



CATCH THE NEXT

NEWSLETTER

April
Volume 12, No. 8

National Community College Month



During the month of April, Catch The Next demonstrates its unwavering commitment to supporting all partnered colleges on National Community Colleges Day, reaffirming its dedication to empowering students and fostering academic success. Through its ASCENDER program, Catch The Next has consistently made a profound impact on the lives of students across various campuses. By providing comprehensive support services, mentorship opportunities, and academic resources, ASCENDER goes beyond traditional educational models to address the diverse needs of students, particularly those from underserved backgrounds. From personalized academic advising to leadership development workshops, ASCENDER equips students, staff, and professors with the tools and confidence they need to excel academically and pursue their dreams. Moreover, Catch The Next's collaborative efforts with partnered colleges during National Community Colleges Day serve as a testament to its commitment to promoting equity, access, and inclusivity within higher education. By fostering a culture of support and empowerment, Catch The Next continues to transform the lives of countless students, paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future.

CTN Features

Have you
met

our new
CTN 2024 Leadership
Fellows?



Yolanda Manzano is originally from Port Isabel, and she began moving north from the Rio Grande Valley after high school. Her formal education began at St. Mary's University where she completed a BA studying Secondary Mathematics and Physics Education. From there she moved north to attend Baylor University where she completed a MS in Mathematics and published her thesis "A Matrix Approach to Quantum Mechanics." Yolanda went on to study Curriculum and Instruction and received an MEd from the University of Texas at Arlington. She currently teaches mathematics at Dallas College's Richland Campus.

Manzano's Teaching Philosophy: "I seek to empower students to better understand themselves and their world through mathematics. Students are challenged to be intellectually vulnerable, putting forth their best effort while recognizing that struggle is a key component of learning and growth. We use support systems (tutoring, office hours, study groups, online resources, etc.) knowing that even professional mathematicians rarely work on problems alone. We find joy in discovery and learning, appreciating the profound power of our diverse learning community. New, challenging concepts are approached with courage and authenticity as we work together to achieve our goals."



Diana Gorostieta Martinez, member of the Catch the Next Board, is the Coordinator for the Ascender program under the Office of Student Affairs at Austin Community College (ACC). She promotes student engagement and retention by coordinating cultural and educational events, and ensuring positive relationships between students and mentors.

Diana, an alumna of the Ascender program, earned an Associate's in Business Administration before transferring to Texas State University, where she obtained a Bachelor of Science in Marketing. Diana later completed her Master's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in International Business in the Summer of 2023.

Additionally, Diana serves as a co-host for the ACCTV show "Ready, Set, Ascender!" This engaging program explores the richness of Latinx culture, education, and community within ACC and Central Texas, serving as a platform for celebrating student achievements and inspiring the community.

As a proud first-generation Latina and dreamer, Diana is passionate about inspiring others, like herself, to pursue their educational aspirations.



Chesley "Cade" Mason is a writer and educator living in Dallas where he currently works as a Professor of English at Dallas College's Brookhaven Campus. Before teaching for Dallas College, Mason earned both his B.A. and M.A. degrees in Creative Writing from the University of North Texas in Denton, where he also taught as an Adjunct, researched culturally relevant pedagogical approaches as a Teaching Fellow, and worked behind the scenes for the university's literary magazine.

Throughout his teaching career, whether in one-on-one tutoring or classes of 40-plus, Mason has worked hard to shape his teaching methods, reading lists, and syllabi to not only reflect but speak directly to the diverse populations that make up the university and community college classrooms. With a passion for the personal narrative essay—more specifically, the essay's ability to give voice to society's frequently unheard, underserved, and marginalized—Mason teaches under the philosophy that anyone can write, that everyone has a story to tell, and that fostering one's confidence is the first step in developing the writing voice to tell it. Mason's debut lyric essay collection *Engine Running: Essays*, part of Ohio State University's literary and trade imprint Mad Creek Books' 21st Century Essays series, delves into the family and Southern queerness that shape both the writer and his home landscape of West Texas—themes that often drive his personal work. You can find him in the pages of various literary journals like *Hotel Amerika*, *Ninth Letter*, *DIAGRAM*, *LitHub*, *Sweet*, and elsewhere. When he isn't teaching or writing, you can find him taking a long walk around his neighborhood or cuddling with his two cats.



Dr. Tivy Whitlock current President of Nobles Institute. Dr. Tivy (ty*vee) grew up in a career military family living and traveling all over the world. She has nearly three decades of proven industry experience in the areas of workforce and professional development, technology, and early childhood education. Dr. Tivy is a subject matter expert working with school age parents as young as 11 years old and grandparents who are raising young children.

Dr. Tivy's research work focuses on learning through play, adult development, parent engagement, strengthening teacher-parent relationships, and empathic communication. She's dedicated to guiding individuals to reach their fullest potential through critical connections that align with the new ways we think, learn, and interact.

As a Presidential Scholar, Dr. Tivy earned her Bachelor of Arts in Business from Southwestern University in Georgetown and is a past recipient of Southwestern University's Young Alumna Achievement Award. She has a Master of Arts in Adult and Higher Education from The University of Texas at San Antonio. Dr. Tivy is also a past doctoral fellow and earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching from The University of Texas at San Antonio with a cognate area of study in early childhood education.

Dr. Tivy's passion for teaching and education transcends into her civic involvement, as she has served on four State of Texas board appointments: Texas State Commission on Fire Protection, the Governor's Committee on Childcare Licensing, Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council, and the Texas Commission on Human Rights.



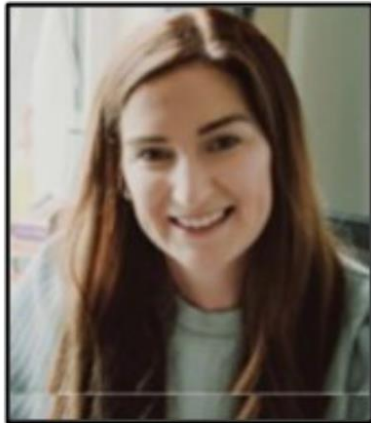
David Rice has always lived in Texas. Born in 1964 in Weslaco, he now divides his time between Austin and the Rio Grande Valley. South Texas and his Mexican American culture are the inspiration for most of his work. The former writer-in-residence for Llano Grande Center for Research and Development in Edcouch, he now teaches and mentors middle and high school students in creative writing. His short story collection, *Crazy Loco*, has received much acclaim, and his stories have been included in several other anthologies for adults and teens. He has also written and directed plays, feature films, short films, and a one-man show called "Just a Kid from Edcouch."



Praveena Dhayanithy is a Professor of Mathematics at Dallas College. She is dedicated to excellence in teaching. Praveena prepares students to understand and use Mathematics effectively and be lifelong learners. She is adept at learning and using new technology and keeping up with state and national level changes in education policies. Praveena has taught all Freshman and Sophomore level Mathematics classes both face-to-face and online. She has spearheaded and conducted three annual Collaboration Day events for STEM faculty at Dallas College. Praveena is also a long-time member of the Curriculum Committee. In her spare time, Praveena loves to garden and spend time with family and friends.

Welcome,

to our new
CTN Peer Mentor



Caroline Maguire has worked in a Tulsa child and family agency since 2001. Caroline's journey as a practitioner has always been client centered. For 15 years Caroline worked within a community social care role implementing collaborative and therapeutic approaches.

Caroline's career led her to Workforce Learning and Development in 2016 where she was introduced to coaching, and completed an Advanced Diploma in Personal, Leadership and Executive Coaching. Since 2017 Caroline has been part of a team that researches and designs coaching modules, delivers on the Tulsa Coaching Skills Programme, and supports the monthly triad practice session.

Caroline credits her coaching clients' success to her combined training in Positive Intelligence (PQ) coaching, Red Team Thinking strategies and ensuring the fundamentals skills of coaching underpin her approach. Caroline is an affiliated and accredited member with the Global European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC).

Caroline strongly believes in the power of coaching and the positive impact it can have. Through deep listening, compassion, presence, holding space, establishing actions and curious questioning there can be a transformative effect. Caroline's coaching space and process is one of acceptance, empowerment and a collaborative approach; her sole focus is on the client's goal and their outcomes.

Caroline has a MA in both Early Childhood Studies and a MA in Practice based Play Therapy, and a BA Hon Degree in Applied Social Studies in Social Care. She also delivers a range of leadership programmes including Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the Everyday Inspirational Leadership Programme (EILP).

Caroline loves playing cheesy & nostalgic games with her son like Connect Four, back in the day her favorite games to play were monopoly, Tetris, Donkey Kong Jr.



Juan Ochoa is an ASCENDER instructor at South Texas College, Pecan campus.

He is the author of Mariguano, a novel set in the drug trafficking world of the Texas/Mexico border circa 1980s. His short stories and essays appear in numerous journals. He teaches writing at South Texas College in McAllen. Ochoa is a licensed Mexican lawyer with an MFA in creative writing. He is currently writing the final volume in the trilogy El Penal.

Featured

CTN Peer Mentor



Biography

Michael Guinn is an internationally renowned Spoken Word artist, published poet, actor and professional, high energy emcee for audiences of all ages.

He has more than 25 years experience as the director of Mike Guinn Entertainment and founder/CEO of Uplift Your Life, a 501c3 which addresses mental health and wellness via performance arts. He is a 2024 Considered Artist, Gospel Music Excellence and Prayze Factor award nominee.

He is an award winning poet/storyteller/actor and promoter who continues to build safe and supportive platforms for all artists and audiences everywhere.

This social worker turned actor has also appeared in films, stage and television series and is currently streaming on Amazon, Peacock, Netflix, Tubi, YouTube and Roku. Michael is also a voting member of the NAACP Image Awards and host 8 ongoing open mics and ten annual showcases and conferences nationwide.

Most recently, he has also been nominated for a Gospel Choice Music award, a Prayze Factor Award and is on the waitlist for Grammy consideration for his new album "The Calling"!

Michael has also published two best selling collections of poetry and has had his works featured in more than 125 journals, anthologies, ezines over the past 25 years! Michael is a two time National Poetry Slam Finalist, Toronto International Slam Champion and most recently won a 2023 National Spokenword Award for America's Top Spokenword Emcee/Host and he is always seeking new opportunities to make every experience a fun and rewarding for all. Say Hello to the HARDEST WORKING MAN IN POETRY Mr. Michael Guinn



Q: What inspired you to become a poetry writer?

A: One day while working as a child abuse investigator I came in from a long day in the field, sat down, started crying, and when I lifted my head, I had a pen in my hand and the first thing I wrote was "what good is my masters degree if I can't be the master of me" And after that, everything came pouring out. I've been writing ever since . December 21, 1997

Q: Why is poetry good for all?

A: Poetry and creative writing in general is good for all because it is a healthy and therapeutic outlet for the mind's expression. It helps us make sense of it all and to manifest our destiny by simply writing it down.

Q: Why do you teach our students to get into spoken word poetry?

A: The reason why I teach students to get into spoken word is because it teaches them to challenge themselves and to express their voice. Because in life, they will have to know how to speak up for themselves and be able to put their thoughts down in a way that defines their authentic selves . This is where empowerment begins. Their energy and enthusiasm has already begun to peak because of the wonderful structure that these Transformational seminars provide. My responsibility is to help them understand that they have a purpose, and that it begins with something is simple as writing and sharing with each other.

