

# June 2022



PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

## The Peer Leader

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- **Jobs Opportunities in Chicago**
- **Contest Winners from 2022 Conference**
- **Profiles: Peer Leader Representative from UTPB; Peer Leader from UHD**
- **Tell me a Joke!**

## Message from the President

Dear PLTLIS Community,

As an outcome of this year's conference, we are excited at the prospect of new collaborations and growth with existing and new PLTL programs. For the first time held in hybrid format, this year's conference hosted over 150 participants - 85 in person at beautiful Washington University in St. Louis, and 65 remotely - from 28 institutions representing 13 states and two countries, coming from as far away as London, England and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

This issue of *The Peer Leader* shares updates from the conference: job opportunities, the winners of the three contests, and even some jokes. The Peer Leaders – both in person and remote - at the conference nominated four colleagues and elected one to serve as a member of the Board of Directors for two years.

As we enjoy the summer months, I invite you to consider your involvement with PLTL and the Society. In the next issue, we will share updates of committee activities and hope that you will consider contributing your experience and expertise.

We are delighted that Sofia Delgado, formerly a Peer Leader Representative and now a Board member, is now the Associate Editor of this newsletter. She contributed several of the items, and is working with the current Editor, AE Dreyfuss. Email sent to [newsletter@pltlis.org](mailto:newsletter@pltlis.org) goes to Sofia's attention. We are grateful to Thomas Pitzer, at Florida International University, who publishes and sends out the newsletter.

Please visit our website at [www.pltlis.org](http://www.pltlis.org) to find a trove of resources, and email us to [info@pltlis.org](mailto:info@pltlis.org) with any inquiries.

Enjoy your Summer!



Milka Montes

President, Board of Directors

[WWW.PLT LIS.ORG](http://WWW.PLT LIS.ORG)

## Jobs Opportunities in Chicago

Looking for a position where your PLTL experience is an advantage? Two positions are open at Dominican University near Chicago, Illinois. For details, check out these postings:

*Coordinator of Academic Success for STEM*

<https://www.dom.edu/jobs?gnk=job&gni=8a7887ac80d90b86018124d4f1d90aaa>

*Peer-led Team Learning (PLTL) Coordinator*

<https://www.dom.edu/jobs?gnk=job&gni=8a7885a880d90b51018120d230707699>

## Contest Winners from the 10th Annual Conference

Thank you all for helping to make the first-ever PLTLIS hybrid conference a success! It was exciting to see so many PLTL Practitioners in person and even more amazing to see everyone interact on the Whova app. To increase the interaction of participants on Whova, the Conference Planning Committee held three competitions: the Community Leaderboard, the Photo Contest, and the Photo Caption Contest. We want to heartily congratulate the winners: Free registration to the 2023 PLTLIS conference!

## Community Leaderboard

The Community Leaderboard awarded points for interacting with the community board, which allowed participants to both pose and answer questions with other participants in the conference. There was a total of 23 topics on our community board! Participants introduced themselves in “Break the Ice!” and gave each other a good laugh in various “Tell me a Joke!” topics. Everyone was active on the community board, but nobody interacted as much as our Community Leaderboard winner, Marice Diaz!



Marice joined us remotely from Miami Dade College in Miami, Florida and was able to earn a total of 27,900 points on the Community Leaderboard by the end of the conference. Congratulations, Marice!

## Photo Contest

The PTLIS Tenth Annual Conference was a picture-perfect event, and we thank you all for helping us capture it and sharing it! There were many pictures shared for all to see, capturing unforgettable moments from both in-person and remote participants; we even had furry friends join the fun!



The most memorable picture uploaded to the Whova app, by popular vote, was Redwan Shahid’s picture from Friday’s reception. In the picture, Redwan (front right) is sitting with Peer Leaders from Washington University in St. Louis and The University of Texas at El Paso. Redwan joined us from Queen Mary University of London in London, England and clearly took the networking spirit to heart. Congratulations, Redwan!

## Photo Caption Contest

What better way to describe all our picture-perfect moments than with a fun caption? Many of you took this task to heart, but only one could be victorious. The conference gave everyone a chance to network with PLTL practitioners from 13 states and two countries, but none took this task as seriously as Ashley Schuman from our host campus, Washington University in St. Louis, in St. Louis, Missouri! Ashley spent time during the conference to prove that birds of a feather stick together and won the caption contest with the caption, "Taking time to flamingle." The picture that matches the caption features Ashley with Lisa Kuehne and a pink-feathered friend. Congratulations, Ashley!



1 - "Taking time to flamingle"

## Profile: Peer Leader Representative (2023-2025)



## Reagan Hudson

Peer Leader, University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB)

Odessa, Texas

The end of another conference brings with it the election of a new Peer Leader Representative to the PLTLIS Board of Directors. This year, Peer Leaders had the opportunity to meet in person once again as well as remotely, and select one of their peers to represent their visions and opinions as PLTLIS continues to grow. The Peer Leader who has been entrusted with this task for the next two years is Reagan Hudson from the University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB). Reagan will join current Peer Leader Representative Kaleigh Love from the University of Texas El Paso (UTEP).

Reagan was born and raised in Gardendale, Texas, a small community near Odessa. She graduated from UTPB in December 2021 with a dual degree in Chemistry and Biology and is currently a graduate student studying Biology at UTPB. She also is conducting research on hydrogels against bacteria growth.

