Greetings from Dr. Jacqueline Elliot, President & CEO

It has been 19 years since Dr. Ref Rodriguez and I first met and had an identical vision of the middle schools we wanted to develop in the communities we loved. The older our organization becomes, the more important it is that our history is shared. So, please read and enjoy this chronology of some of the main events that have contributed to who we have become today.

Unbeknownst to each other, Ref and I wrote charter school startup grants to the CA Dept. of Education in 1998. I wanted to start a middle school in the NE San Fernando Valley for the students I had served since 1986 and Ref wanted to start a middle school for the students in NE Los Angeles, where he was born and raised. We met and realized that our visions for the attributes of the schools we wanted to create were identical and we began working together. In 1999, with Ref’s help I opened Community Charter Middle School, the first charter middle school in LA County, and with my help Ref opened CALS Middle in 2000. Each of our schools became so popular so quickly that by the end of the second year of operation each of us was inundated with requests from parents to open additional schools, which we did. In 2003, CALS Early College High School opened. In 2004, Lakeview Charter Academy, Milagro, and Community Charter Early College High School opened. In 2005, we established Partnerships to Uplift Communities as an umbrella non-profit corporation under which all of the existing schools that we had founded would function in order to leverage economies of scale and help us acquire better school facilities. As the name denotes, our vision was that as a result of the creation of high quality public charter schools supported by partnerships between parents, teachers and community members united in one vision of success for all students, the communities we serve would be uplifted. The term PUC was the acronym for our name and the schools became known as PUC schools. Waiting lists and community demand for more schools continued. In response, we opened Excel in 2006, Triumph Charter Academy in 2007, Santa Rosa and Nueva Esperanza in 2009, Triumph Charter High School and Lakeview Charter High School in 2010 and eCALS in 2011. That same year, we developed PUC’s 3 Commitments to document and memorialize the fundamental elements to which we were dedicated. We officially added PUC as the first word in the name of each of our schools in 2013 in order to unify us and identify us as a network. Ref and I co-founded PUC National in 2014 in response to requests to start PUC schools outside of CA and also to create a separate non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, supporting, and advocating for the vision and purposes of Partnerships to Uplift Communities (PUC schools). Consequently, PUC Achieve Charter School opened in Rochester, NY and PUC Inspire also opened in 2014. The 2 PUC Community Charter schools were merged in order to create a 6 - 12 feeder pattern for our graduating 8th grade students in 2014 and we did the same thing with PUC CALS M.S. and PUC CALS H.S., and PUC Triumph M.S. and PUC Triumph H.S. in 2015. PUC Nueva Esperanza Charter Academy added grades 9 -12 in 2015. PUC International Preparatory Charter Academy, our first language immersion school, will open in 2017.

Our vision came to life with 100 students and 5 employees in 1999. We now serve 5,400 students with over 800 employees. We serve the same 2 Los Angeles communities where we began, and also Rochester, New York. Our vision remains that we will all work together, united in one vision of success for all students within a culture characterized by scholarliness and mutual respect. Dr. Ref Rodriguez now serves on the LAUSD School Board and we both remain committed to the same vision of excellence in public education for all children that brought us together in 1998. Thank you to all who have contributed to this amazing journey.
I'm in my mid 30s and happen to LOVE birthdays. I never really think about getting older in a negative way...I just love excuses to celebrate anything! I have many friends that dread birthdays, and I can understand that outlook if you feel like getting older is tough. So often, if we make an effort to change our mindset, we can also change our feelings about certain experiences. Focusing on the positives that come with that extra candle on your cake can allow us to age joyfully and with great health.

So, where are you? Do you look at each birthday as the next step downhill? Here are 3 ways to stay energized, motivated and at your BEST as the years go by.

#1- Believe YOU are worth it
You are valuable! You are special, unique and are the only one who can fulfill your individual purpose! If you haven't been, NOW is the time to start acting like it. Start making changes towards health today. Nothing happens overnight, but small changes add up in a big way. Start by cutting out soda or processed foods. Once you have that down, add an exercise routine to the mix and be consistent! Soon you will be feeling great and looking your best.

