



CHABOT COLLEGE

AN ACCREDITED CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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PUENTE

About PUENTE

The mission of the Puente Project is not only to increase the number of educationally underserved and under-represented students who enroll and earn degrees in four-year colleges and universities, but to also increase the number of those who return to the community as leaders and mentors in service of succeeding generations. Puente is open to ALL interested students.

THE PUENTE PROGRAM

What is Puente?

- » A program for students planning to transfer to a four-year college or university.
- » A program to develop critical reading and writing skills.
- » A program to support students in developing personal and life-long goals.

Puente is an academic, counseling and mentoring program of support for students to build the skills necessary for success in both academic and career goals while at Chabot

College . Students in Puente work closely with their counselor, English instructor and Mentor to prepare for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. Students should be prepared to participate in the following components:

ENGLISH INSTRUCTION Puente students will take two English classes, one each semester. These classes stimulate and build Puente students' confidence in reading, critical thinking, and writing skills through an exploration of the Mexican American/Latino experience.

COUNSELING: Puente students take one Counseling class and work closely with their Puente counselor until they graduate, exploring career options, developing an academic educational plan and identifying lifetime goals. Students visit University of California and California State University campuses and attend a statewide annual Puente Student Motivational and Transfer Conference.

MENTORS: Each Puente student is matched with a mentor from the business or professional community of interest. Mentors share with students their personal, academic and career experiences, and thereby provide a window into "real-life" work environments. The network of trained Puente mentors provides many resources for the Puente students, their families, their colleges, and the community.

PUENTE PROJECT HISTORY

As Assistant Dean of Chabot College Felix Galaviz began research on the performance and persistence rate among students of color on campus, specifically Latinos. He collected data from 20,000 transcripts of these students in 1979. To his dismay the data collected exposed a disheartening performance and persistence rate among his study population. With 55% of Latino students dropping out in the first three weeks of the first quarter and another 20% dropping out at the end of the same quarter, Señor Galaviz was compelled to create a model program to address this crisis. Upon further investigation, the data pointed to three major factors that contributed to the high drop out rate among Latino students at Chabot. The first was the avoidance of meeting with a college counselor. Second, students would avoid completing the English courses. And three 98% of the Latino students were the first in their family to attend college. These three major findings created the Puente model of counseling, writing, and mentoring which today is very strong.

For Felix Galaviz and Patricia McGrath, former English professor at Chabot College, the answer was a program that would specifically address these three academic factors. Hence, the Puente Project was founded in 1981. In accordance with Puente's mission, the **core components of participation** for a Puente student remain the same today: 1) must meet with Puente counselor on a regular basis, 2) must commit to the program for a full year, and 3) make a commitment to work with their mentor and complete the associated writing assignments. Developing relationships with their counselor and mentor work to build a critical support network that students need in order to understand the value and importance of higher education. More important, students will create a student network that will serve them well into their future. In Puente "Once a Puentista, Always a Puentista" therefore, they will lead the next generation of Puente students.

Since then, as a result of Puente's success has increased to include 90 community colleges and high schools throughout the state making The Puente Project a successful vehicle for social change among historically marginalized communities. Puente is open to ALL students.



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