Q: Is there anything you'd like to convey?

A: I'd like to say that I applaud catch the next for always finding creative ways to engage students and enhance their educational pursuits. Poetry and creative writing is just one of the many ways that they can engage and aspire by manifesting through their writing.

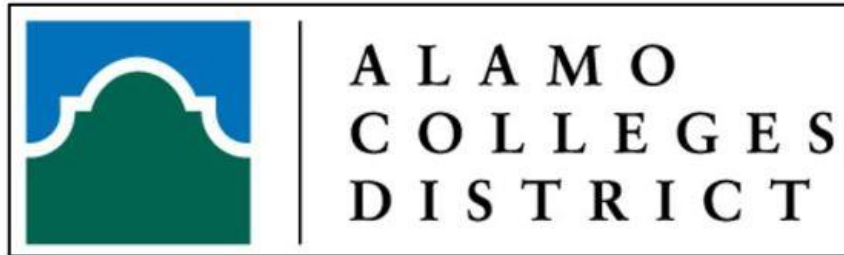
Michael Guinn, Actor/Poet/Emcee

[INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PEER MENTOR ?](#)

Thank you to all the
CTN *Lead the Change* Sponsors

who make it possible for students to transform their lives.

With your generous donations during our gala totaling \$8,225, CTN will be able to provide paid internships to our Ascender students.



Gold Sponsor

Alamo Colleges District (ACD) is the largest provider of higher education in South Texas. Its five independent colleges (including Palo Alto College and San Antonio College which offer the CTN Ascender program) provide two-year degrees that focus on preparing students to transfer to baccalaureate-granting institutions and workforce development programs that help build new careers and meet the needs of business; ten education and training centers that offer a wide range of education and training for the community and military; and three district support operations centers.



Silver Sponsor

Special thanks to Dr. Ruth Reinhart, ACC Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Support Services, who sponsored the gala

Austin Community College is a nationally recognized college serving Central Texas as the primary gateway to higher education and technical training opportunities. Their mission is to provide open-door access to an affordable college education for students who want to earn a degree, learn a marketable skill, or advance their careers.

Individual Donors

- Norma Cantu
- Rogelio Saenz
- Linda Hagedorn
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Donations are still being accepted and are welcomed here: <https://catchthenext.networkforgood.com/events/47544-ascender-catching-dreams-tenth-anniversary-reception>

College News

ascender
CATCH THE NEXT



STC ASCENDER Girls Discovering Math Club Organization Fundraising for Yaqui Animal Rescue



Submitted by Naidelyn Ramos, STC Club Member

RIO GRANDE CITY, TEXAS- On Friday, April 6, 2024, the Girls Discovering Math Club dropped off their first donations to the Yaqui Animal Rescue in Sullivan City, Texas.

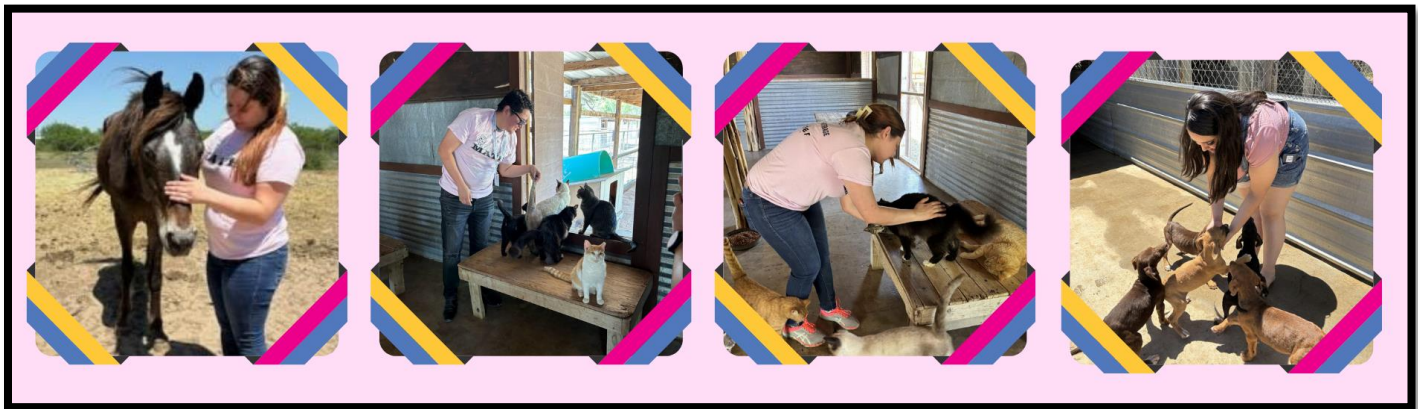
The Club was first formed in Spring of 2023 to support and inspire minority women's interest in the STEM fields by promoting STEM associate degrees, creating a community where students can socialize, share interests, and support each other to meet their educational goals.

At the start of the Spring 2024 semester the club, with the sponsorship of Catch the Next ASCENDER and under the guidance of Advisors Rosa Gutierrez and Lazaro Garcia Costilla, decided to start fundraising efforts in support of the Yaqui Animal Rescue. The Rescue has a complex and long history, but it wasn't until 2004 when Sonia Venecia repurchased her family's old ranch to make it into a rescue, that the organization started taking shape to what it is today.

Nine years later, in 2013 through hard work and an extraordinary amount of passion for animals the Yaqui Animal Rescue officially became a registered no-kill/ non-profit organization with a rescue team that has saved thousands of strays (Yaqui Animal Rescue, 2024). With knowledge of what the rescue stands for the Girls Discovering Math Club found it the best fit for them to turn their fundraising efforts towards.



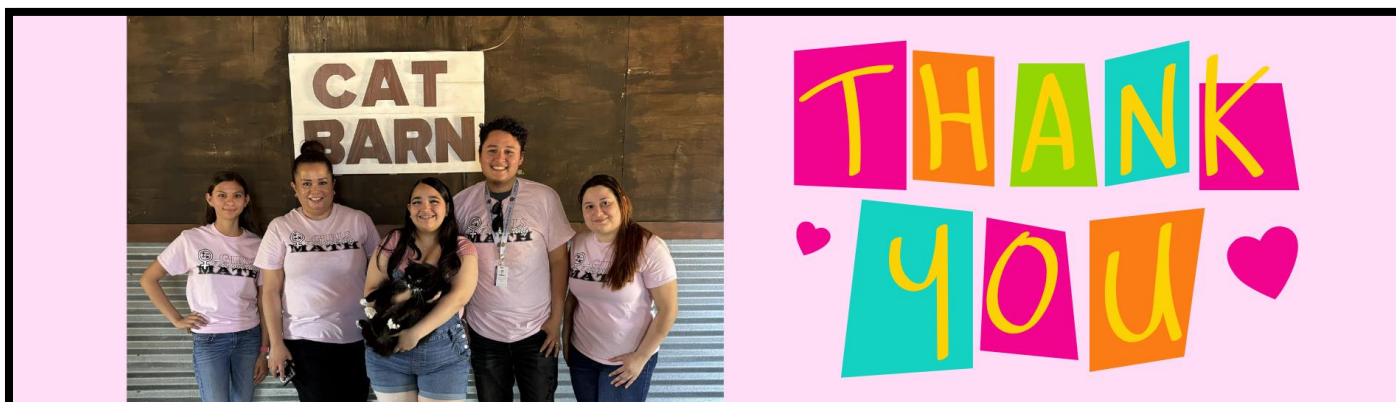
On February 1st the Club had started collecting various donations from pet bowls, dog and cat food, kitty litter, puppy pads, bleach, Dawn dish soap, detergent, cleaning supplies etc. to drop off at the end of March 31st. Then on April 6, after collecting all the supplies that were donated The club set out to Sullivan City to make the drop off and learn a bit more about the Animal Rescue by touring the grounds and most importantly meeting all the pet beneficiaries.

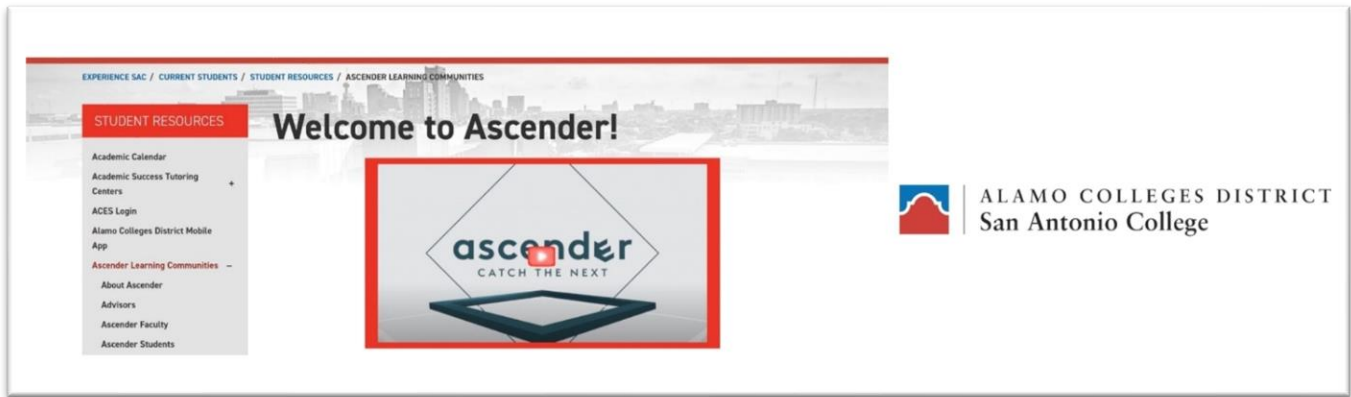


One of the first stops the club made was at the Cat Barn, which currently houses 60 cats. In addition to the cat barn there was also a separate quarantined unit for the cats who were ill and had leukemia and other afflictions, which require extra attention. Afterwards the group was shown the Rescue pigs. There were around 10 pigs give or take that had been rescued from slaughter or given up by local farmers. The rescue Dogs were up next with the Rescue having over 60 dogs of various ages. Some of whom had been there for over 13 years. In addition to the dog sanctuary there was also a separate air conditioned unit for more elderly dogs to get some peace and enjoy their later days. The following stop for the Club was visiting the equines on the property. Their were three adult horses, one mule, and a pony. The final animal the Club visited was the literal black sheep of the bunch Tomasa.

