



CATCH THE NEXT
PROFESSIONAL MENTORING NETWORK™

A Legacy in Motion

Ten Years of CTN
Leadership Fellows
Transforming Higher Education

IMPACT REPORT



.Dedication

Catch the Next, Inc. (CTN) dedicates this report to the pioneers whose vision, leadership, and love have shaped our mission to transform higher education.

This Impact Report is lovingly dedicated to the seventy-six Leadership Fellows whose courage, brilliance, and unwavering commitment have shaped a decade of transformative leadership across higher education.

You are more than participants in a program—you are architects of opportunity, champions of *cariño*, and stewards of institutional change. Your work has resonated across classrooms, campuses, and communities, leaving a lasting legacy of validation, hope, and possibility.

To the mentors, supervisors, and CTN staff who have nurtured this journey: thank you for believing in the power of collective leadership and for modeling the values we hold dear—respect, reflection, and radical care.

As we celebrate this milestone, we honor not just the past ten years, but the future you continue to build. May this manual serve as a testament to your impact and an invitation to keep leading boldly.

With deepest gratitude,

Catch the Next, Inc.

Introduction: A Decade of Collective Impact

For over ten years, CTN Leadership Fellows have been at the forefront of educational transformation—leading with purpose and heart. This impact report celebrates their journey and the powerful ripple effects of their work across Texas and beyond.

From classrooms to communities, Fellows have created spaces where student voice is honored, culturally affirming practices are embraced, and leadership is rooted in care. They’ve facilitated hundreds of workshops, mentored new educators, authored tools and scholarship, and led statewide initiatives that advance opportunity and belonging.

Their efforts have not only strengthened CTN’s mission—they’ve woven it into the fabric of higher education. This report highlights the milestones, stories, and systems shifted by Fellows who believe in the power of collective action to change lives.

Together, they remind us: when leadership is shared, courageous, and community-rooted, transformation is not only possible—it’s inevitable.

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SECTION I

CATCH THE NEXT, INC. OVERVIEW

Catch the Next, Inc. was founded in 2009 by John Siceloff, Mimi Evans, and Ruben Martinez with a bold and compassionate vision: to empower young people as agents of change within their families, communities, and educational institutions.



John Siceloff

The organization was established to:

1.) Empower Youth for Transformative Impact

CTN’s programs are designed to elevate self-esteem, cultivate leadership, and foster a deep sense of agency among students. By promoting academic achievement, skill development, and civic engagement, CTN helps prevent dropout, encourages college enrollment, and nurtures community-rooted leadership. The goal is to equip students not only to succeed academically but to lead with purpose and responsibility.

2.) Challenge and Transform Cultural Stereotypes about ethnicity, culture, and civic engagement—especially those held by educators and the general public. Through culturally affirming frameworks and inclusive programming, CTN fosters a more profound understanding, promotes equity, and cultivates respect for diverse identities and lived experiences.

LAUNCHING THE COLLEGE SUCCESS PROGRAM: ASCENDER’S FOUNDING STORY

With the founding purpose of Catch the Next, Inc. firmly rooted in youth empowerment and cultural affirmation, co-founder **John Siceloff** sought to create a college success program that would promote academic achievement and community leadership. Despite early efforts, the search for someone to lead this initiative proved challenging—until **Maria Chavez** learned of the vision, reached out, and joined the team in **2011**.

Maria’s leadership marked a turning point. She spearheaded the **recruitment of partner colleges** and led the **planning and implementation** of what would become the **Catch the Next College**

Success Program, now known as **ASCENDER**. The program officially launched in **Fall 2012**, grounded in the belief that **all students can succeed** when supported by validating instruction, culturally responsive pedagogy, and a strong sense of belonging.

CTN’s initial college partners—**El Paso Community College, Palo Alto College, and South Texas College**—formed the foundation of the ASCENDER network. Early partnerships with **PBS Teacher Online** and **Dr. Suzanne Morales-Vale** at the **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)** provided critical support. THECB awarded original funding to the founding colleges, enabling the program’s launch and early growth.

To strengthen its framework and expand professional development capacity, CTN later partnered with the **Puente Project of California**. This collaboration offered a proven model for culturally affirming instruction and helped train Texas-based teams, laying the groundwork for a statewide movement in opportunity-driven education.

ASCENDER PROGRAM TIMELINE

A Decade of Growth and Partnership

Celebrating milestones that shaped opportunity-driven education across Texas and beyond

Year Milestone

2009 Catch the Next, Inc., founded by John Siceloff, Mimi Evans, and Dr. Rubén Martínez.

2011 Dr. Maria Martha Chavez-Brummel joins CTN to lead the development of college success programs.

2012 ASCENDER officially launches at El Paso, Palo Alto, and South Texas College
Strategic partnerships formed with PBS Teacher Online and THECB (Dr. Suzanne Morales-Vale)

The Puente Project of California joins to support professional development.

2014 CTN Leadership Fellows Program launches with support from THECB
Lee College and Houston Community College join the CTN partnership.

