained through virtual continuity of education programs



**41** faculty from **Texas** member universities provided expertise during TIEC projects



**39** undergraduate nursing faculty from **19** colleges of nursing in Egypt, Jordan, and Texas trained to conduct virtual exchanges through TIEC



TIEC launched **8** new pilot programs in 2020



**6** universities joined the Texas International Education Consortium



With **2** global partners, TIEC applied for approval to conduct research on implementing flexible learning in higher-education institutions

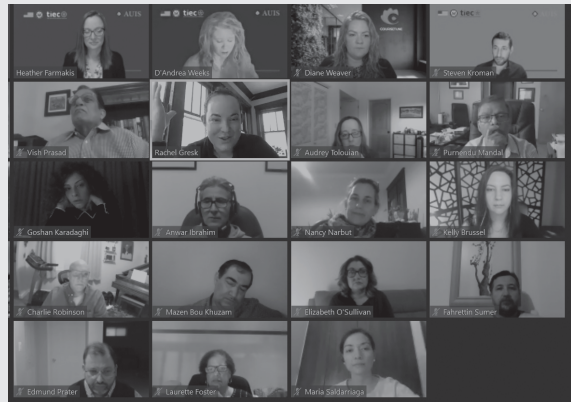
# A YEAR OF PROGRAMS

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TIEC has always prioritized building long-term relationships. Developing enduring international partnerships between Texas and the world is the reason TIEC was founded 35 years ago and remains our foundation. In 2020, TIEC's long-term relationships were at the heart of our resilience —programmatically and financially — during a time of upheaval for our industry. We experienced the trust of our funders who gave us flexibility to adapt programs to meet the pandemic environment, and who also sought our collaboration to help them meet the overwhelming needs of educational institutions around the world. Our friends stuck with — and chose — TIEC.

TIEC was able to shift many of our planned in-person projects to virtual. From the Central Asian Journalists in Residence program, to professional development for English teachers across the Near Eastern region, to taking our intensive English programs online in a matter of weeks, we were grateful to our students, participants, and grantors who gave us the trust and flexibility to succeed, despite the closing of physical borders around the world.





**LASTING  
RELATIONSHIPS  
MATTER**



# MISSION: RENEWED FOCUS ON THE “CONSORTIUM” IN TIEC

During the early months of 2020, TIEC engaged in a comprehensive look at our mission alongside the sum of our different projects, exchanges, and offerings. We understood that for each, TIEC was certainly not the only actor globally working in that space.

Why would potential partners — both in Texas and abroad — choose to work with TIEC? What could we bring to a collaboration that no other organization could? It quickly became clear that the answer was the “C” in our name: our consortium members. The combined strength and wealth of resources that our Texas universities brought to any potential project was TIEC’s “secret sauce.”

Bringing global partnerships and collaborations to Texas is our mission and, COVID-19 aside, 2020 was the year to consider this challenge in light of the specific 21st Century international education environment we find ourselves in.

TIEC’s leadership team found support from the TIEC board of directors for a renewed mission focused on strengthening the partnership platform of TIEC. As a result, we moved forward with a plan to transition TIEC’s structure from a loose consortium to a formal membership model in the

fall of 2020. We also initiated an expanded membership that allows for private universities to join and friends and partner universities around the world to join as affiliates.

## The Value of TIEC’s Model at Home and Abroad

In early 2020, TIEC was proud to host two delegation visits to Texas, opening up new collaborations and partnerships for our consortium members. TIEC welcomed His Excellency, Dr. Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, from the Arab Republic of Egypt for a visit to Houston with 14 TIEC member universities in late January. Then-chairman of TIEC’s board of directors, President Kenneth Evans of Lamar University, signed a new Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of TIEC to facilitate cooperation between Texas universities and Egyptian universities under the ministry’s auspices. Dr. Mohamed Hamzah, cultural advisor and head of the educational mission for the Egyptian Embassy in Washington, D.C., also participated in the visit.

