Service learning can serve as an effective vehicle to **build tangible skills** in implementation science **research and practice** among ITRE scholars

Evaluating an implementation science training program: Impact on professional research and practice

Project Background

Providing the opportunity for future researchers and practitioners to gain capacity and knowledge in implementation science research and practice is critical to closing the gap between translating best practices into workable programs in the field. The Institute for Translational Research Education in Adolescent Drug Abuse (ITRE) is a NIDA funded graduate certificate program that aims to develop innovative, applied research and implementation practice skills among ITRE scholars. The results of this evaluation highlight the ITRE's impact on implementation research and practice skills among its scholars.

Evaluation Design

Participants = ITRE Scholars Cohorts 1-5

- » **ITRE Scholars** = multidisciplinary graduate students (e.g., public health, social work, occupational therapy), non-degree seeking students, and community partners

Qualitative interviews (n=58)

- » **Exit interviews** – One month post-graduation (n=34)
- » **Alumni interviews** – Two years post-graduation (n=24)

Thematic analysis

- » A priori and emergent themes

Thematic Analysis

IS Application

- » Awareness and application of IS concepts in research, practice, and daily work
- » Using IS concepts to create a bridge between academia and community settings
- » Multidisciplinary nature of IS

Mentorship

- » Supported development among scholars in research/evaluation methods, professionalism and the ability to engage stakeholders and build relationships with community agencies

Research Skills

- » Real-world experience in conducting community-based research
- » Community partner collaboration
- » Engaging in applied research in a team setting

Vocational Impact

- » Opportunities to network
- » Increased job and educational opportunities by bolstering CV

IS Application

"I think it's influenced the way I think about things. I know one of the biggest takeaways was learning about translational science and the research-to-practice pipeline. I'm always thinking about that when I'm doing my work and thinking about how to apply it in the future."

Research Skills

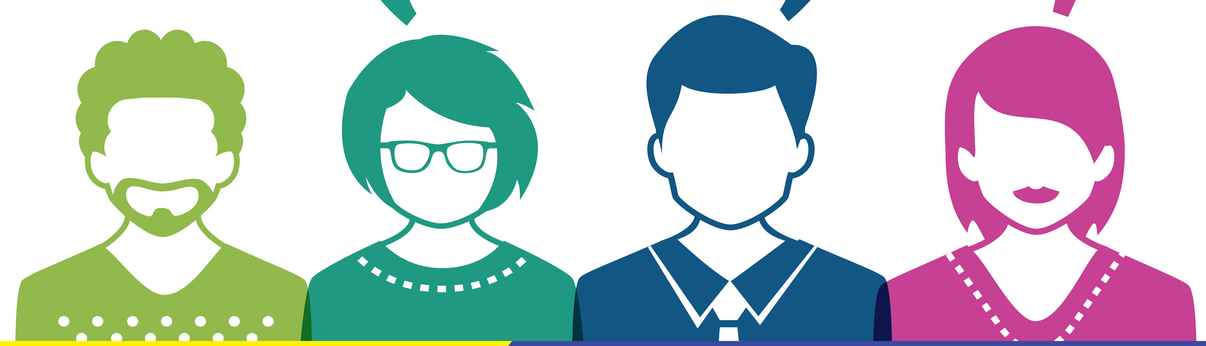
"The project and the curriculum has helped me have an idea of research that I could continue to do in communities and I can take these skills and apply it to different situations, different phenomenon that I like to observe, or that communities feel are relevant to them and have at least a ground – like a general idea of what are the steps for achieving this."

Mentorship

"...having her there to kind of help guide us through the process of doing all that was really important. I think that mentor-mentee type of role was really big for me. It kind of turned me onto the possibility that I could potentially get involved in research, if that was something I wanted to do, whereas before, I didn't even think that research was something I considered."

Vocational Impact

"I can reference the classes that I've taken that were very specific, and specific to my future employers and community partners, and how that is relevant to legislators. So, really, that one program provided me with behavioral health content, and a skillset in translational science, that I otherwise would have been lacking in all of my education."



The Institute for Translational Research Education in Adolescent Drug Abuse is supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the National Institutes of Health under award number R25DA031103.

NAU NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

Institute for Translational Research Education in Adolescent Drug Abuse

UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA
College of Behavioral & Community Sciences
Child & Family Studies

The Institute for Translational Research Education in Adolescent Drug Abuse is a collaborative effort between community agencies serving adolescents and the University of South Florida and Northern Arizona University.

Enya Vroom, MS
Alexandra Albizu-Jacob, MPH
Oliver T. Massey, PhD
Contact: evroom@usf.edu