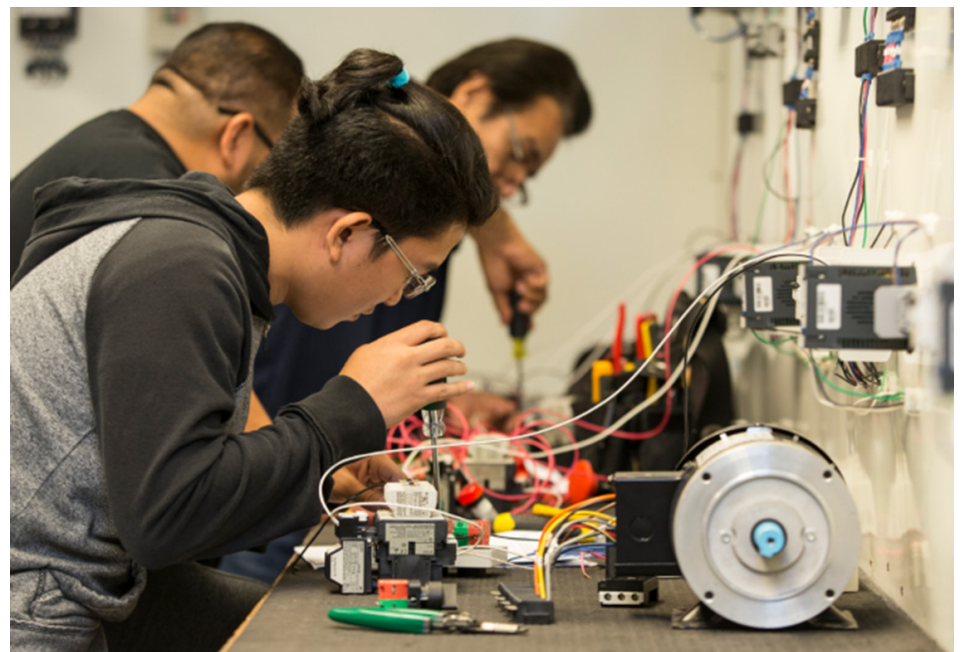


# Find Your Path to **SUCCESS!**

Mt. SAC Regional Consortium  
for Adult Education is  
**here to help**





# NETWORKING FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mt. SAC Regional Consortium for Adult Education  
helps create synergy for success

The leaders of the consortium's adult schools and Mt. San Antonio College School of Continuing Education are committed to the successful assurance of economic mobility of the residents of our service region. Over the past several years, consortium member schools have worked diligently to partner with agencies to support our most vulnerable populations. Among those served: immigrants, poverty-level income earners, under-educated or formerly incarcerated residents, and older adults returning to the workforce.

Adult education and career training, in partnership with support agencies and local businesses, have always been essential to economic development and recovery, even more so after the COVID pandemic. Mandated to operate in concert with local workforce development boards and agencies including the Employment Development Department and America's Job Centers of California (AJCC), adult education programs are recognized for their capacity and role in supporting adults to achieve economic self-sufficiency in a rapid time frame.

An example is the recent mobilization to help ongoing COVID vaccination support efforts. Initiated by a call from CVS pharmacies to County of Los Angeles Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), this partnership was developed to respond to an immediate need for several thousand pharmacy workers in the greater Los Angeles area.

Students attending our schools can access either of two AJCC locations in the area: the Pomona Valley AJCC, operated by Managed Career Solutions, Inc. (MCS); and the East San Gabriel Valley AJCC, operated by Goodwill Southern California. In addition to its main facility, the Pomona Valley AJCC also has a co-located office at the Mt. SAC School of Continuing Education, while the East San Gabriel Valley

AJCC runs co-located offices at Baldwin Park and Hacienda La Puente Adult Education campuses. Other members of our consortium are working on co-located activity to better serve our students locally.

Maritza Dubie-Urbe, Senior Deputy Director of the L.A. County Workforce Development Board, put a call out to convene meetings with regional adult schools and community colleges to discuss how to describe this synergistic partnership that connected the components of education and training, workplace readiness, job placement and employer partners to support student success.

Michael Thomas, Business Services Representative for the Pomona Valley AJCC, facilitated the process. So far, we have seen several students come from our adult schools to participate in the pharmacy pipeline program. Gabriela Goetz, Associate Director with the East San Gabriel Valley AJCC, has more participants in the program's pipeline from her adult school partners.

Jorge Ramirez, a pharmacy technical student, was part of that pandemic response.

"In August of 2020, I found myself unemployed due to the pandemic," said Ramirez, who became part of the East San Gabriel Valley AJCC team. "I decided to continue my education and saw Hacienda La Puente Adult Education was offering the pharmacy

technician course with instructor Lakia Mozell. During the course, I was given an opportunity by AJCC to join the CVS/Pharmacy Tech program, which gave me a chance to learn and work at the same time. The school's Pharmacy Tech program has helped me gain new skills and find a job using those skills during a pandemic."

For more information on Mt. SAC Regional Consortium for Adult Education and how to become a partner, visit [www.mtsac-rc.org](http://www.mtsac-rc.org).



Pharmacy tech Jorge Ramirez found the program he needed during the pandemic, and immediately got to work.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF JORGE RAMIREZ.