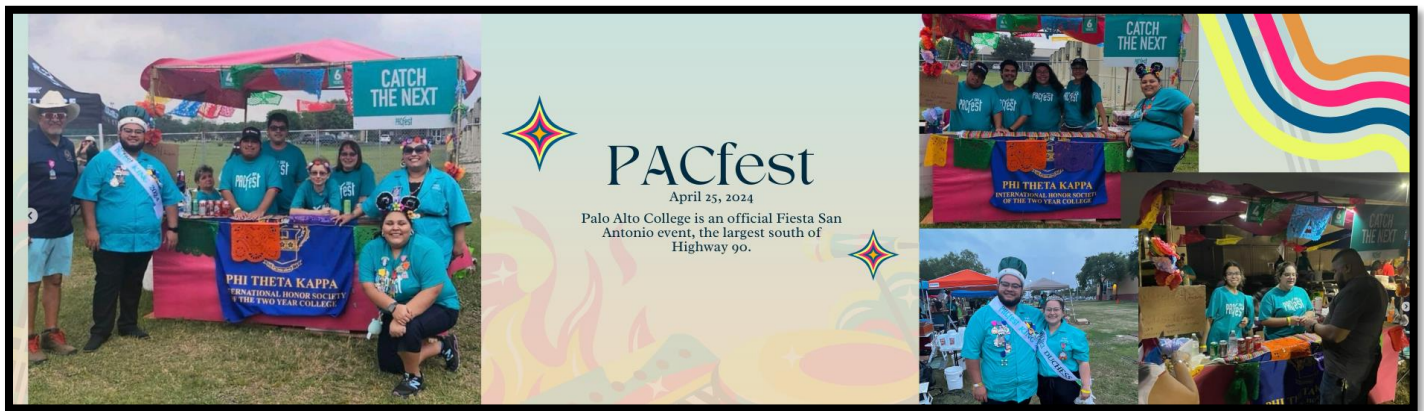
Being able to experience how much effort and work goes into helping save and help animals was a rewarding experience for the Girls Discovering Math Club and they can't wait to help out again. The Club will continue spreading the word and supporting the Yaqui Animal Rescue with the intent to continue facilitating and maintaining a good relationship with the organization. In addition, to supporting the Rescue The Club also wishes to set their sights on other ways to help and set their mark on the community.

If anyone wishes to volunteer or donate to the Shelter please visit: <https://yaquianimalrescue.com/> for more information.





PAC ASCENDER Club Celebrates at PACfest

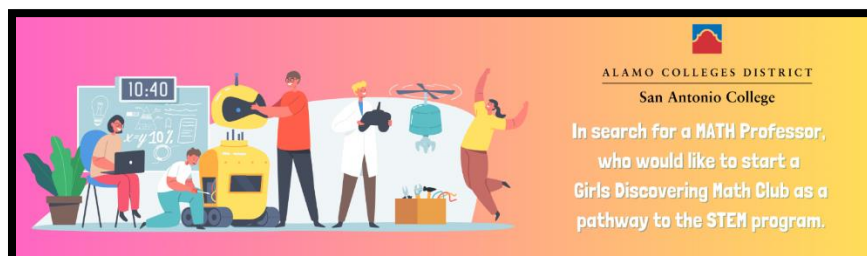


Submitted by Dakota Rodriguez, PAC, Intern

The PAC ASCENDER club celebrated Fiesta, a large celebration in San Antonio, at PACfest on campus on April 25. The club sold waters and sodas as a fundraiser. Club President, Logan Martinez, won PACfest king and club member Kayla Muzquiz won PACfest duchess.

PACfest at Palo Alto College is an official Fiesta® San Antonio event, the largest south of Highway 90, held the Thursday before Fiesta's Battle of Flowers Parade. This family-friendly event features a main stage with artistic and musical performers throughout the day, food booths, children's activities, Social Media Alley, and more. (<https://www.alamo.edu/pac/experience-pac/campus-life/arts-and-culture/pacfest/>) Entertainers this year included Grupo Control and Bobby Pulido.

In Search for a Math Professor





Ascender



Pathway's Panel



ASCENDER ALUMNI

Tori Cortinas, UT Graduate
Jose Arce, UT Transfer Student
Diana, TXST Graduate

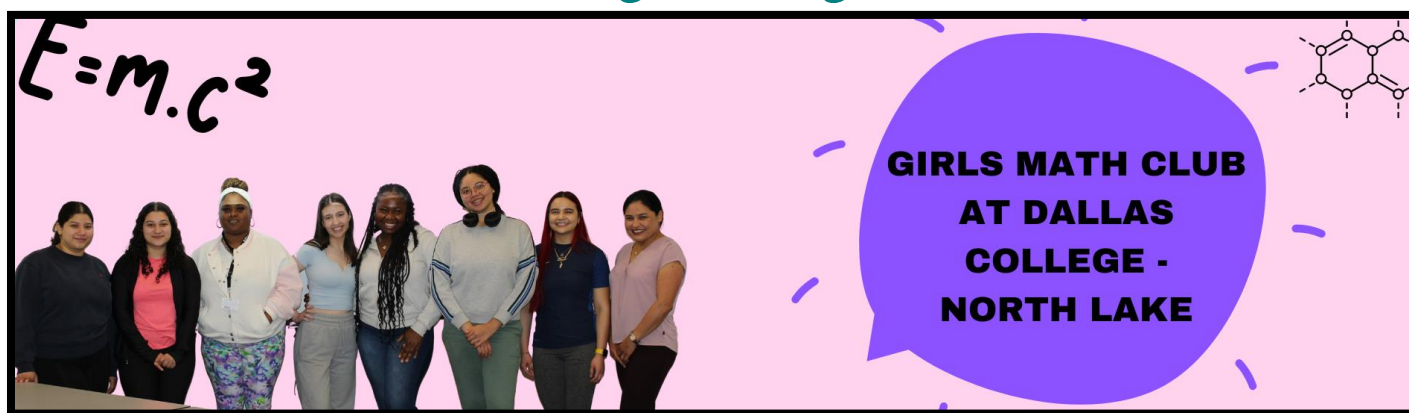


At a recent Pathway's panel hosted by Austin Community College, three esteemed Ascender alumni, Tori Cortinas, a proud graduate of the University of Texas (UT), Jose Arce, currently excelling as a transfer student at UT, and Diana, who achieved her academic aspirations at Texas State University (TXST), came together to recount their transformative transfer journeys. Each alumni shared poignant accounts of their experiences, emphasizing the instrumental role that Ascender played in facilitating their successful transitions. Tori eloquently spoke of Ascender's unwavering support and guidance, which propelled her towards her UT degree. Jose highlighted the invaluable resources and mentorship he received from Ascender, which eased his transition into UT. Diana fondly reminisced about the holistic support system at Ascender that empowered her to thrive at TXST. Collectively, their narratives showcased the profound impact of Ascender in empowering students to realize their dreams of transferring to esteemed institutions.

Jose Arce: "Sharing my experience transferring with faculty, staff, and administrators lets me know that there are people who want to support students in their transfer journey. It made me happy to meet with different people and share my transfer story with them. More importantly, it's heartwarming knowing that there are people interested in our perspectives as students, and lets me know that there is help for everyone."



Dallas College – Girls Discovering Math Club 1st Club Meeting Coming Soon



Girls Discovering Math Club Meet & Greet at Dallas College - North Lake Campus Submitted by Dr. Teresita Ramirez-Rosas, Dallas College - North Lake Mathematics Faculty

The Dallas College - North Lake Campus Girls Discovering Math Club had its first Meet & Greet meeting on April 2, 2024. This is the first Girls Discovering Math Club at Dallas College led by Dr. Teresita Ramirez-Rosas, Mathematics Professor at North Lake College.

The mission of the club is to support and inspire minority women's interest in the STEM fields by promoting STEM Associate degrees, creating a community where students can socialize, share interests, and support each other to meet their education goals.

In the first meeting, there was 10 students, 3 professors, and one staff member from TRIO services at Dallas College who gave a presentation to the students. The club currently has 14 members registered.

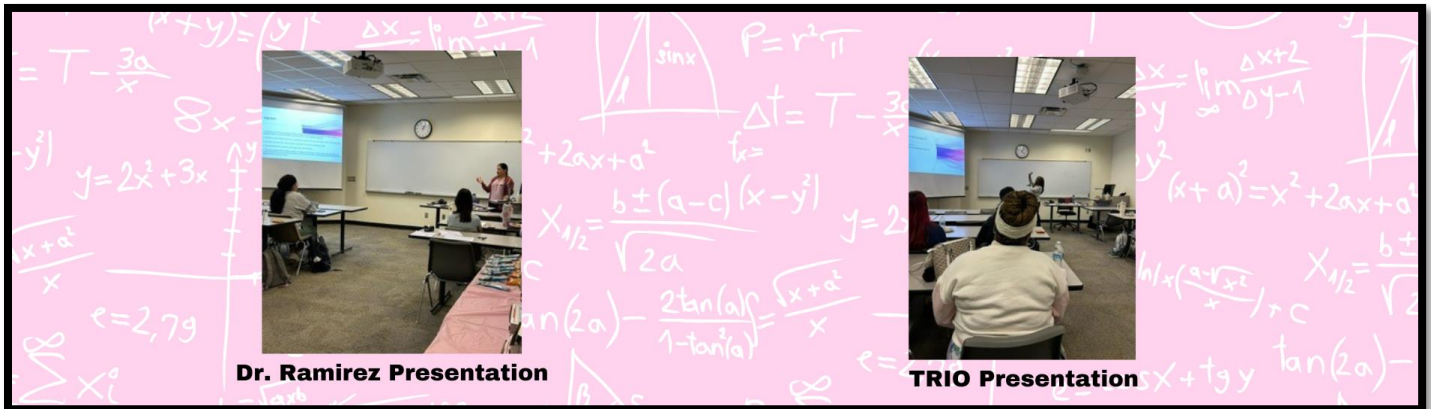


Club Members (10 in Total)

During the first meeting, the club participants got to know each other and shared ideas for the next meeting activities. Students were enthusiastic about being part of the club and being able to get math help from a place where they feel comfortable asking math questions and helping their peers.

The club will be having their second meeting on the last week of April to determine the activities for the next academic year, fill out leadership positions, and have a *Final Exam Preparation Day*.

Girls Discovering Math Club participants had a first meeting full of positivity, engagement, and creating a community centered around mathematics.



Dr. Ramirez Presentation

TRIO Presentation



CATCH THE NEXT

Thinking About Your 2024 Tax Deductible Gift

Consider giving to Catch the Next so we can continue to fulfill our mission of empowering faculty, staff, and institutions to increase the educational attainment of Latinos and other underserved communities in order to close higher education equity and opportunity gaps.

Send donations to

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San Antonio, TX 78258

To sign up as a monthly donor,
Call 203-508-3129 or email maria.chavez@catchthenext.org
Visit <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1217887>
to make an online donation

Ascender News



The Valley Promise is a South Texas College last-dollar initiative to provide students an affordable education toward an associate degree. With the help of STC supporters and community partners, this program will scale up and eventually provide all Rio Grande Valley students with a free education.

OVERVIEW/How STC Helps

The Valley Promise is a South Texas College last-dollar initiative to provide students an affordable education toward an associate degree. With the help of STC supporters and community partners, this program will scale up over five years and eventually provide all Rio Grande Valley students with a free education.

STC and its statewide and local partners understand that a well-educated workforce is key to the Valley's future prosperity. All are committed to ending poverty, strengthening the economy and meeting the workforce demands of the region by helping more student's complete college and get the career skills needed to hold high-paying, high-demand jobs.



