



# California State University, Stanislaus

## AGRICULTURE



### Preparing Underrepresented Students for Careers in Agriculture through Recruitment, Experiential Learning, and Community Service

Award Number: 2007-38422-18107

Amount: \$240,000

Project Directors: Dr. Eric Houk & Dr. Mark Bender

#### USDA Collaborators

Farm Service Agency & Natural Resources Conservation Service

#### CSREES Priority Area

Strengthen institutional educational capacities including libraries, curriculum, faculty, scientific instrumentation, instruction delivery systems, and student recruitment and retention, in order to respond to identified State, regional, national, or international educational needs in the food and agricultural sciences.

#### CSREES Educational Need Area

Student Recruitment and Retention (Need Area F), Student Experiential learning (Need Area E), Instruction delivery system (Need Area C)

### Project Summary

The 2+2 Agricultural Studies program at California State University, Stanislaus is designed to accommodate a wide variety of students, including underrepresented students, who often begin their education at a community college and do not complete a bachelors degree. This project will assist this relatively new program as it attracts and retains underrepresented students from partner community colleges, and engages them in real-life applications and experiences that will prepare them for lifelong careers in agriculture.

### Project Objectives

- (1) Increase the Recruitment and Retention of Underrepresented Students by 10%.
- (2) Develop New Experiential Learning Opportunities.
- (3) Create and Utilize a New Instructional Delivery System.

#### Objective 1 Activities

(Increase Recruitment and Retention)

- Increase recruitment efforts at a variety of HSI community colleges.
- Improve coordination between the HSI institutions.
- Create new recruitment brochures and websites explaining transfer process.
- Reduce financial barriers using scholarships for underrepresented students.



#### Objective 2 Activities

(Develop New Experiential Learning Opportunities)

- New internships will be integrated into the Agricultural Studies program.
- New internships will be created with USDA partners at the NRCS and FSA.
- Students will attend agricultural conferences.
- A USDA representative will speak to students about career opportunities.



#### Objective 3 Activities

(Create a New Instructional Delivery System)

- A sustainable garden will be designed and installed on the CSU Stanislaus campus.
- Hands-on & service learning activities will be incorporated into Agricultural Studies courses.
- An Agricultural Awareness Day will be held for local K-6 students and their teachers.
- A course will be designed for current K-6 teachers on how to create their own school gardens.
- An expert in sustainable agriculture will use the new garden to give an annual workshop.

Future Garden Site

Garden Design

### Beneficiaries & Impacts

The primary beneficiaries of this project will be the students that are interested in pursuing agricultural education, but would not be able to do so without the benefits of this project. The new internships and hands-on activities will strengthen our agricultural program and better prepare our students for lifelong careers in agriculture. The U.S. agriculture industry will ultimately benefit from the increased number individuals that are qualified to work in this field and by raising the overall awareness of the U.S. agriculture industry.