

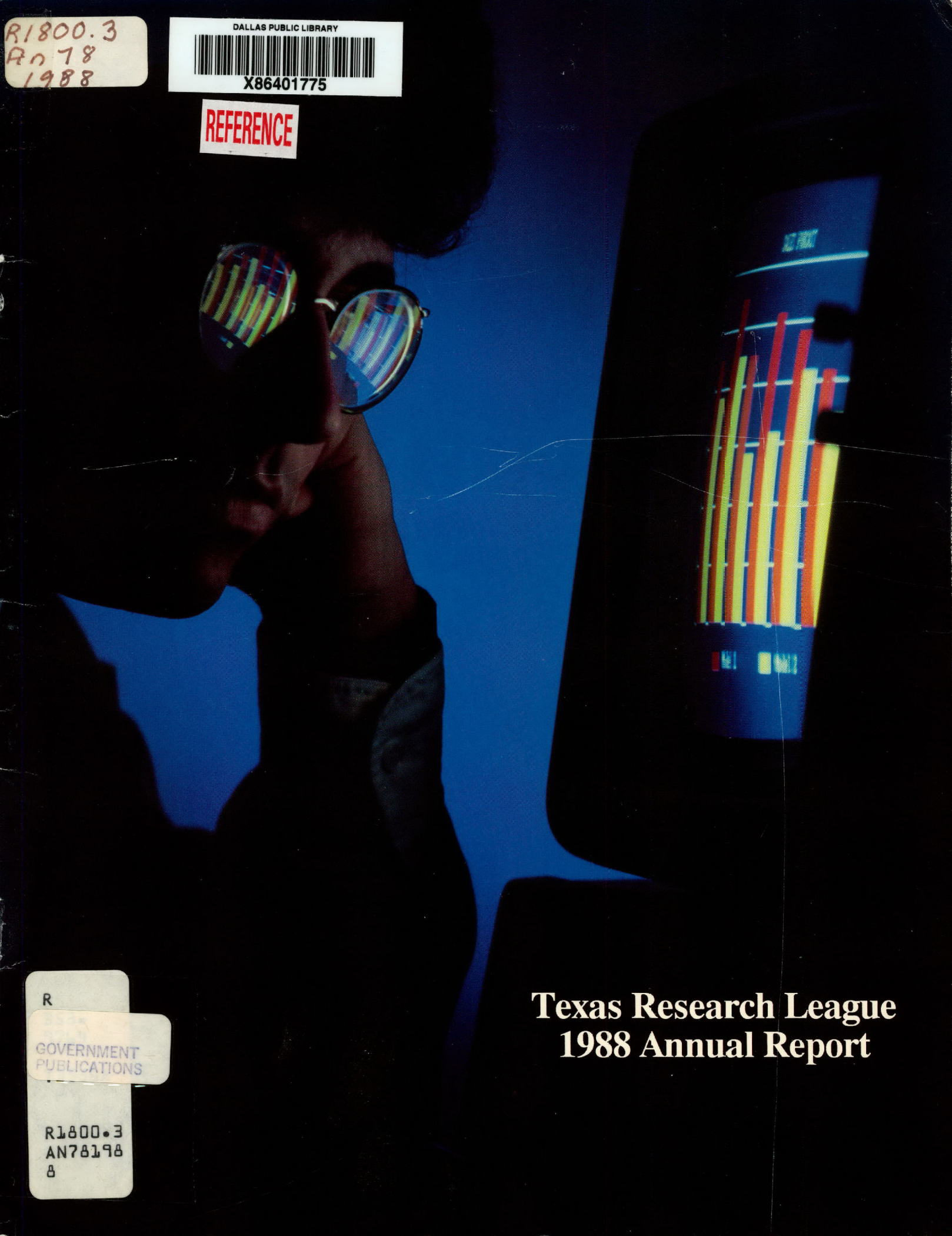
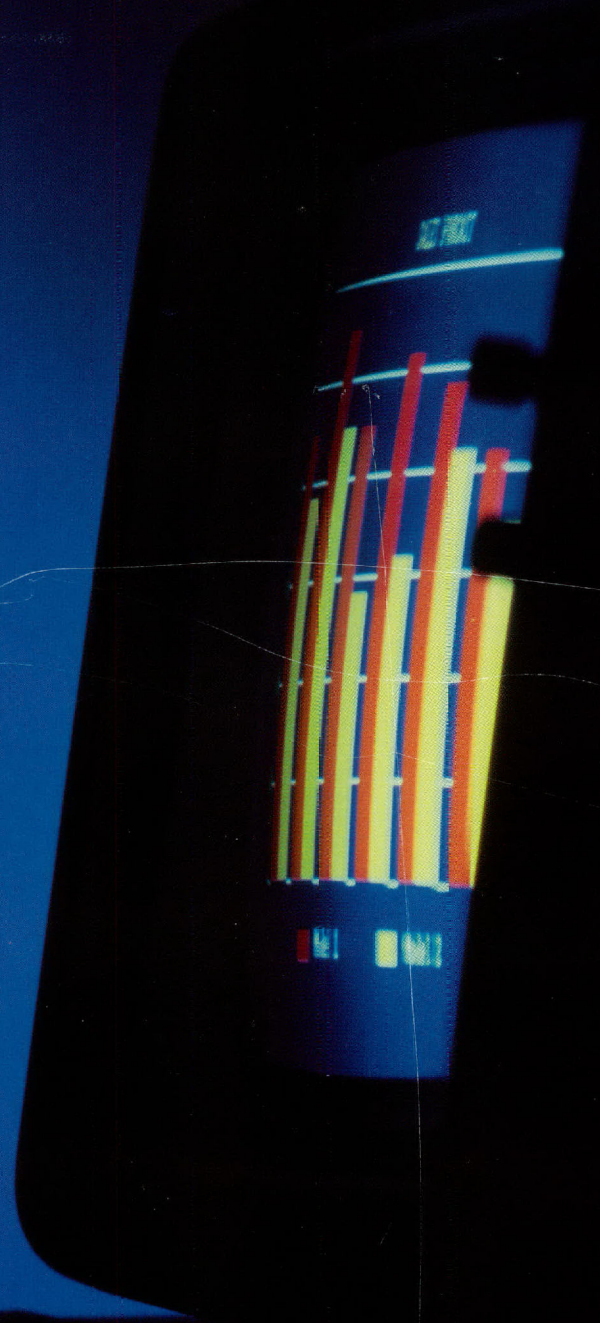
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# Texas Research League 1988 Annual Report



