MESSAGE FROM THE ENLACE CHAIR, RICHARD REGUA

Enlace Brings Department of Education Funds to EVC

Enlace members recently completed the EVC to SJSU 2005-2010 Transfer Project, a project designed to increase the number of EVC Latin@ transfer students who graduate from San José State University. Enlace Mentor Advisory Council member Dr. George Castro helped develop the grant application and served as Co-Principal Investigator by providing oversight for the SJSU component. The collaborative project was funded by the Department of Education Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions program, a national effort designed to achieve access and success equity for Latin@'s at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). EVC, with a Latin@ student enrollment of approximately 30%, qualifies as an HSI. The primary project activities were for EVC and SJSU project staff to collaboratively increase the number of EVC Latin@'s eligible for transfer and to provide support for students prior to and after transferring.

In order to continue external program support, Enlace staff and community members developed a second successful Title V HSI project proposal funded for slightly less than three million dollars. The 2010-2015 project, entitled Cambios, is intended to foster institutional cambios (changes) that accelerate the academic success of EVC Latin@'s and other underserved students.

College funding augmented by Title V HSI funding have enabled Enlace to grow to its current size: 14 English, math, science, and guidance classes each semester with over 400 students, in addition to over 400 students meeting with the Enlace counselor.

CONGRATULATIONS
Frank Tello!

Spring 2011 also marked the fifth year an Enlace student was awarded the Karl S. Pister scholarship, which is a $20,000 scholarship awarded to one student from each regional community college who plans to attend UC Santa Cruz. The 2011 recipient was Frank Tello.
The 2010-2011 academic year was filled with many exciting moments and many student accomplishments. As the Enlace Counselor, I am fortunate to serve about 400 incoming and continuing students each semester. My fall semesters are typically filled with conducting orientations for new Enlace students, counseling sessions, university application workshops to the CSU and UC systems, completion of transfer application guarantees (TAGS) to the University of California, and teaching Enlace Guidance courses that introduce incoming students to both the Enlace program and Evergreen Valley College. Additionally, I collaborate with Enlace English, Math, and Science instructors to improve student retention and student success.

While the fall semesters entail a lot of exciting times, the spring semesters are even more exciting because two of the largest Enlace events take place in the spring. The annual Enlace Honors Society Conference, usually held the second Saturday of March, was again a success in 2011. This conference is an opportunity for all students who are enrolled in Enlace courses to attend on a Saturday and engage in various workshops and presentations. In 2011, the keynote address was given by Teresa Alvarado, Communications Manager for the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and workshops were conducted by Ruben Sanchez, former Enlace student and current Enlace Mentor; Amalia Alvarez, Enlace English Faculty; and Janina Espinoza, Enlace Steering Committee Member, along with students from the Student United for Educational and Retention among Transfers (SUERTE) at EVC program at SJSU. SUERTE serve as a focus and support group to ensure the success of transfer students from Evergreen Valley College to San José State University.

Spring 2011 also consisted of the largest Enlace Convocation in the program’s history. Mayra Cruz, San José / Evergreen Community College Board Trustee gave the keynote address. We are proud to share that 56 Enlace students earned Associate degrees; however, a total of 65 Enlace students will be transferring to universities. The various universities students are transferring to include: San José State University, Chico State, CSU Sacramento, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CSU East Bay, San Francisco State, Humboldt State, UC Davis, UC San Diego, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, Santa Clara University, and the University of San Francisco.

Additionally, four Enlace Honors Society students were awarded scholarships by the Hispanic Advisory Committee for Employees (HACE) at NASA Ames Research Center. HACE has awarded over $30,000 in scholarship money to Enlace Honors Society students over the years. The 2011 scholarship recipients are Fernando Cardona, a Business major who is attending UC Davis; Jennifer Vergara, a Microbiology major who is attending UC Davis; Maricela Radilla, a Business major who is attending SJSU, and Jaime A. Lopez-Miramontes, a Psychology major who is attending UC San Diego. We congratulate the students for their outstanding academic accomplishments, and we appreciate the support of Enlace students by HACE.
The mathematics component of Enlace has continued its success rates of previous years and is now planning to expand its course offerings and student support beginning this academic year. In Fall 2012 there will be two paths for Enlace students placing into Algebra I. Students whose goal is to take Statistics will no longer take Algebra I and II; instead, a one-semester course called Statpath will prepare them to succeed in Statistics; students whose goal is to take Precalculus will still take Algebra I and II. All of these courses will be offered by the Enlace program with the usual assistance of tutors and of Jorge Vallin, Enlace Math Instructional Support Assistant in the Math and Science Resource Center.

