

Sanctuary Advisory Council
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
 299 Foam Street
 Monterey, CA 93940
 (831) 647-4201

June 25, 2001

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Mr. Scott B. Gudes
 Acting Under Secretary/Administrator
 & Deputy Under Secretary
 National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
 14th & Constitution Avenue, Room 5810
 Washington D.C. 20230

Dear Mr. Gudes:

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) fully endorses the Sanctuary's Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans (MERITO) Plan. We are very excited that such a plan has been developed and carried forward by Sanctuary staff, as it will expand outreach and science-learning opportunities to the largest of our constituent groups – the Hispanic communities. In addition, MERITO will enable a vital interchange between NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary System and Hispanic leaders of the Central Coast of California.

Many of our Advisory Council members have been involved with the development of MERITO, because we share the same mission of building relationships between nonprofit and community groups, marine research organizations, government agencies, universities, and industry in order to better address marine conservation and Sanctuary resource management issues. Working with MERITO partners*, we are reaching out to new audiences within the Hispanic-serving community. The response has been immediate, extremely enthusiastic, and committed to building sustainable and collaborative partnership projects that meet the needs of both coastal and inland communities.

As you're well aware, the above issue is of national importance right now. Hispanic leaders of government agencies, chambers of commerce, and industry are important constituencies for NOAA to connect with on marine and coastal management issues. Their daily decisions and practices have enormous impacts on local coasts and oceans, and ultimately affect national resources.

The Sanctuary Advisory Council is composed of 19 federally appointed representatives from government agencies, local institutions, and user groups concerned with the resources of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The Council advises the Sanctuary Superintendent on matters of policy and provides a link between the community and Sanctuary management.



The three main components of MERITO are to provide science-learning opportunities for Hispanic-serving teachers and Hispanic college students, support to state and federal agencies (Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, California State Parks) that manage sites of high visitation by Hispanic families and students, and support to Hispanic-serving youth leaders working to integrate marine conservation issues into their community programs. According to Sanctuary staff reports, these target areas were developed in response to six months of personal interviews with thirty community leaders who identified their priority needs, followed by an assessment and project development processes. This is an example of community-based planning – an inclusive and effective approach!

The benefits to implementing MERITO will be diverse, and will include among other things: enhanced awareness of marine and coastal conservation issues by Hispanic audiences; increased opportunities in science resulting in a larger pool of Hispanic professionals for NOAA; greater communication and interchange between the NMSS and Hispanic leaders in government and industry; greater collaboration by state and federal agencies to pool resources; a suite of well-tested and universal bilingual education products; and, a model multicultural outreach program that can be adapted and utilized by other national marine sanctuaries.

We strongly believe that MERITO (meaning “merit” in Spanish) exemplifies NOAA’s mission to conserve, understand and protect resources while enhancing sustainable economic opportunities. By connecting with our largest, single constituency, we are paving the way for social and economic progress. As you’ll see from the attached letters of support, our partners are eager and ready to implement programs now. The Advisory Council respectfully requests that NOAA seize this unique window of opportunity by fully approving the funding needed for MERITO. This Council will lend any support needed to make this innovative initiative a reality!

Sincerely,



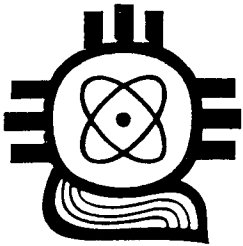
Stephanie Harlan
Chair

Attachments: Seven letters of support
c.c. Daniel Basta, ONMS, Margaret Davidson, NOS

***MERITO Partners:**

National Hispanic University
Society for Advancement of Chicanos &
Native Americans
City of Salinas
City of Watsonville
Elkhorn Slough NERR
California State Parks, Monterey District
Pajaro Valley Unified School District
California State University, Monterey Bay
Calif. State University Moss Landing
Marine Laboratories

Central Coast Coalition of Farm Bureaus
Monterey Bay Aquarium
O’Neill’s Sea Odyssey
Save Our Shores
S.E.A. Lab, Monterey Bay
University of Santa Cruz, MESA Program
Monterey County Office of Education’s
Migrant Education
Recruitment in Science Education Program
(CSUMB)



SACNAS

Society for Advancement of Chicanos
and Native Americans in Science

SACNAS

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Telephone (831) 459-0170 • FAX (831) 459-0194
e-mail: info@sacnas.org
www.sacnas.org

May 10, 2001

Mr. Daniel Basta
Director, National Marine Sanctuaries Program
NOAA/National Ocean Service
1305 East West Highway, Rm. 11523
Silver Spring, MD 20910

MAY 11 2001

Dear Mr. Basta:

The Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) is pleased to endorse the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary's Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans (MERITO) Program. SACNAS is very excited that such a plan has been developed and is under consideration by the US Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Great effort went into the development of this plan, and as a local stakeholder, we are pleased that our feedback was asked for and considered.

