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United States Department Of Agriculture

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**The E. Kika De La Garza
Fellowship Program**



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E. "Kika" De La Garza II

United States Representative

*Eighty-ninth - One Hundred Fourth Congresses
Serving from January 3, 1965 - January 3, 1997*

ABOUT E. (KIKI) DE LA GARZA

Eligio (Kika) de la Garza was born September 22, 1927 in Mercedes, Texas.

De la Garza attained his Doctor of Jurisprudence from St. Mary's University Law School, in San Antonio, Texas. He is a member of the Texas State Bar Association and was admitted to practice in the Federal Courts and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Kika served six consecutive terms in the Texas House of Representatives before spending thirty-two years as a leading U.S. Congressman from Texas, in addition to working twelve years in the practice of law. The first Hispanic Congressman elected from Texas' 15th District, Kika served as Chairman of the Congressional Agriculture Committee from 1981-1994. He played a large role in overhauling the agricultural lending system, implementing Federal farm crop insurance and commodity futures reform, reorganizing the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and providing numerous aid packages for American and international agriculture. Additionally during his time in Congress, Kika co-founded the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

As an expert on national and international law related to agriculture and commerce, Kika played a major role in expanding trade with Japan, the former Soviet Union, China, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East. A skilled and multilingual communicator de la Garza has developed close working relationships with top-level government officials throughout the world.



USDA E. (KIKI) DE LA GARZA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The USDA E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship Program offers faculty and staff from Hispanic Serving Institutions the opportunity to work collaboratively with USDA to gain insight and understanding of the federal government. This uniquely tailored experience brings together HSI staff and federal executives to address the spectrum of challenges faced in the development of a well prepared Hispanic workforce.

Fellows spend two to four weeks in Washington, D.C. to increase their understanding of USDA and other federal agencies; particularly at the national level and to identify and explore mutual collaborative interests.

EDUCATION FELLOWS

Education Fellows experience first-hand the education policymaking process and build linkages to research and funding opportunities. In addition to meeting with USDA officials, Fellows connect with other federal agencies and organizations. Participants enrich the USDA with their diverse experiences and allow for on-going dialogue regarding the educational challenges facing the Hispanic community.

Also, the Fellowship enhances the participant's professional growth and knowledge of the federal government, thereby improving the quality of teaching, student services, and advancement of institutional development programs at their respective HSIs.



CARLY CHAVEZ



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Carly Chavez is a high school instructor at Fontana High School, in Fontana, California where she has been teaching for eight years. She was the first in her family of seven to attend a university. She received her bachelor's in biology and master's in education with a concentration in curriculum and instruction from California State University, San Bernardino.

At Fontana High School, she leads various instructor committees in SLC (Smaller Learning Communities) and AVID (Advancement Via Individualistic Determination). She also dedicates her time to facilitate a number of student organizations on campus, such as M.E.Ch.A (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlan) and a freshman mentoring program called Link Crew.

Ms. Chavez is also actively involved in the Fontana Teachers Association where she holds positions as both site representative and human rights committee member.

She was recognized by Assembly member Wilmer Carter in 2007 for the "30 under 30 Latino/Native American Recognition Award". She has also been recognized as SLC Teacher of the Year in 2008. She plans on continuing her education by enrolling in the educational leadership doctoral program, this fall.



AMOD CHOUDHARY



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Amod Choudhary is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics and Business at City University of NY, Lehman College, Bronx, NY. At Lehman College, he has taught courses in microeconomics, corporation finance and strategic management. Prior to his teaching career, he was a corporate lawyer with various law firms, and Systems Engineer for the US Army Research and Development Center.

Professor Choudhary has published research papers in areas of finance, law and economics. His research interest focuses on learning about economic, political, management and legal issues that impact society.

His goal for the fellowship is to forge a mutually beneficial and lasting relationship between the Department of Agriculture and Lehman College, Department of Economics and Business. He wants to learn about the internship and professional opportunities available in the Department of Agriculture for college students majoring in economics and business. He also wants to learn about funding and other opportunities available for academicians at Department of Agriculture. He believes that his fellowship experience will enable him to provide information to Lehman students, which will better prepare them for professional employment. He is confident that his De La Garza Fellowship experience will help prepare a well-developed and highly qualified Hispanic business work force.



