

The Peer Leader



PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

The Peer Leader

July 2021

Issue No. 13 Contact: info@pltlis.org

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Message from the President



Dear PLTLIS Community,

What a delightful virtual conference we held last month! A big thank you to all the participants who attended, and to the Conference Committee for organizing a great conference. Even if you were unable to join us for our virtual conference, the Society has many more opportunities to learn about, and to partake in our activities. In this issue of *The Peer Leader*, there are invitations to participate in the Research Committee, serve as a Moderator for the Online Forum, and contribute to the Inaugural issue of *Advances in Peer-Led Learning*. We invite you to visit our growing collection of PLTL workbooks at our online store and keep an eye out for upcoming PLTLIS virtual workshops and other activities, including next month's *Open House*.

New members are always welcomed on our committees, so if you are interested in participating at a higher level within the Society, email us: Secretary@pltlis.org

And do you have a news item or information that you would like to share with the PLTL community in the *Peer Leader* newsletter? Contact us at info@pltlis.org!

Enjoy your summer!

Milka Montes

University of Texas Permian Basin

President, 2021-2023

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Deadline Approaching for Publication in Inaugural Issue of Advances in Peer-Led Learning!

Submit by Monday, August 9

It's not too late! Contribute to the Inaugural Issue of Advances in Peer-Led Learning (APLL)!

A new peer-reviewed journal published by the Peer-Led Team Learning International Society, APLL is an online journal that solicits original articles on research, evaluation, and instructional practices related to peer-facilitated models of learning. APLL encourages the inclusion of content from all academic disciplines and all levels of education. The goal of the journal is to encourage practitioners to reflect and share peer-facilitated models of learning. Manuscripts are not limited to submissions from colleges and universities.

An Editorial Committee will review authors' manuscripts and authors will be provided with informative feedback. The inaugural issue of the APLL journal will be published in Fall 2021, marking the **tenth Anniversary** since the formation of the Peer-Led Team Learning International Society.

For guidelines and further information go to: <https://journal.ptlis.org>

To contact the editorial team with any questions you may have, email us: journal@ptlis.org

Join the Research and Evaluation Committee:

Collect, Analyze, and Report Data for Trends in PLTL

Are you interested in educational research? Program evaluation? The Research Committee welcomes interested peer leaders, alumni, faculty and staff to join our research and evaluation efforts.

The Research Committee's purpose is to examine major themes in educational research, evaluation, and Peer-Led Team Learning. The Committee's functions include collecting, analyzing, and reporting results of research areas such as Retention trends and Sense of Belonging. Fostering collaborations across institutions will be essential to the Society's efforts in furthering research and evaluation of peer-led learning in teams. Research collaborators will contribute to improving the breadth, rigor and robustness of collected data. The results will provide research-based assistance to campus programs and allow cross-institutional analyses.

Join our efforts by contacting us: secretary@ptlis.org. We look forward to hearing from you and collaborating in the near future!

Searching for PLTLIS Forum Moderators

Want to discuss issues and questions of practice for PLTL? In search of the perfect position to add a little something extra to a resume?

The Society seeks individuals to moderate its Online Forum. PLTL practitioners from around the world publish their findings, share their strategies for implementation, and help develop the model's practices. Working in conjunction with the Society's Research Committee, the Forum team of Peer Leaders and interested practitioners will moderate questions of practice, comparing practice with theory, and expand the discussion online regarding papers featured in the *Peer Leader*, the PLTLIS newsletter. The Forum moderator team members will encourage discussion and insight about the research and its applicability to enhance the many facets of practice. The time commitment would be minimal and the experience invaluable! To find out more, contact secretary@pltlis.org.

Peer Leaders' Experiences

Peer Leader from University of Texas at El Paso Publishes in The ADVANCE Journal
[<https://www.advancejournal.org/>]

Vanessa L. Rodriguez



Peer Leader, General Chemistry, University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)

Major: Cellular and Molecular Biochemistry, Minor in Nutrition

My manuscript has finally been published! You can find it here: <https://www.advancejournal.org/article/24824-general-chemistry-peer-led-team-learning-pltl-program-at-the-university-of-texas-at-el-paso-utep-for-fall-2020> (<https://doi.org/10.5399/osu/ADVJRN.2.3.12>)

I have been a General Chemistry I Peer Leader for one year at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) – a large Latinx university located at the border between the United States and Mexico, and it has truly been an enriching and eye-opening experience.

As a student in my first Chemistry course, my workshop group and Peer Leader were a valuable resource that allowed me to build a strong foundation. This prepared me for upper-level classes and ultimately my career. Because of my experience, and this program's ability to empower and prepare students, especially those who are Latinx, I decided to become a Peer Leader in the Fall of 2020, right when there was a shift to virtual learning. The long periods of time spent in front of the computer, the isolation, and added stressors that resulted from quarantine and the pandemic were circumstances that both my

students and I experienced, and which took a toll on us. Throughout the semester, I became more analytical of students' conversation and my own experiences and implemented solutions that I would have liked to see in my own classes. I also saw how motivated other Peer Leaders and their students were to succeed despite these unprecedented times. I have become aware of the struggles and determination of my peers which has motivated me to become a better Peer Leader and person overall.

At the end of each semester, Peer Leaders at UTEP write a reflection essay where they describe their experiences: what they have learned, and what they would like to implement in the future. After my first semester, I expressed just how much my own students had taught me and how the shift to virtual learning affected my Latinx community in and outside of university. I was extremely proud of the resilience and adaptability of the program and students despite the turmoil brought forth by COVID-19. Writing this paper was encouraged by Dr. Becvar and others and they suggested that I submit my essay to the ADVANCE journal so that others may be aware of my experience and be as uplifted as I have been this past year.

Peer Leader from University of Texas at El Paso Wins Scholarship to First Class of New Dental School

Paulette Ramirez



Alumna, Peer Leader, General Chemistry, University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)

Major: Chemistry

I graduated with a Chemistry degree from the University of Texas at El Paso in 2018. Dentistry has been my dream since middle school, so since my graduation I worked my way to apply. This year, I'll be joining the Inaugural Dental Class of 2025 at Woody L. Hunt School of Dental Medicine. I was awarded a scholarship from the GECU credit union that will be contributing to my tuition for the dental program.

When the Dean and the Senior Director of Admissions met with me virtually through Zoom, they told me that my selection was based on the letters of recommendations that had submitted with the application.

All the experiences I've gained since I began at UTEP have driven me to succeed to the place that I'm standing right now. However, working as a Peer Leader was the first exposure I had to a job and professional growth. I will never forget this experience as the PLTL program has taught me a lot, but the most important factor was that it showed me the basics on how to become a leader. I participated in several projects such as editing the workbook and worked on other activities to support future students' generations. After the peer leading experience, I continued growing and adding more abilities to my knowledge, yet everyone I've been around has noticed my leadership skills. I'm very thankful for the opportunity I had back in 2015 on being part of an amazing team that not only helped general chemistry students pass the course, but also shape future professional leaders to succeed in life.

Hunt School of Dental Medicine celebrates completion of Texas Tech Dental Oral Health Clinic; \$323k GECU Foundation gift in support the Dean's Excellence Fund and student scholarships during the ribbon cutting for the Texas Tech Dental Oral Health Clinic on Tuesday, June 22.

The event celebrated the completion of construction of the public clinic, which will serve as the clinical arm of the new dental school.

[For more information about the school, click here.](#)



1 - https://epherald.sfo2.digitaloceanspaces.com/2021/06/210622_DentalClinic_RC_PRESS_003-scaled.jpg