On April 3, 2024, the atmosphere at South Texas College Starr County Campus was charged with inspiration and motivation as the Girls Discovering Math Club welcomed a very special guest: Dr. Cervantes. Dr. Cervantes's story left the attendees starstruck, captivated by her journey and the challenges she overcame to achieve her dreams. Her willingness to share her experiences with vulnerability and authenticity resonated deeply with everyone present, leaving a lasting impression on each participant. Dr. Cervantes's story served as a powerful reminder of the importance of perseverance, resilience, and determination in the pursuit of one's career aspirations. As the meeting concluded, attendees left feeling empowered and energized, ready to embark on their own paths with renewed enthusiasm. The Girls Discovering Math program extends its heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Cervantes for her willingness to share her story and inspire the next generation of mathematicians and professionals.



The ASCENDERS at Palo Alto College continue to shine brightly, exemplifying the essence of camaraderie and support within their tight-knit community. On April 8, their treasurer, Melanie Trujillo, showcased her talents and dedication at the "Beauty Industry Social Event," where she collaborated with fellow CTN member, Alisha, to craft a stunning hairstyle that captured the essence of creativity and collaboration. Their seamless teamwork not only demonstrated their individual skills but also highlighted the power of collective effort in achieving shared goals. Witnessing students uplift and empower one another in pursuit of their passions is truly heartwarming and reaffirms the inclusive and supportive ethos that defines the ASCENDERS. A resounding chorus of appreciation and admiration echoes throughout the campus as Melanie is celebrated for her unwavering commitment and remarkable talent. Her presence and contributions serve as an inspiration to all, embodying the spirit of unity and excellence that permeates through the ASCENDERS community. Melanie, your dedication and enthusiasm uplift us all, and we are profoundly grateful for your continued efforts in making Palo Alto College a place where every student feels valued and supported.





A momentous occasion at Palo Alto College as the ASCENDERS, a group of dedicated student leaders, were honored for their tireless efforts throughout the academic year. Amidst a flurry of excitement and pride, CTN students, the backbone of this vibrant community, took center stage to receive their well-deserved awards.

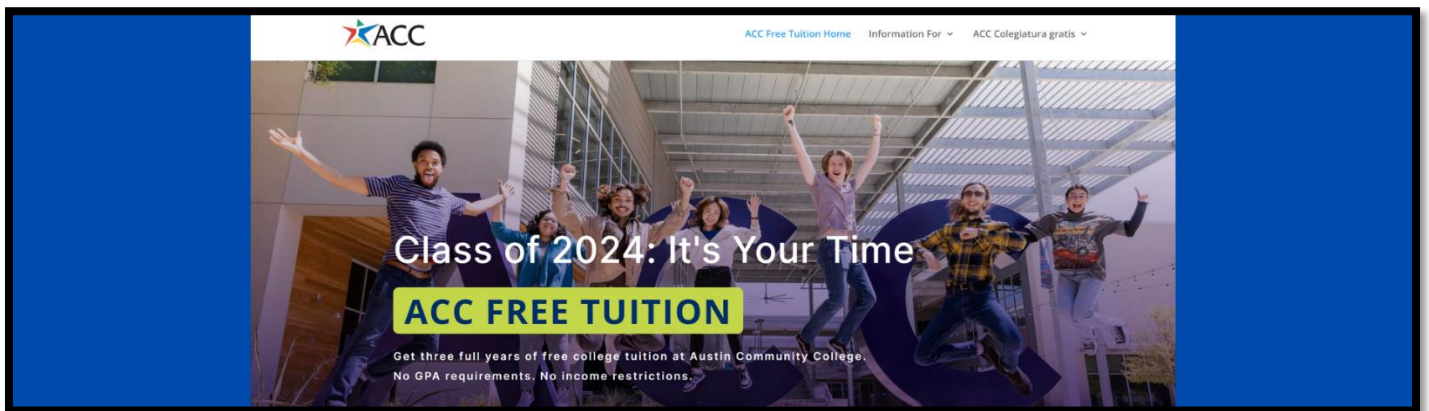


Their achievements not only reflected their individual dedication but also underscored the collective spirit of excellence that thrives within the college's corridors. As the ceremony unfolded, CTN advisors radiated with pride, witnessing the culmination of their students' hard work and commitment. Among the shining stars of the event was Angelica Juarez, whose exceptional leadership illuminated the path for others to follow.



Her unwavering dedication, coupled with her passion for fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, exemplifies the very essence of the ASCENDERS. With each accolade bestowed upon these remarkable individuals, the entire campus community resonated with a sense of admiration and appreciation for their

contributions. Indeed, the ASCENDERS at Palo Alto College serve as beacons of inspiration, reminding us all of the transformative power of perseverance, leadership, and camaraderie within the realm of higher education.



"WHAT IS ACC FREE TUITION?"

The ACC Free Tuition pilot program eliminates the cost of tuition and general fees at Austin Community College.

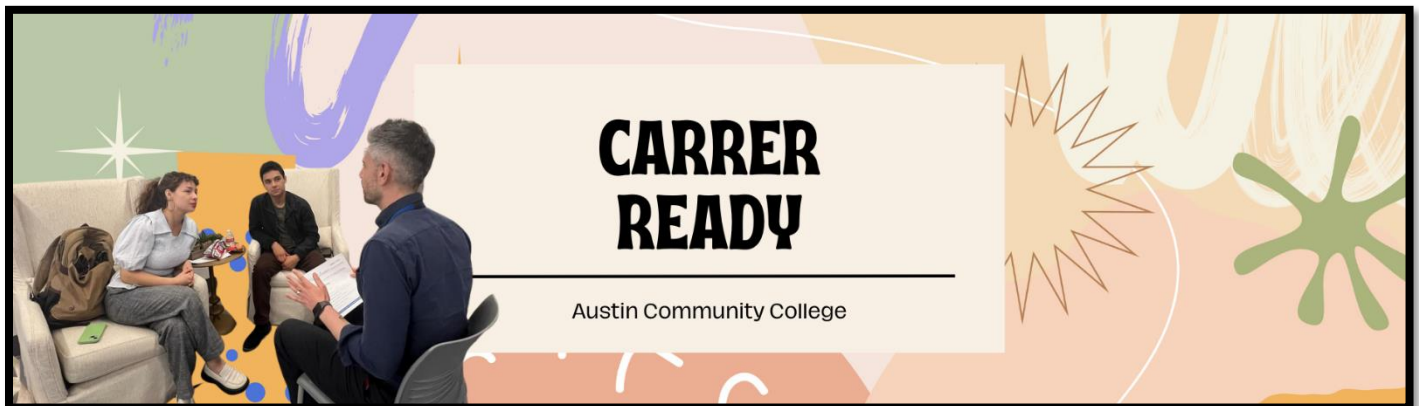
It starts with the class of 2024 and will continue over the next five years for future classes of high school graduates and GED® completers who live in the ACC service area. Removing the up-front costs of college means you can feel comfortable about investing in your future and go to school full-time, reaching your full potential faster.

Students with ACC Free Tuition can also apply for scholarships, grants, and loans for everyday expenses, like housing, groceries, and transportation. "

[Learn More](#)



Thank you to El Centro - Latin American Cultural Center at Austin Community College for organizing and hosting 'Cafecito con Morty Ortega!' This event provided a unique and enriching opportunity for members of the ACC ASCENDER Club to come together and delve into the captivating stories of our outstanding staff members. As participants enjoyed their coffee, they were treated to a wealth of personal narratives and insights shared by Morty Ortega. The event fostered a sense of connection and camaraderie, allowing attendees to gain a deeper appreciation for the diverse backgrounds and experiences that enrich our campus community. El Centro's initiative in organizing such events highlights its commitment to promoting cultural awareness, inclusivity, and meaningful dialogue within the ACC community. ACC's Ascender students extend a heartfelt appreciation to El Centro for orchestrating the memorable and enlightening experience.



We extend our sincere appreciation to Career Ready at Austin Community College (ACC) for partnering with us to offer Mock Interviews for ASCENDER students. This collaboration represents a significant step in equipping our students with essential skills for their future endeavors. The Mock Interviews provide invaluable opportunities for students to refine their interview techniques and communication skills in a supportive environment. Through this partnership, students gain practical experience and readiness for the job market. We are grateful for Career Ready's dedication to student success and their commitment to providing impactful resources for ASCENDER students' professional development.



Congratulations, Elisha, on being named Student Volunteer of the Year! Her dedication and commitment to service are truly commendable, and ACC ASCENDERS are immensely proud of her accomplishments. This recognition is a testament of Elisha's passion for making a positive impact in the community and exemplifies the spirit of generosity and kindness that defines ASCENDERS at ACC. Her contributions have not only enriched the lives of those around her but have also inspired others to follow in her footsteps. Her outstanding leadership and embodying of values of service and compassion are an example to others. Elisha's efforts serve as a shining example of the incredible impact that ASCENDERS can have, and ACC ASCENDERS are privileged to celebrate her well-deserved achievement. Keep shining bright, Elisha!



The recent accolades bestowed upon 12 Riverbats with the prestigious THRIVE Award serving as a testament to the exceptional talent and dedication within the ACC community. Among these deserving recipients, it fills the

ACC ASCENDERS with immense pride to announce that three ASCENDER students, Crystal, Vianca, and Elisha, were rightfully recognized for their outstanding achievements and contributions. Their remarkable accomplishments not only reflect their individual perseverance and commitment but also highlight the impactful role that ASCENDER students play within the ACC family. As the celebration for their success continues, it's heartening to witness the strong presence of ASCENDERS among the broader ACC community, reaffirming their collective commitment to support, uplift, and empower one another. Together, as a united force, they continue to soar to greater heights, inspiring one another to thrive and succeed in our academic pursuits and beyond. Felicidades to Crystal, Vianca, Elisha, and all the Riverbats who exemplify the spirit of excellence and resilience within our vibrant community.

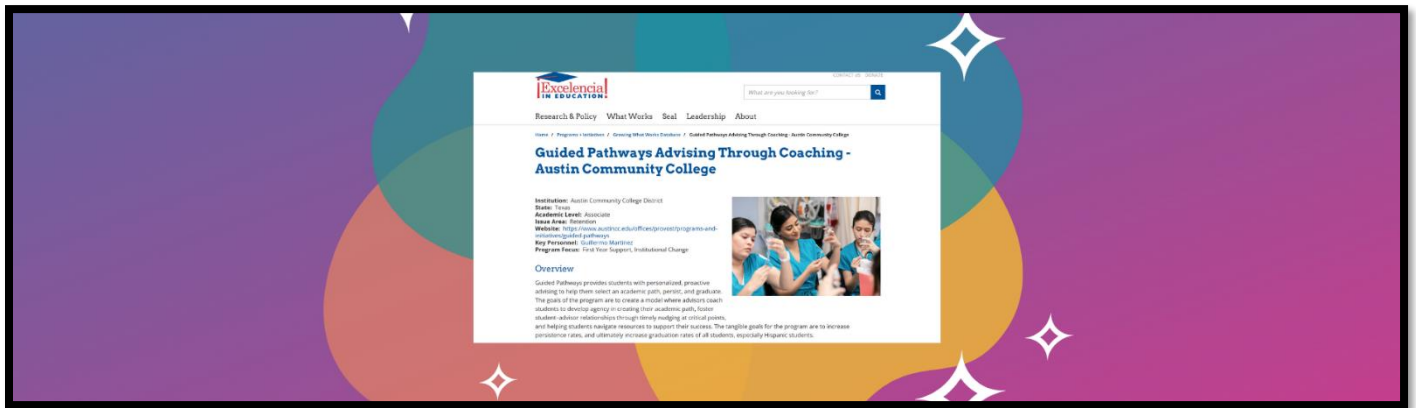


Austin Community College ASCENDERS are thrilled to extend an invitation to everyone for the ASCENDER Catch the Next closing ceremony, celebrating the achievements of the 2023-2024 Cohort as they complete their first year of college. This event serves as a poignant tribute to the dedication and hard work of our students, highlighting their remarkable accomplishments and milestones.