## MEET THE MEMBERS

Mt. SAC Regional Consortium for Adult Education includes:

- ▶ Baldwin Park Unified School District
- ▶ Bassett Unified School District
- ▶ Charter Oak Unified School District
- ▶ Covina Valley Unified School District
- ▶ Hacienda La Puente Unified School District
- ▶ Mt. San Antonio College School of Continuing Education
- ▶ Pomona Unified School District
- ▶ Rowland Unified School District



# It all starts here!

There's not one road to success, and the journey is often not a straight line. To reach their goals, adult learners can choose several pathways that can lead to a new career, a better job, community college or university degrees, or technical certification.



1

## Decide to pursue education

Each individual journey starts with that first step. Adult learners may choose one goal – or multiple goals.

### Find an adult school or program

Adult education providers are available at no or low cost with flexible schedules and proven success, close to where students live.

### Create a plan to reach goals

Counselors help adult learners assess their needs and goals. Then, a personalized pathway to those goals is created.

2

## Pick a program and pathways

Students can follow multiple pathways at once or stick to one program.



### ABE

Adult Basic Education helps students gain the literacy and math skills they need to succeed.

### CTE/STV

Career and Technical Education, also called Short-Term Vocational training, prepares students for a wide range of skilled, high-paying and high-demand jobs needed by our economy.

### ESL

English as a Second Language helps students become proficient in speaking, reading and understanding English while building needed language skills.

### HSD/HSE

High School Diploma or High School Equivalency lets students fill in gaps in their education and earn their graduation certificate.

### IET

Integrated Education and Training combines English literacy with career training. Students learn English including the vocabulary they need for the jobs they want.

### IELCE

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education helps English-language learners at the same time acquire the skills to be more effective parents, workers and citizens.

Success!

Education, degrees, and certificates open doors to in-demand careers.

Better job!  
Better pay!  
Better life!

3

## Make progress

Students can see the progress they've made with their new skills and confidence. They may earn a short-term certificate, diploma or high school equivalency certificate.

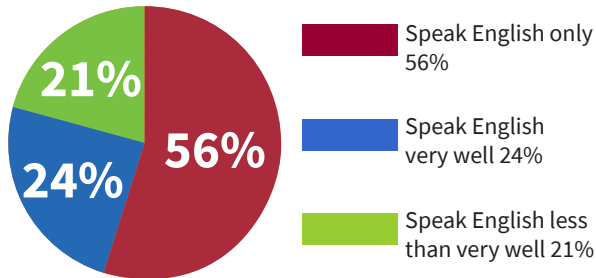
## Keep going

Adult learners join the workforce and start their new careers. Or they can transition to a community college or 4-year university program.

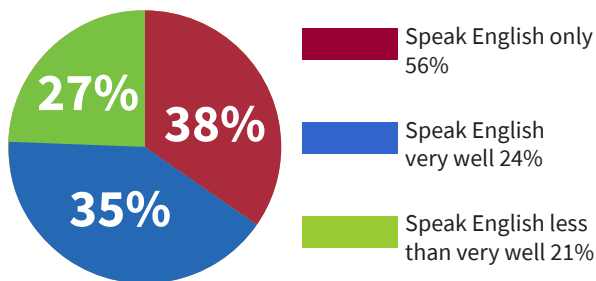
Lourdes Melchor Suastegui earned her high school diploma, overcoming several obstacles.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF BPACE

## LANGUAGE ABILITY

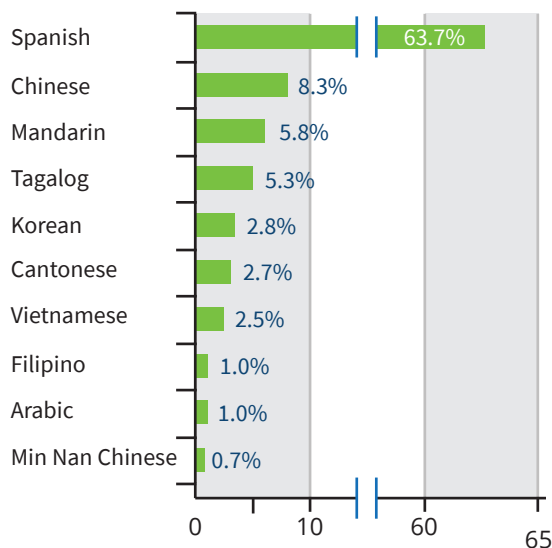
### California Statewide Figures



### Mt. SAC Regional Consortium for Adult Education Figures



### Languages\* spoken at home in Los Angeles County area served by Mt. SAC



\*Other than English

California Adult Education 2019 Fact Sheets



# Mom becomes role model for sons

Earning her high school diploma took determination — and support

For Lourdes Melchor Suastegui, education is a journey. Once she decided to get her high school diploma, she wasn't going to stop.

"I am a mother of three boys, two of them are twins," explained Suastegui, who wants to be a good example to them.

"I do not want to fail as a mother," she said. "I can fail as a student, but not as a mother. So, they are my biggest motivation."

Suastegui faced other obstacles. English is her second language, and she lacked confidence. She started her studies in a community college ESL program, but quit in frustration. Then, she found Baldwin Park Adult and Community Education.

"The environment at Baldwin Park Adult Education is very welcoming," she said. "I never felt so comfortable and grateful

"She didn't see her growth but I did," he noted. "Her growth was not just academic. When she started the high school program, she was timid and shy (because) she could not express herself properly. (By the end), she was nominated as the Student Leadership Representative. She did an excellent job representing my class and the school's interests."

Suastegui credits the BPACE staff with helping her achieve her goals. "They made me feel very important," she said. "(They) raised my expectations to help me believe in myself and give me the confidence I needed to complete (her diploma)."

