



News from Merced College

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MERCED COLLEGE COUNSELOR ENRIQUE RENTERIA CHOSEN FOR KIKA DE LA GARZA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Merced College counselor Enrique Renteria was one of 20 individuals selected nationwide by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program office to participate in the 2009 class of E. (Kika) de la Garza Fellowship Program.

The 20 fellows, highly accomplished faculty members at Hispanic-Serving Institutions from across the nation, were selected based on the compatibility of their research interests with USDA mission areas and the value their experience with the Department would add to their institution's curriculum.

"The fellowship will allow me to meet executives and other stake-holding individuals in many federal agencies that one may not necessarily easily meet, especially in the central valley," stated Renteria. "I want to understand the agencies they work in and how they currently support education, and identify/create partnerships between schools and federal agencies to promote student success." Renteria will not only be looking into grant opportunities but also to create a network of professional partnerships. "Being a counselor, my interest is to promote students to consider a career in federal government."

Renteria has set three goals he hopes to achieve through the fellowship program. However, they may change after experiencing the four weeks in D.C. in the fellowship program. "There are many possibilities, however, and one must understand the scope of the agency and know key individuals before attempting to achieve any realistic goals." He looks forward to "creating education and career pathways to students, partnerships with government

entities that permit students to understand federal government careers, and most importantly, exploring creative ideas that promote student success."

Renteria's vision is to create a career fair of government agencies in collaboration with University of California, Merced for the county residents; create a committee of interested faculty members and community leaders including various agriculture and agriculture-related programs and businesses to promote new and innovative ideas to better serve the students of the Merced Community College District; and to create an organization on campus for students to tour government agencies in the region.

Renteria will begin his fellowship in Washington, D. C. later this month.