Inside This Issue:

2 Message from the Vice President for Student Affairs

3 Student Academic Services

5 Information Technology Award Winner

6 International Education & Exchange

8 Top Scholar Athletes

9 Titan Excellence Awards

11 Resident Advisors

12 McNair Scholars Program

Pilot Program

CSUF Selected to Host

-Beatriz E. Tapia, Coordinator
  Educational Partnerships

Kids to College® is an early outreach program designed to bring awareness about higher education and college financing options to 6th graders as part of the school curriculum. The Sallie Mae Fund currently funds Kids to College® programs in Massachusetts, Washington DC and North Carolina. The program consists of a structured six-week curriculum that is implemented in the classroom, as part of the regular school day. Students are taught by their teachers and representatives from the partner colleges about career exploration, educational options and college financing. The program culminates in a half-day visit to the partner college campus.

In December 2005, the Sallie Mae Fund initiated a campaign to raise awareness about college financial aid options among underrepresented minorities in the state of California. As a part of this initiative, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI), housed at the University of Southern California (USC), has partnered with the California State University Chancellor’s Office to bring the Kids to College® Program to California.

The CSU Chancellor’s office selected Cal State Los Angeles (CSULA) and Cal State Fullerton (CSUF) to implement a three-year pilot Kids to College® Program in their respective counties. The pilot project requires that each of the college campuses service 1,000 sixth graders this spring semester, 1,250 in the second year and 1,500 in the third and final year.

The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs at CSUF has put together a team comprised of the Associate Deans and other Student Affairs staff to identify local schools that will participate in the Kids to College® pilot program and coordinate the campus visit. Participating Orange County school districts include: Anaheim City, Fullerton School District, Garden Grove Unified and Santa Ana Unified. These districts have been targeted because their student bodies are comprised of a high percentage of underserved students who have been traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education.

Over the next several weeks, the CSUF team will be working to train campus liaisons and participating school teachers in the Kids to College® curriculum. The team is also in the process of finalizing plans for the campus visits in which participating sixth graders will get a tour of the campus and receive a goodie bag filled with a CSUF book marker, pencil, and t-shirt.

During the campus visit, students will also have the opportunity to take part in hands-on educational activities provided by the various colleges. These campus visits will take place in late May and early June.

Kids To College

CSUF is enthusiastic about bringing the Kids to College® program to California, and especially to Orange County. We are committed to making sure that local students are informed about their higher education options early so that they can begin to think about a college education as something that is accessible and attainable.

For additional information, please contact Beatriz Tapia (714)278-2795 or btapia@fullerton.edu.
A Few Words

Message from the Vice President for Student Affairs

Robert L. Palmer, Vice President for Student Affairs

Articles in this 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.

Some of the articles contained in this edition relate to the development and enhancement of student leadership skills through programs such as the work experience of undergraduate Resident Advisors. Efforts to increase access and success in higher education are illustrated in the articles on the Kids to College Program and the EOP Alumni Fund Raising Campaign. In this edition, you will also read about the local and international success of the Certified Athletic Trainers Program. Additionally, the academic accomplishments of student-athletes Risto Marttinen and Lauryn Welch; and recent graduates Sunshine Lawson and Rocio Mendoza are also highlighted in this issue.

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

Student Affairs enhances and supports the academic mission of the University. The Student Affairs mission encompasses the dual paradigms of student development and student services and includes building alliances between the classroom and other aspects of campus life. As a partner in the educational enterprise, Student Affairs contributes to the comprehensive educational experience of students. Through myriad services, programs and activities, the intellectual, vocational, personal, social and cultural development of all students is encouraged. Through these programs and services, students are assisted in acquiring the knowledge, skills and insights that facilitate life-long learning, a sense of personal and interpersonal competence and human understanding.

