

15 thousand young people expected to benefit from BBVA Bancomer *Por los que se quedan* [For those left behind] Integration scholarships this year.

The BBVA Bancomer foundation has announced that for the coming academic year it is to increase the number of scholarships awarded from 10,600 to 15,000 in 143 municipalities in 18 states, covering 60% of the national territory. A new structure entailing 18 state supervisors has also been unveiled to handle the growth of the programme.



Foundation Director Gustavo Lara Alcántara explained that the programme was so important that its structures needed to be strengthened to assure greater efficiency in operation and monitoring tasks. To that end, he said, the post of state supervisor had been created. These supervisors will accompany and monitor community promotion officers and scholarship *godparents* at state level.

A reception was staged for the newly-appointed state supervisors, with the participation of top management staff from BBVA Bancomer and participants in this Social Development programme. Juan Pablo Ávila Palafox, General Manager for Retail Banking, stressed the importance of the human side of the scheme, which provides support for communities "in two parts: financially and through the time devoted by our staff to monitoring progress through programme *godparents* at our branch offices".

A training course for state supervisors was organised for this week, at which the main points covered were the development of skills and operational aspects of the programme. Mexico State Supervisor Blanca Estela Muñoz Mandiola stated that this training "helps me to grow professionally and increases my awareness as a human being of the circumstances in the various communities in which the scholarship holders live".

The *Por los que se quedan* ["For those left behind"] programme of integration scholarships was launched as a pilot initiative in 2006. Initially, 600 scholarships were awarded in 3 of the country's states hardest hit by migration to the USA. Awardees were given financial aid to the tune of 100 pesos each per month for ten months, in which time they were required to maintain an 8.5 grade average. Although the programme has now grown far bigger, its essential characteristics remain the same.