



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Great Minds in STEM Announces HENAAC Award Winners for 2024

Washington, DC, August 22, 2024 – Great Minds in STEM is proud to unveil our 2024 HENAAC Award Winners! Established in 1989 to honor Hispanic engineers, scientists and technology professionals and highlight their world-class contributions to the STEM fields, the HENAAC Awards have become synonymous with excellence. As a true peer-review distinction, a HENAAC Award distinguishes the honoree as among the best and brightest in their field, and the Class of 2024 more than meets the highest standards these prestigious awards.

As in each previous year, the 36th class of honorees emerged from the rigorous, peer-review independent Selection Committee, chaired this year by the deans and senior leaders of the schools of engineering and/or science at our academic host institutions: The University of Texas at Dallas; the University of Texas at Arlington; and Dallas College. The Selection Committee reviewed nominees from dozens of companies, national laboratories, government agencies, academic institutions and our nation's uniformed services on their way toward finalizing the 2024 slate of professional honorees.

All GMiS professional honorees will be honored at the 36th annual GMiS Conference, "Answering the Call," November 6-9, 2024 in Fort Worth, Texas. The HENAAC Awards Show is scheduled for Saturday, November 9th, at the Fort Worth Convention Center.



ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

Clara Rivero Baleine, Ph.D.

Lockheed Martin Fellow
Lockheed Martin Corporation



SCIENTIST OF THE YEAR

Rui Vogt Alves da Cruz, Ph.D.

Vice President, Core R&D
Dow

EXECUTIVE EXCELLENCE

Francisco Flores

Vice President, Production
Engineering & Operations
Northrop Grumman Corporation

OUTSTANDING TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Katherine Meza, Ph.D.

Associate Technical Fellow
Configuration Management
and Product Integration Engineer
The Boeing Company

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Tabare Abadie, Ph.D.

Senior Research Manager and
Distinguished Laureate, Seed Product
Development Recruiting Lead
Corteva Agriscience

CHAIRMAN'S AWARD

The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers

SANTIAGO RODRIGUEZ DIVERSITY AWARD

Maria C. Lopez

Deputy Executive Director
Ames Exchange
NASA Ames Research Center

PIONEER AWARD

Anna Mellado Park

CEO
Mellado-Castañeda Family Office

Press Release

August 22, 2024



GMiS Announces HENAAC Award Winners for 2024 (continued)

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT II

Jorge Lopez, Ph.D.

Manager Subsurface Technology &
Senior Principal Geophysicist
Shell Brasil

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT I

Maria Cardwell

Senior Director, Vehicle Engineering
Formerly of
Northrop Grumman Corporation

ENTREPRENEUR

Will Gaviria Rojas, Ph.D.

Co-Founder
Coactive AI

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER, PH.D.

Claudia Moreno Chicunque, Ph.D.

Senior Principal Engineer
Guidance, Navigation, and Control
Northrop Grumman Corporation

MOST PROMISING SCIENTIST, PH.D.

Mauricio Tano-Retamales, Ph.D.

Modeling and Simulation Scientist
Idaho National Laboratory

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER, MASTER'S DEGREE

Monica Ochoa

Human Engineering Lead, Flight Crew
Integration, CST-100 Starliner
The Boeing Company

MOST PROMISING ENGINEER, UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

Karina Quintana

System Engineer
Digital Communications and RF Payload
The Boeing Company

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Marjorie Blanco

Engineering Product Lifecycle Manager
The Boeing Company

GMiS Acknowledges and thanks our 2024 Selection Committee Chairs

Stephanie G. Adams, Ph.D.

Dean and Lars Magnus Ericsson Chair
Erik Jonsson School of Engineering
and Computer Science
The University of Texas at Dallas

Peter E. Crouch, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Engineering
The University of Texas at Arlington

Morteza G. Khaledi, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Science
The University of Texas at Arlington

Raghunath Kanakala, Ph.D.

Vice Provost
School of Engineering, Technology,
Mathematics, and Sciences



About Great Minds in STEM (GMiS): Great Minds in STEM is a national nonprofit organization established in 1989 to inspire, support, and recognize students and professionals, especially those from underserved communities, in order to expand and strengthen America's talent pool of Science, Technology, Engineering, Math and Medical (STEMM) professionals. For 36 years, GMiS has pioneered programs and initiatives that have helped build a STEMM workforce that fully reflects the rich diversity of our nation, including in-classroom pre-college engagement, college scholarships, academic advocacy, professional partnerships, and national recognition events.



About the GMiS Conference: Great Minds in STEM's annual Conference is the organization's flagship event. First held in 1989 in Houston, Texas, and renewed every year since, the conference features executive forums, seminars, competitive programs, networking sessions, and an all-day Career and Graduate School fair. The 4-day event is attended by over 3,000 STEM students and professionals annually and will culminate with the HENAAC Awards Show Saturday, November 9th at the Fort Worth Convention Center. 2024 will mark the first GMiS Conference to be held in the city of Fort Worth, and the first conference in Texas since 2008.

For media inquiries about honorees, please contact: Peter Mellado, Director of Recognition Events, at pmellado@greatmindsinstem.org

Note to editors: High-resolution photos of the GMiS logo are available upon request

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