Additional student support will be available through Supplemental Instruction (SI), which we will begin in Fall 2011. We welcome Araceli Garza, Luis Hernandez and Matthew Ramos as the SI Leaders in Algebra I and II.

We are also very happy to announce we have a new faculty addition to the Enlace mathematics component. Guillermo Castilla, who earned a B.S. in Mathematics from UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), an M.A. in Applied Mathematics from UC Berkeley and a Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics from UCLA, will teach Math 310 (Basic Mathematics) this fall. Bienvenido, Guillermo!

A highlight for Enlace was being selected in 2007 as the outstanding community college program for accelerating Latin@ student success by Excelencia in Education, a Washington D.C. based organization that “aims to accelerate higher education success for Latino students by providing data-driven analysis of the educational status of Latino students and by promoting education policies and institutional practices that support their academic achievement”. This recognition included a $5,000 award, which we used to fund extracurricular educational activities for Enlace students. As a result of the Excelencia award, we presented at the National Association of Educators/American Federation of Teachers National Conference, and we participated in a breakfast briefing in Washington, D.C. for the Hispanic Congressional Caucus. http://www.edexcelencia.org/newsroom/video/excelencia-education-2007-examples-showcase-enlace.

Because of its demonstrated program effectiveness, Enlace has been highlighted in two recent national publications. The Enrollment Management Journal, a quarterly referred journal focusing on increasing student access and success, included an article written by Enlace staff identifying the central program elements contributing to Latin@ student success. http://www.tgslc.org/pdf/EMJ-Sp09.pdf

Excelencia in Education released in August 2011 Latino College Completion: California, which focuses attention on the “current equity gap in Latino college completion and the impact of selected effective strategies to increase college attainment.” Enlace was identified as one of two California “institutional programs with evidence of effectiveness in serving Latino students” http://www.edexcelencia.org/initiatives/EAF/State

Bravo Enlace!
By Raquel Rojas

Over $4,000 of scholarship monies were awarded to Enlace students during spring’s Scholarship Ceremony. This is one of several highlights from Enlace English courses. Enlace English faculty incorporated into their curriculum an assignment which guided students in the process of completing a scholarship. Another English curriculum highlight was student exploration of social, historical, and cultural readings through a variety of sources.

Our pedagogical approach of student-centeredness and innovative curriculum demonstrate our high success rates. The continuum curriculum between English 104 (writing development) and English 1A (first year composition) is a prime example. Faculty utilize the 3-hours intensive lab in English 104 for one-on-one instruction and collaborative group activities. Beginning this semester, Enlace English will incorporate Supplemental Instruction, in which master students provide their own unique instruction to enhance course material to develop the students independent learning skills. In collaboration with a campus librarian, a module of the English curriculum focuses on library information literacy so that students are able to perform research and write an effective academic paper.

by Amalia Alvarez

In the fall, my Enlace English 104 course (a developmental short composition writing class), will study several creative non-fiction essays. Many of the essays are from the book Hurricanes and Carnivals: Essays by Chican@s, Pochos, Pachucos, Mexicanos, and Expatriates. Specifically, the class will dive into the deep prolific pool of Gloria Anzaldua’s “Tlilli, Tlapalli the Path of the Red and the Black Ink.” Anzaldua’s essay explores a writer’s quest to use the creative force and story to negotiate identity, heal past wounds and assert power. Another essay entitled, “Of Sea Turtles: A Cautionary Tale,” traverses the efforts of Mexican writer and environmental activist, Homero Aridjis. Aridjis writes about his struggle to ban the capture and trade of sea turtles on Mexican beaches in states like Michocán, Guerrero, and Oaxaca. In conjunction with viewing Peter Brat’s film “La Mission,” starring Benjamin Bratt, we will also read “Liberace’s Sink” by Chican@ writer Rigoberto Gonzalez. An interesting juxtaposition, both the film and the essay explore gay identity within the Mexican/Chican@ community. Additionally, the film and essay address issues such as alcoholism, youth/domestic/family violence, and obesity. Lastly, from the text, we will read “Here’s to you, Jesusa!” “Here’s to you, Jesusa!” is an inspiring essay by Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska. The essay is based on interviews from the 1960s with a former Adelita (female soldier) and force to be reckoned with from the Mexican Revolution. As the instructor, I am very much looking forward to student reactions, insights, contemplation, discovery, and dialogue in relationship to the readings.

