Promoting Opportunities for Hispanic Students

Juanita E. Razo, Assistant Dean of Students
Leadership and Multicultural Development Programs
Photos Credit: Amy Covart

In 2004, the U.S. Department of Education awarded Cal State Fullerton a five-year $2.3 million Title V grant to increase the retention and interest of Hispanic students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) majors. The grant has four major components which focus on the development of academic enrichment opportunities for students. One component focuses on the enhancement of leadership development opportunities for Hispanic students in STEM majors, with a particular emphasis on Hispanic women. Leadership for this component has been provided by Leadership and Multicultural Development Programs (LMDP) in the Dean of Students Office.

In implementing this grant goal, the department has made special efforts to promote existing co-curricular leadership programs such as the Student Leadership Institute (SLI) and the University Leadership Conference to the cohort group. Students have also been encouraged to participate in the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, a national organization aimed at providing scholarship funds and access to Hispanics; the Latino/a Leadership College Leadership Institute, a program of the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ); the Multicultural Mentoring Program, coordinated by the university’s Multicultural Leadership Center; and the McNair Scholars Program which promotes the pursuit of graduate education among first generation, low-income and underrepresented students.

LMDP staff also work closely with the Student Retention and Assessment Coordinators for the Colleges of Engineering and Computer Science (ECS) and Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM) to market programs to the cohort population. The Coordinators have been essential partners in coordinating on-going outreach efforts and have worked with the cohort population to determine the best methods of communication. As a result, they have primarily used electronic communication such as email and the student portal to keep students informed of leadership development opportunities.

Through these efforts, LMDP has been successful in increasing the number of STEM and Hispanic students participating in both SLI and the University Leadership Conference over the last three years. What follows are highlights of achievements specific to leadership programs resulting from the Title V efforts:

- Hispanic students currently participate in the University Leadership Conference in higher numbers than any other ethnic group.

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Articles in this edition of the newsletter provide information about several of the recent programs and activities provided by the Division of Student Affairs which contribute to the comprehensive educational experience of students at Cal State Fullerton.

In this edition of Spotlight, you will find highlights of the Title V retention efforts aimed at increasing leadership development for Hispanic students in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Through the promotion of the Student Leadership Institute and the annual University Leadership Conference, both programs of the Dean of Students Office, Hispanic students’ participation rates in these programs currently surpass all other ethnic groups on campus. In addition, the number of STEM majors participating in both of these programs continues to steadily increase due to special outreach efforts to these cohorts.

Students are at the forefront of Cal State Fullerton. Preparing youth in the region for college participation is critical to ensuring access to the educational pipeline. Kids to College, our newest of the programs in Educational Partnerships, introduce and promote the college-going process to sixth graders in our local community. The program is a collaborative partnership between the California State University Chancellor’s Office, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute at the University of Southern California, and Cal State Fullerton with funding provided by the Sallie Mae Foundation.

Additional features of this issue highlight the success of the Titan Weeks of Welcome in welcoming new and returning students to the academic year and the important work of the Women’s/Adult ReEntry Center. Through their Women’s Cultural Resource Centers, the Women’s Center staff provides a supportive and empowering environment sensitive to cultural and political issues faced by women of diverse ethnic backgrounds. I invite you to read about the efforts of the Greek leadership in raising awareness about the disabled community and providing funds for monetary grants to organizations across the country.

In this edition, you will also read about the fascinating background of one of the division’s senior leaders, his many accomplishments in higher education and how he strives to reach outcomes that benefit the good of all whom he works with.

I thank the Student Affairs staff for continuously striving to enhance the quality of life for all students at Cal State Fullerton.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Palmer, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs
Kids to College: More than a Field Trip

Kids to College is the newest of the programs in Educational Partnerships. This program aims to introduce and promote the college going process to sixth graders in the local community. Unlike many other early college outreach programs that begin introducing college to students in high school, Kids to College preempts middle school by getting students to think about college at the end of elementary school. The research on college access shows that the bridge to college begins in middle school and Kids to College points them in the right direction, early and right on schedule.