As a resource for students, administration, faculty, staff, alumni and the broader community, Student Affairs provides a wide variety of university services. These services meet the needs of students as they progress through their college experience and also include problem solving, research assistance and consultation. With a diverse and comprehensive set of responsibilities, Student Affairs contributes to the campus community a special perspective about students, their experience, and the campus environment.
Student Academic Services:

EOP Alumni Fund Raising Campaign

-Dr. Jeremiah Moore
Director, Student Academic Services

The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Fund Raising Campaign for 2005/2006 is designed to directly benefit EOP participants. Supported by both the SAS department and a grant from the 2005/2006 University Mission and Goals Initiative process, the campaign seeks to raise $10,000 this year from former EOP students now CSUF Alumni. One hundred percent (100%) of the proceeds will benefit currently enrolled EOP participants by increasing the amount of funds available through the Martin Luther King Emergency Loan Program.

EOP participants are eligible to receive an EOP Grant of up to $2,000.00, although the maximum at CSUF is $800.00 due to the large enrollment. “These students, all of whom meet low income thresholds,” stated Dr. Jeremiah Moore, Director of the program, “occasionally suffer from temporary cash flow problems: They arrive in the fall or spring semester with insufficient funds to cover the exorbitant cost of textbooks; obtaining employment takes longer than expected; Financial Aid packages might be insufficient or late coming so we offer the Martin Luther King Loan as a critical resource allowing the students to negotiate financial tight spots.” To date, the department, in partnership with the CSU Philanthropic Foundation, has raised $5,854.49 and has contacted over one thousand EOP/CSUF Alumni. “We look forward to reaching our goal as we continue to contact our former students” stated Dr. Moore, “by asking each one to do as the campaign theme states: make possible for another…what was made possible for you.”

Honoring Faculty Colleagues:
Serving Students

Our children learn those nifty little computer tricks from them and our adolescents understand the torment of Les Miserables because of them …educators…we love them. In an effort to acknowledge teachers, the Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Ashley Bishop, recently hosted a gala entitled: Honor a Teacher. Faculty scholars, students, parents, and community leaders honored teachers of past and present…the ones that have enriched our lives and those of our loved ones. Honor a Teacher funds will go directly to CSUF College of Education student scholarships….a token of appreciation for our teachers. Thank you Dean Bishop. We think you’re great. In your honor, a new bulletin board will be created near your complex entry in EC-190...the Dr. Ashley Bishop Student Money Board. All College of Education scholarships and financial opportunities will be posted there.

-Nancy Wright, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, College of Education
Spotlight On...

Dr. Howard Wang
CSUF On The International Scene

Representing California State University, Fullerton, Dr. Howard Wang welcomed a group of 200 Chinese American Social Science professors at the 11th annual conference of the Association of Chinese Professors of Social Sciences in the United States, and challenged them to collaborate with social scientists in China to conduct research on Chinese university students and their personal development. The Conference was held at the Titan Student Union in October 2005.

Dr. Wang served as a panelist in December 2005 to discuss and critique President Bush’s “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001” to the Xiamen Public School Principals delegation from China. In January 2006, Dr. Wang gave a lecture on “Systems of Higher Education in California: the California Master Plan” to the Shanghai Pudong New Area government officials during their stay to receive the “Advanced Public Administration Training Program”.

Dr. Wang served as one of the editors for a book project sponsored by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). The book will provide a comparative overview of history, administration and organization of student affairs across several countries in the world. Dr. Wang edited five chapters on Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Hong Kong and China. He also co-authored the chapter on China’s student affairs. The book is tentatively scheduled to be released in Spring 2006. Additional countries not included in this edition may be added in the future.

Representing CSUF at the 2006 NASPA National Conference in Washington, D.C. in March, Dr. Wang served on a panel focusing on editing a NASPA book project on international student affairs during the Pre-Conference International Symposium.

On behalf of the University, Dr. Howard Wang provided welcome speeches to numerous groups of government and business officials from China visiting and/or receiving professional development training at California State University, Fullerton, through the University Extended Education International Programs – Asia. Groups included the Guiyang City Government, Dalian City administrators, the China National Pharmaceutical Foreign Trade Corporation, the Zhejiang Province Personnel Bureau, the Wuhan/Taiyuan Municipal and District officials and the Qingdao City Government.

