

Name(s):

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Career Spotlight: Monica Rosas

Multicultural Students are a Step Ahead in International Business



Monica Rosas

Hi, my name is Monica Rosas. I am an International Trade Specialist with Center for International Trade Development in San Diego, CA.

I was born in Anaheim, California but from a young age moved to Chula Vista, California for a few years. At the age of 12, I moved to Tijuana, Baja California Mexico with my father. I studied middle-school, high-school and university in Tijuana.

In my 7th semester of college I had to get an internship for school credits. I was lucky enough to land a coveted internship with

the Foreign Commercial Service Section (FCS) at the U.S. Consulate General in Tijuana. FCS or U.S. Commercial Service is the trade promotion arm of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration. U.S. Commercial Service has offices in the U.S. and in more than 75 countries. Their offices are usually inside U.S. Embassies or Consulates. The agency's mandate is to help U.S. companies get started in exporting or increase sales to new global markets.

I remember one of my first tasks as an intern was to help coordinate a delegation of Mexican buyers (businessmen) to an irrigation trade show in San Diego, CA. Coordinating a group of companies from Mexico to attend the expo in the U.S. was not as hard as the translation service part between Mexican businessmen in *sombreros* and U.S. sales agents who wanted to sell their products to them.

After a 1 year internship, I was hired on as a full time employee, and spend the following 7 years working for the US Commercial Service & Department of Commerce.

Some of my duties as a Commercial Assistant (and subsequently Commercial Specialist) included:

- Providing consultation services about market potential for all types of sectors and industries
- Attending and coordinating trade missions to major trade shows in Mexico and in the U.S.A.
- Writing market research reports for specific sectors within my territory (Northwest Mexico)
- Giving presentations about Mexico to American businesses
- Assisting in Diplomatic visits to the region





My day-to-day activities required me to interact with Foreign Service Officers, colleagues and clients who spoke English and Spanish. I had to speak, write and brainstorm in 2 languages.

By being part of a 2-person office I had to learn about every industry and sector in the region, as opposed to the other posts where they had more Commercial Specialists, each in charge of smaller portfolios (sectors). In my 20's I was helping all types of companies do business in Mexico, and even-though there were stressful times I remember them with pride and joy because I was recognized by my peers and my supervisors at the Consulate in Tijuana and U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. In 2011, there was

Executive decision to shut down 10 operations around the world and Tijuana was one of them. I decided to leave the Consulate and take some time off.

About six months after I left the Consulate, at a Binational Trade Event I was invited to by U.S. Department of Commerce former supervisor, I was lucky [again!] to sit next to Director for Center for International Trade Development in San Diego who offered me a position as an International Trade Consultant with his office. This was great for me because I was going to be able to do what I love: help U.S. Companies find business opportunities abroad! And continue fostering Government and Business contacts on both sides of the border.

Aside from providing business consulting to clients, I recently began assisting Deputy Sector Navigator for Global Trade & Logistics in San Diego & Imperial Valley in connecting High-Schools students with opportunities in our sector. These opportunities range from coordinating in-classroom presentations, organizing company tours to internships with clients of ours. It is fun to be part of a chain of activities that indirectly helps our regional economy grow.



Monica Rosas consults with a business planning to export their product to Mexico.

When asked by students what skills have helped my career I always tell them being not only bilingual but bi-cultural has been the best tool for me. To understand another culture, its people and customs helps me help my clients in their export promotion efforts. I enjoy my job so much that even when I am not working I think about how I can help clients in both countries. If I travel somewhere and see a need for a U.S. Product I will most-likely connect them to a client.



Nowadays, interacting with people from different cultures is the way business is done. Companies wish to grow, domestic market is not enough, to start exporting goods and services to consumers outside the United States we need to produce employees who have an international vision and mindset. Our region is geographically blessed and has a diverse pool of people from different countries. Let's offer our small-medium size businesses the option to hire employees who come from different backgrounds and who will eventually be the key to their exports success.

Gracias, Monica.