TERI ERICKSON



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Teri Erickson is the Director of Resource Development at Otero Junior College in La Junta, Colorado. In this position, she manages the Grant Resource Office, which is an integral part of the college's Southeast Colorado Resource Enterprise (SCORE) Center. The SCORE Center was created with federal grant dollars to enable collaborations in economic development activities in southeastern Colorado, including increasing the number of grant dollars brought into the rural region. Ms. Erickson is responsible for researching, writing and administering all grants for OJC, working with non-profit organizations in the college's three-county service area and providing grant writing training for both campus employees and the community. To date, she has written and assisted with successful grant proposals that have brought over \$30 million to southeast Colorado, worked on events that have brought together foundations and non-profit organizations and developed a series of workshops designed to promote best practices in non-profit leadership.

Ms. Erickson's background is in journalism and public relations. She received a bachelor's degree in English/Journalism from Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado, and served as editor of a local newspaper before starting a career in grant writing. She has been at OJC since January 2006 and is the first person to hold a full-time grant writer position at the college. Because of that, she has been responsible for developing all aspects of the Grant Resource Office, including creating in-house resources and starting a library of non-profit materials.



KAREN IVY



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As a Career Counselor II at UTSA, Karen Ivy currently focuses primarily on assisting students whose majors are within the College of Sciences. Most recently, she has taken on the position as Interim Assistant Director for the Career Counseling Team within the office.

Karen Ivy has her undergraduate degree in Psychology and a Masters Degree in Counseling Psychology from Texas A&M University's main campus in College Station as well as has recently completed her coursework for her Doctorate of Educational Psychology and is currently completing her dissertation which she also obtained at Texas A&M University.

Currently, she serves as the liaison between Career Center and other offices on campus such as the Health Professions Office, and she also coordinates an elective course (Personal Career Planning) open to all students that provides them with a forum to make informed and supported discoveries about self and the world of work, leading to productive career planning and decision making. Previously, she has worked with high school students in the Rio Grande Valley through a project called GEAR UP, assisting them with career planning and adjustment to college. Throughout her graduate studies and her professional career, she has been involved in organizations such as SOACE and NACE.



JANIS LENTZ



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Janis Lentz has taught at Weslaco East High School in Weslaco, TX, for nine of her twenty-four years of teaching. She holds a bachelor's degree in Geology from Baylor University and a master's degree in Educational Technology from the University of Texas-Brownsville. Janis is certified to teach elementary grades as well as all level English as a Second Language and Special Education. She currently works with at-risk high school students.

Janis participates in the study of monarch butterflies with Monarch Watch, an outreach program based at the University of Kansas, and she travels to Mexico with Monarch Watch to collect migration data. She and her classes raise monarchs, often sharing the experience with local schools through mentoring programs matching her high school students with elementary classes.

Providing partnerships for high school students is one of the goals Janis would like to accomplish with the help of the Fellowship. Through a USDA-ARS and Texas A&M partnership, she participated in an internship program for teachers at the Honey Bee Research Lab in Weslaco, TX. She would like to establish similar programs linking her students with local USDA entities.



ADRIAN LOPEZ



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Adrian Lopez was born in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico and grew up in San Diego, California. He obtained his bachelor's degrees in Political Science and Economics at the University of California, Davis. He also completed his Juris Doctorate degree at the UC Davis School of Law, King Hall. He has worked as the Education Legislative Advocate for the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (CRLAF), Statewide Coalition Director for the Alliance for a Better California, as a Senator Richard Polanco Public Policy Fellow.

Mr. Lopez is on the Board of Directors for the North Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, is the Chair for the Kappa Chapter Alumni Association of Nu Alpha Kappa Fraternity (Latino Based Fraternity), and sits on the California Community College League's Commission on the Future.

Currently the Director of Public and Governmental Relations at YCCD, Mr. Lopez serves as the governmental liaison for the 8 county 4,200 square mile District by cultivating relationships with federal, state, and local elected officials to secure legislative and financial support for the District. Mr. Lopez assesses legislative priorities and recommends a legislative program, coordinating and directing its implementation. He serves as the District spokesperson and principal contact for media representatives. Mr. Lopez also provides public information, public relations, and marketing leadership for the District.