# PLOTTING THE COURSE

The public policy decisions being made as we enter the 1990s will chart Texas' future into the 21st Century. The Texas Research League's efforts toward efficient and effective government are a much-used navigational tool for Texas' decision makers. The advantage of having an organization such as TRL -- a group with roots in the middle of this century and commitment to policies benefitting all Texans well into the next century -- cannot be underscored enough.

The long-term, far-sighted nature of the League is one of its strongest assets. *A Strategic Economic Plan for Texas*, a report by the Strategic Economic Policy Commission, emphasizes the importance of such an approach to Texas' current challenges. In fact, *A Strategic Economic Plan for Texas* underscores the value of the League itself. Throughout the report, the commission stresses again and again that the state must reduce the student dropout rate, reform the workers' compensation and judicial selection systems, and modify the present tax structure so as to stimulate

growth and enhance Texas' competitiveness with other states. **These are the exact issues the League has focused on in recent years.** The League's research and recommendations have contributed enormously to the public policy decision-making process.

The organizational aspect of Texas government also has benefitted from the League's expertise, only this time the resource was League members rather than staff. Governor Clements again asked the League to recruit private sector volunteers from its membership for operational audit teams. The companies responding found themselves in a win/win situation: the agencies audited profited from the expertise of the audit team members and the private sector volunteers gained valuable insight into and appreciation for public sector services.

