




PUENTE
LEARNING CENTER

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2024
2025**





Message from the CEO and Board Chair

As we reflect on the 2024-2025 program year, we honor a remarkable milestone: the beginning of PUENTE Learning Center’s 40th Anniversary. This moment invites us not only to look back with pride, but also to look forward with renewed purpose. Even as our community faced extraordinary challenges this past year, PUENTE stood firm — guided by the values that have defined us from the beginning — leading through service, lifting up community voices, and drawing deep strength from the resilience of those we serve.

At the center of our mission — yesterday, today, and always — are our students and families. Each day, they inspire us with their boundless curiosity, their courage in the face of uncertainty, and their determination to keep moving forward with their dreams. We are humbled by the trust they place in us and energized by the hope they carry, even in the most difficult times.

We look back on 2024-2025 with gratitude, conviction, and a steadfast belief in the transformative power of education — and in the inherent potential of every individual who walks through PUENTE’s doors.

In these pages, you will find stories that reveal the impact of relationships built this year. You will be introduced to Michael, an elementary student gaining confidence, and his mother Irma, now a devoted and inspiring volunteer. You will also

meet Ana, whose journey illustrates resilience and possibility as she builds language skills, strengthens employability, and deepens connections within our shared community. You will also learn more about the progress that we achieved together during the 2024-2025 program year. Among this year’s accomplishments, we:

- Achieved a six-year renewal for PUENTE Charter Elementary School and reduced chronic absenteeism by 41%
- Reached a record 931 participants in the PUENTE College and Career Program, with a 98% college enrollment rate
- Boosted our food distribution to provide over 20,000 pounds of food to 2,195 PUENTE constituents
- Launched a new strategic plan and completed our \$11 million facility renovation

None of this would be possible without our extraordinary community — our students and families, our dedicated employees, and supporters like you. You are the heartbeat of PUENTE Learning Center, and we are profoundly grateful for the passion and belief you bring to our mission.

Thank you for standing with us and helping open the doors to high-quality educational opportunities for learners of all ages. As we step boldly into the next 40 years, we are energized by all that we can accomplish together — and honored to continue this important mission with you.

Gratefully,



Jerome Greening
Jerome Greening
Chief Executive Officer



tmpr
Tyler Press
Board Chair

Family Highlight: Meet Irma and Michael

PUENTE has touched multiple generations of Irma and Michael's family. Years before Irma enrolled her son at PUENTE Charter Elementary School, Irma's mother was a student in PUENTE's Adult Education Program, gaining English and computer skills that helped her navigate daily life in Boyle Heights. That earlier connection influenced Irma's decision to enroll Michael at PUENTE Charter.

Throughout elementary school, Michael has demonstrated steady academic growth. He has strengthened his math and language arts skills with support from teachers who track student progress closely and intervene when needed.

"The teachers are so involved," Irma explains. "They go out of their way because they love their jobs." Irma also values the additional support provided by having a designated paraprofessional in each classroom — providing individualized assistance and meeting diverse learning needs throughout the school day.

During his years at PUENTE Charter, Michael has also grown more confident and self-sufficient. "He became very independent when it comes to homework," Irma shares. "Now, he's consistent and makes sure everything is turned in on time, all on his own."

Effective communication has been another key factor in Irma's positive experience. The school

provides consistent updates with responsive follow-up from teachers. Family nights and student-led conferences further strengthen the connection between home and school. As Michael approaches middle school, Irma feels confident in his readiness.

Earlier this year, Irma even stepped up as a committed volunteer. She is representing the PUENTE parent community as part of the statewide Community Engagement Initiative (CEI).

CEI is increasing the ability and capacity of schools to implement effective, equitable, and culturally-responsive community engagement practices — thanks to the participation of Irma, the rest of our team from PUENTE Charter School, and 128 other districts and charter schools across California.

For Irma, CEI is a significant time commitment. There are eight convenings this school year, including virtual and hybrid meetings as well as an in-person conference. Irma has taken on this role because of the difference PUENTE has made for her family.

PUENTE has played a meaningful role in the educational journey of Irma and Michael's family—demonstrating the impact of a school that prioritizes connection, communication, and long-term impact.