Our mission at SACNAS is to encourage Native American and Chicano/Latino students to pursue advance degrees in sciences, mathematics, and engineering. Our membership consists of undergraduates and graduate students, postdoctoral students, post secondary faculty, K-12 science and math educators and professionals from academia, non-profits, government and private industry. While we accomplish our mission on a national scale, we welcome opportunities such as this one to become more involved in our local community.

SACNAS fully supports the three components of the MERITO Plan: the Professional Development Program; the Site Based Bilingual Outreach Program; and the Community Based Bilingual Ocean Outreach Program. Under MERITO, SACNAS and the MBNMS have proposed to partner under the plan's first component, which focuses on the professional development of local Hispanic/Chicano/Latino science educators and providing/creating marine science internship opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Both of these initiatives are consistent with SACNAS' efforts to (a) develop K-12 science educators; and (b) link research opportunities to undergraduate and graduate student SACNAS members. SACNAS envisions that such a partnership with MBNMS under MERITO would include:

- Encouraging local undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in programs at universities/colleges aligned with MERITO/MBNMS to become members of SACNAS.
- Encouraging these local students to participate in the poster presentations and/or graduate oral presentations, which are held annually at SACNAS' national conference and serve as a training tool to further develop the students' research abilities.

- Encouraging local marine scientists, K-12 educators, marine science faculty and other marine science professionals to become members of (and more involved in) SACNAS.
- Linking marine science, policy, technology, education scholarships and internships with local undergraduate and graduate students who are members of SACNAS.
- Promoting and advertising MERITO activities and opportunities on the SACNAS website.
- Linking local marine scientists and educators involved in MERITO to SACNAS' e-mentoring initiative, which fosters a year round connection among scientists and mathematicians to K-12 science and math educators.
- Working together to bring more local educators who have had exposure to or involvement in MBNMS Programs to SACNAS' annual conference. This includes providing financial assistance for attending the conference to these educators. And
- ensuring that local marine scientists, professionals and "mentors" are invited to participate in future SACNAS Conferences, including in the scientific symposia, and professional development sessions, and mentoring activities.

By fostering and building connections between and among marine scientists, K-12 educators, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and the Chicano/Latino communities in the counties along California's Central Coast, the MERITO Plan compliments and enhances SACNAS' mission. We at SACNAS are certain that MERITO will contribute to the success of a future generation of Chicano/Latino science educators, marine scientists and environmentalists!

We look forward to working with MBNMS and many others from the local community in implementing MERITO, a comprehensive plans that demonstrates NOAA's commitment to Hispanic/Chicano/Latino Community.

Sincerely,



Ronaldo Ramirez,
Executive Director

cc: Karen Grimmer
William Douros
Margaret A. Davidson



City of Salinas

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR • 200 Lincoln Avenue • Salinas, California 93901 • (831) 758-7201 • Fax (831) 758-7368

April 5, 2001

Mr. Daniel Basta
Director
National Marine Sanctuaries
1305 E/W Highway
Silver Springs, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Basta:

As the Mayor of Salinas, I would like to voice my support for the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary M.E.R.I.T.O. outreach proposal. The City of Salinas is a strong supporter of ensuring the safety of the Monterey Bay which is well documented through our efforts to address storm water run-off, the disposal of hazardous chemicals as well as nitrate intrusion into the aquifers.

I am extremely excited about the Multicultural Education Plan developed by the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary that focuses on youth outreach efforts in our community. I believe this initiative is an excellent conduit to connect our community with the natural wonders of the Monterey Bay. Specifically, programs such as the Salinas Weed and Seed, the Salinas Kid's House, Mujercitas/It's a Girl's World, and the Second Chance Youth Program that work with at-risk youth can incorporate marine science and technology-based programs into their curriculums as outlined in this proposal.

