

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program

The E. Kika De La Garza
Fellowship Program
2011

USDA



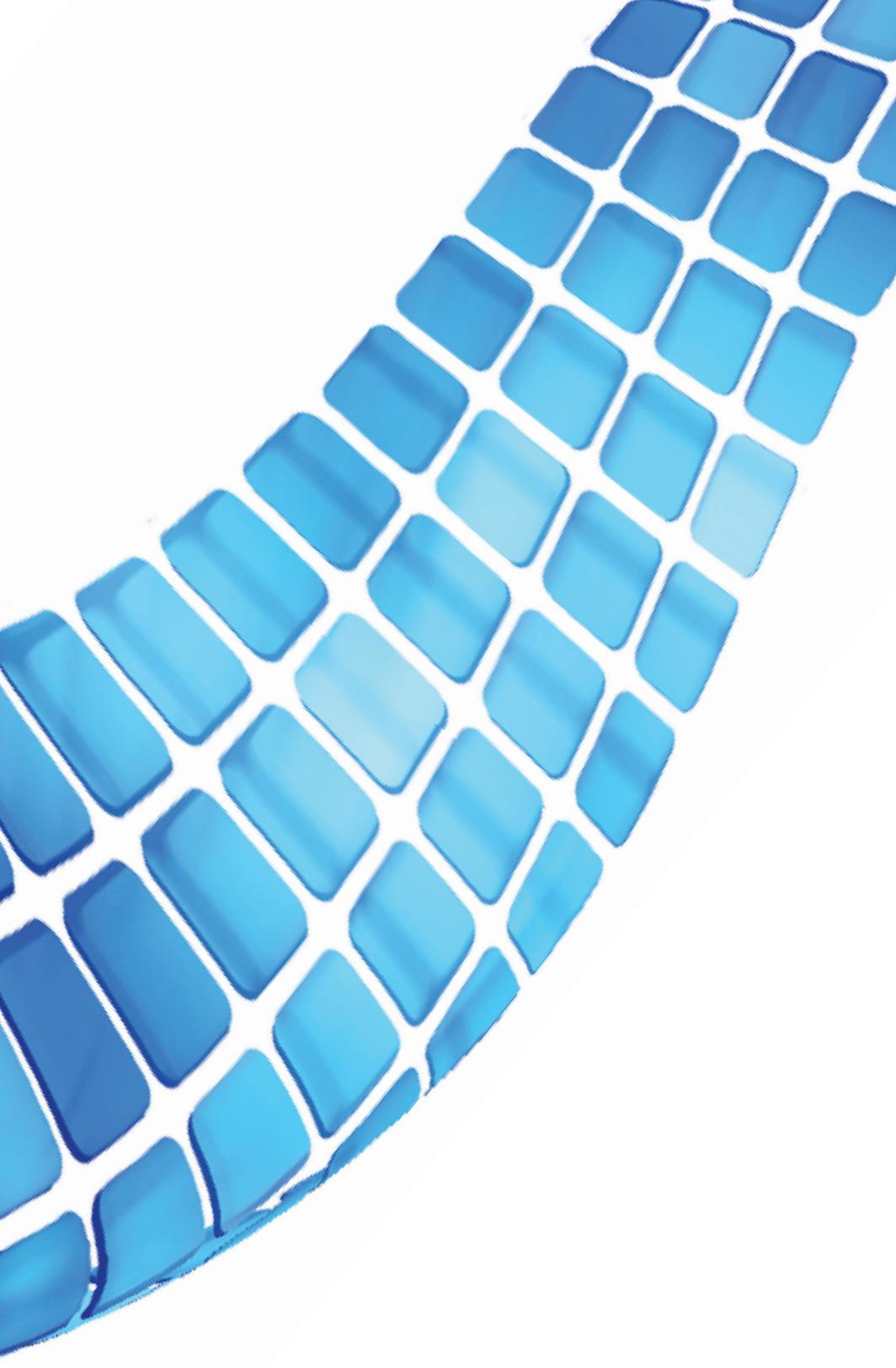
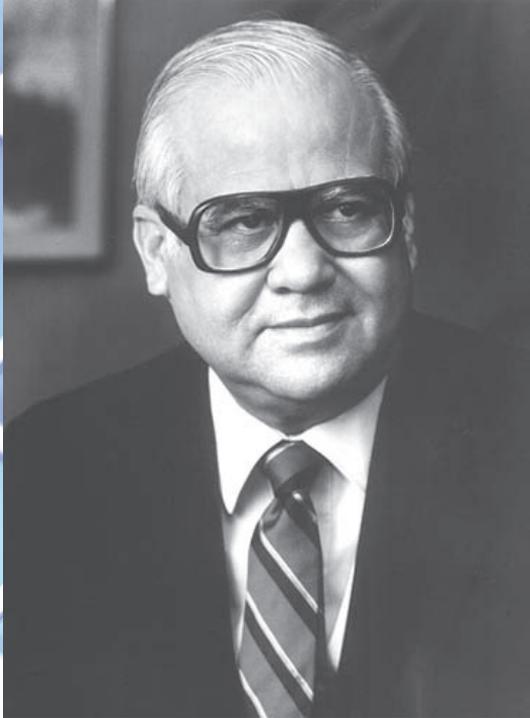


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E. Kika De La Garza II
United States Representative

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

ABOUT E. KIKA 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.



