



# Student Trainees

Meet our student trainees and scholarship recipients! These 51 qualified students were selected from a pool of 164 applicants. Approximately \$850,000 in scholarships, which cover tuition and a living stipend, will be distributed to the students during the 2015–2016 academic year.



Scholarship recipients pose with UTEP President Dr. Diana Natalicio and the BUILD Leadership Team in front of the newly constructed Centennial Plaza.

## Majors and classification of our students:

Major	FR	SO	JR	SR	Total	Total %
Biochemistry	3	0	0	0	3	6%
Biological Sciences	3	3	2	0	8	16%
Cellular & Molecular Biochemistry	1	3	2	0	6	12%
Chemistry	2	0	0	0	2	4%
Computer Science	0	1	0	0	1	2%
Electrical Engineering	2	0	0	0	2	4%
Engineering Leadership	0	1	0	0	1	2%
Health Promotion	1	0	0	0	0	2%
Industrial Engineering	1	0	0	0	1	2%
Kinesiology	1	1	0	0	2	4%
Mechanical Engineering	7	2	0	0	9	18%
Microbiology	0	3	0	0	3	6%
Physics	1	1	0	0	2	4%
Pre-Pharmacy	0	1	0	0	1	2%
Pre-Science	1	0	0	0	1	2%
Psychology	3	1	2	1	7	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>

### FAST FACTS

#### ABOUT OUR TRAINEES

90%

Are Hispanic, 4% are non-Hispanic White & 6% are of another race/ethnicity

57%

Are female

# Welcome Orientation

The first class of BUILDing SCHOLARS scholarship recipients were officially recognized at the BUILDing SCHOLARS Welcome Orientation held on May 30 at the Tomás Rivera Conference Center on the UTEP campus. Over 100 students and parents were welcomed by more than 35 distinguished campus representatives, including UTEP President Dr. Diana Natalicio.

"It's important to remember this moment – that you started right here," Dr. Natalicio said as she spoke of the students' futures and of the significance of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded BUILD grant at UTEP. The students were gifted with embroidered BUILDing SCHOLARS laboratory coats and escorted to the new Centennial Plaza for a group picture with the president and members of the UTEP BUILD team.



Students and parents were briefed on the BUILD curriculum and activities by Drs. Sara Grineski and Osvaldo Morera, BUILD Principal Investigators (PIs), followed by encouraging words and advice from a student-faculty panel.



"Dream as big as you can, then go bigger. You really can do it," panelist Andre Fernando Perez-Orozco, a recent Bachelor of Science graduate and 2015 UTEP Top 10 Senior, said.

Other panelists included Dr. Edward Castaneda, professor, department of psychology; Dr. Eva Moya, professor, department of social work; Dr. Laura O'Dell, professor of psychology; Claire Wells, UTEP doctoral student; and recent UTEP graduate Alexander Balcázar.



The orientation also included a presentation about diversity in health-orientated fields by Dr. Lourdes Echegoyen, BUILD PI and director of the Campus Office of Undergraduate Research Initiatives, and an interactive parent-student session held both in English and Spanish. The goal of the session was to foster communication and support between parents and their students during the college years.



The event concluded with a luncheon and remarks by Associate Provost Dr. John Wiebe. "Everything you do is going to prepare you for your next chapter in life."

Congratulations and good luck to all of the BUILDing SCHOLARS awardees!



# Supermentor Program 2015

## Progress Report

This competitive program pairs UTEP and pipeline partner faculty with “all-star” faculty mentors from our research partners in an effort to strengthen ties between institutions and build faculty’s research skills and competitiveness for external funding.



Mentee

**Dr. Munder Zagaar**  
Texas Southern University  
*Pharmacy*

Dr. Zagaar applied for a grant offered by the Texas Alzheimer’s Research and Care Consortium.  
*(Chronic and Degenerative Disease Node)*



Mentor

**Dr. Ann Stowe**  
UT Southwestern  
*Neurology*



Mentee

**Dr. Binata Joddar**  
UT El Paso  
*Biomedical Engineering*

Dr. Jodaar submitted grant proposals to the American Heart Association, the Welch Foundation, and the NIH (Score SC2).  
*(Translational Biomedicine Node)*



Mentor

**Dr. Laura Suggs**  
UT Austin  
*Cellular & BME*



Mentee

**Dr. Veronica Gonzalez**  
El Paso Community College  
*Chemistry*

The team is pursuing grant opportunities for lab instrumentation. *(Environmental Health Node)*



Mentor

**Dr. Jeoung Soo Lee**  
Clemson  
*Bioengineering*



Mentee

**Dr. Guillermina Solis**  
UT El Paso  
*Nursing*

Dr. Solis is writing a proposal for a research study to address fall injuries.  
*(Chronic and Degenerative Diseases Node)*



Mentor

**Dr. Jane Champion**  
UT Austin  
*Nursing*



Mentee

**Dr. David Torres**  
Northern New Mexico College  
*Math & Physical Science*



Mentor

**Dr. Judy Cannon**  
University of New Mexico  
*Pathology*

Dr. Torres is continuing his work with Dr. Cannon through the Summer Sabbatical Program. Their ultimate objective is to write a grant proposal to the NIH (R03) or U.S. Army Office Biomathematics Program.  
*(Cancer Node)*

# SCALE-UP To Learn!



It's not the usual lecture setting, nor is it the traditional teaching approach – it's SCALE-UP.

SCALE-UP, which stands for Student-Centered Active Learning Environment with Upside-down Pedagogies, is an interactive “flipped classroom” where students work in teams to discuss and investigate the content that they've learned prior to class. During class time, the instructor clarifies any questions regarding the material and helps facilitate hands-on activities.

