**INTRODUCTION**
• Undergraduate active learning necessitates exposure to the scientific community through research, communication, & networking
• Lab experience involves an interview process, training stage, lab meetings, & sense of belonging
• PIs seldom have the time to devote individual attention to multiple undergraduate students
• Graduate students can fulfill the role of mentors

**Methods**
• Students are recruited from the College of Science at UTSA and local community colleges
• Undergraduate researchers in the lab recruit their colleagues from classes and by word of mouth
• Students are first introduced to the expectations
  - Commitment to 1 full semester
  - Agree to volunteer 8 hours per week
  - Trained by a graduate student
  - Given progressively more responsibility
  - Train incoming undergraduate students
• Introduce undergraduate to terminology that is applicable to the work force that they will not learn in formal course work

**RESULTS**
**Demographics of Students (n = 116)**
• 99 % under-represented groups
• 90 % first-generation students
• 50 % are transfers from community colleges

**Undergraduates**
• Real world lab and field experience (Fig. 1 & 2)
• Preparation for graduate school, internships, and jobs
• Graduate school (n = 6)
  - Law School (n = 1)
• Presentations at conference (n = 23)(Fig. 3)
  - Best student presentation (n = 2)
• Publications (n = 1; 2 in review)
• Professional positions (n = 34)
• Federal Pathways Program (n = 3)

**Graduate Students**
• Experience motivating and managing people
• Assistance with their research
• More productive and efficient research
• Professional positions (n = 8)

**SUMMARY**
• Working in a lab and networking with other students enhances the undergraduate experience (see comments)
• Students develop a sense of belonging and identification as a scientist, often expressing for the first time they feel like scientists
• Increased learning outside the formal class structure that adds to their overall education experience
• Autonomy is required at some point to give undergraduates a sense of belonging, trust, and part of the research lab
• High quality graduate students willing to work with undergraduates are the most important part of managing a successful and productive lab