This Spring 2015 semester, (STEM)$^2$ hosted a faculty and staff development event by sponsoring a webinar titled “Creating a Transfer-Friendly Campus”. We were happy to see the variety of university offices participating….Women and Adult Re-Entry, Biology Faculty, Center for Careers in Teaching, Health Professions Office and Career Center. In addition, University Outreach, New Student Programs and Center for Scholars & Scholarships couldn't attend but wanted informational materials from the webinar. I did learn from the webinar that is takes many “inter-institutional partnerships” to create a Transfer-Friendly campus and having these offices interested are the partnerships needed. I was also pleased to see that the model presented in the webinar by the University of Central Florida (UCF) is quite similar to the (STEM)$^2$ approach to providing a Transfer Friendly Campus for STEM majors. The UCF model discussed three critical stages in providing smooth transitions for transfer students: Preparation, Transition, and Progression - assuring transferring students are prepared, guiding students through the transition and supporting transfer students to graduation. At (STEM)$^2$ we do just that with having Peer Mentors prepare the students at our partner community colleges, (STEM)$^2$ staff in helping with the transition process with admissions and orientation assistance, and our Academic Transition Program has proven to retain students in the major and the university. The webinar reaffirmed that (STEM)$^2$ is providing that Transfer Friendly Campus here at CSU Fullerton!

By Maria V. Dela Cruz, Ph.D.
New Peer Mentor Corner

Alejandra Garcia
Biology major

My name is Alejandra Garcia and I was born in Los Angeles. I am a transfer student from Citrus College, pursing a degree in Biology at CSUF. I am interested in veterinarian and biomedical research fields. My goals include going to graduate school and becoming an equine-veterinarian. Another one of my goals is to inspire underrepresented students, especially first generation students, succeed in the STEM fields. Outside of school, I enjoy watching movies and I love to go hiking.

Robert Gudino
Mathematics major

I was born in Los Angeles, California. I transferred to CSUF from Citrus College. Initially, I started college without an idea of what I wanted to do career-wise. I eventually found my love in Mathematics. I am fascinated by it’s interdisciplinary and limitless applications. I plan to stay in academia, my goal is to obtain a Ph.D. in Mathematics, where I want to continue doing research and expose other students to the different wonders of math. In my spare time I like to play sports, tutor students, and tinker with computers.

Jose Gutierrez IV
Electrical Engineer major

My name is Jose Gutierrez IV and I am a transfer student from Cypress College majoring in Electrical Engineering. I plan on getting my B.S. and then entering the work force. My goal is to end up in the field of robotics or automation after college but my dream is to be part of something with space travel. Outside of school I enjoy playing video games, catching up with friends, playing basketball, and going out to see new places and try new things.

Stacy Schkoda
Biology major

Hi! My name is Stacy Schkoda, a recent transfer student from Cypress College. I am studying biology with a concentration in molecular biology and biotechnology. I love the area where human impact overlaps with the environment. Enjoying nature is a true love of mine, and I believe that through science we can protect and preserve it for later generations. I live with the motto “leave things better than you find them,” which is why I want to dedicate myself to environmental toxicological research. In my spare time, I enjoy reading, hiking, and archery. My educational goal is to obtain my Ph.D. in Biology and work for an organization such as the EPA.

Study Tips

By Stacy Schkoda, Peer Mentor and Molecular Biology and Biotechnology Major

Finals week is a stressful and trying time for students. It is important to not become overwhelmed with the “what ifs” of an exam, but to balance long picture goals simultaneously. I’d like to share some study tips to help you prepare for your exams.

1. Start Early
   -After each lecture, review or rewrite your notes
   -Pretend that you’ll have a quiz the next class: always be prepared

2. Office Hours
   -Set up an appointment with your professor to get one-on-one attention and direction

3. Know Your Study Style
   -Study groups: come to groups prepared with questions or topics to review, don’t expect to get tutored!
   -Individual: Quizlet is a great resource for online flashcards, study games, and virtual media for learning terms or vocabulary

4. Don’t Change Your Routine
   -Don’t change your normal sleeping/eating habits before exams (for the worse)
   -Changing your routine drastically (cramming instead of sleeping) can do more harm than good and leave you less prepared, even though you’re staying up to study

5. Relax
   -Morning yoga is a great way to relieve stress and provide natural energy
   -Puppy therapy! Often, CSUF hosts puppy therapy where you can unwind and play with some cute puppies during the day

Keep in mind your end goal not as a stressor, but as a motivator.
Campus & Community Outreach/Engagement

