

Office of the President

TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY:

ACTION ITEM

For Meeting of January 17, 2007

NAMING OF UC LABOR PROGRAM AFTER MIGUEL CONTRERAS

The President recommends that the Committee on Educational Policy recommend to The Regents that the labor and employment research and education program, funded by the 2006 Budget Act, be named the Miguel Contreras Labor Program.

BACKGROUND

Due in great measure to the leadership of Regent and California Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez, the final 2006 Budget Act agreed upon by the Governor and the Legislature included a permanent \$6 million appropriation to fund the University's labor and employment program. The Budget Act required that this funding be used to carry out research, education, and service on issues of labor and employment throughout the UC system. It is recommended that the labor and employment program supported by this funding be named the Miguel Contreras Labor Program.

The Contreras Program will support the systemwide Labor and Employment Research Fund and the Labor Studies Development Fund. The Contreras Program will also provide funding for research programs through the Institutes of Industrial Relations at the Berkeley and Los Angeles campuses, and also support the educational programs conducted in the Centers for Labor Research and Education located within each of the Institutes of Industrial Relations.

The proposed naming is in recognition of Miguel Contreras, the late head of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor from 1996 until his untimely death at age 52 in May 2005. He was one of the nation's most respected Latino leaders. Born into a family of immigrant farm workers, Contreras labored in the fields as a small child and joined Cesar Chavez's union at age 17. Contreras worked on the staff of the United Farm Workers union and later became an organizer with the hotel workers union. In 1994, he became political director of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. The first Latino to head the Federation, Contreras cared deeply about working people and fought to ensure that their voices would be heard in civic life.