ACC ASCENDERS warmly invite you to join in commemorating this special occasion and honoring the journey of our Ascender scholars.

Your presence will make this celebration even more meaningful as everyone comes together to applaud the achievements of students and show support for their continued success.

ACC ASCENDERS look forward to seeing you at the closing ceremony and celebrating the bright futures ahead for our Ascender scholars.



A significant milestone for Austin Community College (ACC) as it was officially included in the esteemed Programs that Work Database curated by Excelencia in Education. This recognition underscores ACC's commitment to promoting educational equity and fostering student success. A notable highlight of ACC's presence in the database is the inclusion of the ASCENDER program, a flagship initiative renowned for its impactful outcomes in supporting underrepresented students. ASCENDER stands as a shining example of ACC's dedication to providing comprehensive support services tailored to the unique needs of diverse student populations. Through mentorship, academic resources, and guidance, ASCENDER has played a pivotal role in empowering students to overcome barriers and achieve their educational goals. The program's recognition in the Programs that Work Database serves as validation of its effectiveness in promoting student success and advancing the mission of ACC to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all. ACC's inclusion in this prestigious database not only acknowledges its exemplary programs but also solidifies its reputation as a trailblazer in higher education.

[Read Full Article Here](#)



Palo Alto College and San Antonio College have been recognized of some of the best places to work in the realm of community colleges. This prestigious accolade was further enhanced by the inclusion of two former colleges, St. Philip's College and Northeast Lakeview College, in the esteemed list of winners. This recognition speaks volumes about the commitment of these institutions to creating supportive and inclusive work environments where faculty and staff can thrive. Palo Alto College and San Antonio College have long been known for their dedication to fostering excellence in education while prioritizing the well-being and professional growth of their

employees. Similarly, St. Philip's College and Northeast Lakeview College have left an indelible mark with their emphasis on cultivating a positive workplace culture and promoting opportunities for career advancement. The acknowledgment of these colleges as the Most Promising Places to Work in Community Colleges, as featured in NISODIRECT, is a testament to their unwavering commitment to excellence in all aspects of academia and administration. Congratulations to all the winners for this well-deserved honor, which serves as a testament to their ongoing dedication to creating vibrant and supportive communities within the realm of higher education.

[Read Full Article Here](#)



Austin Community College (ACC) is extending a warm invitation to local school district administrators to participate in the Vertical Alignment Content Exchange on May 31, 2024, at the ACC Rio Grande Campus from 9 am to 12 pm. This event promises to be an enriching opportunity for educators to collaborate and share insights on various topics aimed at enhancing student learning and success. Among the distinguished presenters is David Rice (ASCENDER instructor), who will be leading a session on Flash Fiction and Critical Reading. Rice brings a wealth of expertise in literature and literacy, offering valuable strategies for engaging students in critical thinking and analysis through the exploration of short fiction. His session promises to be dynamic and thought-provoking, providing administrators with practical tools to foster literacy skills and intellectual curiosity among their students. ACC is excited to welcome David Rice and all attendees for a morning of meaningful dialogue and professional development.

CTN News



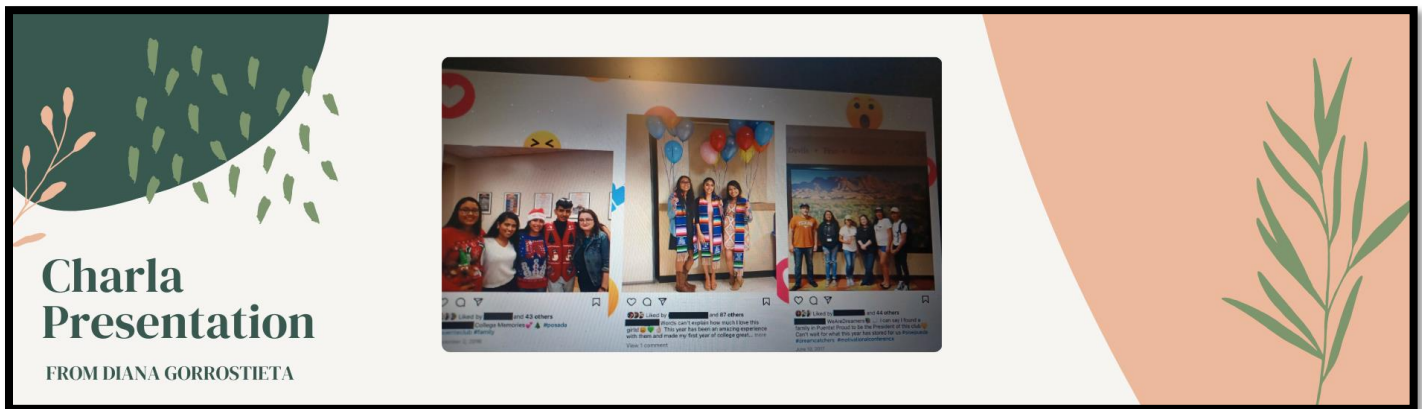
As the Catch The Next (CTN) team, our commitment to the well-being of ASCENDER students, faculty, and staff extends to providing comprehensive support for stress relief, especially during April, Stress Awareness Month. We recognize that stress is a common experience for many and we aim to empower individuals with practical strategies to manage and alleviate stress effectively. To facilitate stress relief, the CTN team has included a variety of initiatives and activities tailored to the diverse needs of ASCENDER members.

These may include:

1. ****Mindfulness Sessions****: Hosting guided mindfulness meditation sessions or yoga classes to help participants cultivate present moment awareness, reduce stress, and promote relaxation.
2. ****Stress Management Workshops****: Offering workshops that provide evidence-based strategies for coping with stress, such as time management techniques, assertive communication skills, and stress-reduction exercises.
3. ****Physical Activity Programs****: Encouraging participation in physical activities like group walks, dance sessions, or sports tournaments, which have been shown to improve mood and reduce stress levels.
4. ****Creative Expression Opportunities****: Providing outlets for creative expression through art therapy sessions, writing workshops, or music performances, allowing individuals to channel their emotions and reduce tension.
5. ****Peer Support Groups****: Facilitating peer-led support groups where ASCENDER members can share experiences, offer mutual support, and exchange coping strategies in a safe and supportive environment.
6. ****Access to Mental Health Resources****: Collaborating with counseling services or mental health professionals to offer confidential support, counseling sessions, or referrals for individuals experiencing significant stress or mental health concerns.
7. ****Promotion of Self-Care Practices****: Educating the ASCENDER community about the importance of self-care practices, such as adequate sleep, healthy nutrition, regular exercise, and setting boundaries to prevent burnout.

During Stress Awareness Month, the CTN team amplifies these efforts by focusing on stress relief methods and mental well-being. By actively promoting stress relief and prioritizing mental health within the ASCENDER community, the CTN team strives to create a culture where individuals feel supported, resilient, and empowered to thrive academically, personally, and professionally. Through collaboration, education, and compassionate support, we endeavor to make stress relief an integral part of the ASCENDER experience, fostering a healthier and more resilient community for all.

[Additional Resources](#)



In the virtual realm of Catch The Next - Ascender's Charla, Diana Gorrostieta emerged as a beacon of inspiration, her story transcending the confines of screens and wires to touch the hearts and minds of students and staff alike. As her image flickered to life on screens across the digital landscape, she embarked on a journey of resilience, determination, and unwavering belief in the power of education.

Diana's virtual presence radiated warmth and authenticity as she shared her personal narrative with those tuning in from all corners of the internet. Through the pixels and wires, her story came to life, painting a vivid picture of triumph over adversity. With each word, Diana transported her audience into her world, a world defined by struggle, sacrifice, and unyielding perseverance.

She spoke candidly of the challenges she faced as a student, navigating unfamiliar terrain with courage and determination. Her honesty and vulnerability resonated deeply with viewers, many of whom could see themselves reflected in her journey. But it was not just the recounting of her hardships that captivated the online audience; it was Diana's infectious passion for education and unwavering optimism that truly left an impression.

Despite the obstacles she encountered, she remained steadfast in her belief that education was the key to unlocking a brighter future, not just for herself, but for countless others. Throughout her presentation, Diana served not only as a speaker but as a mentor, offering words of encouragement and guidance to those who may be facing similar challenges. Her words were a source of comfort and inspiration to students and staff alike, reminding them that no matter how daunting the journey may seem, they were not alone.

As her presentation drew to a close, Diana's impact was palpable. Though separated by screens and miles, she had managed to forge a connection with her audience, leaving them feeling empowered and uplifted. Her story served as a reminder that in the face of adversity, resilience, and unwavering belief in oneself can lead to triumph.

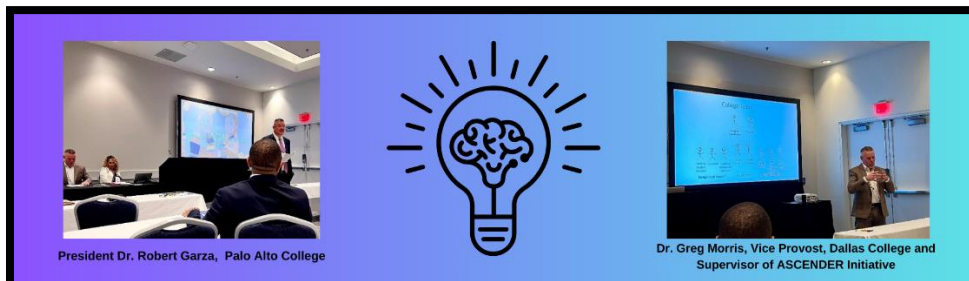
As viewers logged off and returned to their daily lives, they carried with them a newfound sense of hope and determination, inspired by the remarkable woman they had encountered in the digital realm. Though the virtual presentation may have ended, Diana's legacy of inspiration would continue to reverberate long after the screens had gone dark.

