

# PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

# 2023

## ELEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Hybrid Event

**Wednesday-Saturday | May 31-June 3**

Strengthening Diversity, Equity,  
and Inclusion through  
Sustainable PLTL Programs

Hosted by University of Houston-Downtown  
Houston, Texas



# **PEER-LED TEAM LEARNING INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY**

## **Vision, Mission, and Goals**

### **Vision**

Our vision is that the Peer-Led Team Learning is integral to excellent education practice.

### **Mission**

Our mission is to foster student learning through peer-led teams by supporting practitioners and institutions.

### **Goals**

To achieve our mission and vision we will transform formal education by:

1. Training practitioners and students
2. Establishing and maintaining an international organization
3. Disseminating content, research, and best practices
4. Supporting PLTL Programs across disciplines/ departments/ campuses
5. Examining and addressing hindrances to adoption
6. Providing ideas for PLTL implementation
7. Supporting institutional strategic plans through PLTL implementation

**Strengthening Diversity, Equity, and  
Inclusion through Sustainable PLTL  
Programs**

**Advocacy, Networking, Resources**

# **WELCOME FROM LOREN J. BLANCHARD**

**President, University of Houston-Downtown**

Welcome to the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) International Society's conference. As President of the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD), I am proud that our university is host of this important meeting, bringing together leaders of Peer-Led Team Learning across our nation.

Among those leaders are two of our very own faculty members, Dr. Mary Jo Parker, Executive Director of UHD's Scholars Academy, and Mitsue Nakamura, lecturer in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. Their hard work and dedication to PLTL pedagogy has resulted in notable progress since UHD last hosted this conference in 2013. Since then, UHD has formed a PLTL student organization, made workshops available for an additional seven courses, developed online workshops, and engaged PLTL leaders in undergraduate research. Further, investigations of the trainability of high school peer leaders, research that has potential to increase college readiness, are underway.

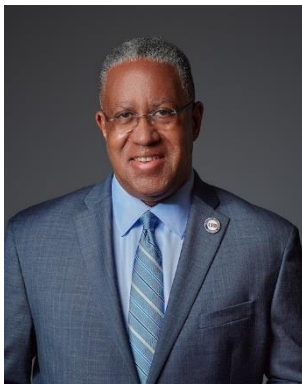
Here at UHD, we are committed to enhancing student success and creating dynamic academic environments through the implementation of evidence-based pedagogical strategies. High-impact, student-centered practices are key to students' mastery of difficult concepts, such as those often presented in STEM-related courses. As an instructional model, PLTL optimizes learning by providing training and logistical support for weekly peer-led problem-solving workshops. The dynamic learning environment created by these workshops nurtures students to their fullest potential. Under the watchful guidance of faculty members, both trained peer leaders and the students under their guidance develop the critical thinking, problem-solving, communicating, and collaborating skills necessary to developing readiness for successful entry into the complex workforce.

# WELCOME FROM LOREN J. BLANCHARD

**President, University of Houston-Downtown**

Whether you are here as a presenter or attendee, thank you for joining our UHD family for this year's conference. I applaud your efforts to implement such an impactful pedagogical approach and support your vision of continuing the research, refining the pedagogy, and expanding PLTL across disciplines. I look forward to the additional contributions you will undoubtedly make to secondary and higher education – one successful student at a time.

Sincerely,



**Loren J. Blanchard, Ph.D.**  
President, University of Houston-  
Downtown

# WELCOME TO THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PLTL PRACTITIONERS!

Dear Esteemed Participants,

It is with immense pleasure and genuine excitement that I welcome you all to the Eleventh Annual Conference, taking place in the picturesque setting of The University of Houston Downtown. Whether you're joining us here on campus or tuning in virtually, your involvement, insights, and contributions are invaluable to this conference. It is the confluence of diverse minds that brings forth the potential to initiate meaningful change and progress.

This year, we are centering our discussions around the critically pertinent theme "Strengthening Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion through Sustainable PLTL Programs." It is our firm belief that leveraging diverse perspectives, ensuring equitable opportunities, and fostering an inclusive environment will contribute significantly to creating lasting, sustainable changes in our educational and professional ecosystems. We are incredibly honored to welcome our distinguished keynote speaker, Athena Sherman, an individual whose work has consistently epitomized our theme. Athena's insights will no doubt ignite thought-provoking discussions, inspire transformative ideas, and provide us with invaluable guidance on our path towards a more inclusive and equitable society.

