

**Merna Villarejo**  
Professor Emerita, University of California, Davis  
*Ph.D., University of Chicago*

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Merna Villarejo received her PhD in biochemistry from the University of Chicago. Since joining the faculty of the University of California, Davis, Professor Villarejo has been actively working to improve undergraduate education. As Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Programs in biology, she designed and implemented supplementary education programs for underrepresented minority students, transfer students and honors students from all backgrounds, raising over \$10 million in external grants to support that work. In recognition, she received a University of California Presidential Award of Excellence in Mentoring Undergraduate Research.

Merna Villarejo was active in K-12 science education as Principal Investigator for the state-wide California Science Project and subsequently successfully coordinated campus efforts to launch a new School of Education.

Prof. Villarejo has also been an active researcher throughout her academic career. Her most recent scientific research emphasis was on the molecular mechanisms of adaptation to osmotic stress in bacteria. Since her retirement, she has been conducting research on the efficacy of educational intervention programs for minority students in biology on a grant from the NIH. She currently serves on Educational Advisory Committees to the National Human Genome Research Institute and the NSF-sponsored Center for Biophotonics and Technology.

#### **Selected Publications**

Barlow, A.E. and Villarejo, M. Making a Difference for Minorities: Evaluation of an Educational Enrichment Program. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 41, 861-881 (2004).

Villarejo, M. and Barlow, A.E. Evolution and Evaluation of a Biology Enrichment Program for Minorities. *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering* 13, 119-144 (2007).

Villarejo, M., Barlow, A.E., Kogan, D., Veazey, B.D., and Sweeny, J.K. Encouraging Minority Undergraduates to Choose Science Careers: Career Paths Survey Results. *CBE-Life Sciences Education* 7, 394-409 (2008). <http://www.lifescied.org/cgi/content/abstract/7/4/394>

Jones, M.T., Barlow, A.E., and Villarejo, M. Importance of undergraduate research for minority student persistence in biology. *Journal of Higher Education*. (forthcoming).