Adrian is bilingual, bicultural, and is an immigrant to the United States. Mr. Lopez has a passion for helping underrepresented students. As a E. (Kika) De La Garza Education Fellow Mr. Lopez hopes to work collaboratively with the USDA in order to develop key relationships which will in turn lead to the development of innovative programs and services to help our Hispanic students succeed.



STACEY LYLE



**Program Coordinator and Associate Professor
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Dr. Stacey Duane Lyle is a Registered Professional Land Surveyor. He holds a PhD in Geography, MS in Computer Science, and BS Civil Engineering Technology. He teaches Geospatial Surveying Engineering and Geographic Information Science at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi and is a researcher at the Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Mapping. Dr. Lyle is a NASA Faculty Fellow, President of the Texas Society of Professional Land Surveying-Coastal Bend Chapter, and Director/Treasurer in ACSM/GLIS. Dr. Lyle's research includes development of tools to assist first generation students in improving writing. He has developed technology for precision agriculture the GIS and GPS technology. His published works in "Portable Wiki Map Server and Real Time Environmental MySQL GIS Server", Intersection of Geomatics and Geographic Information Systems Emphasis into a new Geospatial Information Science Degree for ABET review", "Portable Gulf of Mexico Geospatial Data Solution", "Read-Write-Hear project: An Emerging Technology Used to Increase the Academic Performance of Students with Disabilities", "Investigation into Small-format Digital Camera Sensors for Development of USDA GIS of Crop Compliance", and . "USDA/FSA Crop Compliance Monitoring GIS".



ROSARIO MARTINEZ



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Rosario Juanita Martinez is the United States Department of Agriculture Grant Administrator at Laredo Community College in Laredo, Texas. Prior to joining Laredo Community College, she was a classroom teacher for several decades. She has taught from Kinder all the way to Seniors in High School.

Her experiences have included being among the Mixe Indians in Ayutla, Oaxaca (Mexico), private academies in New Jersey, and public schools in Texas.

Awards that she has received are: Teacher of the Month, Who's Who Among America's Teachers (twice), Cambridge Who's Who, Campus Lead Teacher Mentor, Grade Level Team Leader, Laredo Independent School District Leadership Training. Rosario has been selected to participate in the 2010 USDA E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship Program. She has been a member of the Texas State Teachers Association, Parent Teacher Association, Alumni of Our Lady of the Lake University, National Association of Pastoral Musicians, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Parish Diocesan Representative, Parish Council - secretary, Youth Choir Director and Eucharistic Minister.

In the state of Texas, she has the following teaching certificates: Secondary math, Elementary, Bilingual, Kinder, Gifted and Talented (all grade level). In the state of New Jersey, she is certified as an Elementary teacher.

Rosario received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas. She has completed 36 hours of Theology graduate courses at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas.



JAMES ORTEZ



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Dr. James Ortez is the Assistant Dean for the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts at the University of California, Merced, the nation's newest research university. He earned BA's in Psychology and Sociology from Columbia University, and a Masters of Public Administration and a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Washington. Dr. Ortez has worked in Higher Education for 20 years. He is a founding member of the UC Merced community.

Title and educational accomplishments aside, what drives and excites Dr. Ortez for this opportunity is how the fellowship can translate to better services and opportunities for Latino students. UC Merced is 40% first generation and over 40% Latino (predominantly Chicano) as reflective of the San Joaquin Valley in which he serves. As UCM is poised to accept HSI designation once accreditation is officially granted, Dr. Ortez hopes to turn funding and services into opportunities of access to higher education and patterns of success for UCM's students of color.

Dr. Ortez was born and raised in the Valley in a single mother household and was the first person in his family to attend college. He is married to Lara and they spend much of their time raising Satchel and Ella, their 3-year-old twins.



RON PRESLEY



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Ron Presley has taught at South Plains for 21 years. Currently, he teaches five courses: Agronomy, Horticulture, Agricultural Finance, Agricultural Industries and Agricultural Marketing.

