

ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Charles Schmuck, Founder  
Les DeWitt  
Francesca Eastman  
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Kathy Hawkes  
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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**PCF's Second Annual Dutch Goose Dinner**

On Sunday, September 14th from 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., come meet our inspirational students before they head off to college while enjoying a special dinner, drinks and music. This is a great opportunity to learn more about how you can help a PCF student achieve their dreams.

**Author's Evening sponsored by Kepler's at the Menlo Park Library**

On Friday, November 14th award-winning author, and Santa Clara University professor, Francisco Jimenez, will give a talk on his new book *Reaching Out*. Just released, *Reaching Out*, the third book in a trilogy, talks about the challenges for an immigrant to get in and get through college. His 7:00 p.m. public talk will be preceded by a special PCF private reception and book signing with Francisco. This pre-event party will be limited to the first 40 people who purchase a \$100.00 ticket, a tax deductible donation to PCF.

*PCF is a great organization for students who want to continue to grow in knowledge as well as in the community. Yes, PCF provides money for tuition but more importantly you also receive hands on and personal support. When you begin college PCF makes sure you are not alone by introducing you to people in or near the university and during the summer PCF helps you find jobs or internships. PCF is committed to supporting you while you are at school and making sure you succeed with your goal of obtaining a college degree.*

-Cynthia Karr Kendall, PCF Donor & Mentor

**GET INVOLVED!**

As we grow toward our goal of eventually serving 50 college students from our community, we will have numerous opportunities for people to help. PCF needs are:

- **Mentors** - agree to partner with students in their goal of achieving a college education. This is a four-year opportunity to directly impact the life of a PCF student
- **Event coordinator** - help us coordinate events for the various activities we have during the year
- **Public relations** - help us get the word out to local media on what we're doing at PCF
- **Application readers** - assist in reading and evaluating the dozens of applications we get from our five high schools next spring
- **Help fund a student** - create a team of friends/family/co-workers and sponsor a student for their four years of college. \$3,000 a year - divided up by 8-10 friends - is a very doable plan and can make a real difference in a young student's life.

Buy all your books at Kepler's in Menlo Park. As a new "community partner" with Kepler's, PCF receives 10% of all purchases when you mention "Peninsula College Fund" at the time of purchase! This money will go directly to scholarship students!

To get involved, please contact Charles Schmuck at (650) 561-9534 or [cschmuck@pacbell.net](mailto:cschmuck@pacbell.net)

[www.peninsulacollegefund.org](http://www.peninsulacollegefund.org)

**THE PENINSULA COLLEGE FUND UPDATE**

**Peninsula College Fund Doubles its Scholarships!**

On June 21st the Peninsula College Fund (PCF) celebrated its third annual awards day. Over one hundred supporters - including our students, their families, donors, volunteers and mentors - attended the Awards Ceremony once again hosted at Menlo School.

PCF, thanks to the very generous contributions of its 2007-08 donors, was able to double the number of students under scholarship to eighteen, by awarding nine additional high school seniors \$12,000 over the next four years for college expenses. Each PCF student receives a mentor and assistance in locating a summer job in their area of study. As you can read in their biographies (Page 3) all of these scholars have accomplished much in their high school careers and are off to outstanding colleges and universities this fall.



New to our program this year is Summit Preparatory Charter High School located in Redwood City. We are very excited to add them to our existing list of schools - Woodside High School, Menlo-Atherton High School, East Side College Preparatory High School and East Palo Alto Academy- High School.

We have also established a relationship with Notre Dame de Namur University of Belmont, who will award a full PCF scholarship annually to a winning student choosing to attend their university. This most generous program means that in the years ahead, there could potentially be four PCF scholarship winners at Notre Dame simultaneously. This year's winner of the Notre Dame Scholarship is Jose Betancourt, who attended East Palo Alto Academy-High School.



**THE ORIGINAL THREE**

Our first three scholars, shown above at this year's Awards Ceremony, are all doing well. Miriam, (right), will be a junior at Mills College and has worked the past two summers at Peninsula Bridge. Nitzia, (center), transferred to San Jose State this year from De Anza College and hopes to eventually work in a hospital. Marisol, (left), will be a junior at UC Santa Cruz; this summer she worked as a teacher's aide at Crystal Springs-Uplands School in Hillsborough. We are very proud of these young scholars!

**SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED TO HONOR SERGIO ZAMORA**

Sadly, this past April, Sergio Zamora, a freshman student at UC Santa Cruz and a scholarship winner from PCF's class of 2007, passed away after a courageous battle with skin cancer. Sergio was an excellent student, an accomplished lacrosse player and coach, and an active person in his school and in his community.



To honor his memory and all he meant to his family, friends, and community, a Peninsula College Fund scholarship has been established in Sergio's name.

The winner of this scholarship, like Sergio, is a graduate of Menlo-Atherton High School who will be a freshman at UC Santa Barbara.

*Our family has always had the idea of helping a motivated student who was having trouble meeting the financial requirements of attending a 4-year university. Setting this up as an individual family was not as easy as it sounded. The beauty of PCF is that the structure is already in place and all you have to do is figure out how involved you want to be. So far, it has been a wonderful experience.*

-Neil Laderman, PCF Donor & Mentor

## COLLEGE PREP DAY

On August 9th, PCF students met at Notre Dame de Namur University, Belmont, for our second annual College Prep Day. The program was designed both to assist the nine incoming freshmen on what to expect from their upcoming college experience, and to also advise our nine current students on ways to maximize their chances of graduating from college on time.

The full day included excellent speakers from Santa Clara University, University of San Francisco, San Jose State and Notre Dame with expertise in counseling and financial aid. In the afternoon session, seminars concentrated



Mayra and Laura at College Prep Day



Marisol, right, speaking at College Prep Day

on how to find summer internships. A presentation was also given by Wells Fargo Bank on financial responsibility. Earlier, Notre Dame also hosted a barbecue lunch that included all PCF students, their parents and new mentor volunteers, who will partner with these new nine scholarship winners.

The highlights of the day were the morning panels headed by PCF's current college students advising the incoming freshmen on what they should and should not do in their first year of college. Insights were shared on how to best select valuable college majors.

With less than 50% of all college students graduating from college in five years, PCF is dedicated to growing and improving its education program. Its annual College Prep Day should assist the Fund's students in achieving their college dreams.

*"I loved College Prep Day. All the upper classmen had great and helpful advice that will help me and my fellow Freshmen. I also enjoyed the prep talks from the advisors. Overall, the college workshops were helpful, especially the financial aid. I am also happy I got to meet my mentor Kerry. She was really helpful and talkative. I enjoyed her company and I am glad she is one of my mentors."*

-Freddy, 2008 PCF Scholar

## THE COLLEGE CHALLENGE

Our guest speaker for this year's Awards Day was Sharifa Wilson, of College Track in East Palo Alto. In her comments, Sharifa congratulated the Class of 2008 on their scholarship and then outlined how they had beaten the odds in graduating from high school and heading off to college. Specifically she noted:

- In California, only 65% of students graduate from high school
- Latinos are more than twice as likely as Caucasians to drop out of high school
- The high school graduation rate in California for Latinos (who make up 16 of our 18 students) is 50%. (For that 50% there are challenges - Black and Latino student reading scores are equal to those of Caucasian 8th graders.)

*"For those who have become sponsors or contributors, know that you are doing a good thing. Without your assistance these students would have doors totally closed to them. Your generosity will not only impact the lives of these students but the lives of the many others who these students will touch as they go through life. Thank you for what you are doing"*

-Sharifa Wilson



Sharifa Wilson speaking at Awards Day



Charles Schmuck addressing the attendees at Awards Day

## A MENTOR'S STORY

*I started off as a PCF mentor wanting to give something back to our community - and maybe help a student in my field reach his or her goals. That turned out to be only part of the story.*

*Probably the most important aspect of mentoring has been to reassure a very talented student that it's normal to struggle. Like many of the PCF students, my mentee is the first in his family to attend college, and it's helpful for him to speak to someone who has been there. That said, being a mentor to someone that bright is not difficult.*