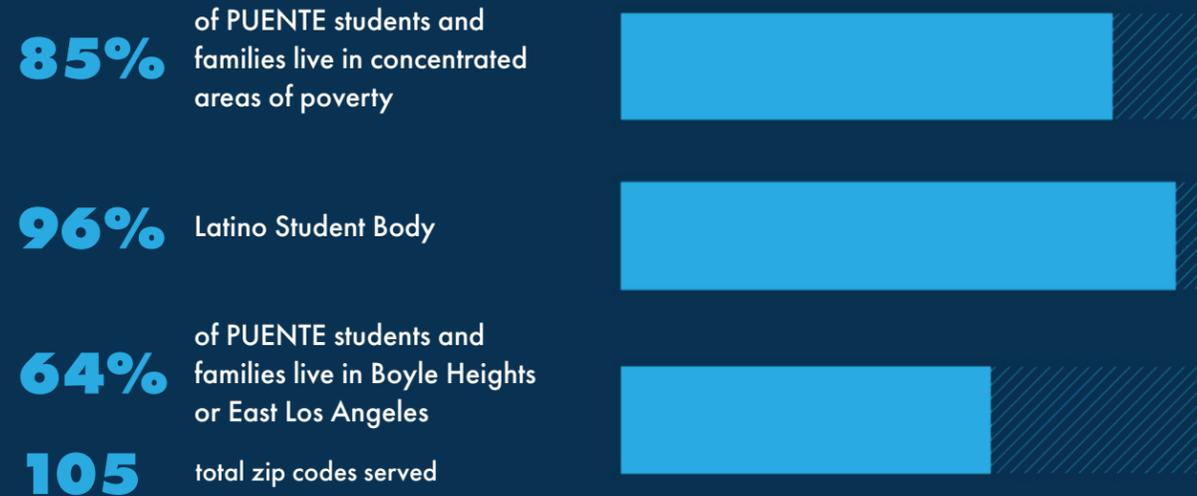
Who We Serve

2,068

Children, Youth, and Adult Students

4,702

Community Service Touchpoints



Numbers Served, By Program



48 Preschool



931 College and Career Program



314 Charter Elementary School



774 Adult Education

Our Impact

41% decrease in chronic absenteeism at PUENTE Charter Elementary School in the 2024-2025 school year

Re-Classified Fluent English Proficient



College Enrollment Rates



PUENTE College and Career Program students have been enrolled at prestigious institutions like **John Hopkins, Dartmouth, Northwestern, USC, UC Berkeley, and UCLA.**

What We Do

Preschool

Charter Elementary School

College and Career Program

Adult Education

Community Services



Strategic Plan

In 2024-2025, PUENTE Learning Center launched a new three-year strategic plan to guide our next chapter of growth and community impact.

Our work is built around **four pillars** that define our priorities:

-  **Integrated Supports**
Addressing student and family needs holistically
-  **Extended Learning**
Expanding access to enriching educational experiences
-  **Family & Community Engagement**
Deepening connection and trust
-  **Collaborative Leadership**
Fostering shared vision and accountability

These priorities are powered by **three cross-cutting pathways** that strengthen our foundation:

-  **Outreach & Communication**
-  **Partnership & Collaboration**
-  **Capacity & Infrastructure**

PUENTE is actively using this plan to guide decisions, measure progress, and hold ourselves accountable—delivering lasting impact that strengthens our organization for the future.

Partner Highlight: Citi

“Citi and Citi Foundation’s support for PUENTE underscores our commitment to enabling growth and economic progress, creating positive change within the communities we serve. PUENTE’s work creates pathways for opportunity, and we are proud to support them in building a stronger, more connected community.”

- Anabel Santamaria, U.S. Community Relations, Citi

Citi and Citi Foundation have been longtime supporters of PUENTE Learning Center, providing grants, engaging in volunteer and board service, and more. In 2021, Citi Foundation selected PUENTE as a recipient of its Community Progress Maker initiative, a multi-year flexible funding program supporting visionary organizations working to connect low-income communities to greater social and economic opportunity.

This past year, Citi has continued its robust support for PUENTE. For example:

- On Teach Children to Save Day, Citi volunteers joined our 3rd and 4th graders to explore the movement of money, what it means to save for the future, and how early choices can help build long-term stability.
- At our Career Fair, Citi helped bring the world of opportunity into focus. Citi employees participated in career panels that gave our high school and college youth exposure to real-world career pathways.



- As a sponsor of Cultura y Raíces — our vibrant celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month — Citi helped us craft a space where families, students and community members connected through culture, learning, and shared celebration.

Unwavering in our Mission: Strengthening Support for Community Resilience



This past year called us to stand together. Federal actions on immigration and equity—from intensified ICE enforcement to threats of mass deportations—have created profound fear and uncertainty for the students and families we serve.

