

UPCEA Excellence in Marketing Award Submission

Campaign Title: "Summer Starts Here: Kids & Teens University (KTU)"

Institution: The University of Texas at Arlington

Narrative Statement

Kids & Teens University (KTU) is a vital STEAM-focused summer camp program for grades 1–12, designed to engage youth through creative, hands-on learning experiences while enhancing UTA's community presence and outreach. With a mix of returning families, sibling enrollments, and new participants each year, KTU has developed a strong reputation for excellence and innovation.

In 2025, we expanded our offerings to include highly popular, trending camps such as "Become a YouTuber," "Lego Robotics," "Veterinarian Camp," and "Car Racers", a strategic move that positioned KTU as both relevant and aspirational for today's youth.

Campaign Goals

- Increase enrollment across all KTU sessions and expand into new markets, including Parker County, to support UTA's Go West initiative in preparation for the future UTA West campus.
- Build awareness and credibility for KTU as the premier local STEAM enrichment camp.
- Engage families through relatable, visually striking marketing and storytelling.
- Support institutional goals for community engagement, lifelong learning, and early college exposure.

Execution & Creativity

Under the leadership of Director Shane Huff and Coordinator Gabriela Marroquin, the KTU program and its marketing were revitalized with a fresh, bold approach. Partnering with our Marketing Coordinator, Kimberly Gale, and leveraging her expertise, Gaby championed the development of targeted, family-friendly campaigns including:

- Eye-catching advertisements and digital graphics tailored for social media, parent groups, and community boards.
- Bilingual flyers, postcards, and inserts distributed through local schools, libraries, and community organizations.
- Virtual graphics and website banners designed to highlight sold-out camps, spark urgency, and showcase trending offerings.
- Email marketing campaigns segmented by returning families vs. new leads, ensuring personalized messaging.

Results & Impact

- 838 total registrations thus far for 2025, with 29 camps sold out.
- Four new camps successfully launched in Parker County, building momentum for UTA West.
- Strong positive feedback from families, with many citing the program's unique course offerings and professional yet approachable communication.
- Increased community visibility for UTA, establishing KTU as not only a summer camp but a gateway to lifelong learning and STEM/STEAM pathways.

2025 Parent Testimonials

"My kids loved the STEM camps! I knew my youngest would be in heaven, but I worried my almost 14-year-old would not be as engaged. He loved it! He is looking forward to more opportunities for camps next year, and he's even added robotics kits to his birthday list. Looking forward to sharing our success with friends!"

"I was very happy to see my grandson so excited about building a Lego robot. He was fully engaged and shared how it works. This class sparked an interest far beyond what I expected. Thank you. I plan to register both grandkids next year."

"This is the second year my son, Michael, has enrolled in UTA's Kids and Teens Summer Programs. Last summer, he took the Basics of Engineering course, which sparked his passion for aerospace and robotics engineering. This year, he's participating in the Car Racer program, which builds on his interests and deepens his understanding of aerodynamics and how it applies in the world of engineering. Thank you to UTA for offering such high-quality and summer programs!"

"My student thoroughly enjoyed the niche programming that UTA provided (Quilting Camp). Because of the specificity and the engagement by the leaders, we are looking to continue to use UTA as a summer and school time resource!"

"Our daughter had a great time with UTA Kids and Teens University camp this Summer. The Dessert Designers class was a great experience in her gaining confidence and skills in decorating cookies, cakes, cupcakes, and other deserts. We will be back next summer!"

"My daughter loved engineering camp and was so excited to come home and show us everything she learned! She even taught her little brother a few things."

Why This Campaign Stands Out

This campaign embraced a bold shift, featuring genuine photos of past KTU participants, a stronger emphasis on STEAM themes, and a playful yet modern brand voice and design, moving away from the conventional marketing strategies of prior years. It embraced the creativity of its audience, kids and teens, while strategically aligning with institutional goals. By combining innovation, resourcefulness, and a deep understanding of our audience, we achieved enrollment growth, community excitement, and a stronger connection between UTA and local families.