

## UTeach Arkansas awards \$5,000 scholarship

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### UTeach Arkansas awards \$5,000 scholarship packages for 15-second videos

**LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Feb. 4, 2015)** –UTeach Arkansas has selected the winners of its video contest for high school seniors.

In September, UTeach Arkansas announced it would award \$5,000 scholarship packages to three high school seniors who created a winning 15-second-or-less online video that demonstrates a STEM concept (science, technology, engineering or math).

The videos were judged on content, originality, and point-of-view/purpose, with a possible total of 12 points.

The winners are Lauren Bradley of eStem School in Little Rock, Miriam Gonzales of Rogers High School in Rogers, and Erica Savage of Cabot High School in Cabot.

Each award package includes a \$2,500 tuition credit at a participating Arkansas UTeach university – University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, or University of CentralArkansas. The package also includes a laptop (approximately \$1,500 value), a graphing calculator (approximately \$250 value), and a \$750 book voucher.

In the winning videos, Lauren prepared dry ice ice cream, Miriam demonstrated an iron oxide and aluminum reaction, and Erica showed an iodine clock reaction.

“We were impressed not only by our three winners, but by all the videos submitted, which showed the depth of creativity among high school students throughout the state,” said Lisa Palacios, chairman of the UTeach Arkansas board. “These entries demonstrated the real-world application and the fun that can be had with STEM subjects, and we are encouraged to know that this next generation of STEM teachers will pass on that excitement to future generations of students.”

Qualified STEM teachers are a critical need throughout the country. In response to this need, the University of Texas at Austin created the first UTeach program in 1997 as a new way to prepare secondary science, math and computer science teachers. Its strength lies in the unique collaboration between the Colleges of Natural Sciences and Education.

The UTeach program has been well received, cited by the National Academy of Sciences as a model program addressing the need for more highly qualified mathematics and science teachers.

The UTeach program is currently active at 40 universities across 19 states with a total enrollment of more than 6,700 students and more than 2,000 graduates. By 2020, the UTeach Institute projects more than 8,000 graduates will be teaching across the country.

Through UTeach Arkansas, students explore science, technology, engineering and math; learn the benefits of an education career; and have a positive impact in Arkansas and beyond. The program is part of the Governor's Workforce Initiative called STEM Works.

Each year the federal government asks states to identify teacher shortage areas. In December 2013, the Arkansas Department of Education designated secondary science and math as two academic shortage areas for the 2013-2014 school year. Shortage areas were designated based on the number and percentage of waivers granted to teachers teaching out of their area of licensure, projected decreases in the teacher work force due to attrition and/or retirement, and the number of teachers entering the teacher workforce relative to attrition.

UTeach Arkansas combines in-depth science or mathematics education with teacher preparation. Students can graduate in four years with both a bachelor's degree in mathematics or science and a minor in education. Students completing the UTeach Arkansas program are recommended to the Arkansas Department of Education for their teaching certificate in science or math grades 7-12.