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Binational *Promotores* Conference

BERKELEY, CALIF. – When it comes to community health promotion, *insiders* can often be more effective than experts. This is the principle that guides the XII annual Binational *Promotores* Conference, to be held by the Health Initiative of the Americas, a program of the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley. The event will take place at **The Women's Building 3545 18th St. in San Francisco on Thursday February 3 (see attached agenda).**

Promotores, otherwise known as community health outreach workers, strive to improve the overall health of underserved communities through health promotion and education. The *Promotores* model is often used in Latino and immigrant communities to conduct health outreach with *hard to reach* groups, and is gaining prominence as an effective tool in public health.

As members of the communities where they work, and with linguistic and cultural competencies, *Promotores* have inside knowledge of the communities they serve, making them ideal for health outreach work. The upcoming conference provides *Promotores* the opportunity to engage in continuing education and form a network that is valuable in public health and prevention efforts. This year's conference will bring together *Promotores* from both the United States and Mexico.

The focus of this year's event will cover 4 topics:

- The Ulysses Syndrome and Migrant Mental Health, with our special guest Dr. Joseba Achótegui, *University of Barcelona*
- Health Care Reform and Migrant Populations, with the participation members of *The California Pan-Ethnic Health Network*.
- Training on Influenza and Whooping Cough -School of Public Health, *UC Berkeley*.
- Promotoras' Empowerment, Community Mobilization and Policy Impact – Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety, *UC Davis*

Promotores are in a unique position to understand the needs of hard to reach groups, such as Latino immigrants, that are often overlooked by the mainstream health care system in the United States. Participants in the event will have the opportunity to share their experiences and learn tools for health education and promotion, with a specific focus on Health Reform and how it is likely to impact Latino immigrants and their communities.

The annual *Promotores* Conference is a part of HIA's *Promotores* Program. The program is a joint effort of the Health Initiative of the Americas a program of the UC Berkeley School of Public Health, the Secretariat of Health of Mexico, the Mexican Social Security Institute (*Programa Oportunidades*), the Institute of Mexicans Abroad, and various community organizations.

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