The Kids to College program is a collaborative partnership between the California State University Chancellor’s Office, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute at the University of Southern California, and Cal State Fullerton with funding from the Sallie Mae Foundation. Currently in our third and final year of the $75,000 grant, we expect to surpass more than 5,500 sixth graders participating over the last three years from Santa Ana Unified School District, Garden Grove Unified School District, Fullerton Unified School District and Anaheim City Unified School District, with more than 2,000 students coming to campus in January and February of 2008. This number is astounding because the Kids to College program is more than just a field trip to Cal State Fullerton, it is a full six-session lesson plan aimed at introducing step by step how to get to college; including financial aid, college requirements, college placement exams and types of higher education.

This innovative program takes a new approach to college preparation by integrating the information about how to get to college with the academic curriculum. Kids to College infuses the culture of the classroom by utilizing their own teachers as the medium for sharing college knowledge. This program highlights the fact that every student now has a role model who attended college that they see everyday, their teacher. Furthermore, teachers are equipped with a curriculum to explore the newest academic subject, college, with their students.

The success of Kids to College is made possible through collaborative efforts with multiple academic departments providing hands-on learning experiences and dedicated student affairs offices supporting the program at various levels including presentations, staffing, campus visits and fostering a welcoming environment for these future Titans. Cal State Fullerton has been nationally recognized as a model program by the Sallie Mae Foundation and the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute. The CSUF model has been presented to other colleges in California, Arizona, Texas, Florida and at national conferences about college access. Cal State Fullerton aims to lead the way again this year, as we transition from a 10-visit model used over the past two years and introduce a 4-visit model using a larger capacity conference style format, where students will get a more experiential introduction to college majors and campus life.

For more information contact Mark Kamimura-Jiménez, Director of Educational Partnerships at mkamimura-jimenez@fullerton.edu or Debra Bush, Kids to College Coordinator at dbush@fullerton.edu.
Dr. Howard Wang

Lea Jarnagin, Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs
Photo Credit: Patrick O'Donnell

The only child of a merchant father and homemaker mother, Howard was always interested in science and enjoyed going to the library as a child. After his family lost their wealth when forced to flee Communist China for Macau, a Portuguese colony, Howard's future was irrevocably changed. His family would later choose to move to Hong Kong (instead of the United States, with the hope that his family would return to China after "the defeat of the Communists," as his father put it) in search of new opportunity, however, his father was never able to re-establish his business and the family lived, along with his maternal grandmother, in a cramped run-down, high rise apartment. At the time, only 1% of high school graduates were admitted to the University of Hong Kong, the sole institution of higher education. Against his father's wishes, at the age of 17, Howard made the decision to leave Hong Kong and travel alone to the United States for the opportunity to earn a college degree and ultimately improve the family's situation.

Influenced by the cover of a college catalog, Howard applied and was admitted to Southern Oregon College. With little financial resources, his mother worked in a local factory and his grandmother took in piece-meal work to pay for his high school education and his trip to the States. Along with the generosity of his local church, Howard arrived in Oregon with enough money to pay for his first quarter's tuition. The generosity of a Chinese couple helped him earn room and board working as a cook in their restaurant until the fall term began and the campus dorms opened.

Howard's first involvement in student life saw him initiated into Theta Delta Phi, an honorary fraternity. His entrée truly was an initiation, including pushing an egg from one side of the room to the other with his nose and the honor of wearing a red cap designating him as a freshman (a cap he still owns to this day). However, his interest in student affairs began as a result of transferring to the University of Oregon at the start of his sophomore year, a move which brought him face-to-face with the Oregon Board of Higher Education. He was selected to go as part of a team of student government leaders to testify in front of the board in protest of a planned student tuition hike. As recalled by Howard, "I was very nervous. This was the first time I used a microphone in front of adults." When asked what he learned from this experience, Howard replied "I learned that you have to stand up for what you believe in."

Additional undergraduate experiences included living in the residence halls and serving on the residence hall Homecoming Queen selection committee.

Despite these involvements, Howard's academic path continued to be the pursuit of a career in the medical field. "I had always wanted to be a doctor. I've been interested in science since I can remember and I wanted to do good for humanity, despite how cliché that may sound" states Howard. The completion of his master's degree at the University of Wisconsin found Howard without the support of his advisor to continue into the joint M.D./Ph.D. program. This disappointing turn of events lead Howard to Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic for two years of research and teaching Mycology (the study of clinical fungus) and medical microbiology. Although the

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Hispanics are second to Asian Pacific Islander students in participating in the Student Leadership Institute.