I am honored to serve as chairman of an organization of such vital importance to Texas' future.



*John B. Utsey*  
1988-1989 League Chairman

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# THE EDUCATION CHALLENGE

Education is the most important factor in navigating Texas' future. Certain trends in Texas combine to merit immediate attention to the public education system:

- Among the general population, one-third of all students who enter high school in Texas fail to graduate. For Hispanics, the dropout rate is 45%. Thirty-four percent of all Blacks do not graduate and 27% of Anglos dropout.
- The fastest growing segments of Texas' population are forecasted to be those with the historically lowest levels of educational achievement.
- An increasingly larger percentage of jobs in the future will require higher education levels than at any time in the past.
- Texas is moving from a natural resource-based economy to one based on human resources.

For all these reasons, the League's

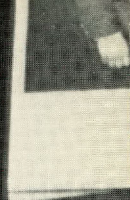
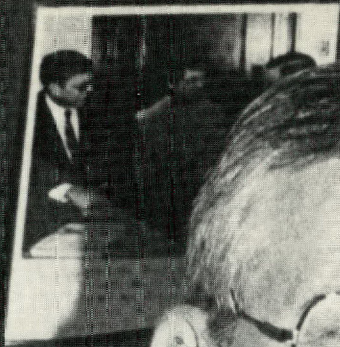
centerpiece research project for 1989-90 is a student retention project. The complexity of the dropout problem is such that the public sector and the educational establishment alone cannot solve it.

The private sector's role in public education is increasingly important because failure to solve the dropout problem will most affect the business community. At stake is nothing less than the ability to hire a work force. The League's involvement here is strategic because it is a unique link between the public and private sectors. Please read more about this project on page eight.

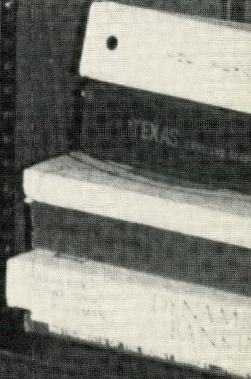
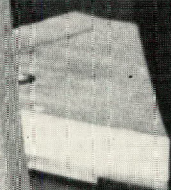
As I move into my second year as president of TRL, I am confident that the League is properly positioned and its resources correctly committed to best utilize its ability to help chart Texas' future.

*Gary E. Wood*

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# LEAGUE FINANCES

During the past year the League accomplished some of its most important work. That work and the League staff are highlighted throughout this report.

Also in 1988, amid economically troubled times, the League set a new total contribution record. Its budget was met and a solid beginning was made for the new year.

The League's success started more than three decades ago when business leaders conceived an organization dedicated to the good of Texas. Today, the League stands without peer in terms of business support and enjoys the personal involvement of the top business leaders in Texas.

The work of the League is recognized by public officials as nonpartisan, factual, and timely. That recognition has been earned

through hard work and careful attention to detail. Without lobbying or seeking special privilege, the League is an authoritative voice and is widely known as a friend to government.

The League's finance and membership committee members have served with distinction and deserve the gratitude of each member. They have met every challenge and completed their task. I thank them, and each member who has contributed to the League. Through the League, you have helped your state at a time when help was needed.

*Sam Winters*

## Comparative Revenues and Expenses

	<u>1988*</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Contributions	\$888,239.25	\$835,755.00	\$829,347.75
Other	66,141.91	130,228.51	63,648.15
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$954,381.16</b>	<b>\$965,983.51</b>	<b>\$892,995.90</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Salaries	\$528,375.02	\$526,689.00	\$534,028.75
Employee Benefits	71,596.91	122,164.07	117,048.25
Research Support Services	31,623.54	39,277.52	47,898.12
Research Publications	24,812.74	28,263.20	29,686.59
Travel	52,026.56	42,777.71	47,816.80
Headquarters	124,229.65	97,602.17	80,869.02
Operating Expenses	36,589.34	42,465.17	50,146.15
Organization	37,313.45	34,063.43	32,094.87
Other	-	-	1,859.36
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$906,567.21</b>	<b>\$933,302.27</b>	<b>\$941,447.91</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$47,813.95</b>	<b>\$32,681.24</b>	<b>(\$48,452.01)</b>

\*Unaudited.



