

# Project MALES Newsletter



Fall 2013

## Project MALES STAFF

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**Project MALES**  
is an initiative of the  
Division of Diversity and  
Community Engagement  
at UT-Austin.

## Project MALES Officially Launches the Texas Education Consortium for Male Students of Color



TEXAS EDUCATION CONSORTIUM  
*for MALE STUDENTS of COLOR*

The Texas Education Consortium for Male Students of Color (TECMSC), a new statewide network of school districts, community colleges and public universities, officially launched this summer. Based within the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) at UT-Austin, it is supported by three years of grant funding from the Greater Texas Foundation, TG,

and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The consortium plans to leverage the collective expertise and align existing male-focused programs among its 14 member institutions, and it seeks to advance research on best practices to improve educational outcomes for male students of color. The Consortium is unique because it engages all sectors of education with the participation of two K-12 school districts, eight community colleges and four public universities.

Dr. Victor Sáenz, associate professor at UT-Austin and executive director of Project MALES, will be leading the consortium. "We're committed to addressing this state policy imperative to improve the educational outcomes for male students of color," Sáenz said. Dr. Luis Ponjuan, associate professor of higher education administration at Texas A&M, serves as the consortium's chief external evaluator. Drs. Ponjuan and Saenz have collaborated extensively over the years on research focused on Latino males in education. They have identified a persistent gender gap in educational attainment and achievement. "This collaborative project allows the state's two leading research institutions to partner with institutions across the state to advance educational outcomes for Latino and African American males," Ponjuan said. For more information about the Consortium visit:

<http://www.txedconsortium.org>.

## Third Annual UT Latino Male Symposium a Success

The 2013 UT-Austin Latino Male Symposium was held on June 7, 2013 at the Student Activity Center at UT-Austin. The symposium provided an opportunity for administrators, researchers, educators, students and community members to discuss issues facing Latino male educational achievement. Project MALES began hosting this gathering two years ago to raise awareness of issues facing Latino male college students and to promote the exchange of ideas and programs that could be used to serve this population. This year's symposium drew over 200 individuals from across the state. The symposium consisted of a series of presentations from experts in higher education, as well as a featured panel with community Latina organization representatives.

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Dr. Luis Ponjuan, our keynote speaker, and Dr. Victor Saenz, Executive Director, Project MALES. Photo courtesy of DDCE.

## Third Annual UT Latino Male Symposium a Success *(continued)*

Presentations earlier in the symposium set the tone for the day, including a presentation from Dr. Victor Sáenz entitled, “Lessons Learned: Three Years of Research on Latino Males”, based on Project MALES research findings. The breakout sessions, featured Project MALES student mentors & mentees, allowed high school and undergraduate students involved with Project MALES to share their mentoring experiences. The keynote and concluding remarks summarized what had been discussed that day and synthesized the last three years of Project MALES achievements.

Participants expressed great enthusiasm and desire to learn more about the last three years of research on Latino Males. Our luncheon keynote speaker Dr. Luis Ponjuan received rave reviews, many stated feeling motivated and inspired by his words. His passion was evident and he engaged the audience, prompting one participant to suggest that a Project MALES be initiated at Texas A&M University in College Station. Overall, reviews of the symposium were very favorable and the participants were satisfied. Many expressed an interest in continuing to attend in forthcoming years as well as a desire to see a similar initiative developed across the state.



From L to R: Sarah Rodriguez, Sonia Castellanos, Lupe Morin, and Laura Donnelly Gonzalez. Photo courtesy of DDCE.

## Project MALES adds Staff, a New Mentoring Site, and receives Recognition

Project MALES continues to expand its reach and its impact in ways big and small. We are pleased to welcome Mike Gutierrez to our mentoring staff. He joins Jorge Segovia and Jose Del Real as our site coordinators working with our school sites through our mentoring partnership with Communities in Schools of Central Texas (CIS). Our partnership with CIS and the X-Y Zone program continues to yield great dividends, as we have expanded our mentoring efforts to John H. Reagan High School this fall semester while also continuing our collaboration with Lanier and Travis High Schools. We will also add a middle school pilot mentoring site this coming year.



From L to R: Sarah Rodriguez, Mike Gutierrez, Dr. Enrique Romo, Dr. Victor Saenz, Jose Del Real, Jorge Segovia, and Guillermo Martinez.  
Not pictured: Claudia Garcia-Louis. Photo courtesy of TG.

The Project MALES research staff has also added two talented UT-Austin doctoral students, Claudia García-Louis and Guillermo Martinez. They join our research coordinator, Sarah Rodriguez, in overseeing an ambitious research agenda that is four years in the making.

Finally, we are proud to report that Project MALES has received special recognition over the last few months. In June the Hispanic Scholarship Consortium of Central Texas awarded us the **2013 College Access Award**. Also, South Texas College—one of our 14 Consortium partners—launched their own version of a Project MALES mentoring program in the Rio Grande Valley this summer. We also continue to receive great media coverage across the state. These recognitions represent important ways that our research and mentoring work is getting acknowledged and validated. We continue to strive to improve and excel in all that we do, for the stakes are still high for the male students of color that we serve through our work.