

Media Advisory

May 5, 2011

DOCTORS ACADEMY AT SUNNYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL TO CELEBRATE ITS NINTH GRADUATING CLASS

The UCSF Fresno Sunnyside High School Doctors Academy (DA) will celebrate its ninth graduating class on **Tuesday, May 9 from 5:45 pm to 7:30 pm in the Performing Arts Theater at Sunnyside High School** (1019 S. Peach Ave.) in Fresno. More than 400 people are expected to attend.

“The Doctors Academy Class of 2011 is comprised of many amazing individuals who have much to be proud of, including completing multiple Honors and Advanced Placement courses, participation in three DA summer programs and involvement in a variety of extra-curricular and leadership activities,” said Katherine A. Flores, MD, director of the UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research and founder of the Doctors Academy.

All of the Sunnyside High School Doctors Academy graduates will attend college in the fall. Eight of the 31 graduating students will attend California State University, Fresno. Nineteen will attend University of California campuses. Three students will attend private universities and one student will attend Reedley College.

Several of the graduates will be awarded the UCSF School of Medicine Merit Award for their academic achievement, commitment in the program, and continued interest in a career in medicine.

“I am very proud of these students. Their dedication and hard work is a reflection of their intent to be successful health care professionals. I look forward to their return to the Valley to provide needed healthcare services in a culturally competent fashion,” stated Dr. Flores.

The UCSF School of Dentistry Pre-Dental Scholars Award will be bestowed to one Doctors Academy graduate. The program offers DA students special consideration for an interview with the UCSF School of Dentistry upon successful completion of undergraduate course work and admission requirements.

“The UCSF School of Dentistry looks forward to our partnership with the UCSF Fresno Doctors Academy, and to the opportunity to introduce California Central Valley students to the world of dentistry and the oral and craniofacial sciences,” said Mr. James C. Betbeze, director of admissions for the UCSF School of Dentistry. “We welcome them to the health professions in the hope that many will someday return to meet the tremendous need for care among the Valley's critically underserved populations.”

Community sponsors will also award scholarships, including the Pre-Med Scholarship from the Anesthesia Consultants of Fresno and the Clark Jones Latino Health Scholars Program.

Background:

The UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research, 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. The UCSF Fresno Latino Center continues to support and work closely with Fresno Unified to sustain the program at Sunnyside High School and provide health career opportunities for qualifying students. Today, the Sunnyside Doctors Academy Program currently has 164 students enrolled.

The Doctors Academy program has grown in popularity and scope in the past ten years. A Junior Doctors Academy Program was established in 2000 to encourage and support students earlier in their academic career as middle school students. In 2007, the Doctors Academy program was implemented at Caruthers and Selma high schools.

In 2009, the Latino Center partnered with California State University, Fresno by re-establishing the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) with the College of Science and Mathematics. Currently, over 100 students are enrolled in the HCOP program.

For more information about the Doctors Academy or the other health profession programs of the UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research, please contact Bertha Dominguez, education director at 559-241-7670 or email: bdominguez@fresno.ucsf.edu

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