*What surprised me was how much the experience impacted me. When we met over his summer vacation before college, I asked my mentee what he was reading - and ended up with a reading list. I found out quickly this young person was more than capable of pushing me intellectually. And being around someone looking up at the world with a fresh pair of eyes has altered my perspective, and reminded me of the ideals I started my career with.*

*I have never wanted to promote a charity by saying the experience was rewarding. You're supposed to give simply because it's the right thing to do. But in this case it's true - I consider myself fortunate to be involved with such an amazing group of people.*

-Irwin Soonachan, PCF Mentor

## STUDENT BIOGRAPHIES



**Jonathan** has not only been focused on academic achievement, but has also been very active in many other aspects of his school and community. At East Palo Alto Academy-High School, he was on the Yearbook staff and involved in the Philanthropy Club. He

served as an ambassador, helping organize events and recruit new students, and as a peer mediator, helping others at school find ways to resolve conflicts. Jonathan played on the varsity basketball and soccer teams. He was elected as Co-Captain of the Soccer Team, where he also achieved the honor of First Team All-league Defender across the entire league. In his community, Jonathan has been involved with Project Reach, tutoring and reading to kindergarten students, College Track, an after-school program that assists students who have the desire to attend college, and he also has been a member of his Catholic Church's Youth Group. In one of Jonathan's recommendations, his math teacher wrote, "Jonathan is a young man of exceptional character." We saw this when we first met Jonathan during the interview process, and are happy to have him as part of PCF. He will attend UC Santa Barbara.



**Jose** is concerned with and dedicated to his community. He has worked at the YMCA and at OICW, a non-profit organization helping those in need in the community. He was also involved in Service Learning, where every week he worked as an intern in the

community. On campus Jose was in Peer Learning, a class designed to facilitate student to student interactions and support transitions into high school and adolescent life. Jose's humanities teacher states "He is patient with the lower classmen and commands respect because he is firm and has a reputation for being a hard worker." Academically, Jose is described as "dedicated to his studies and to increasing his knowledge solely for the sake of learning." Jose has participated in College Track, an after-school program that assists students who have the desire to attend college, and he has taken a poetry writing class at Stanford called Project Write. At home, Jose helps his family by baby sitting his sister and he is extremely active in his church serving as an altar boy, participating in a prayer group and a youth group. On one of his recommendations, it states "Religion keeps Jose extremely grounded, self-confident, conscious of his actions, resilient and compassionate towards others. These characteristics are reflected in his spirited personality." Jose is interested in studying religion at Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont.



Along with the heavy academic load at Eastside College Preparatory School, **Fred** participated in a number of extra-curricular activities and volunteered his time and efforts with community service groups. He played basketball for his school, he was a member of the community branch of the Student Council, and participated in the Ambassadors Program, representing his school at community events. Outside of school he participated in the summer enrichment program, "Aim High" where he assisted a teacher in a 6th & 7th grade math class and was a tutor and bible club leader for Bayshore Christian Ministries. Fred was also awarded a scholarship to travel to Brazil the summer after his sophomore year with the Experiment in International Living. His English teacher says that it was clear that Fred had used his time abroad to mature and grow into his status as a role model. Fred dreams of being a pediatrician. To this end, this summer he had

an internship at Stanford helping a graduate student study the cognitive development of infants and toddlers. One quote from his counselor's recommendation really stood out: "There is greatness in Fred - catch it while you can!" We look forward to experiencing his greatness! Fred will be attending Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles.



**Raul's** mentor and English teacher at Summit Preparatory High School describes him as "Perceptive and Articulate." And says Raul is "a very engaging person, inside the classroom or around the school, as a student or as a friend." From Raul's activities inside and

outside of the classroom, we can see this to be true. Raul had a course load of 5 AP courses in his senior year after taking 3 AP classes in his junior year. He was awarded Student of the Month in January of 2008 during his heavy course load. He also participated in the Summit Cheer Club, volunteered at office hours for one of his teachers and worked for Save the Bay, helping to restore and maintain the wetlands. His AP Spanish teacher states "He is passionate about giving back to the community by providing services he and his family have received. One of Raul's interests is to be a social worker. He will be attending the UC Santa Cruz to potentially study in this field.