• Women represent the largest number of participants in SLI and the University Leadership Conference, with Hispanic women comprising the largest group to participate.

• Although men participate in the SLI and the University Leadership Conference in lower numbers than females, the number of men participating in both programs increased this last year due to special outreach efforts.

• The number of STEM majors participating in both programs continues to steadily increase due to special efforts made to urge these students to participate in SLI and the University Leadership Conference. Historically, STEM majors have either not participated or participated in these programs in very low numbers.

The university’s grant efforts have been valuable in helping the university collect data that benefits the entire student body at Cal State Fullerton. What we have learned from our efforts will help in the continuing enhancement of leadership training and co-curricular opportunities for our CSUF students. Some important lessons learned include:

• Although the number of females currently participating in leadership training is high, we are unsure whether females are assuming leadership positions at the same rate. More research needs to be done in this area and subsequent efforts should follow to ensure that female students are participating in leadership positions at the university.

• There is a significant difference between the participation of men and women, especially among Hispanic students, in SLI and the University Leadership Conference. This may be due to differences in gender socialization related to leadership identity development or other factors (e.g., work, engagement in the university, etc.) leading to the disparity in participation numbers.

• STEM majors are most likely to be involved in co-curricular opportunities connected to their academic and career endeavors (e.g., research, graduate school preparation, tutoring, etc.), and are encouraged to do so by their college faculty. Through some of these areas of involvement, students are receiving valuable leadership training. In fact, we are discovering that many STEM majors are involved in professional organizations such as the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, Inc. (SHPE) where students network with professional colleagues and attend conferences to receive formal leadership training for STEM careers.

• The grant’s cohort population is adjusting to multiple demands (e.g., major, work, etc.) that may limit their involvement on campus. As a result, leadership training or co-curricular involvement opportunities need to occur in such a way that does not place excessive demands on students.

With these lessons learned, LMDP hopes to continue to work in partnership with the various grant collaborators to increase academic support and co-curricular opportunities beyond the life of the grant for Hispanic students majoring in STEM areas. The findings have had a tremendous impact in helping the department improve its leadership programs for all CSUF students.
Titan WOW, a program of New Student Programs, occurs during the first two weeks of every semester and is designed to welcome all new and returning students to campus. It is a time for students to make connections on campus, reunite with friends, and find involvement opportunities. This year’s fall WOW (Aug. 20th-31st) was no exception. Filled with over 25 events and activities for students, faculty, and staff, the program was a huge success! A special thank you is extended to all staff in the Division of Student Affairs for their support of Titan WOW programs.

On Monday, Aug. 20th, and Tuesday, Aug. 21st, students were served by four Information Stations set up in key campus locations. In fact, over 6,600 students were served by the stations this semester, a record number for any fall WOW event. Over 30 Student Affairs staff from across the division volunteered their time to work at the stations and to assist students with finding their classes, buying their parking permits, directions to the Irvine Campus, and much more. The hot item at the stations is always the student handbook. Students arrived early to wait for the various distribution times throughout the day.

In only its second year, the Evening Services Fair on Tuesday Aug. 21st is specially designed to highlight campus services for evening students. Fourteen campus departments, including nine from Student Affairs, came out to connect with students who might otherwise miss welcome events that occur during the day, particularly Discoverfest.

The Irvine Campus Snack Attack is always a big hit, held on Wednesday, Aug. 22nd. New Student Programs makes the semi-annual journey down to Irvine to welcome students at the University’s branch campus. Some of the students are skeptical at first, (yes, the snacks really are free!) but extremely thankful for our presence. We like to remind them they are not forgotten!

Perhaps the highlight of Titan WOW is Discoverfest. Held in the Quad on Aug. 29th and 30th, it showcased over 35 campus services and more than 110 student organizations. The event is co-sponsored by New Student Programs and Student Life. Titan Radio spun music during the noon hour to a packed audience.

Titan WOW also featured numerous other events, with Student Affairs departments and academic colleges doing their part to welcome students back to school. The Multicultural Leadership Center co-sponsored cultural welcome events including: African American Student Welcome (Aug. 19th), Asian and Pacific Islander Community Welcome (Aug. 28th), and Lavender (LGBT) Welcome (Aug. 29th). Open Houses were held by the Student Health and Counseling Center, Adult Reentry Center, ASI Rec Sports, Career Center, Multicultural Leadership Center, and the Volunteer and Service Center.