#2- Know that you can never be TOO OLD
Your time has not passed, you are not too old to change, you are not too old to start something NEW. Maybe you have limitations, but you can do SOMETHING. Don't let mental or physical limitations stop you. If you can't run right now, start walking. The important thing is finding what you can do and starting today.

#3- WRITE your goals! Short term and long term
It is easier to overcome daily challenges when you are clear on what you are working towards. Write down 2-3 short term fitness related goals and 2 long term goals, one fitness related and one personal. Short term goals should be achievable in 1-2 months maximum. Long term goals can take anywhere from 6 months to a year to achieve. Once your list is made, post it where you can see it EVERY DAY. I have a few of my own goals posted on my mirror in my room. They are an everyday reminder of what I must do to get to where I want to be. Make your goals challenging, but doable. Get ready to see yourself succeed!

If you can commit to doing these 3 steps, you can, and will be healthy and happy at any age.
PUC Excel Charter Academy Legal Immigration Information Session

PUC LA Parents had a very strong presence at PUC Excel Charter Academy Legal Immigration Information Session where Immigration Attorney Alan R. Diamante received parents. Parents received many tips on how to avoid frauds. They also received information in case ICE officials harass them. Parents shared how concerned they are for their safety and that of their children with the recent ICE tactics that are spreading uncertainty in the community. Parents received tools and resources that begin to address their anxiety and fear. A powerful resource parents received is a Declaration of Appointment of Guardian for Their Children in the Event of Their Sudden Absence. This resource truly helps us understand the seriousness of the times we are facing and the need for our involvement. Parents shared their eternal gratitude to Dr. Gasca and the Parent Leaders that organized this event attended by over 110 parents. Attorney Diamante had parents who had individual questions line up in the middle of the multi-purpose room. He then proceeded to hear them individually and answer their questions empowering them and the whole group. As Diamante left to his car parents trailed asking more questions. The feeling was somber as if an angel had left their presence. Parents asked leaders to organize more of these sessions throughout the city, knowing that other parents were afraid to travel to Excel. Let us make every effort to answer to this calling. Go PUC!!!
PUC LCHS Environmental Science Visits the Water Reclamation Plant & Landfill

On March 14th, the seniors of Lakeview Charter High School journeyed to the Los Angeles Sanitation District to learn about the San Jose Water Reclamation Plant and the Puente Hills Landfill. One of the Environmental Engineers there gave us a tour of both areas. She first brought us to the water reclamation plant, which to our surprise is where all the sewage goes from 1 million people in Los Angeles County. The plant reclaims about 100 million gallons of wastewater per day. Some of the clean water is reused as groundwater recharge and irrigation of parks, schools, and greenbelts. The remainder is discharged to the San Gabriel River. The students were at first shocked by seeing sewage in these huge cement pools. However, as the tour guide explained the importance of cleaning the sewage water in order to reuse it instead of dumping it in the ocean, we were all interested and engaged. She further discussed how these amazing microorganisms in the pools break down the organic matter in the sewage and are a crucial part of cleaning and filtering the water. As we walked through the reclamation plant, we saw the transformation of filthy water becoming clean reusable water. The water transformation was incredible. We were able to see the filtration process from the beginning to the end, and by the time we reached the last pool, our tour guide took out some of the clear water and poured it on her hand. She said that this water was now safe for contact, but had to undergo another filtration process to make it drinkable. The students were amazed and expressed that they had never thought about what actually happens to our sewage. They were also surprised that these little microscopic organisms did all the dirty work in making filthy water reusable again.

