



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

May 12, 2010

Dear Future College Graduate,

Congratulations! You have already taken the first step towards graduating high school and entering college by registering for the Detroit College Promise. President Obama has set our nation on the course to once again lead the world in the number of students that complete college by 2020. This goal will never be accomplished without individuals like you that have taken it upon themselves to make this dream a reality.

I am one of thousands of people who came to Washington D.C to work for the Obama administration with the belief that we can change the world and ourselves. His message that inspired me was simply put—"Yes *We Can!*" Regardless of circumstances, statistics, odds, and challenges—we as a people have the capacity, intelligence, and perseverance to succeed. It is the daily acts of courage and tenacity by young people like you that re-ignite hope and allows the community to re-imagine a different and better neighborhood, city, and nation.

I am fortunate to have an older brother, Paco Retana, who looked out for my best interests and constantly encouraged me to strive ahead. Whether or not you have older or younger brothers/sisters--- your decisions, actions, and accomplishments will set an example for others to follow, as my brother did for me. Good luck to you in your future endeavors. Never doubt your intelligence, leadership or ability to succeed. Our nation needs you now more than ever!

With hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alberto Retana".

Alberto Retana

Director of Community Outreach, U.S. Department of Education