

STUDENTS FIRST

How Vista Adult School makes education personal

By Raul Clement

Adult schools are sometimes excluded from conversations about traditional educational paths. Yet, adult education dates back centuries, providing affordable career training and flexible means for students to continue their education and improve their employment prospects.

Vista Adult School continues that long tradition. Though officially established in 1977, when it began offering high school diploma and GED programs, the school's origins go back to a single, storefront ESL classroom in the 1950s. Since then it has expanded to offer Career Technical Education (CTE) in areas such as business, medicine, information technology and construction. Along the way its enrollment has swelled to over 3000 students annually, making it a fixture of the local education system and wider San Diego County community.

Elizabeth O'Shea-West, principal of VAS, attributes the school's success to its focus on student needs.

"Our whole goal is to put the student first," O'Shea-West says. "What does the student need? How can we meet that need? People come here for more personalized education than they've gotten other places. We're able to provide that because of our approach."

Part of that approach is a commitment to keeping classrooms small, with no more than 24 students per class. O'Shea-West says this makes students feel comfortable from the outset.

"Within the first couple weeks, the students all know each other," O'Shea-West says. "They feel comfortable asking questions. It's not intimidating at all."

Another way VAS makes students feel welcome is through its support services. These include program coordinators, counseling services and transition advisors.

"Our student support team is there from the minute we open to when we close, from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.," O'Shea-West says. "So if at any time a student has an issue, one of the team members is there. We have people who



Principal Elizabeth O'Shea-West of Vista Adult School says the school offers educational opportunities and affordable career training at a fraction of the cost of other institutions. Photo by Charlie Neuman

will sit down and talk to them about their plan. And if they have any barriers that come up—whether medical, financial, transportation or housing—we have local agencies we can refer them to. The support team makes sure our students are successful."

This focus on students extends to the classes offered. VAS is part of the Vista Chamber of Commerce and attends events with local employers to stay in touch with industry needs. The goal is to provide students with an education that will connect them with good local jobs.

"We have a reputation within our community of preparing students to meet the industry needs," O'Shea-West says. "For our Pharmacy Tech students, Walgreens is right there, ready to accept them once they get their license. Our phlebotomy interns do their internships through Scripps. A lot of times, they get hired. When our local industry needs people, they'll reach out to our CTE Coordinator to find qualified candidates."


In addition to CTE, VAS hasn't neglected its roots as a provider of ESL, high school diploma and GED programs. Like CTE, these programs offer a flexible approach, tailored to student needs. Classes can be taken concurrently or separately, in person or online.

"If something changes in your life, you don't have to stop learning," O'Shea-West says.

VAS and other adult schools also offer education and valuable career training at a fraction of the cost of other institutions.

"We don't want you to pay \$30,000 for a program that would be a few hundred dollars here," O'Shea-West says. "We have high-quality credentialed teachers with industry experience. We have a staff who cares. We have a support team that will help you get through the hiccups along the way." And most importantly, she says, students' needs always come first. "We really believe in our students. We believe in what they want to do. It's our priority to help them meet that goal."

"Anything is possible," she says. "If you want to work hard enough, you can achieve it. Vista Adult School helped me to achieve my goal."

 Vista Adult School

For more information on how Vista Adult School can help you achieve your goals, visit www.vistaadultschool.org or call 760-758-7122

SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT:

Vista Adult School sets a student on an entirely new path

By Whip Villarreal

Vista Adult School has helped countless students improve their lives and Juan Flores, 36 of San Diego County, is no exception. Flores once faced numerous obstacles that eventually led him down the wrong path, resulting in a period of incarceration during his teenage years. However, his journey took a remarkable turn as he embraced the transformative power of education, which helped reshape his life's trajectory.

During his time in a residential drug rehabilitation program, Flores realized the importance of turning his life around and decided to use his time there as an opportunity for self improvement. He dedicated himself to education and earned a high school diploma through Vista Adult School in 2014. This accomplishment marked the beginning of his education journey toward a brighter future.