Staff Accomplishments - Professional Development

Congratulations to the following staff members in the Student Health and Counseling Center (SHCC) who completed their degrees during the 2005-2006 academic year!

Lenka Schanka, Medical Records Administrative Support Assistant, earned her Bachelor of Arts, English with a minor in Spanish, from CSU Sacramento in December 2005.

Heather Calkins, Health Education Assistant in Physical Therapy & Sports Rehabilitation, earned her Bachelor of Science, Kinesiology, from CSUF in December 2005.

Briana Roumeliotis, Health Educator, earned her Masters in Public Health from CSUF in January 2006.

Mary Hermann, Director of Health Education and Promotion, will earn her Master of Science, Public Health, from CSUF in May 2006.

Grace Johnson, Administrative Analyst Specialist, will earn her Master of Science, Counseling from CSUF in May 2006.

Briana Roumeliotis, Health Educator, will present “Relationship Establishment is Key to Health Education” at the American College Health Association (ACHA) Annual Meeting in New York City in June 2006.

Yen Ling Shek, Coordinator of the Multicultural Leadership Center, was selected as a facilitator for the 2006 APIA U: Leadership 101, a training designed for Asian American and Pacific Islander College Students, sponsored by State Farm and coordinated by the Organization of Chinese Americans. The trainings are held annually all across the country to give students an opportunity to develop their leadership skills and to have an understanding of community issues.

Student Academic Services — Information Technology “Dickie Award”

This week Lorrie Harnach, Coordinator of the University Testing Center received the IT Dickie Award. This Service Recognition Award was created to show campus staff appreciation for contributions and outstanding technical input and/or support to IT’s computing services.

The award reads:
“Thanks to Lorrie’s hard work and thoroughness, the web team was able to install the self-registration website for students registering to take the EPT and ELM exams with an extraordinarily high level of quality. Lorrie was actively and creatively involved with the design of the website as well as with the necessary testing and debugging. Her thorough knowledge of Testing Center procedures and requirements, as well as her flexibility in inventing a whole new methodology for the EPT/ELM registration was invaluable for the project.”

“Lorrie is dedicated and committed to the mission of both CSUF and Student Affairs. Her efforts and ability to creatively develop ways to improve service delivery to students and the university community are commendable.”

— Dr. Jeremiah Moore, Director, Student Academic Services
Staff Accomplishments - Professional Development

Sabrina Sanders, Acting Director of Athletics Academic Services, served as coordinating presenter for two workshops during the 2006 NASPA National Conference in Washington, D.C.:

“Individual Commitment...Collective Action: Making the Most Out of Your Professional Association” - a NASPA 101 workshop. The workshop provided an overview of how to get involved, leadership structure and the need for volunteers to support the work of the association.

“Individual Initiation & Academy Facilitation: The Future of the Higher Education Administration Pipeline”. During the workshop, Ms. Sanders’ doctoral research on the need for professional mentoring and leadership development for mid-level administrators to fill the upcoming vacancies of senior level administrators in higher education was presented.

Ms. Lay Tuan Tan, Associate Director of the Office of International Education and Exchange has been selected to participate in the 2006 Fulbright International Education Administrators Program (IEA) in Japan. This program is designed to familiarize participants with higher education, society and culture and consists of briefings, campus visits, appointments with selected government officials, cultural activities and meetings with international education professionals. Five awardees have been selected from a national competition and will participate in this three week program in June 2006.

Lay Tuan is particularly pleased to be participating in this program because for the past two years, Japan has been the top-sending country of international students to Cal State Fullerton. Of the 1200 international students on campus (including the American Language Program), about 250 students are from Japan (22%). Cal State Fullerton also has international exchange agreements with Nanzan University and Okayama University in Japan and offers study in Waseda University through the CSU International Programs.

