

International Nutrition: Tec professor recognized by Universitas 21



Universitas 21 (U21) has recognized the academic for her innovative teaching methods and her work in international training.

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Karen Mariel

Courtesy Rebeca Leyva

The director of the [Nutrition and Integrated Wellbeing \(LNB\)](#) program, Rebeca Leyva Rico, has been awarded the **Health Sciences Teaching Excellence Award** by [Universitas 21 \(U21\)](#), which is made up of leading universities from around the world.

To participate in the call, Leyva explained that she first took part in an internal call for professors from the **School of Medicine and Health Sciences (EMCS)** and

then applied to U21, a global league of the best universities of which Tec de Monterrey is part.

A representative from each of the universities that make up U21 participates in the final phase, with two teachers from around the world winning every year. Rebeca stressed that they review **innovation, the use of technology, and how** they assist in **training students about health**.

*"You have to demonstrate skills in three areas: evidence of international work, that your **teaching work is global**; the next is carrying out **interdisciplinary work**; and the third is to have a **teaching level** that demonstrates you have **innovative excellence strategies**,"* she said.

*"I've been teaching here at the Tec for over ten years; I always like to be involved in **educational innovation** courses, **to see what's new**,"* she said.

Rebeca and a professor from Canada won awards. Photo: Karen Mariel



Destination: Amsterdam

Leyva said that there is a **U21 conference** every year, where awards are given out. This year, **it took place in Amsterdam**, the Netherlands. *"It's a **global meeting** where awards are given out, presentations are made, and progress is made on what's been done collaboratively,"* said the professor.

"You decide what you want to give more weight to in your application: the international or the interdisciplinary. I gave more weight to the second one." She explained that this is due to her work via the **Global Classroom initiative** (in which various topics, challenges, or subjects are addressed online in conjunction with groups from other universities and countries).

Thanks to *Global Classroom*, she has invited foreign speakers and participated with other universities to give talks.

*"It's like a faculty exchange that has given me the opportunity to **learn how other universities do things** and **bring back their best practices**, while also **promoting our best practices** to other universities,"* she added.

*"In addition to innovative and relevant topics, the program also showcases **social impact actions**, such as students going to communities, and even the **professional training** of my students **in cutting-edge topics**,"* the academic added.

Carrying out interdisciplinary and innovative work are factors for winning the award. Photo: Karen Mariel



“I’ve been teaching here at the Tec for over ten years; I always like to be involved in innovation courses.”

Connecting with new projects

*“I bear in mind what would be best for my students and that’s what has motivated me to educate myself to **look for new strategies, to bring speakers...** I’m going to make sure they have experts. We’ve carried out a lot of collaborative work with other campuses and so I think that has also helped me,”* Rebeca said.

Eight professors from participating universities took part in this call. The winners were Rebeca from the Tec and a professor from [**McMaster University**](#) in Canada.

The professor said that the global meeting is attended by professors, deans, graduate students, and those who have projects belonging to the organization.

*"It's an excellent opportunity to **connect, plan new projects**, and also opportunities for research topics in education and the health field," she said.*

She added that this year it was held at the [University of Amsterdam's](#) Faculty of Medicine. *"It was a great opportunity to **learn their best practices**, what their simulators are like," she said.*

In 2025, she will teach a workshop on health practices because she was a 2024 winner. Photo: Karen Mariel



A more global vision

Receiving the award made her feel that her work was recognized. “As a Tec graduate, I wave the blue flag. I’m very **proud of not only having been trained by the Tec, but also of now doing what I most enjoy.**”

She said that the award helps her a lot because it gives her a **much more global vision.** “**It connects me with professors from the best universities who are doing the same thing as me.** This gives me many professional opportunities, but also in teaching, as part of what we do at the Tec to conduct research projects,” she concluded.

As part of the award, Rebeca will teach a workshop on best practices with the other winning professor at the 2025 annual meeting, which will be held in MacMaster, Canada.

“I really like the topic of **healthy aging.** At my clinic, I provide care to the elderly; I’m a diabetes specialist and I’ve always really liked clinical care. I see an opportunity in the area of research and public health; I think that’s where I’ll begin to focus my attention for my PhD,” she said.



During her visit to Amsterdam. Photo: Courtesy of Rebeca Leyva

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