"My experience at Vista Adult was awesome, they helped me and worked with me to make sure I submitted my assignments on time and made sure that I understood the material," Flores recalls. "They gave me the resources and knowledge of programs to help me go to school. Prior to that, I thought higher education was basically unattainable for someone like me who had a background of drugs, violence and incarceration."

Determined to continue his education, Juan enrolled at Palomar College for the next two years, where he not only met the requirements for an Associate's degree, but also discovered his passion for sociology.

"At that time, I didn't understand my situation as a social problem: I was very narrow-minded and very ignorant to a lot of things," Flores explains. "So, education allowed me to really see more than what I was conditioned to see and experience as a person who grew up in a marginalized community. I continued to learn more



After time in a rehabilitation program made him determined to turn his life around, Juan Flores earned his high school diploma and was able to forge a new path for himself. Photo by George Baker

about my situation and I became curious about my lifestyle and that got me to pursue sociology as a student."

His curiosity and persistence in his studies ultimately led him to enrolling into the University of California, Berkeley where he has so far received a Bachelor's degree in sociology. His resilience, combined with the support of mentors and peers, opened up many opportunities he could not have dreamed about prior to his enrollment at Vista Adult School. Flores is currently enrolled in dual Master's degree programs for social welfare and public policy at U.C. Berkeley, furthering his education and working towards a future that once seemed beyond reach. He is on track to complete the dual programs within the next two years.

Flores recognizes that without undergoing rehabilitation and enrolling in Vista Adult School, his current life wouldn't reflect the positive trajectory it does today. He attributes his newfound opportunities for

success to his education, opportunities that may not have been accessible otherwise. He believes that his story serves as a testament to the power of education and self-discipline, advocating that anyone with dedication can achieve their goals.

"It's been long and hard, but nothing comes without sacrifice and I have been able to stay the course," Flores says. "I think if folks are looking for guidance or want to do something to better their lives, it is important to understand where they are at in life and really follow what they want to do regardless of what other people are doing around them."

 Vista Adult School

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A LONG WAY UP

Student earns GED after overcoming adversity, now has higher education goals

By Gail Short

Today, Tara Bender has a GED, a certificate that enables her to help others and her sights set on higher education goals, but for many years her future didn't look as promising. As a young, single mother Bender battled alcoholism, and her addiction eventually led to her experiencing homelessness.

Over time, Bender says she sought help from a local agency called Solutions for Change, a recovery facility that provides aid and counseling for people struggling with substance abuse, homelessness, incarceration and poverty. She says she became so inspired by the help she received there that she decided to pursue a career working for the organization.

To do that Bender needed state certification, and to study for certification she needed to finally complete her high school education: "I wanted to become an alcohol drug or a peer support specialist, but I didn't ever think it was possible for me to get my GED," she says..

Once he finishes his classes at Vista, which include business courses, Enriquez plans to return to Guadalajara and enroll in college to complete his studies. "Your education is what tells people about you, your family and your country," he says.

Despite those doubts, Bender enrolled at Vista Adult School, determined to finally earn a high school equivalency certificate. She says that when she signed up for the school, it had been nearly three decades since she attended her last high school class.

Open since 1977, Vista Adult School offers a range of educational programs for adult learners, from career technical education and English as a second language to basic education and secondary education, as well as community education courses. Within the adult secondary education program, students can earn their high school diploma by taking English, math,



Pursuing higher education has enabled Tara Bender to not only improve her own life, but offer a hand up to people struggling the same way she used to. Photo by Charlie Neuman

United States and world history, government and economics, life and physical science, fine art and several electives.

To earn their GED, students must pass tests in language arts, science, social studies, and what Bender says has always been her weakest subject in school—math.

After enrolling, Bender attended classes as Vista Adult School three days a week from 9 a.m. to noon. She says she still found math difficult, especially geometry, but found essential help and support from one particular teacher.

