

Peter Likins Inclusive Excellence Awards



Staff Recipient

Jacy Farkas

Jacy Farkas is the Training Director at the Sonoran University Center for Excellence in Disabilities (UCEDD). Sonoran UCEDD’s goal is to ensure full community participation by individuals with disabilities through interdisciplinary training, research, information dissemination, and the development of model programming to enhance and expand systems of support for people with disabilities. Ms. Farkas oversees the center's interdisciplinary pre-service preparation, continuing and community education programs. She also engages in community-based program development, research, and evaluation addressing the transition to adulthood for youth with disabilities, particularly those who experience and age out of foster care. Her interests lie in the intersection of disability and other historically marginalized populations, community inclusion and successful adult living, cultural and linguistic competency, and information accessibility. As Training Director, Ms. Farkas revised the syllabus for the core disabilities class to include the voices and perspectives of racial/ethnic and linguistic minorities with disabilities and their communities, increased the number of guest lecturers of color, and enhanced the course readings to include diverse perspectives. Many of her statewide disability projects involve UArizona students, thereby enhancing their knowledge about disability and diversity. For example, she is currently the principal investigator on a statewide needs assessment for transition-aged foster care youth. Ms. Farkas has also developed a collaborative partnership with the Tucson Zoo focused on the inclusion of youth with disabilities in volunteer and camp activities. Ms. Farkas is currently a doctoral candidate in Family Studies and Human Development at the Norton School of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Program Recipient

Petersen HIV Clinics and PAETC Arizona

University of Arizona’s Petersen HIV Clinics (PHC) provide HIV treatment and prevention services for over 1,000 patients in southern Arizona. Through a multi-disciplinary team approach, all patients receive high-quality medical care, medications, and support services. In addition to care coordination, PHC staff are skilled in navigating medical systems, insurance plans, and financial programs which assist with the cost of medical care for patients in need. PHC serve people from all socioeconomic backgrounds including men, women, and transgender individuals. The clinic endeavors to provide culturally sensitive services that prioritize vulnerable populations such as racial and ethnic minorities, refugees, LGBTQ communities, and those with behavioral health challenges. The Pacific AIDS Education and Training Center (PAETC) – Arizona provides HIV training and capacity building to health care professionals throughout Arizona. PAETC Arizona prioritizes health care organizations that serve minority and vulnerable populations such as Federally Qualified Health Centers, Indian Health Service sites, and health care professionals along the U.S.-Mexico border. PAETC Arizona works to address disparities in HIV infections through increased access to high-quality HIV prevention and care services. In addition to clinical training, PAETC Arizona offers training curricula that mindfully prepare the workforce for the diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities, and sexual behaviors seen in patient populations with the long-term goal of creating safer spaces for all to access non-judgmental and compassionate care.





Student Recipient

Da'Mere Wilson

Da'Mere Wilson is a Clinical Psychology doctoral student in the Department of Psychology. Prior to pursuing her doctorate, Da'Mere earned her B.A in Psychology from St. John's University, where she worked as a research fellow in the Collaborative Health Integration Research Program (CHIRP) studying discrimination and health disparities. As a Ronald E. McNair Scholar, Da'Mere first came to the University of Arizona as part of the UROC Summer Research Institute in 2017. Da'Mere has been involved in activism and social justice movements since the beginning of the 2014 #BlackLivesMatter movement. As a graduate student, Da'Mere is a member of the Psychology Department's Diversity Committee and helped to form the department's Graduate Student Wellness Committee.

Within these roles, she hopes to advocate for the continued advancement of women of color in psychology and to advocate for fair treatment of her fellow graduate students. Her research currently focuses on the interactions between social stress, grief, and health outcomes. Specifically, how experiences of discrimination, grief, and other stressors impact cardiovascular health within the African American community. As a Graduate Student Mentor for the Arizona Science, Engineering and Math Scholars Program, she's spoken on several graduate student panels at the University to provide advice on applying to graduate school. Da'Mere has also spoken to local low-income middle school students through the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) college readiness program. Additionally, she created an infographic that helps graduate students and faculty understand how to recruit undergraduate scholars of color into their laboratories.

