

## UNC program receives recognition

By Darin Moriki

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UNC's College of Education has gained national recognition for its Cumbres program, and is being nominated for the Excelencia in Education's Examples of Excelencia Award.

"I think we are very glad and honored to be recognized and nominated as a finalist in this award," said Aldo Romero, the assistant director of the Cumbres program.

Allanna Sobel, the Excelencia in Education's media director, said the Examples of Excelencia award recognizes programs that have been proven to be successful in enhancing the success of Latino students at the associate, baccalaureate and graduate levels of college. The Cumbres program has been nominated for success at the baccalaureate level.

"UNC's Cumbres program is a proven program," Sobel said in an e-mail.

The Cumbres program, which started 11 years ago, recruits students from high schools, transfer students and students at community colleges and encourages those whose first language isn't English to join the program.

Romero said students in the Cumbres program develop a support system while living on campus by participating in a specialized learning community, where students study in cohort groups. In addition, Romero said the program provides each participant with an adult and student mentor, who allow them to find a balance between their academic life and their social life.

"With all of these components, we believe that we can provide students specific elements and tools, so that they are not alone in the marketplace in respect to getting a job," Romero said.

Romero said students who graduate from the Cumbres program currently have a 99 percent job placement rate, especially among those who have endorsed English as a second language. She also said the national recognition receiving will also serve as a motivation tool for the program to recruit more students.

"It's encouraging to know that we have been nominated," Romero said. "It implies and means that we need to work harder to recruit more minority students to the program, specifically Latino students."

Linda Carbajal, the Cumbres program director, is currently attending the Excelencia in Education awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. and could not be reached for comment.