Sara Torres, Ph.D.
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in School Improvement — December 2021

Master of Education in Leadership — May 2016

Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies — May 1998
Specialization: Early Childhood

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

Assistant Professor — Sept 2022 – Present
of Instruction, Texas State University
Curriculum & Instruction
Prepare coursework, teach, and grade

- 2311 Education and Equity in a Diverse Society
- 2355 STEM in ECE & Elementary
- 4301 Play in Educational Settings for Diverse Learners
- 4355 The Elementary Science Curriculum
- 4345 Teaching Mathematics to Diverse Children in ECE-2nd
- 4350 Teaching Mathematics to Diverse Children in Grades 3-6

Research Scholar at the LBJ Institute for — Aug 2023- Present
STEM Education and Research

Principal Investigator, *FAMA 3: High School IDEAS (Innovation, Discovery, and Exploration in Aerospace and Science).* (2022, August). Torres, A. (Co-I), MUREP Aerospace Academies (MAA), NASA Minority Education Research University Project (MUREP). $479,800.00, Grant #80NSSC22M0287 (PR No. 4200814277). Period of Performance: September 2025-Present. https://www.nasa.gov/feature/stem/nasa-awards-38-million-to-recruit-students-into-stem

Co-PI, *LBJ SHIP Project 2: The Lyndon B. Johnson Institute for STEM Education and Research Space Health Inclusion Partnership.* (2023, March). Collins, K.H. (Co-PI); Hanson, L. (Co-I), Translational Research Institute for Space Health (TRISH), NASA Sub-award Grant #DIV0002. $100,000.00, Granted. Period of Performance: Aug 2023-Sep 2023.

Program Coordinator, *FAMA 3: High School IDEAS (Innovation, Discovery, and Exploration in Aerospace and Science).* (2022, August). Collins, K.H. (PI) & Torres, A. (Co-I), MUREP Aerospace Academies (MAA), NASA Minority Education Research University Project (MUREP). $479,800.00, Grant #80NSSC22M0287 (PR No. 4200814277). Period of Performance: October 2022-September 2025. https://www.nasa.gov/feature/stem/nasa-awards-38-million-to-recruit-students-into-stem

Key Personnel, *LBJ SHIP Project 2: The Lyndon B. Johnson Institute for STEM Education and Research Space Health Inclusion Partnership.* (2023, March). Collins, K.H. (PI); Sangam, D. & Huling, L. (Co-Is), Translational Research Institute for Space Health (TRISH), NASA Sub-award Grant #DIV0002. $100,000.00, Granted. Period of Performance: July 2023-Oct 2023.

LBJ Institute for STEM Education and Research: June 2017-August 31, 2022
NASA Ames Research Center [STEM Engagement & Educator Professional Development Collaborative (EPDC) Specialist]

- Create Educator Professional Development Sessions, ie. Teaching teachers STEM curriculum
- Develop NASA STEM content and educational resources including instructional videos & micro-credentials we call badges
- Deliver asynchronous and synchronous virtual & face to face PD Sessions
- Student Engagement K-20 ie. Teaching undergraduate students and preservice teachers STEM Content
- Coordinate STEM Engagement Events
- Communicate and establish external partnerships
- Educational Researcher for STEM Initiatives
- Present NASA STEM content at Conferences

Researcher for the LBJ Institute of STEM Research and Education: 2016-2017
Texas State University

- Coordinator of Future Aerospace Mathematicians & Engineers Academy (FAMA) programming
- Educational researcher for STEM Initiatives

STEM & Enrichment Elementary Teacher (Full-time) 2015-2016
Travis Elementary

- STEM education for all students in grades 2-5 daily
- Coordinator of Science Fair at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of Family Engineering Nights at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of Duke TIP at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of Green School projects at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of after-school student enrichment clubs
- Coordinator of Community Learning Exchange (CLE) in partnership with Dr. Guajardo
- Coordinator of Family Café for Future Aerospace-Engineers & Mathematicians Academy

