

Greetings!

It has been a while since our last Lalani Letter, and I'm excited to reconnect with you. As we approach the end of May, a time of graduations and new beginnings, this edition is specially dedicated to those exploring or embarking on their higher education journey.

Higher education is a transformative experience that opens doors to knowledge, growth, and future success. Whether you're a student, a parent, or a mentor, navigating the path to college can be both exhilarating and challenging. This edition is packed with valuable tips, resources, and insights designed to support you every step of the way.

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends and family who might benefit from it. Your involvement and enthusiasm are what make our community strong and vibrant.

Remember, this is your District. You are the most important part of what happens here. Get engaged, get involved, and help make your community a better place for all.

Thank you for your continued support.

Representative Suleman Lalani, M.D.

Follow us on social media!

 [@LalaniTX](https://www.facebook.com/LalaniTX)

 [@DoctorLalani](https://twitter.com/DoctorLalani)



[@DrLalaniForTX](#)

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Understanding the Benefits of College or Career School Education

As you contemplate your educational future, it's essential to understand the long-term benefits of pursuing a college or career school education.

The below graphic from the bureau of labor and statistics shows more education equates to more career opportunities, higher earning potential, and increased personal freedom. With each step up the educational ladder, from a high school diploma to a doctoral degree, earning potential rises significantly. Investing in your education is one of the most critical decisions you can make for your future. By carefully planning your educational journey and exploring the available funding options, you can find the right college or career school to match your aspirations and put yourself on a path to long-term success.



Exploring Career Opportunities

It's crucial to consider career paths that align with your passions and interests.

Whether you're drawn to the world of animals or fascinated by technology, pursuing higher education can equip you with the skills needed to turn your interests into a fulfilling career. Start exploring the various career possibilities that resonate with your passions and open doors to a rewarding future.

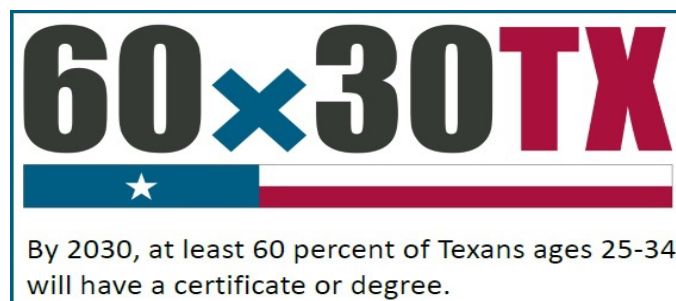
The [Exploring Your Career Options | Federal Student Aid](#) website allows you to find potential careers using the keyword search, or browse by industry.

Selecting the Right School for You

With so many education pathways to choose from, it's essential to explore your options thoughtfully.

Whether you're considering a two-year community college, a four-year university, or a specialized trade school, it's crucial to select an institution that aligns with your academic interests, career aspirations, and financial circumstances.

Explore the steps you can take to research potential colleges or career schools at the [Choosing a School | Federal Student Aid](#) website.



Preparing Your College Application: Key Information You Need

When applying to colleges, you'll need to gather some basic information that almost all applications require. It's important to have these details ready:

- **Name and Address:** Essential for colleges to create your file and communicate with you.
- **Educational Information:** Be prepared to discuss your enrollment intentions, educational background, and academic goals. You'll need to list your high school and any colleges attended, along with the dates.
- **Standardized Tests:** Inform the colleges which standardized tests you plan to take or have taken, such as the SAT, ACT, or THEA, along with the scores if available.
- **Residency Information:** This determines if you qualify for in-state tuition, which can significantly affect your costs.
- **Extracurricular Activities:** Detail your talents, honors, community service, and employment history to give schools a full picture of who you are outside the classroom.
- **Essays:** Not all schools require essays, but for those that do, they can be crucial to your application. Get help from your counselor or teachers to ensure your essays are compelling.

Applying to Colleges as a Texan

Begin your application journey with two prominent platforms:

[ApplyTexas](#) for state institutions and [CommonApp](#) for a broad range of colleges nationwide.

ApplyTexas Overview: ApplyTexas provides a unified application process for multiple public colleges and universities across Texas. The newly redesigned ApplyTexas portal, set to launch in May 2024, promises a user-friendly application experience.

Essential Steps:

1. **Create an ApplyTexas Profile:** Initiate your journey by registering an account on ApplyTexas. Explore and select from a diverse array of Texas colleges and universities that align with your academic interests and career aspirations.
2. **Assemble Necessary Documentation:** Prepare essential documents such as your high school transcript. These can be directly requested through the Texas Records Exchange (TREx) via ApplyTexas.
3. **Submit Your Applications:** Comply with the application deadlines for each chosen institution, utilizing the resources offered by ApplyTexas to facilitate your application process.