To top it all off, New Student Programs concluded Titan WOW with Moonlight Madness on Thursday, Aug. 30th. Co-sponsored by Titan Bowl and Billiards, students enjoyed free food, bowling, and billiards. A complete listing of events from this fall’s Titan WOW is available at: www.fullerton.edu/titanwow.
In keeping with its mission to explore the growing concerns of first generation college women, under the coordination of Rosalina Camacho, the Women’s Center offers the Women’s Cultural Resource Centers for students. Now in their 13th year, the Cultural Resource Centers are an integral part of the Women’s Center. The centers include the African American Center (SisterTalk), Asian/Pacific Islander Center, Chicana/Latina Center and the Native American Center.

The primary goal of the Cultural Resource Centers is to offer a supportive environment for all women to share their concerns and challenges of their ethnic heritage. They also provide a place where students can discover resources and tools to help them make a smooth transition to the college environment.

Each semester one intern per center is identified and guided toward building a rich infrastructure for her resource center. The leadership opportunity, administrative focus and cultural knowledge required to manage such a center is an extraordinary internship challenge. Interns receive academic credit for coordinating each resource center’s agenda and activities for the academic semester. Some of the activities include presentations, special events, programming, peer counseling, outreach efforts, educational/research opportunities and fundraising.

Below are the specific activities of each resource center, which focus on the needs of the students participating:

• SisterTalk (African American Women) provides information and support through participation in weekly discussion groups. This resource center is intricately linked to the African-American Faculty/Staff Association. SisterTalk encourages solution-oriented empowerment dialogues, and provides a forum in which everyone can voice their concerns about various issues affecting their relationships with others. SisterTalk sponsors several high profile events during the year such as the annual SisterTalk Dinner and the Men/Women Dialogue.

• The Chicana/Latina Resource Center is dedicated to providing the Chicana/Latina student with information, guidance and referrals needed as the student encounters the rigorous challenges of higher education. The Resource Center was specifically designed to create awareness, educate the campus community on the Chicana/Latina experience, and explore the rapidly changing roles and current social and political issues faced by Chicanas/Latinas. The discussion group, Para Mujeres, provides a place where support and community resources are emphasized. Peer counseling is a large component of the discussion group.

• The Asian/Pacific Islander Women’s Resource Center provides students with information, guidance, and referrals on the changing roles of the Asian woman. This center explores issues ranging from personal to professional growth. The center heightens awareness of the needs and strengths of the Asian woman and builds a strong and effective network for establishing partnerships and personal friendships among Asian women.

The Women of Color Resource Centers work toward a common goal: providing female students with an environment sensitive to cultural and political issues faced by women of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

As stated by the resource centers’ coordinator, Rosalina Camacho, “The Women’s Cultural Resource Centers provide rich and challenging leadership opportunities for women. Exploring ethnic and cultural identities, as well as women’s issues within the work and educational environments, and concerns with immediate family, is imperative for many of our students who are first generation college students.”

The net result of this comprehensive program is the enhancement of each student’s sense of self through the exploration of the intersection of gender and culture. The Resource Centers also provide a view of the challenges confronting women of diverse ethnic backgrounds in the professional arena. Finally, the Women’s Cultural Resource Centers offer university women an educationally-based information center and role-modeling opportunity that contributes to the elimination of gender and ethnic stereotypes on campus.
Cal State Fullerton fraternity member Steve Toney beat the heat and blisters this summer to bicycle 4,100 miles across the country to raise awareness about the disabled. President of Fullerton’s Pi Kappa Phi chapter, Toney spent 64 days peddling for Push America, the national philanthropy of his fraternity. Nearly 90 members from Pi Kappa Phi chapters across the country joined the trip to demonstrate the strong impact fraternity and sorority men and women have in leadership roles locally and in the greater community.

Toney, a political science major who plans to become a lawyer, collected $5,000 in donations from alumni, family, and friends. With the money team members raised, monetary grants were awarded to organizations in the cities visited.