Workshops at the Community Colleges

This past year, (STEM)$^2$ sponsored a variety of workshops at our partner community colleges and at CSUF. Peer Mentors led lab tours and facilitated workshops where they imparted tips to STEM transfer students, such as securing research and scholarship opportunities, developing their professional profile, and transitioning successfully to 4-year universities. Below are some of the workshops Peer Mentors presented this year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Spring 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEM Research Symposium</td>
<td>2015 SRE Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSU/UC Admissions Workshop</td>
<td>Searching for the Fountain of Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(STEM)$^2$ Transfer Preview Day</td>
<td>REU Preparation/Underwater Dreams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pizza with STEM: Admissions Presentation</td>
<td>Next Steps for Transfer Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build Your STEM Profile</td>
<td>Citrus Foundation Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRE: Student Panel and How to Find Research Opportunities</td>
<td>Pre-Med Workshop with Dr. Efrian Talamantes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRE: Personal Statement Tips, Interview Etiquette, and Letters of Recommendation</td>
<td>Welcome to CSUF Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REU Workshop: Finding the right opportunity for you</td>
<td>Engineering and Beyond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workshops at the Transfer Resource Center

By Sam Barrozo, Academic Transition Coordinator

Since opening the (STEM)$^2$ Transfer Resource Center (TRC) in the Fall of 2012, we have served over 1,200 STEM transfer students from both the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and College of Engineering and Computer Science, providing them a space to study and learn about the various resources and opportunities in their respective disciplines. This past semester, (STEM)$^2$ collaborated with campus programs to provide workshops for STEM transfer students in the TRC. Michelle Ajemian Levy, STEM Career Specialist, presented information about Summer Research Experience for Undergraduates. She shared with students how to find research opportunities, the application process, and improving their interview skills. Monica Coloso, Assistant Director, Office of Financial Aid, provided information to students on how to fund their college education. She covered the types of aid offered, the application process, and information about the California Dream Act. Lastly, Dr. Patricia Literte, Director of the Ronald E. McNair Scholars program, and (STEM)$^2$ transfer students and current McNair Scholars, Christina Tran, Mathematics, and Jose Zavala, Biochemistry, presented information about the McNair Scholars program, including its requirements, its benefits, and its application process. Christina and Jose spoke about their experiences as McNair Scholars, participating in research, applying to graduate school, and receiving acceptances to their desired schools. Through these collaborations, the TRC has become much more than a space for students to study rather it is now a space for STEM transfer students to be exposed to resources and opportunities they may have otherwise not considered. With the success of the spring workshops, we look forward to presenting more informational workshops next academic year.
The (STEM)² Celebration is an event that recognizes the achievements, leadership, and participation of Peer Mentors and Academic Transition Program (ATP) students. Peer Mentors play a major role in helping our community colleges students prepare for transfer from community college and transition to CSUF. They facilitate various workshops, participate in panels, and mentor students at our partner community colleges and ATP students at CSUF. In addition, ATP students are doing great things both on and off campus. From securing internships and research opportunities to receiving acceptances to graduate schools and industry, several students are shining brightly at CSUF. We are thrilled to see that 22 ATP students will be graduating this year.

---

### Graduating ATP Students

#### Fall 2012 Cohort

- Brian Douglas Brick, *Computer Science*
- Cesar Ceja, *Biology*
- Sabiha Fatima, *Biochemistry*
- James Francis Murphy, *Computer Science*
- Joshua Silva, *Biology*
- Christina Tran, *Mathematics*
- Kevin James Vincent, *Computer Science*

- Shabnam Shariff Caterino, *Mathematics*
- Andrew B Ercillo, *Mechanical Engineering*
- Ricardo Lucero, *Computer Science*
- David Marcus Romo, *Biology*
- Heather Natalie Stemen, *Mathematics*
- Denise L Velazquez, *Mathematics*

#### Spring 2013 Cohort

- David Bryan Carrillo, *Mechanical Engineering*
- Ivey Summer Stone, *Biology*

- Brandon Dale Gentile, *Mathematics*
- Karla Lopez, *Biology*

#### Fall 2013 Cohort

- Andrei Dominic Bilog, *Biology*
- Sheila Eileen McClure, *Biology*

- Brian Victor Lee, *Biochemistry*
- Luis Ruben Ramirez Jr, *Mathematics*
Welcome to CSUF Day is an annual event that is designed to introduce admitted students (and their families) to the Cal State Fullerton campus. The day provides prospective Titans a chance to meet faculty, learn about student services and resources, tour the campus, and get to know the campus community. (STEM)2 welcomed future Titans from our partner campuses – Citrus, Cypress, and Santiago Canyon. In addition to participating in the day's festivities, these students received laboratory tours (led by peer mentors), and participated in a workshop, “STEM Transfer Student Success.” The workshop featured a panel of current Peer Mentors and transfer students who described their journey to a 4-year university and discussed tips to help future transfer students succeed.

