

2019
2020

**ANNUAL
REPORT**



Table of Contents

02 Message from the CEO

03 Our Mission

05 Timeline

07 COVID-19 Response

09 2019-2020 Highlights

11 2019-2020 Accomplishments

13 Our Supporters

15 Financials

17 Leadership

Message from the CEO

We are publishing this annual report during an extraordinary year, as the COVID-19 pandemic and the national reckoning for equity and justice continue to unfold.

This year, PUENTE is also celebrating 35 years of service. Throughout our organization's history, we have stood in the right place: for increased access to education to help those who need it most. At PUENTE, we believe that education is the most powerful tool we have to transform the world.

PUENTE Learning Center started in response to community demand for high-quality educational options. Back in 1985, we disavowed the approach that a student's success should be determined by their zip code or place of birth.

Since then, we have continued to build a community that celebrates learning and builds bridges to achievement.

***At PUENTE,
we believe that
education is the
most powerful tool
we have to transform
the world.***

We are laying the groundwork for the next thirty-five years of hope and success. PUENTE has launched major initiatives for our preschool, elementary school, youth programs, adult education, and wrap-around services. We are renovating our facility to serve more people than ever before.

As a leader in providing our distinct model of multi-generational education for Boyle Heights, East Los Angeles, and beyond, we continue to stand for personal and community transformation through the power of education.



Jerome Greening
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome Greening". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Our Mission

Our Mission: People United to Enrich the Neighborhood Through Education.

Our Vision: Education is the bridge that empowers lives and builds thriving communities.

Our Values: Commitment to Education, Collaborative Spirit, Culture of Excellence

Each year, over 2,000 constituents come to PUENTE in an effort to improve their lives. They are welcomed into learning with respect, dignity, and a spectrum of services for children, youth, adults, and community. PUENTE's four program areas reflect our distinct, multi-generational approach to education.

The key services we offer include:

 <p>PUENTE provides a stimulating environment for young learners, and we thoroughly engage parents to provide a strong foundation for success.</p> <p>Children</p>	 <p>PUENTE closes the achievement gap for youth and young adults as they persist through high school and college on their way to achievement.</p> <p>Youth</p>
<p>PUENTE gives adult students the opportunity to excel through courses that improve language and academic skills, provide technical training, and increase employability.</p>  <p>Adults</p>	<p>We offer wrap-around services and engagement workshops to help community members succeed in school and in life.</p>  <p>Community</p>

35 Years of Service

In 2020, PUENTE Learning Center celebrated 35 years of providing educational and wrap-around services to students and families, allowing them to access new opportunities and contribute fully to the community.



Watch our video
PUENTE Celebrates 35 Years

Timeline

1980s



During the 1990s, PUENTE moved to its current location on Boyle Avenue. The organization initially provided services in ten double-wide trailers on the vacant lot. In 1995, PUENTE opened the Richard J. Riordan building, a new 40,000 square foot facility that remains a testament to the dignity of education.

2002



Sister Jennie Lechtenberg founded PUENTE Learning Center in 1985 to serve low-income children, operating out of a storefront location in Boyle Heights. From the beginning, PUENTE offered classes for parents as well as their children, educating each student within the context of her or his family and community. PUENTE also led the way by incorporating technology into education, an emphasis that continues today.

1990s



In 2002, PUENTE opened the first charter school in Boyle Heights, serving kindergarten students. Our school has succeeded in part due to the trust that PUENTE built in the community we serve.

2018

In 2015, PUENTE sold its South Los Angeles campus in order to expand programs and facilities in Boyle Heights. The organization operated programs at that facility from 1999-2017.

⋮



PUENTE Learning Center continues to serve students and families by building bridges to education and opportunity. PUENTE's services reach over 2,000 constituents each year in four core program areas: children, youth, adults, and community. PUENTE maintains its distinct, multi-generational approach that incorporates educational and wrap-around services for Boyle Heights, East Los Angeles, and beyond.

⋮

2015



2018 saw PUENTE Charter School receive approval to grow from kindergarten-only to become a full elementary school. The school is expanding by one grade each year until 2022-23, when we will serve over 300 students in grades TK-5.