International Education & Exchange

Bob Erickson, Director of International Education and Exchange, has been selected as a faculty member for the NAFSA: Assn. of International Educators Management Development Program. This 20 hour, 3-day intensive program gives participants a comprehensive applied view of management in a higher education setting with a particular focus on international education.

The program includes such components as: managerial style, organizational culture, managing change, dealing with performance issues, financial management and seeing your program in a larger context. The program’s cutting-edge curriculum was developed by international education professionals working with a management consultant over the past 3 years and will be conducted by Bob and six co-instructors at the NAFSA annual conference in May 2006 in Montreal, Quebec.

Bob is eager to share his training and plans to offer some modules of the program to the Student Affairs management and staff. The modules easily adapt to any Student Affairs management setting. Watch for news of this exciting development.

Births/Announcements

Laura Matz, Industry Specialist in the Career Center, became engaged on Dec. 24th to Mr. Peter James Neal of Fullerton, CA. The wedding is planned for February of 2007.

Shannah Johnson of Freshman Programs gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, Alexander James Johnson (AJ or Alex for short) on August 4, 2005 (the date he was due).

Weight: 7lbs 1oz
Length: 19 ½ in
Currently:
Age: 6 ½ months
Weight: 18 lbs
Length: 26 in
Staff Changes

The University Learning Center (ULC) is happy to announce the arrival of the Learning Coordinator, Patricia Benjumea. Patricia has previously served at CSUF as Gear Up Coordinator and as English faculty, teaching English 99 and 101. Some of her Learning Center duties include: coordinating the ULC website, supervising the tutoring staff, and assisting with tutor training. She has already joined our Student Affairs Staff Development Committee and will bring a new professional's prospective to the group. Please join us in welcoming Patricia to the ULC.

Natalia Yamashiro recently joined the staff of International Education & Exchange as receptionist. Natalia brings with her extensive international experience, including fluent Spanish, some Japanese and many years in Argentina.


Darany Hoang, Administrative Support Assistant, joined Counseling and Psychological Services in December 2005.

Dr. Julie Meisels joined the counseling staff at Counseling and Psychological Services in December 2005.

Ann Cornaggia, Administrative Support Assistant, previously with Counseling and Psychological Services, is now with the Athletics Department.

Sylvia Wilber, Administrative Support Assistant II, previously with Student Health Medical Records, joined Counseling and Psychological Services in January 2006.

Anne Andal, Heath Records Technician, joined SHCC’s Medical Records Department in February 2006.

Elizabeth Chingquangco, Licensed Vocational Nurse, will join SHCC’s nursing staff in March 2006.

Welcome!

Serena Cline Joins New Student Programs Team

New Student Programs (NSP) is pleased to welcome Serena Cline as the newest member of the NSP staff. Serena officially starts the beginning of April as the Coordinator for New Student Programs, working specifically in the area of New Student Orientation. She will be responsible for coordinating NSO Leader training and overseeing the implementation of components of the New Student Orientation programs, which include mandatory freshman orientation, as well as programs for transfer students and the parents of new freshmen. Serena joins Cal State Fullerton with a strong background in student leadership training and program planning. She most recently served as the Student Development Coordinator/Hall Director at Scripps College in Claremont, where she developed and supported a residential community, and provided academic support and co-curricular programming. Prior to Scripps, Serena worked with student orientation programs and the student center at Hope International University. She has a Master of Education degree in College Student Affairs from Azusa Pacific University and graduated Cum Laude with a B.S. in Social Studies Education and a minor in History from Warner Pacific College in Portland, Oregon. Please join NSP in welcoming Serena to the campus and to the Division of Student Affairs.
Time management is a challenge to all college students but particularly to Div. I student-athletes. The demands of competing in intercollegiate athletics at the highest level are not that far removed from professional sports, where homework and book reports and final exams are foreign expressions. Currently the best examples of the ability to mix athletics and academics on the Cal State Fullerton campus are wrestler Risto Marttinen and women's soccer player Lauryn Welch. They were selected CSUF's Male and Female Scholar-Athletes of the Year for 2005 for their ability to excel in both disciplines, not to mention being actively involved elsewhere on campus.