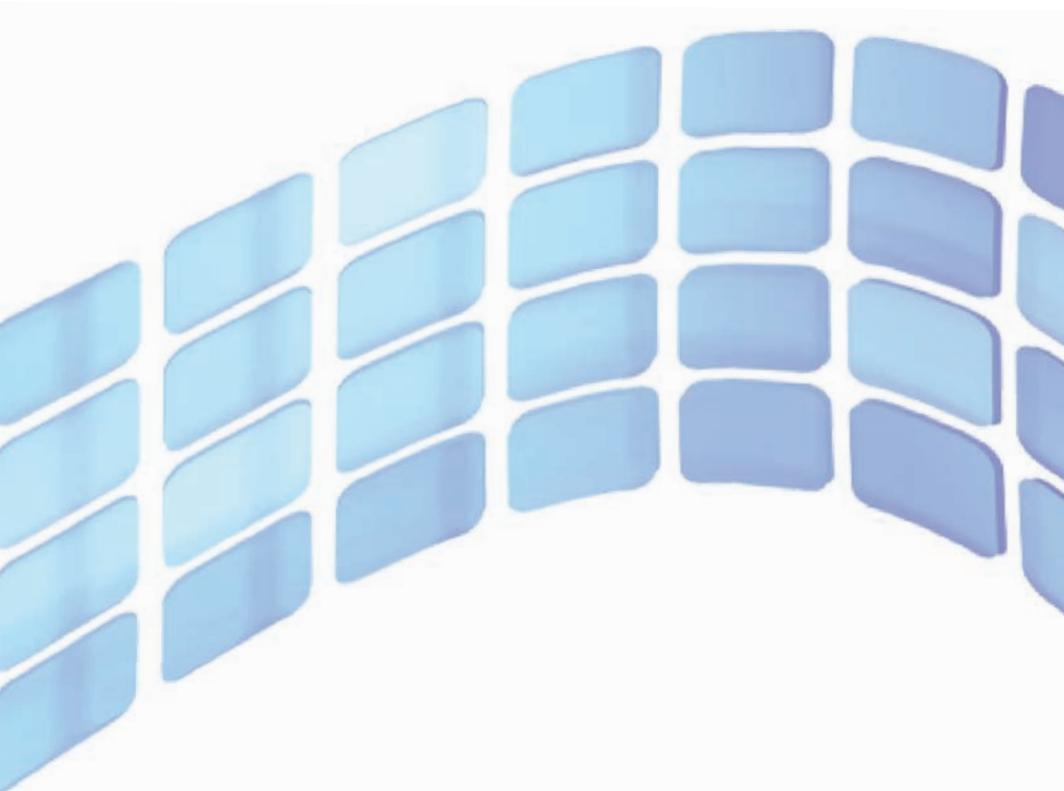
USDA E. KIKA DE LA GARZA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The USDA E. Kika de la Garza Fellowship Program offers faculty 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.

Education Fellows spend two to three 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. Science Fellows spend one week in Washington D.C. and two-three weeks at a USDA ARS Research Station working collaboratively with USDA Scientists.

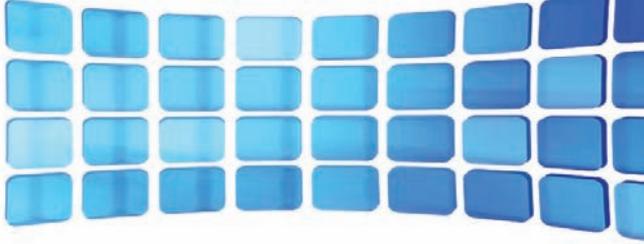
EDUCATION FELLOWS

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.





JAMES BEDARD



Professor, Biology and Earth Sciences
Adams State College
Colorado

Dr. James Bedard is an assistant professor in the Department of Biology and Earth Sciences at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. He has been with Adams State College since 2008. His teaching focus is in cellular and molecular biology, and research focus is the use of bioinformatics in gene identification. This research is part of a collaborative effort with the Genomics Education Partnership at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, through funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Most recently he was awarded a grant from the U.S. Army High Performance Computing Research Center in Research and Infrastructure Development Program for Hispanic Serving Institutions, to investigate the application of supercomputers in cross-disciplinary undergraduate education and research. In 2002 Dr. Bedard was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Cincinnati, College of Medicine – Genome Research Institute, in Cincinnati, Ohio where he studied molecular responses in the body to low levels of oxygen. In 2005 he was a postdoctoral fellow at the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Division of Cardiovascular Molecular Biology, where he studied the genetic mechanisms of cardiac development and disease and in 2007 was awarded an American Heart Association postdoctoral fellowship. Dr. Bedard received his doctoral training at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. The focus of his Ph.D. dissertation was the evolution and diversity of the 5S rRNA gene family in *Pythium* and other stramenopiles. Members of *Pythium* species cause millions of dollars of damage to pastures and grain crops every year in the United States.

MARIA BHATTACHARJEE



Professor, Urban Education
University of Houston - Downtown
Texas

Dr. Maria Bhattacharjee received her Doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction specializing in Bilingual Early Childhood Education (1995). Her Masters degree in Education is in Instructional Design (1977). Both her Masters and Doctoral degrees are from the University of Houston in Houston, Texas. Maria graduated in 1974 from the Pedagogic Institute of Caracas, Venezuela with a focus on Geography and Social Studies.

As an Associate Professor in Urban Education at the University of Houston Downtown, Maria teaches, Language Arts, Reading in Spanish, Bilingual/ESL Curriculum, Children s Literature in Spanish, and Current Issues in the Urban Classroom. Prior to her employment at UHD, she was a bilingual teacher in Houston ISD.

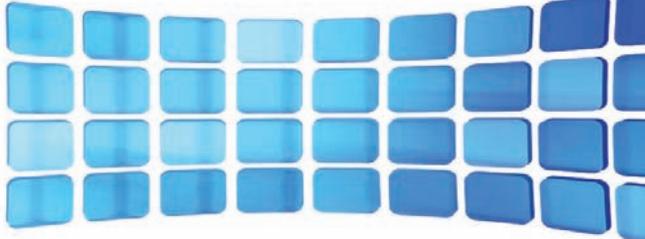
Her research agenda includes early literacy, curriculum development, and parental involvement. Maria is interested in creating inner-city school/UHD partnerships which would allow UHD to assume a key role in transforming communities.

The USDA E. Kika de la Garza Fellowship will allow Maria to increase her understanding of the way the USDA and other federal agencies operate at the National level. Her goal in this experience is to identify areas for potential partnerships to better serve the Hispanic community. As the global job market evolves, it is necessary to create a more diverse workforce which requires the inclusion of increased high quality education and available opportunities for Hispanic-Americans. Community partnerships that are connected and responsive to the needs of the Hispanic students are crucial. Maria s participation will allow her to learn about student outreach/retention, grant funding opportunities, and partnership development, which are critical areas of need for her institution.