Part of TIEC’s mission is to scout opportunities for its members. With a focus on Kazakhstan, TIEC worked with the U.S. Embassy in Astana to





connect university leaders from Kazakhstan with TIEC members. Thanks to the U.S. Embassy’s support for the Central Asia University Partnerships Program, TIEC organized a special networking session just for our members with a delegation of Kazakhstani university leaders invited to attend the AIEA conference in Washington, D.C. TIEC then followed up with a second focused discussion with the group in Austin with Texas faculty in specialized areas from across the membership. TIEC’s efforts provided new connections for both sides.

### TIEC Membership: A Texas Consortium With A Global Reach

To strengthen our membership and services, TIEC expanded membership to include certain Texas private universities and added an affiliate membership for select international universities. TIEC is a Texas-based, globally engaged consortium with a commitment to our Texas members and a global reach to facilitate quick and easy networking with peers around the world. With the launch of our new membership model, Texas and affiliate members now have access to TIEC’s inaugural members-only portal, with exclusive access to content, events, and networking platforms. We are proud to welcome our first affiliate members and long-standing partners, Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University and the American University of Cairo. We look forward to strengthening our ties in international higher education through our consortium.

### New or Returning University Members

The University of Texas at Austin	Austin, TX
St. Edward’s University	Austin, TX
Baylor University	Waco, TX
Huston-Tillotson University	Austin, TX
Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University*	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
The American University of Cairo*	Arab Republic of Egypt

\*Affiliate Members

# STAYING RELEVANT

## TIEC ADAPTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



TIEC and OLC joined forces to promote flexible learning globally.



It's hard to overstate the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the international education industry. At TIEC, that huge disruption brought clarity around the role Texas higher education could play in the world — and the network we could build for each other within our borders.

In the early days of the pandemic, TIEC prioritized our role as a convening space for our Texas universities. By providing discussion forums and informal conversations, TIEC made available a platform for key players at our universities to share ideas and discuss challenges. It also gave TIEC the chance to more deeply engage many of our campuses — allowing TIEC's staff better insight into how we could strengthen our value to our consortium members.



## Sharing Texas' Expertise in Online Instruction

Almost overnight, the ability to deliver quality online education became essential to prevent the disruption of education for university students around the world. The challenges came not just for individual faculty, but institutions and governments had to grapple with a sea of complexities around implementation, quality, access, and scale of distance learning.

TIEC was proud to meet the need of the moment by standing up a new capacity-building program to support online learning and preserve continuity of education for students around the world. We were lucky to have two experts in online learning and online instruction design on TIEC's senior leadership team — Dr. Heather Farmakis, chief learning officer, and Dr. D'Andrea Weeks, director of business development. Both were able to quickly tap experts across Texas and forge a partnership with the Online Learning Consortium that strengthened and supported the TIEC team as we offered a new online learning support program to ministries, universities, and U.S. embassies around the world.

TIEC kicked off two major online learning programs that will continue into 2021. We were honored to be an inaugural program of the U.S. Embassy Ghana's University Partnership Initiative with Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). The program has begun training 30 faculty members at KNUST to be regional experts and trainers in online learning techniques and best practices.

Through a collaboration with the U.S. Embassy Manila and the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education, TIEC is training faculty from 50 universities across the Philippines to build capacity to deliver quality online

and flexible learning. Faculty across the Philippines will apply new methods of engaging students to transform teaching practices, promote higher-level student learning, and help their students build the 21st Century skills needed to excel in the global workforce.

“We are grateful TIEC has willingly agreed to work with us, to ensure our eLearning pedagogy is as rigorous as our in-person standards. We look forward to a very fruitful partnership between KNUST and TIEC.”

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**Vice Chancellor Mrs. Rita Akosua Dickson, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST)**

## Virtual Exchange Becomes a Central Program for TIEC

As disruptors lead to opportunity and innovation, COVID-19 created an urgency for our members to gain capacity to conduct virtual exchange, also known as globally connected classrooms. With physical exchanges halted indefinitely, we saw a turn toward virtual implementation of international student programs and engagement. Technology, time differences, language barriers and difficulty reading cultural cues over video make virtual exchange a challenge to implement the first time. For this reason, TIEC piloted a virtual exchange capacity building program for faculty of nursing and was one of 18 programs funded as part of the Stevens Initiative Coronavirus Response Fund, an effort through the Stevens Initiative, a public-private partnership housed at the Aspen Institute. With the grant, TIEC launched the Texas International Education Consortium Virtual Exchange for Undergraduate Nursing in Egypt, Jordan, and Texas, an eight-week virtual exchange capacity-building program for 38 undergraduate nursing faculty from 18 colleges of nursing in Egypt, Jordan, and Texas. Together, faculty learned effective virtual exchange models and jointly designed virtual exchange modules to integrate into existing Bachelor of Science in Nursing courses that encouraged students to research and investigate global health challenges shared across borders.