Thank you to the Assistant Deans – Amy Mattern and Victor Delgado – of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and the College of Engineering and Computer Science, respectively, for their help in organizing the laboratory tours. Thank you to Dr. Soledad Ramirez and Dr. Danielle Zacherl from the Department of Biological Science, Dr. Christopher Meyer, Dr. Peter de Lijser, and Dr. Zhuangjie Li from the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and Dr. Garrett Struckhoff from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering for allowing us to tour their research laboratories. A special thanks to Dr. Mark Filowitz, Associate Dean of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, who took part in the workshop and provided students with essential information about the transition from a 2-year community college and a 4-year university.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATP Students</th>
<th>Scholarships &amp; Awards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Silva, Biology (1)</td>
<td>The Maximizing Access to Research Careers Training Program (MARC)-Graduating Scholar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik Muiz, Physics (2)</td>
<td>Dan Black Physics Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacy Schkoda, Biology (3)</td>
<td>Jewel Plummer Cobb Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazmine Titular, Geology (4)</td>
<td>Dimensions: Section Editor for Geology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christina Tran, Mathematics (5)</td>
<td>Service to the University &amp; Department- Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Gentile, Mathematics (6)</td>
<td>Special Recognition for Undergraduate Research- Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Romo, Biology (5)</td>
<td>The Rose Society of Saddleback Mountain Research Assistant Award in Plant Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose Zavala, Biochemistry (6)</td>
<td>American Chemical Society Division of Organic Chemistry Undergraduate Organic Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis Alsky, Biochemistry (7)</td>
<td>Excellence in Biochemistry Award</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CSUF WELCOME DAY  
—By Felipe Salazar, Mentor/Outreach Coordinator
Dr. Maria Dela Cruz and Sam Barrozo presented at the Conference of the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students, Atlanta, GA, February 4-6, 2015 “(STEM)$^2$ – A Model for STEM Transfer Student Success”.

Dr. Maria Dela Cruz and Felipe Salazar presented at the Alliance for Hispanic Serving Institutions Educators (AHSIE) Conference, San Antonio, Texas, March 8-11, 2015 “It’s HIP to Conduct Research: The Summer Research Experience as a Model”.

(STEM)$^2$ would like to thank Justin De Jesus, Peer Mentor at Cypress College for his work and dedication to mentoring (STEM)$^2$ students. He will be graduating this spring, ending his involvement with the program since its inception. Justin has secured an internship while he prepares to apply for graduate school in the fall.

(STEM)$^2$ would also like to thank Zack Newman, former Digital Media Support and Peer Mentor. Zack was part of (STEM)$^2$ since the start of the grant; he secured a position that will allow him to further his career in geo-sciences at Caltech. Thank you Zack for your work and dedication.

We wish them the best.
Upcoming Events

Summer 2015 Calendar Dates

Summer Research Opening Night- Monday, June 15th
CSUF Transfer Orientation (NSM)- Monday, July 13th
CSUF Transfer Orientation (NSM)-Tuesday, July 14th
CSUF Transfer Orientation (NSM)-Wednesday, July 15th
CSUF Transfer Orientation (ECS)-Tuesday, July 14th
CSUF Transfer Orientation (ECS)-Wednesday, July 15th
Summer Research Symposium- Friday, August 7th
Collaboration Council Meeting- Friday, August 7th
(STEM)^2 Welcome Day for ATP Fall 2015 Cohort- Friday, August 14th
STEM Transfer Day- Saturday, August 15th

Highlights of the academic year...
California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), a four-year comprehensive university and Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), in addition to three of its feeder community colleges, Citrus, Cypress and Santiago Canyon, also HSIs, have all created "(STEM)² - Strengthening Transfer Education & Matriculation in STEM", a multifaceted project funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

This five-year grant project, awarded in October 2011, is designed to encourage Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) degrees, retain students in STEM fields, produce more community college STEM transfers to four-year institutions and ultimately, increase the number of Hispanic/Latino and low-income students attaining STEM baccalaureates.

**Cal State Fullerton**
Dr. Maria V. Dela Cruz, (STEM)² Project Director
Felipe Salazar, M.A., (STEM)² Mentor/Outreach Coordinator
Sam Barrozo, B.S., (STEM)² Academic Transition Coordinator
Diana Serna, B.A., (STEM)² Administrative Assistant
Dr. Jose L. Cruz, Principal Investigator, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes, Co-Principal Investigator, Vice President for Student Affairs
Dr. David Bowman, Principal Administrator, Dean (Interim), NSM
Dr. Mark Filowitz, Co-Principal Administrator, Associate Dean, NSM

**Citrus College**
Dr. Marianne Smith, Principal Investigator/Project Director
Dr. My Chau, SI Coordinator
Alejandra Gonzalez, STEM Coordinator

**Cypress College**
Dr. Richard Fee, Principal Investigator/Dean of Science Engineering and Math
Yanet Garcia, (STEM)² Program Director/Counselor
Veronica Del Campo, SI Coordinator
Rama Nashawati, SI Coordinator

**Santiago Canyon College**
Ruth Babeshoff, Principal Investigator/Dean, Counseling & Student Support Services
Dr. Jennifer Coto, Coordinator/Chair of Counseling
Dr. Phillip Crabill, Counselor
Laney Wright, SI Coordinator

---

**California State University, Fullerton**
McCarthy Hall 527
657-278-8398
stem2.fullerton.edu

---

(STEM)² funded by the Dept. of Education (Grant# P031C110116-12)