2015 CTN launches the Transfer Motivational Conference
Austin Community College joins the CTN network.

2016 Lone Star College, Eastfield College, and the University of North Texas at Dallas join.
CTN explores “Dream Catchers” as a potential name change
CTN introduces Customized Coaching Options for colleges

2017 CTN rebrands its flagship program as **ASCENDER**

2018 San Antonio College joins the partnership.
CTN launches the **Transformative Teaching Institute (TTI)**, expanding to 4-year institutions

2019 CTN publishes the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Ideas and Pedagogy*

2022 Dallas College joins the CTN partnership.

2024 CTN launches the **Virtual Empoderate Leadership Academy for Youth**

2025 CTN launches **TTI Online**, expanding access to transformative pedagogy

ORIGINS OF THE CTN LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM

In **2014**, with support from the **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)**, Catch the Next launched its **Train-the-Trainer initiative**, welcoming the first cohort of **Leadership Fellows**. This marked a pivotal moment in CTN's evolution—transforming a statewide college success movement into a leadership development engine rooted in equal opportunity, collaboration, and cultural affirmation.

The **CTN Leadership Fellows Program** is a dynamic, customized learning experience that immerses participants in the culture, policies, and strategic decision-making processes of Catch the Next. Fellows engage deeply with the **ASCENDER framework**, gaining insight into its statewide implementation and contributing to CTN's mission as a catalyst for educational transformation.

Designed for both emerging and established leaders, the program equips Fellows to navigate real-world challenges in higher education while advancing the capacity-building goals of CTN and its partner institutions across Texas and beyond. Grounded in the belief that **effective leadership drives organizational learning and innovation**, CTN cultivates leaders who foster environments of growth, reflection, and continuous improvement.

Organizational learning—the process of creating, retaining, and transferring knowledge—is crucial for sustaining progress and preventing the erosion of institutional knowledge. In today's knowledge-based economy, this learning culture is a strategic advantage that enables organizations to adapt, evolve, and lead with purpose (*Oxford Review, 2015*).

A DEVELOPMENT TRACK FOR CAMPUS-BASED PRACTITIONERS

The Leadership Fellows Program offers a structured development track for campus-based practitioners, equipping them with the tools and insights to lead with **integrity, inclusiveness, and vision**. Fellows explore foundational leadership values—**respect, community, professional development, and responsible stewardship**—and are encouraged to model a leadership code rooted in **collaboration, empowerment, and equity**.

CTN Leadership Fellows are more than participants—they are **catalysts for change**. By fostering a transformative culture of learning, Fellows enable CTN and its partners to reach new heights and cultivate teams that achieve extraordinary outcomes. Over the past decade, Fellows have:

- Co-created branded resources and statewide initiatives.
- Facilitated retreats and professional development sessions.
- Authored journal articles and scholarly publications
- Mentored the next generation of equity-driven educators.
- Served as ambassadors for CTN's mission across urban and rural communities.

Over the past ten years, the Leadership Fellows Program has cultivated a vibrant network of seventy-six **opportunity-driven educators** committed to transforming higher education through mentorship, validation, and culturally affirming leadership.

These fellows represent a powerful cross-section of Texas colleges, each bringing unique community wisdom, institutional insight, and student-centered innovation:

Represented Institutions:

El Paso Community College
South Texas College
Palo Alto College
Austin Community College
Houston Community College
Southwest Texas College
San Antonio College
Dallas College

Today, the program stands as a testament to what’s possible when leadership is **grounded in purpose, nurtured through mentorship, and sustained by collective care.**

CTN LEADERSHIP FELLOWS REFLECTIONS

“I firmly believe that the CTN Leadership Fellow program will continue to provide me with the opportunity to continue growing as a lifelong learner, and it will also continue to equip me to assist students in becoming and sustaining their authentic selves. CTN has provided me with such broad and valuable perspectives as a participant, and becoming a fellow allows me to make a sustainable impact as a student and academic partner. All of this gain would be under the leadership of Drs. Alaniz and Chavez, whom I admire greatly.”

“The chance to support a network of leaders committed to educational justice excites me in particular. I intend to improve my capacity to connect research and practice, making sure that students from various backgrounds have the tools, direction, and support they require to fulfill their academic and career goals.”

“... I am passionate about enhancing student learning experiences and ensuring they receive the support needed to succeed. Becoming a Catch the Next Leadership Fellow has enabled me to contribute to the development and customization of the mathematics track, tailoring it to meet the diverse needs of our students better.”

“This program enables me to refine my leadership skills and also empowers me to foster leadership among colleagues across multiple campuses. By collaborating with other educators and sharing best practices, I aim to make a lasting impact on student success and educational equity. I am excited about the possibilities of engaging in meaningful professional development, building strong networks, and contributing to Catch the Next’s mission of creating a just world.”

ABOUT THE IMPACT REPORT

This report reflects the collective voice and vision of the CTN Leadership Fellows community. In November 2024, Catch the Next distributed an 18-question survey via Zoho to all active Fellows, inviting them to share their experiences, motivations, and insights. The goal was to deepen our understanding of who the Fellows are—not just as individual educators and leaders, but as a dynamic cohort shaping equity-driven change across Texas and beyond.

The survey explored three key dimensions:

- **Identity and Background:** Who are our Fellows, and what lived experiences do they bring to the work?
- **Motivations and Purpose:** What inspired them to become CTN Leadership Fellows?
- **Vision for Growth:** What recommendations do they offer to strengthen CTN’s impact and expand its reach?

