

SWOSU Biology Faculty Member Awarded OCAST Grant for Advancement of Science

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Among those involved in an Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) grant for scientific research, led by Dr. Andrea Holgado (second from left), are (from left): Melanie Graham, Carnegie; Ariana Eakle, Stigler; Tyler Hardin, Broken Arrow; Dana Poling, Oklahoma City (Putnam City North); Erica Benda, Union City; and Carissa Fischer, Weatherford.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University Assistant Professor Dr. Andrea Holgado was recently awarded an Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) grant for scientific research in the amount of \$135,000.

Holgado, who teaches in the SWOSU Biological Sciences Department in Weatherford, has a project titled "Molecular analysis of membrane trafficking and fusion" that is intended to provide SWOSU with state of the art equipment and supplies for neuroscience research, stipends for students engaged in this type of research and travel funds to attend international conferences and scientific meetings. These funds will be used to advance the understanding of communication between neurons in health and disease.

Specifically, the awarded research will investigate how brain cells communicate using a simple microscopic worm called *C. elegans*. Findings from this research can easily uncover new strategies for the treatment of neurological disorders.

For more information about this project contact Dr. Holgado at 580.774.3230 or andrea.holgado@swosu.edu .