

## **Promise grants bring needed hope**

### **Express-News Editorial Board**

The more than \$27 million in grants awarded to various projects on the city's East Side since the area was designated a federal Promise Zone in January are focusing much needed attention on an often-neglected community near downtown San Antonio.

As Express-News education writer Maria Lusia Cesar reported, the zone designation itself brought no tangible benefits to the East Side community, but it is helping cut red tape and earning grant applicants extra points in the competitive federal grant market.

Thus far, grants have been awarded to the San Antonio Independent School District, IDEA Public Schools, the Gervin Youth Center, San Antonio for Growth for the East Side and St. Philip's College, the Express-News reported.

Aimed at addressing the economic development, health care and education needs in an area with high rates of poverty, crime and unemployment, the Promise Zone has united a diverse group of organizations, nonprofits and schools in working toward a common goal.

The most recently announced grants are in addition to more than \$53 million in Promise and Choice Neighborhood grants awarded on the East Side to revitalize public housing, schools, upgrade infrastructure and aid in efforts to curb crime and drug abuse.

There is much optimism about the future of the East Side, but the work is just beginning. Pouring millions of federal grant dollars can help revitalize the blighted area that has seen little investment. But it will take more than money to get the job done.

The hard labor of making it a sustaining success and ensuring good stewardship of the funds granted to revitalize the East Side rests in the hands of the residents, business owners and leaders who live and work in this community.