"The number one teacher who was just a huge part of my journey and my success is Kathy Boyd," Bender says. "She taught me up on the board, which really helped because I had a hard time doing it online. The way she explained things just clicked for me."

And Bender says she appreciated how Boyd always encouraged her.

"I really thought it was impossible, but she continually told me, 'Yes, you'll do it,' and 'You're going to make it' and, 'You're going to get it,'" she says. "She had a lot of patience with me because I got really frustrated, wanting to give up, but she told

me giving up was not an option and that I could do this.

"She told me not to give up and to look how far I had come, and that it would be just another success under my belt. She's super proud of me right now," she says.

Last November, Bender earned her GED.

"I passed the math portion by two points," she says. "I got my GED 27 years after high school, and then I got my peer support specialist training out of the way."

Today, she is a certified peer support specialist for mental health systems and plans go back to school and to pursue a bachelor's degree in psychology.

"I want to continue enhancing my education," she says.

"Anything is possible," she says. "If you want to work hard enough, you can achieve it. Vista Adult School helped me to achieve my goal."


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WORTH IT

Persistence pays off for parent who returned to school to earn GED certificate, further educational goals

By Whip Villareal

Breanna Varela-Perez, 37, dropped out of high school at the age of 14 and did not make it past the ninth grade. During this tumultuous period, motherhood came earlier than she expected, and she gave birth to her first child at 17. She has a total of four children and focused on providing for them, limiting her educational pursuits. Despite the challenges she faced, she recently earned her GED certificate at Vista Adult School and plans to enroll in the 2024 fall semester at Palomar College to accomplish her further educational goals.

In 2017, Varela-Perez attempted to obtain her GED before enrolling at Vista Adult School. She passed all of the exams except the math portion, which she failed multiple times. On her last attempt, she was one point away from passing. This resulted in a two-month waiting period before she could retake the test. Subsequently, her momentum stalled as she focused on work and her GED was put on hold.

Varela-Perez would find a new career working as a teacher's aide at her children's daycare. Immersing herself in early childhood education, she completed child development courses and aspired to become a social worker or teacher. However, in order to achieve this goal, she needed to enroll in college, leading her to revisit pursuing a GED in 2023.

"I saw the Vista Adult School flyers come in the mail and I decided to enroll and finish taking math," Varela-Perez says. "It came to a point where if I wanted to further my education, I would have to do college classes and a GED is required to enroll. That was one of my motivating factors to further my education."



Since passing her GED exam, Breanna Varela-Perez has worked on further educational goals to pursue a career in early childhood education. Photo Charlie Neuman

Initially attempting to complete the GED courses online, she once again found herself struggling with math. She was referred to in-person classes, where she met instructor Kathy Boyd. Varela-Perez said that Boyd helped her understand the course material and the lessons were finally starting to click. Through hard work and dedication, she conquered the math test and received her GED in 2024. She credits Boyd for providing her with the help she needed to understand the material while praising her teaching abilities and dedication to helping students.

Her advice to others in similar situations is to not give up and go for it.

"It will be worth it in the end, especially if you have children," Varela-Perez says.

"Your children will always look up to you, so you have to keep going for them. I now know it's never too late to reach for your dreams, and getting an education will help make it happen."

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SCIENTIST CRACKS LANGUAGE BARRIER

Brazilian doctor learns conversational English to continue immunology career

By Jill Spear

Even with her doctoral degree and post-doctoral studies, Daniela Grosso had more to learn. In July of 2023, when she arrived in Vista from Brazil, she didn't speak conversational English. It was a hurdle she'd have to conquer to resume her career in immunology.

Though she'd studied English to read scientific papers, she couldn't converse in the language. Remarkably, she is now nearly fluent. In March of 2024, she enrolled in Advanced English as a second language (ESL) at Vista Adult School and proved to be a quick study.

Like many other professionals, she'll have to pass an English language test to work in her chosen field. She's working hard to eventually pass that test and establish a new career, taking six Advanced ESL classes a week.

