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Ryan Sanchez

A Long Hard Journey to Leadership

The path 2008 MBA for Executives Sac Metro cohort student Ryan Sanchez took from cleaning tomato buckets in Merced at the age of 8 to leader in the Genetech Antibody Purification Department was a winding one. Career stops along the way included tomato picker, telemarketer, cake decorator at a Mexican bakery, flea market T-shirt vendor, dishwasher, fry cook, busboy, waiter, grocery bagger, lab assistant, Class-A truck driver, trainer for Class-A truck drivers, car rental management trainee, construction worker and substitute teacher. Sanchez was one of two of the four brothers to finish high school and was the first in his family to go to college.

One of the constants in Sanchez’s journey was a passion for advocacy. “People need and deserve a leader who truly cares about them,” Sanchez says. “However, it’s one thing to be nice to your employees; you’ve also got to keep the business going.”

Genentech has been a leader in the local biotechnology industry, however, as patents expire and follow-on drugs are developed, it is looking for new business models in the face of looming commoditization pressures that could reduce the price of its products. Sanchez turned to the Sacramento State College of Business Administration EMBA program for the tools to help lead that change effectively.

Learn he did. In addition to mastering the latest in sales, organizational modeling and production efficiency strategies, he formed a bond with his fellow students that could propel him into the next stage of his life.

Through continued leadership in the workplace and in volunteer work at Habitat for Humanity, Sanchez is putting those resources to work to make a difference. The husband of supportive wife Amanda and father of seven-year-old Jenna still plans to go on to law school and one day fill a school district seat to further enhance his advocacy role.