Suastegui didn't stop with one diploma. She earned BPACE scholarships to attend Citrus College, where she is close to finishing her Associate's Degree. Her goal now is to transfer to California State University, Fullerton, to earn a degree in Business Administration.

"I was always motivated to continue my classes," she said. "I remember wanting to quit at some points in my schooling because, as a mother, I had many responsibilities ... (I'm also) a wife; my husband was demanding more time with me."

But her family could see how much she believed in her goals.

"I think, at the end of the day, my family realized that I was motivated and determined," she said. "We are a low-income family. I want to provide better opportunities to my children. My desire for my three sons is for them to attend and attain a college or a university degree."

Just like mom.

**"I never felt so comfortable and grateful for the opportunity I had and the wonderful assistance of all."**

Lourdes Melchor Suastegui  
Baldwin Park Adult and Community Education graduate

for the opportunity I had and the wonderful assistance of all."

At BPACE, Suastegui enrolled in Adult Basic Education. Although she struggled with English, she persisted.

Mark Steimle, who has been teaching at BPACE since 1988, had high praise for Suastegui.

"Lourdes is one of the best students I have ever had in 30 years of teaching," Steimle said. "Her determination, hard work, dedication and perseverance really set her apart."

Suastegui tackled English along with her assignments.

"Lourdes just refused to be stopped," Steimle said. "She would sit in front of a computer with her book open, reading, taking notes, and not stopping over and over until she found the definition of the vocabulary words."

For more information on Baldwin Park Adult and Community Education, visit <https://bpace.bpusd.net> or call 626-939-4456.



Mark Steimle has taught at Baldwin Park Adult and Community Education since 1988.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BPACE



# For electrician, a light went on

Bassett Adult School offers father and son opportunity to study, advance together

Father and son electricians got the specialized training and certification they needed at Bassett Adult School. But the experience also sparked the desire to do more.

Frank De Leon and his son, Xavier, studied together in Bassett's Career Technical Education program, lending each other support.

"Bassett Adult School's Career Technical Education programs have a great reputation among the community," said Frank, a longtime employee of Long Beach Transit's Stops and Zones Department, which installs signs, benches, shelters and more along transit routes.

Frank wanted to advance his career, but needed professional certifications. With his son Xavier's encouragement, father and son enrolled in Bassett's HVAC program and completed the course in just 17 weeks.

Next they signed up for Bassett's state-certified electrician program. This one-year program is broken down into four modules: residential wiring, commercial wiring, motor controls and programmable logic controllers. Again, the De

Leons continued to ace their studies, working in class and studying at home side by side.

Halfway through the electrical program, another kind of light went on for Frank, a family man with three sons and two grandchildren.

"I didn't graduate from high school the first time around because I had other responsibilities that didn't make graduation a priority," Frank said.

**"I feel that all the time and effort has made me a better individual."**

**Frank De Leon**  
*Bassett Adult School graduate*

Bassett Adult School offered the opportunity for Frank to get his high school diploma while also earning his electrician certificate – during a pandemic.

"I have accomplished a great deal at BAS," he said. "I feel that all the time and effort has made me a better individual."

The De Leons are an example of how adult education changes lives, said Bassett Principal Albert Michel. When that spark is ignited, so much can be done. All that's needed is that desire and the right learning environment.

Frank De Leon agrees. "I would most definitely recommend BAS to anyone who wants quality education as well as workforce development," he said. "BAS is a wonderful school with a wide variety of courses. The instructors are respectful, patient and knowledgeable."

A big part of the De Leons' success came from within his own family, he added, including his wife, Irma, and all three sons.

"I am very grateful to the Bassett staff, but I am especially grateful to my family as none of this would have been possible without the support, love and encouragement from them," he said.

For more information on Bassett Adult School, visit <https://bas.bassettusd.org> or call 626-931-3100.



Frank De Leon demonstrates his electrical skills.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BASSETT ADULT SCHOOL

## LOCAL NEED FOR EDUCATION

Representing a large portion of inland Los Angeles County, Mt. San Antonio College Regional Consortium for Adult Education serves the communities of Baldwin Park, Bassett, Charter Oak, Covina, Diamond Bar, southern Glendora, Hacienda Heights, City of Industry, Irwindale, La Puente, La Verne, Pomona, Rowland Heights, San Dimas, Walnut and West Covina. These are diverse communities with a real need for adult education.

### Mt. SAC Consortium area at a glance



**621,470**  
Population, age 18+



**117,501**  
No high school diploma



**170,899**  
Speak limited English



**30,224**  
Unemployed



**269,910**  
Foreign-born



**181,515**  
Live near poverty level or less



**76,375**  
Adults with disabilities



**24,730**  
Veterans

Source: 2019 California Adult Education Fact Sheets

## FIGHTING POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Los Angeles County ranks as the nation's most populous county, with more than 10 million residents, according to census estimates. It's also among California's most diverse counties; one out of every three Los Angeles County residents was born outside the United States. In addition, one in five adult residents over age 25 lacks a high school diploma or equivalent.

Learning language skills and earning a diploma or certificate can help Los Angeles County residents get good jobs and lift themselves out of poverty — especially as the jobs market continues to recover after the 2020 pandemic.