"It's been a challenge to move to another country and speak another language at the age of 50," she says. "That's true for my husband also, who was a math teacher in Brazil, and my daughter, Manuela, who's 14."

It was Manuela who provided the motivation to move to the U.S. "My home city of Sao Paulo has a thriving economy, but it's dangerous. Crime is a big problem," she says. "I wanted to give my daughter a better life with more opportunities.

It was a bold move, and one that many immigrants make. After spending their lives in Brazil, where the native language is Portuguese, she and her family risked an uncertain future and culture shock to leave their home country and build new lives.

"The only regret in life is if you don't try," Grosso says.

Like her mother, Manuela has proven to be a fast learner and is already speaking English with her classmates, thanks in



Despite having advanced degrees from her university in Brazil, Daniela Grosso lacked the conversational English skills needed to continue her career in the United States ... until she took ESL classes at Vista Adult School. Photo by Charlie Neuman

large part to her ESL class at school. She has adapted well to her new life, and Grosso says Manuela has expressed a desire to stay in the U.S. "My husband and I think it's important to live in different countries and experience different cultures," she says.

Grosso has high praise for her experience at Vista Adult School. "My teacher is the best. She worries about us and we've learned a lot from her. She teaches carefully to make sure we understand."

Grosso also appreciates the assistance Vista's personal counselors provide. "The counselor has been such a big help. Whenever I need advice about my career, she's there for me. She worked with me on creating a resume in English and helped prepare me for a job interview," she remarks.

"Everybody is so friendly and welcoming here. I never feel that I'm an immigrant. My schoolmates in ESL come from all over—Japan, Ukraine, China and Mexico," she says. "We're all on the same page, working to learn the language, so I'm not alone. The school has really lifted my mood."

Once Grosso has finished her Advanced ESL studies and passed her English fluency test, she plans to focus more on her career in science. With her doctoral degree in biotechnology and postdoctoral work in immunology, she'd like to combine teaching at the university level with lab-based research, just as she did in Brazil.

"People in Brazil think it's great to live in the U.S.," she adds. "Here, they want you to learn and have fun, too."


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BILINGUAL BUSINESS GOALS

ESL student plans to become language interpreter for businesses

By Jill Spear

In Guadalajara there are a lot of opportunities if you speak both English and Spanish,” says Brayan Smith Enriquez Diaz. With that in mind, he has his eyes on a particular prize. He’s studying to become a language interpreter for companies that need bilingual employees.

Given his academic success in Vista Adult School’s Advanced English as a second language (ESL) program, he’s well on his way to his goal.

Enriquez, who was born and raised in Mexico, singles out his family as one of the driving forces in his success. “My mother encouraged me to learn English. She told me that if I want to learn something, I can.”

Other family members played equally important roles in motivating him. When Enriquez graduated from high school in Guadalajara, his grandparents encouraged him to come to Vista and learn English. He researched schools online and discovered that Vista Adult School has an accredited ESL program that’s close to his new home and free of charge.

He enrolled at Vista in 2019 and advanced from ESL Level 2 to ESL Level 4 by 2020, at which point the COVID pandemic arrived, bringing virtually everything to a halt. Enriquez stopped going to classes for the year and didn’t resume his studies until 2021, when he began taking online classes.

“That was a challenge because it was difficult to ask questions during the online class without stopping everything. You have to practice your English outside class, too, and it was hard to wear a mask and understand other people,” he says.

Enriquez was glad when in-person classes began again. Now that he no longer had to wear a mask, his English began to improve once more. “It’s good to have a



Brayan Enriquez is improving his English skills at Vista Adult School and hopes to return to Guadalajara to work as a language interpreter for businesses. Photo by Charlie Neuman

native speaker in front of you and be able to ask questions.”

As his ESL teacher can attest, questions are one of his favorite ways to learn and a valuable tool in moving him toward his goal to be a language interpreter. He says she offered a lot of positive encouragement by regularly acknowledging his patience, curiosity and strong work ethic.