⋮



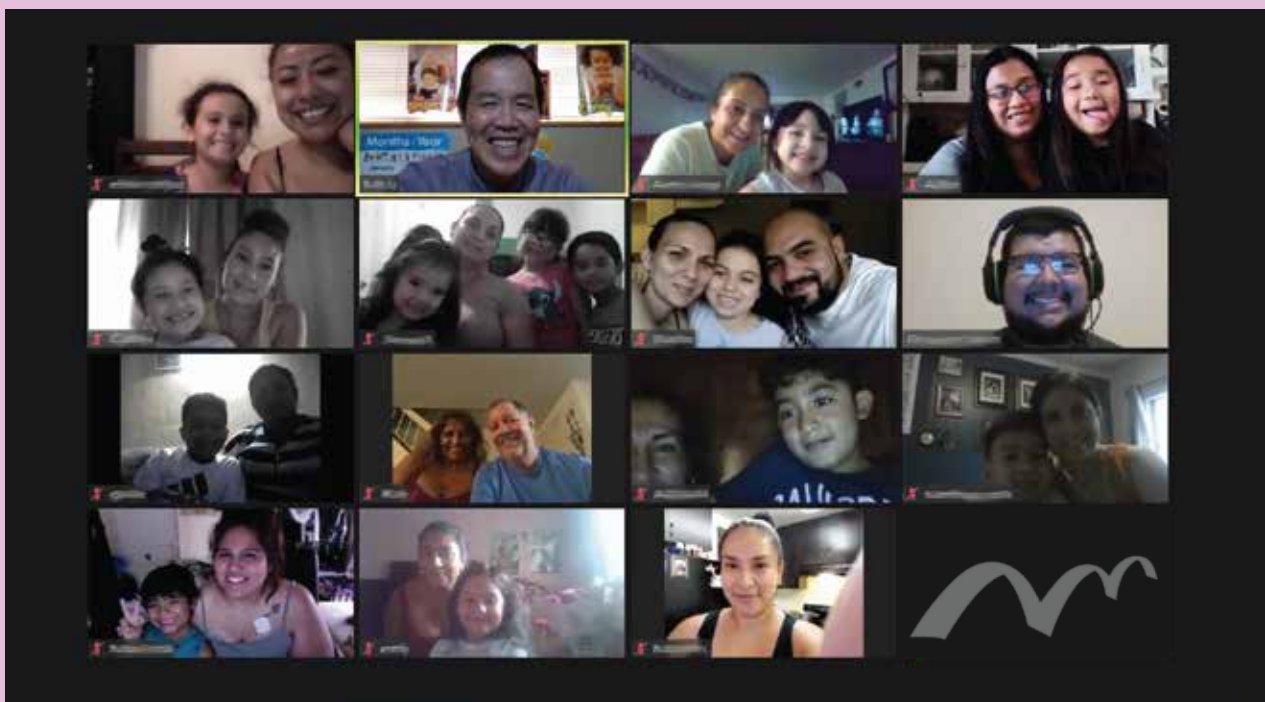
Today

COVID-19 Response

PUENTE classes transitioned to distance learning in March 2020, and we remain on that status as of this annual report's publication. We are following guidance from the Los Angeles Unified School District, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, and other regulatory agencies.

During COVID-19, PUENTE has adapted by providing high-quality distance learning—attendance rates have been as high as 96% for the elementary school—handing out hundreds of laptops and devices to families in need, and distributing thousands of free meals to our community members.

The best place for students of all ages to learn is in school. We are working hard to prepare for opening our doors to on-site classes again as soon as it's safe. Even though the way we deliver programs has changed, our mission remains the same. We remain People United to Enrich the Neighborhood Through Education.



Maria's Story

When a friend recommended PUENTE Learning Center as a welcoming environment to learn and grow, Maria did not realize at first what a difference that would make. She is currently enrolled in Career Skills classes, and her children both attend PUENTE Charter Elementary School.

From her first day at PUENTE, "everything felt different," says Maria. Her children had a fun, stable place to go with guaranteed access to three meals daily and after school care. Maria especially cherished the opportunity to attend the school's theatrical performances—an opportunity to see her children excel in the arts.

In Maria's own classes, she had attentive instructors who helped her gain the language and professional skills needed to get a raise at work.

When COVID-19 hit, Maria's family was sharing one cell phone for all their digital needs. PUENTE staff members lent both of Maria's children laptops for high-quality distance learning. For months, the family was food insecure, and they took advantage of PUENTE's free distributions of fresh produce. "The weekly box of food made such a difference in my family's life. Times have been hard, and everything helps," says Maria.

