

## **The Puente Project: A Proven Track Record of Academic Success**

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Puente Project

[http://www.puente.net/results\\_pg.html](http://www.puente.net/results_pg.html)

The Puente Project has demonstrated its success with measurable results year after year. Some of the colleges our graduates go on to attend include the University of California Berkeley, Los Angeles, San Diego and Davis, Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Mt. Holyoke College, and the University of the Pacific School of Pharmacy. It has also won significant national recognition as a model academic preparation program.

Minnesota Future Work staff note: This is a program that improves student success in college. The colleges work with high schools in their region to cooperatively provide courses.

Mission:

The goal of the Puente Community College Program is to increase the number of educationally underserved students who transfer to colleges and universities, earn degrees, and return to the community as leaders and mentors to future generations.

Service to Students:

Puente provides three areas of service to students: teaching, counseling, and mentoring. Puente trains school and college staff members to conduct this program at their sites.

Programs:

Puente serves students in 56 community colleges and 36 high schools throughout California. Puente's staff training programs have benefited over 40,000 students directly and over 400,000 indirectly. Puente is open to all students. Students in the community college program: Participants take an accelerated two-course English class sequence with a curricular focus on Latino literature and experience, meet regularly with a Puente counselor who helps navigate the college application process and follow a college-prep curriculum, are matched with a professionally and academically successful mentor from the community and attend field trips to college campuses

### **Program Results**

- High School Program Results

Puente students are more than three times as likely to be eligible for admission to the University of California (UC) than non-Puente students at the same high schools (19% vs. 6%).

Puente students enter college (two- and four-year) at a rate of 83%, as compared with 49% of all California graduating high school seniors.

Puente high school students are almost twice as likely to enroll in a four-year college as their peers (43% vs. 24%), even though they are recruited from all achievement levels.

Puente students in Northern California passed the California High School Exit Exam at a significantly higher rate than other students in the same school districts (96% versus 69% for the English section; 81% versus 56% for the math section).

The number of Puente students who applied to UC increased 198% between 2001 and 2003.

The number of Puente students admitted to UC campuses increased 234% from 1999 to 2003 (from 98 to 147), while the increase from 2002 to 2003 alone registered 50%; Puente student admissions to the Berkeley, Los Angeles and San Diego campuses (the most competitive) grew 140% from 1999 to 2003.

66% of all Puente students come from families where neither parent holds a university degree; 48% come from families where neither parent attended college.

- Community College Program Results

Puente students are three times as likely to succeed (i.e., earn a grade of C or better) in pre-transfer-level English and 35% more likely to succeed in transfer-level English than are non-Puente community college students enrolled in such courses.

Nearly 90% of students are retained in community college for a year following participation in Puente; 73% are retained 2 years after completing the program. Between 1999 and 2003, Puente transfers to four-year institutions grew by 67%. In 2003, transfers to UC increased 55% from the previous year (73 to 116)

- National Recognition

Puente was one of ten programs selected from a national pool of over 1,400 to win the prestigious Innovations in American Government Award, a program of the Ford Foundation, the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and the Council for Excellence in Government.

Puente was chosen as one of six model programs nationwide to help guide policy makers to improve college access and success by the Pathways to College Network, a national consortium of educational institutions, foundations and non-profit organizations. Chosen for its successful track record in “embracing the social, cultural and learning-style differences in developing learning environments and activities for underserved students,” Puente was chosen from among over 100 organizations studied by the Pathways Network for its report, *A Shared Agenda: A Leadership Challenge to Improve College Access and Success*, released February 2004.