

## Education Research as a Catalyst for Improving Policy and Practice



### ERC Staff

**Hersh Waxman**

Director

**Jacqueline Stillisano**

Co-Director

**Kayla Rollins**

Coordinator of Teacher Education Research

**Susana Franco-Fuenmayor**

Assistant Research Scientist

**Kim Wright**

Research Associate

**Anna Witt Boriack**

Assistant Research Scientist

**Elba Barahona**

ERC Intern

**Tyler Hooper**

Undergraduate Student Research Assistant

**Ethan Vieira**

Undergraduate Student Research Assistant

### Program Area Leaders

**Yolanda Padrón**

Educator Preparation

**Dennie Smith**

Curriculum &amp; Instruction

**Lori Taylor**

School Finance, Resources, &amp; Facilities

### ERC Awarded Continuation Grant to Evaluate Large Urban Education Initiative

The Education Research Center (ERC) at Texas A&M University is pleased to announce it has been awarded a grant by United Way of Greater Houston (UWGH) to conduct the Year 3 evaluation of the agency's urban education initiative. This third phase of the evaluation examines a scaled-up version of UWGH's urban education initiative, which involves over 30 non-profit agency programs that deliver educational services for more than 300,000 children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances in the Houston metropolitan area. Hersh Waxman, Yolanda Padrón, Kayla Rollins, and Susana Franco-Fuenmayor are co-PIs of the project. Additional ERC researchers involved include Anna Boriack, Kim Wright, and Elba Barahona.

The Education Initiative is an outgrowth of the efforts of a task force of Houston community leaders recruited by UWGH to identify various means by which the organization could support and impact the work of the city's school districts.

"This education initiative by UWGH will continue to serve as a long-term vision for the agency as it works towards its goal to help the Houston metropolitan area become a place where high-quality education and high school graduation are the norm and where resources are available to help all students achieve to their highest ability," said Waxman. "Year 3 of the evaluation will continue to focus on examining the effectiveness of the initiative."

For additional information, please contact Kayla Rollins at [kcbraziel@tamu.edu](mailto:kcbraziel@tamu.edu) or Susana Franco-Fuenmayor at [sfrancof@tamu.edu](mailto:sfrancof@tamu.edu)

### ERC Presents First Seminar for 2014-2015



The ERC held the first event in its 2014-2015 seminar series on October 1, 2014. Kay Wijekumar, professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture and project director of ITSS, SWELL, and We-Write, presented *When Prior Knowledge Inhibits New Learning: Results from Classroom Use of a Web-based Intelligent Tutoring System*. The presentation focused on research with middle school students and their use of an online writing tutor program. Dr. Wijekumar recently joined the TAMU faculty from Pennsylvania State University, so this presentation provided an introduction to her research for the TAMU community.

### Contact Information

112 Harrington Tower  
College Station, TX 77843-4232  
<http://erc.cehd.tamu.edu>

### Recent ERC Presentations

- Rollins, K. B., Franco-Fuenmayor, S. E., Waxman, H. C., Padrón, Y. N., Callander, N., Boriack, A. W., & Alford, B. L. (2014, October). *Investigating the challenges and uses of school outcome data from a city-wide community collaborative*. Paper presented at the American Evaluation Association annual conference, Denver, CO.
- Stillisano, J. R., Waxman, H. C., & Rollins, K. B. (2014, October). *Lessons learned from statewide evaluations of preK-12 educational initiatives*. Paper presented at the American Evaluation Association annual conference, Denver, CO.
- Stillisano, J. R., Waxman, H. C., Rollins, K. B., & Wright, K. B. (2014, October). *Evaluating professional development educational initiatives in Texas: Lessons learned*. Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education annual conference, Austin, TX.
- Waxman, H. C., Weber, N. D., Rollins, K. B., Stillisano, J. R., Kelly, L., & Smith, D. L. (2014, June). *Research summary on integrating career & college readiness standards in a residency-based teacher preparation program*. Paper presented at Texas Association of Teacher Educators (TxATE) – Summer Conference, Austin, TX.

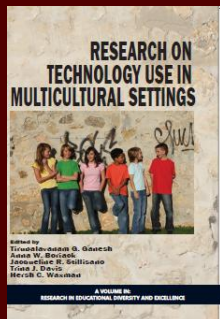
## ERC Researchers Receive Honors

Anna Boriack, assistant research scientist, was awarded the TLAC Dissertation of the Year Award for her dissertation entitled, *Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Science, Technology, and Mathematics Professional Development and Changes in Classroom Practices*. The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' perceptions of professional development and changes in classroom practice.