from left to right, 
Araceli Garza, Professor Amalia Alvarez, and Alyssa Aguilar
I am in my 14th year as the Enlace science instructor, and the science component continues to evolve because of the commitment and talent of Evergreen Valley College students. Another exciting academic year has passed. The EVC chapter of Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) continued to strengthen connections between EVC and our feeder schools by hosting its third Annual EVC SACNAS High School Science Fair. The aim of the fair is to acquaint high school students with the EVC science curricula and academic programs. Approximately 75 high school and 30 college students attended the conference. The student chapter is preparing to expand its membership and increase community mentor involvement. More information about the EVC SACNAS chapter is available on the EVC Enlace website.

The summer 2011 Enlace Environmental Science class was a huge success. The summer course is rigorous because it condenses 16 weeks to 6 weeks, with approximately 6 hours of lecture and lab each meeting day. Field trips are an important component of Enlace science courses, enabling students to connect theory learned in class with real-life examples. This year’s trips included an overnight camp to Big Basin State Park, where students tested their knowledge of animal and plant identification, geology, park management, tide pool ecology. The trip included a hike up to Buzzard’s Roost. For many, this was their first camp experience.

In 2011-2012 Enlace will be adding a supplemental instruction (SI) component to the science program, as well as to the English and math programs. The SI student leaders will provide Enlace science students with activities designed to increase the students’ mastery of course content and to improve the students’ academic skills. Ultimately, the goal of SI is for students to increase their academic performance and matriculation into more rigorous coursework and academic programs.

The Enlace staff, mentors, and students welcome Henry Yong as the newly selected EVC President. Mr. Yong, with over 30 years experience as an educator and administrator, most recently served as Vice President of Instruction at Taft Community College, located 30 miles southeast of Bakersfield. According to EVC President Yong, “I will be involved in the community, and will serve to be a bridge between the College and the community. The community support fosters an environment for collective engagement and innovation, and promotes excellence in instruction.” President Yong has reached out to the Latin@ community by initiating discussions with Enlace Mentor Advisory Council members Victor Garza, George Castro, Rose Amador and with Dr. David Lopez, President of the National Hispanic University.

[enlace_welcomes_2011.pdf link]
The Enlace Mentor component, in its 28th year, has continually connected students with mentors in a profession of their choice, giving the students a better understanding of the profession as well as, helping them reach their educational goals.

This past summer, one of the Enlace goals was to reconnect with our mentors by meeting with them one-on-one, in an effort to strengthen our relationships and foundation. The mentor component has been strong; nevertheless, the mentors emphasized in their interviews that it could use some positive changes to enhance its effect on both mentors and students. For example, many of our mentors want to meet with our students more regularly, and they also want an opportunity to connect more with our program. As the program specialist, it was nice to see the enthusiasm and passion that the mentors have for volunteering their time to serve as mentors. I would like to acknowledge two of our mentors who have been with the program over 20 plus years, Marcos Legaspi Herrera, P.E., Vice President/Senior Associate at Structural Integrity Associates, Inc., and Mike Ramirez, Enterprise File Integration and FA Manager at Hitachi Global Storage Technologies. Mentors like these two, have demonstrated dedication and commitment to this program, and have put the mentor component on a great path to success. This year we have three new mentors: Olga Rodriguez, a Civil Engineer who is a Senior Project Manager for AECOM Transportation; Nancy Reid, Math teacher at Lincoln High School; Ulices Preciado, former Enlace student and Mental Health Therapist at Gardner Family Care Corporation. For all other mentors, a heartfelt thank you for your continued support. I look forward to scheduling a meeting with you in the near future.

I look forward to a new year with added growth and stronger commitments!

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