Moreover, we eagerly anticipate the wealth of knowledge our panelists bring to the table. These distinguished individuals will share their experiences and perspectives on some of the most exciting topics within our theme. Each one of you, participants, speakers, and panelists alike, forms a critical piece of this intricate puzzle of diversity and inclusion. We invite you all to listen, learn, and engage in these discussions actively. Ask challenging questions, provide innovative ideas, and most importantly, utilize this platform to learn from one another, fostering connections that reach far beyond these conference walls.

# WELCOME TO THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PLTL PRACTITIONERS!

We are confident that this conference will be a vibrant exchange of ideas, a place of intellectual growth, and a catalyst for meaningful action. The road to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive future starts here, and it starts with each one of us.

Thank you for your participation in this important endeavor. We look forward to a fruitful and inspiring conference.

Best Regards,



**Milka Montes**  
President, PLTLIS (2021-2023)

# CONFERENCE INFORMATION

## Tips For a Great Conference Experience

PLTLIS is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all meeting participants. Your participation in promoting such an environment will include:

- ✓ Ensuring that any personal electronic device is turned to silent mode or set to vibrate
- ✓ Engaging with the presenters during the time set up for interaction and discussion
- ✓ Staying in a room once the presentation has started
- ✓ If you choose to leave a room, do so with minimal noise and disruption so other participants' attention can be given to presenters

The conference organizers and members of the Tech Team will be working on the technical aspects of conducting a conference in hybrid format. To make sure that the conference experiences for both in-person and virtual participants are maximized, capturing, streaming, uploading or re-broadcasting any images, sounds and videos from the conference by participants other than the Tech Team members is prohibited.

Please respect a presenter's request not to copy, take pictures, or take screenshots of presentations, Q&A or any chat room activity that takes place onsite or in a virtual space.

PLTLIS follows guidelines enunciated in federal Title IX statutes. Please abide by these so that all participants, in person and virtual, share this collaborative experience.

For comments or questions, please contact [President@pltlis.org](mailto:President@pltlis.org)

## Share Your Conference Experience

We are excited to see what you will learn during your time at the eleventh annual conference! To share your experience, and to see what others are up to, post with the hashtags #PLTLIS2023 and #PLTL be sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn!

**Facebook:** Peer-Led Team Learning Society     **Instagram:** @pl\_tl\_is  
**LinkedIn:** Peer-Led Team Learning International Society

# CONFERENCE INFORMATION

## Using the WHOVA Platform

The hybrid Conference will be presented via the WHOVA Platform. Understandably, there is much information to examine in order to fully utilize the platform. Since this year's conference will be in person and online, participants will access schedules, event descriptions, and other features through Whova.

Where can I find the agenda? Am I in the right session? Where can I network? Thanks to WHOVA, you won't need to worry about these issues because they will all be available on one platform. Presentations, Networking, Direct Messaging, are all possible by using the WHOVA interface. Conference registrants will be sent an invitation to link to the WHOVA platform prior to the conference, with the subject line: Access to WHOVA and PLTLIS Conference. Use the information to set up and access the WHOVA web and/or mobile apps.

You will also need access to ZOOM if you are attending virtually and add lots of enthusiasm for the World of Peer Leading! If you are presenting (in person or virtually) a member of the Conference Tech Team will be helping you to ensure that anyone attending can enjoy your presentation.

## What Happens After I'm Done Presenting?

Attend presentations of your choice. Some presentations are in-person or remote only, while others are livestreamed, offered in-person and virtually at the same time. There is a variety of content for you to enjoy. There are many presentations, keynote workshops and talks, opportunities for networking, and even contests happening during the conference. To satisfy your thirst for knowledge of Peer-Led Team Learning, attend other presentations to learn more about what Peer Leaders and practitioners are doing!

Come to the Conference Networking Sessions to talk to others about their interests. Just attended a presentation that you enjoyed? Reach out using the Direct Messaging feature to set up a meeting without ever having to leave WHOVA! There is plenty to do during this conference so take advantage!



# A SHORT GUIDE TO PLTL

New to Peer-Led Team Learning? We invite you to scan the QR Code below for a quick overview of the PLTL model. To see the model in action, we recommend you attend the pre-conference workshop.

## *A Short Guide to PLTL*



# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Pre-Conference Workshop

**Wednesday, May 31, 2023 – Academic Building A625**

### **Introduction to the PLTL Model (Part 1)**

1:00 PM – 1:45 PM

The workshop introduces the experience of working in collaboration with colleagues to solve a problem, facilitated by a trained Peer Leader. The focus of the process of learning is highlighted as well as the critical attributes that students gain. The Peer-Led team Learning model's six critical components are introduced.