CommonApp Overview: Common App simplifies the college application process for over a million students annually, connecting applicants to more than 900 colleges globally.

Essential Steps:

1. **Establish Your Common App Profile:** Register on the Common App website. This profile allows you to present your academic records and extracurricular engagements, forming the foundational step in your college application journey.
2. **Collect Required Materials:** Accumulate essential documents such as transcripts and recommendation letters. Common App offers a comprehensive checklist tailored to the specific requirements of each college.
3. **Finalize and Submit Applications:** After completing your profile and customizing applications according to each college's requirements, thoroughly review your submissions and ensure they are submitted before the respective deadlines.

Navigating Financial Aid in Texas and Nationwide

Securing financial aid is crucial for managing college expenses effectively.

1. **Complete the FAFSA or TASFA:** Depending on your residency status, you could fill out either the **Free Application for Federal**

Student Aid (FAFSA) or the **Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA)** to access various forms of financial aid.

2. **Explore State and Federal Grants:** A list of known grants and scholarships

- **Texas Educational Opportunity Grant Program (TEOG)**
- **Toward EXcellence, Access, and Success Grant Program (TEXAS Grant)**
- **Tuition Equalization Grant Program (TEG)**
- **Federal PELL Grant**
- **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant**
- **Federal Teacher Quality Enhancement Scholarships from the U.S. Department of Education**
- **Fifth Year Accounting Student Scholarship Program**
- **Kenneth H. Ashworth Fellowship Program**
- **Marine Corps Foundation Scholarship**
- **National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Scholarship**
- **Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program**
- **Texas Public Educational Grant Program (TPEG)**

3. **Other Scholarships and Work-Study Opportunities:** Utilize national resources such as **Fastweb** and the **College Board's BigFuture** to find other scholarships and work-study programs that can help offset educational costs.

Other Helpful Links

These resources can provide valuable support as you prepare for and pursue higher education.

1. **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board** - Offers comprehensive information on higher education policies, financial aid, and resources in Texas. **Visit the THECB**

2. **Texas Education Agency** - Provides resources for K-12 education, assessments, and school accountability in Texas. [Visit TEA](#)
3. **OERTX** - A digital repository of Open Educational Resources (OER) that can be freely used and shared. It's an excellent resource for finding educational materials that can supplement college learning. [Explore OERTX](#)
4. **College for All Texans** - A helpful resource for prospective students with information about applying to college in Texas, including details about admissions, financial aid, and the college-going process. [Learn more at College for All Texans](#)
5. **College Scorecard** - Research and compare colleges: their fields of study, costs, admissions, results, and more. Learn more at [College Scorecard](#)

Continued.....

Out and About in HD 76

Rep. Lalani Fort Bend Mental Health Round Table

My office organized a Fort Bend Mental Health Round Table to review best practices, address current challenges, and discuss future legislation related to mental health. We express our heartfelt gratitude to all the volunteers and staff working with special needs individuals. As the IDD (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities) population continues to rise, proactive care becomes crucial. Our mission is to provide equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of abilities or challenges, so they can flourish and contribute fully to society.





Hope For Three Second Annual Family Fun Fest





I attended the Hope For Three Second Annual Family Fun Fest, which brought families and supporters together for a day of celebration and awareness. As the leading autism advocacy group in Greater Houston, Hope For Three provides vital resources to families with autistic children. I fully support their mission and was inspired by the positive energy and sense of community at the event.

To support & Learn more go to www.hopeforthree.org

Texas Coalition of Black Democrats Quarterly meeting



I had the pleasure of attending the Texas Coalition of Black Democrats Quarterly meeting with my colleagues, Rep. Ron Reynolds and Rep. Senfronia Thompson. The coalition discussed ongoing projects and plans for their organization, sharing insights and strategies for advancing their initiatives. I am inspired by their dedication and commitment to making a positive impact. It was a great opportunity to connect and engage in discussions on future endeavors.

Nora's Home - World of Wonder Gala



I was happy to attend this amazing gala and help raise funds for this wonderful organization. Nora's Home aims to improve the outcome and quality of life for patients suffering end-stage organ failure, individuals undergoing transplantation, and these patients' families. They provide affordable housing and a home away from home for organ-transplant patients and their families receiving care in the Texas Medical Center. This is an important cause that I am happy to support.

