

Leveraging Students' Assets for Academic Success

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UTEP & STEM Education

UTEP Context

- Large, public Hispanic Serving RI Institution
- Enrollment: >25,000
 - >80% Hispanic
 - ~5% Mexican National
 - >50% First-generation



INTENTIONALITY

UTEP EDGE

Holistic, asset-based
framework for student success
based on three core principles:

- **Talented Students**
- **Enriching Experiences**
- **Lifelong Success**



Talented students. Enriching experiences. Lifelong success.

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What does it mean to adopt an asset-based approach?

Framing the Change Process

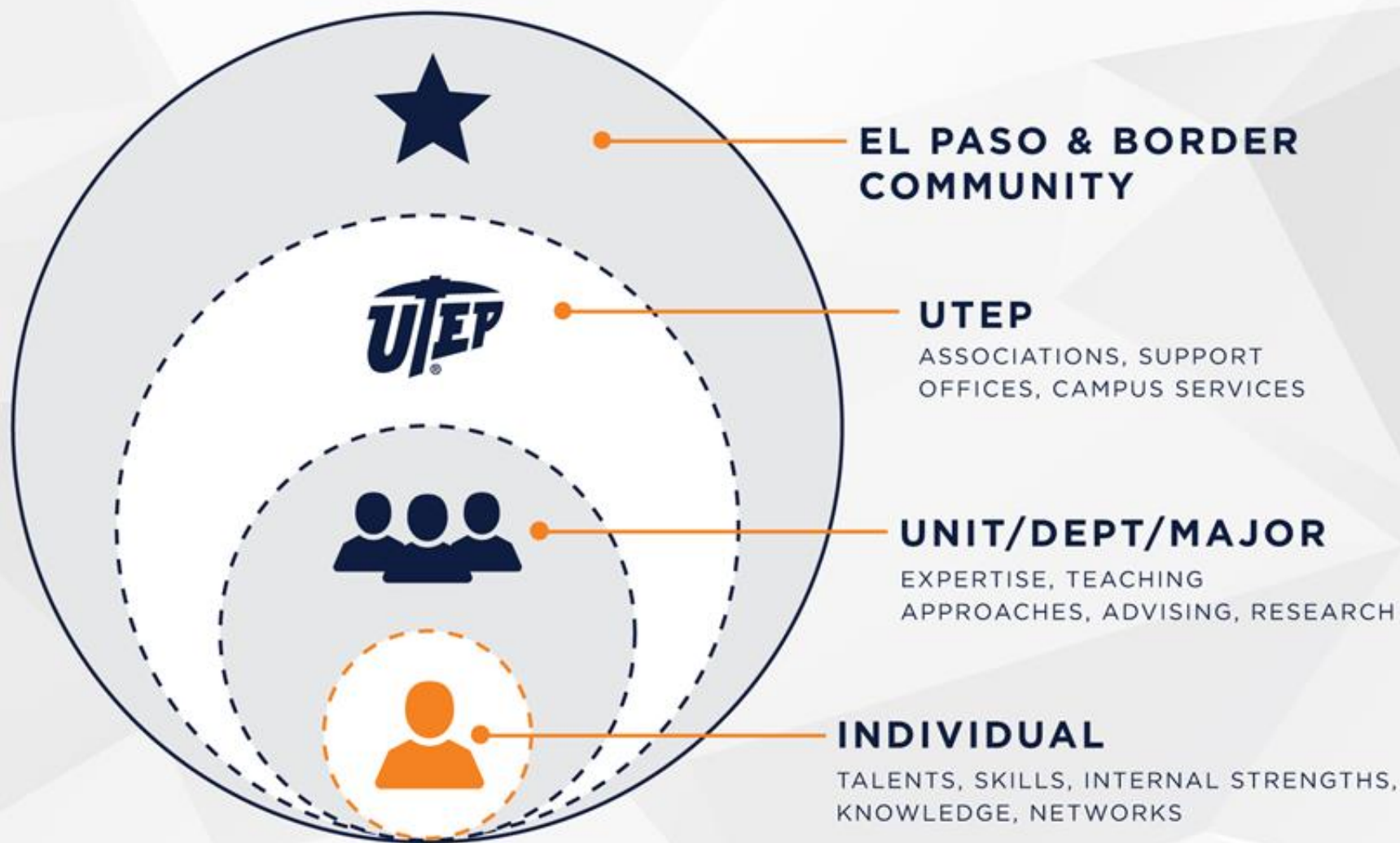
Needs-based	Asset-based
Focused on an imposed standard and deficits	Focuses on existing capacity and resources
Views community members as having things done to them	Views community members as assets/contributors
Minimizes community resources	Maximizes and recycles
Reactive	Proactive
Sees community as in need of external experts	Sees community as expert