### **Introduction to the PLTL Model (Part 2)**

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Three components of the PLTL model are introduced, with collaborative exercises that support participants' understanding of each so that they will be able to choose how to apply the concept to implement the program. Faculty roles and responsibilities, recruiting and training Peer Leaders, and the rewards/challenges in implementation are discussed.

### **Introduction to the PLTL Model (Part 3)**

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

The importance of challenging problems to promote interaction, the issues of integrating peer-led workshops into schedule and physical space, and the attention to issues of assessment for the implementation of PLTL at participants' institutions will be explored through exercises and discussion.

## **Facilitators**

M. Cecilia Barone, University of Rochester  
Mohsen Beheshti, California State University Dominguez Hills  
Sally Faulkner, Queen Mary University London  
Robin Frye, University of Rochester  
Lesley Howell, Queen Mary University London  
Hector Leal, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Peer Leaders from the University of Houston Downtown  
Peer Leaders from the University of Texas at El Paso

# REMOTE SEMINAR

## Voices of Peer Leaders and Peer Leader Alumni: A Video Overview of the PLTL Program

The following videos were selected to highlight the first ten years of Peer-Led Team Learning. Scan the QR code after the descriptions or click on the link (listed after each title) for each individual video for a closer look. These will be available to all attendees throughout the conference.

Enjoy!

- Introduction ([Watch here](#))
- More Details on PLTL and an Exemplary Funding Model ([Watch here](#))
- Quality Control in Online Workshops ([Watch here](#))
  - Texas Academy of Science undergraduate oral presentation award video
- Facilitation Guide for PLTL ([Watch here](#))
- The Queen Mary Festival of Education 2022 Keynote – Peer-Led Team Learning: Promoting Student Engagement and Success ([Watch here](#))
- PLTLIS Live-Chemistry ([Watch here](#))
- Inaugural PLTLIS Conference in May 2012 ([Watch here](#))
- City Tech Math Peer Leaders ([Watch here](#))
- PLTLIS Live-Evaluation ([Watch here](#))
- Peer Leaders Explaining their PLTL end-of-semester Posters (3 videos; watch [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#))
  - For the full paper in *Advances in Peer-Led Learning*, go to:  
<https://journal.pltlis.org/index.php/apll-num1-8>
- A conversation: FIU Peer Leaders 2015 ([Watch here](#))
- Campus Showcase: Chemistry PLTL at Washington University in St. Louis ([Watch here](#))

## A Video Overview of the PLTL Program



# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Day One

### Thursday, June 1, 2023

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM <b>Milam/Travis</b> (UHD Welcome Center, also called Girard Street Building)	<b>Welcoming Remarks</b> Kimshi Hickman, President-Elect, PLTLIS <b>Introduction of Speaker</b> Mitsue Nakamura, UHD <b>Speaker: Deborah E. Bordelon, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, UHD</b>
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM <b>Milam/Travis</b>	<b>Introduction of Speaker</b> Kimshi Hickman, President-Elect, PLTLIS <b>Keynote Presentation</b> Safety for Diverse Students in Educational Environments: How Can PLTL Bridge Gaps and Promote Equity? <b>Presenter: Athena Sherman</b>
11:15 AM - 12:15 PM <b>A625, A627, A629</b>	<b>Presentations &amp; Workshops</b> See presentation schedule for details
12:30 PM – 1:30 PM <b>Milam/Travis</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
1:45 PM – 2:45 PM <b>A625, A627, A629</b>	<b>Presentations &amp; Workshops</b> See presentation schedule for details
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM <b>A625, A627, A629</b>	<b>Presentations &amp; Workshops</b> See presentation schedule for details
4:15 PM – 5:00 PM <b>Milam/Travis</b>	<b>Discussion Session I – Peer Leaders</b>
4:15 PM – 5:00 PM <b>Milam/Travis</b>	<b>Discussion Session I – Faculty/Staff/Administrators</b>
6:00 PM	Scavenger Hunt in Teams