During the second part of the tour, we visited a landfill that was no longer accepting trash. As we were driving up this big hill, the students were waiting to turn the corner and see a big pile of trash. However, as we kept driving there was nothing but beautiful trees, shrubs and flowers. Our tour guide proceeded to explain that all of the trash was buried underneath us. Some students didn’t believe her at first, but she said that that was why the road was so bumpy, it was paved over trash! These Environmental Engineers made something undesirable into something beautiful. There were also all these pipes that captured methane produced by the trash underground and carried it to a facility where they can convert chemical energy into electrical energy. Instead of letting the methane, which is a greenhouse gas, be released into the atmosphere, they used it as a resource for energy purposes.

The last part of our field trip was spent at a park by a lake. Here we ate lunch and enjoyed the relaxing scenery of the lake surrounded by geese and ducks. Overall, the field trip was an eye-opening and inspiring day of learning where our waste goes and how it can be used as a resource instead of something that contaminates our Earth.
CCECHS Students Run LA Marathon

15 CCECHS students in SRLA (Students Run LA) Club along with their 3 coaches, Ms. Valenzuela, Mrs. Simonian, and Ms. Neary completed the LA Marathon on March 19, 2017. The training began back in August and students and coaches completed several races including a 5K (3 miles) in September, a 10K (6 miles) in October, a 15k (9 miles) in November, a half-marathon (13.1 miles) in December, another half-marathon in January, and an 18-mile race in February in addition to 3 practices per week and at least 2 long run practices per month over the weekends. This is a challenging training and requires students to be extremely dedicated and motivated to be able to complete all of these in addition to keeping up with their grades and our students showed a great deal of perseverance in particular this year.

Students reported completing the LA Marathon as a significant boost in self-esteem and now believe that they can accomplish anything. Many of them want to try it again next year and many of our seniors are talking about coming back as alumni runners to help out with the program or run the marathon again in the coming years. We had David Barrios, an alumnus who ran the marathon as a student with SRLA when he was a student at CCECHS and this year he served as the team chaperone and this is what resembles PUC's third commitment, uplifting our communities now and forever as positive role models.

We would also like to recognize the following:

Susana Cisneros, freshman, who baked a yummy cake for the team for their accomplishment, Ms. Plascencia for coming to cheer for the team at mile 8, and Coach Wiley for coming to cheer for the team at mile 20.

Here is a list of students who completed the marathon:

- Eric Alvarado
- Jesse Andaluz
- Keily Barrera
- Vianey Barrios
- Jesus Cano
- Michelle Figueroa
- Esperanza Lemus
- Stephanie Manriquez
- Gisselle Morales
- Elba Paz
- Andres Perez
- Alex Quintero
- Brian Ramirez
- David Ramirez
- Jose Sequra
PI Day at PUC CCECHS

CCECHS celebrated its first Pi Day event on Tuesday 3/14/17. Students in each grade level engaged in several activities related to circles and Pi. Some teachers provided yummy pies for their classes, and the school enjoyed the camaraderie and enjoyment while working on math concepts. We loved this activity so much that we incorporated it in 9th grade family night on 3/23/17. Parents were engaged in the process of discovering Pi along with their scholars. The room was filled with math engagement, students teaching the concept to their parents, and a strong sense of community and math accomplishment.

SBAC Assessments

As students get closer and closer to taking SBAC assessments, students, families, teachers, and staff are coming together to inspire PUC Excel scholars to do their best. Families joined each cohort to speak with the students about why it is important to them that their child, and all children at PUC Excel Charter Academy, are successful on SBAC assessments.

Families described their hopes and dreams that they have for their children and shared moving experiences from their own educational experiences. Families spoke to the importance of students doing their very best on measures of success, such as SBAC assessments, because it uplifts our community. Families committed to support their children at home to help them to do their best. Finally, all students wrote postcards to someone they love so that they could commit to doing their best and to ask for help that they may need at home to be set up for success.