MARIE BYRD

STEM Grant Coordinator and
Business Instructor
Reedley College
California



Marie Byrd is currently the STEM Grant Coordinator and Business Instructor at Reedley College. In this position, she has developed/implemented programs and services to serve Hispanic students majoring in and/or transferring in STEM related fields and maintained strong working relationships with the college's academic support services and surrounding high schools to promote goals/objectives of grant programs. Ms. Byrd has supervised staff to plan, organize, and implement college and financial aid educational outreach, instructional activities, and cultural activities. She also serves on various Reedley College committees working closely with STEM faculty. Before coming to Reedley College she worked in the private consulting industry where she has extensive business background including project management, non-profit management, grants management, workforce and community development, economic and business development, communications, and marketing experience. Currently, Ms. Byrd is actively involved in the Black Business Professional Network for the Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce, is a Board Member for World Youth Empowerment, and serves as a Youth Entrepreneurship Coordinator and member of the Mount Zion Assemblies Strategic Planning Team in her community. Ms. Byrd holds a Masters of Business Administration, University of Phoenix; Bachelor of Arts in Communications, minor English, emphasis in Journalism, CSU, Bakersfield; and Associate of Arts in General Education, Reedley College. Ms. Byrd is a first generation college graduate. Ms. Byrd was the recipient of various scholarships including the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission, Art Mariscotti Memorial (female athlete), RC Associated Student Body, Bakersfield Californian Journalism Scholarship, Don Hopkins Journalism Scholarship, and she also received a Track & Field Scholarship to CSU, Bakersfield.

CARLOS R. DEJES S



Assistant Principal
Pedro Albizu Campos High School
Chicago, Illinois

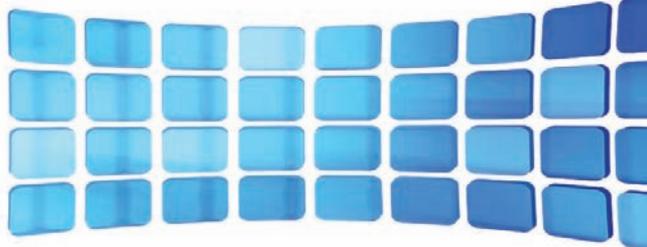
Carlos R. DeJesus was born in Puerto Rico to a family of sharecroppers. His family migrated to Chicago when he was six. Although he is a former high school dropout, he graduated from Yale University and has a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership from Northeastern University. His professional life has been dedicated to working with and for his community, in the areas of food security, education, housing, health, and mental health. His present service is as Assistant Principal and as the Director of Urban Agriculture for a community charter high school. He believes all students are intelligent, gifted and talented, and his goal is to help students achieve their full potential as successful and productive contributors to their family, community and society.

Carlos R. DeJesus has been married for 35 years to the very first woman he met in college. They have two children and three grandchildren.



JIHAN EJAN

Advisor, Center for Student Success
California State University, Monterey Bay



Jihan Ejan is the Retention Advisor for the Center for Student Success at California State University Monterey Bay. In her position, Jihan works collaboratively with other departments to develop campus-wide programs focusing on student success topics such as time management, managing test anxiety, test preparation, etc. She also meets individually with students to discuss goal setting and academic planning. Other initiatives include supporting students on academic probation and co-ordinating programs to increase sophomore student retention and engagement. Her previous work in student affairs includes experience in high school outreach, admissions, retention, mentoring, teaching, and working with educationally and economically disadvantaged students.

Jihan has her Bachelor s degrees in Asian American Studies and Sociology from University of California, Davis. She also has her Master s degree in Counseling with an emphasis in college student personnel counseling from San Francisco State University. She is a National Certified Counselor and an active member of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA).

Jihan is very passionate in providing equal access to education, especially to historically underrepresented groups. She plans to use her experience as a Kika De La Garza Fellow to further her understanding of career and educational opportunities for the Latina/o community and to develop stronger ties between USDA and CSU Monterey Bay.

LOURDES ESPAÑA



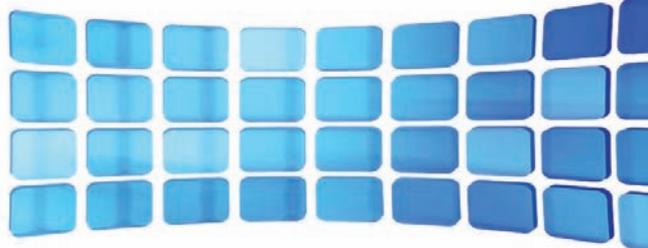
Professor, Mathematics
Miami Dade College
Florida

Professor Lourdes España is a graduate of Miami Dade College. She received her Associate in Arts Degree in 1988 and went on to get both her B.S. Degree in 1991 and her M.S. Degree in 1996 in Mathematics Education from Florida International University. In 2006, Professor España was awarded an Endowed Teaching Chair from Miami Dade College. Professor España has been a full-time Mathematics Professor at Miami Dade College (North Campus) since January 2001. In the Summer of 2007, for two months, she taught Geometry for Educators at the University Autnoma of Santo Domingo (UASD) in the Dominican Republic. In February 2003, she was one of the lead faculty members who took part in the planning of the first ever Miami-Dade College Math Faculty Retreat. In addition, she was part of the SACS Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Team that took on the idea of Math Across the Curriculum (MAC), which aims to promote successful learning communities that involve Math with other disciplines. Consequently, with her colleague Isabel Rodriguez-Dehmer, they spearheaded the award-winning “Best Practices” (awarded by the FLDOE – Florida Department of Education) “Circle of Life” learning community that links College Prep Reading with Beginning Algebra.



SHARON HALFORD

Administrator/Dean, Public Service
Phoenix College
Arizona



Sharon Halford joined Phoenix College, which is a Hispanic-serving institution, in 2004 and is the Dean for Industry and Public Service. In this role, Dr. Halford works with faculty, college administration, and business and community leaders throughout the Valley to explore, develop, and support workforce development programs and initiatives. In addition, Dr. Halford serves as the college grants administrator. She is committed to securing funding that supports the Maricopa County Community College District's strategic directions and to improving access and opportunity for students in a diverse, urban community.

A first generation college student, Dr. Halford relates to the college success barriers facing today's students. Dr. Halford earned a bachelor's degree in Education and a master's degree in Criminal Justice Administration, juggling school, work, and family. For over twenty years, Dr. Halford worked in the legal profession. Nine of those years she served as Director of Victim Services for a four-county judicial district in metropolitan Denver and rural Colorado. While working in victim services, Dr. Halford began teaching as adjunct faculty. This experience ignited her passion for education. As a result, Dr. Halford transitioned to a community college where she taught justice studies and acted as service-learning coordinator and department chair. Over thirty years after completing her bachelor degree, Dr. Halford earned a doctorate in Education and Human Resource Management, specializing in Community College Leadership.

