Local Researchers Recognized for Innovative Public Health Communications to Reduce Cancer, Obesity

SAN ANTONIO (Nov. 18, 2014) – Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez and Mr. Kip Gallion, director and deputy director of the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, today were named co-recipients of the Everett M. Rogers Public Health Communication Award from the American Public Health Association (APHA).

Ramirez is an internationally recognized expert in health disparities research and outreach.

Gallion is an accomplished health communications producer and researcher.

Working together for more than 20 years, Ramirez and Gallion have developed robust health communication models, research interventions, community outreach, public and scientific speaking engagements, and training of young minds—which have contributed to reduced cancer and disease among Latinos, including cancer risk factor identification, clinical trial accrual, tobacco prevention and cessation, obesity prevention, and more.

The duo was recognized for “outstanding contribution to advancing the study and/or practice of public health communication” at the APHA’s 142nd Annual Meeting on Nov. 18, 2014.

“We are honored by this tremendous distinction from some of the key leaders in our nation’s growing effort to communicate health messages in evidence-based, technologically advanced ways,” Ramirez said. “We worked frequently with the late Dr. Rogers, so it is especially humbling to receive this award that is named after him and his many contributions to the science of communication and dissemination.”

Ramirez and Gallion have designed, developed and implemented more than 100 studies focused on human and organizational communication to reduce Latino health disparities.

These projects have led to unique health communication models and interventions—such as the dual-link communication model and behavioral journalism—that have contributed to increased access to care, preventive screening rates, and healthy behavior changes.

They also lead two national research networks (Redes En Acción and Salud America!) and are the co-founders of the SaludToday Latino health social media campaign.
Ramirez also mentors Latino undergrad, pre- and post-doctoral students, contributes to the scientific literature and serves on editorial boards for several journals. She has been recognized for her work to improve Latino health and advance Latinos in medicine, public health, and behavioral sciences across the U.S., including: 2011 White House “Champion of Change”; 2007 election to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies; and 2007 Professor of Survivorship from Susan G. Komen For the Cure.

Over his career, Gallion has performed media production and coordination for many health groups and research teams at the Houston and San Antonio campuses of The UT Health Science Center. His work to promote cancer control, diabetes risk and tobacco cessation has been recognized in scientific literature and lauded with media industry awards.

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**The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio**, one of the country's leading health sciences universities, ranks in the top 3 percent of all institutions worldwide receiving federal funding. Research and other sponsored program activity totaled $228 million in fiscal year 2010. The university’s schools of medicine, nursing, dentistry, health professions and graduate biomedical sciences have produced approximately 26,000 graduates. The $744 million operating budget supports eight campuses in San Antonio, Laredo, Harlingen and Edinburg. For more information on the many ways “*We make lives better*,” visit [www.uthscsa.edu](http://www.uthscsa.edu).

**The Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio** investigates the causes and solutions to the unequal impact of cancer and chronic disease among certain populations, including Latinos, in San Antonio, South Texas and the nation. The IHPR, founded in 2006, uses evidence-guided research, training and community outreach to improve the health of those at a disadvantage due to race/ethnicity or social determinants, such as education or income. Visit the IHPR online at [http://ihpr.uthscsa.edu](http://ihpr.uthscsa.edu) or follow its blog at [http://www.saludtoday.com/blog](http://www.saludtoday.com/blog).