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Day Two

### Friday, June 2, 2023

9:00 AM – 9:15 AM

**Milam/Travis**  
(UHD Welcome Center,  
also called Girard Street  
Building)

**Opening Remarks**  
Mitsue Nakamura, PLTLIS

9:15 AM – 10:30 AM

**Milam/Travis**

**Panel Presentation**  
Securing Administrators' Support  
to Sustain Your PLTL Program  
**Convenor**

Kimshi Hickman, University of Texas at Arlington

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

**A625, A627, A629**

**Presentations & Workshops**  
See presentation schedule for details

12:30 PM – 2:00 PM

**Milam/Travis**

**Lunch**  
Discussion Session II

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM

**A625, A627, A629**

**Presentations & Workshops**  
See presentation schedule for details

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

**Milam/Travis**

**Panel Presentation**  
Building Leadership Skills for Career Success:  
PLTL Alumni in Action  
**Convenors**  
Allison McKee, University of Houston-Downtown  
Sofia Delgado, The University of Texas at El Paso  
Azfar Vahidy, University of Houston-Downtown

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

**Milam/Travis and  
Welcome Center**

**Reception & Poster Presentations**  
Welcoming Remarks  
Akif Uzman, Dean, UHD  
**Honoring the Late Dr. Ongard Sirisaegtaksin**  
Highlighting the PLTL Programs  
at University of Houston-Downtown

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Day Three

### Saturday, June 3, 2023

9:15 AM – 9:30 AM

**Milam/Travis  
(UHD Welcome  
Center, also called  
Girard Street  
Building)**

#### **Opening Remarks**

M. Cecilia Barone, University of Rochester  
Robin Frye, University of Rochester  
Nicholas Hammond, University of Rochester

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM

**Milam/Travis**

#### **Panel Presentation**

Finding the Next Generation of Champions  
to Sustain your PLTL Program

#### **Convenors**

Mitsue Nakamura, UHD  
Katherine Shoemaker, UHD

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

**Milam/Travis**

#### **Discussion Session III**

Building for the next decade

12:15 PM – 12:30 PM

**Milam/Travis**

#### **Closing Remarks**

12:30 PM – 1:15 PM

**Milam/Travis**

#### **Lunch**

1:15 PM

#### **Group Event in Houston**

1:30 PM – 5:30 PM  
**Math and Statistics  
(MS) Conference  
Room S760**

**Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Peer-Led Team Learning International Society**

# WELCOMING SPEAKER

Thursday, June 1, 2023

**Deborah E. Borledon**

**Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost**



**DR. DEBORAH E. BORDELON** serves as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs for the University of Houston-Downtown, where she is responsible for the articulation of the University's vision of academic distinction; the development and administration of academic programs; policies relating to instruction, curriculum, and distance learning; faculty and academic staff and

appointments performance assessments; and scholarship and community service initiatives among faculty. Previously she served as the Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs for Columbus State University in Georgia and Governors State University in Illinois. She earned a doctoral degree in Special Education, a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on Literacy, and a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education – all from the University of New Orleans.

# KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Thursday, June 1, 2023

## Safety for Diverse Students in Educational Environments: How Can PLTL Bridge Gaps and Promote Equity?

Social determinants of learning have a profound effect on one's ability to meet personal and academic goals. Moreover, the theory of intersectionality posits that our identities and social positions intertwine and overlap to influence the power or oppression we experience in society. Learning to create safe and brave spaces to nourish the aptitude of peers and reduce barriers to individual and group learning and growth is no small feat. Join our valued alum, as we discuss strategies to promote, maintain, and evaluate safety and equity for a diverse student populace.



**ATHENA DF SHERMAN**, Ph.D. PHN, RN, CNE, (xe/they/she; First Gen) is an Assistant Professor at Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. Throughout their educational journey, Dr. Sherman spent many years as a PLTL leader at San Jose City College and later brought the PLTL model to San Jose State University where they ran the Tutoring Center through

the Educational Opportunity Program. Dr. Sherman's research focuses on examining how complex systems of racism, cisgenderism, and heterosexism influence health and health equity for racial, ethnic, sexual, and gender minoritized populations. Dr. Sherman seeks to lift the voices of LGBTQ+ violence survivors and co-create a foundation of research to improve LGBTQ+ healthcare delivery, with a focused lens on the impacts of stigma on psychological distress among transgender and gender diverse people violence survivors. Additionally, their educational research focuses on improving the inclusion of LGBTQ+ health content in nursing curricula locally and nationally. This work is all made possible through Dr. Sherman's community driven, interdisciplinary, and multi-institutional research team, which brings together community stakeholders, community-based partners, clinical partners, academic partners, and researchers across the nation.