Population	Unemployment
2010: <b>9,818,600</b>	May 2019: <b>4.2%</b>
2020: <b>10,039,100</b>	May 2020: <b>19.1%</b>
Growth: <b>2.2%</b>	May 2021: <b>11.7%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Los Angeles County residents need adult education

**16%**

live below the poverty line

**21%**

adults age 25+ lack high school diploma or equivalent

**41.1%**

language other than English spoken at home

**\$34,156**

per capita annual income (2019)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Out of the Kitchen and into the Classroom

Charter Oak Adult Education helps student transition into new career

BY ANNE STOKES

When Lidia Felix arrived in the United States, she didn't speak a word of English.

"Not even 'milk,'" she remembers. "I couldn't go to the store to buy anything because I didn't know how to ask for it. ... (But) I had to start working to make a living."

For several years, she worked in diners and fast food restaurants. She faced a steep language learning curve, but managed to master the ins and outs of the business and eventually earned her associate degree from Le Cordon Bleu in 2010. From there, she ended up in a five-star hotel kitchen, working her way up from prep cook to head chef. But like for many people, the COVID-19 pandemic forced her to find a different way to make a living.

"I was laid off and it was very devastating because I was working there for a little over 10 years," she says. "I thought, 'What am I going to do?' because I still struggled with my English."

Charter Oak Adult Education's English as a second language (ESL) program was her solution. According to Principal Michelle Lee, many students come in to improve their English skills and advance their careers at the same time.

"While they're learning the English language, they can enroll in those CTE (Career Technical Education) courses to fast track them into jobs," Lee says. "The main thing is to get them into the job market quickly and in a viable career. As we look at the pathways we've created here and the certifications, we wanted things that were not just jobs, but career options that make enough of an income to live on."

At Charter Oak, Felix got help with more than her English. She also got guidance continuing her career in a new direction: As a teacher. Currently, she's earning her teaching credential through the University of California, San Diego, and working as a substitute teacher at the East San Gabriel Valley Regional Occupational Program. Her ultimate goal is to find a full-time teaching position at a culinary program.

"If it wasn't for (teacher) Lucy (Code) and the Charter Oak Adult School, I probably would be looking for another type of job because I would have never known how to do it," Felix says. "I thought I've already learned so much in the culinary industry that I can share my knowledge with other people. For me, I wish I could be more fluent to express myself so I can teach better."

For more information on what opportunities are available through Charter Oak Adult Education, visit [www.coadulted.org](http://www.coadulted.org)

**"I've already learned so much in the culinary industry that I can share my knowledge with other people."**

Lidia Felix  
Charter Oak ESL student



An accomplished restaurant chef, Lidia Felix had to change her career path during the pandemic. That pivot started with English classes. She's now a teacher.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LIDIA FELIX

# Healthy Career Pathways

Tri-Community Adult Education helps students build lives for themselves and their families

BY ANNE STOKES

Being a single parent is tough. Being a single parent studying nursing is even tougher. Both take patience, empathy and a big heart — qualities that Marina Balderas says she hopes will serve her well in her new career in health care.

“It’s an atmosphere that pushes you out of your comfort zone but at the same time ... I felt, ‘I want this,’” she says. “It’s hard, it pushes you, it can break you, but I feel it’s where I’m supposed to be.”

In 2019, Balderas earned her personal care aide certification through Covina Valley Tri-Community Adult Education. She was then able to further her education and earn her certified nurse assistant (CNA) certification and plans to advance her career as a licensed practical nurse (LVN) or registered nurse (RN).

“I think the instructors were great, very patient, and that helps,” she says. “It helps when you have patient people listen to see what you’re lacking and help you figure out what you want or what you’re interested in.”

According to Virginia España, assistant principal of Tri-Community Adult Education, health care is a growing field, especially for workers like Balderas, who already have experience under their belt. And it’s one of several Career Technical Education (CTE) programs available for students, including court reporting, electrician, bookkeeping, HVAC and more.

“Adult Education and CTE programs are based on the needs of our local industry and current labor market information,” España says. “Lower tuition costs make it more affordable to attend school and financial aid is offered for several programs. CTE programs provide students with opportunities to acquire the competencies required in today’s workplace. ... Students are prepared to start a new career, advance in their career, and support their families and

strengthen communities.”

For Balderas, all of the hard work and perseverance it has taken to forge her new career path was something she did not just do for herself, but for her two kids as well.

**“Education will get you far and it’s something that will last forever.”**

**Marina Balderas**  
*Certified nurse assistant and Tri-Community Adult Education graduate*

“If you don’t make the time to work towards it, you’ll never get there. It’s easier to give up ... but once you start something, taking baby steps in the right direction, that adds up,” she says. “I wanted them to see that regardless of how hard it got, I didn’t give up. ... I want them to know that education will get you far and

it’s something that will last forever.”

For more information on Covina Valley Tri-Community Adult Education programs, visit [www.tri-communityadulthood.org](http://www.tri-communityadulthood.org) or call 626-974-4200.