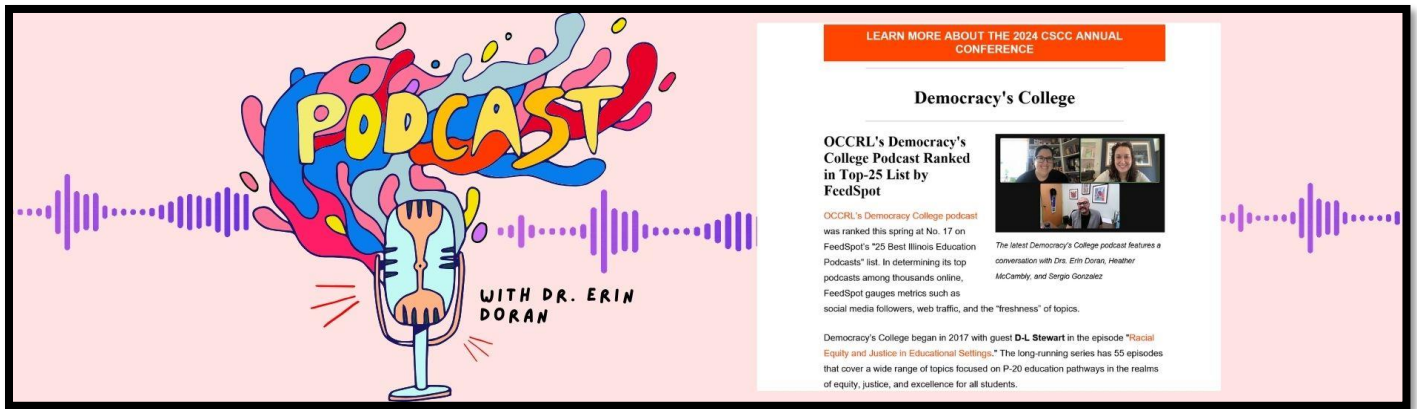


President Dr. Robert Garza, Palo Alto College; Dr. Joan Jaimes, Director of Teaching and Learning Agenda, San Antonio College and ASCENDER Director; Dr. Greg Morris, Vice Provost, Dallas College and Supervisor of ASCENDER Initiative; Dr. Maria Chavez, Catch the Next, Inc.'s Chief Executive Officer, presented at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) on the ASCENDER Partnership on April 8, 2024, in Louisville, Kentucky, at the request of CTN's Peer Mentor, Dr. Kevin Christian from AACC.



The event was memorable in that we could get multiple partners to join us for the event to speak about our partnership and the outstanding work being done across the state of Texas. Still, it was also unique in that before the presentation, there was an “Eclipse party” outside the room where we would present after the eclipse. There were snacks, drinks, and jazz music. Some participants even danced the electric slide and then moved on to the viewing of the eclipse. Our presentation followed, moving us to a new era of growth and development. As Dr. Rodriguez, VP of Business Development at STC, said at the spring seminar, our gathering was more than a celebration of our work; “it is a starting line. Together, we are not just reaching for the stars—building a constellation of success.”

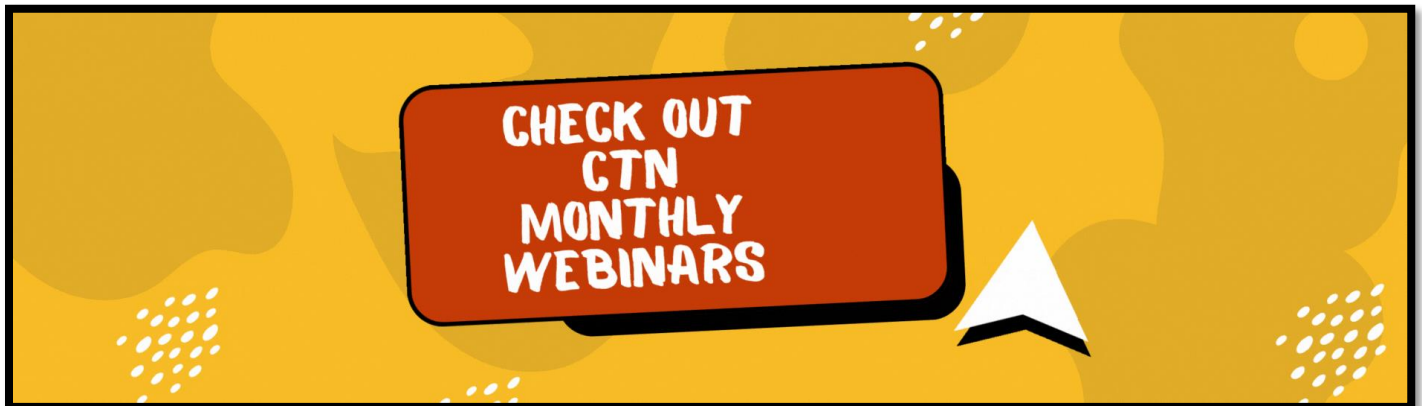




The Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL) employs research and assessment methodologies to enhance educational policies, initiatives, and methodologies, thereby fostering educational equity and excellence throughout the educational continuum from pre-kindergarten to postgraduate levels. This 35-year endeavor operates under the auspices of the Department of Education Policy, Organization & Leadership at the University of Illinois, with a focus on advancing knowledge and practice in educational settings.

The most recent episode of the Democracy's College podcast showcases a dialogue with Dr. Erin Doran, Heather McCambly, and Sergio Gonzalez, who are key figures in this initiative.

[LISTEN TO FULL PODCAST](#)



CTN past webinars are all available on CTN's YouTube Channel. There is a playlist of videos for the 2023-2024 Professional Development Webinar speakers.

If you are interested or have suggestions for webinar speakers (or would like to present on a topic), please email Dr. Erin Doran at erin.doran@catchthenext.org. We are booking the speakers from June 2024 through the next academic year.

[Past Webinar Videos](#)



Carlos Antonio Torre a current Catch The Next Peer Mentor is the visionary behind the 14th annual Latino and Native American Film Festival (LANAFF 14), a vibrant celebration of culture, diversity, and artistic expression. In his recent message, Torre reminds recipients of the limited time remaining to experience this enriching event, which spans 15 days and features a curated selection of 371 films out of an impressive 2,310 submissions. He encourages participation in the festival by providing easy access to the films through a dedicated link, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in the captivating stories and perspectives showcased. Torre's passion for promoting inclusivity and representation shines through as he urges recipients to share the festival's message with their networks, amplifying its impact and reach.

LANAFF 14, curated under Torre's guidance, embodies the commitment of the South Central State University (SCSU) to support the recruitment and retention of Latino and Native American students and faculty. The festival serves as a catalyst for nurturing educational and professional aspirations within these communities by providing a platform for their stories to be told and celebrated. Through a diverse array of films, documentaries, shorts, and animations, LANAFF showcases the rich cultures and artistic expressions of Latino and Native American communities while challenging stereotypes and promoting positive representation.

With a theme centered on "¿Quiénes Somos? Nuestra Interseccionalidad / Who Are We?: Our Intersectionality," LANAFF 14 delves into the multifaceted racial identities within Latino and Native American communities. Through film screenings, panel discussions, Q&A sessions, and networking events, the festival fosters dialogue, introspection, and understanding, encouraging viewers to explore the complexities of identity beyond stereotypes and labels. Torre's dedication to promoting diversity, inclusion, and cultural exchange is evident in every aspect of LANAFF 14, making it a beacon of inspiration and empowerment for audiences worldwide.

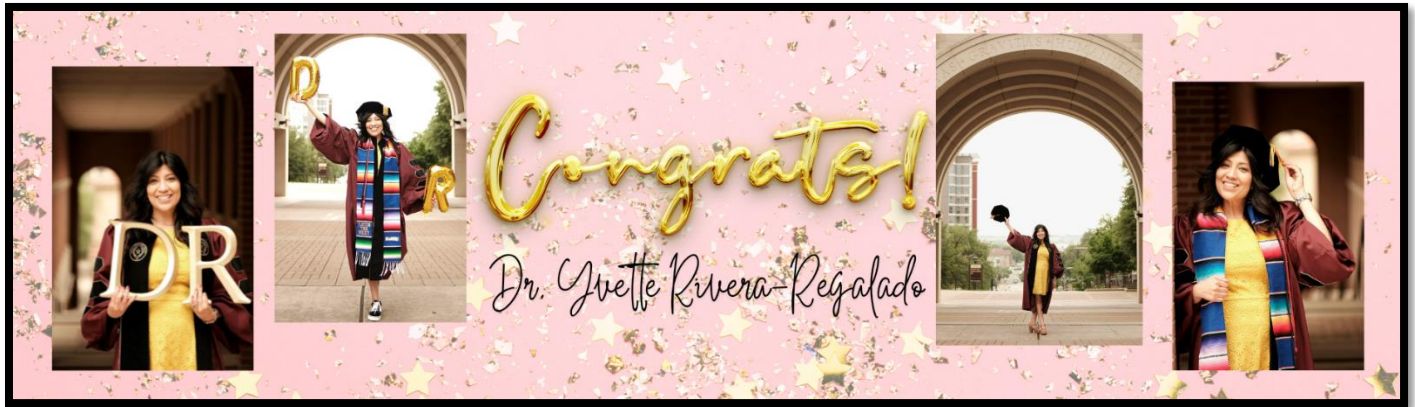
[View Films](#)



Juan Jose Higa, the Finance-Procurement Director at Catch The Next, had the honor of representing Dr. Maria Martha Chavez at PACFest, where he seized the opportunity to attend the 2024 PACFest Partner Reception. Amidst the vibrant festivities and palpable excitement, Juan Jose embraced the chance to reconnect with his PAC familia and soak in the lively atmosphere. Sharing moments of camaraderie with his good friend Vanessa Wilson added an extra layer of joy to the occasion. However, the highlight of the evening came when Juan Jose had the privilege of taking pictures with Erick from Massore and Grupo Control, capturing memories that will undoubtedly be cherished for years to come. Juan Jose's presence at PACFest not only exemplified Catch The Next's commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships but also underscored the importance of community engagement and celebration within the higher education landscape.



Dr. Maria Martha Chavez, the esteemed CEO of Catch The Next, captivated audiences at the University of Connecticut during her presentation at the Connecticut Association of Latinos in Higher Education on Friday, April 26. With her wealth of knowledge and passion for educational equity, Dr. Chavez delivered a compelling address that resonated deeply with attendees. Drawing from her extensive experience in championing student success, she shed light on innovative strategies and best practices for fostering inclusivity and empowerment within higher education. Through engaging anecdotes and insightful analysis, Dr. Chavez underscored the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy and holistic support systems in addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by Latino students. Her visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to educational justice inspired attendees to reflect on their own practices and advocate for transformative change within their respective institutions. Dr. Chavez's presentation not only sparked meaningful dialogue but also ignited a renewed sense of urgency and purpose in advancing equity and access for all students, regardless of background or circumstance. As a trailblazer in the field of higher education, Dr. Chavez continues to pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable future, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of all who have the privilege of hearing her speak.



Congratulations to Dr. Yvette Rivera-Regalado, Director of Curriculum & Instruction at Catch The Next, on the remarkable achievement of completing her doctorate degree! As she prepares to walk the stage on May 10th, we celebrate not only the culmination of her academic journey but also the profound impact she's had on the field of education. Her dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to excellence have been an inspiration to all who have had the privilege of working alongside her. Her tireless efforts in advancing educational equity and empowering students to reach their fullest potential have left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of many. May this achievement be the first of many milestones in her continued success. Wishing her a future filled with endless opportunities to make a difference and continue shaping the landscape of education for generations to come. Congratulations, Dr. Rivera-Regalado!

CTN UPCOMING EVENTS

YOU HAVE
THE POWER
TO HELP



No amount is too small to give.