“Our staff has emphasized making students and families feel welcome,” says CEO Jerome Greening. “Our students are on the front lines of these challenges and stressors. We are grateful for the trust they place in us—and for their eagerness to learn and succeed.”

Throughout these uncertainties, PUENTE Learning Center remained a safe and steady place where opportunity is possible regardless of income, ethnicity, zip code, or immigration status.

To meet rising needs, we delivered a comprehensive response. We strengthened on-site safety and expanded staff training. We hosted know-your-rights workshops and family engagement events. And, as our families struggled with basic necessities, we significantly expanded our free food distribution—providing over 20,000 pounds of food to 2,195 individuals, helping them stay stable, supported, and on-track with their educational goals.

“Our students and families have the right to navigate their lives with the support, clarity, and compassion they deserve,” says Greening. For many, walking through our doors means finding not only services but also hope, dignity, and community.

2024 - 2025 Highlights



Team PUENTE at the L.A. Big 5K

In March 2025, Team PUENTE brought their energy to Dodger Stadium for the L.A. Big 5K, uniting over 100 runners and supporters to raise \$24,000 for our life-enhancing programs.



University of Utah Volunteers

Volunteers from the University of Utah visited PUENTE during their spring break to learn about our impact and work with our students. Their service included joining our weekly 'Conversation Cafe' with our adult students to help improve their ESL skills.



Girls on the Run

PUENTE Charter students participated in the Girls on the Run program, developing healthy habits and self-confidence through teamwork and physical activity. Guided by a dedicated volunteer coach, the girls trained together for a culmination 5K event – earning medals and a strong sense of empowerment.



Cultura y Raíces

In October 2024, PUENTE celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with Cultura y Raíces, an event honoring the vibrant histories and contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities. The celebration also recognized our 2024 Volunteer of the Year, Alexandra Cabrales, for her outstanding service to PUENTE's students and community.



PUENTE Receives Valued Partner Award from East LA College

PUENTE's Volunteer Program was recognized as a valued partner by East Los Angeles College Corps at their end-of-year celebration. Thank you to our student volunteers for their impact, dedication, and hard work in our community.



Education Advocacy Day

PUENTE staff members joined UnidosUS and affiliates for Education Advocacy Day in Sacramento during March 2025. Together, they met with state legislators to share stories of the PUENTE community and to highlight the importance of supporting our students' success.



Career Fair

PUENTE held its Career Fair in March 2025. High school and college students from the PUENTE College & Career Program received career advice, networked with prospective employers, and attended panel discussions to explore diverse career fields.



PUENTE Preschool Expands to Serve Two-Year-Olds

As a site in the California State Preschool Program, PUENTE Preschool now serves children between the ages of 2-4 with part-day morning and afternoon sessions. Our program supports the whole child with high-quality early education.

Six-Year Renewal

The L.A. Unified School District approved the renewal of PUENTE Charter Elementary School in March 2025 — a proud milestone for our entire community. This renewal affirms our ongoing commitment to provide an excellent education and meaningful learning experiences for every student we serve.

We extend thanks and appreciation to our PUENTE staff, students, and families for their steadfast support, and to the LAUSD Board of Education for granting our charter renewal for the next six years. Together, we look forward to continuing this important work and to empowering our students for success.



“Our six-year charter renewal is a powerful affirmation of the hard work, dedication, and belief that our entire school community invests every day. It reflects not only our past accomplishments, but our shared commitment to continually raising expectations for our students and expanding what is possible for their future.”

-Brenda Meza, Charter School Managing Director

Facility Renovation and Re-Imagined Schoolyard

During 2024-2025, PUENTE Learning Center completed its \$11 million renovation. Our facility has an upgraded building type, enhanced seismic dampers, new walls and exterior staircases, and new classroom space on the second floor.

In 2026, PUENTE looks forward to the installation of its Re-Imagined Schoolyard, with a new outdoor activity space and playground, including a state-of-the-art structured play area as well as natural elements. Thank you to the Re-Imagined Schoolyard project funders, with major support from the Ahmanson Foundation and additional gifts provided by the IMA Foundation, the Henry L. Guenther Foundation, and the Los Angeles Lakers Youth Foundation.