While rearing two kids, Marina Balderas steadily advanced her education and her health care career.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARINA BALDERAS

## HEALTH CARE CAREER GROWTH

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the health care field is projected to grow 15% in the next decade and add 2.4 million new jobs— more than any other occupational group. Some of the fastest-growing health care occupations include:



### Nursing assistant

- 2017: 103,345
- 2027: 131,054 (27% growth)
- Median hourly wages: \$22.39
- Median annual wages: \$46,578



### Home health aide

- 2017: 31,461
- 2027: 37,329 (19% growth)
- Median hourly wages: \$14.99
- Median annual wages: \$31,175



### Physical therapist assistant

- 2017: 5,114
- 2027: 7,710 (51% growth)
- Median hourly wages: \$38.49
- Median annual wages: \$80,063



### Occupational therapy assistant

- 2017: 1,955
- 2027: 3,209 (64% growth)
- Median hourly wages: \$40.30
- Median annual wages: \$83.832



### Health technologists and technicians

- 2017: 24,221
- 2027: 33,231 (37% growth)
- Median hourly wages: \$37.56
- Median annual wages: \$78,130

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



## FASTEST GROWING JOBS

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, these 10 occupations will see the most growth\* this decade in Los Angeles County:



**Home health aide**  
**113.7%**



**Solar installer**  
**95.2%**



**Occupational therapist assistant**  
**58.1%**



**Physical therapist assistant**  
**50.7%**



**Personal care aide**  
**47.4%**



**Construction helper**  
**44.5%**



**Health technician**  
**37.2%**



**Electrical power-line specialist**  
**27.2%**



**Nursing assistant**  
**26.7%**



**Social and human service assistant**  
**24.9%**

\* Estimated increase, 2017-2027.

# Life-changing experiences part of her education

During pandemic, Hacienda La Puente Adult Education nursing students help others

Veronica Talamante has always wanted to be a nurse because she loves helping people. Growing up, the Covina native saw family members struggle with sickness because they did not know how to take care of their chronic health conditions. A career in health care was a way she could help others in need.

During the pandemic, that need became crucial. Talamante was among several nursing students pressed into emergency hands-on service.

Those life-changing experiences of 2020 culminated a long and winding career path for Talamante, who became a single mother shortly after high school graduation. Completing a medical assisting program, she found work at an assisted living facility. That job eventually led to a career at Kaiser Permanente, starting as a receptionist and moving up to ward clerk.

Fifteen years after her first health care job, Talamante decided to renew her nursing dream. While working, she took college classes with the goal of an associate's degree in nursing.

Talamante completed all her degree prerequisites, but had difficulty competing for limited nursing program openings with younger students who had higher GPAs in core sciences. Her prerequisites eventually expired, and she decided to pursue other options.

A co-worker who had graduated from the Hacienda La Puente Adult Education (HLP AE) LVN program suggested Talamante apply. After a year of waiting to get into the Licensed Vocational Nursing program, she was accepted.

Her personal challenges were not over. While Talamante was studying to become an LVN, her partner was diagnosed with cancer. Talamante herself was severely injured in a car accident. Then came COVID. But she didn't quit.

HLP AE's LVN program was granted hybrid status by the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians. That allowed Talamante and other LVN students to continue their studies through distance learning.

In June 2020, Talamante and her LVN class were placed into clinical experience at Los Angeles County+USC Medical Center. She assisted with live births, worked alongside nurses and supported patients who had undergone surgery. She even used her accident to bring hope to patients who were healing.

After graduating HLP AE, Talamante was hired by Kaiser as a full-time Licensed Vocational Nurse, starting in June 2021. She still plans to further her studies and become a Registered Nurse. But as a new LVN, she's doing what she always wanted to do – helping others care for their health.

**While still a HLP AE student, Talamante assisted with live births, worked alongside nurses and supported patients who had undergone surgery.**

For more information on Hacienda La Puente Adult Education, visit [www.hlpae.com](http://www.hlpae.com) or call 626-934-2801.



During the pandemic, Hacienda La Puente Adult Education nursing student Veronica Talamante got hands-on clinical experience. She's now a LVN.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VERONICA TALAMANTE



# Pivot keeps EMT program on track

Thoughtful instructors help EMT student complete training despite crisis

Newly certified as an Emergency Medical Technician, Edgardo Marquez-Castanon completed Mt. San Antonio College's short-term vocational program as a step towards his goal of becoming a firefighter.

"I want to have a career where I am able to help as many people as I can and have a career where I will be physically active," Marquez-Castanon said.

As soon as he started Mt. SAC's program, he was immediately inspired by how much he was learning.

"It was a lot of information to take in, because all of the information that we were learning was all new to me," he said. "Before this class, (for example), I did not really know how to perform CPR or how to check blood pressure manually."

Then, the pandemic disrupted everything. During Los Angeles County's lockdown in Spring 2020, no in-person classes could be held. Marquez-Castanon had an unexpected weeks-long break midway through his program.

"The pandemic made it difficult because we had to stop going to classes in person and it was hard to keep all the information fresh in our heads for the tests," he said. "I actually kept studying and reading ahead, so when we started going over that information in the Zoom meetings, I would understand (the lessons)."

Marquez-Castanon credits his instructors in pivoting their training.

"Professors Vu and Yoshida did great transitioning from in person to online classes and they were always there for us if we had any questions or if we had any problems," he said.

Clinical portions of the training were broken down into four-student groups.

That's when the pandemic hit home for Marquez-Castanon. His father passed away

from COVID in October 2020, just as Marquez-Castanon was starting the clinical portion of his training.

"It was difficult for me at the time, but Professor Vu understood what I was going through and gave me time to grieve the death of my father," said Marquez-Castanon, adding the professor also offered counseling referrals and other support. "I really appreciated the help."