To support & Learn more go to www.norashome.org

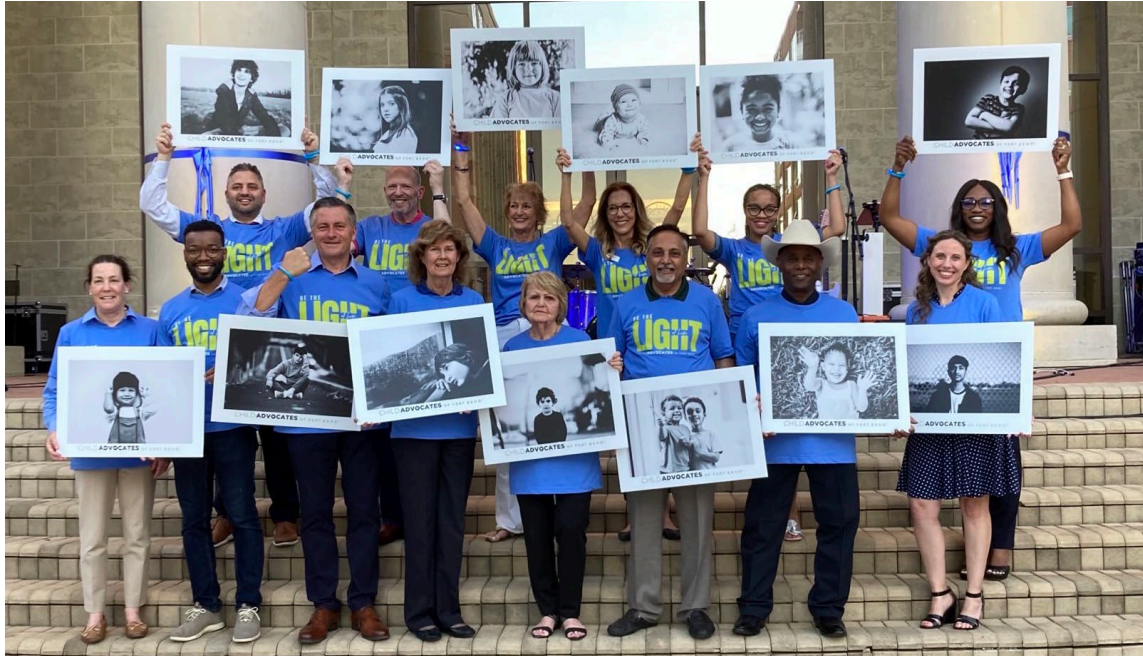
Hard Hats for Little Heads YMCA Healthy Kids Day



I joined the Fort Bend Medical Society at YMCA Healthy Kids Day. They generously distributed books and bike helmets to children. Hard Hats for Little Heads bicycle helmet giveaway program was created in 1994 to help reduce head injury among Texas children in sports on wheels, including riding a scooter and inline skating.

To support & Learn more about The Hard Hats for Little Heads go to
[www.texmed.org/Hard Hats for Little Heads](http://www.texmed.org/Hard_Hats_for_Little_Heads)

Child Advocates of Fort Bend: Light of Hope Ceremony





I joined local elected officials in a Child Abuse Awareness Event to mark the start of Child Abuse Prevention Month. The event was a powerful reminder of the need to raise awareness and advocate for child safety. Standing alongside community leaders, we highlighted the importance of preventing child abuse, supporting affected families, and ensuring every child has the opportunity to grow up in a safe environment.

Meeting with the Church Ambassador Network of Texas



I had the opportunity to meet with Bryan English, a constituent and the Executive Director of the Church Ambassador Network of Texas, along with local area pastors. Our discussions centered around building meaningful partnerships with the faith community. It was an enlightening conversation that emphasized the significant role faith-based organizations play in supporting our community and explored ways to collaborate on initiatives that can positively impact the lives of residents across Texas.

2nd Annual House District 76 Community Iftar



My family, staff, and I gave back to the community by hosting a community IFTAR dinner at a local mosque during Ramadan. We also offered tours to guests, creating a welcoming environment and fostering connections within the district. The event provided a meaningful opportunity to connect with our community during this special time and exemplified the spirit of service and unity.

The Job Link*

This section aims to provide HD 76 with valuable access to employment opportunities. Whether you're looking for a career in government, private industry, or local business, these resources can help connect you with the right opportunities.

Fort Bend County Careers Center The Fort Bend County Careers Center offers a wide range of employment opportunities within the county government. From administrative roles to public safety and beyond, you can find various openings that align with your career interests. Explore current job postings and find your fit: [Fort Bend County Careers Center](#).

Non-Government Fort Bend Jobs If you're seeking non-government opportunities in the Fort Bend area, the FortBendJobs website is a comprehensive resource. It offers listings across various industries and professions, making it a valuable tool for job seekers: [Non-Government Fort Bend Jobs](#).

Sugar Land Government Jobs For those interested in pursuing a career in local government, the City of Sugar Land provides diverse job opportunities. The official job board offers listings for roles within the city government, ranging from administrative to technical positions: [Sugar Land Government Jobs](#).

These resources aim to connect HD 76 residents with the opportunities that best match their skills and ambitions.

**If you are an employer and want to share hiring information, please reach out to our office at District76.Lalani@house.texas.gov and use the subject line "District Employment Opportunity" and we will share it in our newsletter.*