## Quick Pivot to a Virtual Intensive English Program

At TIEC's headquarters in Austin, the Texas Intensive English Program's Spring 2020 ACCESS and Texas University Pathway Program courses were set to begin just as COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders took effect. TIEP quickly shifted gears and converted both programs to fully online

delivery. Earlier strategic decisions enabled TIEP to pivot in just a few weeks to virtual classrooms. Even before shelter-in-place orders made it a necessity, online learning was already a part of TIEP's educational approach. The integration of an online learning management system, Schoology, and other online learning tools and assessments were key TIEP initiatives over the last few years. Having a strong foundation already in place made it easy for students and faculty to make the switch to online.



“The collaboration with TIEC provides us with an excellent opportunity to further refine our academic programs. Having access to cutting-edge expertise and innovation through TIEC’s world-renowned consortium members will support ongoing AUIS efforts to align all curricula with leading benchmarks. This does not only allow us to meet regional and international labor-market needs and global accreditation requirements, but it also ensures our students receive the very best education possible.”

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**Dr. Wolfgang Hinck, AUIS Vice  
President of Academic Affairs**

# 2020

## ALIGNING ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES TO MISSION

In 2020, TIEC realized its commitment to growing and deepening our reach around the world, and to providing relevant programming for our Texas members with the creation of a new business development team (BDU) and an expansion of the communications and marketing team. With more capacity in these areas, TIEC has organizational resources available to increase and diversify on-the-ground partners, funding sources, geographic footprint, and audience. All of these lead to more partnership potential for consortium members.

### Organizational Updates To Realize Our Mission

With the new infrastructure in place, TIEC is responsive to new opportunities, convenes experts quickly, ideates more creatively, and responds to trends and needs of the international education environment. As a result, in 2020 TIEC found itself receiving new funding even in the midst of the pandemic and expanding our reach to 54 new universities in Iraq, Philippines, Ghana, Egypt, and Jordan.

# FINANCIAL UPDATE

## New Signed Awards During 2020

The financial and economic impact of COVID-19 in 2020 shook companies and organizations both large and small, private and public all around the world, and TIEC was not spared. Thanks to our strong relationship with donors and long-standing partners, we postponed some in-person programs and shifted others to virtual implementation.

TIEC senior leadership reviewed all financial commitments and recurring costs, business processes and practices, and significantly reduced costs and enhanced technological efficiencies. TIEC was grateful to receive a

CARES Act Paycheck Protection Act loan to support its core staff comprised of 13 full-time employees. This lean and powerful team not only retained most existing programs, we achieved significant funding approvals for new programs and contracts for curriculum services. TIEC will take the many lessons learned in 2020, most notably around flexibility, adaptability, vigorous communication with partners, and the strength of network and community to our future practices.

### New Signed Awards During 2020

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University Partnerships Initiative—Flexible Learning:  
Responding and Reimagining Education in Ghana

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Support to American-Style Higher Education in Iraq:  
American University of Iraq, Sulaimani

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University Partnerships Initiative—Flexible Learning:  
Responding & Reimagining Education  
in the Philippines

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The Stevens Initiative—Virtual Exchange Program  
for Nursing in Egypt, Jordan, and Texas

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Egypt English Language Institute

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### Continuing Programs

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Intensive English Program (T-UP/ACCESS)

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Pan Regional Teacher Training  
Exchange Program—Tunis

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Pan Regional Teacher Training  
Exchange Program—Jordan