Families, students, and teachers described the conversations as motivational and inspirational.
PUC LCHS Seniors attended a field trip to Junior Achievement’s Finance Park (near Forest Lawn) on March 29 to culminate the personal financial planning and career exploration they had been doing during PCE. After working in PCE on skills such as how to read a paycheck, understanding taxes, and creating and building a budget, Seniors went to JA Finance Park for the day, a realistic on-site and somewhat virtual community, to put into practice what they’ve learned by developing and committing to a personal budget.

At JA Finance Park, each student was put into a group headed by a volunteer in the banking field. The volunteers started the session sharing with students how to build a resume and how to be successful in a job interview. Their volunteer shared information about their profession and provided students with general financial advice. Next, students were assigned a persona for the day, which included their profession, family size, education and debt (from student loans or credit cards). Students worked with their volunteers to create a budget based on this information and then attempted to follow their budget as they made virtual payments to different institutions and creditors. Students also had to figure out how to deal with unexpected expenses, like replacing home appliances or buying new tires for their car. At the end of the experience students were able to compare what their monthly cost of living was and how much money they were able to save a month with their peers who had different professions, educations, etc. Big takeaways: “having kids is expensive,” “being married is expensive,” “You can make a lot more money if you go to college and get lots of degrees,” and “It’s important to pay yourself first (i.e. put money in savings) in case of emergencies.”
Measles. It sounds like a disease of the past like polio. But recent outbreaks like the one in Disneyland have shown the importance of making sure everyone is properly vaccinated.

Measles (Rubeola) is a highly contagious disease. It is a virus that spreads through the air through coughing and sneezing by an infected person. It starts with fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and sore throat. It’s followed by a rash that spreads over the body. Now a new study shows that a complication, called SSPE (subacute sclerosing panencephalitis), a progressive and deadly brain disorder, can happen years after infection and is more common than previously thought.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention recommends:

2 doses of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine
- First dose at 12-15 months
- Second dose at 4-6 years of age
- Babies can be vaccinated as early as 6 months if there is risk of exposure like traveling abroad

All unvaccinated children (over a year old) and adults (born in or after 1957) should be immunized to minimize their risk to infants and people with weak immune systems who cannot be vaccinated.

In some instances, U.S parents refuse to vaccinate their children. One reason these parents cited was the dishonest 1998 study in The Lancet (a British medical journal) that falsely suggested a link between MMR and autism. That study has been completely discredited and proven to be false, and as a result, The Lancet retracted the study from their journal in 2010. In a report from the Journal of American Medical Association published in April 2015 there was no association between MMR vaccination and increased ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) risk.

These vaccines are safe and effective. Serious side effects are rare. Not sure if you’re protected? Measles is still one of the leading causes of death among young children worldwide (134,200 in 2015 according to World Health Organization), so ask your doctor and make sure you and your family are properly immunized.
PUC Excel Scholars Explore Their Place in the Universe

8th grade scholars at PUC Excel went on an ecological and astronomical expedition to the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles. They discovered that the Observatory offers learning and discovery on every inch of its terrain, from the grounds to the nooks of its underground _. On the lawn, they connected their understanding of gravity and orbits to a to-scale model of the solar system and reasoned why Pluto, the dwarf planet, is sometimes closer to the sun than Neptune.

The climax of the expedition was traversing Hollywood Mountain and reaching its peak. Along the way, we looked for signs of local flora and fauna by journaling our findings in our field notebooks. We observed a red tailed Hawk circling for prey, a rattlesnake, a California Racerback snake, beaver tail cacti, wild flowers in full bloom, and a woodpecker! Not to mention the pair of Westcoast Lady Butterflies dancing around us while sharing lunch together atop the summit of Hollywood Mountain.