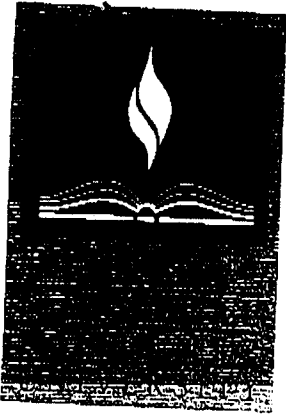
I would also like to add that as a result of the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary's leadership and commitment to this outreach effort, this initiative will help in improving the overall social, economic, health and educational opportunities for students and families in Salinas. Your serious consideration of the Multicultural Education Plan is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna M. Caballero".

ANNA M. CABALLERO
Mayor

c: City Council



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B. Roberto Cruz Ph.D.

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Milke Brewing Company

Eduardo Salas, Past President
National Hispanic Employers Assoc.

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www.nhu.edu

April 5, 2001
William Duoros
Superintendent
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey 93940

Dear Sir:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for the Sanctuary Hispanic Outreach Program, specifically the multi-Cultural Education Plan, "Merito".

As you know, the National Hispanic University's mission is "to enable Hispanics, other minorities, women, and others to acquire an undergraduate degree or certificate using a multicultural experience". One of the areas that we need to enhance is teacher education, especially in the science disciplines.

The Merito Summer Teacher program will:

- 1) provide pre-service teachers with marine science knowledge and teaching skills that they can use to educate our Hispanic students about marine resources and stewardship
- 2) enhance and support the National Hispanic teacher education program by providing stipends and incentives to our pre-service teachers
- 3) provide support to the Moss Landing Marine Laboratory with curriculum development
- 4) support the new California Science Framework and the National Science Framework by training science teachers according to the guidelines

The Merito partnership will have lasting influence on our science teachers and benefit Hispanic and other minority students. My best wishes that the proposal be fully funded.

Yours truly,

Josephine S. Hawkins
Josephine S. Hawkins, Ph.D.
Vice Provost, Academic Affairs

cc: Dan Basta

Sanctuary Education Panel

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

March 28, 2001

MBNMS
Sanctuary Education Panel (SEP)
C/O Pat Clark-Gray - SEP Chair
2211 Garden Road
Monterey, CA. 93940

William J. Douros
MBNMS Superintendent
299 Foam Street
Monterey, California 93940

Dear Bill,

The Sanctuary Education Panel is highly supportive of the Multicultural Education Plan, Hispanic Component, "M.E.R.I.T.O." (Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans). The current MBNMS educational program is printing some materials in Spanish, but this does not begin to meet the needs of the Hispanic community. M.E.R.I.T.O. was developed to reach this large, untapped constituency.

This plan has been well researched and the needs assessment demonstrates the necessity of a program like M.E.R.I.T.O. The collaborative approach will be an important part of the success of this program. Many of the members of the SEP (California State Parks, CSUMB, MLML, Elkhorn Slough NERR, and SEA Lab, Monterey Bay) are M.E.R.I.T.O. partners. Not only will students and communities benefit from this program, the partners' existing programs will be enhanced.

We agree with the three areas of focus:

1. Professional development program for Hispanic serving teachers, undergraduate and graduate students
2. Site-based bilingual ocean outreach program for Hispanic youth and families in conjunction with California State Parks and National Estuarine Research Reserves
3. Community-based bilingual ocean outreach program for Hispanic youth, families, and migrant farm workers

Specific comments from the SEP:

1. Before MBNMS Staff begin creating new curriculum, be sure to research existing curriculum and modify these for your program needs.
2. Curriculum needs to be bilingual and the Monterey Institute for International Studies could be a source of translators.

We feel that this program will enhance the Hispanic population's knowledge of the Sanctuary and it's associated watersheds and their understanding of the importance of protecting our resources and their special qualities.

Sincerely,

Patricia Clark-Gray
Patricia Clark-Gray, SEP Chair



Monterey District
2211 Garden Road
Monterey, California 93940
(831) 649-2836

Bill Douros
MBNMS Superintendent
299 Foam Street, Suite D
Monterey, California 93940

March 15, 2001

Dear Superintendent Douros,

California State Parks is very supportive of the Multicultural Education Plan – Hispanic Component (MERITO). We are looking forward to expanding our partnership with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) with this program. Monterey District has a great need for a bilingual educator at two park units – San Juan Bautista SHP and in our North Beaches units (Monterey Sector).

At San Juan Bautista SHP we have large numbers of hispanic students year-round visiting the park and the local mission. We anticipate developing a unique historically connected water conservation educational program that would compliment our existing hands-on one-hour programs.