Kretzmann, J.P. & McKnight, J.L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out*. Chicago: Acta Publications.

DEFINING “ASSETS”

Assets = Talents, skills, capacities, and strengths of individuals, associations, and communities that can be mobilized for action/change





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Asset-Based Pedagogy



Mein, E. (2018). Asset-based teaching and learning with diverse learners in postsecondary settings. Departmental Technical Reports (CS). 1271. https://scholarworks.utep.edu/cs_techrep/1271/

UTEP STUDENT RESPONSES

ASSET INVENTORY

- I. Reflect on and identify your assets. Assets are your *unique talents, skills, capacities, and strengths as an individual*. Assets can be academic, social, athletic, cultural/linguistic, technical, artistic, etc.

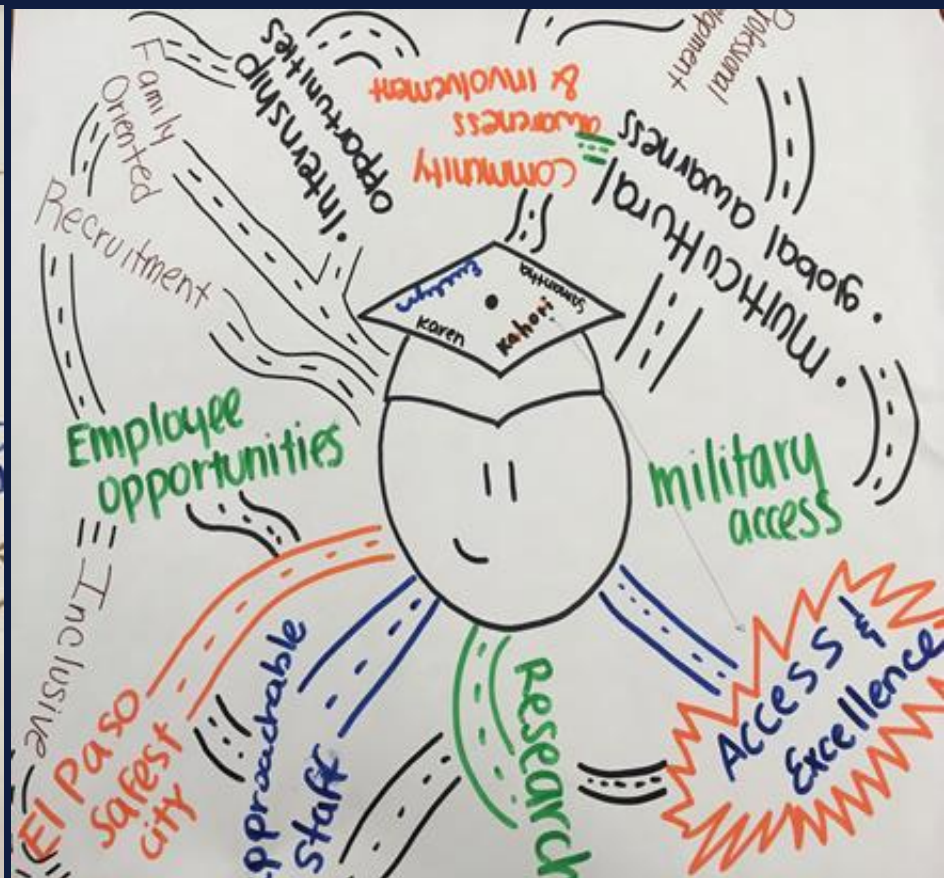
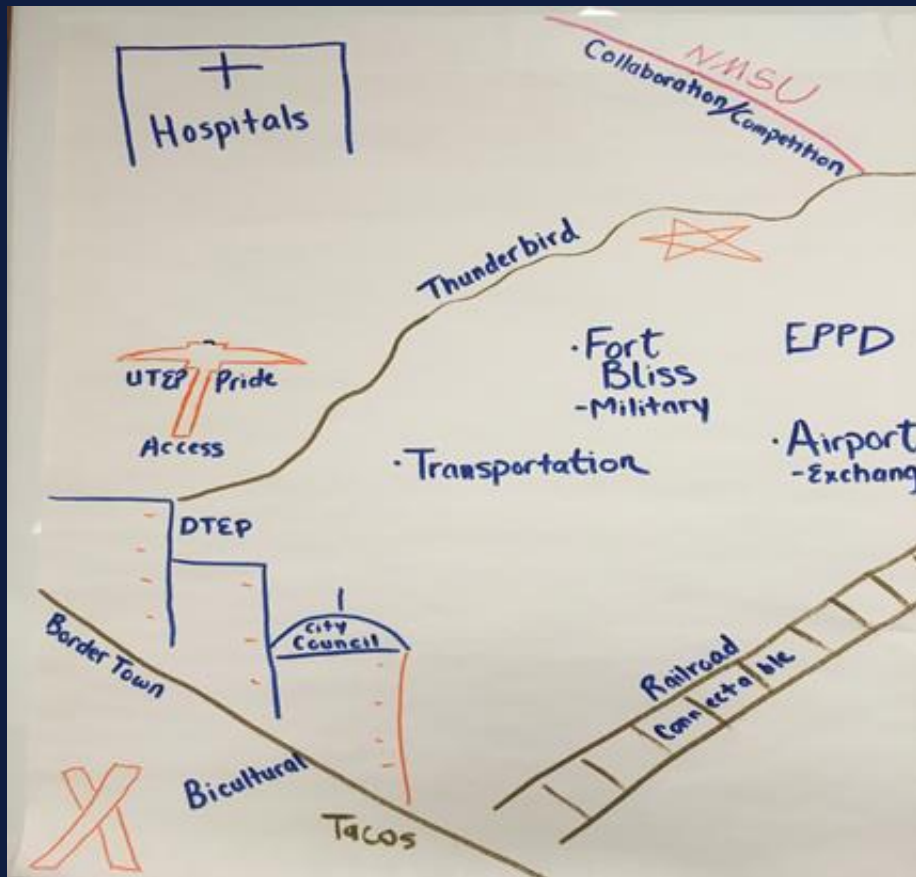
artistic	accomidating
creative	reliable
responsible	quick learner
musical	detailed oriented
bilingual	curious
driven	open mindness
persistent	initiative
hard working	perseverance
diverse/multicultural	understanding
caring	
motivated	
passionate	
problem solver	
determined	
time-management	
Loving	