Dr. Halford's goal as a fellow is to forge mutually collaborative relationships that will open the door to possibilities to diversify funding and scholarship opportunities, devise innovative partnerships, and better prepare students for careers that conserve and restore the environment and its resources and develop healthy communities.

NEIDA HERNANDEZ-SANTAMARIA



Program Specialist
Northeastern Illinois University

Dr. Neida Hernandez-Santamaria is an adult educator promoting learning and the pursuit of higher education for all. As an adult educator, she is committed to mentoring, adults and first-generation college students and their families while serving as a cultural broker to those new to “American” culture and American higher education. She is further dedicated to discovering opportunities that will provoke personal and professional transformation for those whom she serves, making the E. Kika De La Garza Fellowship an ideal learning opportunity that parallels her mission in life.

Dr. Hernandez-Santamaria earned an Ed.D. in Adult Education from National-Louis University and her Bachelors and Masters Degrees from Northeastern Illinois University—a Hispanic Serving Institution in Chicago. She has over eleven years of professional experience in higher education having taught at numerous Chicagoland universities including Northeastern Illinois University. Some areas of expertise are adult learning, advising, facilitating college success and an array of interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning. She has vast experience working with an ethnically and culturally diverse population and currently works as a Program Specialist in Northeastern Illinois University’s Proyecto Pa’Lante program.

On a more personal note, her commitment and interests are fueled by her personal, family and ever evolving story as a bilingual and bicultural American born woman whose identity is strongly rooted in her father’s Cuban culture. Born to a Costa Rican mother, Dr. Hernandez-Santamaria draws much of her strength and ability in connecting with individuals to her mother’s nurturing nature and her rich and diverse background. She is the youngest of three incredibly loving and funny sisters. She was also a first-generation college student, who grew up in Albany Park, a working class immigrant gateway neighborhood of Chicago. Dr. Hernandez-Santamaria attended local Chicago Public Schools like Volta Elementary and Theodore Roosevelt High School. She is married to her high school sweetheart, Harold who is also an educator, teaching at Truman College in Chicago. Lastly, they have an especially smart, kind and gentle seven year old daughter, Miranda Flora Angelina who is the ultimate blessing in their lives.



BRENDA MARQUEZ

Instructor, Biology
Desert Mirage High School
Coachella Valley Unified School District
California

When asked in “What’s the big idea?” why she chose the Coachella Valley as the place to teach Mrs. Brenda Marquez responded “the Coachella Valley is the community that provided me with support by inspiring and preparing me in determining my destiny...” As a result Brenda Marquez feels that as a 1st generation Hispanic it is her responsibility to inspire, motivate and prepare the next generations. Brenda Marquez was born and raised in the Coachella Valley where she currently teaches. She graduated with her Bachelors in science from California State University, San Bernardino and earned her multiple and single subject Biology teaching credential from Chapman University. Mrs. Marquez is currently in the process of completing her Masters in Educational Administration with a Preliminary Administrative Credential (Tier 1) from California State University, San Bernardino. She currently teaches Biology and AVID at Desert Mirage High School in Thermal California, and is also the Associated Student Body Advisor for the class of 2014.

Brenda has been described by her mentor / past principal as being an educator who epitomizes the term “in service to others”. Since 2002 she has introduced students into the wonderful world of Biology engaging students to look at science in a different way while encouraging them to become future scientist, doctors, or Biology/science educators or researchers. As a result of her dedication and passion to students and her community Mrs. Marquez has been awarded teacher of the year twice, once in 2004 and again in 2006. Additionally in 2010 she was AVID teacher of the year for the class of 2013.

DIANE PODOLSKE



Director, Community-University Partnerships
California State University, San Bernardino

Diane Podolske, Ph.D, is the Director of Community-University Partnerships at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). Community-University Partnerships is a campus-wide initiative to build partnerships in a two county area equivalent in size to the state of South Carolina. Current programs include academic service learning, a service learning internship program, volunteer service referral and community-based research. Under Diane s leadership, CSUSB has received national recognition on the President s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll-With Distinction and with the prestigious Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. Diane also was awarded the highest CSUSB employee honor by receiving the President s Outstanding Employee Award for 2008-2009.

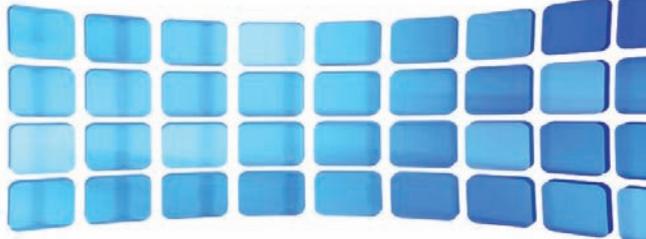
Diane is also a Project Co-Director on CSUSB s award winning Title V grant program, CoyoteCareers, which provides academic and career support for Hispanic and economically disadvantaged STEM students. CoyoteCareers works directly with USDA agencies as a conduit for students to gain real life work experience and to develop professional networks in their fields of study. Program results include impressive student retention rates, and despite the regions 14+% unemployment rate, one out of every four students who participated in the internship program received employment offers at their host site.

Diane s doctoral degree is in Educational Psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



CHRISTINE REMENIH

Coordinator, Bioscience Undergraduate Edu.
South Mountain Community College
Arizona



Christine Remenih is the Coordinator of Science Labs and Co-Project Director for eUBET (expanding Bioscience Undergraduate Education Track), a USDA/NIFA HSI Higher education grant at South Mountain Community College in Phoenix, Arizona. The goal of eUBET is to increase under-represented minority student access to biosciences and agriculture-related fields and to diversify the bioscience workforce. Christine comes from a U.S. Navy family and spent the majority of her childhood in California. A change of scenery brought her to Indiana, where she obtained her bachelor's degrees in Biology and Chemistry from Valparaiso University. A few years later, Christine returned to the southwest where she spent several years as a microbiology research technician at Arizona State University. Currently, Christine has combined her passion for science and enthusiasm for public service in the predominantly Hispanic community SMCC serves by providing support to high school bioscience teachers, mentoring students, and assisting in developing grant proposals that advance minority student access and preparation for agricultural sciences. She aspires to elevate the visibility of the USDA and the importance of agriculture in our institution's largely Hispanic community so that more young talented students will join the ranks of USDA. Christine has authored one scientific paper and co-authored a college-level biotechnology lab manual for high school teachers. She recently co-authored a USDA/NIFA grant proposal and comes to Washington DC as a De La Garza Fellow to discover more funding and student internship opportunities that will enable to achieve her professional goals.

