



# MSE Students and Alumni

Summer 2020

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## Latest News



In case you missed it, **Dr. Manuel Quevedo** accepted the position of **Department Head of Materials Science and Engineering**, and began his duties on July 1, 2020.

On August 5 and 6, 2020, please **#COMETogether** with us for our annual day of giving by making a donation online. Follow UTD MSE on Facebook and Twitter for fun challenges and matches. Find more info below.

**We appreciate your support!**



If you have news to share or would like to stay in touch with the MSE community you can join our quarterly newsletter here.

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# The two-body problem

In real life, the two-body problem represents the dilemma that can cloud all graduation celebrations. Having to finish and defend a thesis while applying and interviewing for job positions is already difficult. Bring a plus one into the equation and, well, good luck.

Gautam, originally from India, joined the MSE department in 2013. Isabel, originally from Mexico, joined in 2014. That is when they met and in 2019 they had to find a solution to their two-body dilemma. Here they share the story of how that played out.

**Isabel Pintor, PhD**  
Postdoctoral Researcher at  
IMEC/KU Leuven



**Gautam Gaddemane, PhD**  
Postdoctoral Researcher at  
IMEC/KU Leuven

**Isabel:** Gautam and I have been together for about 5 years. Since we wanted to stay together in the future, we started looking for options, where we both could find a position in the same company/university or at least in the same city.

**Gautam:** I defended my PhD at the end of 2018. However, I was still interested in working on a few more ideas, related to my PhD project. My advisor, Prof Fischetti (Max) was kind enough to hire me and let me continue my work post-graduation for about 9 months. I am very glad I stayed as I was able to work freely without the pressure of PhD requirements, and I ended up learning a lot and producing some good results.

While still working at UTD, I was actively looking for jobs in the US. I came across a postdoc opening at IMEC, Belgium, on LinkedIn, which matched my research interest. I interviewed with them in April 2019 and received an offer. However, Isabel had still not defended, and we were not sure if we wanted to move out of the US. I then spoke to their HR department explaining our two-body problem. Soon they had lined up a few interviews for Isabel and even enrolled her in a workshop which coached her on CV and interview preparation. Finally, Isabel was also offered a postdoc position.

**Isabel:** The hiring process was simple and straight forward. Once I got the job offer I was able to focus on finishing my thesis. All of this happened very fast and we did not need to look into any other options. The support from IMEC made everything easier. I think we got lucky here.

Gautam moved to Belgium to start working in October 2019 while Prof. Quevedo and I set my graduation date for December 2019. This year when I finally joined Gautam in Belgium, he had everything figured out, so it was a lot smoother for me.

I work on a new project involving the development of photodetectors. The project involves the deposition (by physical methods) and optimization of absorber materials and device fabrication, characterization and optimization. Gautam is working on electron transport in two-dimensional materials using Quantum transport models. His project involves working closely with the experimental group.

**Gautam:** In the future we would like to continue in research, either in industry or academia. We are open to stay in Europe or move back to the US.

### How did UTD prepare you for your current position?

**Isabel:** Working with Prof. Quevedo, I had my own project, which involved everything from the materials deposition to characterization, fabrication, and optimization. Hence, my profile aligns very well with my new position here. I am responsible for my own tool, so it helps that Prof. Quevedo trusted me with similar responsibilities. While at UTD I tried to be active within the department, getting involved as the MSE Student Leader, the MRS Chapter, etc. That kind of service, and having to work within a team, helped integrate easily into a new position with a smooth transition, while learning how to work/deal with people in

a multicultural environment.

**Gautam:** During my PhD, I worked on electron transport in 2D materials just like in my current position. Looking back now, I feel working in Prof. Fischetti's group was very fruitful. Prof. Fischetti was very involved in my project and was always glad to help when needed. This experience was invaluable as I developed a deeper understanding of my research area. During my PhD, I got to develop codes from scratch which gave me a good understanding of the physics of 2D materials and, additionally, it improved my coding skills. At UTD, I also worked closely with Prof. Vandenberghe and Dr. Van de Put, who were former employees at IMEC. Therefore, I was familiar with the work culture even before I started. Overall, studying at UTD has made me confident to face challenges in my current role.



