



PRESS RELEASE

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Fontana Adult School Celebrates 60th Anniversary

FONTANA, CA – Fontana resident Carlos Ocampo Jr., fed up with struggling along as a warehouse worker, was nervous when he enrolled at Fontana Adult School last year to obtain his GED. He grew comfortable after learning how the 60-year-old institution had helped so many others like him improve their lives.

“It’s the best decision I’ve ever made – my old lifestyle did nothing for me and got me nowhere,” said Ocampo, 36. “The teachers here provide me with support, they make me feel comfortable and they teach me things I never thought I could learn.”

Ocampo has passed the high school equivalency test and began classes at Chaffey College; he hopes to transfer to CSU Sacramento and pursue studies in architecture – a career decision influenced by his teachers once they discovered his predilection for math.

Ocampo joined more than 100 students, teachers and District staff members to celebrate the adult school’s 60th anniversary on Nov. 1.

The event’s festivities featured refreshments, a photo booth with props and masks, and two birthday cakes for attendees. Booths highlighted the school’s classes and programs, including human anatomy, high school equivalency, citizenship test preparation and abundant career pathways.

“It’s amazing to know that I’m part of a legacy that started so long ago and now has such a high demand in our community,” Fontana Adult School Principal Cynthia Gleason said. “I just want everyone to know that it’s never too late to come back to school and we’ll help you transition to college and into a career.”

FUSD Board President Mary Sandoval praised the adult school for giving her and countless other students a chance to continue their education while facing hardships like immigration and unplanned pregnancies.

“The life lesson that I can tell students today is to never give up and to believe in yourself because you can succeed,” Sandoval said. “Whenever I have the chance to talk to students, I let them know about the importance of continuing their education at any age.”

Sandoval obtained her GED in 1980 by taking night classes at the adult school while she was pregnant with her first child. She said it was important to share her story to inspire any individuals who might be afraid to come back to school.

After the event's speeches, Fontana Unified administrators, school staff and attendees sang Happy Birthday to the school.

"It's amazing to hear current and former students share stories of how the Fontana Adult School helped them achieve their college and career goals," FUSD Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said.

"Congratulations to the school's staff for their years of dedication and for giving thousands of students hope for a better life through education."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

110817_FUSD_ANNIVERSARY1: Fontana Adult School Principal Cynthia Gleason (right) cuts into her school's 60th anniversary cake, celebrating decades of providing the community with educational and career support during a Nov. 1 event.

110817_FUSD_ANNIVERSARY2: Guests gather at Fontana Adult School's multi-purpose room to celebrate the campus' 60th anniversary on Nov. 1. Students and staff set up booths to highlight the school's classes and programs including human anatomy, high school equivalency, citizenship test preparation and career pathways.

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