



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA



### **Lopez-Ponnada and Serrano-Garcia Awarded NSF EAPSI-Singapore Fellowships**

**Emma Lopez-Ponnada** and **William Serrano-Garcia**, PhD students in the College of Engineering are recipients of the East Asia Pacific Summer Institutes (EAPSI) Fellowship program from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Both students will spend two months this summer conducting research at the National University of Singapore (NUS). The goal of NSF EAPSI is to help US graduate students become engaged in the global STEM workforce through 1) first-hand and cutting-edge international research experiences at partner locations; 2) an introduction to the science, science policy, and scientific infrastructure of the respective location; and 3) an orientation to the society, culture, and language of these locations.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes (EAPSI) Fellowship Program provides U.S. domestic graduate students in science and engineering with an opportunity to spend the summer conducting research at one of the seven host locations in East Asia and Pacific (Australia, China, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, and Taiwan). Graduate students are required to submit a peer-reviewed research proposal based upon the NSF criteria (intellectual merit and broader impact). Prior to submitting the NSF EAPSI proposal, they must contact and gain the support of a host researcher aligned with their thesis or dissertation research. Recipients receive a \$5,000 stipend, round-trip travel, and housing accommodations over the summer.

Lopez-Ponnada, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Her dissertation topic involves the development of novel bioretention systems for sustainable stormwater management. Lopez-Ponnada is co-advised by Sarina Ergas and James Mihelcic, professors in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Her research has been supported by USF's EPA Center for Reinventing Aging Infrastructure for Nutrient Management (RAINmgt).

Serrano-Garcia is a doctoral student in the Department of Electrical Engineering and the Advanced Materials Bio & Integration Research group. His dissertation research focuses on the study of organic, conducting and semiconducting polymers for nanoscale fiber-based electronic devices. He is advised by Sylvia W. Thomas, associate professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering.

Both Lopez-Ponnada and Serrano-Garcia are participants in the NSF Florida-Georgia Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (FGLSAMP) Bridge to the Doctorate Project and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation University Center of Exemplary Mentoring (UCEM) at USF.

[NSF East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes for U.S. Graduate Students \(EAPSI\)](#)

[EPA Center for Reinventing Aging Infrastructure for Nutrient Management \(RAINmgt\)](#)

[NSF Florida-Georgia Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation \(FGLSAMP\) Bridge to the Doctorate](#)

[Alfred P. Sloan Foundation University Center of Exemplary Mentoring \(UCEM\)](#)