Not an avid cyclist, Toney trained for 10 months and rode more than 600 miles to get in shape for his first long-distance bike ride.

Each day of the tour, Toney climbed on his bike at dawn and rode about eight hours, traveling across 12 states through small towns, big cities and state capitals. He witnessed the country’s natural beauty as he rode by lakes, rivers, canyons, thick forests and waterfalls. He passed through Death Valley, the plains of Texas and the lush green hills of Georgia. He climbed the Rockies in New Mexico, the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia, and the most challenging, the Sierra Nevadas, where he peddled 6 m.p.h. to climb 8,000 feet, then raced 45-50 m.p.h. down. “It was scary, but exhilarating,” Toney said.

During his travels, Toney slept on high school gym floors and ate home-cooked meals from people who welcomed the college students to their communities. Each day, the team met with organizations that support people with disabilities. Toney met children who played baseball for the first time from their wheelchairs, visited a clinic for people with autism and mentored abused and neglected teens with mental conditions.

“It was an eye-opening experience to see what people with disabilities can do and how these organizations help to improve their quality of life,” said Toney, who plans to graduate in December. “Experiencing firsthand the impact the fraternity has on making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities was a life-changing experience,” Toney said.

“It changed my life for the better. I’m glad I did it. I’m not an athlete, or a professional cyclist. Riding across the country was very physically and mentally demanding,” he said. “But the trip was important; it taught me empathy, in that there are people who cannot open doors for themselves, those who can’t eat on their own, and a million other stories. To go through the pain and anguish of the Journey of Hope was our tribute to those with disabilities.”

“You have succeeded in raising the consciousness of the communities you visited and brought light to the organizations who help to improve the quality of life for disabled persons. Congratulations on a job well done!” stated Dr. Robert L. Palmer, Vice President for Student Affairs, in a recent letter commending Mr. Toney for his efforts.
The Cal State Fullerton department of Intercollegiate Athletics is successfully meeting or surpassing its goals for compliance with Title IX and the California State University Voluntary Self-Monitoring Report Regarding Equal Opportunity in Athletics for Women Students.

The latter report stems from an expired consent decree known as the CA NOW settlement. In the Spring of 2000, the CSU Chancellor and Presidents implemented voluntary self-monitoring of the former decree to continue to monitor progress on all CSU campuses toward meeting gender equity goals in three areas: participation, expenditures and grants-in-aid (scholarships). Fullerton met its goals in all three areas for 2005-06, the most recent reporting period.

Title IX is federal legislation aimed at providing more opportunities for women in education. Its effects on athletics are most commonly known. One of three methods for complying with Title IX participation requirements is proportionality, where the percentage of women participating in athletics mirrors the percentage of women on the campus. Of the more than 350 student-athletes competing in intercollegiate athletics at Cal State Fullerton in the 2006-07 academic year, 40.4 percent were men and 59.6 percent were women. The general student body percentages were 42.1 percent men and 57.9 percent women. In 2005-06, the Titans were just shy of their target with 43 percent men and 57 percent women competing compared to a student body that was 42 percent male and 58 percent female.

"Cal State Fullerton always has been in tune with Title IX legislation and the CA NOW settlement," said Director of Athletics, Brian Quinn. "But we are very pleased that our continuing efforts have allowed us to reach our goals and, in the case of Title IX participation, even surpass them. It takes diligence on the part of many people."

CSUF sponsors 17 intercollegiate sports -- 10 for women (cross country, volleyball, soccer, gymnastics, basketball, indoor track and field, outdoor track and field, tennis, softball and fencing) and seven for men (soccer, cross country, basketball, wrestling, track and field, baseball and fencing).

Since the original CA Now settlement in 1993, the number of female participants in intercollegiate athletics within the CSU system increased from 1,862 to 3,840 in 2005-06, an increase of more than 106 percent over 3 years. Almost 56 percent of all intercollegiate athletes within the CSU in 2005-06 were female compared to about 35 percent in 1992. During the same period, male participation decreased 23 percent from 3,733 athletes in 1992-93 to 3,033 in 2005-06.

By comparison, in the California Community Colleges in 2005-06, males comprised 67 percent of the athletes compared to 33 percent for females. At the high school level, California Interscholastic Federation, in 2005 participation was 59 percent for males and 41 percent for females.

