



# EL CAMINO COLLEGE PUENTE NEWSLETTER SPRING 2018



## English 1A Cohort

Clarisa Amaya  
Melissa Anaya  
Allison Avila  
Wendy Barrientos  
Jeselyn Castillo  
Michelle Ceballos  
Carlos Cerna  
Priscilla Escobar  
Jose Garcia  
Hazel Godinez  
Gleenix Guevara  
Sarainy Hernandez  
Andres Herrera  
Frida Linero  
Areli Martinez  
Mia Martinez  
Daniel Morales  
Alejandra Nunez  
Alejandro Nuno  
Brenda Pineda  
Dulce Puente  
Jorge Ramirez  
Ana Ramos  
Shawn Rodriguez  
Desiree Rodriguez  
Estefania Romo  
Ashley Sanchez  
Kathy Sanchez  
Angie Vargas

## English 1C Cohort

Nicholas Zaragosa  
Victoria Aguilar  
Daniel Andrade  
Naidelyn Buenrosto  
Mariajose Castellanos  
Elizabeth Cotto  
Matthew Enriquez  
Carlos Fraire  
Salvador Fraire  
Carolina Galvis  
Jose Garcia  
Janett Gutierrez  
Maria Hernandez  
Christopher Herrera  
Gerardo Lopez  
Erick Luna  
Daniela Mejia  
Jose Nieves  
Eduardo Padilla  
Diana Rivera  
Giovanni Sanchez  
Eric Sosa  
Cristian Torreblanca  
Bruno Tovar  
Mayra Vasquez

## Class 32: United and Ready

by Erica Brenes, Puente Co-Coordinator and English Instructor

Our Puente students returned from Winter Break motivated for the second phase of our program and its accompanying high rigor courses. This semester, our 55 students, split between two cohorts, took English 1A and English 1C. In these writing-intensive courses, they continued to grow as scholars, paying special attention to matters of social justice and the work of Latino writers, such as Richard Rodriguez, Julia Alvarez, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Alex Espinoza, and Junot Diaz. This semester, the students also took Human Development courses where they explored prospective career opportunities, interviewed professionals in their field of study, continued to prepare for their ultimate transfer, and reflected on who they truly want to become. This semester, our program was also categorized under different management, and we are now a part of Student Support Services.

To complement our experiences in the classroom, Puente, in conjunction with Project Success, hosted Village to University Day, where representatives from different universities came to our campus and spoke directly to our students about their concerns and questions. Many of the universities sent delegates of color or first-generation status, so that students could see themselves represented. Many motivated Puentistas, who were curious about universities in Northern California, traveled over spring break recess with the Transfer Center to visit UC Santa Cruz, Davis, Merced, and Berkeley. Before break was over, our busy familia also journeyed to UC Santa Barbara's College Day, where the students walked through club rush, enjoyed lecturers discussing their expertise in small-classroom settings, toured the stunning seaside campus, and were able to imagine their lives beyond El Camino College.

Counselors Maribel Hernandez and Griselda Castro also took a group of our continuing students, those about to graduate and transfer, along with a handful of interested current members, to UC Riverside to meet with alumni. While most of the semester was spent visualizing and



PHASE 2 PUENTISTAS JOIN PHASE 3 STUDENTS ON A TOUR OF UC SANTA CRUZ



OUR ECC FAMILIA VISITS PUENTE ALUMNI AT UC RIVERSIDE

preparing for the successes to come, we also organized a trip to the Autry Museum in Griffith Park, where students and their mentors celebrated photographs of the Chicano Rights Movement between the years of 1967-1977. Our last event of the semester is our End-of-the-Year Banquet, in which we celebrate the Puentistas who worked all year to complete Phase 1 and 2 of our program, those who are graduating, and those who are transferring. Spring 2018 left us with many reasons to celebrate and with an excitement for what's to come!

# Graduation Spotlight: Jayro Lopez Torres Future College Counselor



CO-COORDINATORS, GRISELDA CASTRO AND ERICA BRENES, CELEBRATE JAYRO AT THE 2017 EOPS BANQUET

Jayro Lopez Torres, Puente 30, is an excellent scholar. For three consecutive semesters, he has maintained a 4.0 GPA. He manages his responsibilities as a son and a brother; he serves his campus and community as an EOPS peer mentor, and he is the proud and accomplished child of Mexican immigrants. When I asked him how he managed it all, he explained that it wasn't always easy. Although he credits his mother and father for their unwavering support and love, he recognizes that his high school and

his neighborhood failed to offer him the resources he needed as a first generation-college student. As a result, before joining our familia, Jayro never saw himself as a scholar. Now, he manages his classes with ease, encourages his brothers to finish school with high marks, and dreams of one day returning to our campus as a college counselor. While he may have come to El Camino unprepared, he says, **"I now feel ready to transfer** and know that even when I do leave, I can always come back to Puente and they will keep supporting and helping me along the way." He's not yet sure where he'll transfer next Fall, but **Jayro has received admission to nearly every school he applied to, including UC Irvine and Cal State Long Beach.** Jayro closed our discussion with the following sentiment: **"I know I could not have done all of this without Puente. My expectations for myself weren't high enough before, but Puente made me realize I can accomplish anything I set my mind to."**



