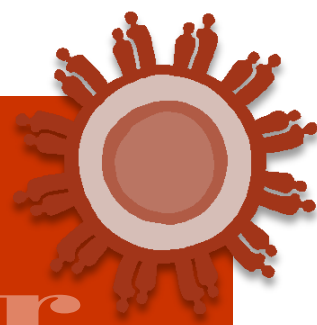


# Project MALES Newsletter



SPRING 2015

## Project MALES STAFF

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

## IMPACT Service Learning Course is Launched

We would like to update you on the progress we have made with our service learning course we introduced in our fall 2014 newsletter. During the fall 2014 semester Project MALES launched an innovative new service learning course called **Instructing Males through Peer Advising College Tracks (IMPACT)**. This one-unit course was offered through the College of Liberal Arts and was sponsored by the Longhorn Center for Civic Engagement in DDCE. The course was co-instructed by Dr. Sáenz, Dr. Romo and the entire Project MALES mentoring team. Our student mentors and work-study students met weekly to discuss and reflect on the experiences of young males of color in education. Course activities included selected readings on this topic, critical writing and reflection, and a final project where students presented on Latino male identity, Latino masculinities, and the role of family in the education of Latino males. This spring our student mentors will continue their coursework and work on mentor development as well as crafting a range of topics and activities focused on college and career pathways for our mentees. We are specially proud of our Project MALES student mentors for taking on this innovative new service learning course as a way to improve their mentoring skills and deepen their commitment to social change and civic engagement. The IMPACT course is emblematic of Project MALES' continued commitment to improving our mentoring efforts to benefit young men of color in our local community.



## Project (FE)MALES — A Spotlight on our Female Mentors

Over the course of our collaborations with internal and external partners, one of the frequent questions we get is, "Can female students get involved with Project MALES?" Our response has always been, "Yes, absolutely...almost half of our mentors are female." Borne out of our research work, we have learned that women can play a pivotal positive role in motivating young males of color to pursue and persist in higher education, be it mothers, sisters, friends, or partners. Some young men are more responsive to female mentors because they have license to be more vulnerable and perhaps forge lasting mentoring relationships with their mentor. Since we began our mentoring efforts, Project MALES has recruited and encouraged female students to become mentors and student leaders within our student organization. We asked a few to share their experiences about Project MALES and mentoring Latino males. Lidia Salazar who has been involved with Project MALES since she was a first-year student at UT Austin, shared that,

"This isn't strictly 'the boys' problem'; it affects everyone and everyone should do their part to ensure that the issues of educational injustice in society are being addressed. As a female mentor, I am simply a human being wanting to work towards the progress of humanity" (Lidia Salazar, Project MALES, Mentor & Student Council, Secretary).

Learn More about Lidia's and other Female Mentors' experiences with Project MALES by visiting our website at <http://ddce.utexas.edu/projectmales/>



## Project MALES Student Organization — On The Move

Last semester the Project MALES Student Organization had one of their most successful semesters to date. They hosted and participated in multiple events at UT-Austin and in the community. Highlights from the fall semester included the participation of the Project MALES student organization in the First Annual Transfer Student Social, volunteering at Austin's Pets Alive, a Project MALES bowling night at the Underground, and raising over \$800 throughout the semester to support community service projects.

Part of the Student Organization's mission is to bring awareness to the gender gap that exists in regards to the educational attainment for young men of color, specifically Latino males. The student members strive to fulfill the mission of the student organization by engaging the surrounding local community in different events and activities like those mentioned and many more.

Carlos Guerrero, Project MALES Student Council President, said that the success of the student organization during the fall semester was attributed to, "the council's dedication and passion...that's what made our events and semester successful. We all have great expectations and visions for the organization". Kudos to our student leaders and members of our Project MALES' Student Organization for their demonstrated commitment to leadership development, civic engagement, and community service.



*A few of Project MALES student mentors and staff at Austin's Feria Para Aprender, February 2015*

## Project MALES Alumni, "Where Are They Now?"



Over the years Project MALES has been fortunate to have many student leaders and mentors come through our ranks. In particular, our undergraduate mentors and work-study students work with young males of color at all levels of the educational pipeline in an effort to improve their overall educational attainment. In addition, Project MALES also aims to increase the year-to-year retention and graduation rates among its own members, including encouraging mentors and work-study students to pursue graduate or professional degrees. Recently, we caught up with two alum of our Project MALES student mentor program who are now pursuing their academic and professional goals.

### **Irene Acosta (LMSW)**

Irene was active with Project MALES during the 2012-2014 academic years. She is currently pursuing a career goal as a Children's Counselor, providing psychotherapy to children and adolescents at Roxane's House in the Hays and Caldwell Child Advocacy Center. Kudos to Irene as she continues her commitment to social change and public service in the Central Texas region. You make us proud!



### **Andreyez Alvarado**

Andreyez is proud to be one of the founding members of our Project MALES students mentors program. He became involved with Project MALES in Fall 2011 during our pilot year of our mentoring program, at Travis High School in Austin ISD. Andreyez is currently a second year masters students in the College & University Student Personnel Administration program, in the Program in Higher Education Leadership (PHLE) at the University of Texas Austin. We are so proud of Andreyez for his continuing commitment to his own educational advancement and pursuit of his career goals.

(Read Irene Acosta's and Andreyez Alvarado's full profile at <http://ddce.utexas.edu/projectmales/>).

### Contact Us:

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