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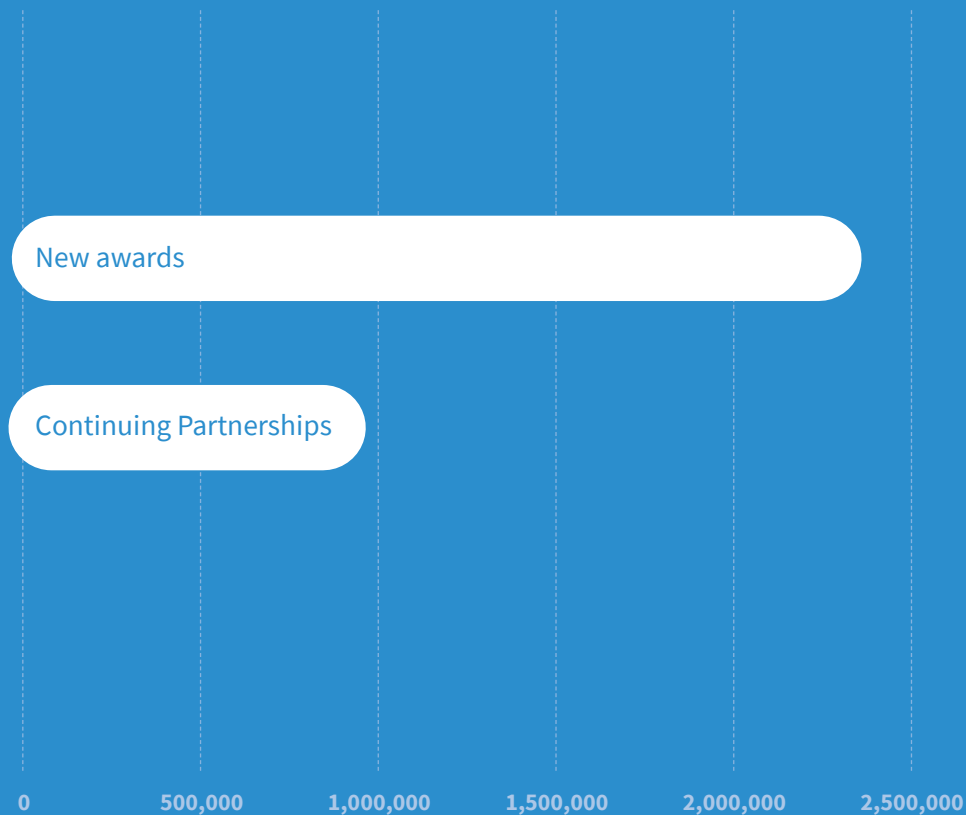
Central Asia Journalist-in-Residence Program

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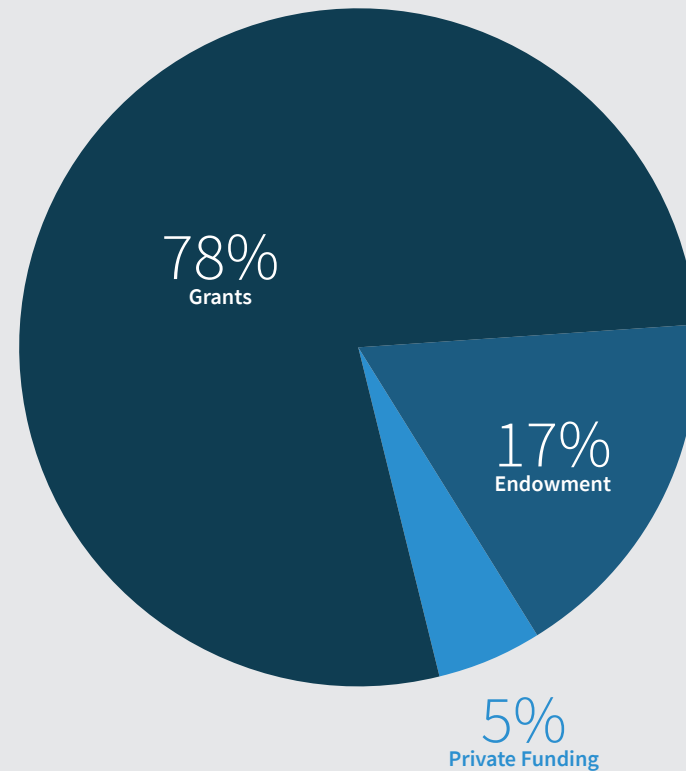
Curriculum Review:  
Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

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# NEW PARTNERSHIPS VS. CONTINUING PARTNERSHIPS



# 2020 REVENUE BY FUNDING TYPE



TIEC updated its financial management policies and procedures by developing a fully fledged Grants Management Manual to enable it to continue to effectively manage its resources. Over the years, TIEC has managed to maintain clean external annual audits, thereby demonstrating a strong internal control environment to potential funders.