# PRESENTATIONS

Thursday, June 1, 2023

11:15 AM – 11:45 AM

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A625

**The Importance of Strong Execution in the First Workshop**

Rene Aguilar, Luis Mora, and James E. Becvar  
University of Texas at El Paso

*(Continued through next session)*

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A627

**Experiences Testing a Novel Video-Supported Peer Leader Training Module at Two Different Institutions**

M. Cecilia Barone, Joseph Dinnocenzo, Robin Frye,  
Nicholas Hammond, Kyle Trenshaw, Karen Gilbert,  
Sofia Delgado, Ariana Ramirez, and James E. Becvar  
University of Rochester

University of Texas at El Paso

11:45 AM – 12:15 PM

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A625

**The Importance of Strong Execution in the First Workshop**

Rene Aguilar, Luis Mora, and James E. Becvar  
University of Texas at El Paso

*(Continued from last session)*

**Emotional Support and Sense of Belonging**  
Academic Building A629

**Program Expansion at Queen Mary University London**

Lesley Howell, Sally Faulkner, and Redwan Shahid

Queen Mary University London

# PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

Thursday, June 1, 2023

1:45 PM – 2:15 PM

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A625

**Energizing High Impact Educational Experiences  
by Investigating the True Meaning  
of Brainstorming and Algorithm**

Mitsue Nakamura, Allison McKee, MJ Asuncion,  
Azfar Vahidy, and Pamela Morales Diaz  
University of Houston-Downtown  
*(Continued through next session)*

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A627

**PLTL Empowers the Student-Professor Relationship**  
Austin Blake, Paulina Trevino, James E. Becvar, and Geoffrey Saupe  
University of Texas at El Paso

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A629

**Motivating Participation by Focus Presentations in PLTL  
Workshop**

Grecia Perea, Geoffrey Saupe, and James E. Becvar  
University of Texas at El Paso

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A625

**Energizing High Impact Educational Experiences  
by Investigating the True Meaning  
of Brainstorming and Algorithm**

Mitsue Nakamura, Allison McKee, MJ Asuncion,  
Azfar Vahidy, and Pamela Morales Diaz  
University of Houston-Downtown  
*(Continued from last session)*

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A627

**Developing Empathetic Medical Professionals  
Through Peer Leading**

Benjamin Diaz, Asher Min, Joshua Cayme, Michel Rojo,  
James E. Becvar, and Geoffrey Saupe  
University of Texas at El Paso

**Sustainability of Campus  
Program/Evaluation/Outcomes**  
Academic Building A629

**Closing the Attainment Gap: Peer-Led Team Learning  
Workshops for BTEC Students in the  
School of Business and Management**

Xue Zhou, Patrick McGurk, Lesley Howell, and Redwan Shahid  
Queen Mary University London

# PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

Thursday, June 1, 2023

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A625

**Increasing Student Engagement of PLTL Leaders in Training-How to Talk and See the True Colors!**

Kimshi Hickman and Monica Franco  
University of Texas at Arlington

*(Continued through next session)*

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A627

**Implementation of brainstorming to the Training of Peer Leaders**

Allison McKee, Azfar Vahidy, and Thanh Vu  
University of Houston-Downtown

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A625

**Increasing Student Engagement of PLTL Leaders in Training-How to Talk and See the True Colors!**

Kimshi Hickman and Monica Franco  
University of Texas at Arlington

*(Continued from last session)*

**Sustainability of Campus  
Program/Evaluation/Outcomes**  
Academic Building A627

**SHIP: Using Grants to Navigate the High Seas of STEM Education**

Marice Diaz and Dacia Steiner  
Miami Dade College, Wolfson Campus

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A629

**Incorporating Visuals in Workshop**

Elizabeth Lozoya, Brianna Cano, Andre Corral,  
James E. Becvar and Geoffrey Saupe  
University of Texas at El Paso

# PANEL PRESENTATION

Friday, June 2, 2023

## Securing Administrators' Support to Sustain Your PLTL Program

While many PLTL practitioners started their program with grants, some have been started through Learning Centers with the support of administrators concerned about retention and student success. The panelists will share the models that have developed and supported peer-led programs, allowing them to be institutionalized and sustained.



**CONVENOR**

**Kimshi Hickman, Ed.D.**



**PANELIST**

**Nicholas Hammond, Ph.D.**



**PANELIST**

**Ariane Kelly, M.A.**



**PANELIST**

**Mary Jo Parker, Ed.D.**

# PANEL PRESENTATION

Friday, June 2, 2023

## Building Leadership Skills for Career Success: PLTL Alumni in Action

The panel of former Peer Leaders from University of Houston Downtown (UHD) and University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) will share their experiences and how PLTL has helped them to grow as leaders in their post-graduate careers.



