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### LOCAL COLLEGES WIN STATE DIVERSITY AWARD

**El Cajon** – A novel regional program to help prepare community college teachers and counselors has won the 2005 California Community College Chancellor's Award for Best Practices in Diversity. The Regional Faculty Internship Program is sponsored by the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community College Association (SDICCCA).

The association is the only regional consortium of community college CEOs in the state, and is comprised of the presidents and chancellors of Southwestern, Cuyamaca, Grossmont, San Diego City, Mesa and Miramar, Palomar, MiraCosta and Imperial Valley colleges.

The award honors districts, colleges or programs that succeed in advancing faculty and staff diversity in the California community colleges. It was presented at the annual California Community College League Convention in San Francisco Nov. 19.

The internship program, which has been in existence since 1994, prepares future community college faculty. It has been highly successful in attracting future faculty from underrepresented groups.

During the nearly 12 years of the program's operation, 240 interns participated in the program. Two thirds of these interns were people of color. Of the interns who subsequently

have been hired full-time after their experiences in the program, fully 86 percent have been from ethnically underrepresented groups.

It is one of the most successful in the state at preparing new faculty to teach or counsel in community colleges because it involves an intensive training session during the summer to get interns ready to begin their internship in the fall. During the fall semester, the interns work under the direction of mentors, who are full-time community college faculty members or administrators. In the spring semester, still under the direction of their mentors, the interns are given a class of their own to teach or a counseling load if they are counseling interns.

This is the second statewide award the program has won.

In 1995, the Regional Faculty Internship Program won the first ever Award for Multi-Campus Cooperation presented by the Board of Trustees-California State University and the Board of Governors-California Community Colleges. Professors from San Diego State University work with the SDICCCA colleges in the training and preparation of the interns.

SDICCCA was founded in 1963 as a regional model for cooperation among higher education institutions, both public and private. The aim of the organization is to identify issues of concern and implement mutually beneficial programs and projects.

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