Christine enjoys cooking, low-desert gardening, photography and spending time with her husband and two sons.

LOUIS SANTIAGO



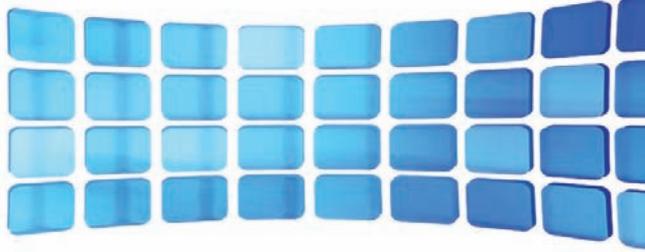
Assistant Professor, Botany & Plant Sciences
University of California Riverside

Professor Santiago's primary research interests are in the environmental physiology of plants, with emphasis on understanding how photosynthesis is regulated by plant hydraulic processes. He also has an active interest in determining the role of plant water use in the hydraulic cycles of forested watersheds. Professor Santiago's field research has been conducted in montane watershed forest in Hawaii, in lowland tropical forest in Panama, and in the arid, sub-tropical inland valleys of southern California. He employs a variety of techniques including plant physiological measurements, stable isotopes, modeling, environmental sensors, statistical approaches, and phylogenetic analysis. Professor Santiago's academic background includes a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Berkeley, a Masters of Science from the University of Hawaii and a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Florida. In 2006, he joined the Botany and Plant Sciences faculty at the University of California, Riverside as an assistant professor of physiological ecology. He is also currently serving as co-director of the Facility for Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometry in the Center for Conservation Biology.



MARISOL VEL ZQUEZ

Director, Student Activities & Workforce
Morton College
Illinois



Marisol Vel zquez is the Student Activities and Workforce Director at Morton College, a community college in Cicero, Illinois. As a director, she manages the Career Planning and Placement Office and the Student Activities Office. Further duties include the development of workforce development programs in cutting-edge and in-demand industries and programming to provide students with the skills necessary to compete in today s workforce.

Prior to working at Morton College, Marisol worked for the City of Chicago assisting youth in securing summer employment. She developed relationships with key employers and organized the job readiness training program. Simultaneously, she served as a Teaching Assistant at the University of Illinois at Chicago in Sociology and Latin American and Latino Studies courses.

Marisol has a strong commitment to community service, in her spare time she participates in several non-profit organizations. She has been actively involved with numerous campaigns to increase the Latino Vote, has volunteered for over 7 years with the American Diabetes Association and is the Vice President for the Alumnae Chapter of Gamma Phi Omega International Sorority Inc. where she assisted with the establishment of a scholarship fund for Latina women. Also, she served on the selection panel for the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program and the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI) Scholarship committee.

Marisol earned a Master s degree in Urban Planning and Policy and holds a B.A. in Liberal Arts and Sciences from the University of Illinois at Chicago. In 2008 she was the recipient of the Diversifying Faculty in Illinois Higher Education Fellowship (DFI) and the Martin Luther King Jr. Fellowship. Opportunities such as scholarships, fellowships and internships have enabled her to accomplish her educational and career goals. The same opportunities that she wants her students to have access to in order to increase their competitiveness in the global economy and workforce. Her goal is to empower students and the Morton College community to overcome the challenges and barriers of attaining their educational objectives.

MEGAN WISE DE VALDEZ



Assistant Professor, Biology
Texas A & M University, San Antonio

Dr. Megan Wise de Valdez is an Assistant Professor of Biology at Texas A & M University – San Antonio, the newest university in the Texas A & M System. Dr. Wise de Valdez earned her B.S. and M.S. in Biology at the University of Nebraska after which she worked in the Animal Health Industry as a research scientist in vaccine development. She then attended Colorado State University where she earned her Ph.D. in Zoology. Also at CSU she was a post-doctoral researcher at the Arthropod Borne and Infectious Diseases Laboratory under a grant with the Gates Grand Challenges in Global Health. Her research interests include the ecology of host-parasite interactions and mosquito behavioral ecology.

As the first tenure-track faculty member in the Biology program at TAMU-SA, Dr. Wise de Valdez is excited to be creating a program from the ground up. She and her colleagues envision a program that prepares TAMU-SA students for a career in the applied life sciences, specifically plant/animal ecology and ecosystem/natural resource management. Her hope is that as an E. Kika De La Garza Fellow she can establish a working relationship and future collaborations with the USDA to help her build a strong biology program and provide unique career-building experiences for TAMU-SA's largely Hispanic student body. Dr. Wise de Valdez is married to a fellow biologist, originally from Guatemala with whom she has two young children. She has been involved in her local Down syndrome associations and is interested in outdoor activities, ultimate frisbee, traveling, museums, and spending time with friends and family.

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.

NGEL O. CUSTODIO

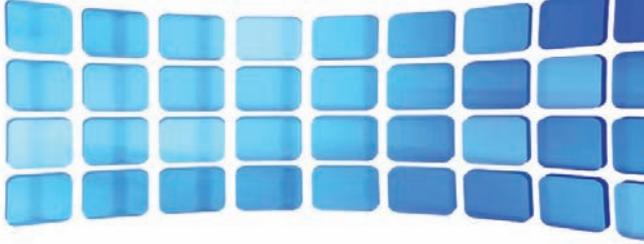


Professor, Agricultural Technology
and Natural Sciences
University of Puerto Rico at Utuado

Dr. Angel O. Custodio is an assistant professor of the Department of Agricultural Technology and Natural Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico at Utuado. Dr. Custodio was born and raised in Mayaguez, PR and is the oldest of three children. He received his B.S. in Biology at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez and subsequently obtained his Ph. D. in Genetics at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University. After completion of the Ph.D. degree he studied culinary arts and received an A.O.S. from the New England Culinary Institute in Montpelier, Vermont. Currently, Dr. Custodio is the coordinator of the Office of External Resources at the University of Puerto Rico at Utuado. Through this position he supports research and infrastructure development efforts at the Utuado Campus and facilitates the interaction of different groups, both on-campus and off-campus, interested in writing and submitting proposals for sponsored projects. As a professor he lectures Biology and food sanitation and safety courses. His current research interests include genetic factors that influence embryo transfer efficiency of tropical food production. In his free time he enjoys the outdoors and cooking.



