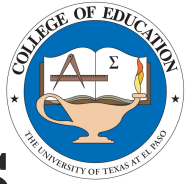




COED Faculty Highlights



Dec 2025

Publications & Conferences

Dr. Robyn Pinilla chaired the local arrangements committee for the 2025 AMTE-TX Annual Meeting at SMU in Dallas (Sept. 26–27, 2025). She coordinated the venue, secured in-kind meal donations, and supported the scheduling of presentations. She also presented research with undergraduate Enrique Pineda Sanchez, who led their session, "It's Pre-K, There's No Real Maths: Preservice Teachers' Noticing of Mathematics Learning Opportunities."

The main findings of **Dr. Tessa Arsenault's** work have been accepted for publication in *Exceptional Children*: Arsenault, T. L., & Powell, S. R. (in press). "Informative mathematics writing within an additive word-problem intervention: Exploring mathematics-writing and word-problem outcomes for Grade 4 students with mathematics difficulty!"

Dr. Sarah Johnson co-organized, with Eton Churchill (Kanagawa University), the panel "Touch and Aesthetics in Co-operative Action" for the 2025 American Anthropology Association conference. She and co-author Asta Cekaite (Linköping University) presented a paper on the role of touch in ballet folklórico pedagogy.

Dr. Robyn Pinilla, with doctoral candidate Pratimaben Mehta and undergraduate researcher Enrique Pineda Sanchez, published an article based on action research in Ms. Mehta's kindergarten classroom using a spatial reasoning framework from Dr. Pinilla's dissertation: Pinilla, R. K., Mehta, P. J., & Pineda Sanchez, E. (2025). *Investigating the connection between spatial reasoning skills and Reggio Emilia-inspired kindergarten mathematics activities*. *Education Sciences*, 15(10), 1375. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15101375>

Dr. David Carrejo's new book, *Connecting History to Secondary School Mathematics*, is available for pre-order: <https://link.springer.com/book/9783032062185>
It examines how scientific and cultural forces shaped core ideas in the secondary mathematics curriculum and argues that understanding these origins can help educators rethink STEM instruction and deepen students' mathematical reasoning.

Dr. Wei-Ling Sun has a new publication with Dr. Daniel Liou, *Coloniality and the Template of White Beings: Hegemonic Expectations in School Discipline* (*Whiteness and Education*, 2025), which analyzes how colonial logics and racialized expectations shape modern disciplinary practices. Sun, W. L., & Liou, D. D. (2025). Coloniality and the template of White Beings: Hegemonic expectations in school discipline. *Whiteness and Education*, 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23793406.2025.2557025>

UTEP TLC Ph.D. graduate **Dr. Laura Salazar** published her article, "Borderland preservice teachers' experiences with reframing bilingualism," in the *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*. The article reports findings from her case study conducted within UTEP's teacher preparation program.

Grants and Funding

The College of Education's Cycle 2 proposal to the Regents' Research Excellence Program was successful, resulting in an award of \$1,017,987 to hire a cohort of research professors who will strategically expand the College's research capacity in three priority growth areas (AI/CS Education, Workforce Development, Use-Inspired Research).

Dean Clifton Tanabe and **Dr. Erika Mein** were awarded a Rural M-Pact Fund Planning Grant by the Trustees of The Moody Foundation. \$18,975 To plan the Rural Educational Alliance for Postsecondary Success along with an invitation to submit an Implementation Grant application.

The College of Education is pleased to welcome Visiting Research Scholar **Dr. Kristina Otero**, Vice President of Education at the Aldrin Family Foundation, who specializes in Space/Science Education, STEM Curriculum Innovation, and STEM career pathways. She will partner with the college to advance collaborative research, partnerships, STEM programming, and future grant initiatives that expand opportunities for K–12 learners.

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Grants and Funding (cont.)

Dr. Beverley Argus-Calvo, Dr. Estala-Guiterrez, and Dr. Chu-Ling Lo are part of an inter-college team awarded a U.S. Department of Education grant, *Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling Training in the Southwest*. The \$1,111,112 grant will help increase the number of vocational rehabilitation counselors in Southwest Texas and New Mexico.

In October, the College of Education awarded seed funding to five teams through the 2025 College of Education Venture Fund, supporting high-quality grant proposals and projects that enhance competitiveness for external funding. Congratulations to **Drs. Tessa Arsenault, Binh Bui, Paul Carrola, Eunae Han, and Pei-Ling Hsu** and their teams on their awards.

Awards & Honorifics

Co-authors **Drs. Eunae Han and Johana Rocha** received the Patricia B. Elmore Award for Outstanding Research in Measurement and Evaluation, awarded by the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (Sept. 2025) for "Evaluation of the Spanish Version of the Machismo Measure with Mexican Men who have a History of Domestic Violence" (*Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*).

Invited Presentations

Dr. Dan Heiman was a keynote speaker at the virtual IX *Simposio Sobre Política del Lenguaje* hosted by UNAM, Universidad Veracruzana, and the Secretaría de Cultura de Chihuahua. His talk was titled "El impacto de la gentrificación en un programa de lenguaje dual en EEUU (y como una maestra la resistía)."

Patricia Ocaña, Anaeva Rodriguez, and Cristina Marin presented "AI in Wonderland: Supporting English Language Learners Through the Looking Glass" at the annual HILT Conference at UTEP on November 7, following the acceptance of their proposal.

Highlights from the Field

On October 10, 2025, **Dr. Bill Robertson** led a "Constructivist Flipped Classroom" workshop for over 50 faculty at EPCC's Mission del Paso campus, providing professional development in active learning and hybrid teaching.

In November, **Rashan Isaac** completed the Launch K-5 CS workshop through WeTeach_CS, becoming a certified trainer. The training enhanced skills in computational thinking, computer science foundations, cybersecurity, and AI-supported instruction. In Spring 2026, Rashan will lead K-5 CS training for educators in partner districts, supporting high-quality, standards-aligned CS instruction. (see photo below)



Counseling students and faculty members represented UTEP at the 2025 Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) conference in Philadelphia. (see photo below)