Presley is also involved with a family cattle and farming operation in north Lubbock County, Texas.

A rural advocate, he has been involved in agricultural and community politics, banking and networking throughout his career. He has worked as an educational consultant for Texas Rural Communities Inc. and the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Presley's goal of enhancing the lives of his students through better understanding of opportunities correlates with his interest in the Fellows Program. "My desire is to teach knowledge elements that will help my students become well-rounded 'Renaissance Individuals' with passion, professionalism, purpose, critical thinking skills and ambition to make this life's experiences fulfilling while serving mankind through our industry. It is an honor to be able to work with my students. Western Civilization currently stands at a crossroads in history. In order to preserve our industry and way of life, we must never forget that subjection and anarchy are but one uneducated generation from us."



CARLOS RAMOS



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Carlos Ramos earned his bachelor's degree in sociology and psychology from the University of Southern California and a master's degree in sociology from the University of California, Los Angeles. His areas of academic interest are educational attainment, social stratification, Chicano/Latino Studies, and race and ethnic relations.

Professor Ramos began his teaching career at Long Beach City College in 2001 and his course offerings include sociology of Latinos, sociology honors, race and ethnic relations and modern social problems. He has also combined his courses, in a learning community format, with Chicano Art and Literature courses.

As a first-generation college student and a son of Mexican immigrants, Professor Ramos has taken a special interest in the needs and experiences of students with similar backgrounds. He helped to establish the Coalition for Latino Advancement student group, which focuses on educational attainment and transfer, cultural awareness, and civic engagement of Latino students at Long Beach City College. He also advises students from Mexican American Engineers and Scientists (MAES) and PUENTE. He has served on several student success campus committees, including the LBCC Transfer Academy and an institutional self-study, in conjunction with the USC Center for Urban Education, which focused on the transfer experiences of LBCC students.

Professor Ramos expects that as a Kika de la Garza Fellow, he can use his unique role as active faculty member and student advisor to disseminate important information and opportunities to faculty, staff and students at Long Beach City College.



RYAN RHOADES



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Ryan D. Rhoades was born in South Whitley, Indiana. Ryan received his B.S. degree in Animal Science from Oklahoma State University in 2001, and was employed by Express Ranches Limousine cattle division. Ryan obtained his M.S. degree in Meat Science from Texas A&M University in 2004. Ryan recently completed a Ph.D. in Beef Cattle Production at Texas A&M University, while concurrently working on an additional M.S. degree in Ag Economics.

Texas A&M University provided Ryan with the opportunity to work on a wide range of projects designed to help producers make better risk management decisions throughout all segments of the beef industry. Ryan's Ph.D. research projects ranged in scope from, determining the impact of dietary energy source on fat accretion; to the use of ultrasound technology in predicting a targeted compositional endpoint. These projects included alternative ways to mitigate cost and value risk through process control strategies. Additionally, Ryan's economic training allowed him to explore the dynamics of the live cattle market and the opportunity to construct business plans for private firms and formulate solutions for case studies using forecasting and modeling techniques.

As a new faculty member at TAMUK and part of the King Ranch Institute, Ryan's research focus has been on the development of ranching production systems models and case studies that can be used as teaching and decision support tools for students and producers. Ryan teaches Agribusiness Management and Environmental Economics courses for undergraduate students. Ryan serves as Co-Advisor for the National Agribusiness Marketing Association student group on campus.



ABNER RODRIGUEZ



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Dr. Abner Rodríguez-Carías is a professor in the Department of Animal Industry at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus. Dr. Rodriguez was born in San Juan, PR, and grew up in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. He obtained his Ph.D. in Ruminant Nutrition at Michigan State University, and his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Agricultural Science and Animal Nutrition at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus.

Dr. Rodriguez's previous professional development experiences include the NASA fellowship program at Cape Canaveral, FL, and the Minorities Biomedical Research Training Initiative at the University of Missouri, Columbia. Dr. Rodríguez is deeply involved in student graduate and undergraduate research programs. His current research is focused on small ruminant nutrition, forage conservation, and waste management. He has also participated in University administration, extension, and outreach. He enjoys traveling, soccer, hiking, and cycling.



