

## **Congratulations D. Joshua Garcia**

Dr. Joshua Garcia, Deputy Superintendent of Tacoma Public Schools received the prestigious ASCD Outstanding Young Educator Award for 2013. The program recognizes creative and committed teachers and administrators under the age of 40 who are making a difference in children's lives. A panel of education professionals selected Garcia, as well as a Maryland teacher, Ryan Twentey, from a large pool of candidates from across the globe.

Joshua Garcia has dedicated his career to closing the achievement gap and serving the whole child. In his role as deputy superintendent in Federal Way Public Schools near Tacoma, Garcia prioritized the creation of a flexible learning program to meet the needs of all students by introducing International Baccalaureate and advanced placement (AP) programs at the middle and high school levels, as well as led the implementation of Web 2.0 technology tools and social media programs. To set a culture of high expectations in the school district, Garcia has also employed an "opt out" versus "opt in" strategy for AP courses, which over the course of three years has resulted in an 72 percent enrollment increase by juniors and seniors taking at least one AP class.

In addition, at Tacoma Public Schools, Garcia has created community-based partnerships with important community organizations, including the University of Washington Tacoma, Tacoma Schools Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, and Stand for Children Washington. These partnerships have helped improve student college, career, and citizenship readiness.

"Being named one of the 2013 ASCD Outstanding Young Educators is truly a humbling honor for me as an educator and human being. I believe every student should and can graduate from our schools well-prepared for higher education. Unfortunately, many of the brick walls our children face are human made," said Garcia. "Schools and community leaders must work relentlessly to dissolve these barriers and build cohesive systems that promote excellence for all. I hope that my award will give me a platform to continue my work to fulfill our pledge to provide every child the opportunity to pursue a successful life."