A total of **45 Fellows** responded, offering rich reflections and actionable feedback. Their responses have been thoughtfully compiled and analyzed, and the findings are presented throughout this manual to inform strategic planning, professional development, and future programming.

This report is more than a snapshot—it is a testament to the power of collective leadership, shared purpose, and the ongoing journey toward educational transformation.



SECTION 2

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Over the past decade, CTN Leadership Fellows have served as catalysts for change, igniting equity-driven transformations across campuses, communities, and statewide systems. Their collective efforts have not only advanced CTN’s mission but have embedded it into the very fabric of higher education in Texas.

- **Facilitating over 100 professional development workshops,** Fellows have created spaces of validation, inquiry, and growth—empowering educators to center student voice and culturally affirming pedagogy in their practice.
- Through **authored journal articles, toolkits, and resource guides,** Fellows have amplified resistance pedagogy and the lived experiences of underserved students, contributing to a growing body of scholarship rooted in justice and belonging.

- By **mentoring hundreds of new faculty and advisors**, Fellows have ensured that CTN’s mission is not just taught—but lived—through onboarding, leadership development, and institutional culture.
- Fellows have **led statewide initiatives** focused on equal opportunity, rural outreach, and curriculum transformation, positioning CTN as a thought leader in culturally responsive education.
- Their work has helped **secure local partnerships and sponsorships**, expanding CTN’s reach, deepening its sustainability, and building bridges between colleges and communities.
- As **ambassadors, retreat facilitators, and journal editors**, Fellows have shaped CTN’s identity, stewarded its legacy, and envisioned its future—modeling leadership that is collaborative, courageous, and community-rooted.

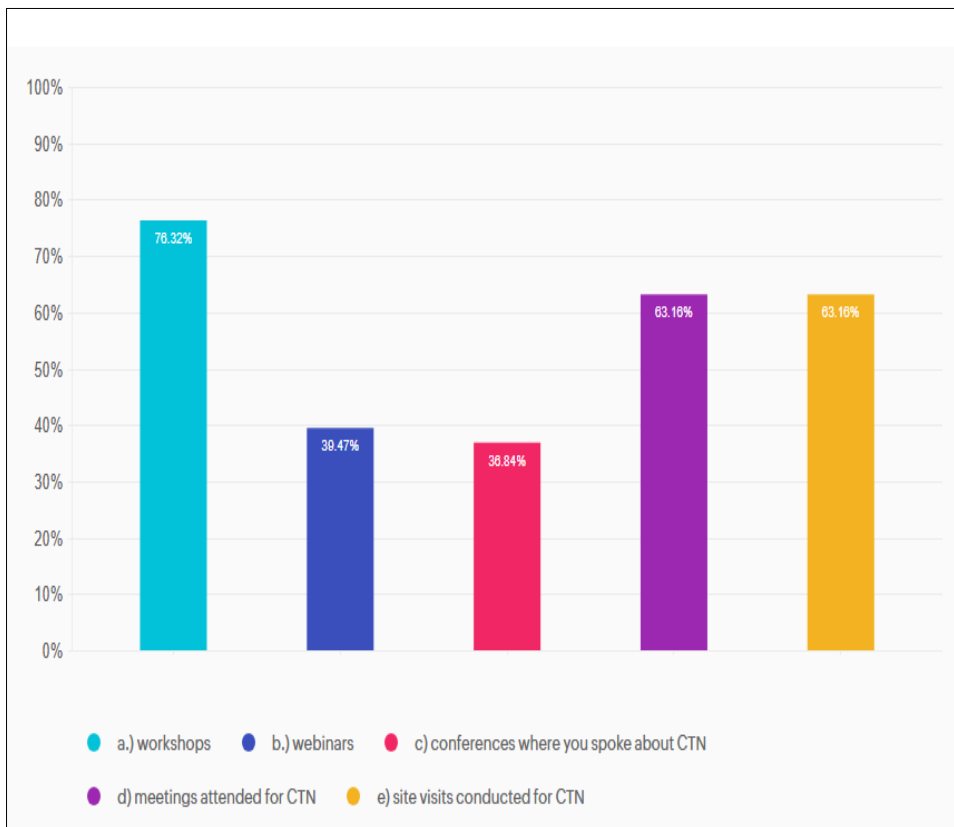
Together, CTN Leadership Fellows embody the power of collective action. Their impact is not measured solely in numbers, but in the lives transformed, the systems shifted, and the stories reclaimed.

★ Collective Impact

Over the past decade, CTN Leadership Fellows have served as catalysts for change—igniting equity-driven transformation across campuses, communities, and nationwide systems.

- Facilitated over 100 professional development workshops**
- Authored journal articles, toolkits, and resource guides amplifying student voice and resistance pedagogy**
- Mentored hundreds of new faculty and advisors, embedding CTN’s mission into onboarding and leadership pipelines**
- Led statewide initiatives on equal opportunity, rural outreach, and culturally responsive curriculum**
- Helped secured local partnerships and sponsorships to expand CTN’s reach and sustainability**
- Served as ambassadors, retreat facilitators, and journal editors, shaping CTN’s identity and future**

ASCENDER



Activities facilitated by Leadership Fellows for CTN

The boxes represent the activities covered by Leadership Fellows, including site visits, as indicated by data collected from the Leadership Fellows survey.

