Terry Scholars, Class of 2014

The 2014 class of Terry Scholars at UT Dallas includes the following freshmen and transfer students:

2014 Freshmen Terry Scholars

Yesenia Barrios, Saginaw High School, Saginaw
Valedictorian and AP Scholar Yesenia Barrios plans to major in biology. Barrios was president of National Honor Society, the Spanish club and HOSA. She also participated on the varsity cross country and tennis teams. Barrios was selected for the STARS Summer Research Program at UT Southwestern Medical Center, an eight-week program that lets teachers and students work with faculty in a research laboratory. As AVID tutor, Barrios spent over 150 hours tutoring freshmen high school students. She also took part in her high school's freshman camp, providing her insight and experience to the freshmen. Barrios participated in the DFW Area Health Education Center Camp Med Academy.

Alexis Bernal, Sachse High School, Sachse
Alexis Bernal participated in Beta club, was president of HOSA and treasurer of the National Honor Society. She was on her high school's varsity bowling team and served as team captain her senior year. Bernal received her high school's 20th Century Scholar Award, Presidential Education Award and a UIL Scholar Award. She traveled with students from her world literature class to France and England. Besides working 20 plus hours a week, Bernal volunteered by assisting with bingo at a local nursing home, providing free blood pressure screenings to the Sachse community, and raising fund for various charities. She plans to major in biology.

LeeAnn Blaylock, Mabank High School, Mabank
LeeAnn Blaylock was her high school's marching band mellophone soloist and section leader, and was awarded the Arion Award for the most outstanding band member her junior year. She was also 1st Chair Concert Band and 1st Chair All-Region Symphonic Band. As a member of VOICE, Blaylock developed ideas for volunteer opportunities, performed community service, and participated in leadership training. She was a member of Student Council and president of National Honor Society. She was the female lead in a one-act play and the fall musical. She volunteers at the Tri-County Library, Special Olympics and the Cedar Creek Humane Society. She recently became a caregiver for the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services. Blaylock will major in neuroscience.

Abigail Camero, Cedar Hill Collegiate High School, Cedar Hill
Valedictorian, honor graduate and Phi Theta Kappa member Abigail Camero plans to major in biology. Camero was co-editor of the yearbook and won first place in the District Digital Fair for best original photography. She was the PTSA student representative for student government and president of the Health Professions club. As part of Big Brothers Big Sisters, Camero spends every Friday afternoon with her little sister. She has volunteered over 200 hours at Methodist Dallas Medical Center since 2011, earning the President's Volunteer Service Award. She was recognized by the United States Achievement Academy as a National Science Merit Award winner. Camero has also volunteered for the North Texas Food Bank,
Yathip "Mindy" Chokpapone, Cy-Fair High School, Cypress
Mindy Chokpapone was a member of the Color Guard, serving as dance lieutenant and captain. She was voted "most outstanding" color guard by her fellow participants and band directors. The Color Guard participated in the World Championships in her freshman and junior year and placed first in UIL Area E. Chokpapone was a member of the Red Cross club, the National Honor Society and the French National Honor Society. She was junior treasurer, junior vice president and senior vice president in HOSA. Chokpapone taught English to students at Rachawinit Middle School in Thailand. She also helped organize activities for the Thai Festival in Houston. She is an accomplished Khim musician. The Khim is played with two bamboo sticks on a total of 42 strings. Chokpapone is a pharmacy technician trainee and plans to major in neuroscience.

Stevie Cornett, Plano East Senior High School, Plano
Stevie Cornett plans to major in psychology. In her freshman year, Cornett was accepted to the jazz choir, all-region choir and varsity mixed choir. She prepared and performed classical, a cappella, jazz and pop literature as a group and soloist. Cornett was a member of the National Honor Society and arranged a volunteer project with Victoria Gardens Assisted Living. She was also a camp volunteer for the Plano East Choir Department and has volunteered at the North Texas Doberman Rescue Mission. Cornett received the Plano Principal's Association Lisa Malson Memorial Scholarship. She is also the recipient of the Plano Trustee Award of Excellence. Cornett won a bronze medal for her achievement on the National Spanish Exam.