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*Peer Leader, University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB)*

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Reagan's involvement in the PLTL program at UTPB started in August 2020 when she was encouraged by Dr. Chao Dong and Dr. Milka Montes to apply to be a Peer Leader. She now works as the PLTL Coordinator, facilitating the connection between Peer Leaders and professors. She has also contributed to her campus' PLTL program by assisting with training of new Peer Leaders and facilitating the merging of the UTPB Chemistry Club and the PL program to enhance the impact of both organizations. She was also instrumental in creating the beautiful conference bookmarks our in-person attendees received as a welcome gift.

As the newest Peer Leader representative, Reagan looks forward to helping expand the PLTL model. She believes that establishing more PLTL programs in more colleges and universities would be beneficial to more students, and she wants to "help with making PLTLIS the best it can be."

## Profile: Peer Leader from University of Houston Downtown: A Family Tradition

Editor's Note: In *The Peer Leader*, #14 (September 2021; <https://pltlis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/September-2021.pdf>), the University of Houston Downtown's longstanding program was profiled, including three Peer Leaders. Nick Huynh was inadvertently not included. He and his three colleagues were part of the amazing "Tech Support Team" at the 2022 Conference. That Team was a collaboration of Peer Leaders from the University of Texas at El Paso, the University of Houston Downtown, and Washington University in St. Louis, the host, making the hybrid event a huge success!



## Nick Huynh

Peer Leader, University of Houston-Downtown (UHD), Houston, Texas

Major: Chemistry

This is my second year of being part of the Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) Project at the University of Houston-Downtown. More specifically, I've been a Peer Leader in the Freshman Seminar course for two semesters. My experience with being a Peer Leader has been a positive one where I am able to meet new and unique individuals and create strong bonds with them.

The process of becoming a Peer Leader, however, was not easy by any means. Going through the process of training sessions that focused on teamwork and leadership-building has been rigorous in addition to its being virtual. But while the journey has been bumpy, it's been rewarding as well. Not only does the training I receive benefit my Peer Leader experience, but it also has translated to other roles such as a Peer Leader in the Collaborative Learning Community Center (CLCC), peer mentoring and even my personal life. The big question is: Why I would want to become a Peer Leader in the first place? The answer to that question can be found in my freshman year.

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*The process of becoming a Peer Leader, however, was not easy by any means.*

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The first time I encountered Peer Leaders was during the START program in fall of 2019, a pre-COVID time in which the world was in much better condition and classes were face to face. The START program was an event that the Scholars Academy offered. The Scholars Academy is an academically competitive scholarship program in the College of Science and Technology at UHD, that promotes scholarship and student success for undergraduate students majoring in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). The general objective of the START one-week program is to create bonds between freshmen students by having them overcome obstacles. While this task should have been an arduous one since the concept of complete strangers collaborating with one another is a tall order, Peer Leaders are that bridge to bring people together. Thus, while my Peer Leader was there for academic help, what

he really excelled in was making every single one of us feel at ease with being ourselves in an unfamiliar environment. Amazingly, our group has persevered and stayed together due to the strong bonds we have forged along the way.

I am very glad to know that I am a part of a prestigious legacy at UHD as my mother, an aunt and an uncle were all SA members and served as Peer Mentors and Peer Leaders.

Subsequently, it was the realization that I wanted to be a Peer Leader, but not just any peer leader. While the general notion of academic grades is that it is considerably significant, will the “A” I get in chemistry be as substantial in ten or twenty years? Or will the connections I’ve made and the friends I’ve gathered continue for that long or even longer? The answer is clear. Consequently, what I hope to achieve is to create a long-lasting impact in others much like my Peer Leader did for me. I am striving to be that inspiration and create as many ties with others as I can.

Hence, that is my experience of being part of PLTL as well as the reason why I’ve wanted to become a Peer Leader. The concept of bringing people together toward a common goal and being able to see the incredible effects when we, as a community, work as a whole is when we shine the brightest.

Many thanks to Professor Mitsue Nakamura and the UHD Scholars Academy for their continuous support and encouragement.

### [Connect on Social Media!](#)

PLTLIS is proud to connect past and present Peer Leaders and all who are interested in Peer-Led Team Learning. What is happening at your campus? What opportunities do you know about where peer leading would be a valuable attribute? *Follow* and *like* us on Instagram and Facebook:

**Instagram:** [@pl\\_tl\\_is](#)

**Facebook:** [Peer-Led Team Learning Society](#)

### [Contribute to the Peer Leader!](#)

Do you have news or opportunities share with the PLTL community? Send news items, story suggestions, and updates from your campus Peer-Led Team Learning program to [newsletter@pltlis.org](mailto:newsletter@pltlis.org).

*“Tell Me a Joke!”*



## Jose Collazo

Peer Leader, University of Texas Permian Basin, took the initiative to create a thread of Biology jokes. His opening contribution:

Question: What do you call a scientist who studies the ghosts of pets?

Answer: I don't know...spooky?

Jose's Answer: A boo-ologist :)

Question: Why didn't anyone want the biologist's new book?

Answer: 'Cuz it had too many problems?

Jose's Answer: It was a hard cell

Monica Franco posted:

Question: What do you call a biochemical compound with an attitude?

Answer: A-mean-o acid

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