Remarkably, Maria is just one of over 110,000 Angelenos whose lives were changed through PUENTE over these past 35 years.

"The weekly box of food made such a difference in my family's life. Times have been hard, and everything helps."



2019-2020 Highlights

Leadership Appointments



PUENTE has announced the appointments of Jerome Greening as CEO and Chun Wong as Board Chair. Jerome Greening was named CEO in Spring 2020, after serving as Interim CEO since October 2018. Chun Wong was appointed incoming Board Chair in Spring 2020, after previously serving as Board Vice-Chair and Board Finance Committee Chair.



"PUENTE has continued to strengthen its leadership with both of these recent appointments," said outgoing Board Chair Albert Reyes. "I know Chun and Jerome will build on PUENTE's 35-year history of offering academic services to children, youth, and adults."

Facility Upgrade and Renovation

Lack of access to high-quality education options is a pressing barrier for residents of Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles. Since just 37% of service area elementary school students demonstrate grade-level proficiency and just 8% of service area residents ages 25 and older have a bachelor's degree, building bridges to education is critical to creating more opportunity in our communities. To meet its growing service goals, PUENTE is upgrading and renovating its building with support from The Ahmanson Foundation, Great Public Schools Now, and the Walton Family Foundation. This will make PUENTE secure, modern, and welcoming for the next 35 years and beyond.



2019-2020 Highlights



State Preschool

Studies indicate that low-income children benefit more than children from wealthier backgrounds when they have access to free preschool. In our service area, 43% of preschool-age children did not receive preschool services in 2019. With enhanced capacity to bring early education intervention, PUENTE Preschool began its first year as a site in the California State Preschool Program, prioritizing enrollment for the lowest income families and for English Learners.



Elementary School Expansion

PUENTE Charter Elementary School welcomed its inaugural 2nd grade class in 2019-20 and will continue to expand by one grade level each year. By 2022-23, the school will serve over 300 students in grades TK-5. As a note of impact, students attending the 10 public elementary schools closest to PUENTE demonstrate a 22.4% grade-level proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and 17.4% in Math. In comparison, 66% of PUENTE students demonstrate grade-level proficiency in ELA and 68% in Math.



College and Career

PUENTE's College and Career Program is closing the opportunity gap for low-income youth of color. The College Board reported that median earnings of bachelor's degree recipients who had no advanced degree and who were working full time were 67% higher than those with only a high school diploma.

College Access services for high-school students grew dramatically last year when we added on-site workshops at two service area partner schools, Mendez High School and Roybal Learning Center. The College and Career program now serves over 400 youth aged 14-24 as they succeed in high school, enroll in and graduate from college, and contribute meaningfully in their careers.

2019-2020 Accomplishments

2,334

students and community
members served

67%

grade-level proficiency for Elementary School
students, surpassing the outcomes from 10
other public schools in our service area

0.4

average grade-level-equivalent reading
gain for 161 Summer Camp students

100%

high school graduation rate in College
and Career program

15%

increase in adult student ESL completions,
despite the challenges of COVID-19

75,000+

free student meals served

Sean's Story

Many immigrant children want to make their parents proud by being the first in their family to go to college, including Sean, who is a student in the PUENTE College and Career Program. "My parents have sacrificed a lot for me to have a better life," Sean shares. "I always try my best to not disappoint my parents and make them proud."

As a high school student, Sean received college advisement from PUENTE through in-class workshops. When COVID-19 hit during Sean's senior year, we counseled him on how to stay on track academically, even during distance learning. Through one-on-one case management, we helped him complete his FAFSA form and find financial aid. He also earned a PUENTE scholarship. Without this help, Sean shared that he would not have been able to pursue a four-year university.

"PUENTE has helped me succeed by providing learning and financial services that allow me to continue to excel."



"PUENTE Learning Center gives me hope that things will be all right, even in these times of great difficulty," Sean says. "PUENTE has helped me succeed by providing learning and financial services that allow me to continue to excel."

Sean is a talented young man with a bright future ahead of him. He is following his dreams and is on his way to completing his first year at Cal State LA. He is making his family proud as a first-generation college student.