Elementary Teacher (Full-time) 2010-2015
Travis Elementary

Providing Enrichment & Intervention Education, including:

- Pull out program providing enrichment for students in grades 1-5 daily
- Individualized instruction for struggling students
- Coordinator of Science Fair and academic competitions at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of Family Engineering Nights at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of Duke TIP at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of Green School projects at Travis Elementary
- Coordinator of after-school student enrichment clubs
- Co-teaching Inquiry based physics with Texas State University Physics Professor

Facilitator (Full-time), Gifted/Talented Education 2005-2010

Facilitator of gifted/education programming at Travis Elementary school, including:

- Taught San Marcos CISD identified students with gifts and talents, grades K through 5 (pull out model)
- Wrote curriculum for identified gifted students
- Assessed for the determination of gifted/talented services (coordination and testing)
- Coordinated academic competitions
- Provided Gifted & Talented PD for teachers in grades K-5

Classroom Teacher 2001-2005
San Marcos Independent School District, Bonham Pre-K Center, Travis Elementary, San Marcos, Texas

- Taught Pre-Kindergarten 3 year olds bilingual/inclusion classroom
- Taught Pre-Kindergarten 4/5 year olds classroom
- Taught Kindergarten classroom
- Full-time teaching responsibilities including: lesson planning, assessing students informally and formally
- Participated in daily duties and activities of the classroom
- Participated in after school family nights

Classroom Teacher 1998-1999
San Marcos Independent School District, Travis Elementary, San Marcos, Texas

- Taught 2nd grade inclusion classroom (deaf & hard of hearing)
- Full-time teaching responsibilities including: lesson planning, assessing students informally and formally
- Participated in daily routines and activities of the classroom

OTHER RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

UT Hands on Regional Collaborative: Inquiry Based Science Aug 2011- June 2014
Teacher Mentor (143.5 hours)

Life Through Time: Sponsored by The Institute of Museum & Library Sept 2012
Services & Texas Natural Science Center, 96 SBEC hours

Student Teacher, Dual Placement 1st grade and Kindergarten January 1998
Comal Independent School District, Rahe Primary School, Bulverde, Texas

- Worked with Kindergarten and 1st graders
- Full-time teaching responsibilities including: lesson planning, teaching lessons, assessing students (formally and informally)

EDUCATOR CERTIFICATES

Elementary Self-Contained (PK-6)

Elementary Early Childhood Education (PK-6)

Bilingual/ESL Spanish Education (PK-6)

Principal (EC-12)

AWARDS AND HONORS

Teaching Awards

San Marcos Lions Club Teacher of the month, 2011
Teacher of the Year- Travis Elementary, 2014
White House Initiative on Educational recipient, 2016
Alpha Chi Honor Society's Favorite Professors Award 2024

School Awards- coordinator for groups receiving awards
Green School Award recipient (2010-2015)
San Marcos City Chess Champions (2013)

Academic Awards
Phi Kappa Phi (inducted April 2015)
Michael L. Abbott Scholarship Award (2016)
Merrick Doctoral Merit Fellowship (2016)
Texas State Graduate College Scholarship (2017)
Barbara Jackson Scholar (2018-2019)

Publication Awards
ASEE Honorable Mention Best Paper Competition. Pre-College Engineering Education Division of the American Society for Engineering Education. They Choose to Attend Summer Camps? A Mixed Methods Study Exploring Motivation for, and the Impact of, an Academic Summer Pre-engineering Camp upon Middle School Students in a Latino Community. (2017)

TEACHING-RELATED EXTERNAL GRANTS (FUNDED)

Torres, S. (2011). Incorporating photography with writing- short story and poetry, Funded by San Marcos Education Foundation, $2,800.00

Torres, S. (2012). Afterschool garden club, Funded by Time Warner, $500.00
Torres, S. (2014). Travis Elementary Branching out, Funded by San Marcos Foundation, $3,500.00