Isabel and Gautam happily together at IMEC.

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**Thank you Isabel and Gautam** for sharing your story and how much one can gain from being open and honest. When in doubt, ask.

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# Comets Giving Day

Get Ready for 1,969 Minutes for UTD

**We're excited to celebrate UT Dallas' 50th anniversary with 1,969 minutes of giving.** Comets Giving Day will begin on August 5, at 10 am, and end on August 6, at 6:49 pm.

Together, we have the opportunity to make a cosmic impact as we seek to provide scholarships for MSE Masters Students. This year, Comets Giving Day offers a unique opportunity to stretch the impact of your gift. **When 25 gifts are made to the Department of Materials Science and Engineering , an additional \$5,000 gift will be unlocked and donated to the MSE Scholarship Fund!**

I hope you will join Materials Science and Engineering in supporting our vision, as we look ahead to a bright future. On August 5 and 6, 2020, please **#COMETogether** with us for our annual day of giving by [making a donation online](#). Follow UTD MSE on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for fun challenges and matches. **We appreciate your support!**



*join us*  
**August 5-6, 2020**  
**#COMETogetherUTD**  
[givingday.utdallas.edu](http://givingday.utdallas.edu)

## DEPARTMENT OF **MATERIALS SCIENCE & ENGINEERING**

**ERIK JONSSON SCHOOL  
OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE**

We're looking ahead to a bright future in Materials Science and Engineering. To propel us forward and continue to recruit top-tier graduate students, we seek to provide scholarships for MSE Masters Students. Through additional funding, we will attract the world's top students to UT Dallas.

A graphic featuring the year "1969" in large, stylized numbers. Each digit is filled with a different scenic view of the UT Dallas campus. Below the numbers is an orange banner with the text "MINUTES FOR UTD". At the bottom, the hashtag "#COMETogetherUTD" and the website "givingday.utdallas.edu" are listed.

**1969**  
**MINUTES FOR UTD**  
#COMETogetherUTD givingday.utdallas.edu



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**DONATE**

This program, with the support of our MSE stakeholders, will help MSE continue to make large strides to impact the world. Any size gift will make a difference towards this incredible initiative. Your donation will not only support a student, but further advance our department's research efforts.

When 25 gifts are made to the Department of Materials Science and Engineering , an additional \$5,000 gift will be unlocked and donated to the MSE Scholarship Fund!

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**August 5-6, 2020**  
 #COMETogetherUTD  
 givingday.utdallas.edu



When	What	How to Help
Wednesday August 5 Beginning at 10 am	ALUMNI MATCH	Are you a UTD alum? Now is the time to make your gift go further! All alumni gifts of \$19.69 will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,969! That is 100 alumni making a difference for the next generation of Comets!
Wednesday August 5 10 am - 11 am	TOP 10	Be a TOP TEN and help us kick off Comets Giving Day. Donations of \$10 or more will be entered in a prize drawing.
Wednesday August 5 11am - 2 pm	CATCH 22	Donate and share your support on social media, using hashtags #UTDMSE & #COMETogetherUTD. The first 22 to share the hashtags will be entered in a prize drawing.
Wednesday August 5 2 pm - 3 pm	HIGH 5	The first five donations of \$19.69 will be entered in a prize drawing.
Wednesday August 5 Beginning at 4 pm	FACULTY/STAFF MATCH	Faculty and staff now it's your turn. All faculty and staff gifts of \$19.69 will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,969!
When 25 gifts are made to the Department of Materials Science and Engineering , an additional \$5,000 gift will be unlocked and donated to the MSE Scholarship Fund!		
Thursday August 6 10 am - 6 pm	DOUBLE DOWN	Calling all ALUMNI! Double the impact of your gift with corporate matching donations. Use our <a href="#">matching gifts database</a> to check if your gift can be matched by your employer.
Thursday August 6 Beginning at 2 pm	FACULTY/STAFF MATCH	All faculty and staff gifts of \$19.69 will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,969!
Thursday August 6 6:49 pm	ONE-HIT WONDER	The last donation of \$19.69 or more receives a prize.

**MATERIALS SCIENCE  
 & ENGINEERING**



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