PERSONAL GROWTH OF LEADERSHIP FELLOWS OVER THE YEARS

The Fellows Title and Status at Entry

Participants joined CTN’s program with diverse academic and professional titles, including:

- Adjunct faculty
- Tenured professors
- Advisors and counselors
- Administrators

These roles reflected a broad spectrum of institutional experience and student-facing responsibilities.

Current Title and Status (as of latest data)

Role	Count
Professor / Instructor	44
Administrator	3
Department Chair	3
CTN Program Coordinator	1
Process Analyst and Trainer	1
Former CTN Staff	1
Retired	1
Dean	4
Advisor	11

Academic Credit Pathways: CTN Leadership Fellows and University Partnerships



ACADEMIC CREDIT PATHWAYS

CTN Leadership Fellows and University Partnerships

SEMINAR CREDIT RECOGNITION

Leadership Fellows were eligible to earn credit for seminar participation through UT Austin and Berkeley.



SURVEY INSIGHT



Since its inception, the CTN Leadership Fellows Program has prioritized rigorous, research-informed professional development. In alignment with this vision, CTN has partnered with leading institutions, including the University of Texas at Austin and UC Berkeley, to offer Fellows the opportunity to earn academic credit for participating in seminars.



LEADERSHIP FELLOW INDIVIDUAL ADVANCEMENT

LEADERSHIP FELLOW INDIVIDUAL ADVANCEMENT

Since joining Catch the Next, fellows have pursued and earned a wide range of advanced degrees and certifications, including:

Doctoral Degrees (6 Fellows)

- Ed.D. in Educational Leadership
- Ed.D. in Community Counseling & Traumatology
- Doctor of Education
- Doctor of Philosophy
- Additional unspecified doctoral degrees

Master's Degrees & Graduate Study (5 Fellows)

- Master's in Higher Education Administration (in progress)
- Master's in Statistics and Data Science
- MFA in Creative Writing (in progress)
- Twelve graduate hours in English
- Associates and Bachelor's degrees (earned post-CTN involvement)

Professional Certifications & Training (6 Fellows)

- ACUE Advanced Certificate in Effective Teaching Practice
- ACUE Credential
- TESOL Certification (in progress)
- Certified Product Owner (IIBA, in progress)
- Google Scholar recognition (2015)
- 360-hour leadership training program with plaque recognition

This data reflects CTN's decisive role in inspiring lifelong learning, leadership development, and professional excellence.



ADDITIONAL CREDENTIALS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Summary of additional credentials and leadership recognitions earned by CTN Leadership Fellows beyond formal degrees:

Leadership & Mentoring Programs

- Completed the **Mujeres de HACE Women’s Leadership Program** (Fall 2024), focused on career advancement and empowerment for Latina professionals.
- Earned **Master Certification in Advising** after achieving designation as one of CTN’s first Certified Senior Advisors

Teaching & Counseling Credentials

- Licensed K–12 Teacher
- Licensed Professional Counselor
- Certified High School Teacher
- AP Certified
- ESL Certified

Specialized Certificates & Training

Leadership certificates in:

- Self-awareness
- Leading others and across teams
- Inclusive leadership
- Emotional intelligence
- Public speaking
- Deep training in:
 - Reasoning-based and project-based course design
 - Data-driven student success strategies

These credentials demonstrate a profound commitment to inclusive leadership, student-centered approaches, and ongoing professional development.



AWARDS & HONORS

SINCE JOINING CATCH THE NEXT

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Summary of awards and honors received by CTN Leadership Fellows since joining the organization—reflecting excellence in teaching, advising, scholarship, and service:

Academic & Institutional Recognition

- **Outstanding Former Student**, Palo Alto College (2024)
- **ACC Bravo Award** (2018)
- **ACC Provost Award** for Enthusiasm & Dedication (2022)
- **ACC Provost Shining Star Award**
- **South Texas College Distinguished Teaching & Learning Award** (2019)
- **Alamo Colleges Leadership Award** (2022)
- **Alamo Colleges 20 & 25 Years of Service Awards** (2017, 2022)
- **Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education Distinguished Faculty Award** (2019)
- **NISOD Excellence Award** (2017)

CTN-Specific Honors

- **Trailblazer Award** (2018, 2019, 2021)
- **Master Presenter Award** (2017)
- **Leadership & Service Award** (2018)
- **Example of Excellence in Education Award** (2017)

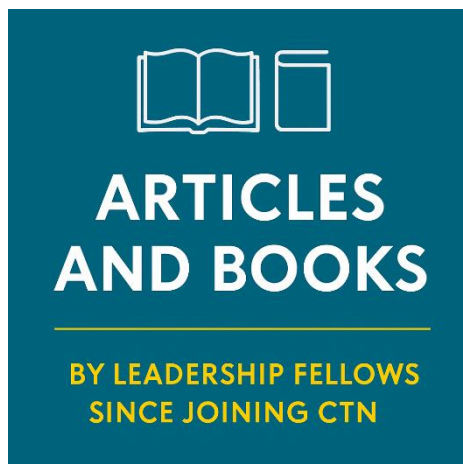
Scholarship & Writing Awards

- **Cynthia L. Peterson Outstanding JCRL Article Award** (2024)
- **Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges** (2013, 2015, 2018)
- **Texas Association of Developing Colleges Urban Scholarship Fund** (2016–2018)

