



Multicultural Center News

December 14, 2005

Magazine honors efforts to recruit, retain Hispanic students

DENTON (UNT), Texas-The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education magazine named the University of North Texas to its Publisher's Picks List for the 10th year, commending UNT's efforts to recruit, retain, educate, and graduate Hispanic students.

Hispanic Outlook Publisher Jose Lopez-Isa cites students, academics, and admissions professionals as some of the factors that make a good institution.

In the same November issue, the national magazine also honored UNT with a separate article highlighting the work of Dr. Rudy Rodriguez, director of bilingual education in the UNT College of Education. Rodriguez has helped lead the way in attracting more Hispanic students who will be educators.

"One of the greatest challenges facing Texas schools is the severe shortage of qualified teachers," Rodriguez said. "The number of linguistically and culturally diverse children enrolling in the schools is huge and growing. In contrast, the number of teachers qualified to teach these children is small and shrinking. We have created multiple options at UNT to attract more students into teaching and are equipping these future teachers with the skills necessary to address the language diversity needs of the schools."

He has a five-year \$1.34 million federal grant to give free tuition and books to future teachers. In addition, he leads the Future Bilingual Teachers Academy, in which bilingual high school students visit the UNT campus for a week in the summer. The aspiring teachers stay in UNT residence halls and work under the guidance of "master teachers," who are Hispanic teachers experienced in bilingual education.

A \$150,000 grant from Fort Worth's Sid W. Richardson Foundation will allow him to offer a year-round program for future bilingual teachers, allowing more opportunities for interaction with students and parents to ensure they enroll in college or encourage them to pursue postsecondary education.

In addition, UNT offers the Roberto R. Alonzo Scholars Program. A two-year \$300,000 grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board allows UNT to offer tuition assistance to students at undergraduate and post-baccalaureate levels seeking certification to teach English language learners.

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