Curiosity is a quality that comes naturally to him. “Since I was a child, I’ve loved learning everything I can,” he says. Enriquez has a passion for reading both fiction and historical books from around the world. His teacher brought books about Martin Luther King Jr. and Amelia Earhart to class, along with the Dickens’ classic, “Great Expectations,” and he devoured them all.

Though he’s a newcomer to the U.S., Enriquez says he’s nevertheless felt comfortable in a different place and different culture. “Everyone has been so welcoming here. The people work a lot more, but they are also more open and friendly.”

In particular, he singles out those he’s gotten to know at Vista Adult School. “I really like my teacher,” Enriquez says. “She helped me overcome my obstacles and face my fears about talking with an American in English.”

“My fellow students are from all over the world: Ukraine, China, the Philippines, Japan and Brazil. They’re really friendly and want to know about the future of Mexico, and I’m just as interested in their countries,” he says.

Once he finishes his classes at Vista, which include business courses, Enriquez plans to return to Guadalajara and enroll in college to complete his studies. “Your education is what tells people about you, your family and your country,” he says.

 Vista Adult School
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SUCCESS WITHIN REACH

Uplifting students' and their families' lives

By Anne Stokes

As a single mom, Daisy Morales wasn't looking for another job, she was looking for a career — something stable with good prospects — to support herself and her daughter. Unfortunately, the only work she was able to find was in restaurants, less than ideal with unpredictable schedules and hectic hours. That's when she started looking for something better.

"I know my mom struggled and I know she worked really hard to give me a good life. I don't want [my daughter] to see me struggle. I want her to think, 'My mom has a good job, she has a good career. She's independent and can do things on her own,'" she says. "I want her to believe, 'If my mom can do it, I can do it too.'"

Morales found something better at Vista Adult School. A recent graduate of their medical/phlebotomy pathway, she's currently a student at Palomar College working toward a nursing career. Until her aunt suggested adult school, Morales didn't even know it was an option. Once she enrolled, she found a quality education, tuition cost within reach and supportive staff and faculty who helped her forge her own path to success.

Quality education, affordable tuition

One of the first things that struck Morales was tuition cost: She found other programs in the area significantly more expensive yet didn't always offer the classes she was interested in. Once enrolled as a student, she was very impressed with her instructors.

"I feel like they gave me a great way to get into the medical field without getting myself in debt. ... It's not a super long program and they have really great teachers," she says. "They're very knowledgeable about what they do and when I was in class, I felt that I was learning from the best. ... I'm really good at what I do and I feel that's because I had great teachers."

When finances unfortunately become an obstacle, Morales says her counselor con-



Daisy Morales with her 2 year old daughter Paola at Vista Adult School, whose goal is uplifting students like her. She's now attending classes to become a nurse at Palomar Community College in San Marcos. Photo by Charlie Neuman

nected her with California's Fresh Success program, which helped pay tuition and other expenses.

"Fresh Success really helped me finish the program," she says. "I was able to go to class, stay there, and focus on class, not worry about finances."

Support in and out of the classroom

Morales says the support she got went beyond academic. She admits going back to school, balancing work and parenthood has been hard, but that faculty and staff encouraged her in many different ways.

"[My teacher] knew that I was having a tough time and she said, 'It's OK, we all go through tough times. We'll get through it,'" she says. "I feel like a lot of teachers and staff are supportive of me wanting to become a nurse."

According to Morales, that support also included working with her to develop a plan to achieve her career goals.

"[The counselor] sat down with me one-on-one and I told her what my goals were,"

Morales says. "She said, 'How else can we help you? What do you need from me?' That, for me, meant a lot."

Support and success

Morales says Vista Adult School has changed her family's life. She's grateful for the support she got from teachers and staff, its affordability, and the opportunity it's given her to build a career.