Lexi Coronado, Donna High School, Donna
Lexi Coronado played for her high school's varsity basketball team for four years, and was captain her senior year. She was president of the Pre-Med club, member of the DHS Ambassadors Program which provides tutoring to at risk freshmen, and an officer of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes club. Coronado received the Border Patrol Head of Class Award for her academic excellence, community service and leadership. She volunteered 250 hours at the Humane Society and she donates blood several times a year. Coronado plans to major in neuroscience.

Manpreet Dhot, Wylie East High School, Wylie
AP Scholar Manpreet Dhot will major in electrical engineering. Dhot participated in the 2013 IBM Summer Innovation Camp. She was a member of Student Council and Business Professionals of America, winning first place in the regional Fundamentals of Web Design competition. Dhot was a member of National Honor Society and participated in the Wylie East Solar Car Team, building and racing a functional solar-powered vehicle.

Trang Dinh, Naaman Forest High School, Garland
Trang Dinh was treasurer for Mu Alpha Theta and a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council and Rachel's Challenge. She placed first in district competition for UIL accounting and second in the art showcase. Dinh volunteers weekly as a teaching assistant at the Van Lang Vietnamese School.
spent the summer in Vietnam, volunteering with special needs children and orphans. Dinh will major in chemistry.

Hunter Gage, Leander High School, Leander
AP Scholar Hunter Gage will major in computer science. Gage played euphonium in his high school's band for four years. He held numerous leadership positions including librarian, head of props, vice president of equipment and section leader. Gage medaled at the Division II Texas State Solo-Ensemble Contest for his virtuoso solo. He was founder and president of a video game club his senior year. Gage was a member of the National Honor Society and Green Paws, a service club dedicated to recycling and conservation. He was a Texas Boys State member, which honors top high school leaders. Gage had a paid internship this summer at Behavior Media Networks building a mobile app.

McKinley Haney, Wylie East High School, Wylie
McKinley Haney was very active in her high school's International Thespian Society Theatre Troupe. She acted in over 15 plays, including four UIL one-act contests, and received honorable mention all-star cast and drama student of the year awards. Haney also was a member of the Spanish Honor Society, National Honor Society and Raiders for Christ. She volunteered for Habitat for Humanity and Toys for Tots. Haney won several first-place awards for her photography and artwork including the Art II Photography award and Most Creative award. Haney will major in visual and performing arts, specializing in theatre.

Kaylie Hartman, Pine Tree High School, Longview
Kaylie Hartman plans to major in healthcare studies. As a member of the Texas Bank and Trust Student Board, Hartman worked with students from area schools to learn about banking and contributed innovative ideas on how to reach young people. She was also a member of National Honor Society, a tutor for PALS and a member of Z Club, a service organization. Hartman participated in her high school's band for four years, serving as captain her senior year. She received a 1st division ensemble rating and 1st division rating marching competition three consecutive years. Hartman has been very active in her church, participating on its executive council and youth leadership team. She volunteered over 100 hours restoring and renovating homes after several natural disasters, including Hurricanes Katrina and Ike.

Luke Huebner, Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, Houston
Luke Huebner will major in mechanical engineering. As an advisory council member for Crusader Crew, Huebner helped incoming freshmen adjust to high school. Huebner was a member of National Honor Society and played on his high school's soccer team. He plays the bass clarinet and was selected 1st chair all four years. He competed in several computer programming competitions as a three-year member of Strake Jesuit's code crusaders. Huebner volunteered for two summers at Camp Champions, a camp for people with mental disabilities. As a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Youth Group, Huebner volunteered at the Houston Food Bank, the Salvation Army and a charity warehouse. He won the French Award and Le Grand Concours, awarded to students that place nationally on Le Grand Concours French Exam. Huebner is a lifeguard in the summer.

