

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**East Foundation’s Behind the Gates educational program gets new outdoor facility, financial support from Elliff Motors and others**

San Antonio, TX – April 1, 2021 – The East Foundation’s Behind the Gates outdoor education program will be getting much-needed new facilities thanks to the generous \$75,000 contribution of Lead Partner Elliff Motors, of Harlingen, as well as other supporters.

The East Foundation and its partners have provided natural resources education in classrooms to more than 30,000 students within the Rio Grande Valley, as well as hosted nearly 6,000 students outdoors (pre-COVID) on the Foundation’s El Sauz ranch near Port Mansfield. The Foundation also conducts educational programs on its San Antonio Viejo ranch near Hebbronville.

“The program has already had a huge impact on South Texas students and their teachers, and the demand from regional schools continues to grow,” said the East Foundation’s Director of Education Tina Buford. “We are seeking additional partners like Elliff Motors to help us educate thousands of new students from across the region who will gain vital understanding of the natural world, while also gaining valuable TEKS-aligned science, vocational and leadership skills critical to their future success.”

The foundation has set a goal of raising \$250,000 in partnership investments, in amounts from \$15,000 to \$50,000, as well as smaller individual donations, to construct the much-needed educational facilities at El Sauz. The \$75,000 Lead Partner gift from Elliff will allow for construction of the facilities to begin this Spring, including the construction of seven new educational pavilions joined by walking trails within the natural setting of the El Sauz ranch.

“We are very excited about partnering with the East Foundation to promote conservation and education for the communities we serve.” – Bill Elliff

Like the Foundation’s other ranches, the El Sauz is a working cattle ranch where the East Foundation partners with universities, agencies and other organizations on ranching and wildlife management research to benefit land stewards across South Texas and beyond.

“The lead partner donation by Elliff Motors communicates that the East Foundation and our partners in South Texas care about the conservation of our natural resources as well as our shared heritage of working and living on the land,” said East Foundation President and CEO Neal Wilkins. “Elliff Motors also understands the critical need for students in our region to develop the knowledge and skills to become future leaders for South Texas, and this partnership will benefit students and our natural resources for many years to come.”

Other partners for the project include Wildlife Systems, Inc., and the H. Yturria Family. In addition, the four members of the East Foundation Board of Directors have personally committed to support the project. We appreciate their gifts toward the ultimate \$250,000 fundraising goal.

For more information on the Behind the Gates fundraising effort, please contact Tina Buford, East Foundation Director of Education, at (956) 793-0785, or [tbuford@eastfoundation.net](mailto:tbuford@eastfoundation.net).

### **About the East Foundation**

The East Foundation promotes the advancement of land stewardship through ranching, science, and education. We manage over 217,000 acres of native South Texas rangeland, operated as six separate ranches in Jim Hogg, Kenedy, Starr, and Willacy counties. The lands were bestowed to the Foundation through the generous gift of the East family in 2007. To honor their legacy, we uphold their vision and values that were established more than a century ago.

### **About Elliff**

Since 1944, the Elliff family has been selling quality pre-owned vehicles through Elliff Motors. Since then, they have added Elliff Trailers, Elliff Polaris, Elliff Kubota and are also partners in Boswell Elliff Ford. They now have fourth generation family members involved in the day to day operations of all of their businesses. The Elliff family is proud of their South Texas heritage and pleased to support education that will instill that pride in future generations.

For more information on our work, visit [www.eastfoundation.net](http://www.eastfoundation.net).

### **Media Contact:**

James Powell, Director of Communications

210-430-4447

[jpowell@eastfoundation.net](mailto:jpowell@eastfoundation.net)

###