"What really stood out for me was how much they're willing to help. The counselors were so willing to help me and figure things out with me. They wanted me to succeed and that really made me want to succeed even more," she says. "Even now, I'm in my first year of college and I have a 3.4 GPA and I feel like I wouldn't be here if I didn't have help from Vista Adult School."

 Vista Adult School

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GETTING BACK TO WORK

Vista Adult School helps students build marketable skill sets

By Raul Clement

The Great Recession of 2008 tanked economic growth across the country, leading to the highest unemployment rates since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Many people were unexpectedly thrust back into the job market, including Kent Leithold.

“I had worked for an attorney service for 20-some years, but the business closed down and I was without work,” he remembers. “I never dreamed I would go back to school at my age, somebody in their 50s going back to school? ... When I thought about going back to school I truly was horrified, I didn’t know what to expect.”

Despite his initial worries, Leithold was surprised at the wealth of opportunities awaiting him at Vista Adult School. The variety of classes as well as the flexible schedules made going back to school easy and enabled him to improve marketable skills like typing and computer literacy, as well as build new ones like accounting.



During times of economic difficulty, like the 2008 recession, adult schools can offer affordable, flexible ways to build marketable skill sets that help people continue to support themselves.

have a great time, you’re going to meet a ton of people. That’s what I did.”

Another key draw over other local programs was cost. As opposed to comparable programs at community colleges, UCs, CSUs and private institutions, Vista Adult School offers many courses at low to no cost.

“It’s a great stepping stone,” he says. “Not everybody in high school knows exactly what they want to do. Don’t waste your money and go elsewhere if you’re not sure. Dip your toe in Vista Adult School and take a lot of things and see what’s going to be a good fit, what sparks your interest.”

Today, Leithold is the community engagement director with the Vista Chamber of Commerce – a position one of his teachers connected him with – organizing community events like the annual Strawberry Festival, holiday parades and awards celebrations like the Heros Gala. He credits the support and skills found at

Vista Adult School with his ability to pivot and build a new career at a time when he needed it the most.

“I loved every split second of Vista Adult School,” he says. “They care. That makes a big difference.”



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**“They care.
That makes a big
difference.”**

**Kent Leithold, Vista Chamber
of Commerce community
engagement director and Vista
Adult School alum**

“If people don’t take advantage of it and they’re looking to hone their skills and keep up on them, they’re shooting themselves in the foot,” he says. “You cannot get a better deal, it’s so inexpensive to do this, the instructors are great, you’re going to

A SHOT AT A BETTER FUTURE

Student turns Vista Adult School phlebotomy technician training into dual career as an instructor and medical professional

By Nicole Carr

When he was 25 years old, Manuel Martinez found himself seemingly stuck in a job he hated. Cut to the present day, and the now-33-year-old Martinez is a certified phlebotomy technician, laboratory lead at Scripps Health and a phlebotomy and externship instructor for the institution that set him on his current path—Vista Adult School.

Before his phlebotomist training, Martinez had worked as a welder for two years. He says the job paid well, but that he felt unhappy and unfulfilled with the work. He heard about Vista Adult School's phlebotomy technician course—where students can prepare to become certified medical professionals trained to perform blood draws—through a friend who had completed the program there.

His friend recommended the school because of the quality teachers and its low-cost relative to other schools and vocational programs, but Martinez says there was still some trepidation before he made the jump: "I did hesitate a little bit, because I didn't know whether I was doing the right thing or not," he says. "But I decided I was going to invest some time and money in myself."

He says the school did a good job of making him feel comfortable with his courses in spite of a lack of previous patient care experience, and that his instructors helped keep him engaged and motivated.

"Those instructors were very kind and nice and very supportive of everything, even when you made mistakes," he says.

Martinez says his three-week externship program with Scripps Health was another

highlight of his phlebotomy education, and that the experience there helped him realize he'd chosen the right path.

After completing his training in 2017, Martinez went on to work for Scripps, and is now the laboratory lead for four sites in the San Diego area. He returned to Vista Adult School initially as a guest speaker, before he was offered the position of phlebotomy instructor in 2022.