SUZANNE VALERY



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As director of institutional grants at a community college in an agricultural region, Suzanne Valery is committed to securing external funding to support the district's strategic priorities and improve programs and services for students in a largely Hispanic farm worker community.

As a first generation college student, Suzanne can relate to the struggle to overcome barriers to educational attainment. She received a bachelor's degree in Sociology, then ten years later a master's degree in Counselor Education, and 20 years later a doctorate in Educational Leadership. During this time she worked in both educational and nonprofit settings. She has sixteen years working in all aspects of grants management, five years administrative experience at a community college, and many years teaching part-time at both the community college and university levels. She has taught Career Planning, Creating Communities of Learning, Race & Ethnic Relations, Cultural Democracy, and the Art of Research in Education. She co-authored an article, *Creating a Sense of Community in the Classroom*, in which she discussed her experience as both a student and a teacher in a multicultural counseling program.

As a fellow, she looks forward to learning more about the inner workings of federal agencies and the resources that are available for community college faculty and students. There are many ways that initiatives can support and disseminate best practices across the system and the networking among peers in the E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship is one of those ways.



ROJELIO VASQUEZ



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Born and raised in Fresno, Rojelio Vasquez has always been connected to the widely diverse ethnic landscape in this area. He has worked with many ethnic businesses and organizations in order to create and develop more economic opportunities. For the past 6 years, he has worked for Fresno Pacific University, an educational institution serving a growing Hispanic population.

He earned a bachelor's degree in management from the School of Business at Fresno Pacific University, and a master's degree in business administration from the Sid Craig School of Business at California State University, Fresno. He is currently a doctoral candidate of business administration in marketing from the School of Business at George Fox University. Rojelio is also the Director of the Business Undergraduate Programs and the Chair of the Marketing, Management and Non-profit Departments at Fresno Pacific University. In addition to teaching, Mr. Vasquez has been a Business Consultant for nearly 20 years working with small, medium and large businesses.

Mr. Vasquez holds a certificate of business management from Pepperdine University, a certificate in online teaching, economic development, international trade, entrepreneurship and a certificate of leadership development from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

He is also a Board Member and Treasurer of the Board for the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce. He is an appointed Planning Commissioner for the City of Fresno, an appointed Local Board Member for the United States Selective Service System, and former appointed Tourism Committee Member for Fresno County; Rojelio is currently on the Fresno Mayor's PIPES Blue Ribbon Task force. He has been the Chairman of the Central California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, an advisor for the San Joaquin Valley Black Chamber of Commerce as well as other minority chambers in the metropolitan area. He has been a member of the Task Force for International Air Service for the City of Fresno.

Rojelio is a graduate of the Leadership Fresno Class of 19 of the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce. He has been a judge for the Marjorie Mason Center, "Top Ten Business Women of the Year Awards," the Coleman Foundation, "Central Valley Entrepreneur Leadership Program," and the California Association FHA-HERO, "Statewide Competition" in the Fresno area.

Rojelio enjoys tennis, fishing, reading, and spending time with his family.



RAQUEL PUIG ZALDIVAR



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Professor Raquel Puig Zaldivar's career began at Miami Dade College where she has taught English Composition 1101 and 1102 since her early twenties. During the early part of her career, she combined her teaching with her work as a journalist first for El Diario Las Americas, Miami's only Spanish language daily newspaper, and then for The Miami Herald where she published interviews and human interest stories. It was at this time that she wrote and published three books: Joaquina a collection of vignettes, published in Mexico City; Robert Goes Fishing, a children's book published by Lectorum Publications in New York City, and Women Don't Need to Write, a novel published by Arte Publico Press at the University of Houston. Professor Puig Zaldivar then attended law school, graduated from the University of Miami's School of Law and became a practicing attorney specializing in probate and guardianship law in Miami-Dade County.

Professor Puig Zaldivar fully enjoys her life as a professor, where she tries to empower students to become active and effective members of society; at the same time she finds great meaning in assisting clients who may be facing a difficult time in their lives because of the death or disability of a loved one. Professor Zaldivar has two children. One is an accountant practicing in Miami-Dade County, and her second child is beginning a career in journalism in the fall. Reading, cooking, and talking to family and friends are some of her most cherished activities.