Mentorship Program - Navigating Education and Transitions

The PUENTE NExT (Navigating Education and Transitions) Mentorship Program serves select graduates of our College Success program by delivering structured mentorship, targeted communications, and curated events during their academic transitions and early careers. This year’s cohort of 12 alumni was matched with volunteer mentors who are working professionals from organizations such as Public Law Center, U.S. Bank, and the Los Angeles Superior Court. The mentorship lasted six months resulting in deepened connections, refined goals, and sustained momentum.



In the face of a shifting political landscape and regional crises—including the Los Angeles wildfires—PUENTE NExT maintained consistent engagement and enriched community-based networks. Participants received continued support despite external disruption—reinforcing our ethos of resilience.

By June 2025, nine of the 12 cohort members secured full-time employment, one has advanced into a second-year PhD program at UCLA, and two are enrolled in graduate programs while working. These outcomes illustrate the power of intentional alumni connections and the capacity of our community to adapt and thrive.

12
Mentees/
Mentors

111
Hours of
Service

\$11,100
Service Value
from Mentors

Volunteering

138
Total Number
of Volunteers

3,983
Total Hours
of Service

\$166,522
Total Value
of Service



Student Highlight: Meet Ana

When Ana (pictured, left) first arrived in the United States with her family, she faced barriers many immigrants know all too well: navigating daily life with limited English while working tirelessly to create stability for her children. For years, Ana placed her own dreams on hold, prioritizing her family's needs and ensuring her children had the support and care they deserved.

In the early 1990s, Ana enrolled her children into the PUENTE Preschool Program, marking the beginning of her family's connection to the organization. As the years passed and her children grew into independent young adults, Ana found herself at a crossroads. She began to imagine a future that included goals of her own.

That turning point led Ana to PUENTE's Adult Education Program. Through ESL instruction and high school equivalency coursework, she committed herself to overcoming two significant barriers faced by many immigrant adults: language proficiency and educational credentials. "My dream is to continue my education and earn my high school diploma," Ana says. "I have the conviction—and with PUENTE's support, I know it's possible."

PUENTE's tuition-free Adult Education Program has offered Ana more than academic instruction. Its flexible schedule, culturally-responsive

approach, and encouraging learning environment made it possible for her to balance her studies with ongoing family responsibilities. Just as importantly, PUENTE's holistic model ensured that support extended well beyond the classroom.

Ana regularly participated in PUENTE Learning Center's food distributions — an essential resource that eased financial stress and allowed her to stay focused on education. Over time, she became deeply engaged in the broader PUENTE community, joining the Adult Student Advisory Council and helping with outreach to families facing similar challenges. "It's beautiful to see teachers, students, and the community support one another," explains Ana. "That is what I see at PUENTE."

Today, Ana remains dedicated to her pursuit of a high-school diploma — an achievement she once thought out of reach. Through PUENTE's Adult Education Program and Community Services, she is strengthening her English language skills, rebuilding confidence, and creating new pathways to opportunity. Her journey reflects the heart of PUENTE's mission: enriching the neighborhood through education and providing whole-family support that empowers individuals across generations to flourish.

Our Supporters

\$100,000 and above

The Ahmanson Foundation
 BCM Foundation
 California Department of Education
 The Carl & Roberta Deutsch Foundation
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\$50,000-\$99,999

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California Department of Health Care Access and Information
 Citi
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 IMA Foundation
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 USC Good Neighbors Grant Program
 Vernon CommUNITY Fund

\$5,000-\$9,999

Leticia Acosta

Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
 The Chris & Melody Malachowsky Family Foundation
 ECMC Foundation
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 Los Angeles Lakers Youth Foundation

The Snell & Wilmer Foundation
 Visión y Compromiso

\$2,500-\$4,999

Raul and Lisa Amezcua AvalonBay Communities
 Community Learning Partnership
 Juan Dominguez
 Office of Hilda Solis, LA County Supervisor

\$1,000-\$2,499

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 Don Wen
 Helen Sztrigler Weston and Richard Weston
 Lillian Williams
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\$50-\$99

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 Stephanie Villada
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Gifts In-Kind

\$100,000 and above

LAUSD, Division of Adult and Career Education

\$25,000-\$99,999

Americorps VISTA
 Microsoft, Inc.