PhD. Ortiz (PI), A., PhD. Rodriguez (Co-PI), L., **Torres, S.** (2015) FY 2014 NASA Research Announcement (NRA) for Educational Opportunities in NASA STEM (EONS) 2014, NASA Minority University Research and Education Project Aerospace Academy, $400,000.00

Collins, K.H. (PI); **Torres, S.,** Hanson, L., & Huling, L. (Co-Is). (2023, March). *LBJ SHIP Project 2: The Lyndon B. Johnson Institute for STEM Education and Research Space Health Inclusion Partnership.* Translational Research Institute for Space Health (TRISH), NASA Sub-award Grant #DIV0002. $100,000.00, Granted. Period of Performance: July 2023-Oct 2023.

TEACHING-RELATED EXTERNAL GRANTS (Submitted/ Pending)

Torres, S. (PI), Rivera, E. (Co-I), Huling, L. (Key Personnel), (2024, April). Texas State University Air, Space, and Engineering Academy (ASEA) Department of Defense Air Force Office of Scientific Research, Submitted proposal, anticipated funding $450,000.00 Grant period of Performance: Sept 1, 2024-August 31, 2027.

Torres, A. (PI), **Torres, S.** (Co-I), Rivera, E. (Key Personnel). Bridge: Building Resilience, Innovation, Development and Growth in STEM.NASA Office of STEM. Engagement. (OSTEM) Minority University Research and Education Project (MUREP), Engagement Opportunities in NASA STEM. (EONS). Submitted proposal, anticipated funding $250,000.00 Grant period of performance: Sept 1, 2024-August 31, 2027.

Rivera, E. (PI), **Torres, S.** (Co-I). El Jardín: Organic, Dynamic, and Sustainable Approaches to Public Education. Spencer Large Grant. Submitted proposal, anticipated funding $374,000.00 Grant period of performance: Sept 1 2025-August 31, 2028.

PRESENTATIONS

Close E. & **Torres, S**. (August 2012). Teaching Science using the Inquiry Method. Professional Development for teachers in San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District.

Close E. & **Torres, S**. (April 2013). Building scientific curiosity, content knowledge, and inquiry skills through investigations of simple electric circuits. NSTA Accepted for presentation at the annual convention of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA).

Close E., Thompson M., & **Torres S**. (January, 2016). Integrating Expository Writing and Hands-on Science. Professional Development for 4th and 5th grade San Marcos CISD teachers.

Guajardo M., Garcia S., Martinez E., **Torres S**., Valadez M. (2016). *Living for Community: Cultivating Leadership for School and Community Change*. University Council of Education Administrators 2016 Conference.

Ortiz, A.M. & Rodriguez Amaya, L., & Warshauer, H.K. & **Torres, S. G.** & Scanlon, E., & Pruett, M. (2017, June), *They Choose to Attend Summer Camps? A Mixed Methods Study Exploring Motivation for, and the Impact of, an Academic Summer Pre-engineering Camp upon Middle School Students in a Latino Community*. 2017 ASEE Annual Conference.

Torres, S. (2017). Enhancing Elementary Students' Scientific Investigation and Reasoning Skills by Using the Engineering Design Process and NASA Resources. CAST 2017 Conference.

Torres, S. (2018). NASA Learning Lab, Using the Engineering Design Process and NASA Resources. ATE 2018 Conference.

Torres, S., Betts, S., Carpenter, B., Hinojosa, O. & Guajardo, M.A. (2018). *The power of Community Learning Exchanges (CLE): Cultivating sustainable relationships to effect radical change.* University Council of Educational Administrators annual convention. Houston, TX.

Torres, S. (2019). Exploring Flight Using NASA Resources. UtSTA 2019 Conference.

Torres, S. (2019). NASA Resources. SACNAS 2019 Conference.

Torres, S., Betts, S., Carpenter, B., Hinojosa, O. & Guajardo, M.A. (2019). *Navigating the Institution: A Multiracial Perspective.* University Council of Educational Administrators annual convention. New Orleans, TX.