At units in the North Beaches (Monterey Sector), we are proposing a three-way partnership with O'Neill Sea Odyssey, State Parks, and the MBNMS. O'Neill Sea Odyssey would provide students who participate in their ocean based educational programs. State Parks would provide habitat restoration sites (for the community service project component of the O'Neill program) and the MBNMS MERITO Program would provide a bi-lingual coordinator three days a week.

We are looking forward to developing unique opportunities in collaborative education project management. Please feel free to share this letter of support with potential funders.

Sincerely,

Lynn Rhodes
District Superintendent

c.c. Files
Bill Berry
Paula Peterson
Phil Jenkins
Patricia Clark-Gray
Tom Moss



ELKHORN SLOUGH NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE
1700 Elkhorn Road • Watsonville, CA 95076 • (831) 728-2822

March 22, 2001

William J. Douros, Superintendent
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940

Dear Mr. Douros;

We are pleased to be included as a partner in the M.E.R.I.T.O. (Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans) program as it is outlined in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary's Multicultural Education Plan. We appreciate the effort that has gone into developing this plan and feel that an important step has already been made towards meeting the needs of the Hispanic community. Through the research and interview process used to define these needs, the ground work has been laid for the collaborations that will be necessary to make this a successful program.

Each year at the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve over 50,000 visitors, including 10,000 school children, experience a day exploring one of the largest remaining salt marshes left in the state of California. They hike the trails through grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian corridors and down to the edge of the marsh and mudflats. They observe Great Blue Herons feeding in the tidal channels and can then take a drop of water from these same channels and use the microscopes in the visitor center and teaching labs to take a peek at the plankton, the very foundation of the food chain that extends from here out into the open ocean. This experience makes a vivid connection between the watershed of this seasonal estuary and the health of the MBNMS into which these waters flow.

Yet, we are aware of many schools unable to provide the buses needed to bring their students on field trips. We are aware of many teachers who simply do not have the time to organize and implement new, hands-on environmental science curriculum in the classroom. We receive numerous requests to give presentations in classrooms or to participate in after school programs and are unable to do so because of limited staffing. And we are painfully aware that our audiences often are not as culturally diverse as the surrounding communities.



*The Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve is managed by the California Department of Fish and Game
in cooperation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*



We hope that through the M.E.R.I.T.O. program, the MBNMS can assist us and other partners as we seek to expand our programs to audiences not currently being reached. We urge you to pursue a variety of funding sources to support this program through all its stages of development and long into the future. Comprehensive, long term support is absolutely necessary to build lasting relationships throughout the culturally diverse segments of our community; relationships that will help to nurture a deeper understanding of the connection to our ocean resources through the watersheds where we live.

Please forward this letter to any others who could potentially fund this program.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenton R. Parker".

Kenton R. Parker
Education Coordinator



California State University Monterey Bay

100 Campus Center • Seaside • CA • 93955-8001

Chris Hasegawa, Ph.D.
Director
Institute for Earth Systems Science and Policy

office: (831) 582-3796
fax: (831) 582-4122
e-mail: chris_hasegawa@monterey.edu

March 14, 2001

William J. Douros, Superintendent
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940

Dear Mr. Douros,

The Institute for Earth Systems Science & Policy at California State University Monterey Bay is pleased to endorse the excellent Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans (MERITO) proposal from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Our communications with Karen Grimmer from the National Marine Sanctuary staff have all been positive and we are glad to be involved in this collaborative effort. As an institution which has a Vision statement "framed by substantive commitment to multilingual, multicultural, gender-equitable learning" and dedicated to the development of "programs of instruction will strive for distinction, building on regional assets in developing specialty clusters in such areas as the sciences (marine, atmospheric, and environmental)", we find that this proposal fits well with CSUMB's academic plan.

The faculty and staff of Earth Systems Science & Policy will be pleased to participate in the planning and implementation of the Professional Development program for teachers and the Internship and job training opportunities for Hispanic Undergraduate and graduate level students. We will act as liaison for the MERINO program with other parts of the University including the Teacher Education and Liberal Studies (the undergraduate program that serves most potential candidates for elementary and middle school teacher preparation programs). We will also make sure that the students involved in the MERINO program are connected to other relevant programs available at CSUMB, which has been designated as a Minority Serving Institution by the United States Government.

We appreciate being invited to be a part of this project and look forward with excitement to further interactions. If we can provide additional support, feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Hasegawa".

Dr. Chris Hasegawa, Director
Institute for Earth Systems Science and Policy