

# Demystifying grant administration

## HACU-DHHS program celebrating ten years

By NJ Revilla-García

Michael Sesma, Ph.D., has been making presentations to Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), in efforts to help demystify the grant submission and administration process. His was the first of many presentations made by National Institutes of Health (NIH) staff earlier this summer. By providing information about the NIH organizational structure and explaining how program officials work together to administer grants, HSIs gain further insight about expectations during grant application development.

"The more you know, the better off you are," Sesma told this year's participants of the HACU-DHHS Professions Capacity Building Program (PCBP) during a workshop at the NIH in Bethesda, MD.

The multi-day session gave participants an overview of NIH funding opportunities and a chance to meet staff members. Among the presenters were Judith Arroyo, Ph.D., National Institute of Alcohol and Alcoholism, Alberto Rivera-Rentas, Ph.D., who provided information about more program opportunities, and Derrick Tabor, Ph.D., of The National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities.

The technical training session was one of a three-part series of workshops that also included an online training component. Established in 1999 through a partnership between the Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU) and the Department of Health and Human Services, the program is funded by the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) and administered by the Office of Minority Health (OMH) and HACU through a cooperative agreement.

"The program has had an unprecedented impact on the capacity of our member institutions to secure funding in the areas of health disparities research, education and outreach programs, and health science research programs in particular," said HACU President and CEO Antonio Flores.

The program goals have been: (1) to help strengthen the capacity of HSIs to secure and retain funding for biomedical and health services research and other sponsored programs; (2) to enhance the capability of faculty at HSIs to compete successfully for grants to support research in the social sciences and sciences; and, (3) to enhance the administrative support systems at HSIs so as to encourage faculty to obtain grant support and to facilitate the process of managing grants so as to make the endeavors successful.



L-R) Dr. Rubén Martínez, Arturo Caéllar, Jr., Director of Capacity Building and Leadership at HACU and Dr. Raymond Garza at the closing reception for HACU-DHHS PCBP.

This year, a series of separate breakout sessions allowed faculty and staff to discuss issues faced in their positions. These sessions proved extremely helpful to participants.

"It was great to hear the experiences of others and how they tackled various situations," noted Sylvia Vetrone, Ph.D., an assistant professor at Whittier College.

The breakout sessions also served to enhance career development and networking opportunities. Doug Carey, a research administrator at California State University-Fresno, says he's planning on a long career in the OSPR. For him the opportunity to interact with others in similar positions has been invaluable.

"I really felt like I was able to form a network of colleagues that I'll stay in touch with for years to come," said Carey.

Past year participants from the HACU-DHHS Capacity Building Program will have a reunion this year at HACU's Annual Conference in Walt Disney World®, Florida. There, participants will discuss their success stories of how the program had made a difference in their careers.

To learn more about the program, visit [www.hacu.net](http://www.hacu.net).



(L-R) HACU President and CEO, Antonio Flores presents certificate to Doug Carey, research administrator at California State University-Fresno participant in the 2009 HACU-DHHS Professions Capacity Building Program.



(L-R) HACU President and CEO, Antonio Flores presents certificate to Sylvia Vetrone, Ph.D., an assistant professor at Whittier College, participant in the 2009 HACU-DHHS Professions Capacity Building Program.