FELIX ZUNIGA



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Felix J. Zuniga was born and raised in Southern California. He holds several degrees from CSU San Bernardino, a dual bachelors in information technology and accounting, as well as a dual MBA in information technology and entrepreneurship.

He is currently employed as an information technology consultant at CSU San Bernardino. Felix's activities revolve around the University, the local business community as well as the large Latino community in the Southern California area. He strives to support those in historically underrepresented cultures to learn about opportunities and to grow professionally where possible.

Felix has recently been awarded a community service award for his contributions to the Latino and Native American communities by California State Assembly-member Wilmer Amina Carter.

Felix has been elected as president of the CSU San Bernardino Association of Latino Faculty, Staff and Students (ALFSS). ALFSS strives to support those students that typically fall by the wayside in education. ALFSS raises and donates scholarships to those in the Inland Empire community who need financial support to attend CSUSB. Felix serves on the CSUSB Graduate Business Task Force, on the executive board for the Latino Scholastic Achievement Corporation (LSAC) which focuses on raising the number of Latino graduates from college, chair of the board for the CSUSB Hispanic Alumni, and was one of the founding board members of the Latino Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) at CSUSB. LEAD tackled the task of educating the public about the crisis in Latino education, by bringing in community stakeholders for a summit that was broadcasted live around the world. Over 40 Universities partnered to host viewing events across the nation and throughout Latin America. Our Inaugural summit was the first of its kind using technology and social media to share the information discussed.

In 2009, Felix was selected as a scholar in the California Academy of Professional Students (CAPS) program by the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He was one of 5 students that were selected into the program in 2009 and the first graduate student. This program allows for students to have access to the network and leadership of the Hispanic Chamber in California and the USA. This post has created regional and state contacts that help foster the relationship between the University and the Latino business community.



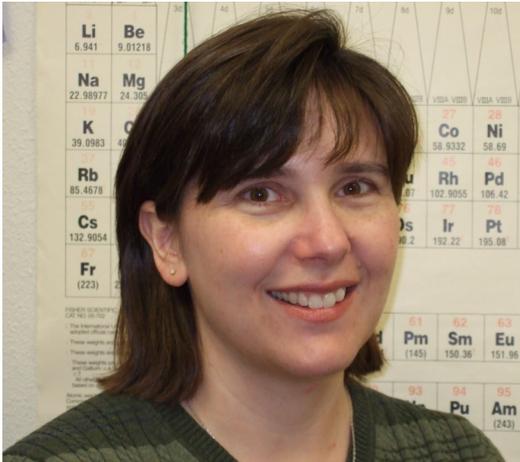
SCIENCE FELLOWS

Science Fellows collaborate with leading scientists from USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) - one of the world's premier scientific organizations. Participants learn about state-of-the-art agricultural research that solves problems affecting Hispanic Americans and the rest of our nation on a daily basis.

Fellows share their expertise with students at their respective HSIs, motivating Hispanic students to pursue careers in agriculture, science, research, and technology.



BARBARA NÈMETH RHODE



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Dr. Rhode was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina. After finishing High School, she earned a scholarship to attend William Smith College, in Geneva, NY, where she earned a B.S. in Biology. She then completed her Master's and Doctoral degrees in Botany at Miami University, in Oxford, OH.

Her research interests are in plant reproductive morphology and ecology, particularly pollen competition, but her primary professional focus is in undergraduate Biology teaching.

After completing her studies at Miami University, Dr. Rhode obtained several teaching positions in Nebraska, Missouri, and finally California. She joined the faculty at Woodland Community College in 2004, where she is working to improve the Biology and Ecology programs, to attract more students to those programs, and to facilitate transfer to 4-year schools.

She is currently working with her colleagues in the Agriculture department to design new programs in Sustainable Agriculture and Environmental Technology. Dr. Rhode is married to a fellow botanist and has a 3 year-old son who is very interested in plants and bugs.