**CONVENOR**

**Sofia Delgado, B.S.**



**CONVENOR**

**Allison McKee**



**CONVENOR**

**Azfar Vahidy**



**PANELIST**

**Kevin Castillo**



**PANELIST**

**Nguyen (Blake) Lam, MD, DDS**



**PANELIST**

**Brian Holtkamp, Ph.D. Candidate**



**PANELIST**

**Eva Ruiz Alvarez**



**PANELIST**

**Ameer Stevenson**



**PANELIST**

**William Holtkamp, Ph.D.**



**PANELIST**

**Farhad Zonoozi, DMD**



**PANELIST**

**Eva Deemer, Ph.D.**



**PANELIST**

**Sergio Saucedo, B.S.**



**PANELIST**

**Karina Monticone, MSPAS**



**PANELIST**

**Krissett Loya-Bodiford, MPH**

# PRESENTATIONS

Friday, June 2, 2023

10:45 AM – 11:15 AM

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A625

**Faculty Development: Implementing Change  
in a Department**

AE Dreyfuss and Ana Fraiman  
Northeastern Illinois University  
PLTLIS

*(Continued through next session)*

**Emotional Support and Sense of  
Belonging**  
Academic Building A627

**Intuitive Learning: PLTL Addresses Individuality**

Adriana Bernier, Ca Hammer, Geoffrey Saupe,  
and James E. Becvar  
University of Texas at El Paso

11:15 AM – 11:45 AM

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A625

**Faculty Development: Implementing Change  
in a Department**

AE Dreyfuss and Ana Fraiman  
Northeastern Illinois University  
PLTLIS

*(Continued through last session)*

**Workplace Skills  
and Development**  
Academic Building A627

**Peer Leading as a Steppingstone into Higher Education**

Madeline Olivas, Abigail Valles, Geoffrey Saupe,  
and James E. Becvar  
University of Texas at El Paso



# PRESENTATIONS

Friday, June 2, 2023

11:45 AM – 12:15 PM

**Sustainability of Campus  
Program/Evaluation/Outcomes**  
Academic Building A627

**Long-term Effects of Introductory Biology PLTL  
on Student Performance in Upper-Division Courses**

Erin O'Brien, Sara Faust, and Amy Kulesza  
The Ohio State University

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A629

**Training Week: The Importance of Being Prepared**

Ximena Beltran Medina, Brooke Dorsey, Andre Corral,  
Andrea Granados, Madeline Olivas, Abigail Valles,  
Geoffrey Saupe, and James E. Becvar  
University of Texas at El Paso

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A625

**Stimulating Participation in PLTL Workshop**

Grecia Perea, James E. Becvar, and Geoffrey Saupe  
University of Texas at El Paso

*(Continued through next session)*

**Emotional Support and Sense of  
Belonging**  
Academic Building A627

**Looking Beyond the Numbers: The Impact of PLTL  
on Psychosocial Factors**

Nadia Monroe Mills and Meria Marcel-Lewis  
University of the Virgin Islands

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM

**Preparation for Peer-Led Sessions**  
Academic Building A625

**Stimulating Participation in PLTL Workshop**

Grecia Perea, James E. Becvar, and Geoffrey Saupe  
University of Texas at El Paso

*(Continued from last session)*

**Emotional Support and Sense of  
Belonging**  
Academic Building A627

**Building a PLTL Community Through Structured  
Introductory Profiles – 'Leaders Like Me'**

Kyle Trenshaw and Nicholas Hammond  
University of Rochester

**Sustainability of Campus  
Program/Evaluation/Outcomes**  
Academic Building A627

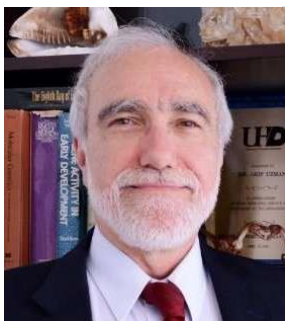
**How to Go About Scaling a Peer-Led Team Learning  
Program**

Hector Leal, Sabrina Herrera, Marilyn Rodriguez,  
Rebekah Schlatter, and Nancy Becerril  
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

# RECEPTION

Friday, June 2, 2023

## Opening Remarks



**AKIF UZMAN**, Ph.D., is a Professor of Biochemistry & Biology at the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) and Dean of the College of Sciences & Technology. Akif is an active member and founding Fellow of the Partnership for Undergraduate Life Sciences. As a faculty member and Chair of the Department of Natural Sciences, he mentored over 40 undergraduate research students in molecular biology and genomics.

