The San Fernando Valley is shaking off the recession and looking forward to a brighter future in most sectors of the Valley economy, according to the second annual forecast prepared by Cal State Northridge’s own San Fernando Valley Economic Research Center in partnership with Chicago Title.

Cal State Northridge’s Reading First Teacher Preparation Initiative has been awarded the Steve Allen “Excellence in Education” Award by the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley. The initiative is part of a nationwide program designed to improve the skills of future teachers.

The University paid tribute in April to three outstanding alumni—CNBC anchor Ron Insana, Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle and actor Cheech Marin—for bringing distinction to themselves and to their alma mater. The three were given Distinguished Alumni Awards, the highest honor bestowed by the university’s Alumni Association.

Cal State Northridge placed eighth in the nation in The Hispanic Outlook for Higher Education’s annual ranking of the top 100 colleges for Hispanics. The magazine annually rates the nation’s universities and colleges on how well they serve Hispanic students.

Harold Hellenbrand, dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, will join Cal State Northridge on Aug. 1 as its new provost and vice president for academic affairs.