



Time to Celebrate – Communication and Collaboration Bring Student Success Increasing Multicultural Diversity in Agriculture: Education and Partnerships  
Award No. 2007-38422-18511

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food and  
Agriculture

Laredo Community College

Texas State University

Southwest Texas Junior  
College



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**USDA Need Areas:**

Instructional Delivery Systems  
Student Experiential Learning  
Student Recruitment and Retention

**All USDA Strategic Goals:** especially 6 *Protect and Enhance the Nations' Natural Resource Base and Environment* by bringing together top-notch students from rural and border areas to complete degrees in agricultural sciences and agribusiness

**Activities:** Dual enrollment at the community college and university

Teleconferenced courses  
Summer Academies dealing with water, soils, science and mathematics

Informational tours of the university

Internships  
Scholarships

**Evaluation:** External evaluation using identified baselines included in the objectives, timelines, and proposal.

**Impact:** A solid path for Hispanic and other underrepresented students to complete degrees in agriculture science and business to qualify for jobs with USDA

Through a CSREES (NIFA) grant, two community colleges and one university collaborated to create a path for Hispanic students to complete degrees in agriculture science to qualify for USDA jobs.

Created a Joint Admissions Process so that students interested in agriculture science could dually enroll at the college and university.

The investigators wanted to:

1. increase the number of graduates at the community college with successful transfer to the university;
2. develop early linkages with the university through classes, mentors, internships, scholarships, and field experiences;
3. increase the number of Hispanic students pursuing agriculture degrees at the university by 2% per year;
4. increase the technology in the agriculture department at TX State;
5. disseminate information on successes and best practices; and
6. prepare students for the rigors of agriculture courses by early exposure to agriculture studies.

**Successes to Date:** Joint Admissions, teleconferenced classes for 4 semesters, student visits to the university and Freedman Ranch. Four students have presented posters at the national conference of soil scientists, one high school student received a scholarship from NRCS, one graduate at the college transferring to Texas State University to pursue Agriculture Science Teaching degree, one student transferred successfully and will graduate from Texas A & M Kingsville. Forty high school graduates have applied for 2010 summer academy at LCC.

Success has been slow, but the project gains momentum and all objectives should be met.