STUDENTS SHAILA BRAVO AND BELINDA CORONADO EXPLORE UC MERCED

## Special Thanks

### to Our 2017-2018 Puente Mentors

- |                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Indira Amaya            | Jaime Gallegos    |
| Argelia Andrade         | Erika Gavitt      |
| Julieta Aramburo        | Bernice Gonzalez  |
| Martha Arias            | Ricky Gonzalez    |
| Ibeth Arriaga           | Cesar Jimenez     |
| Marian Rose Bagamaspad  | Maria Jimenez     |
| Maria Barrio De Mendoza | Arnulfo Juarez    |
| Thania Bogarin          | Jhania Lantan     |
| Giovanni Bohorquez      | Philip Lantz      |
| Masiel Calderon         | Cynthia Lopez-    |
| Ronald Calderon         | Herrera           |
| Veronica Casillas       | Edgar Lopez       |
| Carlos Castro           | Rene Lozano       |
| Guillermo Castro        | Araceli Martinez  |
| Jessica Cifuentes       | Myrna Mendoza     |
| Gilmer Contreras        | Daniela Massarina |
| Odette Cook             | Jeff McMahon      |
| Todd Crabtree           | Lesley Meza       |
| Katya De Los Rios       | Carlos Montalvan  |
| Eileen Del Pino         | Josephine Moore   |
| Darcie Descalzo         | Christina Nagao   |
| Graciela Diamante       | Salvador Navarro  |
| Rocio Diaz              | Toni Newman       |
| Vanessa Escobar         |                   |
| Vilma Fuentes           |                   |



EACH PUENTE MENTOR, LIKE SUE ODA OMORI, PHOTOGRAPHED HERE WITH MENTEE, KATHY SANCHEZ (CURRENT PUENTISTA), IS FROM THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY AND READY TO OFFER GUIDANCE ON THE PATH TO A DEGREE. ECC IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE A RICH POOL OF MENTORS, MANY OF WHOM ARE PUENTE ALUMNI THEMSELVES. WE APPRECIATE THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Sue Oda Omori    | Veronica Quinonez     |
| Oscar Ortiz      | Dulce Ramirez         |
| Veronica Palafox | Johanna Silva         |
| Edith Parra      | Jennifer Valdez       |
| Blaine Pearce    | Carla Velasquez-Lopez |
| Christian Perez  | Kristell Villacorta   |
| Blanca Prado     | Breanna Von Stein     |
| Jesica Quezada   | Vanessa Watson        |

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

"To me, Puente means joining a second family that doesn't judge and always supports.

Without Puente, I wouldn't have learned from my strengths in school, weaknesses, or how to open up to people."

Kathy Sanchez

"It's a home away from home—my at-school family."

Matthew Enriquez

"Puente means family, community, growth, and friendship."

Dulce Puente

"Puente is a family that wants the same thing in life: SUCCESS!"

Jeselyn Castillo

# Alumnus Spotlight: Jesse Cisneros Solis

## Full "STEM" Ahead

By: Jaelyn Toledo, Student Puente 31



PHOTOGRAPHED BY COUNSELOR, MARIBEL HERNANDEZ, WHEN VISITING JESSE AT THEIR SHARED ALMA MATER: UC SANTA CRUZ.

Jesse Cisneros Solis, Puente 24 student, will graduate this Spring from the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) with a degree in Physics. Jesse was accepted to a Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP) at the University of Michigan--Ann Arbor focusing on Molecular Biology Physics and is interested in pursuing a Biophysics doctoral program in the future. He is motivated to make a difference in the field of cancer or virology (the study of viruses). Before graduating, Jesse served as a UC LEADS scholar, a Stem Diversity member, and the Co-Vice President of UCSC's SACNAS chapter (Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science). Although Jesse's family had always encouraged him to pursue higher education, when he first began at El Camino College, he didn't know what he wanted to major in. Thankfully, while enrolled in the Puente Program, Jesse received the support and mentorship he needed to discover his true passion, navigate college life and successfully transfer. At El Camino, Jesse used the resources around him to get involved. He loved his Puente community and participated in both the STEM Trio and MESA program on our campus. Jesse worked hard to get where he is today, but he also attributed parts of his success to Puente: "College was a huge culture shock to me because in high school I wasn't a great student. Once I started, I found that I was missing a lot of necessary skills. Puente introduced me to those skills." We're so happy to have been a part of Jesse's story and look forward to his future success.

