

Dr. Elizabeth Aguilera is the Director of Programs at SACNAS, where she leads the strategic design, management, and execution of high-impact initiatives that support scientists and STEM professionals at critical career transitions. Trained as a molecular microbiologist, she earned her Ph.D. from UT Southwestern Medical Center and completed postdoctoral training at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Her scientific training, paired with a deep commitment to advancing representation and belonging in STEM, informs her evidence-based and practitioner-focused approach to program design and facilitation.

Dr. Aguilera has frequently engaged as a speaker and facilitator on professional development topics, including practical skill-building, leadership development, and career advancement strategies for early-career scientists and professionals. In addition to her role at SACNAS, she serves as a member of the pd|hub Scientific Societies Group, contributing to cross-sector collaboration and the advancement of innovative professional development practices across scientific organizations, and co-facilitates the Postdoc Leadership Institute (PLI) and the Linton-Poodry SACNAS Leadership Institute (LPSLI), where she helps cultivate the next generation of STEM leaders.

A longtime SACNISTA, Dr. Aguilera has been actively engaged with SACNAS since her undergraduate years, serving in chapter leadership roles and presenting research at the SACNAS Annual Conference (formerly NDiSTEM). This lived experience informs her leadership philosophy and reinforces her commitment to creating accessible, high-impact learning environments where emerging scientists and leaders can thrive.