Pathway to Agricultural Education: Recruitment, Preparation, and Careers

Situation

- Ongoing shortage of qualified secondary ag. educators across the state & nation
- Local community colleges continually struggling with enrollment and financial resources for courses that create greater awareness of opportunities for students in Ag. Education.
- Insufficient number of students from underrepresented populations pursuing careers in Ag. Education

Inputs

- USDA / HSI support
- University faculty & part-time student assistant
- Community college faculty & part-time student assistants
- Instructional space & infrastructure
- Existing equipment & technology
- 3 years
- Faculty expertise & extensive experience in the field
- Support from all stakeholders & institutions involved
- At least 30 interested community college students

Activities

- Provide Ag. Ed. Orientation (AEO) course - lecture, discussion, field experience, experiential learning, and online learning activities
- Use website for dissemination of course materials & communications between faculty and students
- Assist students' transition from community college to the four-year university by utilizing ag. teacher mentors and field experience
- Recruit and enroll at least 10 MJC students in AEO course each year.
- Provide financial assistance to underrepresented Ag. Ed. students completing AEO course.

Outputs

- New Ag. Ed. Orientation (AEO) course
- Website to disseminate project information
- Promotional brochure
- JCAST Ambassador outreach / recruitment presentations
- Ag. teacher mentors
- Student observations of Ag. teacher mentors
- Academic advising & career plans for community college students
- Academic advising with AEO completers
- Student financial assistance
- Project Evaluation
- Reporting & Publications

Outcomes

Immediate

- Project information available to public & AEO students from website
- Model curriculum created for Ag. Ed. Orientation course
- 30+ community college students complete AEO course
- 60+ students create academic & careers plan
- 15+ outreach & recruitment presentations by JCAST Ambassadors
- Ag. teacher mentors provide guidance & support

Short-term

- Improved Ag. Ed. undergraduate program
- Increased number of (minority) students entering Ag. Ed. program at CSUF
- Increased retention rate of Ag. Ed. students
- Greater student awareness of careers in Ag. Ed.
- Students follow clear academic plan to career in Ag. Education
- Project continuation collaborating with additional community colleges

Long-term

- Increased number of qualified ag. teachers entering profession
- Additional ag. teachers available for jobs in high need rural areas
- Improved quality of ag. programs in state's rural areas
- Increased number of competent high school ag. program graduates
- Enhanced rural/farm economies
- Increased rural economic opportunities & improved quality of life

Assumptions: 1) Recruiting & retaining Ag. Ed. students will increase numbers entering the profession. 2) Provided with greater awareness of career opportunities, increased numbers of students will be interested in careers in Ag. Ed.

External Factors: 1) Financial and enrollment limitations created by current economic situation.