



# SWCOEH Southwest Center for Occupational and Environmental Health

A NIOSH Education and Research Center

SWCOEH ERC Director: David Gimeno, PhD | E-mail: david.gimeno@uth.tmc.edu

**Mission** As one of the 1st and continuously funded NIOSH ERCs in the nation, the SWCOEH has a 45-year history of commitment to addressing issues on occupational safety and health. With contributions from partners in industry, government, and community organizations, the SWCOEH’s mission is to promote and improve health, safety, and well-being for workers and their communities through inspiring education, innovative research, and engaging outreach in Public Health Region 6: **Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.**



## Education and research-based training program for improving workers’ well-being and business performance

**Purpose** To empower workers and their communities to attain their well-being goals in work and life. Three core values, excellence, collaboration, and integrity, guide our work.

**Industrial Hygiene (IH)** — To anticipate, recognize, evaluate, control, and protect workers from workplace hazards that may result in injury and illness.

**Occupational Medicine (OM)** — To diagnose and treat work-related injuries and illnesses and promote the well-being of workers .

**Occupational Epidemiology (Occ Epi)** — To identify and evaluate work-related exposures that may be linked to risks for injury and illness.

**Total Worker Health (TWH)** — 1<sup>st</sup> graduate level program in TWH in the U.S. dedicated to identifying, characterizing, and integrating workers’ well-being and safety and developing, implementing, and evaluating strategies, policies, and programs to improve health.

**Traineeships Benefits** — Tuition & fees, travel funds, an a monthly stipend for U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

**81** masters and doctoral trainees in IH (40), OM (18), Occ Epi (12) and TWH (11) in 2017-2022

**All graduates** are employed and currently serving the needs of communities, industry, government and academia



### Industrial Hygiene

- Los Alamos National Laboratory, NM
- Lawrence Livermore Nat’l Lab., CA
- BAE Systems, Incorporated, PA
- U.S. Airforce

### Occupational Medicine

- Memorial Hermann, TX
- Phillips 66 refinery, TX
- U.S. CDC

*“I greatly appreciate the collegial environment at the SWCOEH”*

*“I greatly value the kind and thoughtful feedback from SWCOEH faculty”*

*“The SWCOEH has the personnel and the resources to help you gain the knowledge to carve out their desired future careers”*

*“The SWCOEH is a great asset with mentorship, finding opportunities, and growing your professional network”*

### Occupational Epidemiology

- UTHealth Houston, TX
- U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research, TX
- National Center for Farmworker Health
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

## SWCOEH ERC Minority Alumni Success Stories

**R. Daywalker**— African American, 1st TWH trainee in the US currently working on her dissertation after completing her residency in Occupational Medicine has been appointed Medical Director at WorkSTEPS, a large provider of Fit-for-Duty evaluations.

**W. Harrison**—African American, started her journey at Tulane University in New Orleans, graduated from the Occupational Epidemiology program, and has been appointed as a Public Health Informaticist with the Washington State Department of Health.

**A. Rodriguez**—Latina, raised in an agricultural migrant family from South Texas, graduated from the Occupational Epidemiology program and is now an Assistant Professor focusing on occupational health and safety among agricultural workers.

# Finding Solutions Through Research

24 Years

\$1.7 Million

155 Projects

41 Institutions

## Pilot Projects Research Training Program

Promotes regional **inter-institutional ties** by fostering short-term research projects initiated by investigators and research trainees in AR, LA, NM, OK, and TX.

**National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) sectors:** Services; Oil and gas extraction; Public Safety; Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing; and Construction; and **cross-sectors:** respiratory health, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, injuries, and musculoskeletal health. Also, novel issues such as nanotechnology or application of innovative technology ('prevention through design').

<b>AR</b>	Arkansas State University, University of Arkansas, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
<b>LA</b>	Louisiana State University, Southeastern University, and Tulane University
<b>NM</b>	University of New Mexico, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
<b>OK</b>	Oklahoma State University, University of Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, University of Tulsa
<b>TX</b>	Baylor College of Medicine, Baylor University, Texas A&M components, Texas Tech, Texas Woman's, University of Houston, University of Texas components

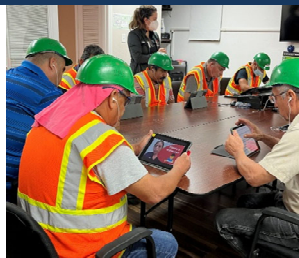
## Funded Research Projects

- **UTHealth School of Public Health**—Cooling vests for heat strain in construction workers; maternal occupational exposures and birth defects; or, disease risk perception and preventive care among household cleaners
- **University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences**—Aerosolized Human Papilloma Virus in health care workers
- **Texas A&M HSC**—Evaluation of exoskeleton fit, use, and associated neurophysiological costs
- **Oklahoma State University**—Mitigating infection risks to airborne SARS-CoV-2 in patient rooms
- **New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology**—Respirable silica dust characteristics and sources in the mining industry
- **Southeastern Louisiana University**—Importance of exercises for low back pain in construction workers

## Updating knowledge, skills, & current practices

### Continuing Education

Provides **easy access to a wide range of specialized training** for physicians, nurses, industrial hygienists, safety professionals and other occupational safety and health professionals to better protect workers' health and improve how they do their job.



In 2017-2022

19,847

Contact Hours

4,532

Professionals Trained

135

In-person & e-trainings

In all states

### Outreach

We aim to **increase awareness and positively impact** worker health, safety, and well-being **translate science into practice** by collaborating with businesses, community groups, advocacy groups, and governmental agencies .

On-site training to over 4,000 workers and 46 businesses on keeping workers and customers safe, returning to work, use of personal protective equipment.

Worked with 41 community partners to facilitate over 66 on-site vaccine clinics in small, medium, and large employers in AR, OK, and TX, for 3,400 workers and their families.

Conducted 2,272 door-to-door conversations with hard-to-reach, vulnerable community members in the Rio Grande Valley, El Paso, and the Texas Panhandle.

In 2021-2022

1,569

Online training hours

1,245

Attendees

36

Webinars & media