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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Grant Benefits Valley High School Students

*UC Merced outreach program receives federal funding to help students  
realize their dreams of postsecondary education*

MERCED, Calif. — Students from eight San Joaquin Valley high schools are getting extra assistance in preparing for college, thanks to a federal grant received by the Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP) at the University of California, Merced.

The center has been awarded grants totaling more than \$3.4 million from the U.S. Department of Education to continue its Talent Search program, which is intended to increase the number of low-income and first-generation college students by helping them complete high school and enroll in and complete a postsecondary education.

The grants will allow the program to work with students from Corcoran, Delhi, Farmersville, Fresno, Le Grand, Orestimba, Roosevelt and Strathmore high schools.

### Quick Facts

- UC Merced has received \$3.4 million in federal grants to help prepare students to graduate from high school and get into college.
- The grants will provide academic and social support for about 1,500 disadvantaged students in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Approximately 600 high school students are benefiting from the first four-year grant received in 2006 to launch the Talent Search program.

“Receiving these grants reflects the increased recognition of the outstanding work that the center is doing with the K-12 system up and down the San Joaquin Valley,” said Jane F. Lawrence, vice chancellor for student affairs. “We are thrilled to be able to further these necessary programs so that more students will have the means to graduate from high school and continue on to postsecondary school.”

The five-year grants will support academic, college preparation and financial counseling for approximately 1,500 high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education.

“These new grants will enable us to expand our existing program into new schools and affect the lives of more students,” said Orquidea Largo, interim director for the program. “The program provides a strong parent component, to help them become their child’s advisor and advocate.”

Through the Talent Search program, students learn about financial aid opportunities and are walked through the college application process.

Program participants must meet federally outlined eligibility guidelines, which include being a citizen or national of the U. S., a permanent resident of the U. S., and being considered low-income and a potential first-generation high school student (neither parent completed a bachelor’s degree).

Approximately 600 area high school students are benefiting from the first four-year grant the CEP received from the Department of Education in 2006 to launch the Talent Search program at Delhi, Le Grand, Orestimba, El Diamante, Strathmore and Corcoran high schools.

For more information about UC Merced’s Talent Search program, call 559-241-7476.

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*UC Merced opened Sept. 5, 2005, as the 10th campus in the University of California system and the first American research university of the 21st century. The campus significantly expands access to the UC system for students throughout the state, with a special mission to increase college-going rates among students in the San Joaquin Valley. It also serves as a major base of advanced research and as a stimulus to economic growth and diversification throughout the*

*region. Situated near Yosemite National Park, the university is expected to grow rapidly, topping out at about 25,000 students within 30 years.*