The creator of SCALE-UP and professor of physics at North Carolina State University, Dr. Robert Beichner, visited our state-of-the-art SCALE-UP room on June 5 to conduct a workshop titled, “SCALE-UP Innovation Space: Maximizing Use & Benefits Over Traditional Lecture Settings,” to further familiarize the BUILD team as well as the UTEP community with the SCALE-UP approach.

“It's hard to find another SCALE-UP space with this type of technology – you've got the Cadillac,” Dr. Beichner said of the facility. The renovation of the room was funded by the BUILDing SCHOLARS grant.

Research has shown that this type of learning environment improves students' problem solving skills, attitude and conceptual understanding, while reducing failure rates. It is no wonder why SCALE-UP is used at more than 150 institutions nationwide.

The BUILDing SCHOLARS research foundations and research-driven courses, BUILD-sponsored professional development workshops, and BUILDing SCHOLARS summer boot camps will all be hosted in the SCALE-UP Innovation Space, CCSB Room G.0706A.

# Faculty Summer Sabbatical

This fellowship matches five faculty members from UTEP and pipeline partner institutions with faculty from research partner institutions to collaborate on and conduct a 10-week research project. Congratulations to this summer's awardees!



**Dr. David Torres**  
Northern New Mexico College  
*Math & Physical Science*



**Dr. Judy Cannon**  
University of New Mexico  
*Pathology*

They are employing a genetic algorithm to identify a set of genes that are correlated with the progression of acute lymphoblastic leukemia into the central nervous system.  
*(Cancer Node)*



**Dr. Yok-Fong Paat**  
UT El Paso  
*Clinical Social work*



**Dr. Christine Markham**  
UTHSC-Houston  
*Behavioral Science*

They are examining the contextual effects of family, school, and neighborhoods on teens' risk and protective factors for sexual health and behaviors.  
*(Health Disparities Node)*



**Dr. Huan Xie**  
Texas Southern University  
*Pharmacy*



**Dr. Xiaohong Bi**  
UT Houston  
*Nanomedicine & BME*

Their objective is to develop a new type of nanoconstruct to achieve image-guided photothermal cancer therapy.  
*(Cancer Node)*



**Dr. Miguel Narvaez**  
Western New Mexico University  
*Kinesiology*



**Dr. Bijan Najafi**  
University of Arizona  
*Bioengineering*

They are studying the incidence of sport injuries and their long-term socio-economic effects. As part of the collaboration, they expect to produce at least one publication or presentation from this effort within a year of completing their research.  
*(Translational Biomedicine Node)*



**Dr. Lucas Gonzales**  
Northern New Mexico College  
*Nursing*



**Dr. Tracie Harrison**  
UT Austin  
*Nursing*

They are assessing the health literacy needs of Latinas with severe visual impairments.  
*(Health Disparities Node)*

## Supermentors 2016 Selected

Twelve faculty members from UTEP and BUILDing SCHOLARS partner institutions were recently selected for the 2016 BUILDing SCHOLARS Supermentor Program.

The six pairs of mentors and mentees include mentor Louis D. Brown, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth), and mentee Jennifer Sanchez, University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP); mentor William Yost, Arizona State University (ASU), and mentee Jaime Desjardins University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP); mentor Kristina Mena, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHSC-Houston), and mentee Carolina Chianelli, El Paso Community College (EPCC); mentor Cato T. Laurecin, University of Connecticut (UConn), and mentee Brenda Linnell, Northern New Mexico College (NNMC); mentor Mark Pagel, The University of Arizona (U of A), and mentee Karina Castillo, El Paso Community College (EPCC); and mentor Fernando Valenzuela, University of New Mexico (UNM), and mentee Ulises Ricoy, Northern New Mexico College (NNMC).

This marks the second year of the BUILDing SCHOLARS Supermentor Program.

## Annual BUILDing SCHOLARS Consortium Meeting

The 2015 BUILDing SCHOLARS Consortium Meeting is scheduled for October 9 at the Hilton Garden Inn, located adjacent to the UTEP campus, to plan the upcoming year of activities with our partner institutions.

Sessions include a UTEP BUILD student panel; available funding opportunities briefing; guidance on subcontracts and budgets; evaluation of BUILD programs; student and faculty recruitment; discussion of best practices for summer programs; and a recruitment/informal reception where UTEP BUILD students, as well as other local students from STEM-focused research programs, can learn more about summer and graduate programs at research partner institutions.

We will cover travel and accommodations for one representative per partner institution. For more information, contact Yoliet Vela Garcia, BUILDing SCHOLARS Administrative Assistant, at [yvela@utep.edu](mailto:yvela@utep.edu) or 915-747-8717.

# Our Partnership with NRMN

We have teamed up with the [National Research Mentoring Network \(NRMN\)](#). NRMN is a network of professionals, supported by the NIH, committed to assisting individuals from diverse backgrounds who are pursuing biomedical, behavioral, clinical, and social science research careers (collectively termed biomedical research careers) by facilitating mentoring relationships, as well as providing professional development opportunities during all career stages.

Register [here](#) to join the NRMNet community for access to these additional resources.



## News & Events

- **2015 – 2016 Seed Funding Program**

Applications and letters of intent are now being accepted. Click [\[here\]](#) for detailed information and to apply online. UTEP and BUILD pipeline partner institution faculty are encouraged to apply.

- **Travel Awards Program**

Applications are now being accepted. Click [\[here\]](#) for detailed information and to apply online. Affiliated UTEP faculty and postdoctoral personnel are encouraged to apply.

- **2015 Annual BUILDing SCHOLARS Consortium Meeting**

October 9 • Hilton Garden Inn • El Paso, Texas • Agenda TBA • Check our [website](#) for updated information as the date approaches.

## BUILDing SCHOLARS Newsletter

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