League Treasurer A. W. Riter (l), Retired Chairman & CEO, NCNB-Texas, Tyler and League Vice Chairman J. Sam Winters (r), Partner, Clark, Thomas, Winters & Newton



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# 1988 A Productive Year

Economic diversification is a vital key to Texas' future as the state continues to move from an agri-petroleum based economy to one that relies more heavily on retailing and services.

The League's 1988 research products were keyed to assisting state leaders to make decisions that would help to make that transition smoother.

## TAXATION

The state's basic tax structure has not changed in almost three decades since the first imposition of a sales tax in 1961; in many respects the state's tax policy is a mismatch to the changing economy.

A *Select Committee on Tax Equity* was created to make a thorough review of the state's tax structure. With the staff expertise in tax policy, it was natural that the League was asked to participate. Three reports were made to the committee:

- Tax Policy and Economic Development,
- Tax Structure and the Economy, and
- Property Tax - Basic Issues.

*Appraisal Practices and Tax Burdens: Texas Local Governments* -- the 7th edition -- detailed local government property tax appraisal practices. This report helps individual taxpayers -- most particularly business taxpayers -- to determine if their property is taxed equitably.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

Removing impediments to continued economic expansion is one of the keys to Texas' continuing to move forward. A select committee was created to study one such issue -- a workers' compensation insurance system that features high premiums and low statutory workers' benefits.

In addition to assisting in the overall study design, the League staff responded to the committee's request (with endorsements from Lt. Governor Hobby and House Speaker Lewis) to examine five specific areas included in the study: the current rate making system, competitive rate making, the use of a state fund, self-insurance, and the assigned risk pool.

*The very successful program of operational audits has been made possible only through the private-sector employees loaned to the program by member-firms of the Texas Research League. Managers of state agencies are now aware of the benefits to be gained from such audits and are most receptive to them.*

--Governor Bill Clements

*I would like to thank your organization for the invaluable help rendered to us in preparing for the task of reforming the Workers' Compensation System. Your study of the insurance issues surrounding Workers' Compensation ... has provided answers to questions many of us have had concerning insurance.*

--Bill Hobby  
Lieutenant Governor

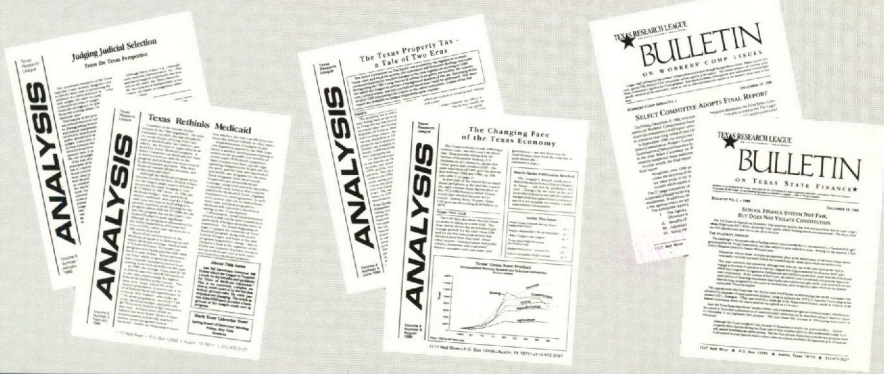
*I am writing to thank the League for the property tax presentations and paper ... It was an outstanding piece of work and shows why the League is the acknowledged expert in property taxation in this state.*

--Billy C. Hamilton,  
Executive Director, Select  
Committee on Tax Equity

## League Publications -- A Trusted Resource

**ANALYSIS**, the League's monthly publication serves both as a newsletter for League supporters, and as an outlet for disseminating the results of staff research.