That caring attitude and personal attention were

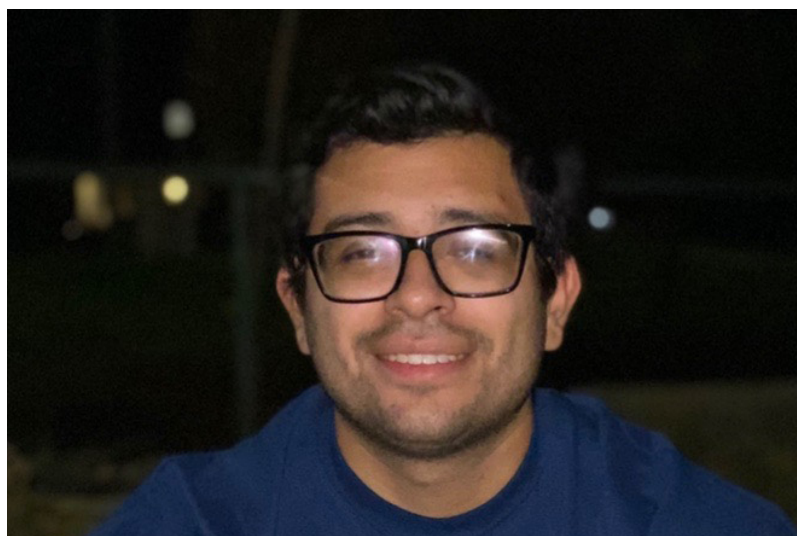
what Marquez-Castanon experienced throughout Mt. SAC's EMT program.

"All the instructors were very helpful," Marquez-Castanon said. "Overall, it was a great program, and I would recommend the EMT program and Mt. San Antonio College to anyone."

**"I would recommend the EMT program and Mt. San Antonio College to anyone."**

**Edgardo Marquez-Castanon**  
*Graduate, Mt. SAC's EMT program*

To learn more about Mt. San Antonio College's short-term vocational programs, visit [www.mtsac.edu/vocational/](http://www.mtsac.edu/vocational/) or call 909-274-4220.



Edgardo Marquez-Castanon kept up with his studies during the pandemic.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE

## A NATURAL FOR NURSING

Caring for her grandfather gave Jennifer Guzman career inspiration.

Diagnosed with Stage IV lung cancer, her grandfather needed a caregiver so he could stay at home. Unemployed at the time, Guzman took on that hospice role without hesitation. A nurse assigned to his case observed her talent.

"It was brought to my attention ... that I was a natural to be a nurse, better yet a hospice nurse," Guzman said. "I never considered (being) a hospice nurse, but as a young girl, I did want to be a nurse. So, it did spark my interest."

After her grandfather's passing, Guzman decided to pursue that career in earnest. While researching schools, she discovered Mt. San Antonio College's short-term vocational programs. She completed Mt. SAC's In-Home Support Services/Personal Care Aide program, then decided to go for the Certified Nursing Assistant program. She was so excited about turning in her paperwork, she camped out in front of the program's building at 3:30 a.m. "Yes, I camped out," she said.

Guzman completed Mt. SAC's CNA program in November 2019. During the 2020 pandemic, she continued her medical education and received her Certified Home Health Aide license. She now works with a hospice agency.

Her goal is to be "a nurse (and) to provide the best, possible care needed for the elderly," she said. "I focus more on the elderly because my whole career would not have taken off if it were not for caring for my grandfather."



Jennifer Guzman was inspired by caring for her grandfather to start her health care career.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER GUZMAN

## MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION CAREERS EXPECTED TO GROW

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the manufacturing and construction fields are projected to grow throughout California. Jobs include painters, carpenters, construction equipment operators, sheet metal workers, plumbers, electricians, roofers, drywall and ceiling tile installers, and building inspectors.

These occupations usually don't need a university degree. Career technical education can provide the training needed to secure these good-paying jobs.

### Manufacturing/construction jobs in the Top 10 fastest- growing occupations

#### Electrical Power Line Installers and Repairers

Median hourly wages:

**\$57.12**

Median annual wages:

**\$118,811**



#### Solar Photovoltaic Installers

Median hourly wages:

**\$26.49**

Median annual wages:

**\$55,109**



#### Pipelayers, Steamfitters and Plumbers

Median hourly wages:

**\$25.29**

Median annual wages:

**\$52,601**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

# Uplifting the Community

A Q&A with Pomona Adult School Principal Miguel Hurtado

BY ANNE STOKES

For the past 85 years, Pomona Adult School has been offering students a hand up through education. More than just getting hired for another job, students have the opportunity to build a new career within in-demand fields. Through adult education programs, students can earn a high school diploma, improve their English skills, prepare for citizenship — all tuition free. For those looking for career advancement, Pomona's career technical education (CTE) programs offer a wealth of career pathways. Principal Miguel Hurtado shared ways that adult learners can take advantage of these programs.

#### How do adult education and CTE programs benefit students?

We provide academic and vocational technical training and instruction that allows our students in our community to improve their lives. ... Students can come here and acquire a new language — English — and attain instruction in civics and daily life skills. For those students who (are already fluent), we offer vocational opportunities that allow them to go out into the world with a certificate that allows them employment in high-demand fields, sometimes a life-changing opportunity in terms of employment.

#### Is there financial assistance and job placement support available for students?

Here at Adult and Career Education, we offer financial aid through Pell Grants. For the majority of students who qualify for this financial assistance, it's cost effective. They exit our programs with a certificate that makes them eligible for these careers absent of any debt.

We have (staff) who assist and walk our students through the FAFSA process (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). (Our staff member) takes them step by step to ensure all the steps are done correctly to ensure that they qualify.

We partner with AJCC (America's Job Center of California) and we're also part of the Mt. SAC Consortium, so there are ample opportunities for our students to be given the opportunities to further their studies and their career.

