

Even university paychecks are bigger in Texas.

A new report from the **Chronicle** of Higher Education shows Texas college president and chancellor salaries leading national presidents' incomes as universities are giving their top officials pay raises across the country. Texas presidents and chancellors held three of the top 10 spots in the 2015-16 year.

University of Texas System Chancellor William McRaven took in the second-largest salary of a public college president or chancellor in the country last year at \$1.5 million.

RANKED: The most profitable Texas college sports programs in the state

His is among eight college CEO salaries in the U.S. that is \$1 million or above, including Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp, at about \$1.28 million, and Texas A&M University president Michael Young, at \$1 million.

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University of Houston President and Chancellor Renu Khator took in \$850,960, making her the 14th highest-paid president in the country. Last year, she ranked first with \$1.3 million.

Making \$1 million is a "new high water mark" for public university presidents, said **Dan Bauman**, a **Chronicle** of Higher Education database reporter who authored the report. The average salary was \$501,398, up 5.3 percent from the prior fiscal year, the data show.

The **Chronicle's** results show that the arms race for top-of-the-line university presidents isn't slowing anytime soon – particularly in Texas.

DATA: Texas colleges that pull the most students out of poverty

Even as universities here approached a legislative session that took schools to task for high spending, governor-appointed regents allowed presidents to take in big paychecks.

Fourteen Texas public higher education leaders – system chancellors and university presidents – were paid above \$500,000, according to this year's data. Regents said pay is competitive in the state.

McRaven's salary is entirely paid by private donations to the UT System, UT System Board of Regents chairman Paul Foster said in a statement.

"Our Chancellor is essentially the CEO of one of the largest and most complex organizations in the state of Texas and one of the largest systems of higher education in the country, and we believe his compensation is reasonable and justified. He is well recognized as a great leader and manager, and in my opinion, earns every cent," he said.

HOOK EM': University of Texas takes issue with Gene Simmons' devil horns' copyright claim

University of Houston System Board of Regents chairman Tilman Fertitta said in a statement that high salaries in Texas reflects "the high level of competition in Texas, the size of our universities and how seriously we take our commitment to supplying the workforce with the highest-quality graduates."

"Given the \$6 billion economic impact that UH alone has on the city of Houston and the amount of research dollars spent, I don't think anyone should be surprised at what it takes to recruit talented chief executives capable of innovating and managing billion dollar budgets," he said.

Texas A&M University System regent Phil Adams said in a statement that Sharp's use of public-private partnerships, the system's high research output and the developing campus in Bryan were examples of his accomplishments that merit high pay.

[Click through above to see which Texas college executives have the biggest paycheck.](#)

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