As we kick off the month of May, we're excited to announce the launch of our donation campaign aimed at providing scholarships to ASCENDER students. Your support can make a profound difference in the lives of deserving students, helping them access higher education and pursue their dreams.

Why Support ASCENDER Scholarships?

Transform Lives: Your donation directly impacts students' access to education, enabling them to break barriers and reach their full potential.

Empower Communities: Investing in education strengthens communities, creating a ripple effect of positive change.

Foster Diversity and Inclusion: Ascender is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of background or circumstance.

How You Can Help:

Donate Today: Your contribution makes a tangible difference in the lives of students. Every dollar counts!

Spread the Word: Share our fundraiser with your network and help us reach more supporters.

Together, we can empower tomorrow's leaders and build a brighter future for all.

[Donate Here Today](#)

CATCH THE NEXT

Donate to CTN'S Laura Rendon Scholarship

Dr. Laura I. Rendon: A Champion for Education and Social Justice

- Tireless advocate for low-income and first-generation students
- Author of "Sentipensante Pedagogy: Educating for Wholeness, Social Justice and Liberation" and numerous influential publications
- Leader in innovative teaching-learning methods that promote equity and inclusion
- Established the Laura Rendon Scholarship at Arizona State University to support Chicano/Latino students
- Featured speaker at universities and conferences nationwide, inspiring educators and students alike

CTN Laura Rendon Award for Highest Contributor to the Laura Rendon Scholarship

The CTN Laura Rendon Award for Highest Contributor to the Laura Rendon Scholarship aims to recognize and honor individuals who demonstrate exceptional commitment to supporting students in their pursuit of higher education. Named in honor of Dr. Laura Rendon, a distinguished scholar and advocate for educational equity, this award celebrates those who embody her values of inclusion, empowerment, and transformative learning.

Eligibility:

Candidates must have contributed to the Laura Rendon Scholarship fund through the provided PayPal fundraiser link.

Open to individuals of all backgrounds and professions who have made a significant donation towards the scholarship.

Criteria for Selection:

The recipient will be selected based on the total contribution made to the Laura Rendon Scholarship fund.

Contributions will be evaluated based on their impact in supporting underrepresented students in accessing higher education opportunities.

Donate here: <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1217887>

[Donate Here Today](https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1217887)



CATCH THE NEXT

PROFESSIONAL MENTORING NETWORK

WEBINAR SERIES

FREE

5/16, 3 PM - 4 PM CST



Recognizing Autistic Community College Student Experiences and Successes

Speaker Bio: Dr. Brett Ranon Nachman serves as an Assistant Professor in Adult and Lifelong Learning at the University of Arkansas. Prior he worked at NC State University as a postdoctoral research scholar at the Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research. He obtained his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis program. Brett's research focuses on autism and disability in higher education, teaching and learning issues, and community college access, equity, and transfer. He serves as the Director of Research for IN ADULT AND LIFELONG College Autism Network, a non-profit organization centered on serving autistic college students via advocacy, research, and training efforts.

DR. BRETT RANON NACHMAN

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN ADULT AND LIFELONG LEARNING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS.



REGISTER NOW



REGISTER TODAY



Overview:

Catch the Next, Inc. understands the transformative power of dialogue and the significance of student engagement in shaping educational experiences. To enhance this connection, the organization has introduced "Charlas," a student conversation series aimed at fostering meaningful discussions and promoting academic success. These sessions serve as a platform for students to share their experiences, challenges, and aspirations, creating a supportive community that empowers individuals on their educational journey.

CATCH THE NEXT

CHARLAS

Real-Talk - Informal Student Conversations 3 pm - 4 pm all dates below

21

FEB

Mental Health 101

This presentation will delve into the importance of mental health and self-care as a community college student. Practical tips and advice for staying mentally well will be shared.

26

MAR

Roberts Rules of Order and Ascender Student Clubs

Attend this session to see how you can create an Ascender club on campus and how to abide by Roberts Rules of Order as a student leader.

4

APR

Importance of Networking and Mentoring

This presentation delves into the transformative impact of networking and mentoring within the context of community college. Recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities that community college students face.

2

MAY

Transfer 101

Geared towards navigating the process of transferring, this presentation, scheduled for May, aims to provide valuable insights and guidance for students. Whether moving between institutions or programs, Transfer 101 seeks to facilitate a smoother transition for students.

UPCOMING STUDENT CHARLAS

May 2, 2024: Transfer 101

Geared towards navigating the process of transferring, this presentation aims to provide valuable insights and guidance for students. Whether moving between institutions or programs, Transfer 101 seeks to facilitate a smoother transition for students.

[REGISTER TODAY: May 2](#)



The team eagerly anticipates receiving your submissions. Gratitude is extended for your unwavering commitment to student success and valuable contributions to the ASCENDER program. We eagerly await the opportunity to review your application and commemorate your accomplishment as the Student, Faculty, or Staff Member of the Month!

[SUBMIT HERE](#)

Student Resources

The following are student professional development opportunities, including scholarships, internships, articles to read and student success opportunities.

If you would like to share an opportunity, please email at stacy.ybarra@catchthenext.org

Thank You,
Stacy Ybarra Evans
Catch The Next

External Student Professional Development Opportunities Student Opportunities

Date	Activity	Activity Description
4/29/2024	Internship	<u>HACU Internship</u> <u>6/28/2024 - Priority Deadline</u> <u>for Fall 2024</u>
4/29/2024	Scholarship	<u>Community Foundations of</u> <u>Texas Scholarship</u>
4/29/2024	Scholarship	<u>TACVB (Tourism majors</u> <u>scholarships)</u>

Website Offers Best Scholarships for Latino Students

Scholarships are a great way to pay for college without the obligation to repay funds. Maximizing scholarship potential can be especially useful for Latino students, who on average received less in institutional grants than their white counterparts in 2016, according to a [statistical brief](#) from UnidosUS.

There are hundreds of organizations that recognize this financial gap and offer scholarships specifically for Latino college students with the aim of making a college education more accessible and affordable. Here's where you can start your search and apply for a few of the best scholarships for Latino students:

<https://www.bankrate.com/loans/student-loans/scholarships-for-latino-students/>

Resources Available for Students and Families to Complete FAFSA

The White House Hispanic Prosperity Initiative has a [resources webpage](#) to help students and families complete their FAFSA form. The Department's Federal Student Aid (FSA) office is urging students to file the FAFSA form to help defray, and in some cases completely cover, the costs of their postsecondary education. FSA has made it easier than ever for students and families to access resources at [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) and via the myStudentAid mobile application using a computer, tablet, or mobile phone.

Organization Offers Resources for Financial Literacy

Annuity.org believes when students learn financial literacy at an early age it helps them to make astute decisions about their personal finances, smart financial behavior leads to financially secure lives. Now, more than ever, is a great time for students to hone in on this skill while they are learning from home. Their site covers things like: Budgeting -Filling out a FAFSA request for college and financially planning for your future and more. Please take a look at our student resource here: www.annuity.org/financial-literacy/stu+dents/

Nonprofit Provides Free Mental Health Support to Children and Teens

[Wonders & Worries](#) is a Texas-based nonprofit that provides free, professional mental health support to children and teens during a parent's serious, physical illness. Parents dealing with a cancer diagnosis, TBI, stroke, heart condition, neurological condition, or other physical illnesses and traumatic injuries often don't know how to talk about their diagnosis and its impact on the family.

Wonders & Worries' free programs ensure children and teens can reach their full potential, despite a parent's serious illness. They do this by leading children through an evidence-based and copyrighted Six-Session Illness Education and Coping Curriculum led by healthcare professionals.

Services are always free and offered in English and Spanish at [5 Texas locations](#) and virtually in the Greater Austin, Greater San Antonio, and Greater Houston areas. They also operate a national [helpline: 844-WE-WONDER \(1-844-939-6633\)](#) available Monday – Thursday 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, where parents can receive a free consultation, from one of our child life specialists, on how to talk with and support kids impacted by adult illness. Additionally, they have several resources available for [professionals](#) and [parents](#) on their website.

Professional Opportunities

The following professional development opportunities highlight Ascender grant and funding opportunities, conference opportunities, and information for theory, research and practice. I encourage you to forward any information that would provide wonderful opportunities to our team or students by emailing me at stacy.ybarra@catchthenext.org.

Thank You,
Stacy Ybarra Evans
Catch The Next

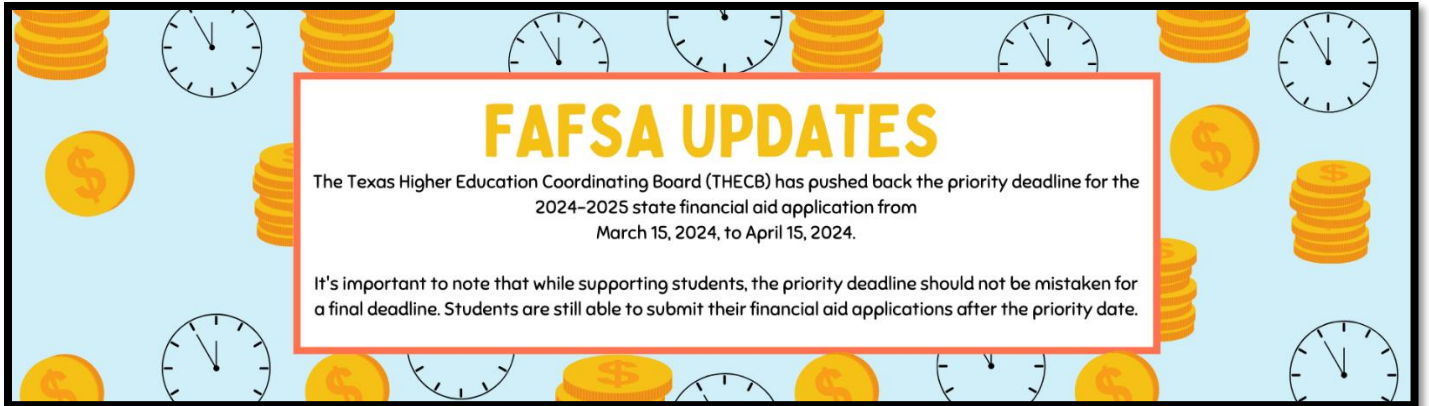
External Professional Development Opportunities Staff Opportunities

Date	Activity	Activity Description
4/29/2024	Tools	<u>CCSSE Professional Development Tools for Faculty</u>
4/29/2024	Conference Proposals	Poster Session Submissions OPEN Let Dr. Chavez know if you get accepted <u>Lilly-Austin Proposals (lillyconferences-tx.com)</u>
4/29/2024	FREE AI Faculty Training	<u>Free AI Faculty Development</u>