Leadership & Fellowship Recognition

- **HACU La Academia Fellow** (2023)
- **Theory of Change Committee Member** – *Belonging in the Classroom* (2025)
- **Social Media Platform Certificate** (2023)
- **Armadillo Award for Advising** – nominated by students, faculty, and staff (2024)

This rich tapestry of awards reflects the Fellows’ deep commitment to equity, innovation, and student-centered leadership.



ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Stacy Ybarra: Ybarra Evans, S. (2024). Empowering Faculty Vitality and Mitigating Burnout Through Generative AI in Higher Education: Reimagining Learning Environments with Generative AI. In R. C. Sharma & A. Bozkurt (Eds.), *Transforming Education with 1. Generative AI: Prompt Engineering and Synthetic Content Creation* (pp. 281308). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-1351-0>

Rafael Castillo: San Antonio Express-News, 70 articles; CC Humanities journal, 2021, 2022, 2024; *Dostoevsky on Guadalupe Street* (2023), Peter Lang International.

Yvette Regalado: 1. A Critical Systematic Review of Cultural and Community Practices in Integrated Reading and Writing Courses in Two-Year Colleges
2. Planting Seeds for Curricular Change: Bridging Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies and Intertextuality for IRW

Juan Higa: *Student Engagement & Leadership Manual - Running a Successful Ascender Club*. Austin, Texas | Catch the Next, Inc. | August 2016

Angelica Cerda: *The compulsory online experience: understanding EdD students’ perspectives of program transition during COVID-19*

Darrial Reynolds: 1. Understanding How Two Major Events and the 1840 Election Impacted the Presidential Legacy of Martin Van Buren, published in the 2024 National Social Science Proceedings; 2. Understanding How Two Laws and the 1828 Presidential Election Impacted the Presidential Legacy of John Q. Adams, published in the 2023 National Social Science Proceedings, 3. Understanding How Three Amendments Impacted the 2020 Presidential Election Results in the Five Flipped States, published in the

2022 National Social Science Proceedings, 4. Understanding How Three Key Political Actions Impacted the Presidential Legacy of John Adams, published in the 2021 National Social Science Proceedings

Yon Hui Bell: 2 in CTN journal; “A Quarantined Lent” in La Vos de Esperanza, April 2021

Yolanda Reyna: Reyna, Y. & Rodríguez, D. (2020). Steppingstones to Student Success: A COVID-19 Resource Manual. Catch the Next, Inc. San Antonio, TX.

David Rice: Los Muertos Anthology. Trinity University Press

Esmeralda Macías: Macías, E. R. (2023). Grit and the Full Range Leadership Model: A Practical Examination of Two Concepts [Doctoral dissertation, Our Lady of the Lake University].

Diane Lerma: Catching Dreams: A Collection of Inspiring Mentor Stories

Teresita Ramirez: Journal of Pedagogy and Creativity 2023

Price, J. K. and Rodriguez, P.D. (Fall, 2022). Risk Assessment for Burnout in College Students: Analyses of Demographics, Health, Stress, and Work Factors. Research Journal, The St. Mary’s University McNair Scholars Program. San Antonio, Texas

Chavez Brumell Maria Martha. CTN Administrative Procedures, Catch the Next, 2013.

Chavez Brumell Maria Martha. CTN Operations Manual, Catch the Next, 2015.

Alejandra Polcik: Script of the ACC TV show Ready, Set, Ascender Monthly.

SEMINAR TOPICS & PRESENTATIONS

CTN Leadership Fellows have consistently brought forward bold ideas, critical inquiry, and culturally affirming practices to every seminar and convening. Their sessions reflect a commitment to equity, emotional intelligence, and transformative pedagogy. Below is a sample of topics explored:

1. **Paulo Freire and the Pedagogy of Love** – Centering compassion and liberation in the classroom
2. **Making Thinking Visible** – Strategies to surface student reasoning and deepen engagement.
3. **Place-Based Writing** – Honoring local narratives and community-rooted storytelling.
4. **Mathematics & Student Engagement** – Validating instruction and inclusive strategies in STEM
5. **Culturally Relevant & Sustaining Teaching** – Building a curriculum that reflects and uplifts student identities.
6. **Writing as a Process** – Empowering students through iterative, reflective writing practices
7. **Sustaining Mentorship in the Program** – Strengthening support systems for Fellows and faculty
8. **Mental Health in Higher Education** – Reimagining counseling and care for today’s learners
9. **Exploring the Emotional Landscape of the Classroom** – Navigating vulnerability, resilience, and belonging