ROSAN. CH VEZ J UREGUI



Assistant Professor, Agricultural Sciences
University of Puerto Rico
Mayaguez Campus

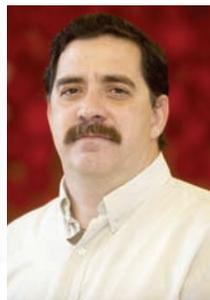
Dr. Rosa N. Chávez Jáuregui is an assistant professor in the Department of Crops & Agroenvironmental Sciences and Food Science and Technology Program at University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus (UPRM). Dr. Chávez was born in Cusco, Peru. She received her B.S. in Chemical Engineering from National University of San Antonio Abad of Cusco in Cusco, Peru and Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in Food Science and Food Technology at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil. After completing her studies at the University of Sao Paulo, she received her first postdoctoral fellowship in the Nutrition Department at the University of Sao Paulo.

She also obtained two teaching positions in Brazil. In 2004, she moved to the United States for another postdoc position at the University of Minnesota and at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

She joined the faculty at the Food Science and Technology Program at UPRM in 2010, where she is teaching an undergraduate course, Nutrition and Food Technology.

Her research interests are in phytochemicals in fruits from Puerto Rico, antioxidant stability and assessment, postharvest retention and value-added products. Dr. Chávez was chosen to participate as a Science Fellow in the 2011 USDA E. (Kika) De La Garza Fellowship program. Her goals for this fellowship are to increase her institution's knowledge of USDA research, foster potential partnerships, and encourage collaborative grantsmanship. She enjoys traveling, yoga and walking.

JAVIER MACOSSAY



Professor, Chemistry
University of Texas-Pan American
Edinburg, Texas

Dr. Macossay was born and raised in Mexico, where he obtained his Bachelor's degree in 1989 in Chemistry at Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon. He continued his studies in Polymer Chemistry at Louisiana State University, obtaining his Masters in Science in 1993 and his Doctoral degree in 1995. He was also a postdoctoral fellow at Louisiana State University and Texas State University.

He arrived at the University of Texas-Pan American in 2003, where he teaches Organic Chemistry lectures and laboratories at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He has a vibrant and diverse research group with undergraduate and graduate students and a postdoctoral fellow. His current research interests are in the development of polymer nanofibers through electrospinning for potential applications as ligaments and tendons prostheses. Furthermore, he is collaborating with colleagues to design tissue scaffolds for diverse biomedical applications. His research efforts are currently funded by NIH.

Dr. Macossay is a member of the American Chemical Society Polymer Chemistry Division, Polymeric Materials Science and Engineering Division and the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board for the American Chemical Society. He was selected to the prestigious 2011 E. (Kika) De La Garza Science Fellowship, where he will be able to meet with federal officers to learn more on how the USDA operates, participate in workshops, to visit USDA's premier research laboratories and to establish collaborations with USDA's scientists.



LYNETTE ORELLANA



Professor, Food Science & Technology
University of Puerto Rico
Mayaguez Campus

Dr. Lynette Orellana holds a doctorate in Food Science (2004) from Washington State University, a master s in Food Science and Technology (1998) and a bachelor s in Microbiology (1995), from the University of Puerto Rico, Humacao Campus and Mayaguez Campus, respectively. Dr. Orellana joined the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus (UPRM) faculty in 2004. Since coming to UPRM, she has served on the Food Science and Technology Department for over seven years and has written grant proposals collaboratively to support graduated students. She currently teaches courses in Food Microbiology, Food Processing, Microbiology of Fruits and Vegetables and Food Toxicology. Orellana s line of research include: microbiological risk assessment for fruits and vegetables, new product development, shelf life studied and the use of edible films for food products. Dr. Orellana is certified in Hazard Analysis and Critical Points, Safe Quality Food 1000 and 2000. Together with several other professors at her institution she helped develop short courses in Good Agricultural Practices, Good Manufacturing Practices, Low Acid Canned Food Regulations, Nutritional Labeling, Standard Sanitation Operational Procedures, Safe Quality Food and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points. Dr. Orellana is member of the Institute of Food Technologist and Alpha Delta Kappa Agricultural Society. In 2009 she was recognized as Distinguished Professor by the Agricultural Science College at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus.

DAVID STILL



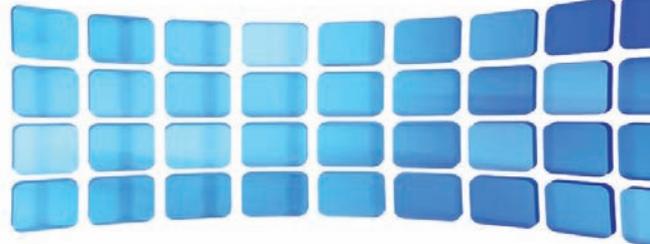
Professor, Plant Sciences
California State University Polytechnic, Pomona

David W. Still is a professor in the Plant Sciences department at Cal Poly Pomona. In addition, Dr. Still serves as the Campus Coordinator of the Agriculture Research Institute at Cal Poly Pomona. Dr. Still received his B.S. in Wildlife Science and a M.S. in Horticulture from New Mexico State University, a Ph.D. in Horticulture from Texas A&M University. He continued his science training as a Postdoctorate Fellow under Dr. Kent Bradford at UC Davis studying various aspects of seed biology. Dr. Still was appointed as an Assistant Research Scientist in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Arizona, Yuma Agricultural Center, a major lettuce and winter vegetable production area.