#### What types of career paths are available at Pomona?

We're currently offering our barbering program and cosmetology. We also have our office occupation program, which encompasses secretarial (positions), executive assistant, word processing, typist, office assistant and general receptionist, as well as machinist/CNC (Computer Numerical Control) and MasterCAM. We also have an apparel design and construction class that we offer the community.

Given the vast needs of our community here in Pomona and surrounding cities ... it's my goal that we become better known for the opportunities that we offer and the services we provide.

**“We provide academic  
and vocational technical  
training and instruction that  
allows our students in our  
community to improve their  
lives.”**

**Miguel Hurtado**  
Principal, Adult and Career Education, Pomona Unified  
School District

For more information on what Pomona Adult and Career Education can do for you, call 909-397-4800 ext. 24301 or visit [ace.pusd.org](http://ace.pusd.org) online.



# At Last: A High School Grad!

Adult school helps student finally  
finish high school

BY ANNE STOKES

For a long time, Florida Flores thought she'd never walk across a stage and celebrate graduating high school. After dropping out in her junior year to care for family, it was something she always wanted to finish, but life just seemed to get in the way. For 12 years, she worked as a certified nurse assistant, a physical job with a demanding schedule that was difficult to balance with the needs of her young family.

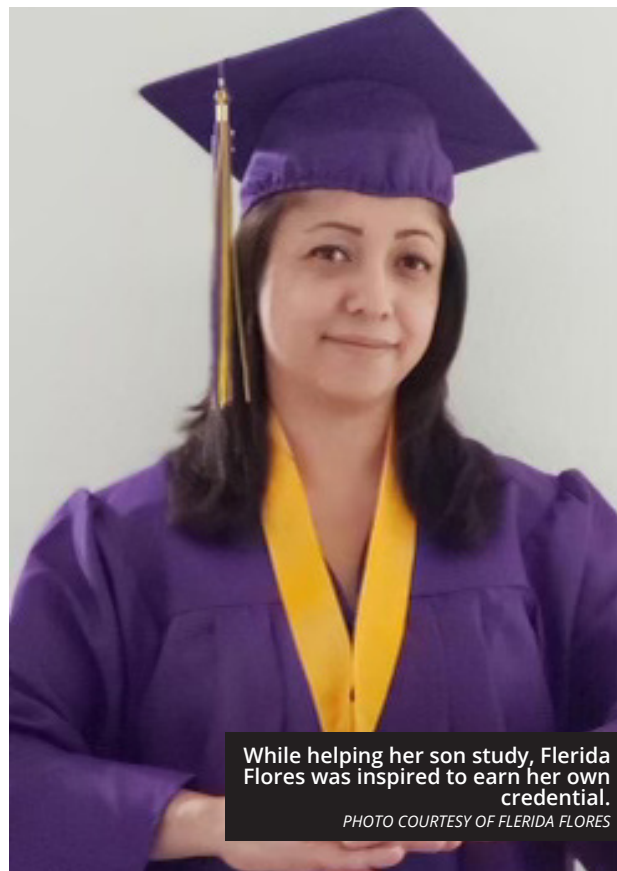
**“You need those kinds of teachers, you need that kind of support if you really want to do it.”**

**Florida Flores**  
*Rowland Adult and Community Education graduate*

“I’m helping my son with school during the pandemic and I thought, ‘How could I not finish high school?’” she says. “I had to do it.”

Flores found what she needed at Rowland Adult and Community Education. Through their programs, she was able to pass the HiSET exam and earn her high school equivalency credential. While it wasn’t easy, Flores says support from teachers and staff made all the difference.

“I told them, ‘Maybe to you, I was just another student,



While helping her son study, Florida Flores was inspired to earn her own credential.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FLORIDA FLORES

but to me, it was everything.’ You need those kinds of teachers, you need that kind of support if you really want to do it,” Flores says. “I was sometimes not sure of myself, if I could finish the subjects and the test, but (my teacher Norm Chavez) kept me positive and kept me going.”

At Rowland, all courses are free and students at any level can enroll in their Adult Secondary Education (ASE) or English as a Second language (ESL) classes. Like Flores, many students return to start a new career or advance in the one they’re already working in.

“We take students wherever they are,” says Janet Duker, outreach specialist with Rowland. “Many, many jobs want proof of some sort of high school education. ... If you don’t even have a diploma from high school, it’s much more difficult to get anything more than a minimum (wage).”

Today, Flores is looking into continuing her education in order to start a new career in medical billing or coding, an office position with a more stable schedule. For Flores, going back to school has been a positive experience for her whole family. Not only did her husband change careers, transitioning from a chef to a drug counselor, but her children have also been inspired to dream big.

“My 6-year-old, he was trying to help me with my math, he was motivating me, he was so excited that I finished,” she says. “He says he wants to go to college, too —like his mom.”

For more information on the programs available at Rowland Adult and Community Education, visit [race.rowlandschools.org](http://race.rowlandschools.org) or call 626-965-5975.

## IT PAYS TO KNOW

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, getting an education pays off: Not only do higher levels of education usually result in higher earnings, they also correlate to lower rates of unemployment.