Maria Muhammad-Brown, Plano Senior High School, Plano
Maria Muhammad-Brown is an AP Scholar. Working 25 plus hours a week, she still tutors immigrants in basic math, science and English at Plano Family Literacy and volunteers with Bed Start, helping collect and deliver beds, and other items to low-income families. She is also a volunteer mentor at Forman Elementary and Barron Elementary. Muhammad-Brown played violin in her high school’s orchestra for four years, earning a solo and ensemble award two consecutive years. She was an AVID member and historian for two years, vice president for Global Humanity Association and communications officer for National Honor Society. As a member of the French National Honor Society, Muhammad-Brown has participated in several competitions, including Fete Francais and Texas French Symposium, placing third state-wide with the drama group and earning one of the top scores on the National French test. Muhammad-Brown plans to major in psychology.

Carolyn Nguyen, George Bush High School, Richmond
Valedictorian and AP Scholar Carolyn Nguyen will major in biology. Nguyen was one of three students selected from her high school for the Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD) Leadership Program. Part of the program included volunteering at non-profit organizations that included Bethel Ministries and Fort Bend Cares. She was selected for Youth in Philanthropy, a FBISD program sponsored by the George Foundation, and served more than 200 volunteer hours within the Fort Bend community. She also performed an additional 400 hours for UNICEF, Youth Expanding Services, National Honor Society and Art Honor Society, serving as president of UNICEF and Youth Expanding Services and historian for National Honor Society. She provided Christmas gifts, clothing and canned goods for children living at the Casa Hogar Elim orphanage in Mexico. Nguyen competed in the Technology Student Association and placed first in the photographic technologies competition, earning a trip to Florida for the national competition. As the academic team leader for the LET-1 squad in the AJROTC, she helped her squad place second in the National e-cyber Mission competition sponsored by the U.S. Army. Nguyen won the RMHC Scholarship and Youth in Philanthropy Service Excellence Award and the Youth Expanding Services medal for outstanding volunteering.

Brooklynn Palmer, Cedar Park High School, Cedar Park
AP Scholar Brooklynn Palmer received the AP Biology award, the only one from her graduating class. Palmer was president of the environmental club and was instrumental in raising money for the Austin Zoo. She was historian of the international club and a member of speech and debate, winning district honors for oral interpretation. A gifted dancer, Palmer was a member of Senior Elite, a dance company competition team in Cedar Park. She has volunteered over 100 hours for the Williamson Regional Animal Shelter and helped with school blood drives for the Blood and Tissue Center. Palmer received the prestigious St. David’s Neal Kocurek Scholarship award for leadership and commitment to her community. She will major in biochemistry.

Mishali Patel, Allen High School, Allen
Mishali Patel will major in healthcare studies. Patel organized a healthcare screening for Invisible Children, an organization that helps child soldiers in the Republic of Congo and south Sudan. As vice president of InterAct club, Patel organized service events and directed other officers. Patel was a member of HOSA, National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society and Key Club. She has volunteered for five years at the Allen Public Library, reading books and performing puppet shows. Patel is a greeter for Acute Kids Urgent Care and has volunteered for Angel’s League and Texas Health Resources in Allen. She is a certified
nursing assistant and completed an EMT course. Patel received the American Association of University Women's Scholarship and the Prestige Ambassador Scholarship.

Joselyn Quiros, JJ Pearce High School, Richardson
Joselyn Quiros was awarded the Mustang Star Award, an award given by faculty members to the student who excels in academics, exhibits character and has a passion for learning. Quiros was captain of the varsity bowling team, president of Mu Alpha Theta and vice president of the art club. As historian for the Red Cross club, she promoted community service among teens. She mentored and tutored incoming freshmen as a member of Starting Off Strong. For the past two summers, Quiros has traveled to Costa Rica to work in the microbiology lab of Dr. Alberto Olivas, assisting with blood and pregnancy tests. She operated equipment that measures cholesterol, triglyceride, glucose, and other metabolic chemical compounds, and corresponded with patients regarding their test results. Quiros plans to major in biology.