Student Recipient

Maria Steinrueck

Maria is a fifth-year PhD student in Planetary Sciences. Her research focuses on the atmospheres of extrasolar planets. She simulates the climates of giant planets very close to their stars using supercomputers. She has been awarded the NASA Earth and Space Science Fellowship to perform ground-breaking research, in addition to numerous other grants and awards throughout her time at UArizona. Maria has been coordinating the Lunar and Planetary Laboratory Women (LPL Women) group since her first year at UArizona, whose events are open to members of any gender identification. She organizes regular luncheon discussions on topics affecting women and other underrepresented groups in Planetary Science, STEM, and academia. Topics have included Native Americans in STEM fields and the inclusion of people with disabilities in STEM. Maria has worked to advance the breadth of LPL Women, by working to change the name and goals of the group to include trans individuals, non-binary people, and other gender minorities. She has also increased efforts to make the luncheons a safe space for all by encouraging participants to take Safe Zone Training and respect all voices in the group. She led a team of fellow graduate students to launch a new "Department Life" section of the LPL website, containing a collection of resources related to departmental climate, equity, inclusion, non-discrimination policies, groups that support underrepresented groups in planetary science, and how to report problems. For two years, Maria organized the annual Lunar and Planetary Lab Conference where she implemented Safe Zone guidelines which gave speakers and attendees the opportunity to provide pronouns and name pronunciation.



Richard Ruiz Diversity Leadership Faculty Award

The Richard Ruiz Diversity Leadership Faculty Award honors Professor Ruiz's many contributions to making UArizona a better, more inclusive campus. In fact, he was awarded the Inclusive Excellence Award in 2009 for his tireless work supporting and advocating for diversity and cultural appreciation. Reflecting upon Professor Ruiz's decades of contributions to diversity leadership, former President Peter Likins noted his "exceptional ... devotion to the UA diversity programs and their underlying values."



Faculty Recipient

Dr. Duarte Diaz

Dr. Duarte Diaz joined the University of Arizona School of Animal and Comparative Biomedical Sciences (ACBS) faculty as an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in 2015. Dr. Diaz holds a M.S. and a Ph.D. in nutrition and toxicology from North Carolina State University. As the dairy extension specialist, Dr. Diaz provides relevant and current extension programs to the dairy producers of Arizona. This includes educational activities that are broad-based in nature, but specifically impact decision-making ability at the farm level. It also includes research and graduate programs that help answer relevant questions in the industry. He developed an Extension program entitled Arizona Dairy Farm Training which trains Arizona dairy farm employees, 95% of whom are Hispanic, in their native language. His efforts to address the safety and training of the Hispanic workforce in Arizona dairies carries out UArizona's efforts to improve diversity and inclusiveness beyond campus boundaries and into the communities our Land Grant mission requires we serve. Dr. Diaz continues to expand his extension programs in labor education and is currently developing a multi-national agreement to do in-country trainings and service to meet the extensive needs of the dairy industry in Arizona, Idaho, and Mexico. This program has the potential to transform and/or redefine agricultural immigration regarding the much-needed labor force. Dr. Diaz has also contributed to a more inclusive campus by helping non-native English-speaking graduate students achieve their academic goals. He understands that many underrepresented students lack confidence in their own ability to succeed and often need just one person to express belief in them and provide mentoring and support. Furthermore, Dr. Diaz is contributing to a collective effort to expand the existing UArizona extension personnel who are "BQA Certified Trainers" around the state. In the last year, the diversity of trainers has significantly increased in number, now including the majority of the Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program tribal agents and several new county agents who are women. Dr. Diaz has given over 50 invited presentations around the world and has published over 70 articles in scientific journals, proceedings and popular press magazines. In 2005, Dr. Diaz served as editor of a publication that focused on the applied impact of mycotoxins on agriculture titled "The Mycotoxin Blue Book" (Nottingham University Press). The book has been translated to Spanish, Russian and Chinese. It is considered an important reference on the subject.