LAURA SANDERS



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Laura Sanders is a Professor of Earth Science at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) in Chicago, Illinois, where she has taught for 24 years. She holds a bachelor's degree in Geology from Allegheny College, and a Ph.D. in applied Geology from Kent State University. She teaches courses in ground water, hydrology, and water chemistry, and has advised two dozen master's theses. She also has participated in the NEIU First-Year Experience program since its inception and team teaches an FYE course called "Chicago Rocks! Geology in the City".

Dr. Sanders is the author of the Prentice Hall text, "A Manual of Field Hydrogeology", as well as papers, abstracts, and book reviews in the areas of ground water geochemistry, hydrogeology, and Geoscience pedagogy. She has presented 22 short courses to participants from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and other technical audiences.

Her current interests are in the effects of urbanization on watersheds, wetland hydrology, storm water management, and the "first flush" phenomenon. She is especially interested in learning to facilitate connections between the urban commuter students at NEIU with professional and research opportunities available at the USDA.

Dr. Sanders enjoys biking, walking, and urban organic vegetable gardening. She lives in Chicago with her partner of 21 years.



CRIS WELLS



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Ms. Cris Wells holds Bachelor of Science degrees in Radiologic Technology and in Electrical Engineering, and Masters degrees in Health Services Administration and Business Administration. Additionally, she has a Graduate Certificate in Educational Technology and will be completing her Doctor of Education in December 2010.

She is currently the Director of the Clinical Research Coordinator Program at GateWay Community College, a Hispanic Serving Institution in Phoenix, AZ. Prior to her current position; Ms. Wells held positions in the biotechnology, healthcare and engineering industries where she was involved in medical and biotechnology research. Additionally, she served on several U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Medical Device Advisory Committees.

Ms. Cris Wells was chosen to participate as a Science Fellow in the 2010 USDA E. (Kika) De La Garza Fellowship program. Ms. Wells' goals in participating in this fellowship are to increase her institution's knowledge of USDA research, to foster potential partnerships, and to encourage collaborative grantsmanship.



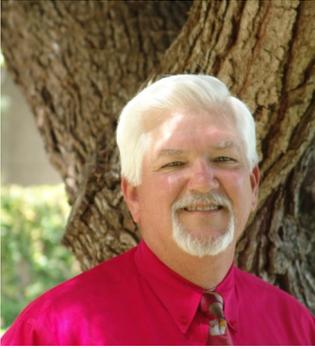
FELLOWS' ADVISORS

Fellows' Advisors provide guidance, support and advice for making the most out of the Fellowship experience. The advisors are alumni of the USDA E. (Kika) De La Garza Fellowship Program, and have demonstrated leadership, appreciation and understanding of the mission of the USDA, the HSI National Program, and other federal agencies.

As a mentor, the Fellow's Advisors ensure that the Fellows connect the respective goals and challenges of their HSIs with the information gathered throughout the Fellowship. In addition, the advisors encourage the sharing of ideas, facilitation of dialogue, and highlight opportunities for collaboration.



MARK BENDER



Professor and Endowed Chair
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-2007 Fellows

Dr. Mark Bender holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Vocational Education) from Oregon State University, Master of Science in Agriculture from California Polytechnic State University SLO, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from California State University Fresno, and an Associate of Arts from San Joaquin Delta College. He is currently serving as Professor and Endowed Founding Chair of the Department of Agricultural Studies at California State University Stanislaus, a program which is a partnership between California Community Colleges and the University. He is a recognized leader and authority in state-wide curriculum and articulation in agriculture, serving as the Statewide Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum (IMPAC) Lead for Agriculture, the Chair of the California Postsecondary Agricultural Articulation Collaborative, and Director of the curriculum and articulation portion of the Statewide Discipline/ Industry Collaborative Project for the California Community Colleges (1997-current). Through this activity and under Dr. Bender's direction, a statewide standardized postsecondary agriculture curriculum has been developed, validated and disseminated. He is currently working with the California Course Identification Board to implement a uniform numbering system for all disciplines and continues to lead this initiative for agriculture. Mark Bender has long been involved in curriculum development, articulation efforts, student service and program development. He assisted in the development and field testing of portions of the California high school Ornamental Horticulture curriculum. As part of his involvement with the Central Valley Consortium Agricultural Education Tech Prep (CVCAETP), Dr. Bender chaired the Ornamental Horticulture Curriculum Committee that developed recommendations for unit sequencing and course articulation.