Torres, S. & Uribe M. (2020). Artemis. Celebrating Women In Mathematics &Science (CWIMS) STEM 2020 Conference.

Torres, S. (2020). Moon to Mars. CA STEAM Symposium.

Straubhaar, R., Betts, S., & **Torres, S** (2020). *Pursuing Critical Consciousness on the Tenure Track: Toward a Humanizating Praxis within the Neoliberal University*. Reinventing Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Bloomsbury Academic. New York, NY.

Torres, S. (2021). Moon to Mars, Artemis Program Aeronaut-X and Ames Research Center. Celebrating Engineer's Week- Anchorage Alaska.

Torres, S. (2021). Experimental Planes at NASA, X-57. Silicon Valley Leaders Group-STEM Stars Girls Conference

Torres, S., Garcia S. & Uribe M. (2021). STEM Learning Exchange: Building & Uniting a STEM Community in the Artemis Era from Coast to Coast.
Torres, S. & Uribe, M. (2021). Next Gen STEM Moon to Mars, Designed to grow Conference- Montana After School Alliance.

Torres, S. & Uribe, M. (2021). Explore Moon to Mars: We are the Artemis Generation. American Indian Science and Engineering Society Conference.

Torres, S. & Uribe, M. (2021). NASA Makes. Maker Ed.

Torres, S. & Uribe, M. (2021). NASA Aeronaut-X featuring X-57 and X-59. CA STEAM 21 Virtual Conference.

Torres, S. & Uribe, M. (2021). Artemis Generation. American Indian Science & Engineering Society (AISES) Conference.

Torres, S. (2022). Exploring the "How" of Contributing to Equity, Inclusion, Diversity in the Lunar and Planetary Community. Lunar Surface Science Workshop.

Kohler, S. & **Torres, S**. (2022). NASA STEM: Problem Based Learning with Biomimicry Robotics. SEEC Conference.

Kohler, S. & **Torres, S**., Uribe, M. (2022). NASA STEM Robotics: Navigate Your Zone and Robotic Search and Rescue. SEEC Conference.

Uribe, M. & **Torres, S**., Kohler, S. (2022). NASA STEM Robotics: Sistemas de aeronaves no tripuladas: Navegando tu Zona. SEEC Conference.

Guajardo, M. & Torres, S. **(**2023) Teaching as an act of Liberation within diverse Spaces of knowledge construct: L@s Maestr@s de la Comunidad. Project Maestros Conference.

Torres, S. (2023). Featured Speaker. A *Plática* on Child's Work- The Importance of Play: Schools of the Future Conference, Honolulu, HI

Torres, S. (2023). Featured Speaker. Connecting Families and Schools - Building Sustainable Early Childhood Education Communities using STEM and Nontraditional Methods: Schools of the Future Conference, Honolulu, HI

COMMUNITY SERVICES

San Marcos Parks and Recreation girl's basketball coach (2008-2010)
Sunday school Bible class teacher (2009-2014)
St. John's Catholic Church Choir member (2013-2020)
Facilities Steering Community Committee Member for SMCISD (2016-2017)
SMCISD district wide science fair consultant (2016-2017)
Advisor Representative for Kappa Delta Chi, Texas State University (Jan 2024-Present)
Ph.D. Mentor. Graduate students. Texas State University (2020-2022)
Honor's Mentor. Undergraduate student. Texas State University (Fall 2024)
Comprehensive Exam Review Committee (Fall 2024- Present)
Kappa Delta Chi Advisor (2023-Present)
Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos Board Member (Spring 2025-Present)
Student Recommendations (Fall 2023- Present)
C&I Hiring Committee (Fall 2025)
C&I/ NASA Thinkshop (Makerspace) Coordinator (Fall 2025- Present)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

TSTA/ NEA (National Education Association) Member 2012-2016
NSTA (NATIONAL SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION) Member 2013

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Phi Kappa Phi (2015-2021)
Hispanic Policy Network (2016-2018)

LANGUAGES

English (Fluent)
Spanish (Fluent)