Inside the observatory, the students embarked on an exploration of our solar system and beyond through a competitive scavenger hunt! The students worked in teams of 6 to more deeply connect the physics and astronomy learned in class to the interactive exhibits of the Observatory. A highlight was being able to hold a 10 pound chunk of a METEROITE that had struck in deserts of Arizona! Students were in awe of the heavy, smooth and cool rock in their hands. When the students had learned the meteorite was predominantly composed of Iron (Fe), they made the connection that the meteorite was of the same material commonly found on Earth! In an interactive display of the Periodic Table, students uncovered that they are made up of nearly a dozen of the same elements that the sun is made of! During our reflection on the lawn, the students revealed they are walking away from the Observatory feeling more deeply connected with the Universe.
College Majors and Career Event

PUC Schools had our first College Majors and Career Event, on Monday, March 27th, at PUC Triumph Charter Academy. This event was created to empower Class of 2018 juniors, to make more informed career and college/university or alternative post-secondary education matches. This event also reminded students that major choice, and ultimately career track, should help drive students’ post-secondary education choices, prior to senior year. At the event opening session, it was noted: college application season is quickly approaching - UC and Common App applications open August 1st, 2017. As one junior shared applying to college “Is about to get real!”

Unlike traditional career days, this event had 20 college/university professors from institutions throughout southern California, along with 11 career industry experts. Juniors PUC-wide (~520 students) were assigned to three sessions, where they heard from a total of 6 presenters. Each presenter provided insight on their personal career journey; academic strengths needed for success; the kind of jobs the major frequently leads to; tips on how to standout and get ahead, as well as employment and salary forecasts.

Research shows college retention rates for declared students are better, and these students are more likely to graduate in four years (Capuzzi Simon, Nov. 2, 2012, Major Decisions, New York Times). No, not every student needs to know their career and major in junior year. Yes, it is helpful for students to be aware of a variety of career options, job growth sectors, and the majors that link with specific industries and jobs, allowing them to weed out majors that do not align with their personality, desired lifestyle and interests. With this being said, this event will expand into two events next year, serving sophomore at one event and juniors another (dates T.B.D.). Post-event survey feedback provided by the students, presenters, high school leaders, college counselors and teacher-chaperones will be used to enhance next year’s events.

A special thank you to:
Dr. Elliot for supporting this new, career focused event; Principal Max Valdez for allowing us to use his school site; Daniela Ponce and her team for making sure the event went off without a hitch; The PUC home office where multiple people & departments went above and beyond to ensure we had a variety of presenters, donations, materials, and event-day support staff; and much appreciation to the HS leaders, College Counselors and Teacher-Chaperones for their work and post-event survey feedback.
School Nutrition Program Surveys

Hey Everyone! Reminder from the Food Services Team: Don’t forget to PLEASE have students log onto the PUC Web Page and access the School Nutrition Program Surveys!!! We would love to get feedback from as many students as we can, to help us improve the program and participation. Follow the steps in the image below, OR try this link to access the survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KT6KYRJ
National Prescription Take Back Day

National Take Back Initiative

The 13th National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

Saturday, April 29, 2017
10:00 am - 2:00 pm

The National Prescription Drug Take Back Day aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about medications and the potential for abuse. Proper disposal of unwanted medications helps protect the environment, your family, and your community. If you have expired, unused, or unwanted household medications, please check the link below for locations near you.

NO DRUGS DOWN THE DRAIN

Inquiries can be made at 1-800-882-9539
To search for a collection site near you: www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/
Employee Referral Program

Every year PUC receives some of its best teacher candidates from current employees and this year we would like to see teacher referrals meet an all-time high! After all, who better than our own teachers to know what kind of candidate would be a great fit for PUC?

Our teacher referral program offers some great benefits to you as a current employee. This year we are offering a monetary bonus!

How do I get it?

In order to receive the hiring bonus, the applicant must list your full name in the "How did you hear about us" box on our application.

Are there any exclusions?

If you are considered a PUC Hiring Manager (All Managers, Directors, Coordinators, Instructional Team Member and School Leaders), you do not qualify for the referral program.

Tips for Team Members!

We recommend that you email any potential friends or family with a link to our Career Opportunities page, and let them know they must list your name in order for you to receive the referral bonus. Posting the link on your Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter account with those brief directions may also prove fruitful!

