On Thursday, September 15, 2011 UTSA's Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program sent a total of 10 undergraduate students to compete at the UT–System Annual Statewide Conference. Each student presented a poster which covered research projects they worked on throughout the 10 week summer research academy at UTSA.

The 2011 conference was hosted by the University of Texas at Arlington. The LSAMP fellows were comprised of 5 UTSA students, 3 San Antonio College students, 1 UT–Brownsville student & 1 student from UT–El Paso. All 10 students participated in research with UTSA faculty in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

"The LSAMP SRA (Summer Research Academy) is a wonderful experience for undergraduates. It gives them an opportunity to work alongside prominent research faculty and get exposed to the wonders of research," said Darrell Balderrama, director of outreach programs and LSAMP director at the UTSA Office of P–20 Initiatives. "Each of the research fellows was dedicated to a program and exhibited a wonderful desire to pursue their education into graduate school and I'm excited to see what the future holds for these students."

This year’s participants included 7 students in the area of engineering, 2 students in science and 1 in the area of mathematics. Each student was required to perform a minimum of 30 hours per week in their selected research labs. They then had to complete a final poster which would be showcased at the annual conference to compete against other LSAMP fellows from across the UT–System.

UTSA's LSAMP program proudly won 1st place in the Science poster competition and 2nd place in the engineering poster competition. Gerardo Rosas, a senior Biology major at UT–Brownsville, presented a poster of his work alongside Dr. Richard LeBaron & Dr. Clyde Felix. Gerardo's poster was titled, 'BIGH3: A Novel Agent that Induces Apoptosis in Breast Cancer Cells.' Cole Meyers, a sophomore engineering major at San Antonio College, presented his poster on the work he did alongside Dr. Xiaodu Wang titled, 'Effect of Polarity and Hydrogen Bonding Ability of Water on the Mechanical Behavior of Bones.'
“My summer experience at UTSA was something that made me, in many ways, more independent and mature, both personally and at work. My future goals include getting published in more papers and gain entrance into pharmacy school. I would like to specialize in neuropharmacology,” said Gerardo Rosas. “My summer LSAMP experience has helped in the sense that it allowed me not only to gain a different scope in research but also helped me realize what I am capable of.”

As part of the LSAMP program, this year's summer research academy participants were offered an opportunity to apply competitively for a trip to the World Science Forum in Budapest, Hungary. This year's winners are Peter G. Reyes, senior at UTSA – College of Engineering and Daniel Hernandez, senior at the College of Science.

The 2011 LSAMP SRA cohort at UTSA pursued research on an array of topics by working alongside faculty mentors in the UTSA College of Sciences and College of Engineering. Below are a list of participating students and their faculty research mentors:

Rodrigo Frausto–Dr. Sazzard Shafique & Drew Johnson (UTSA Engineering)
Daniel Hernandez–Dr. Mathew Gdovin (UTSA Biology)
Ariel Larson–Dr. Anand Ramasubramanian (SAC Engineering)
Melissa Martinez–Dr. Medhi Shadaram (UTSA Engineering)
Cole Meyers–Dr. Xiaodu Wang (SAC Engineering) (2nd Place Winner)
Peter G. Reyes–Dr. Harry Millwater (UTSA Engineering) (1st Place Winner)
Gerardo Rosas–Dr. Richard Le Baron & Dr. Clyde Felix (UTB Biology)
Adan Sanchez–Dr. HungDa Wan (UTSA Engineering)
Jonathan Tavarez–Dr. JingYon Ye (UTEP Engineering)
Shahla Zahroony–Dr. Sandy Norman (SAC Math)

The UTSA LSAMP program enrolls new participants each semester and will accept applications beginning Nov. 1 for Summer Research Academy 2012. To learn more, contact Darrell Balderrama at 210-458-2697.