

SWOSU Receives \$229,000 Grant from National Science Foundation

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University's Dr. Andrea Holgado, assistant professor in the biological sciences department in Weatherford, recently received a \$229,767 grant from the National Science Foundation for scientific research. SWOSU students will assist in the research. Celebrating the award are (front from left): Anita Blankenship, director of the SWOSU Office of Sponsored Programs; student Melanie Graham, Carnegie; student Kassandra Guthmueller, Purcell; student Erica Benda, Union City; student Carissa Fischer, Weatherford; and student Taylor Baxter, Broken Arrow. Back from left-Holgado; student Maggie Yoder, Thomas; student Tanner Wheeler, Weatherford; student Tyler Hardin, Broken Arrow; student Angela Edwards, Oologah; Dr. Blake Sonobe, SWOSU senior vice president and provost; and Dr. Joseph Maness, chair, SWOSU Department of Biological Sciences.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University and Dr. Andrea Holgado, assistant professor in the biological sciences department in Weatherford, recently received a \$229,767 grant from the National Science Foundation for scientific research.

Dr. Holgado's project titled "Modulation of Synaptic Vesicle Exocytosis in *C. elegans* FY10" will enhance and promote career development, education and community outreach.

This continuing grant is a four-year grant from NSF for a total amount of \$698,835. Holgado is working with co-principal investigator Bing Zhang, assistant professor in the zoology department at the University of Oklahoma.

The research for the grant will primarily be conducted by undergraduate students enrolled at SWOSU. This project will not only represent an exceptional opportunity for SWOSU students to experience this unexplored scientific world but will also assist in increasing the acceptance rate of graduates pursuing careers in research and professional schools.

The hypotheses and predictions proposed in this research will be conducted in a newly-designed Cell Biology laboratory course, where students are exposed to novel research ideas and will be able to speculate the molecular bases of neurobiology. The course will enable students to become skilled at experimental design and research execution, reinforcing data analysis and quantitative abilities, evaluating hypothesis and communicating findings.

Students will translate their knowledge in neuroscience to local communities participating in "brain awareness" week and neuroscience presentations at local schools.

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