The Still lab studies how plants work and how to make them work better. Most of the research in the Still lab focuses on improving horticultural traits in lettuce. His lab trains undergraduate and graduate (M.S.) students to solve plant breeding problems using a wide range of disciplines, including traditional physiology and plant breeding approaches aided by molecular, genomic and computational tools. Dr. Still recognizes the value of collaborative research which can extend the opportunities for his students through internships with collaborating laboratories. Students benefit by being exposed to research-intensive universities while the Still laboratory benefits by new techniques being transferred to the laboratory. Dr. Still looks forward to learning about the USDA infrastructure and building collaborative research projects through the Science Fellowship program that will benefit his institution's students.



FELIX F. TORRES



Professor, Organic Chemistry
Inter American University of Puerto Rico

Felix came to Inter American University of Puerto Rico after nearly twenty years of service at Pfizer Pharmaceuticals in Barceloneta Puerto Rico. He teaches undergraduate Organic Chemistry I and II and also a course in spectrophotometric methods of analysis. He is also working to develop special topic courses for students oriented to a career into the chemical industry. Felix is also interested on developing research projects that uses the honeybee as a studying model that could benefit students with projects in different science areas such as genetic, analytical analysis and pollution monitoring.

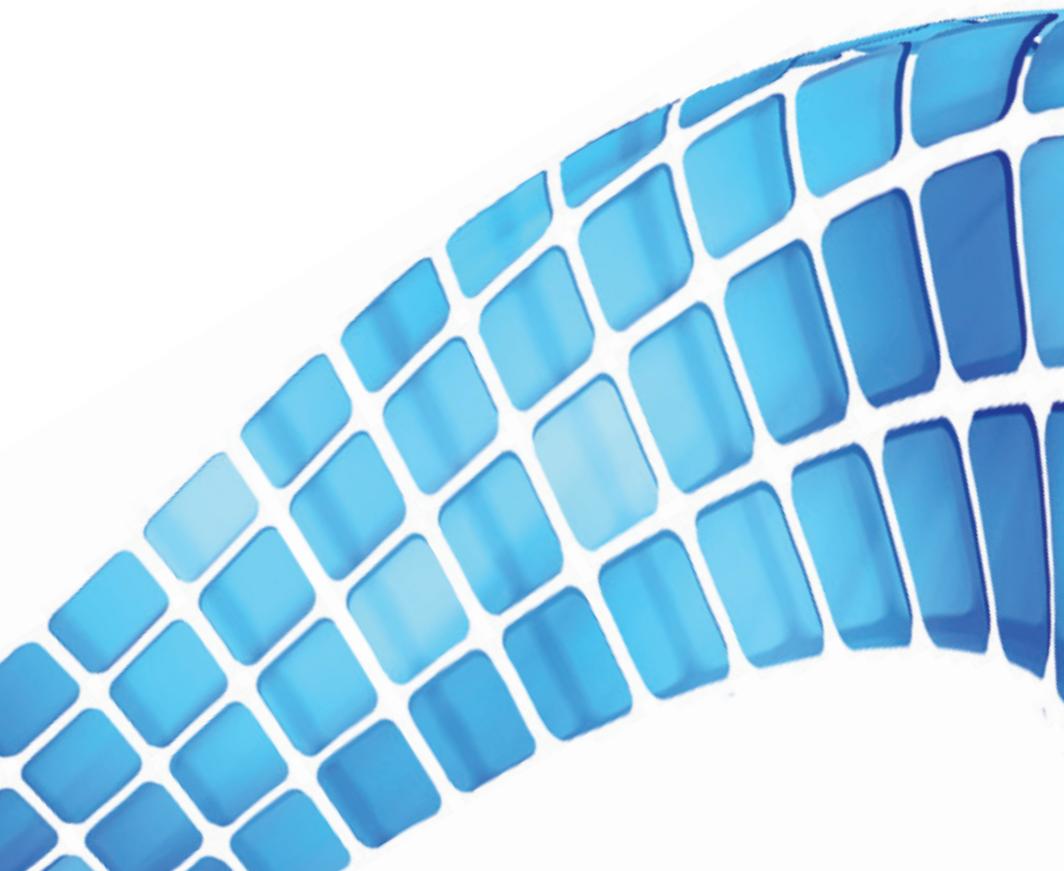
During his years in the pharmaceutical industry he gained vast experience in the manufacturing of bulk active pharmaceutical ingredients. This includes optimization of existing chemical processes, the designs of new potential synthetic routes, developing rework alternatives for affected materials and technology transfer across sites. He also led cross functional multidisciplinary teams in charge of technology transfer and validation.

He is active in a variety of civic organizations including Ocean Conservancy and Puerto Rico's Ornithology Society. Outside of professional interests, he likes travelling, reading, beekeeping, scuba diving, and enjoys living in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico with his family, dogs and bees.

HSI 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 Fellows 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
Department of Agricultural Studies
California State University, Stanislaus

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. Prior to this position, he served as the Dean of the Agriculture, Environmental Sciences and Technical Education Division of Modesto Junior College from 1997 through 2002, having joined the faculty as an Environmental Horticulture and Agricultural Business instructor in 1976. Mark has served 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). His efforts have resulted in validated and disseminated statewide standardized postsecondary agriculture curriculum.

He assisted in the development and field testing of portions of the California high school Ornamental Horticulture curriculum and developed a computerized Professional Career Portfolio which has been widely adopted by high schools and community colleges throughout California. Dr. Bender also has been awarded and served as Co-Principal Investigator for two USDA HSI CSREES Grants over the past 5 years and most recently a USDA HSI NIFA Grant (2010-2012). Mark 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. 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.

DANIEL HOSTETLER



Professor, Agronomy and Farm Management
California State University Polytechnic, Pomona

Dan Hostetler has served California State Polytechnic University for 35 years. He received a bachelor's degree in Agronomy and a master's in Agricultural Science from the same institution. Following graduation he worked with two large farming companies in the San Joaquin Valley, before returning to Cal Poly in 1976. He has been the Department Chairman of the Plant Science Department for the past 20 years. During his tenure, he has assisted in developing AGRIScapes, a new Center which incorporates agricultural literacy projects into a Farm Store, research labs, greenhouses and visitors center.

