

EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

Empowering Leadership: Computing Scholars of Tomorrow Alliance
<http://www.empoweringleadership.org>

The ELA Mission

The Empowering Leadership Alliance: Computing Scholars of Tomorrow Alliance is a national network of committed university and industry professionals that addresses the needs of underrepresented minority (URM) students at research universities across the country. The ELA is committed to ensuring that the nation's research universities do their part in contributing to the preparation of the nation's next generation of computing professionals and prepare them for positions of leadership at the national level.

The ELA Challenge: Loss of the Precious Few

The nation is losing many of its best students from computing and other science, engineering, technology, and mathematics disciplines when students enter universities intending to major in those areas then migrate to other disciplines.



The ELA Work

The ELA has engaged a network numbering over 650 members to date. The ELA provides resources and opportunities that support students at research universities to flourish in the discipline through three working models depending on the size of the university minority community.

1. **Local Model** – Where a sufficient critical mass of underrepresented students exists at a university, a local support network encourages students. Local ELA programs provide in-person relationships with on-campus faculty and peers. At University of Texas in Austin, members of the Minority Computer Science Student Organization, UTCS ELA, meet monthly for community support, mentoring on research, and social activities. The new ELA Rice chapter connects students and faculty in an innovative advising relationship and meets monthly for community support as well. ELA at UC Berkeley sponsors dozens of support activities for URM students.
2. **Regional Model** – Where critical mass is not available locally, a network is built through groups of universities within a region. Regional programs provide an opportunity for collaborations that can have a strong impact on several institutions, where individuals can meet and focus on multi-campus programs that give students and faculty the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences. The ELA catalyzed the New England Computer Science Department Chairs organization, which successfully launched the first annual New England Undergraduate Computing Symposium (NEUCS) in 2010, and plan another regional symposium some time this year.
3. **National Model** – Seeking out and supporting individuals across the country through virtual and in-person experiences, a national network allows any individual student, faculty member, or computing professional across the country to become connected to others as a part of the ELA. The national model is particularly important to isolated minority students. A new 2010 teleconferencing mentoring program connects students across the country with computing professionals, an additional one hundred students have been mentored in an e-mentoring program, more than 500 have participated in ELA conference networking activities, and dozens have organized panels, given talks, and presented posters at conferences, provided tutoring, and much more.



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"The EL Alliance has been critical to my development as an academic professional....In April 2007 I was a 2nd year Ph.D. student. I was one of only four African American students of 650 graduate students in the school of Engineering, and the only one in my department...Because there are so few of us underrepresented students at the PhD level, we often find it challenging to break into established networks of student support...The EL Alliance has provided a necessary vehicle for me to become a member of a community of scholars."

Christopher Harris, Graduate Student, the University of California, Irvine



"In just one year of belonging to the EL Alliance, I have had many opportunities to meet leaders from across the United States who inspire me to continue my studies and get involved with programs where I can help other students. ... Becoming part of the EL Alliance has helped me consider several options for my career, and has provided an environment that encourages me in a very meaningful way."

Jessica Rivas, Texas A & M Undergraduate

Who we are?

Richard Tapia, University Professor, Rice University, is the Principal Investigator and Program Director. The ELA Leadership Team includes Ruzena Bajcsy, Clint Dawson, Alice Fisher, Shelby Funk, Juan Gilbert, Rosco Giles, Tiffany Grady, Ben Hescott, Raquell Holmes, Sheila Humphreys, Edgar Lobaton, Cynthia Lanius, Phoebe Lenear, Lori Scarlatos, Ceola Curley; Lecia Barker and Jose Cossa, Project Evaluators.



Dr. Richard Tapia

Alliance Lead Institutions: Rice U., Boston U., the U. of California, Berkeley, the UT Austin, the U. of Georgia, Clemson U., Tufts U., and Stony Brook U.

For further information, please contact: Alice Fisher, ELA program manager (afisher@rice.edu)

To join, go to empoweringleadership.org and become an ELA member today!



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