Consuelo Rojas, Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School, Dallas
Consuelo Rojas will major in finance and was a summer analyst intern at JP Morgan Chase. Rojas was a member of the LULAC Youth Council. She was selected to participate in the National LULAC Youth Leadership Convention, winning LULAC Youth Council of the Year. As chairman of Career Day for four years, Rojas was responsible for recruiting area female leaders to talk with the school's students about various career paths. Rojas was a member of the archery club, the Rebano Companerismo Cristiano Youth Group and the Hispanic Women's Network – Dallas Chapter, in which she received the Latinas in Progress Scholarship award. She co-founded and served as president of Tech Girlz, a program that provides laptops to students and performs repair work when necessary. She has volunteered at Head Start of Greater Dallas and Ascher Silberstein Elementary School.

Trevor Sommer, Los Fresnos High School, Los Fresnos
Trevor Sommer was captain of varsity baseball and basketball in his senior year. He was selected to the 1st team All-District Baseball Team, and the 1st team All-Metro Baseball Team, and will play for the UT Dallas men's baseball team. He has held numerous positions in DECA, including treasurer and vice president of community service. Through DECA, Sommer participated in a Breast Cancer Awareness walk, and made posters and helped recruit volunteers for a local Domestic Violence Awareness walk. He won state and regional competitions as a DECA ICDC International Conference qualifier. As a Dairy Queen Scholar awardee, Sommer received a laptop. He will major in accounting.

Brittney Tiemann, Lufkin High School, Lufkin
Brittney Tiemann will major in art and technology. Tiemann was historian, public relations chair and president of the art club. While president, she successfully started a face painting project to raise money for annual museum trips. She was commissioned to produce a portrait of Paul Laurence Dunbar for Dunbar Primary School's front entrance. Her award winning artwork was hung in her congressman's Washington, DC office for a year. Her work was displayed in the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for three consecutive years, earning a gold medal. She recently completed illustrations for a children's book to be published next year. Tiemann was awarded first place in the Edward Gorey Letter contest. Tiemann also took time from her art to participate in the theatre. She was head sound technician and handled the makeup for several shows. She was a member of National Honor Society and volunteered for the Museum
Deryl Tschoerner, Dr. Ralph H. Poteet High School, Mesquite
Deryl Tschoerner plans to major in actuarial science. As squad leader for the band, Tschoerner taught marching drills and reviewed music. He earned the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), and received Bronze, Gold and Silver Palms for completing extra merit badges and activities. He attended BSA's Oak Leaf Leadership training and was selected by his peers for BSA's honor organization, The Order of the Arrow which is a rare honor. He was a member of National Honor Society and received his high school's highest math award. Tschoerner has played piano for 10 years, winning several awards in area recital competitions.

Payam Zohdi, Frisco High School, Frisco
Payam Zohdi is CEO and founder of tecclick.com, a company that does graphic and web design and search engine optimization. He has partnered with international outsourcing agencies to handle his business growth. He also founded a non-profit, childsafetykits.weebly.com, an initiative to distribute child safety kits to local schools and daycare centers. Zohdi received the Gary Burns Leadership Award and the Short Bus Entrepreneurship Award. He has volunteered over 700 hours for the Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment Program and Change for Tomorrow. Zohdi also participated in a camp for youth and organized classes that focused on personal development, leadership and initiative. Zohdi is the Internet marketing director for Dallasirrigationsolutions.us. He was a member of National Honor Society and will major in healthcare studies with a minor in business administration.

2014 Transfer Terry Scholars

Jennera Berry, Dallas
Jennera Berry graduated with an associate of arts degree from Mountain View College in May. Berry is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and the Student Leadership Institution, where she attended workshops designed to nurture leadership qualities and develop conflict resolution skills. She has volunteered for It’s a Sensory World and has been a senior server and lead trainer at Hibiscus since 2011. Berry will major in sociology.

Benjamin Borst, Bulverde
Benjamin Borst plans to major in arts and technology. Borst attended San Antonio College and earned an associate degree in animation design. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and the drama club. He received the San Antonio College Presidential Honor and Outstanding Student Leadership Award for his involvement in GALA. Borst currently works at J. Crew and is a face painter and balloon artist.

