FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, Oct. 25, 2013

UCSF FRESNO AND FRESNO STATE HOLD CONFERENCE FOR ASPIRING HEALTH LEADERS

FRESNO - The University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research (LaCMER) and the California State University, Fresno College of Science and Mathematics will hold the fall 2013 “Aspiring Health Leaders Conference” on Saturday, Oct. 26, 2013, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at Fresno State McLane Hall, Room 121.

The conference is for students in the UCSF Fresno Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) at Fresno State. Seniors in the Doctors Academy programs at Caruthers, Selma and Sunnyside high schools and the Delhi High School Medical Magnet Program and their parents also will participate. Nearly 250 people are expected to attend.

HCOP and the Doctors Academy provide advising, internship opportunities, tutoring, summer programs and professional development seminars to participating students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are committed to becoming health professionals. The conference is aimed at motivating, guiding and preparing students to become future healthcare leaders for the San Joaquin Valley. Through UCSF Fresno LaCMER efforts and partnerships, these programs serve to increase the number of underrepresented health professionals in the San Joaquin Valley. Funding for the conference is provided, in part, by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development.

The conference will feature two keynote speakers, former Fresno State HCOP alumni Bonnie Her-Ramirez, MD, a family medicine physician, and Patrick Ramirez, MPH, director of ambulatory administration at UCSF. Other guest speakers include health professionals from UCSF Fresno residency programs, Fresno State Career Service Center and Fresno State Department of Public Health and Career Services.

Workshop topics include: “When Life and School Collide,” “UCSF Resident Physicians: Staying Focused on Your Path to a Health Professional School,” “How to Become a Stronger Medical School Applicant,” presented by the UCLA School of Medicine,” Medical Discoveries: Chronic Diseases Impacting the Heart,” by North Primary Care and UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program, “Tapping into Financial Resources - Loans, Grants, Scholarships,” “Common Mistakes College Freshmen Make,” “Informing Parents about College as a Life-Changing Experience” and more.

(More)
**Agenda:**

9:00 – 9:15am Welcome

- Katherine Flores, MD, Director, UCSF Fresno Latino Center for Medical Education and Research
- Susan Elrod, PhD, Dean, Fresno State College of Science and Mathematics

9:15 – 10:15 am Keynote Presentation “Keep Moving Forward” by Fresno State HCOP Alumni

- Bonnie Her-Ramirez, MD, Community Medical Providers, Family Medicine
- Patrick Ramirez, MPH, Administrative Director in Ambulatory Administration, UCSF Medical Center

11:30-12:50 pm Workshops

12:50-1:00 pm Evaluations and Wrap-Up

For more information, please contact: Juan Carlos Gutierrez, DC, MA, HCOP Coordinator, at HCOP: 559-278-4139, LaCMER: 559-241-7670, Cell: 559-907-1170 or email: jgutierrez@fresno.ucsf.edu

**Background:**

Located in Fresno, CA, the Latino Center for Medical Education and Research (LaCMER) is a unit of the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program. The Center addresses the serious shortage of physicians and other health care professionals in the area. The mission of the Center is to develop individuals to become health care professionals who will ultimately return to the San Joaquin Valley to provide culturally competent health care services to the medically underserved. To accomplish its goal of increasing the number of health care professionals in the area, the Center partners with California State University, Fresno College of Science and Mathematics in operating the Health Careers Opportunity Program, Fresno Unified School District, Selma Unified School District, and Caruthers Unified School District in operating the Doctors Academy.

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