**BULLETINS** provide brief updates on a variety of topics to keep readers informed on matters too timely to await the next **ANALYSIS** press date.





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**David W. Biegler**, Lone Star Gas Company, Dallas

**Merle L. Borchelt**, Central and South West Corporation, Dallas

**Thomas A. Bullock**, CRS/Sirrine Inc., Houston

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**Don W. Scoggins**, Texas Eastman Company, Longview

**Marvin Selig**, Structural Metals, Inc., Seguin

**William T. Slick, Jr.**, Houston

## PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE

No issue is more central to economic development than is a well-educated populace capable of effective participation in the new Texas as workers, consumers, taxpayers and informed citizens.

The public school finance system is under constitutional attack in the state courts as being unfair in providing equal educational opportunities to all the state's school children. A select committee was created to examine the finance system.

As one of the few repositories of school finance data, the League was able to provide valuable information and expertise to the committee. The League also developed a conceptual plan for achieving school finance equity that does not require additional spending. New dollars then could be targeted directly to areas that make a real difference in improving education.

## MEDICAID

Responding to the medical needs of less fortunate Texans can have direct payoffs not only in promoting a healthier citizenry, but also in reducing future spending requirements on health care, public welfare, education and imprisonment.

The rules governing the state-federal Medicaid program are changing, and Lt. Governor Hobby asked the League to examine the issues involved in expanding the program. In response, the staff prepared a series of reports that examined Medicaid expansion, physician participation and reimbursement, the role of alternative health care providers, and the impact of medical liability.

### Alvin A. Burger Memorial Intern Program

The League's intern program, a memorial to the League's first executive director, has three goals:

- to give participating students practical research experience,
- to give the League staff an opportunity to work with an elite group of potential League or government employees, and
- to expand the League's research capability.

Funding for the program, which is separate from the League's

operating budget, is provided by foundations. Current contributors to the program include the Brown Foundation, Houston; Davidson Family Foundation, Midland; Dodge Jones Foundation, Abilene; James R. Dougherty Foundation, Beeville; Alice Kleberg Reynolds Meyer Foundation, San Antonio; Sid Richardson Foundation, Fort Worth; Hatton Sumners Foundation, Dallas; and the Trull Foundation, Palacios.

# LOOKING AHEAD TO 1989

The League research program is built around an 18-month cycle that begins in odd-numbered years at the adjournment of regular legislative sessions. While the legislature is in session, the staff is held available to respond to the many information requests it receives. The Research Committee meets early in 1989 to set the next Research Agenda for the staff.

## Two-Year Student Retention Study Approved

All of the ingredients necessary to create an economic disaster for Texas are present in the state's public education system.

- Combine the following: a dropout rate as high as 45% for Hispanic and 34% for black students, lower achievement test scores for those who stay in school and graduate, and a higher dropout rate in college for disadvantaged students.
- Let these ingredients leaven for 20 years.
- Mix with a public school system where the majority of students are black or Hispanic.
- Bake in an economy that requires increasingly higher education levels.

That is a recipe for disaster.

A two-year League study to examine ways in which that disaster can be averted already has been approved by the Research Committee.

State tax policy and public school education finance are two topics that always have been at the top of the League's research agenda -- the first because of its obvious importance to the entire state, and the second because it is by far the largest consumer of tax dollars. Other topics are added to the League's agenda as staff resources are available.



Ample scholarly research has been done on dropout prevention, so the thrust of the League's efforts will be to identify and evaluate existing programs -- most particularly those that involve business participation -- which produce results. The study has four basic goals:

1. *To act as a catalyst for greater collaboration between public and private efforts to increase student retention in Texas.*
2. *To act as a catalyst for greater private sector involvement in student retention activities.*
3. *To evaluate Texas' student retention programs and to identify gaps in the state's efforts.*
4. *To develop a coordinated public awareness campaign.*

This ambitious and timely undertaking will be an addition to the League's usual research program, and \$344,500 (which allows some temporary staff expansion solely for this study) is needed in 1989-1990 to fund this study.