**Maria** is extremely committed to her family as she often acts as a translator for her parents and helps baby sit her nephew. Aside from these family responsibilities, Maria has been very successful in high school. She has excelled in her advanced placement courses

at Menlo-Atherton taking a course load of four AP classes in her senior year. She also played soccer and softball for her high school, where she was voted most-improved player and was also selected as the captain of her softball team. Her dedication to her family and school and her participation in sports made her an obvious choice to receive Peninsula College Fund's Sergio Zamora Memorial Scholarship. We believe that Maria will continue to exude the qualities that we saw in Sergio. The following was written on one of Maria's recommendations, "Maria's own drive and determination has been essential to her success thus far and will serve her well in college." We believe that is true. She will attend UC Santa Barbara.



On one of **Sonia's** recommendations, she is described as "Hard-working, responsible, and ambitious" and it states that "Sonia is dedicated to achieving success." Sonia has persevered since a very young age. During her freshman year

Sonia joined Foundation for a College Education, (FCE), a program that provides students with support and services helping them to achieve their dream of pursuing a higher education. She was also admitted to SMASH, a math and science honors academy held at UC Berkeley each summer. Along with her academic responsibilities, Sonia became Captain of the Girls' Varsity Soccer Team and she volunteered to coach both a girls' middle school soccer team and a team for seven-year-olds. Her ability to balance her many responsibilities shows not only Sonia's dedication, but also just how much she is capable of accomplishing. At school, Sonia helped to found the Student Support Foundation, a philanthropic group helping to finance deserving student activities on campus. She is also always helpful to her peers, acting as class math tutor, proofreader or person just available for advice. The Director of Programs at FCE says Sonia is admired and respected for her love of learning

and passion to make her college dreams a reality." She will be attending UC Berkeley studying engineering.



**Laura** is not merely a motivated student; she has also found time to become very involved in her school. Laura has been on the basketball team as well as on the cheer leading squad and was a conflict mediator where she helped resolve issues among her peers. Much

of Laura's involvement at school also extended into her community. In her leadership class, she helped organize dances, rallies, food drives, lunchtime activities and other community projects. Outside of school she was a member of the Young Latino Leaders Club helping to clean up the community and assist the Salvation Army. She was also a member of College Track, an after-school program that assists students who have the desire to attend college. She is a member of her Youth Church Group. Aside from all these activities, Laura still found time to work every weekend in party planning and in baby sitting. However, she admits one of her most rewarding activities has been her weekend visits to Carlmont Gardens Nursing Home where she brings smiles and spreads good cheer among the residents. Laura will be attending UC Santa Cruz where she wants to study political science.



**Denis** came to the United States in his junior year of high school to live with his grandmother. After arrival, he became very active in the MESA/AVID Club, an academic enrichment program that prepares first-generation college students. Denis is extremely

strong in math and science. Through this program, Denis voluntarily devoted his time tutoring lower level classes, his peers and even students in his college calculus class. He has also been a Math TA in a Russian school in San Mateo. Denis has been pursuing his interests in computers by joining the Robotics Team and also has been working on a documentary about the nuclear waste industry that affects his home town in Russia. On campus Denis participates on Woodside High School's Swim Team and in the Environmental Club. Denis' MESA/AVID teacher says "Denis possesses the determination, intelligence and compassionate spirit that will make him a wonderful college student. We are looking forward to experiencing Denis' time at college with him. He will be attending Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo."



Graduating from Woodside High School, **Freddy's** influence on others has extended beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Freddy has been an extremely active member of College Track, an organization for students who have the desire to attend college. As

a leader on the College Track Student Senate, Freddy led many students in the program to excel. Freddy participated in Summer Search, a youth development program where he served as an ambassador; Peninsula Bridge, a program where he tutored other students; and BUILD, an entrepreneurial program where he started his own business winning second place at a business plan competition held in partnership with Stanford Business School. Freddy is also very interested in dancing. At the graduation for College Track, he participated in a dance performance. The site director of College Track describes Freddy as smart, eloquent, a leader, a connector and a motivator. She states that "Every single opportunity that he gets to bring other people along with him, he does." We are excited to have Freddy joining PCF. He will be attending UC Davis.