ASSET INVENTORY

- I. Reflect on and identify your assets. Assets are your *unique talents, skills, capacities, and strengths as an individual*. Assets can be academic, social, athletic, cultural/linguistic, technical, artistic, etc.

Problem-Solver	
Critical/analytic thinker	
caring	
observant	
adaptive	
Strong-willed	
curious	
collaborative	
Community-oriented	
Positive	
Sense of humor	
social media savvy	

ASSET-MAPPING: UTEP STUDENTS



Talented students. Enriching experiences. Lifelong success.

UTEPEDGE

RESEARCH BASE: ASSET-BASED APPROACHES

Research on Asset-Based Approaches

Conceptual Frameworks

- Funds of Knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll, Amanti, 2005)
- Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005)
- Bilingualism as a Resource (Garcia, 2009)

Studies by UTEP Researchers

Bilingualism in STEM (Mein & Esquinca, 2017)

Transfronterizx Literacies & Knowledge (de la Piedra, Araujo, & Esquinca, 2018)

Identity Resources of Latinx in Engineering/CS (Mein et al, 2019, 2021)

Latinx Voices in STEM (Villa, 2018; Villa et al., 2016)

Theories of Learning

Conceptual Frameworks

- Learning as a social process (Vygotsky, 1978)
- Learning as situated in activity/practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991)
- Emphasis on development

Studies by UTEP Researchers

Affinity Research Group (Gates et al., 2014; Villa et al, 2013)

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Thank you!