**League Staff:**

*Back row, left to right:* **Alan Barnes**, Senior Research Associate; **John Kennedy**, Senior Research Associate; **Bob Norwood**, Director of Research; **Augustin Redwine**, Research Analyst; **Herbert Griffin**, Staff Assistant

*Middle row, left to right:* **Todd Hicks**, Research Intern; **Jeff Cole**, Research Analyst; **Sarah Burka**, Research Librarian; **Patricia Matthews**, Executive Secretary; **Janet Beinke**, Research Analyst; **Wilburn French**, Director of Administration

*Front, left to right:* **Anne Dunkelberg**, Research Analyst; **Valerie Milburn**, Publications Manager; **Jennifer Elrod**, Research Intern; **Margaret White**, Executive Secretary

*Not pictured:* **Harold Sanders**, Research Associate



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#### •E. BRUCE STREET, Street Investment Co.

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•TONY A. MARTIN

•TOM SEALY, Senior Partner, Stubbeman, McRae, Sealy, Laughlin & Browder

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RAYMOND R. PREDDY, Publisher, Waco Tribune-Herald

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DAVID WOLVERTON, Chairman of Board & Chief Executive Officer, MBank-Wichita Falls

- Former League Chairman (Life Member)
- Elected Life Member

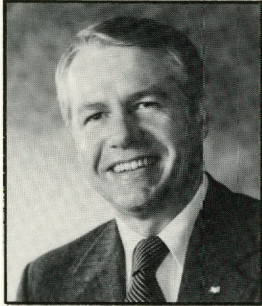


*Adams*

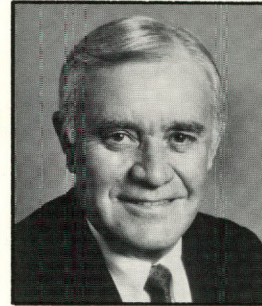


*Ballengee*

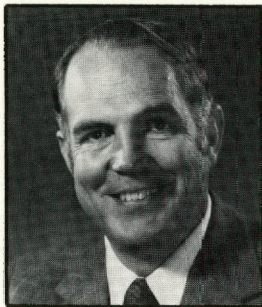
**1989  
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Committee\***



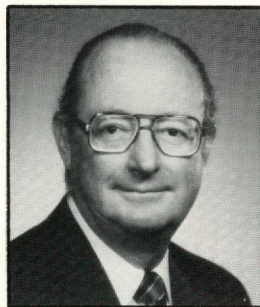
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*Farrington*



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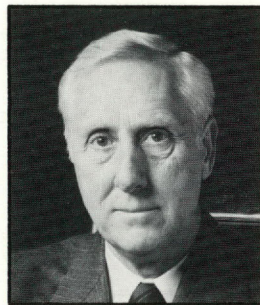
*Johnson*



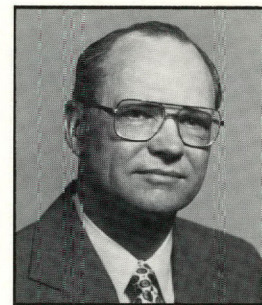
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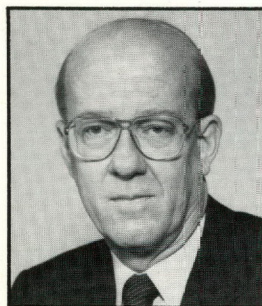
*Marsh*



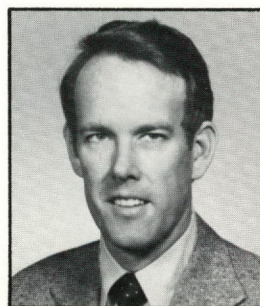
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*"Knowledge will forever govern  
ignorance: and a people who  
mean to be their own governors  
must arm themselves with the  
power which knowledge gives."*

*--James Madison*

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