“The key is dedication,” said Marttinen. “If something is important you find a way to do it. Wrestling and getting good grades are important to me and I wanted to make a difference in the University so I put time into doing things on campus. You have to sacrifice other things that are less important.”

Marttinen is a fifth-year senior who has been the team’s top scholar-athlete four years running with a fifth honor a mere formality. Three times he has been selected to the Pac-10 All-Academic team (Fullerton is a Big West Conference member but wrestles under the auspices of the Pac-10). He has made the dean’s list eight out of nine semesters and has a cumulative grade point average of 3.83.

Marttinen, a native of Lappeenranta, Finland, but now a resident of Laguna Niguel, has served for four years on the CSUF Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and was president for two years. A two-year member of Eta Sigma Gamma, the wrestling team captain represented CSUF at the 2004 NCAA Leadership conference in Florida.

On the mats he has been a cog in the Titan program’s return to respectability. He has been the Titans’ regular at 165 pounds around a shoulder injury that required surgery during the 2003-04 season. His senior season record was 21-13. He hopes to compete in the Finnish National Championships in November and then plans to teach and coach at the high school level.

Welch has played a major role in the growth of the Titans’ women’s soccer program into national prominence. The junior from La Mirada was team captain in 2005 and has started every one of the 63 matches in her three seasons. She was the team’s leading scorer last season (9 goals plus 4 assists for 22 points) as the Titans won the Big West Conference championship, the Big West post-season tournament and two NCAA playoff matches vs. UNLV and USC. CSUF advanced further into the NCAA Tournament (losing at No. 7-ranked Virginia) than any Big West team ever. Welch made the All-Big West first team as well as the Big West All-Academic team.

Like Marttinen, she also finds time to get involved outside the campus. She serves as the volunteer head coach for the Troy High School girls’ junior varsity soccer team, is involved with her Yorba Linda Friends Church and has competed for the U.S. National team.

Lauryn’s goal is to become a chiropractor with a focus on muscle massage therapy.
Trainers Program
Preparing On A Global Level

-Brian Quinn, Director of Athletics

Cal State Fullerton’s reputation in preparing students for careers as certified athletic trainers continues to reach new outposts. The program has developed the majority of the high school athletic trainers in Orange County, is represented at numerous major colleges across the nation and now is attracting worldwide attention.

Meet Hiro Nagai, Yasuhiro Kitagawa, Kyoki Kajiya and Nao Tanigawa. All are CSUF students from Japan who are studying and actively working in the Titans’ athletic training program and pursuing certification. Kajiya earned her bachelor’s degree in January and will be seeking employment once she passes her certification board exams while the other three are close to graduation.

How did they get from Japan to Fullerton? Each utilized a Japanese company that places students wishing to study in the United States. Kitagawa’s path to Fullerton started at Gadsden State Community College in Alabama.

“I was placed there because it was more inexpensive than other areas”, he said. “But I transferred to Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College and there I heard from friends about the Fullerton program. They all had an idea of how well the CSF program is run.”

Nagai also went to Irvine Valley with plans to transfer to Long Beach State. But at IVC he heard about Fullerton and had a change in plans.

“There has been a big push in sports medicine in Japan and Cal State Fullerton is on the global map” said Julie Max, head athletic trainer at CSUF and past president of the National Association of Athletic Trainers. “The Japanese students have done their homework and know that our reputation and rate of success on the certification boards will open doors for them.”

The predecessor for this quartet is Yoshi Ushijima, who transferred to Fullerton eight years ago from Kansai College in Japan. He left his family behind to graduate (bachelors degree in Fall, 2000 and masters in Spring, 2002) and obtain certification before bringing them to the United States. He returned to Japan but recently got a job offer with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays of the American League and is on his way to the major leagues. There he will likely come across some of the former Titan ballplayers he serviced during his Fullerton experience in 2002 such as Shane Costa of the Kansas City Royals.