As an instructor, Martinez says it is important for him to remember how he felt when he was in his students' position and to let them know he understands what they are going through. In particular, he tries to address aspects that students could find disheartening or difficult.

"You are going to feel nervous, you are going to feel anxiety," Martinez says. "I do add that part into my class as well to get them ready for their internship and their career."

Martinez says that in deciding to go to Vista Adult School, he liked knowing that if phlebotomy didn't work out he could pursue other career training options offered there. But luckily, he found his calling in the program. He says he's very happy as both an instructor and with Scripps, and



Manuel Martinez did his phlebotomy technician training at Vista Adult School and now he is an instructor there. Photo courtesy of Manuel Martinez

is eager for the next semester with Vista Adult School to start.

"Even on the weekends, I don't mind going to work on Mondays," Martinez says. "I really don't."

 Vista Adult School
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TRANSFORMING LIVES

After retiring as a school administrator, Pattie Campbell continues to impact lives teaching English as a second language

By Nicole Carr

When Pattie Campbell saw the final days of her tenure as the principal of Lincoln Middle School drawing to a close, she somehow knew her journey was incomplete.

“A year into retirement, I answered the call of a fellow school administrator, and I agreed to return to education serving as an ESL (English as a second language) teacher at Vista Adult School,” Campbell reflects. “Teaching is my passion, so I had to return to it.”

It was the continuation of a long career—now totaling more than 50 years—at Vista Unified School District. She served in administrative roles for most of that time, developing qualified faculty pools and curricula and overseeing her school’s daily activities, which she says was challenging yet rewarding.

As a principal, Campbell had witnessed a surge of immigrant students, which resulted in higher teacher-student ratios. Having seen the demand for qualified ESL instructors firsthand, Campbell decided to make a direct difference in the lives of these students and meet an unmet need in the Vista School District. In 2006, she joined the faculty at Vista Adult School as an ESL instructor.

“Vista [Adult School] was my chance to inspire students to achieve fluency in English and to provide my pupils with the training needed to enhance their lives,” Campbell explains.

A unique aspect of Vista Adult School is its flexible approach to education. Once enrolled at Vista, students are not confined to a single learning path. They are encouraged to explore multiple avenues to find the path that suits them best. This unique approach has proven a highly effective way



Pattie Campbell has taught English as a second language at Vista Adult School since 2006. Before that, she was an administrator in the same district for more than 30 years. Photo by Charlie Neuman

of offering students basic and secondary education and English as a second language curricula.

In addition to the varied courses of study, Vista uses a holistic approach to education, ensuring its students’ success. Students are not only afforded the benefit of educational services, but they are also provided with wraparound services and customized plans that offer financial aid, wellness, and academic and career counseling.

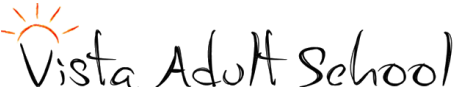
“The curriculum at Vista Adult School is a scaffolding program where students start with the ESL program, then transition to vocational programs based on their interests,” Campbell notes.

At Vista, ESL instructors like Campbell have inspired students to join the workforce and make invaluable contributions to their communities. During Campbell’s 18 years as a Vista ESL instructor, she has enjoyed teaching a diverse population of students from Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Campbell says that the ESL program helps international students overcome language barriers and improve their ability to secure employment.

“Vista Adult School helps students reach their job search goals by acquiring English fluency and developing viable career paths,” Campbell states.

Effective, passionate teachers like Campbell form authentic relationships with their students to positively impact their lives. As a result, Campbell indicated that most of her students not only complete her advanced ESL class but also pursue and complete high school equivalency exams and enjoy technical or vocational careers, many as medical assistants.

“My students are contributing members of a global society, and I help them find the skills needed to make positive, economic impacts on society and their communities,” Campbell concludes.


Vista Adult School

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