### CREATIVE WRITING: "Mojado 3 Veces"

*Mojado tres veces  
(Three times a wetback):  
That's what that Mexican song  
said.*

*Mexicans are mojos,  
We are triple mojos,  
Triple mojado,  
Triple the pain.*

*Different tongue  
Different culture  
Different people*

*Spat at  
Cursed at  
Yelled at*

*Unwelcomed  
Undocumented  
Uneducated*

*Mojado 3 veces:  
we hear it  
At work  
At school  
At stores*

*Mojado 3 veces:  
We hear it so many times  
Mojado 3 veces  
3 veces  
3 veces*

*Mojado has become our name*

**Alejandra Nunez** (Puente 32) was inspired to write this poem while reading Sonia Nazario's book, "Enrique's Journey."

### CREATIVE WRITING: "The Other Day"

*Was that you in our spot the other  
day? On the breath of despair,  
I wasn't able to turn and see  
If it was really you, or if I was going  
crazy 'cause I missed you.*

*Two years passed and I still dream  
about you. Yet, I didn't turn around  
for fear of this road again. Was that  
you, the other day, in the parking  
spot?*

*The model of the car was enough for  
me to stop. But, I knew it wasn't  
yours because it wasn't facing the  
horizon. Am I going crazy 'cause I  
miss you?*

*Counting the hours we've spent  
together, and realizing you have  
been gone longer than we have been  
companions. Was that you, in our  
parking spot?*

*The souvenir of our friendship is  
written in blood, the lights from our  
mutual bonds dwindled to nothing  
when you left. Please tell me, am I  
going crazy 'cause I miss you?*

Original work by **Jason Leal**  
(Puente 30) in honor of **William  
Chun**, inspired by Atmosphere's  
"Yesterday"

## WE PROUDLY ANNOUNCE OUR GRADUATING STUDENTS



"EDUCATION IS OUR PASSPORT TO THE FUTURE, FOR TOMORROW BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE WHO PREPARE FOR IT TODAY." -MALCOLM X

Kenia Alcaraz  
Pedro Contreras  
Andrea Dardon  
Daniel Diaz  
Jannett Diaz  
Jason Leal  
Monica Lima  
Amilcar Rodriguez  
Jayro Lopez  
Angela Orozco  
Brianna Sandoval  
Celso Uribe  
Keeyan Ventura

In loving memory of William Chun (1997-2016, Puente 30)



# WHAT IS PUENTE?

ENGLISH • COUNSELING • MENTORING

THE MISSION OF THE PUENTE PROJECT IS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF EDUCATIONALLY UNDERSERVED STUDENTS THAT WILL ENROLL IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, EARN DEGREES, AND RETURN TO THE COMMUNITY AS LEADERS AND MENTORS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS.

## DESCRIPTION & HISTORY

Since its origin in 1981 at Chabot College in Hayward, California, The Puente Project has been committed to the success of Latino students. Currently in its 32nd year on the El Camino College campus, the program includes three components: teaching, counseling, and mentoring. Our students receive English instruction as well as academic and career counseling, both of which emphasize the Latino experience in the U.S. The purpose is to provide a supportive and stimulating environment to help students build confidence in their writing skills and the ability to navigate the college system to succeed in higher education.

## OUR IMPACT



THE NUMBER OF TRANSFERS TO FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES CONTINUES TO INCREASE: 573 PUENTE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARTICIPANTS TRANSFERRED IN 2009 COMPARED TO 397 IN 2001, APPROXIMATELY A 44% INCREASE.



COMMUNITY COLLEGES WITH PUENTE PROGRAMS TRANSFER 44% MORE LATINO STUDENTS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA THAN COLLEGES WITHOUT.

## STUDENT SUCCESS

- 70% OF EL CAMINO'S PUENTE PROJECT ARE FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS.
- BETWEEN 2000 AND 2009, 225 OF THOSE PUENTISTAS WHO TRANSFERRED CHOSE A UC, 56% A CSU, AND 21% CHOSE OUT OF STATE OR PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES.
- IN SPRING 2018, THE FAMILIA RETAINED 97% OF ITS COHORT MEMBERS.
- MORE THAN 5,500 STUDENTS HAVE BEEN ENROLLED IN THE PUENTE PROJECT, AND AN ESTIMATED 300,000 NON-PUENTE STUDENTS HAVE BENEFITED FROM OUR STAFF- DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

## MEET OUR FAMILIA

### PUENTE COUNSELORS

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*"To make a great dream come true, the first requirement is a great capacity to dream; the second is persistence."*

*Cesar Chavez*



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