“I didn’t know Yoshi”, said Kitagawa. “But we had heard of him and his success.”

December 2005
Titan Excellence Award Recipients

Congratulations to our Staff!
Jennifer Cunningham, Career Center
Mary Scott, Career Center
Doreen Ferrel, Student Health and Counseling Center
Fran Zareh-Smith, University Learning Center
Nancee Wright, College of Education
Resident Advisors
Students Making A Difference
—Lou Gill, Associate Director Housing and Residence Life

Several years ago the Army aired a commercial that called a career in the Army, “the toughest job you will ever love.” The commercial showed recruits going through grueling basic training exercises and afterwards talking about how those experiences challenged them and changed their lives.

While the 21 Resident Advisors (RAs) working in the Department of Housing and Residence Life at CSUF didn’t necessarily go through grueling Army basic training, several of them have described the job they do on campus as challenging, tough and in many respects life changing just as the Army commercial portrayed.

Ariana Mota, a senior Kinesiology major and second year RA, says that being an RA forced her to grow as a person. “I knew that as an RA I would learn a lot about myself. I wanted to step outside my comfort zone and test my boundaries. I wanted to challenge myself and try to make a difference in people’s lives.”

Anna Santos, a first year RA, says the job is very different from other leadership positions she has held on campus. “Being an RA is different because you live your job and the only way you can ‘clock out’ is if you are not physically on campus.” She added that from the moment residents check in at the beginning of the year to when they check out at the end of the year; RAs basically live in a fish bowl kind of environment. “People are always watching what you do and you are a permanent role model. That’s a lot of pressure on your shoulders”, Santos said. “Having this job means making sacrifices I would never have had to make otherwise.”

Sharnette Underdue, Resident Director and a former RA herself, directly supervises the RA staff and realizes the challenges the undergraduate RAs’ face. She says that the RA job is one that requires a lot of sacrifices. “Having to get up in the middle of the night to let someone in their suite, who is locked out, or to mop up an overflowing toilet or respond to a fire alarm means a significant time commitment. Also you need to be available to your residents when they are facing academic or personal crises at any time of the day or night. It is not a job for the selfish.”

According to Underdue, CSUF RAs are assigned to supervise a floor of approximately 30-40 residents. CSUF has an on campus community of approximately 800 students living in apartment style accommodations. RAs must host at least six programs per semester that are both social and educational. RAs must also work office hours and be on call overnight on a rotating basis. RAs must confront policy violations and respond to emergencies as they happen. They must also be available to their residents as needed for advice on personal and academic issues and do roommate mediations. In return for their work, the RAs are provided a single room at no cost and a monthly food stipend.

Underdue added that not only is the RA job challenging to hold, it is also challenging to get. This year’s Resident Advisor staff was hired from an applicant pool of over 100 candidates. Each candidate had to proceed through a series of group interviews which demonstrated their leadership and team building skills. Then qualified candidates were invited to go through a half hour individual interview with current RAs and professional staff. From the remaining candidates a team of diverse individuals was selected to be offered positions. After being selected, RAs then go through a two week training program prior to school in the fall and again prior to the spring semester. They also have monthly in-services to attend to enhance their skills as leaders, community builders and role models.

This intense process is necessary because, according to Underdue, the RA job is not for everyone. “We are asking our staff to show that not only do they have their personal and academic lives in order but that they can assist other students in doing the same.” Underdue added that it is extremely difficult to be both a peer and a friend as well as a policy enforcer and this is one of the hardest aspects of the job.

Santos commented that enforcing policy was a
challenging aspect of the job for her. “It is very difficult to be friends with your residents and then enforce rules when they’ve broken them.”

Mota also mentioned that policy enforcement has provided challenges for her. “I have had residents get an attitude with me, raise their voice at me and question my authority as a resident advisor. I have had to document several residents and guests because of alcohol incidents and that was tough. The reason it made my job so tough was because I have established a close relationship with my residents.”

