

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Joseph Castro UCSB's New Campus Outreach Director

If any one understands the potential impact on people of University of California outreach programs, it is Joseph Castro, UC Santa Barbara's new executive director of campus outreach initiatives. He benefited from one of UC Berkeley's programs in the early 1980s that identified and admitted eligible Latino students from San Joaquin Valley farming communities.

The native of Hanford---a small town about 45 miles from Fresno---was the first in his immediate family to secure a college education, attaining a B.A. and a master's from UC Berkeley and a Ph.D. in education from Stanford. He vividly recalled how it started.

"A number of Central Valley students like me were invited to come to an office Berkeley had in Fresno with our filled out admissions applications," he said. If they had the prerequisite classes, GPA, and high enough SAT scores, "we were admitted on the spot," he said. "We were given letters of admission right there and then."

His mother and an older sister, who were with him that day in Fresno, were at first as surprised as he, then supportive.

"A lot of people talk about UC being an elite institution, but that was not my first impression," Castro said with a small smile.

Castro came to UCSB, he said, to help maximize the impact of rapidly multiplying campus initiatives for disadvantaged students. "Some people refer to my position as a 'glue' position," he explained. "My job is to work with all the folks involved in outreach on this campus and to enhance coordination of those programs, strengthen them, and to expand them, where necessary."

Among other duties, he expects to provide staff support to the Chancellor's Outreach Advisory Board, which has supported academic kindergarten through 12th-grade

outreach projects for the past two years with University of California funds. The board, chaired by professors Sarah Fenstermaker and Manuel Casas, organized two collaborative working groups to draw together pre-existing outreach programs. Castro said assisting these groups in shaping and meeting their goals would be his internal focus.

Externally, he expects to become a liaison on outreach issues to similarly oriented community groups and other higher education institutions. With community colleges and the California State University system running outreach to similar groups of students, Castro says that avoiding duplication of efforts in serving the needs of students and teachers is high on his list.

For community organizations, such as foundations or businesses, Castro hopes to act as a clearinghouse of information on area K-12 programs that will enable groups to leverage their outreach resources. He expects his pending appointment to the faculty of the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education to be helpful. He previously taught educational leadership courses and directed the UC Educational Research Center in Fresno.

Coming from UC Merced, where he was founding director of academic programs, Castro has experience building partnerships throughout the Central Valley aimed at preparing students for higher education. "There wasn't enough money for each of us to do our own thing in a vacuum," he said. "Together, we had to reshape our thinking about how to serve the area's needs, and that's something I want to bring to this job."

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.