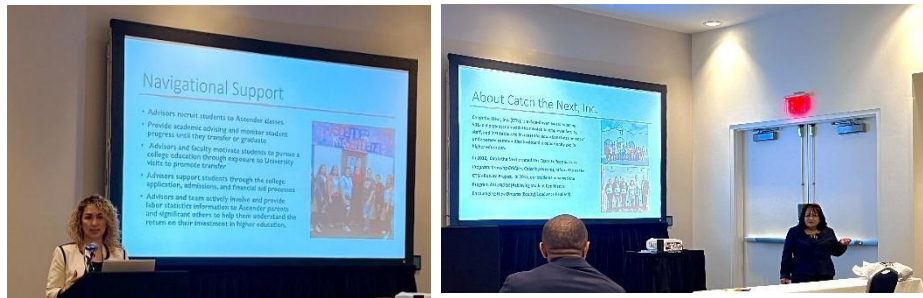
SAMPLE PRESENTATIONS BY LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

Fellows have also represented CTN at statewide and national platforms, sharing insights and innovations that resonate across institutions:

- **TEXAAN Conference: *Building Retention Through Connection*** – Presented by Vidal A., colleagues enthusiastically received this session from diverse institutions.
- **Café College, San Antonio: *Benefits of Belonging*** – Delivered by D. McBeath and S. Ybarra, highlighting the power of validation and community.
- **Texas Pathways Institute #5: *Keeping Students on Their Pathway*** – A collaborative presentation by Dr. Chavez, K. Quiroz, M. Morin, A. Alaniz, and Juan Higa, focused on persistence, guidance, and culturally responsive advising.



Presentation at American Association of Community Colleges, Dr. Joan Jaimes and Dr. Maria Chavez were joined by President Robert Garza from Palo Alto College, Dr. Greg Morris, Vice Provost at Dallas College, to speak about the ASCENDER framework and its impact at the American Association of Community Colleges. 2024.



LEADERSHIP FELLOWS WHO HAVE SERVED AS CTN STAFF



Over the past decade, approximately 15% of Leadership Fellows have deepened their commitment to Catch the Next by stepping into formal staff roles. These fellows have served as program coordinators, journal editors, retreat facilitators, onboarding specialists, and strategic advisors—bringing their lived experience and leadership to the heart of CTN’s operations.

Pictured (left) Dr. Anna Alaniz

Their dual role as both Fellows and CTN Staff reflects a powerful cycle of mentorship, impact, and organizational stewardship.



Pictured (L-R): Dr. Stacy Ybarra, Dr. Rafael Castilla, Dr. Erin Doran, Ms. Debra McBeath, Mr. Juan Higa

LEADERSHIP FELLOWS SERVING AS CTN CONSULTANTS

Almost 50% of Leadership Fellows have extended their impact by serving as **consultants to Catch the Next**, offering strategic guidance, specialized training, and mission-aligned expertise.



These fellows bring deep institutional knowledge, culturally affirming practices, and a commitment to student success into every consulting engagement. Whether facilitating retreats, designing onboarding materials, leading professional development, or advising on journal themes and outreach strategy, their contributions reflect the heart of CTN’s

collaborative model: *leaders who lead with purpose and serve with cariño.*

NOTABLE PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS BY LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

Fellows have contributed to a wide range of mission-aligned initiatives that reflect CTN’s commitment to equity, innovation, and student-centered leadership.

Publishing & Editorial Work

- Served as editors and contributors to CTN journals and manuals.
- Supported layout, proofreading, and theme development for *Journal of Pedagogy and Creativity*

Site Visits & Program Evaluation

- Participated in campus site visits to support Ascender implementation and staff onboarding.

Provided feedback and coaching to new program teams. Pictured is Dr. Esmeralda Macias with her English class.



STEM & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Dr. Rosa Gutierrez, second from the right, serves as Advisor for the *Girls Discovering Math Club*, promoting STEM pathways for underserved students.

Dr. Gutierrez has collaborated with Dr. Mario Morin and Dr. Linda Hagedorn on strategic planning for future math course development.

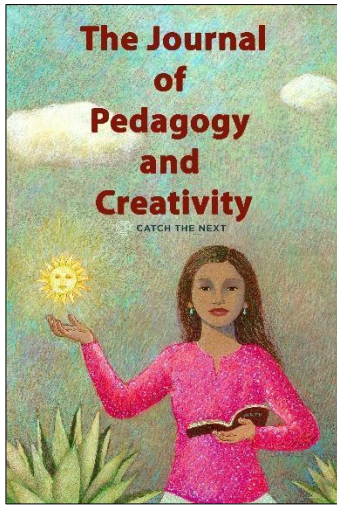
CURRICULUM DESIGN & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Leadership Fellows have served as Curriculum Writers for the *Empoderate Leadership Academy*, crafting culturally affirming modules.
- Contributed to the design of leadership training materials and onboarding resources.