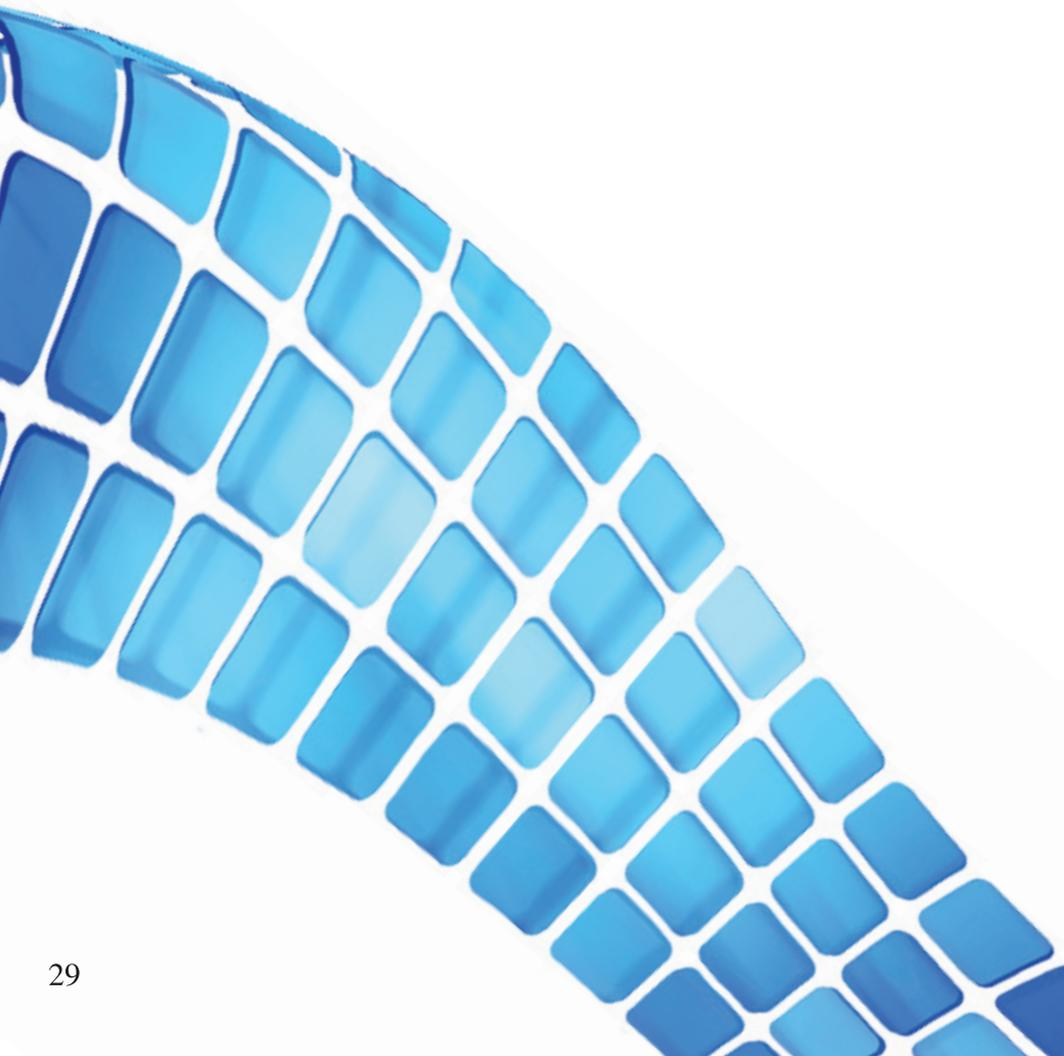
Dan is a member of the American Society of Agronomy, past board member of the California Chapter of the ASA, and the California Alfalfa and Forage Association. He recently served 12 years as Chairman of the Board of the Southern California Agricultural Land Foundation, a land conservancy group in Chino. He has been awarded the outstanding teacher and outstanding advisor award from NACTA, the College of Agriculture and Gamma Sigma Delta, the national honor society for agriculture.

Dan continues to teach various agronomy and farm management classes within the college. He also manages over 1555 acres of diversified farming for the university, which provides experiential learning opportunities for the students. Dan also coaches a successful crops judging team which competes in national competitions.

He Resides in Chino Hills, California with his wife Melinda. They have 3 sons aged 30, 26, and 21, the latter graduating from Cal Poly Pomona (hopefully very soon) in Mechanical Engineering.

USDA FELLOWS ADVISOR

The USDA Fellows Advisor provides guidance and support for the fellows, working directly with the science fellows to facilitate their ARS lab placement. During the orientation they provide the fellows with information on ARS and support the science fellows in advance of the research component of their Fellowship.



ANNIE DONOGHUE



Research Leader, Poultry Production &
Product Safety Research Unit
USDA ARS Southern Plains Area

A native of Southern California, Dr. Donoghue received her B.S. from San Diego State University her M.S. from Texas A&M University and her Ph.D. in Physiology from the F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. She was a post doctoral fellow at the Smithsonian Institution before joining the Germplasm and Gamete Physiology Laboratory, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, as a Poultry Research Physiologist in 1993. Dr. Donoghue conducted basic research to identify and elucidate factors which influence or alter sperm function in poultry including investigating sperm competition between males and its relationship to genetic paternity, and determining the effects of liquid or cryopreservation on sperm function. Dr. Donoghue became Research Leader in June 2000 for the Poultry Production and Product Safety Research Unit, ARS, USDA within the Center of Excellence for Poultry Science at the University of Arkansas and continues to serve in this capacity. The Unit's research focus is on enhancing the food safety of poultry, reducing metabolic disease which impacts poultry production and developing environmentally-friendly methods to utilize poultry manure. Her research here has focused on developing alternatives to antibiotic use in poultry and developing strategies to reduce or eliminate pathogen contamination. Dr. Donoghue has published more than 200 peer-reviewed manuscripts, patents, invited proceedings or book chapters. She has received over \$5 million in grants as PI or co investigator. She received numerous honors including the Distinguished Young Scientist for State of Maryland by the Maryland Science Center, the USDA, ARS, Hebert L. Rothbart Outstanding Early Career Research Scientist of the Year; the U.S. Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers; the HyLine International Research Award; the Helene Cecil Leadership Award; the National Excellence in Technology Transfer Award from the Federal Laboratory Consortium and the ARS Outstanding Technology Transfer Award.

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