He brought to UHD over \$11M in funding to support the Scholars Academy, infrastructure for the Department of Natural Sciences, and most recently, to develop inclusive excellence in STEM education at UHD through funding from the HHMI.

## Honoring the Late Dr. Ongard Sirisaengtaksin



**ONGARD SIRISAENGTAKSIN**, Ph.D. (affectionately known as Dr. Ongard), was a Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering Technology at the University of Houston Downtown (UHD), Houston, Texas. Dr. Ongard first joined UHD as an Assistant Professor of Mathematical Sciences in 1986, and was promoted to full professorship in 2000. He was named a Professor of Computer Science

in 2013 for his many years of scholarship and leadership at UHD. His accomplishments include, but are not limited to, serving as a Principal Investigator (PI) on the National Science Foundation (NSF) CNS award, Paving The Road to Professorship; as a Co-PI on the NSF S-STEM award, Undergraduate/Graduate Student Immersion in Computer Science, Technology and Mathematics; and as a PI on the NSF BPC-AE, Computing Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institutions (CAHSI). He was also the first Computer Science faculty member to develop the materials and implement Peer-Led Team Learning workshops in Computer Science courses at UHD and he served as a founder and Board Director of the Peer-Led Team Learning International Society (2011-2014).

He is survived by his wife, Noemi and three daughters, Natalie, Amanda, and Katrina.

# PANEL PRESENTATION

Saturday, June 3, 2023

## Finding Your Replacement: The Next Generation of Champions

To sustain a successful PLTL program at each institution takes trained peer leaders, interesting workshop materials created by faculty and peer leaders, funding, passionate champions, and supportive administrators. Our panelists will share how the baton has been passed at their institutions to ensure the continuation of their PLTL program; how they have identified and trained the next generations of peer leader coordinators and program managers, and how they kept their administrators' interest and support.



**CONVENOR**

**Mitsue Nakamura**



**CONVENOR**

**Katherine Shoemaker**



**PANELIST**

**Megan Dashbach**



**PANELIST**

**Joseph Dinnocenzo**



**PANELIST**

**Michael Saenz**

# THE HISTORY OF PLTL AT UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

## **2001 Fall**

UHD was awarded \$10,000 from PLTL Workshop Project Consortium to pilot PLTL workshop in Mathematics courses

## **2001 Fall – Present**

Implement PLTL workshops in selected College Algebra classes

## **2004 Summer – Present**

Implement PLTL workshops in Pre-College START Program

Implement PLTL workshops in College Success Program for Scholars Academy freshmen. The UHD Scholars Academy (SA) is a competitive scholarship program to support students in STEM fields

## **2006 Fall**

Linda Becerra and Mitsue Nakamura publish College Algebra workshop materials in *Progressions*, the publication of the NSF-funded PLTL Workshop Project Dissemination grant (1999-2006)

## **2007 Fall – 2011 Spring**

Implemented PLTL workshops in General Biology

## **2007 Fall – Present**

New Peer Leader Training Program: Workshop Style was developed and implemented

## **2008 Spring – Present**

Implement PLTL workshops in selected classes of Introduction to Computer Science with C++

## **2011 Fall – Present**

Mitsue Nakamura and Ongard Sirisaengtaksin are founding members of the Peer-Led Team Learning International Society; Board Directors from 2012

### **2012 Fall – Present**

Implement PLTL online workshops in selected classes of Introduction to Computer Science with C++ (CS I)

### **2013 Spring - Present**

Implement PLTL workshops in selected classes of Introduction to Data Structures and Algorithms (CS II)

### **2016 Spring – Present**

Research Investigation of trainability of high school peer leaders

### **2016 Fall**

Formed PLTL Club as a student organization

### **2016 Fall - Present**

Workshops available in the PLTL Lab in the following disciplines:  
CS I, CS II, Calculus I, Calculus II, Discrete Math, Linear Algebra, Technology (Excel, Maple, Matlab, Simulink)