Helpful Resources

- [FAFSA Resources](#)
- [FSA ID New Details](#)
- [Quick Start Guide for Financial Aid Application Changes](#)
- [Texas OnCourse Monthly Professional Learning Series](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Releases New Resources on Students with Disabilities](#)
- Today the U.S. Department of Education released a new resource – [a toolkit for the promotion of voter participation for students.](#)
- Article: [Transfers and Progress](#)
- [Texas Workforce Commission](#)
- [IRS Direct File](#)
- My Texas Future - [Resources to plan career and education](#)
- Texas Direct - [Transfer Degree Pathways](#)
- [ImmSchools Inclusivity Poster](#)
- [NCAN FAFSA Tracker](#)
- [2024-25 FAFSA Issue Alerts](#)
- [Texas Public University Guaranteed Tuition Program Directory](#)
- [Get Schooled's Scholarship Finder](#)
- [Texas OnCourse: TASFA Resource Sheet](#)
- [SchoolHouse Connection 24-25 FAFSA: Helping Homeless and Foster Youth](#)
- [uAspire FSA ID Recovery Guide](#)
- [Colleges with New Enrollment Deadlines Spreadsheet](#)
- [FACT SHEET: The U.S. Department of Education Announces New Tools to Tackle Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and Related Forms of Discrimination and Bias](#)
- Leading Safe, Inclusive, and Nondiscriminatory Learning Environments During the War in the Middle East: Colleges and Universities [Watch now on YouTube](#)
- Seeking Citizenship through a Fellowship Program [Apply Here](#)
- [Scholarships For DACA Recipients & Undocumented Students](#)
- 2024 NISOD International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence at Austin, TX on May 25-28, 2024 [Register Here](#)
- [Systems of Support for Multilingual Learners Conference has two components to choose from: In-Person Conference – May 29, 30, & 31 – Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday Hyatt Regency Hotel, New Brunswick OR Video Library Conference – Access starting on June 3rd for 3 months Register Here](#)
- [2024-2025 AAHHE Faculty Fellowship Program \(FFP\) & 2024-2025 AAHHE Graduate Student Fellowship Program \(GSFP\) Application Deadline: Friday, May 31, 2024](#)
- [2024 NCAN Awards of Excellence Nomination Form Deadline: May 31, 2024](#)
- Cambio de Colores 22nd Annual Conference [Conference Dates: June 5–7 Register Here](#)

- Texas Student Leadership Summit 2024 on August 8 - 9, 2024 at The University of Texas at Austin **Deadline:** July 29, 2024 **[Register Here](#)**
- 2025 AAHHE Awards and Books of the Year Awards **Deadline:** September 6, 2024 **[Submit Here](#)**
- WIDA Annual Conference - **Conference Dates:** October 15-18, 2024 **[Register Here](#)**
- La Cosecha Dual Language Conference - **Conference Dates:** November 13-16, 2024 **[Register Here](#)**



FAFSA UPDATES

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has pushed back the priority deadline for the 2024-2025 state financial aid application from March 15, 2024, to April 15, 2024.


It's important to note that while supporting students, the priority deadline should not be mistaken for a final deadline. Students are still able to submit their financial aid applications after the priority date.



2024-2025 ONLINE TASFA IS OPEN!

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board announces the launch of the 2024-2025 online Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). The application can be found by visiting the TASFA landing page, housed on the THECB's main website. For questions, contact Financial Aid Services at 888-311-8881.

[TASFA Landing Page](#)



U.S. Department of Education
@eddept

Learn more about the SAVE Plan & how your federal student loan payment could be as low as \$0 a month: StudentAid.gov/save


#SAVEOnStudentDebt

YOUR FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN PAYMENT COULD BE AS LOW AS \$0/MONTH
with the new SAVE repayment plan.



Apply at StudentAid.gov/save







SAVE
REPAYMENT PLAN

An official campaign from the U.S. Department of Education and non-profit partners.



STUDENT UPDATES

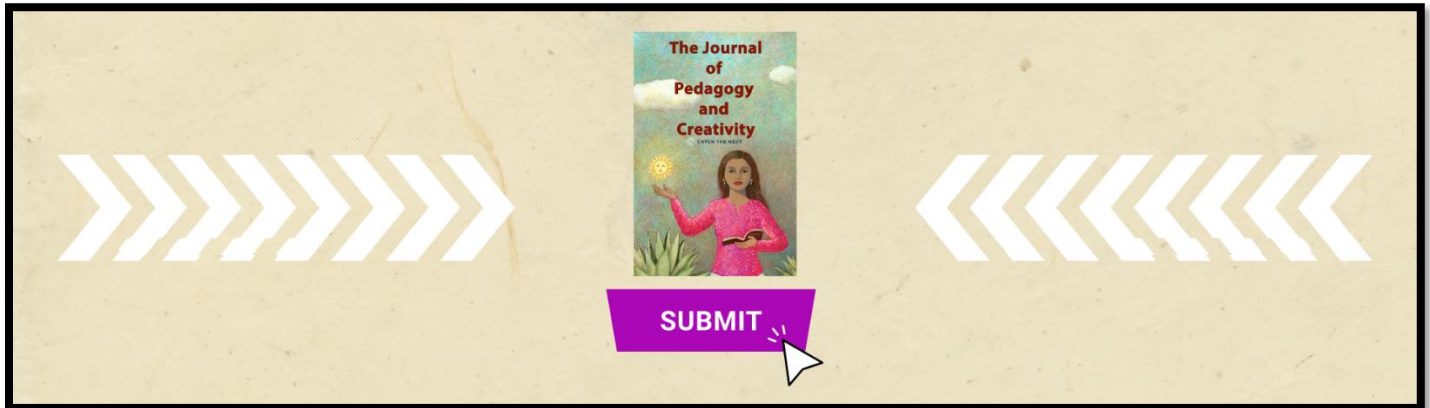
-  **Attention students! Exciting updates just in!**
-  **Explore Texas graduate earnings by degree level with the new TxCAN Dashboard! Get valuable insights into long-term financial outcomes based on different educational pathways and demographics. Check it out now!**
-  **Having trouble with the FAFSA form? Good news! The US Department of Education has fixed issues for individuals without Social Security numbers. Learn more about the updates and get tips for smooth navigation in our latest blog post.**
-  **Need help with financial aid? TxCAN is here for you! We've added more sessions to our Virtual Financial Aid Training Schedule to provide extra support. Register now before spots fill up!**
-  **Mark your calendars for upcoming webinars covering college advising, financial aid, and more! Gain valuable insights to support your college journey.**
-  **Don't miss out on scholarship opportunities! Apply now for programs like the College Prep Scholars Program and the Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages LLC Scholarship. Secure your future today!**



HSI Lists: 2022-23

600 HSIs	Hispanic-Serving Institutions
412 eHSIs	Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions
252 gHSIs	Hispanic-Serving Institutions with Graduate Programs

Journal of Pedagogy and Creativity



We are eager to share our latest journal with you. Please click the following link to explore the content and gain valuable insights: <https://catchthenext.wpengine.com/journal-of-pedagogy-and-creativity/>. Thank you for your interest.

For the next issue of *The Journal of Ideas and Pedagogy*, we invite submissions from our campus partners who want to share their pedagogical knowledge, lived experiences, and build community. As an organization, Catch the Next has steadfastly believed that our community is a treasure trove of knowledge, innovation, and reflective practice. This journal was created as a space to share best practices, innovative teaching strategies, and ideas for supporting the students we serve. As such, we are interested in pieces that consider the following questions:

- What classroom-level reforms has my college enacted in the last 5 years? How have I responded to them?
-
- What reforms have changed the delivery format of my classes (e.g., combining or condensing course sequences, reducing the number of course offerings, moving content into labs or online modules)?
- What professional development was I provided or did I participate in to adapt to changing policy?
- What has been successful for me in adapting to change? On the flip side, what has not worked?
- Who are my students and how have their needs changed in the last 5 years? How am I responding to those changes?

Pieces that consider other questions are welcome as well.

When possible, we encourage collaborations in the writing process. Faculty members may consult with their Institutional Research and Effectiveness partners to provide anonymized data to provide some deeper context about the effectiveness of a policy. For faculty who are working with a learning community or paired course set-up, we invite both faculty to present their perspectives. We also invite college teams (e.g., departments, college teams involved in implementing the Ascender model, and so forth).

We also welcome doctoral students and scholars who are interested in research on the community college sector and student success initiatives in Texas as they relate to gateway courses (e.g., developmental education,

Freshman Composition, Learning Frameworks, and College Algebra). **Mentoring in the Writing Process is Available!** For first-time authors, writing for publication can be a daunting experience. This experience is meant to be positive and developmental. Please know that this issue's editor, Dr. Erin Doran, is committed to working with you to craft a piece that is of publishable quality.

[Additional Information](#)

Free Learning Modules Available from Texas OnCourse Academy

The Academy has over 30 learning modules on endorsements, graduation plans, career pathways, entrance exams, college applications, military academies, financial aid, and more. All these free modules are available remotely, and you can review them at your own pace. The Academy is also certified to offer continuing professional education (CPE) credit. Counselors and advisers can earn up to 31 CPE credits by completing badges in the Texas OnCourse Academy.

Explore

NSF Offers Funding Opportunities to HSIs

The National Science Foundation is offering funding to HSIs for three projects:

- **Planning or Pilot Projects (PPP) track:** An eligible institution cannot have more than two active PPP awards. A new PPP proposal can be submitted by an institution with two active PPP awards if at least one of the awards has had its final report submitted before the submission deadline for HSI proposals. Institutions with an active HSI Track 1: Building Capacity award under the previous solicitations 18-524 and 19-540 are not eligible to submit PPP proposals or receive a PPP award until the prior HSI award's final report is submitted.
- **Implementation and Evaluation Projects (IEP) track:** An eligible institution cannot have more than two active IEP awards. A new IEP proposal can be submitted by an institution with two active IEP awards if at least one of the awards has had its final report submitted prior to the HSI proposal submission deadline. A collaborative award counts as an HSI IEP award for all institutions. For institutions with a current Track 1: Building Capacity award under the previous solicitations 18-524 and 19-540, each award is considered an IEP award for the purpose of calculating active awards for this track.
- **Institutional Transformation Projects (ITP) track:** One submission per institution is allowed. Previous ITP awardees are not eligible to submit a proposal in the ITP track.

For information go to: <https://beta.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/improving-undergraduate-stem-education-hispanic-serving-institutions-hsi>



Catch the Next, Inc. was founded in 2009 by John Sicheloff who sought to identify and scale-up effective models for closing the opportunity gap for Latino students in the United States. His vision is what brought Catch the Next into being, and what continues to motivate us in the valuable work of empowering underrepresented students, in acknowledging that their stories matter and that they can write their future chapters.

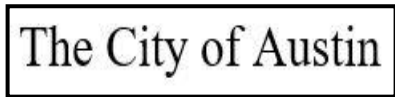
In support of his vision and our mission to empower faculty, staff, and institutions to increase the educational attainment of Latinos and other underserved communities in order to close higher education equity and opportunity gaps, we encourage you to make a commitment of support through a donation.

Donate here: <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1217887>

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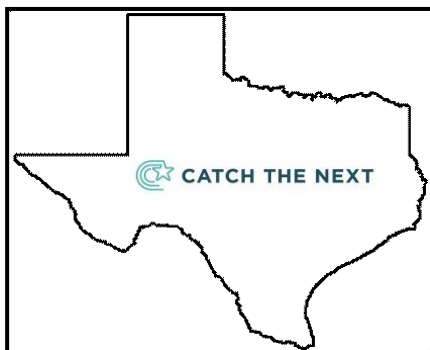
About Our Newsletter

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