Designating Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions

Dr. Howard Wang, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Photos provided by: Yen Ling Shek

A Brief Summary of the Higher Education Act of 1965

The Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 (Public Law No. 89-329) was signed into law on November 8, 1965 under President Lyndon Johnson. The law was intended to provide financial aid to students in postsecondary and higher education institutions. As a result, the original law increased federal funding to colleges and universities, including the creation of low-interest loans and scholarships.

The HEA of 1965 was re-authorized in 1968 and then every four years until 1980, when re-authorization came six years later, in 1986, then in 1992 and 1998. Prior to each re-authorization, Congress generally amends programs, changes policies of existing programs, and/or adds new programs. However, re-authorization of HEA has been pending since 2003. Current programs approved since the last re-authorization expired at the end of December 2006, and changes proposed since 2003 expired June 30, 2007.

Status of Legislation on Designating AANAPI Serving Institutions

On September 7, 2007, both chambers of Congress gave final approval to a compromise bill which would provide sweeping reform of the student-loan industry by reducing government subsidies to student-loan companies and using the savings to reduce the federal deficit, increase the maximum Pell Grant to $5,400, and reduce the interest rate by half on subsidized student loans. As part of the compromise bill, its language now includes a new investment of funds of $255,000,000 per fiscal year for 2008 and 2009 to strengthen “Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority-Serving Institutions” under Title IV (Conference Report, House of Representatives, September 2007).

To be eligible for designation as an AANAPI-serving institution, the institution must be (1) an eligible institution; and (2) have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10% Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander students.

It is unclear in the compromise bill how higher education institutions will become eligible for designation as AANAPI-serving Institutions, or what activities the allocated federal grants must be used for. Regulations for this process may be available soon once the bill is signed into law by the President.

Possible Implications for Cal State Fullerton

At Cal State Fullerton, total AANAPI undergraduate enrollment for Fall 2006, according to data gathered by Institutional Research & Analytical Studies, showed that 25.7% of campus undergraduate enrollment were AANAPI. This fulfills one of the two criteria in defining AANAPI-serving institutions. Therefore, it is possible that Cal State Fullerton would be eligible for additional federal funding under the compromise bill. What has not been determined is how many higher education institutions will be eligible for such designation, and how exactly this bill will be implemented once it is written into public law.
Project Team Wins Inaugural Award

Lea Jarnagin, Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs

Photo Credit: Patrick O’Donnell

Cal State Fullerton’s Campus Community Alcohol Management Project team, known as CCAMP, recently received recognition for their efforts in combating alcohol abuse, underage drinking and promotion of healthy, alcohol-free lifestyles. Recipients of the inaugural Champions Award by the California State University Alcohol Education Conference, members of the team include Jackie Gogan, Health Educator and Coordinator of Substance-Use Prevention Programs, Mary Hermann, Director of Health Education and Promotion in the Student Health and Counseling Center, Kandy Mink Salas, Dean of Students, and Brie Roumeliotis, formerly of CSUF’s Health Education Department.

“Our goal has been to increase our alcohol education efforts on campus and, in particular, to reduce underage drinking and underage access to alcohol,” stated Kandy Mink Salas during a recent interview with Cal State Fullerton’s Inside Online.

Funded through a three-year state grant totaling $435,000, CCAMP’s work across college campuses designed to reduce the incidence of risky alcohol-related behavior including binge drinking among the college student population.

The Campus Community Alcohol Management Project team is part of Cal State Fullerton’s activities overseen by the Campus Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Committee. This fall, CCAMP will release results of programs, policies and best practices across college campuses designed to address alcohol-related issues.

Dr. Wang

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opportunity provided him the means to send financial support home to his parents, medical school was no longer an option. At the encouragement of his supervisor who left Mayo Clinic to work at the UCLA Hospital, Howard moved to California to do research on Legionnaire’s Disease.

Three years of serving as an R.A. while enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Clinical Immunology and Microbiology at UCLA followed. Ultimately, the strains of working full-time and conducting research in the middle of the night when the lab was available brought Howard to the final conclusion that “it wasn’t worth it. This is when I made the decision to leave the field of science and pursue education.” The flexibility of his R.A. position enabled Howard to enroll in and finish his M.A. in Higher Education. Encouraged by the nudging of his supervisor at UCLA, Howard became involved in NASPA and Southern Rap and eventually went through job placement at NASPA to secure his first professional position in the field at Washington State University.

