



# HACIENDA LA PUENTE

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## Hacienda La Puente Adult Education Registered Dental Assistant Program Puts Students on Path to New Careers

**CITY OF INDUSTRY** – The Hacienda La Puente Adult Education (HLPAE) [Registered Dental Assistant](#) (RDA) program puts adult learners on the path to lucrative careers in the dental industry. The year-long program readies students to take the California RDA exam with a thorough curriculum accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA).

The program is overseen by HLPAE RDA instructors in partnership with the San Gabriel Valley Foundation for Dental Health (SGVFDH), which provides professional training during the program with volunteer support from the Western University of Health Sciences. While studying, students must complete 300 hours of an externship at a local dental office.

Available at HLPAE's Willow campus, the RDA program does more than provide a pathway to a career in the medical profession – it also doubles as a working dental clinic for the Hacienda La Puente community, with SGVFDH's dental clinic providing low-cost dental care on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The HLPAE dental program is unique in California, as it is the only program in the state that includes classroom space and a fully functioning dental clinic with seven treatment rooms where students can practice hands-on learning, allowing students to hone their craft while assisting the community prior to externship.

HLPAE student Jakim Flores discovered the RDA program after he went for a check-up with his dentist. Expressing interest in a career as a Dental Assistant, Flores' dentist directed him to HLPAE's RDA program. After enrolling in the summer session, Flores is excited to complete the program and start a new chapter in his life.

"This program was one of the best things that have ever happened to me. My dentist helped connect me with the amazing team and the resources to get me started at the adult school," Flores said. "I have already learned so much in just the three weeks since I enrolled in the class. I look forward to continuing my journey, being placed at a dentist's office and making the HLP Adult Education family proud."

Flores credits HLPAE Dental Program Director and Instructor Heather Pasicznyk for providing the support and inspiration to complete the rigorous program. Pasicznyk, who has been the program director for 10 years, finds the program very rewarding in its ability to train students for a new profession and assist the HLP community in ensuring their families receive high-quality dental care.

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“A lot of students are the first in their families to further their education and many of them are single parents. It’s amazing to watch them grow and move on to not just a job but a career,” Pasicznyk said. “Our rapport with the community is outstanding, with local externship offices aware of our student’s hard work and professionalism. Eager to place our students in their offices, our program has a 100 percent placement upon graduation. Thank you to our amazing team, partners and entire HLP Adult Education department for supporting our outstanding program.”

### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**HLPUSD\_DENTISTASSISTANT1:** Hacienda La Puente Adult Education Registered Dental Assistant students complete coursework in pairs during class on Aug. 23.

**HLPUSD\_DENTALASSISTANT2:** Registered Dental Assistant Student Jakim Flores and Hacienda La Puente Adult Education Program Instructor Heather Pasicznyk prepare to greet a patient in the examination room on Aug. 23.

**HLPUSD\_DENTALASSISTANT3:** Registered Dental Assist students practice oral evacuation on a patient during the summer introduction class on June 20.

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