“Educators around the world have faced so many challenges in the past year, and the Texas International Education Consortium network served as an avenue to share experiences and gain peer input. Thanks to the vision and support of the TIEC board of directors, the TIEC network will continue to grow and focus on helping our members respond to new demands in virtual education while remaining committed to internationalization. We are fortunate to have the capacity to help meet the needs of educators during and after COVID-19”

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**Robin J. Lerner, President & CEO, TIEC**



## LOOKING AHEAD 2021

### **New Governance Structure Makes Way for a More Nimble TIEC**

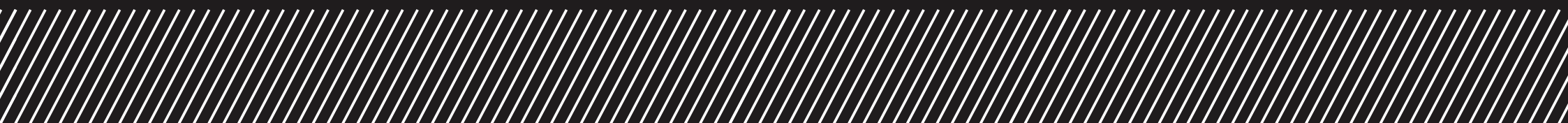
TIEC introduces our 2021 board of directors, including three new directors. This diverse and energetic group of stellar higher education leaders represents The University of Texas System, the Texas A&M University System, the Texas Tech System, and an independent public university. In early 2020, TIEC activated a new streamlined governance structure that reduced the size of our board to six member-university presidents. Remaining member-university presidents have shifted from board members to advisors, as part of a new TIEC Advisory Council.

TIEC looks forward to working with this smaller, more focused leadership structure as we adapt to our new membership model and continue our increase in virtual and online programs. The TIEC Advisory Council will serve as a vital resource for TIEC’s work.





  
TEXAS WOMAN'S  
UNIVERSITY





# TIEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR FY2021



**Texas Tech University**

President Lawrence Schovanec  
Chair



**Texas A&M International University**

President Pablo Arenaz  
Vice Chair



**Midwestern State University**

President Suzanne Shipley





**Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**

President Kelly Miller



**The University of Texas at San Antonio**

President T. Taylor Eighmy



**The University of Texas at Arlington**

Interim President Teik C. Lim



“TIEC built online learning into the DNA of our program. COVID strengthened our understanding that educators are preparing students for futures that require advanced online skills. With students always at the heart of our efforts, we will continue to design programs to help institutions deliver the strongest and most effective online learning possible.”

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**Heather Farmakis, Ph.D.,  
Chief Learning Officer, TIEC**

## Membership Drive

2021 will bring an even larger TIEC consortium as we launch our expanded membership drive. We anticipate more global partners and the addition of a larger cohort of Texas private universities.

## Trainings and Events:

TIEC’s 2021 calendar will include virtual exchange capacity-building trainings, a series of grant proposal development workshops, engaging topical discussions for international educators, public-private partnership development, country-specific briefings, U.S. Government engagements, and more.

## Launch of Partner Finder:

TIEC’s Partner Finder will become our central tool for connecting faculty and institutions and identifying faculty experts for TIEC projects.

## Operating Council Leadership Committees:

TIEC serves as an important network for international educators and, in 2021, will strengthen the voice of our international offices in TIEC operations and activities. With the establishment of a number of leadership committees among our operating council, we anticipate TIEC developing into an ever more responsive organization in service of its members.

## TIEC Signature Programs:

TIEC’s new programs developed during COVID, namely virtual exchange training and implementation and continuity of education/online instruction capacity-building for educators, will remain core offerings in 2021. With the establishment of a number of leadership committees among our operating council, we anticipate TIEC developing into an ever more responsive organization in service of its members.







Texas International Education Consortium

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