Our Supporters

\$500,000 and above

The Ahmanson Foundation

\$100,000-\$499,999

California Department of Education

\$25,000-\$99,999

BCM Foundation

Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation

The Coca-Cola Foundation

Dwight Stuart Youth Fund

Joseph Drown Foundation

The Mark Hughes Foundation

\$10,000-\$24,999

Leticia Acosta

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation

Henry L. Guenther Foundation

The MUFG Union Bank Foundation

The Snell & Wilmer Foundation

Southern California Edison

Union Pacific Foundation

The Walton Family Foundation

Wells Fargo

\$5,000-\$9,999

Accuride International Inc.

Assured Guaranty Corp.

Bergen Foundation

Dollar General Literacy Foundation

Lon V. Smith Foundation

Mata Construction

Eugenia Riordan Mule

Cody Press

UnidosUS

Viele & Sons, Inc

W.E. O'Neil Construction Company of California

\$2,500-\$4,999

A.J. Kirkwood & Associates, Inc.

Raul and Lisa Amezcua

Mizrahi Tefahot Bank Ltd.

The O'Neil Foundation

Chun and Mei Wong

\$1,000-\$2,499

Daniel and Francine Arguello

Beneficial State Foundation

and Beneficial State Bank

Bolton and Company

The Davidow Charitable Fund

Englander Knabe & Allen

Rich Erickson

Hunt Ortmann

James and Wendy Drasdo Fund at the California Community Foundation

Los Angeles Education Partnership

Manufacturers Bank

Northrop Grumman Corporation

University of Southern California

\$500-\$999

Benjamin Ceja, in honor of

Yolanda Chavez

Blue Shield of California

The Murr Family

Roger Riddlehoover, in honor of

Maria Maturano

Levi Rosales

Roy E. Crummer Foundation

The Sandoval Family Charitable Fund

SCE Federal Credit Union

Select Equity Group Foundation

Robert and Joanne Smith

Target

Drs. Christina Benson and Kenneth Wells

Zelda Zinn

\$100-\$499

The Accenture Team, in memory of Beryl Markiles

Hugo Almeida

James and Carole Barrall

Emile Bayle

California Agricultural Leadership Foundation

Juan J. Dominguez

Ana Donayre

Alicia Granados

Greg Gonzalez

Ernesto Espinoza and Sua Hernandez

Lisa Roth, in memory of Beryl Markiles

Gilbert R. Vasquez

Bertha Alicia Santibanez

Philip Watters

William Wolfe, in honor of Michele Wolfe

\$99 and below

Jose de Jesus Alvarez

Dilcia Chinchilla

Jill Diamond

Rosa and Luis Fonseca

Norma and David Gilbody

Jonathan Thomas and Barbara Hurd

Ana Castro and Julter Landaeta

Shetaye Yakebo Letta

Ramon Lopez

Concepcion de Jesus Lopez de Acosta

Fortune Zuckerman and Ken Fry

Andrew Lippman

The Marquez Family

Francisca Montano

Sheck-Bolles Charitable Fund

Robert Thiele

Bianca Rios and Albert Trevino

Carmen Vinuerza

Eileen Wells

In Kind Donors

\$100,000 and above

East Los Angeles Occupational Center
Los Angeles Community College

\$50,000-\$99,999

Ralph F. Miles Trust

\$10,000-\$49,999

Nike

\$1,000-\$9,999

Ace Beverage Company
Andrew Lippman
Kaplan
Drs. Christina Benson and Kenneth Wells

\$500-\$999

Iliana Galliher
Rick and Elaine Goolsby
Garrett and Diane Kop
Ally Maruszewski
James and Lisa Mussenden
Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti,
City of Los Angeles
Target
Total Wines & More
Xcel Mechanical Systems, Inc.

\$250-\$500

Martha and Jorge Armendariz
Angelica Castro
Caesars Entertainment Corporation
Alicia Granados
Office of Councilmember Jose Huizar,
City of Los Angeles
Panera Bread
Ralphs
Eric Rodriguez
Target
Hiro Watanabe

\$100-\$249

ABC7
Andy Tahay and Evelyn Sanchez
Berta Santibanez
The Cheesecake Factory
Contessa Italian Foods Collections
Costco Wholesale
Jennifer Estrada
Lagunitas Brewing Company
Malibu Wine Safaris
Rock Sugar Southeast Asian Kitchen
The Wolfe Family
The World Famous Laugh Factory
Universal Studios Hollywood
Zevia Smart Soda

\$100 and below

Aquarium of the Pacific
Autry Museum of the American West
Big 5 Sporting Goods
Din Tai Fung
El Pollo Loco
Firestone Walker Brewing Company
Howlin' Ray's
In-N-Out Burger
Kidspace Children's Museum
Kimberly Lim
Kylie Link
Lucero's Bakery
Oriental Trading Company
Alicia Salceda
Umami Burger

Thank you also to those donors who have chosen to remain anonymous.