LEADERSHIP FELLOWS WORKING ON SPECIAL PROJECTS

Throughout the past decade, several CTN Leadership Fellows have gone beyond their campus roles to lead **mission-critical special projects** that advanced CTN's vision and reach. These projects reflect the Fellows' creativity, strategic insight, and deep commitment to student-centered transformation.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIAL PROJECTS INCLUDE:



Catching Dreams: Mentor Stories Book by Diane Lerma



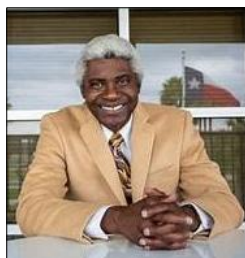
- *Journal of Pedagogy and Creativity*: Fellows served as editors, theme curators, and submission reviewers.
- *Manuals & Onboarding Packets*: Fellows co-authored branded resources for staff training and student engagement.
- *Media & Outreach*: Fellows scripted and hosted CTN’s *Ready, Set, Ascender!* TV show and created promotional materials.
- *Retreat Design & Facilitation*: Fellows led breakout sessions, developed rating scales, and crafted reflective activities.
- *Data & Evaluation Projects*: Fellows contributed to survey design, impact analysis, and strategic planning.
- *Community Partnerships*: Fellows helped secure sponsorships and build relationships with banks, corporations, and rural agencies.
- *Theory of Change & Belonging Initiatives*: Fellows participated in statewide committees shaping inclusive pedagogy.

“Special projects allow us to build the future we imagine—one resource, one retreat, one student story at a time.”

—CTN Leadership Fellow

LEADERSHIP FELLOWS SERVING ON BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Several CTN Leadership Fellows have extended their influence by serving on **organizational boards, advisory councils, and strategic committees**, helping guide the evolution of Catch the Next and its statewide initiatives.



ROLES & CONTRIBUTIONS INCLUDE:



- **CTN Board of Directors:** Fellows have contributed to governance, strategic planning, and mission alignment.
- **Journal Editorial Boards:** Fellows have curated themes, reviewed submissions, and shaped the voice of CTN's scholarly publications.
- **Theory of Change Committee:** Fellows helped design frameworks for belonging, equity, and student validation in the classroom.
- **Retreat Planning Committees:** Fellows co-designed breakout sessions, rating scales, and reflective activities.
- **Curriculum & Program Committees:** Fellows advised on Empoderate Leadership Academy, math pathways, and culturally affirming pedagogy.
- **Community Advisory Panels:** Fellows represented CTN in regional partnerships and rural outreach initiatives.

ASCENDER EVENTS LED BY LEADERSHIP FELLOWS



Fellows bring CTN's mission to life through high-impact campus events that foster a sense of belonging, academic engagement, and cultural affirmation. Summary of the Ascender events that CTN Leadership Fellows actively participate in and lead on their campuses:

Noche de Familia

Attended event (83.87% participation)

- Fellows organize and host this signature celebration, welcoming students and families into the college community.
- Activities include storytelling, cultural performances, student testimonials, and resource sharing.

College Visits

- Fellows coordinate and chaperone campus tours to four-year universities
- Events emphasize transfer pathways, financial aid literacy, and student empowerment, and are often paired with reflective writing or goal-setting activities

Mentor Training

- Fellows facilitate mentor onboarding and ongoing development.
- Trainings include validation theory, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and relationship-building strategies.
- Fellows also serve as mentors themselves, modeling CTN's *cariño*-driven approach.

These events are more than programming—they're rituals of belonging, designed and led by Fellows who understand that transformation begins with connection.

ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES LED BY CTN LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

Beyond the classroom, Fellows bring CTN's mission to life through dynamic events that foster validation, awareness, and joy.

Summary of the diverse campus activities CTN Leadership Fellows have led or participated in—showcasing their deep commitment to student engagement, cultural affirmation, and community-building:

Media & Outreach

- Featured on **ACC TV**, sharing student stories and promoting Ascender programming.
- Scriptwriting, hosting, and coordinating educational segments.



College & Career Readiness



Organized **Career Days** and **University Tours** to expand student horizons.



Facilitated **Motivational Conferences** to inspire academic persistence and leadership.

Student Empowerment & Advocacy

- Hosted **Know Your Rights** events and **Sex Education Workshops**
- Led **planning meetings** and **site visits** to strengthen program implementation.

Cultural Celebration

Coordinated **El Dia de los Muertos Parades** and related cultural events

- Led **Hispanic Heritage Month** programming, including panels, performances, and storytelling.
- Facilitated **Serape Ceremonies** honoring student identity and achievement.



Conferences & Representation

- Participated in **HACU Conferences**, representing CTN at the national level.
- Engaged in fundraising and outreach to support student-centered initiatives.

These activities reflect the Fellows' holistic approach to education, where culture, advocacy, and celebration are woven into every student's experience.



LOOKING AT THE NEXT TEN YEARS

Catch the Next will continue to lead a national movement to transform higher education into a liberatory, community-rooted engine of opportunity—where every student is seen, valued, and empowered to thrive.

STRATEGIC PILLARS OF IMPACT

1. Opportunity-Driven Expansion

- Grow Ascender and other CTN programs across **rural, urban, and tribal colleges**, prioritizing underserved regions.
- Nourish strategic partnerships with **state agencies, philanthropic foundations, and local businesses** to sustain growth.
- Continue to serve as a hub for **professional development, storytelling, and policy advocacy**.

2. Liberatory Pedagogy & Curriculum Innovation

- Develop and disseminate **culturally sustaining curriculum** rooted in validation theory, *cariño*, and resistance-based frameworks.
- Expand CTN's **Journal of Pedagogy and Creativity** into a national platform for educator voice and praxis.
- Create **digital learning modules** and credentialed pathways for faculty, advisors, and student leaders.

