

by Elaina Loveland

Realizing the American Dream

TO STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES, part of the American dream is to pursue higher education. For students who have been brought to the United States as children with their parents illegally, their dream is the same. But the hurdles to pursuing that dream are much more difficult. Still, many undocumented students somehow find a way to achieve their dream, and one shining example is Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa—also known as “Dr. Q”—who spoke to an audience of thousands of international educators at NAFSA’s recent annual conference in May 2013.

When Quiñones arrived in the United States, he did not speak English. He learned English at a community college. “I have no doubt that I would be where I am today if I did not have the support and help from a community college—that is where I found my first mentors in education, at Delta College in Stockton, California,” he told the audience. “It is the beginning for a lot of people like me who came from very humble backgrounds.”

He further admitted what a lot of undocumented students feel: fear. “I was afraid of my future,” he said. “I was embarrassed to tell people that I was a Mexican immigrant.” And that it hurt him when he was studying at the University of California, Berkeley and someone told him: “You are too smart to be Mexican.”

Quiñones started working in the United States as a farm worker and he received his temporary work authorization in 1987 due to a California immigrant reform for migrant farm workers. Later, he received a temporary green card, then a green card, and was a U.S. citizen by the time he graduated from Harvard Medical School.

Although Quiñones is a U.S. citizen, he says that he left part of his heart in Mexico. And now he believes a way he can give back is to help build bridges between the United States and Mexico.

“The American dream is the most beautiful thing I can think of,” he said. “It allows us to be who we are even if a part of our heart belongs in another country.”

Quiñones’s story reveals that international educators can make a difference toward supporting undocumented students whether it is at a community college, four-year college, or university.

Undocumented students—like all students—need support and encouragement from staff and faculty at institutions where they are trying to achieve their dream.

IE

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Cheryl Darrup-Boychuck
USJournal of Academics

Lewis Duncan, PhD
Rollins College

Stephen C. Dunnett, PhD
University at Buffalo-SUNY

Everett Egginton, PhD
New Mexico State University

Patricia I. Jones
Western Illinois University

Paul J. McVeigh, PhD
Northern Virginia Community College

Susan Buck Sutton, PhD
Bryn Mawr College

Susan M. Thompson
University of Nevada-Las Vegas

EDITORIAL STAFF

Marlene Johnson
Executive Publisher

Christopher Murphy
Publisher

Elaina Loveland
Editor-in-Chief

Lisa Schock
In Brief Editor

Cheryl D. Collins
Production Manager

BonoTom Studio, Inc.
Publication Design and Production

ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Scott Oser
NAFSA
1307 New York Avenue, NW
Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20005
PH: 301.279.0468
FX: 202.737.3657
scotto@nafsa.org

STAFF EDITORIAL TEAM

Judy Judd-Price
Professional Development Services

Betty Soppelsa
Conferences and Meetings

Robert Stableski
Planning and Services Development

Jill Welch
Public Policy

Alan Williams
Organizational Advancement

NAFSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT AND CHAIR

Fanta Aw, PhD
American University

VICE PRESIDENT, EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Deborah L. Pierce, PhD
Northern Illinois University

VICE PRESIDENT, MEMBER RELATIONS

Sandy Soohoo-Refaei
Linfield College

VICE PRESIDENT, PUBLIC POLICY AND PRACTICE

Sherif Barsoum
Vanderbilt University

TREASURER

Jolene Koester, PhD
California State University, Northridge

SECRETARY

Mary H. Reeves, PhD
Commission on English Language Program Accreditation

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Simon Adams, PhD
Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

Charles A. S. Bankart, PhD
University of Kansas

Cynthia Banks
Global Links Learning Abroad

Mell Bolen
Princeton University

Arthur Dunning, PhD
University of Alabama System

Lars Heikensten, PhD
Nobel Foundation

William R. Holmes, DBA
Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning

Mora McLean, JD
Rutgers University

Meredith M. McQuaid, JD
University of Minnesota

Jody K. Olsen, PhD
University of Maryland, Baltimore

Kavita Pandit, PhD
University of Georgia

Debra W. Stewart
Council of Graduate Schools

Yenbo Wu, PhD
San Francisco State University

Chunsheng Zhang, PhD
University of North Alabama

EX-OFFICIO

Marlene Johnson
Executive Director and CEO
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

DISTINGUISHED SENIOR FELLOW

Hon. Richard W. Riley



Association of
International Educators

Opinions expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the position of NAFSA: Association of International Educators. *International Educator* accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of information contained in advertisements.

To submit a manuscript to *International Educator*: A full description of format requirements and author guidelines can be found at www.nafsa.org. E-mail inquiries may be sent to publications@nafsa.org.

International Educator is published bimonthly by NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 1307 New York Avenue, NW, Eighth Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005-4701 USA.
Phone: 202.737.3699; Fax: 202.737.3657; inbox@nafsa.org; www.nafsa.org

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 1059-4221

Subscription rates: NAFSA members receive *International Educator* as a benefit of membership. Nonmember subscriptions are \$40 per year in the United States. Nonmember subscriptions outside the United States are \$55 in Canada and Mexico and \$72 elsewhere in the world. Subscriptions are payable in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank, or by Visa, Mastercard, or American Express. Single issues: \$7, plus shipping and handling. To subscribe, call 1.866.538.1927 or 1.240.646.7036. Copyright ©2013 by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. All rights reserved. Postmaster: Send address changes to *International Educator*, 1307 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005 USA.

