



Ag Finance Career Begins With Hands-On Experience

By Michael A. Marsh

I was first introduced and informed about the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) National Internship Program (HNIP) through a past HACU Alumni and co-workers that were participating in the 2007 Summer session at the USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA). After talking to them, I applied for the 2007 Fall session and was selected; attending the orientation in Washington D.C. and interning for USDA-FSA in Fresno, CA.

Throughout the internship, I learned how to work hands-on with large farming operations, dealing with crop certifications, disaster sign-ups, updating files, and answering any question of the services provided to the stakeholders. In the 2008 Spring session I applied again, and was selected to continue working with USDA-FSA. I continued learning more about the programs offered, and was assigned more responsibility during this session.

My experience working with USDA-FSA has been very beneficial because it has allowed me to meet and network with a lot of great people and producers. Along with that, I couldn't ask for any better people to work with. They were very helpful and willing to teach me everything I needed to know to work efficiently and grow as a professional.

Recently, I was selected by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (CAST) at Fresno State to attend HACU's 22nd Annual Conference in Denver CO. I am really excited and eager to represent my college. This will be my first conference I've attended, so it should be a fulfilling experience for me. I have HACU and the USDA to thank for giving me a great opportunity in pursuing my career goals which involve working in the agricultural appraisal and the finance sector. I would definitely recommend any student to get involved with HACU-HNIP because it is a great door opener and offers a lot of opportunity for your future career aspirations.