Dustin Box, Dallas
Dustin Box attended Tarrant County College and served as secretary of the treasury for Spectrum GSA. He helped set up and install art pieces for the Tarrant County College Art Show, in which he received an honorable mention for his art piece “Overlooking”. Box was the recipient of the Dean's List award three consecutive semesters. He currently works as a front desk supervisor at La Quinta Inn. Box will major in
Lesley Capehart, Midlothian
Lesley Capehart plans to major in accounting. Capehart was a member of Phi Theta Kappa at El Centro College, and earned an associate degree in video and film production from North Lake College. He has played for the Dallas Independent Volleyball Association since 2008 and served as team captain. He was a member of their board of directors in 2012-2013. Capehart has worked for a variety of companies, including ABC News as a producer and editor. He has worked as a payroll manager since 2007.

Ruger Carstens, Greenville
Ruger Carstens graduated with highest honors from Paris Junior College with an associate degree in May. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and was selected to represent his college at the Texas Association of Community Colleges in 2012. Carstens is a second degree black belt and a winner of six gold medals. He works at Costco as a merchandiser. Carstens will major in mechanical engineering.

Salvador de Leon, Mesquite
Salvador de Leon graduated with an associate degree from Eastfield College in May. He will major in electrical engineering. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and was public relations officer for the NASA Scholars Club. At Eastfield, de Leon was a member of the Campus Activity Board, helping to plan social events. He is currently a student ambassador at G-Force. He plays guitar with his church's worship team and has volunteered for the IRS, helping area residents prepare their income tax returns.

Jennifer Del Toro, Dallas
Jennifer Del Toro attended Brookhaven College and El Centro College, earning an associate degree in 2013. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and was on the Honor Roll. As a contractor, she has worked as a Tradeshow and Event Coordinator for Texas Instruments since 2005. She will major in marketing.

Hon Ho, Dallas
Hon Ho attended Richland College from 2010 to 2014, earning associate degrees in accounting and applied science. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and participated in the Richland Connections Club, organizing charity drives and assisting with fundraisers. He was on the Dean's List twice. Ho currently works as a pharmacy technician at CVS Pharmacy and will major in global business.

Mai Huynh, Garland
Mai Huynh will major in chemistry. She graduated from Richland College with an associate degree in May. Huynh participated in the Women in Math and Science club, Mu Alpha Theta Honor Society and Phi Theta Kappa. She was on the President's Honor Roll for four consecutive semesters and was selected for the new Richland Honor Academy for her academic excellence and student involvement. Huynh was a STEM Scholar and received the Asian Pacific Islander and JD and Lillie Bell Hall Scholarships for academic excellence and leadership. She was one of 10 selected nationwide for the REU Summer Internship Research Program at Texas A&M – Commerce in 2013. Huynh shadowed professors and scientists engaged in their research and wrote a research paper for publication. She also was selected for the UNT-HHMI...
Transitions Summer Research Experience in 2014. Huynh currently works as a lab assistant and science tutor at Richland College.

Sofia Narvaez, Dallas
Sofia Narvaez graduated with an associate degree from Eastfield College in May. As a member of Phi Theta Kappa, Narvaez organized the 2013 Winter Gala and participated in fundraising. She previously was a receptionist the Pediatric Clinic of Mesquite. Narvaez will major in psychology.

Van Nguyen, Garland
Van Nguyen graduated with an associate degree accounting from Richland College in May and he will major in accounting. Nguyen worked as a repair technician for SV Probe, Inc. for seven years. Previously, he worked as a production manager for Rucker and Kolls.

Chanel Powell, Wylie
Chantel Powell will major in business administration. In 2012, she graduated from Collin College with an associate degree in general studies. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and has been very active in her church, working in childcare ministry and organizing food drives. She worked for three years as a sales representative for Sport Supply Group.

