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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research receives grant from the Union Bank Foundation**

FRESNO – The University of California, San Francisco Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research received a \$10,000 grant from the Union Bank Foundation to benefit its Doctors Academy.

The Doctors Academy is a rigorous academic program at Sunnyside, Selma and Caruthers high schools that prepares students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds who are interested in health and medicine for both higher education and careers in the health professions. To date, 100 percent of Doctors Academy graduates have gone on to attend a college or university.

“Too few students from disadvantaged backgrounds graduate from high school and go on to a four-year university,” said Katherine A. Flores, MD, director of the UCSF Fresno Latino Center. “Our goal is to provide the academic tools necessary for our students to succeed in high school and prepare them for the rigors of college. The ultimate goal is for our students to graduate from a health professions school and return to the Central Valley to provide culturally competent health care. We are tremendously grateful for the generosity of the Union Bank Foundation and for the bank’s support of our efforts.”

The gift from the Union Bank Foundation will be used to support a series of workshops aimed at preparing students in the Doctors Academy program to take the SAT examination. SAT scores are widely used by colleges and universities in the U.S. as a basis for admission.

“We believe that the long-term success of our organization is dependent upon the existence of healthy communities within our market place,” said Elaine Genevro, Union Bank Central California market president. “UCSF Fresno’s Doctors Academy provides young people from low- to middle-income households the opportunity to go to college, become doctors, and then return to their communities to provide access to healthcare to a population that has been historically under-served.”

The UCSF Fresno Latino Center, in partnership with Fresno Unified School District and Fresno County Office of Education, started the Sunnyside High School Doctors Academy in 1999 as a pilot program to encourage disadvantaged students to focus on careers in health and medicine. A Junior Doctors Academy Program was established in 2000 to encourage and support students earlier in their academic career as middle school students. The Doctors Academy has grown in popularity and scope over the years. In 2007, the Doctors Academy program was implemented at Caruthers High School and Selma High School. The Sunnyside Doctors Academy Program currently has 156 students enrolled. Doctors Academy students take part in a rigorous academic curriculum to ensure their preparedness for higher education.

*UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program, established more than 30 years ago, plays a substantial role in providing healthcare services to residents of California's San Joaquin Valley and training medical professionals in the region. The medical education program has trained approximately one-third of Central San Joaquin Valley physicians. Annually, UCSF Fresno currently trains approximately 220 medical residents*

*in eight specialties, more than 30 fellows in nine subspecialties and about 200 medical students on a rotating basis. UCSF Fresno faculty and medical residents engage in a broad spectrum of research addressing health issues pertinent to the Valley. UCSF Fresno faculty and residents also care for the overwhelming majority of the region's underserved populations. In addition, UCSF Fresno provides academic preparation programs for middle- and high school students interested in the health professions through the Doctors Academy and Junior Doctors Academy. UCSF Fresno is a key partner in UC Merced's proposed School of Medicine and is expected to play a significant role in the training of medical students at the planned school.*

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