\$10,000-\$24,999

East Los Angeles Community College
 Los Angeles City College

\$1,000-\$9,999

Angel City Football Club
 Citizens Business Bank

\$250-\$999

Girls on the Run
 The McCourt Foundation

\$100-\$249

Endeavor Apparel Solutions
 Richard Heredia
 A Noise Within Theatre

\$50-\$99

Adventure City
 Andrea Griego
 Children's Museum at La Habra
 Griffith Park Train Rides
 Hollywood Wax Museum
 Petersen Automotive Museum
 Santa Barbara Zoo
 Street Tacos and Grill
 The Cheesecake Factory
 The Huntington Library, Art Collections & Botanical Gardens

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

This list recognizes those who contributed \$50 or more to PUENTE Learning Center between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. 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 contact the Advancement Department at 323-780-5312 or donate@puente.org to report corrections. Thank you.

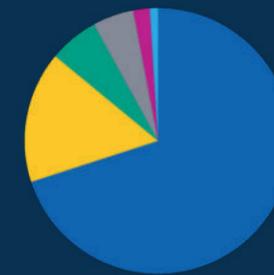


Our Financials

PUENTE Learning Center achieved strong financial performance, with operating revenues increasing by 19% while operating expenses grew at just 9%. This disciplined approach supported continued program growth, including new college access partnerships and expanded community school services. At the same time, generous donor support drove a more than 100% increase in contributions and grants.

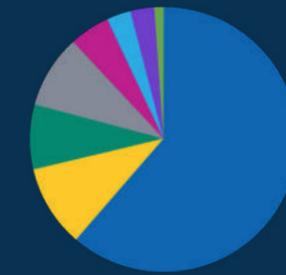
Together with positive investment returns, these results allowed PUENTE to close the year with an overall surplus. Strategic use of this surplus, alongside reserves, enabled critical facility renovations—ensuring our campus remains safe and inviting for the students and families we serve.

Revenue and Support



- Charter Elementary School **70%**
- Contributions **16%**
- In-Kind Donations **6%**
- State Preschool **5%**
- After School Contract **2%**
- Special events and other revenues **1%**

Operating Expenses



- Charter Elementary School **62%**
- Adult Education **10%**
- Preschool **9%**
- College and Career **8%**
- Administration **5%**
- Fundraising **3%**
- Community Services **3%**
- Afterschool **1%**

Statement of Activities 2024-2025

Operating revenue

Contributions	\$ 1,506,643
In-Kind Donations	579,144
California State Preschool Program	438,183
After School - ASES Contract	152,612
Charter School	6,443,456
Special events and other revenues	18,001

Total operating revenue

\$ 9,138,039

Operating expenses and losses

Programs and educational	9,572,786
Management and general	541,112
Fundraising	301,359

Total operating expenses

\$ 10,415,258

Change in net assets from operations

\$ (1,277,219)

(Other items considered to be non-operating)

Investment return, net	\$ 2,865,302
Interest income	3,772

Change in net assets

\$ 1,591,854

Net assets at beginning of year

\$ 32,232,182

Net assets at end of year

\$ 33,824,037

Unaudited Numbers

Leadership



Board of Directors

Tyler Press, Chair

Chief Legal Programs Officer
Public Law Center

Jocelyn Rosenwald, Vice Chair

Director of Acquisitions
Beach Front Properties, LLC

Lara Lightbody, Treasurer

Community Leader

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Vice President
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Director of Early Education

Tesa Marquez

Director of Human Resources

Brenda Meza

Charter School Managing Director

"I am proud to be a part of PUENTE because the organization is a true bridge for the community to be able to achieve, grow, and find economic security."

– Tyler Press, PUENTE Board Chair

Get Involved

Donate

Your gift opens doors to opportunity for students and families seeking a better future through education. By supporting our programs, you help reduce educational inequities, strengthen learning pathways, and create lasting change in our communities. Give the gift of education—and the possibility it brings.

Join Our Monthly Giving

Become a sustaining partner in our mission. Your recurring monthly gift provides consistent, reliable support that allows students, educators, and families to thrive year-round. Together, we can ensure continuity, stability, and long-term impact in education.

Volunteer

Share your time, skills, and passion for education. Volunteers play a vital role in supporting students and families through tutoring, mentoring, food distributions, and special events. Join us in building stronger pathways to learning and opportunity.

Work With Us

Join a collaborative, inclusive, and mission-driven team dedicated to advancing educational equity. Whether in the classroom or behind the scenes, your work helps create supportive learning environments where students and families can succeed.

Make a Planned Gift

Create a legacy rooted in education and opportunity. A planned gift ensures future generations of students and families continue to access high-quality learning experiences, strengthening our community for years to come.



puente.org/donate



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LEARNING CENTER

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