3. Leadership Pipeline & Staff Culture

- Cultivate a **multi-tiered leadership pipeline** from student mentors to regional directors.
- Host annual **Leadership Summits** and **Serape Ceremonies** to honor growth, identity, and impact.
- Continue to have retreat experiences that **reignite purpose, reconnect teams, and reimagine impact**.

4. Data, Storytelling & Advocacy

- Build a robust **impact dashboard** that blends quantitative outcomes with qualitative student stories.
- Train Fellows and staff in **narrative advocacy** to influence policy and funding.
- Position CTN as a thought leader in **equal opportunity-centered reform**, contributing to national conversations on access and belonging.

5. Creative Media & Public Engagement

- Expand CTN’s media presence through **TV segments, podcasts, and digital storytelling**.
- Launch a branded **Ascender documentary series** capturing student journeys and community transformation.
- Host public events that celebrate **resilience and educational justice**

GUIDING BELIEF

“We believe that education is not just a pathway—it is a promise. A promise to uplift families, honor culture, and build futures rooted in dignity and hope.”

FUTURE ENGAGEMENT PATHWAYS FOR CTN LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

Summary on how CTN Leadership Fellows can be meaningfully engaged in the next decade—designed to honor their expertise, deepen their impact, and sustain a vibrant community of practice:

Strategic Leadership & Governance

- Serve on **CTN advisory boards, editorial committees, and regional councils**.
- Co-lead **statewide initiatives** focused on equity, belonging, and curriculum innovation.
- Mentor new fellows through structured **leadership pipelines** and onboarding retreats.

Curriculum & Program Design

- Co-author **culturally sustaining curriculum** for Ascender, Empoderate, and new CTN academies.
- Lead **pilot programs** in rural and underserved regions, shaping scalable models of student success.
- Facilitate **faculty development workshops** rooted in validation theory and *cariño*.

Public Voice & Advocacy

- Represent CTN at **national conferences, panels, and media platforms**.
- Publish in CTN’s journal and external outlets to amplify liberatory pedagogy.
- Host **community dialogues and storytelling events** that center on student voice and cultural heritage.

Creative Media & Outreach

- Script and host **digital series, podcasts, and TV segments** showcasing CTN’s impact
- Collaborate on **documentary projects** and branded campaigns that elevate fellow and student narratives.

Fellowship Culture & Community

- Lead **regional fellow meetups**, reflective circles, and cross-campus collaborations.
- Co-design **retreats and ceremonies** that reignite purpose and celebrate milestones.
- Participate in **special projects**, from journal themes to grant writing and strategic planning.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

Fellows are not just participants—they are architects of CTN’s future. Their lived experience, cultural wisdom, and institutional insight will shape the next generation of equity-driven education.

CALL TO ACTION: LEAD THE NEXT CHAPTER OF EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE

Catch the Next is more than a program—it’s a movement. A movement rooted in *cariño*, cultural affirmation, and the belief that every student deserves to be seen, heard, and empowered.

As we look ahead to the next decade, we invite our Leadership Fellows, educators, and community partners to step forward—not just as participants, but as architects of transformation.

Call to Action designed to energize CTN Leadership Fellows, staff, and partners as you step into the next decade of impact:

Fellows—Your Voice Is Vital

- Share your story. Publish, present, and mentor.
- Lead special projects that reflect your vision and values.
- Join committees, shape curriculum, and co-create the future of CTN.

Staff—Reignite Purpose

- Facilitate retreats that restore connection and clarity.
- Design onboarding that reflects our mission in every detail.
- Build a culture where validation is not a strategy—it’s a way of being.

Partners—Invest in Possibility

- Sponsor student-centered initiatives and regional expansion.
- Collaborate on media, outreach, and policy advocacy.

- Help us scale a model that transforms lives, families, and communities.

Let this be the decade where we don't just imagine equal opportunity—we build it. Together, we will catch the next wave of leaders, dreamers, and changemakers.



CONCLUSION: TOWARD A FUTURE WE ARE BOLD ENOUGH TO IMAGINE

The CTN Leadership Fellows Program stands as a testament to courage, creativity, and collective will. Over the past decade, Fellows have not only shaped classrooms and campuses—they have shaped possibility. Their work has seeded a movement rooted in validation, equal opportunity, and the radical belief that every student deserves to be seen, heard, and uplifted.

This impact report captures more than milestones. It captures momentum.

As we look ahead, we do so with a futuristic lens—one that sees beyond barriers and into the brilliance of what could be. We envision a future where culturally sustaining pedagogy is the norm, where rural and underserved communities thrive through education, and where mentorship is not a program but a promise.

We move forward with faith in our dreams:

- Faith that storytelling will continue to transform systems.
- Faith that girls in math and STEM will rise with mentors who mirror their potential.
- Faith that every Fellow, every student, every partner will carry this mission further than we ever imagined.

The next decade begins now—with new voices, new visions, and the same unwavering commitment to justice and joy. Together, we are not just catching the next—we are creating it.

Presented by Debra McBeath, Director of Engagement
and Dr. Maria Chavez Brumell, President, and CEO

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