Susana Franco-Fuenmayor, assistant research scientist, received the 2014 Distinguished Dissertation Award for the Second Language Research SIG of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Franco-Fuenmayor will present her dissertation, titled *Examining Dual Language, Bilingual, and ESL Teachers' Knowledge, Professional Development Experiences, and Perceptions About Second Language Programs in Texas*, at the Second Language Research SIG business meeting at the 2015 AERA annual meeting in Chicago, IL.

In addition, ERC director Hersh Waxman was awarded a fellowship by the department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture to improve teacher preparation within the department and college. His proposal, entitled *Recruiting, Preparing, and Retaining Excellent Teachers (RPRET)*, describes several research studies he will conduct designed to influence teacher education policy and practice at high needs schools.

## New Book Edited by ERC Researchers



Several current and former ERC researchers contributed to a new book, *Research on Technology Use in Multicultural Settings*, now available from Information Age Publishers. The purpose of the book is to summarize and discuss recent perspectives, research, and practices related to the use of education technology in multicultural settings. Consisting of 12 chapters the book, (a) proposes theoretical concerns for understanding technological learning environments today; (b) envisions the potential impact of future technology use; (c) examines technology tools and models that have been used for interventions, programs, and projects; and (d) measures and documents specific outcomes and challenges involving complex interactions within low-income and language-minority families and students.

## Evaluation of the Discover, Explore, and Enjoy Physics and Engineering (DEEP) Program

The Education Research Center (ERC) was recently awarded a contract to conduct an external evaluation of the Discover, Explore, and Enjoy Physics and Engineering (DEEP) program at Texas A&M University. Jackie Stillisano and Hersh Waxman are principal investigators on the project. Additional research support will be provided by Kim Wright, research associate for the ERC.

Currently in its second year, DEEP was established in 2012 by the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Texas A&M. The goal of the program is to enhance undergraduate and graduate students' learning and research experiences by incorporating active learning, service learning, and teamwork. A key component of DEEP is to encourage undergraduate student participation in high-profile outreach activities, such as the annual Texas A&M Physics and Engineering Festival, fall and spring DEEP Showcases, and TAMU Physics Shows, under the guidance of DEEP graduate mentors from the Departments of Physics and Astronomy and Aerospace Engineering.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to provide program feedback to the DEEP team," said Stillisano. "The DEEP program exemplifies efforts in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Texas A&M University by providing a venue to engage students in physics and engineering outreach, both to the university and to the greater community."

For additional information, please contact Jackie Stillisano at [jstillisano@tamu.edu](mailto:jstillisano@tamu.edu) or Hersh Waxman at [hwaxman@tamu.edu](mailto:hwaxman@tamu.edu).

## Recent ERC Publications

Boriack A.W., & Waxman, H. C. (2014). Introduction and overview. In T. Ganesh, A. W. Boriack, J. R. Stillisano, T. J. Davis, & H. C. Waxman (Eds.), *Technology use in multicultural settings* (pp. 1-10). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Boriack, A. W., Ganesh, T.G., & Waxman, H. C. (2014). Future directions for improving technology use in multicultural settings. In T. Ganesh, A. W. Boriack, J. R. Stillisano, T. J. Davis, & H. C. Waxman (Eds.), *Technology use in multicultural settings* (pp. 225-236). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Kandel-Cisco, B., Stillisano, J.R., Davis, T. J., & Waxman, H.C. (2014). Case studies of online testing in multicultural schools. In T. Ganesh, A. W. Boriack, J. R. Stillisano, T. J. Davis, & H. C. Waxman (Eds.), *Technology use in multicultural settings* (pp. 107-119). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Stillisano, J. R., Brown, D. B., & Waxman, H. C. (2014). Alternative models for evaluating technology use. In T. Ganesh, A. W. Boriack, J. R. Stillisano, T. J. Davis, & H. C. Waxman (Eds.), *Technology use in multicultural settings* (pp. 209-224). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

## Upcoming ERC Seminar

The ERC will hold the second event of its 2014-2015 Seminar Series at 1 p.m. on November 19, 2014, in Harrington 303. Dr. Marlon James will be presenting.