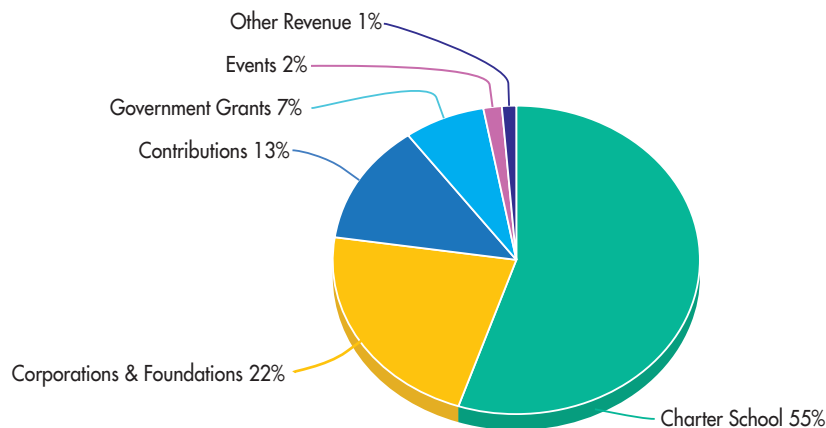
This list recognizes those who contributed to PUENTE Learning Center between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020. Every effort has been made to ensure that the list is complete and accurate. If errors or omissions have occurred, please accept our apologies and call the Development Department at 323-780-5312 to report corrections. Thank you.

Financials

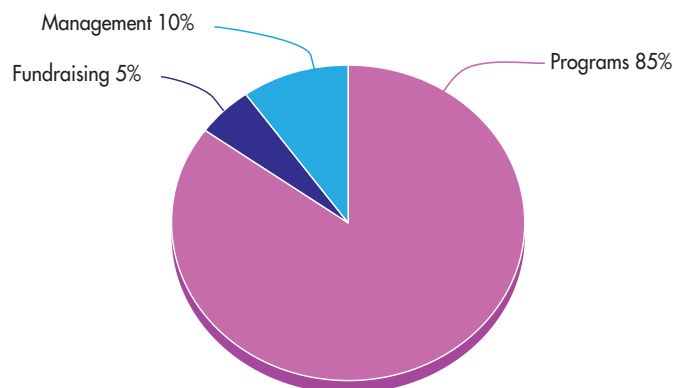
Operating revenue reached \$3,616,526, its highest level in five years. Due to unrealized investment losses from market volatility during COVID-19, expenses exceeded income. PUENTE has leveraged investment gains from previous years, subsequent gains on investments, and cash reserves in order to maintain services through the pandemic and to support the elementary school's expansion.

At PUENTE, we know our donors expect us to use our funds wisely, and we are committed to fulfilling that trust by maximizing the funds dedicated to educational programs and program support.

HOW YOUR GIVING HELPED



WHERE YOUR GIVING WENT





Board of Directors

Albert Reyes

Board Chair
Partner
Kutak Rock, LLP

Chun Wong

Board Vice Chair
Founder and CEO
Asolva, Inc.

Alfredo Izmajtovich

Board Treasurer
Executive Vice President
The Cesar Chavez Foundation

Richelle Huizar

Board Secretary
Community Leader

Daniel Arguello

President and CEO
Daniel Arguello and Associates

Oscar Cabrales

Sales Representative
American & Efird, Inc

Greg Gonzalez

Director of Financial Aid and History Teacher
Harvard-Westlake School

Jocelyn Rosenwald

Director of Acquisitions
Beach Front Properties, LLC

Tyler Sutherland

Attorney
Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

Executive Team

Jerome Greening

CEO

Angelica Castro

Vice President of Finance and
Administration

Matt Wells

Vice President of Development

Michele Wolfe

Senior Director of Education

Tesa Marquez

Manager of Human Resources
and Administration



Donate | Volunteer | Get Involved

**PUENTE Learning Center
501 S. Boyle Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90033**

www.puente.org