Rosario Rojas, Dallas
Rosario Rojas attended El Centro College before transferring to UT Dallas. She was elected to the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) District II Hall of Honor for her outstanding leadership skills in 2013. She also was a Five Star member of PTK and vice president of records in 2014. Rojas was a member of Mu Alpha Theta and the Student Government Association. She was a STEM Scholar and volunteered at Feast of Sharing, Tree Foundation and Kid's Inc. Rojas will major in computer science.

Jessica Romero, Dallas
Jessica Romero will major in business administration. She attended Richland College before transferring to UT Dallas. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and regularly helped to clean up a local community garden. Romero has been a coach and trainer for Texas Select Boxing Club since 2008. She has worked for Target as a supervisor and senior team leader since 2011.

Marylud Silva, Little Elm
Marylud Silva plans to major in accounting. She graduated from Collin College with an associate degree in business in 2012. Silva worked for Bank of America for almost five years, beginning in telephone sales and moving up to senior post-closing specialist. During this time, she regularly volunteered at the DMA Gala, AIDS awareness, Angel Tree and the North Texas Food Bank. In 2011, Bank of America employees volunteered over 1 million hours world-wide.

Matthew Smith, Plano
Matthew Smith graduated with an associate degree from Collin College in July. He was on the President's
List for the 2013 academic year and is a member of Phi Theta Kappa. Smith was active in Boy Scouts as a child and has continued his involvement as an adult, serving as an assistant scout master and advancement chair. He works part-time for FedEx as a courier. Smith will major in accounting.

Darya Tarassova, Bedford
Darya Tarassova will major in arts and technology. She attended Tarrant County College before transferring to UT Dallas. Tarassova is a member of Phi Theta Kappa. She works at Dream World Partners as a project coordinator, recently earning an Award for Excellence.

Semere Tesfagiorgis, Dallas
Semere Tesfagiorgis graduated with an associate degree in liberal sciences from Richland College in 2013. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and is an active volunteer in the Gospel Light Baptist church. Tesfagiorgis works at an area electronics company in quality assurance. He will major in supply chain management.

Jonathan Umelo, Wylie
Jonathan Umelo plans to major in biology. He attended Richland College before transferring to UT Dallas. Umelo participated in Phi Theta Kappa and Male Initiative. He was on the President’s Honor Roll and was nominated for the All-USA Academic Team. He was awarded the Thelma B. Ratcliff Scholarship, which benefits young students from Oak Cliff. Umelo currently works as a pharmacy technician at Wal-Mart.

Sterling Utley, Plano
Sterling Utley graduated with an associate degree in liberal arts from Collin College in July. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and was on the President’s List for two consecutive years. In 2008, Utley was signed with a modeling agency in Milan. He also traveled to New York, Los Angeles and Miami. Utley currently works as a head waiter for Pappadeaux Seafood Kitchen. He will major in business administration.

Alexandria Venable, Forney
Alexandria Venable will major in biology. Venable attended Trinity Valley Community College before transferring to UT Dallas. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa. Currently, Venable is a bookkeeper at Sundown Commercial.

Meagan Williams, Haltom City
Meagan Williams attended Tarrant County Community College and Collin College before attending UT Dallas. As a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, Williams works every June to help repair homes in Dallas. She is a member of the youth council at her church, advising younger female youth members. Williams currently is a server at Cantina Laredo. She will major in accounting.

Minasie Yosief, Garland
Minasie Yosief will major in engineering. Yosief attended Richland College before transferring to UT Dallas. He is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and volunteers at his church, helping young refugees adjust to life in
Erica Zamarripa, Houston
Erica Zamarripa graduated with an associate degree from Lone Star College-North Harris (LSC) in 2012. She was on the President's List for three consecutive semesters. As a founding member and president of American Association of University Women (AAUW) Student Affiliates, Zamarripa increased membership from three to 25 members and won the Outstanding Officer Award. She also was a Student Government representative. Zamarripa has worked as a biology lab assistant for LSC-North Harris for five years, and earned the Staff Excellence Award in 2012. She will major in child learning and development, and plans to teach elementary education.