A collective impact initiative with the singular goal of breaking the cycle of poverty by doubling the number of young adults earning a living wage by 2040.
Dallas continues to be a powerhouse of economic growth—but that growth has not been shared equally.

Before the pandemic, only one in four young adults in Dallas earned a living wage, with even fewer Black and Hispanic residents able to make ends meet. Now, the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated this inequity—and demonstrated the urgency for change.

That’s why local educators, business leaders, and elected officials are coming together to help ensure that Dallas Thrives. We will strengthen the local talent pipeline to the benefit of young adults and employers alike. By doubling the number of living wage earners and achieving racial equity in living wage employment, we can bolster our region’s economy and recover from our current downturn stronger than ever before.

Building Economic Mobility

Doubling the number of young adults earning a living wage has the potential to add $4B to Dallas County’s GDP each year, an increase of nearly 2%, and can add nearly $40M in additional sales tax revenue, an increase of 6%. The potential outcomes from increasing living wage attainment are numerous:

- Reduced poverty
- Increased resilience
- Reduced dependence on entitlement programs
- Greater economic mobility
Dallas Thrives is building economic mobility through data-driven, systems-level collaboration.

- Talent pipeline development
- Career exploration, guidance, and readiness
- Credential attainment

Our view of the big moves required to double living wage attainment *in a single generation.*

- **Talent pipeline development**
  - Engage and convene employers and educators within in-demand industries
  - Provide labor market and talent pipeline data
  - Expand access to high-quality workforce training

- **Career exploration, guidance, and readiness**
  - Support advisors and instructors with career exploration content
  - Expand access to high-quality work-based learning
  - In-demand, living-wage industry marketing to students and families

- **Credential attainment**
  - Increase student and educator access to real-time college and career progression data
  - Increase access to postsecondary financial resources
  - Support high-quality advising for students and families

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Today

3 in 10 young adults¹ earn a living wage.

By 2040

6 in 10 young adults earn a living wage.

¹Young Adults classified as 25-34
Dallas Thrives has laid the foundation for success in its first two years.

- Evaluated, updated, and streamlined CTE programs of study in the Career Institutes, P-TECH programs, and comprehensive high schools using “High Priority Jobs” analysis developed by Dallas labor market data experts.
- Developed district-wide career exploration curriculum currently used to advise all 10,000 DISD 7th graders.
- Developed a virtual internship toolkit for use during and after the pandemic. Use of the toolkit led to the largest number of school year internships in DISD history.
- Established P-TECH pathway management solution to organize data and systems to manage over 10,000 P-TECH students across 76 unique P-TECH pathways.
- Supported New Teacher and IT pathways planning started at Dallas ISD, Dallas College, and UNT-Dallas.
- In 2022, Say Yes to Dallas aligned with Dallas Thrives to launch a digital campaign marketing high demand jobs in the health care and technology sectors.
- Convened three partner events engaging 30 employer and education organizations to share industry partnership updates, best practices, and outcomes.

It is time to start capitalizing on these wins and build the pathways to success for the next generation of Dallas.
In 2023, Dallas Thrives is focused on...

- Developing data sharing and tools among systems partners around critical college and career readiness, progression, and attainment indicators.
- Expanding access to cyber security pathways and training aligned to high-demand IT careers.
- Increasing campus-institution partnerships providing access to postsecondary financial resources.
- Ongoing marketing to young adults to increase exposure and access to education, training, and employment opportunities tied to in-demand, living-wage information technology and health care occupations.
- Launching a family engagement campaign to increase parent awareness of college and career pathways for students.

Learn more or get involved.
Tania Curry, Director, Dallas Thrives | tcurry@dallaschamber.org | www.dallasthrives.com