So why would any student want a job as an RA with all of these challenges to be faced? When asked about this, both Mota and Santos were quick to mention at least two very important rewards of the job that make the challenges easier to face. One is the relationships that they have formed with their residents and also with other RA staff members. The other reward is the chance to make a difference in other student’s lives.

“The types of close relationships that are built here won’t happen anywhere else because we all live here together” says Santos. “The most positive experience has been completely built on the relationships I have formed with my residents, my supervisors and the staff. Without this opportunity I would not have had the chance to meet such amazing people. I have been able to make some lasting friendships and be a role model but most importantly-a friend.”

When asked about the rewards of the RA job for her, Mota said, “The most rewarding aspect of this job is the interactions that I have with the residents. I have been able to make some lasting friendships and interact with residents not only in housing but also on campus.” She added “My residents have come to my door to talk about roommate conflicts, relationships, break-ups, family problems, as well as their accomplishments throughout the year. It is rewarding to know that my residents confide in me with the positive and negative aspects of their lives. A few of my residents once told me that they did not refer to me as their RA, but as their friend. It is those comments which make my job worthwhile.”

All three staff members were quick to point out that another reward of being an RA is that the job skills learned as an RA can translate into being a better employee and a better person in the future. Skills such as activity planning, mediation, public speaking, confrontation, group facilitation, crisis management and active listening will enhance a former RA’s marketability for jobs or promotions and perhaps make the former RA a better sibling, spouse, parent or community member.

Both Mota and Santos would recommend the RA job to others who are willing to work hard, face challenges that will make them grow and improve themselves and who find reward in being a help to others. As Santos said, “I would recommend this job for someone that is looking for a positive experience and a lot of fun, but if you’re looking for a large paycheck, this job isn’t for you. The rewards are greater in other areas that don’t involve how big of an income you have.”

When asked if the challenges of the RA job have made it “the toughest job she’ll ever love”, Mota chose a quote from a different armed forces commercial by saying, “I believe that the RA job makes you be all you can be.”
McNair Scholars
Designed To Prepare

"McNair has been the family of scholars I dreamed of since I was fifteen years old."

-Rocio Mendoza

Tucked between the circle of cashier windows and the campus Carl’s Jr. Restaurant resides the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program office. Though modest in size, programs like McNair are essential for preserving and increasing the numbers of underrepresented students who pursue doctoral degrees. The McNair Program is funded through a federal Department of Education grant and is in the CSUF Student Affairs Division. The Program is designed to prepare first generation, low-income, and/or underrepresented students for doctoral study through involvement in research, academic conferences, and other scholarly events and activities. Each year, 22 students come on board, and their experiences with McNair have profound effects on their futures. The McNair Scholars Program gives its Scholars the tools to succeed at the doctoral level.

Though McNair works year-round to prepare its Scholars, the jewel of the program is its intensive Summer Program, which is filled with opportunities to attend seminars and workshops, as well as the annual “Grad Tour.” The Grad Tour is a week-long trip to a college town somewhere in the U.S. It gives students a chance to visit top-tier universities and get a feel for college life outside of California. The Summer Program’s seminars and workshops focus on three main components of success at the graduate level: graduate school-oriented workshops that provide students with the tools they need to select and apply for top programs in their field; student-focused workshops that provide skills in time-management and building relationships with professors and research-focused workshops that help students develop a graduate-level research project with a faculty mentor. Together with a faculty mentor, scholars design and carry out an original graduate-level research project that is suitable for publication and presentation, two goals that many McNair scholars see realized before graduating from their bachelor’s programs. Topics have ranged from an oral history of farm workers in Delano, California, to a study of HIV/AIDS education among Thai sex workers in Chiang Mai, Thailand, to an evaluation of the computer software used to prevent child abduction in the U.S.

The real test of the program’s success lies not in the opportunities it provides, but in the scholars who take advantage of those opportunities. CSUF McNair Alumni are enrolled in graduate programs across the country.