As Coordinator for Student Services, Dr. Bender was responsible for the development of 6 Tech Prep Program Guides in the areas of Recruitment, Guidance and Counseling, Student Placement, Workplace Learning, Student Tracking and Followup, and Special Populations. This was accomplished through the work of 6 committees made up of high school and community college instructors, industry representatives, and was validated through administrator and industry advisory committees. In 1995-96, he assumed the responsibility of Coordinator for High School and Community College Articulation for the CVCAETP. With the assistance of other community college instructors at Modesto Junior College, a complete review of all agriculture courses at MJC was accomplished. Volume IV of the CVCAETP materials outlined the Articulation Program Model developed through this activity. Since 1996, Dr. Bender has also developed a computerized Professional Career Portfolio and has presented at the State Tech Prep Conference since then to over 1500 participants. This Portfolio has been widely adopted by high schools and community colleges throughout California. His Rabbit Curriculum has been adopted by the states Oregon and California. Finally, Dr. Bender has been awarded and served as Co-Principle Investigator for two USDA HSI CSREES Grants over the past 5 years and most recently a USDA HSI NIFA Grant (2010-2012). Mark Bender has been selected as an Honorary American FFA Degree Recipient, National FFA Association 2008; Honorary State FFA Degree, California Association FFA 2008; Teaching Award of Merit, North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture 2008; USDA HSI E. (Kika) de la Garza Education Fellow 2007; Advisor of the Year, College of Humanities and Social Science CSU Stanislaus 2007; Best of Turlock Ag Leader of the Year 2007; and the Modesto Chamber of Commerce "Good Egg" 2009. Recently, Dr. Bender was appointed to the National Agriculture Research, Education, Extension, and Economics Advisory Board to the USDA Secretary of Agriculture. Dr. Bender resides in Modesto California with his wife Cindy. They are proud parents of four and even prouder Grandparents of six.



FRANK REYES



Executive Director
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-2001 Fellow

Frank Reyes serves as the Executive Director of the Arrowhead Regional Medical Center Foundation (ARMC). ARMC is a non-profit organization that plays a vital role in the hospital's efforts to provide quality health care and health education through ongoing financial support. Over the years your Foundation has provided important tools and programs such as the new mobile clinic, state-of-the art medical equipment, health fairs, tattoo removal, physician training, youth burn camp and nursing scholarships. Frank has been with the Foundation since September of 2009.

From 1993 through June 2009, Frank served as Executive Director of Governmental Affairs with the San Bernardino Community College District.



TOM RIVERA



Associate Dean
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-2001 Fellow

Dr. Tom M. Rivera, or "Dr. Tom," as he is commonly referred to, has 47 years of experience in the field of education, including teaching as a Peace Corps volunteer, teaching at the elementary school level, the community college and college level, and serving as a counselor at San Bernardino Valley College.

For the past 37 years, he has been a California State University, San Bernardino administrator, where he has initiated numerous programs designed to motivate underrepresented students to enroll in and graduate from college

In 1985, with the help of local educators and community volunteers, Dr. Rivera founded the Inland Empire Future Leaders Program. To date, the organization has graduated over 3,100 participants. "My deep concern for the dropout rate of our young people motivated me to begin this program and I take great pride in the fact that students who participate in our program boast a college-going rate of 90%. National figures indicate that 53% of Hispanics dropout and that only 20% of Hispanic high school graduates go on to college. I am also proud of the fact that we have always had a 100% volunteer staff."

Dr. Rivera has a life-long history of commitment to the community. He has served on various Boards and community organizations. And, his many years of service to the community have been recognized by several organizations.

Dr. Rivera and his wife, Lily, have been married 45 years and have 3 children. They reside in Grand Terrace. He is a product of Colton schools and San Bernardino Valley College. He received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Cal State University, Los Angeles, and his doctorate degree in 1973 from UCLA.

In a wheelchair for the last 30 years as a result of Guillain-Barre Syndrome, he is often asked if he feels that his condition has been a hindrance. He responds, "It would be, but I've been very fortunate to have a lot of good people helping me. They're the ones who inspire me and help me succeed."



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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