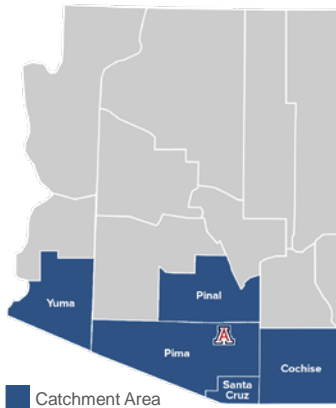


Community Outreach and Engagement University of Arizona Cancer Center

Catchment Area

The University of Arizona Cancer Center (UACC) catchment area includes five southern Arizona counties: Cochise, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yuma. Four of these counties fall along the U.S.-Mexico border (see below). The population is racially and ethnically diverse. Approximately 40 percent of the area's residents are Hispanic, compared to 18.3 percent in the United States. The percentage of American Indians in the catchment area is 2.5 percent, in contrast with 1.3 percent nationally. More than 29 percent of Arizonans in the catchment area are more than 65 years of age, compared to 16.0 percent in the United States. The population in the catchment area, particularly Hispanics, face a number of challenges that place them at an increased risk for cancer.



Community Engagement Focus

Through this Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) supplement project, we aim to provide bidirectional opportunities for community stakeholders and basic scientists to engage in authentic partnerships to improve health equity through relevant cancer research within Hispanic communities in the UACC catchment area.

At a Glance

As a result of this project, we established a new program at UACC: Research Outreach for Southern Arizona (ROSA). ROSA employs multiple strategies to build capacity for collaborative and community-driven cancer research:

- Community and Student ROSA Ambassadors
- ROSA Working Group comprised of Community Stakeholders
- Survey focused on Basic Science and the needs and priorities of Hispanic communities
- Bilingual Scientific Cafes

Collaborators

- UACC Cancer Biology Program
- UACC Cancer Research Training and Education Coordination (CRTEC)
- Nosotros Comprometidos a Su Salud
- El Rio Health
- MCH Healthcare



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cancer Center
Community Outreach & Engagement

The Approach

Establishing ROSA

The goal of ROSA is to bridge the gap between basic science and community needs. Using these strategies, we aim to increase the involvement of underrepresented communities in clinical research and to decrease cancer disparities through partnership building and bidirectional learning. Community ambassadors, student ambassadors, and working group members were recruited with the partnership of the UACC Cancer Biology Program and *Nosotros Comprometidos a Su Salud*, an established program at the University of Arizona that works to achieve greater health equity in Hispanic communities. The ambassadors named the ROSA program, and our COE team hosted a logo contest for local artists to design a logo for ROSA. Ambassadors and working group members voted on the winning logo (see below).



ROSA Community and Student Ambassador Program

A six-month bilingual (Spanish and English) ambassador program was implemented with Mexican-origin undergraduate students and community members. The curriculum focused on five main topics covered in one-on-one discussions: Public Health, Research Methods, Healthy Communities, Cancer Biology, and Science and Culture. We hosted two bilingual “Meet the Scientist” events where community members could have conversations with scientists about their work. ROSA ambassadors assisted with survey question development, beta testing, and recruitment strategies. The ambassadors also developed and presented two posters at the CRTEC

Cancer Research Conference. Overall, ROSA ambassadors reported increased knowledge of research and increased confidence sharing cancer information with communities after program completion.

In fall 2021, we recruited two more ROSA student ambassadors for the 2021–2022 academic year. We are collaborating with CRTEC to provide professional development and research outreach opportunities for them.

ROSA Working Group

The ROSA Working Group consists of UACC scientists, healthcare professionals, and bilingual and bicultural community stakeholders. The group reviewed and advised on survey questions, as well as study recruitment strategies. The working group is in the process of developing scientific cafes where scientists can present research proposals and receive community feedback. They will then select a community-driven pilot project from these presentations to implement.

Community Basic Science Survey

As part of ROSA, ambassadors and working group members collaboratively developed a bilingual survey (English and Spanish) about community health priorities, perceptions of cancer, familiarity with basic science, and a willingness to participate in clinical research. As survey data is collected, it will be used to inform how scientists align their research with community needs. A local, federally qualified health center with representation on the working group, El Rio Health, is assisting with survey recruitment efforts. We are in the process of recruiting 300 Hispanic adults who live in the UACC catchment area to complete the survey.

Scientific Cafes

In spring 2022, we will host scientific cafes for cancer basic scientists to present research proposals to the community. The cafes will be held in both Spanish and English and will be offered in a hybrid (virtual and in-person) format. This will be an opportunity for scientists to receive direct feedback from community members.



Community Basic Science Survey Recruitment

Moving Forward with ROSA

Based on positive ambassador program evaluations and continued working group collaborations, ROSA has been successful in growing opportunities for authentic partnerships between basic scientists and community members. This program provides a comprehensive framework of feasible strategies for increasing bidirectional engagement in cancer research. This COE supplement has also allowed us to develop bilingual resources, such as the ambassador curriculum, that will continue to be used for future programming.

As we learn from the community from their survey responses and from scientific café feedback, the ROSA working group will select one community-driven pilot research proposal to move forward with and implement. We plan to sustain the ROSA ambassador program annually for basic science students and community members. Finally, we are developing “seed” grants for small, local, cancer-focused projects that community members will be able to apply for. These ongoing efforts will expand the ROSA program and contribute to lasting partnerships in the UACC catchment area.

Implementation Guidance

Facilitators of Implementation

There were many elements that contributed to the successful implementation of the ROSA program. We have a bilingual and bicultural COE team, and we made intentional efforts to recruit ambassadors and working group members with ties to southern Arizona communities. Additionally, we collaborated with outreach groups and organizations already established in the Hispanic community. Finally, we were able to provide ambassadors and members with monetary compensation for their time and contributions, as well as foster a sense of ownership over ROSA by incorporating their feedback into the program name, logo, and survey development.

Challenges to Consider

We encountered some challenges while establishing ROSA. One barrier for consideration is the lack of Spanish-speaking scientists available to speak with monolingual community members about their research. We needed to find creative solutions to provide live translations and facilitate conversations in Spanish and English. Furthermore, like many programs, we experienced reduced in-person activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, delaying implementation of the survey and scientific cafes. However, this has provided us with insights for hybrid (online and in-person) approaches to outreach, and it will expand our connections.

I learned ways that I can use what I know about my community to teach broader lessons about cultural competency.

—ROSA Student Ambassador



First Cohort of ROSA Ambassadors, August 2021

Find Out More

Our COE outreach team is diverse and shares their knowledge of the rural regions, culture, compassion, and cultural humility to best serve the populations that represent us.

For more information:

<https://cancercenter.arizona.edu/>

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 @UAZCancer_COE  Arizona Cancer Center  uazcancer_coe

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Community outreach and engagement (COE) activities across the translational research continuum

National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer centers' COE efforts should span all cancer center programs, including basic, clinical, translational, and population research. In FY20, NCI issued a call for Cancer Center Administrative Supplements to support COE activities that focus on either basic science or the translation of evidence-based interventions into community practice. The long-term goal of the supplement initiative is to build capacity for cancer centers' COE programs to adapt and implement evidence-based programs and successfully collaborate with cancer center investigators across research programs and in partnership with community members. To learn more, visit us at: <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/research-emphasis/coe>