### **2016 Summer – Present**

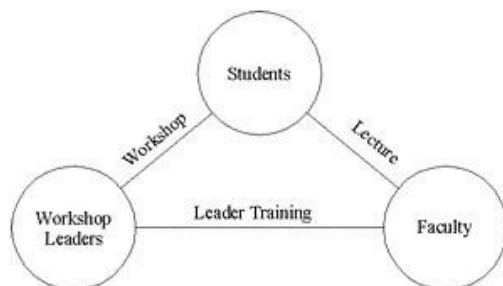
Selected peer leaders to work as research leaders for undergraduate research programs, including Texas Work Commission (TWC) project, Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program (MSEIP) – Department of Education (DOED) project, and Texas Talent Commission (TTC) Project

### **2019 Summer – Present**

Developed and implement online workshops as well as face to face workshops for Peer Leader Training Program, CS I, CS II, Calculus I, Calculus II, Discrete Math, Linear Algebra, and Technology (Excel, Maple, Matlab, Simulink)

## PLTL Learning Community at UHD

We do not have a learning specialist, so we use the following modified model:



### Recruitment of Peer Leaders

Students must have completed PreCalculus and/or Calculus I with a grade of A or B for College Algebra, and *Introduction to Computer Science with C++* and *Introduction to Data Structures and Algorithms* with a grade of A or B for *Introduction to Computer Science with C++* to apply.

The majority of Peer Leaders are recruited from UHD Scholars Academy (SA) which is a competitive scholarship program to support students in STEM fields.

### Training Peer Leaders 2001 – 2006

A 1.5-hour training session was held once a week guided by Mitsue Nakamura. Leaders worked on the workshop materials as a group and discussed the topics from the *Peer-Led Team Learning: A Handbook for Team Leaders* by Roth, Goldstein and Marcus (2001, Pearson Prentice Hall). They discussed *Do's and Don'ts* sharing their experiences from the previous workshop. They also gave feedback on the materials that were used in the previous workshop. Leaders were asked to turn in weekly Workshop Leaders logs.

### 2007 – Present

The Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) training model was adapted to better suit the needs of both the students and the university by incorporating the workshop ideal into the training itself. UHD leaders experience first-hand the benefits of the workshop style and are given the chance to become familiar with the student's perspective before they begin running workshops themselves. The number of prospective leaders to be trained every semester has been reduced in accordance with the workshop style. Approximately 8 students undergo training per semester, with 11 sessions in total. The group meets for 1 hour each week under the guidance of a peer-coordinator to discuss topics from the *Peer-Led Team Learning: A Handbook for Team Leaders*. Peer-coordinators are previously trained leaders chosen due to their interest in education; their objective is to guide the leaders through their

training in the manner that workshops should be conducted. Leaders are required to read through the section of the *Handbook* to be discussed that week, reflect over, and then answer 3-6 questions as assignments so that they can be prepared to collaborate in the workshop. The content materials used in the training workshops are created by the faculty supervisor, then given to the peer-coordinator to modify according to the group's particular needs. The coordinator offers all modifications for approval to the supervisor as well as providing reviews after every workshop session is completed to ensure a constant flow of communication throughout the semester.

All the peer tutors who work in the Commutative Learning Community Center (CLCC) and PLTL Lab have gone through PLTL training workshops.

### **Some Observations on Peer Leaders**

We have observed the following regarding Peer Leaders: PLTL experience provides our students with great leadership skills. PLTL experience makes our students hungry for more mathematical and scientific knowledge. PLTL experience encourages our students to engage in undergraduate research. PLTL experience promotes a pathway for our students to apply for and succeed in professional schools and graduate school.

### **Future Studies Planned**

- Collect data on former peer leaders, using the survey instrument: “Benefits of Peer Leadership”
- Participate in the research project on “Sense of Belonging” – Collaboration with University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) and Florida International University (FIU)
- Trainability of high school students as peer leaders

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Maria Benavides, PhD

### Collaborative Learning Community Center (CLCC)

### Peer Led Team Learning Lab (PLTL Lab)

Peer Leaders

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**Special thank you to the Moderators and you, the participants!**

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Alumni Network  
Certification Program Development  
Communication and Outreach  
*The Peer Leader Newsletter*

### For more information:

[info@ptlis.org](mailto:info@ptlis.org)  
[www.pltlis.org](http://www.pltlis.org)

The Peer-Led Team Learning International Society was founded in September 2011 at Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia and incorporated in April 2012 in the state of Texas and is registered as a 501(c)(3) organization.

**SEE YOU AGAIN NEXT YEAR!**

The University of Rochester  
invites you to:

**The PLTL International  
Society Twelfth Annual  
Conference**

**Wednesday, May 29 through  
Saturday, June 1, 2024**



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