



PCF Celebrates Its 10th Anniversary!

PCF Celebrates Its 10th Anniversary with Community Breakfast and Raises a Record \$121,500!

Over 200 people gathered early on Thursday, October 15 to join in a tribute to the first 10 years of PCF's work to guide and support first-generation college students to reach their dreams of a college education. Among the guests were PCF alumni and current scholars, who joined with their mentors to celebrate their many accomplishments.

Key note speaker Jessica Aguirre, anchor of NBC Bay Area News, told of her own personal challenges as a first-generation college student with humor, but also with searing insights into the cultural and economic hurdles being faced by our current scholars.

The personal stories of the first three PCF Scholars was a highlight of the event. Marisol Gomez, Nitzia Mendoza and Miriam Noriega exemplify the determination and courage of all our PCF Scholars. Marisol and Miriam graduated thanks to the support of PCF scholarships and their one-on-one mentors. Marisol is working in public health and Miriam is earning her graduate degree in Theology and Pastoral Ministry.



"PCF taught me how to change everything. It takes a village to raise a child, and an even bigger one to raise 136 of them," said Marisol.

“I thank my PCF mentors who have played a key role in my journey from guiding me, to assisting me financially, and by lending me their undivided attention when I needed it most,” commented Miriam.

Nitzia’s path has been more difficult, but she announced at the breakfast that she will finally reach her goal of a college degree in spring, 2016.

“My journey has been a bumpy ride. I have shed several tears, been stressed beyond measure, felt down, but regardless of how I felt, giving up was never an option,” notes Nitzia.



The first PCF Leadership Award was presented to Phil Ekedahl, who has been a key leader and mentor throughout PCF’s first decade. He mentored one of our first three scholars, Miriam Noriega, and his second, Gonzalo Alvarez, just graduated from UC San Diego in June 2015. Phil served as the first Executive Director for PCF, and helped guide many of our 51 alumni towards their current successes. In Miriam’s words, “The growth I have witnessed in myself, in many other scholars, and in the program of Peninsula College Fund over these 10 years is thanks to your dedication, Phil.”

The breakfast was also an important fundraiser, and we achieved record breaking results, with 120 donors and a grand total of \$121,000, including our sponsorships and a total of \$35,000 in a Matching Challenge Grant from the Dean Witter Foundation and Wells Fargo Foundation.

If you had to miss the breakfast, but want to make a donation to recognize the 10th Anniversary, we always welcome your generous support!



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Our founder, Charles Schmuck summarized his appreciation for all that has happened over the first ten years “Our students do the heavy lifting. They are putting in the long hours of work and school, and they have chosen to beat the odds. But without the support of all the mentors, volunteers and donors, their path to success is far from certain. Thank you for your investment in our scholars and a stronger, more inclusive community!”

We also premiered PCF's 10th Anniversary video at the event, which follows the stories of two of our PCF scholars, alumnus and member of our Board of Directors, Melissa Sandoval, and current sophomore, Erik Ortega. [Click here to watch this video, which is sure to make you proud to be a part of PCF's mission.](#)



We are deeply grateful to the following companies for supporting our anniversary event!

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