Over the next ten years, Howard provided leadership in a variety of positions at a number of institutions including the University of Southern California, Whittier College, and the University of Judaism. Ultimately, he returned to UCLA in the early 1990s initially to work in residence life, but was later recruited to be the budget officer for Student Health. When asked why he chose to pursue his Ph.D. while employed at UCLA, Howard responded “I knew my parents would want me to continue my education. Even at this point, what they thought mattered a great deal to me. I also wanted to prove (to my former faculty at Wisconsin) that I could do research and I knew I wanted to continue moving up in administration.”

According to Howard, his parents were a great influence on the person he has become today. His parents raised him to be honest (a value mentioned more than once during our interview). “It’s important to remain persistent and to keep trying in the face of adversity. If you don’t try, your circumstances won’t improve” replied Howard when asked what he has learned from his trials over the years. When asked what influence he believes he has had by choosing Student Affairs, Howard replied “your influence is greater in Student Affairs. You get to shape the future of young people.”

Howard’s strengths as a senior administrator include a breadth of experience coupled with lessons learned from early mistakes. For example, during his first year of professional experience in housing, Howard’s car was damaged by students’ angry over a discipline decision he made. After feedback from his supervisor helped him understand his decision in a broader context, Howard learned that institutional fit is critical for the success of a young professional. Ultimately, it is his belief in hard work and the tenacity to always try hard that enable Howard to lead through his values and make decisions with input from those he supervises. His goal: to reach an outcome that is for the good of the whole.
Discover, Innovate and Achieve

Gerald L. Bryant, Project Director, McNair Scholars and Mark Kamimura-Jiménez, Director, Educational Partnerships. Photos provided by: McNair Program

discover
The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Program works with underrepresented and low-income students who want to pursue a Ph.D. and become a researcher or university professor. McNair Scholars discover through a variety of academic resources their research interests, a passion for creating knowledge in academia and the path to graduate studies. Students will develop a research project with a faculty mentor, present their research project at a research symposium or professional conference and receive a $2800 stipend. In June 2007, McNair Scholars went on a graduate tour of five universities in Boston, MA where they had the opportunity to talk with department chairs, faculty, and graduate students at each campus. The trip provided students with a better understanding of various graduate programs. Most importantly, students began to recognize which university was a good academic ‘fit’ for their research interests.

innovate
The McNair Scholars Program remains an innovative component to the undergraduate curriculum as it holistically prepares students to successfully enter and graduate from Ph.D. programs. McNair Scholars learn master strategies in preparation for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), hear from faculty and current graduate students about experiences in graduate school and research careers, attend workshops on financing graduate school, selecting a graduate school, and how to successful navigate a Ph.D. program. Through their faculty mentored research projects, McNair Scholars are taught how to become innovators within their fields of interest as producers of knowledge. Further, students are connected with opportunities for research internships with industry, summer research experiences at other universities and research in other countries through study abroad programs.

achieve
The McNair Scholars Program provides students, who otherwise would not consider graduate school, the possibility to successfully achieve at the highest levels of the academy. Each year more than 20 percent of the graduating Cal State Fullerton McNair Scholars are accepted directly into Ph.D. programs nationwide. This fall our alumni entered graduate school at Duke University, Columbia University, UC Irvine, UC San Diego, UC Riverside and Cal State Fullerton.

Consider nominating your colleague today! Student Affairs TEA months are July and December. Nominations are accepted year round.

If you would like more information about Titan Excellence Awards please visit the TEA website at etd.fullerton.edu or contact Larry Martin, TEA Chair at larrymartin@fullerton.edu.

Photos Credit: Jaime Hamilton, Stephen Weissbart, and Matt Brown.

Mary Hermann
Director of Health Education and Promotion
Student Health & Counseling Center

Janette Hyder
EOP Counselor & Coordinator,
Links Mentoring Program
Student Academic Services

Rob Scialdone,
Assistant Athletics Director, Business Affairs
Intercollegiate Athletics

Left: Scholars at the McNair memorial at MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Below: Scholars and staff at the EOP/McNair Graduation Banquet, Spring 2007.