### Master’s degree

Median usual weekly earnings:

**\$1,497**

Unemployment rate:

**2%**



### Bachelor’s degree

Median usual weekly earnings:

**\$1,248**

Unemployment rate:

**2.2%**

### Associate’s degree

Median usual weekly earnings:

**\$887**

Unemployment rate:

**2.7%**

### Some college (no degree)

Median usual weekly earnings:

**\$883**

Unemployment rate:

**3.3%**

### High school diploma

Median usual weekly earnings:

**\$746**

Unemployment rate:

**3.7%**

### Less than a high school diploma

Median usual weekly earnings:

**\$592**

Unemployment rate:

**5.4%**



# Where learning never stops

Adult education brings learning to the students who need it most

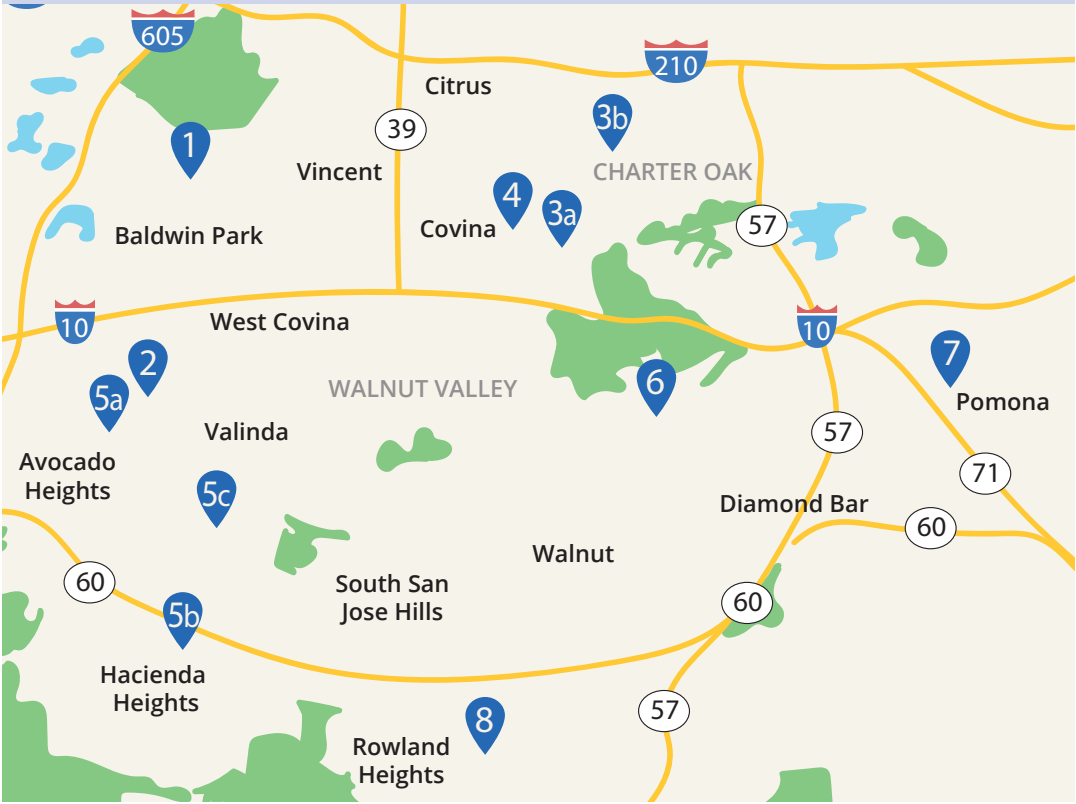
Serving eastern Los Angeles County, Mt. SAC Regional Consortium for Adult Education includes eight members: Baldwin Park Unified School District; Bassett Unified School District; Charter Oak Unified School District; Covina Valley Unified School District; Hacienda La Puente Unified School District; Mt. San Antonio College School of Continuing Education; Pomona Unified School District; and Rowland Heights Unified School District.



## Mt. SAC Regional Consortium for Adult Education

Mt. San Antonio College  
Bldg. 40, Suite 104  
1100 N. Grand Ave.  
Walnut, CA 91789

(909) 274-5357  
[www.mtsac-rc.org](http://www.mtsac-rc.org)



ESL = English as a Second Language  
HSE = High School Equivalency  
ABE = Adult Basic Education  
CTE/STV = Career & Technical Education/Short-Term Vocational

Where to Find Programs	ESL	HSE	ABE	CTE/STV
<b>1 Baldwin Park Adult and Community Education</b> 626-939-4456 bpace.bpusd.net  4640 North Maine Ave. Baldwin Park, CA 91706	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>2 Bassett Adult School-Career Technical Center</b> 626-931-3100 bas.bassettusd.org  943 N. Sunkist Ave. La Puente, CA 91746	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>3 Charter Oak Adult Education</b> 626-938-0280 http://www.coadulted.org/  Main Campus 1115 East Puente Ave. Covina, CA 91724  North Campus 20350 E. Cienega Ave. Covina, CA 91724	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>4 Covina Valley Tri-Community Adult Education</b> 626-974-4200 www.c-vusd.org  160 Barranca Ave. Covina, CA 91723	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>5 Hacienda La Puente Adult Education</b> 626-934-2801 www.hlpae.com  Willow Center 14101 E. Nelson Ave. La Puente, CA 91746  Dibble Campus 1600 Pontenova Ave. Hacienda Heights, CA 91745  Hudson Adult Learning Center 445 N. Glendora Ave. La Puente, CA 91744	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>6 Mt. San Antonio College School of Continuing Education</b> 909-274-4220 www.mtsac.edu/continuinged/  1100 N. Grand Ave. Walnut, CA 91789	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>7 Pomona Adult and Career Education</b> 909-469-2333 ace.pusd.org  1515 W. Mission Blvd. Pomona, CA 91766	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>8 Rowland Adult and Community Education</b> 626-965-5975 race.rowlandschools.org  2100 Lerona Ave. Rowland Heights, CA 91748	✓	✓	✓	