Best of luck.

Employee Referral Program Questions?

For more information, please visit http://www.pucschooolss.org/careers/refer or contact a member of the recruitment team at careers@pucschooolss.org!

Referral Program Payouts

- Chemistry & Physics - $350
- All Other Science - $300
- All SPED - $250
- All Math - $250
- All Other Core Teachers - $200
- All Elective & PE Teachers - $100

All Classified Positions—$75

All referral bonuses are paid out via payroll after the Employee has been hired and working for three months.

*Referral bonus is eligible for full-time new hires for the 2016-2017 SY
Glassdoor and Indeed

Please leave PUC a review

PUC is on the Glassdoor and Indeed job site where you can leave a review about your experience here at PUC!

In case you're not familiar with the job sites they are similar to Yelp!

See our links below:

http://www.glassdoor.com/Overview/Working-at-PUC-Schools-El_IE465918.11,22.htm
http://www.indeed.com/cmp/Puc-Schools

Leave us a review!
Social Media

We’re here! Follow the Recruitment Team on social media to stay updated on events, new openings, and much more!

- PUC Schools Recruitment
- @pucschools_recruitment
- @PUC_Recruitment
Discounted Software Available For Home Use

Exclusive for your company, get the completely NEW Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2016 suite for your home. Or if you use a Mac, get Office Home and Business 2016 for Mac for the same low price, $9.95.

The link below provides the details as well as the new program code necessary to purchase Office.

Human Resources Employee Perks Program

Human Resources is pleased to announce a **new employee benefit**. All employees now have exclusive access to the Working Advantage discount network which allows you to save up to 60% on ticketed events and online shopping. Through Working Advantage you can save on: **Movie Tickets, Theme Parks, Ski Tickets, Broadway Shows, Sporting Events, Hotels and Travel, Health and Fitness, Museums and City Passes, Merchant Gift Certificates, Online Shopping...and much more!** To subscribe, you may access the Working Advantage website by clicking here: [www.workingadvantage.com](http://www.workingadvantage.com). When opening an individual account you will need the **PUC Schools ID #413401740**.

*Working Advantage offers 24-hour online shopping and customer support Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 6:30 PM Eastern time. If you have specific questions regarding the site, please contact Working Advantage at 800-565-3712.*

Human Resources has AMC tickets available for sale. As of August 1, 2016, AMC will no longer sell Silver, Gold or Green Tickets; they have decided to move to one ticket going forward which will be the Black Ticket. **PLEASE NOTE:** May be subject to surcharge. All restrictions are listed in back of ticket.

AMC tickets have no expiration date. The price for a black ticket is $10.25 per ticket.

**PAYMENT METHOD:** ONLY CASHIER’S CHECK, PERSONAL CHECK OR MONEY ORDER. NO CASH! Please make check or money order to: PUC Schools. If you are interested in purchasing AMC Black tickets, please contact Isamar Muñoz, HR Assistant.

T-Mobile offers exclusive discounts for PUC Schools Employees. Click on the T-Mobile logo above to visit T-Mobile’s promo website. To enroll by phone, contact Advantage Direct at 866-464-8662 and use promotional code 20356TMOMFAV.

**Any questions regarding our employee perks program, please contact Isamar Muñoz, HR Assistant, i.munoz@pucschools.org or (818) 559-7699**

Sprint is pleased to offer monthly service discounts to eligible employees, students and organization members. Click on the Sprint logo above to visit Sprint’s promo website or visit the PUC Intranet, Employee Perks under the Team Member Tools tab.
PUC Polo Shirts and Laptop Bags for Sale

You can now purchase PUC Polo Shirts and PUC Laptop bags! Items can be purchased throughout the year. Please contact Isamar Muñoz from the Human Resources Department in order to place an order. You can reach her at i.munoz@pucschools.org or 818-478-2130.

PUC Polo: $20 for either the male or female cut.

PUC Laptop Bag: $40