



COMMUNIDAD

SPRING 2009

DCP-The Alameda Leadership Change

After nearly ten years at DCP, Alicia Gallegos, Principal of DCP's high school is leaving to explore other opportunities in the field of education. During her tenure at DCP, Ms. Gallegos has worked as a teacher, parent outreach coordinator, 9th grade principal, vice principal, interim principal and principal.

Gallegos started her career at DCP right out of graduate school and was eager to be part of a school that promised to send underachieving students in the neighborhood where she grew up to college. Reflecting on her time at DCP Gallegos noted, "It's not about one person. It's a community of people making college normal for first-generation college-bound students." Gallegos went on to say that she is "immensely proud of the work that happens every day at DCP" and knows that this work will continue for many years to come.

Alicia Gallegos and Michael DeSousa

"It's a community of people making college normal for first-generation college-bound students."
- Alicia Gallegos

It is with great enthusiasm that Ms. Gallegos joins in introducing her successor Mr. Michael DeSousa, who has accepted the position of principal beginning in the summer of 2009.

De Sousa grew up in Livermore, California with the support of his two older siblings and the care of his parents, Gizela and Jose. Michael left Livermore for UC Berkeley to be the first in his family to go to college. After six years studying at Berkeley, he earned his BS in Molecular Biology and his MA in Education. As a graduate student, Michael studied how meaningful dialogues in the classroom can help students develop critical thinking and social awareness. Michael went on to work in a small community-run school in Alameda, California where he taught science, physical education and various youth empowerment courses. While in Alameda, Michael also served in many different administrative roles including board member, Head of School, Grant Coordinator and Educational Consultant.

In 2008, Michael was selected to take part in a national residency program through New Leaders for New Schools for urban principals. Principals work together to show that all students can achieve. Michael served his residency



Michael DeSousa with students

at Leadership Public Schools-Hayward, where he led instructional initiatives on Active Learning, Effective Questioning and Equity-Centered Professional Learning Communities. His residency experience has helped him gain insight into implementing various assessment tools that provide teachers with the information needed to ensure every student reaches mastery. After eight years as a teacher and school leader, Michael is excited to be part of the DCP community. With his commitment to social justice, knowledge of instructional practices and experience in community organizing, Michael aspires to bring DCP to a new level of academic success, where all DCP students will thrive in college.

In his free time Michael can be found getting involved in political campaigns, listening to and playing music, coaching youth sports, going for walks, eating his mother's wonderful cooking or spending time with his family.



DCP-Alviso Reflections

In August 2008 DCP opened its second school in the north San Jose community of Alviso. Unlike DCP's first school which serves 9th - 12th grade students, DCP-Alviso will ultimately be a middle and high school serving grades 6th -12th. The school opened with an enrollment of 87 6th and 7th grade students and will add a grade level each year until full capacity is reached.

As the first year at DCP-Alviso comes to a close Principal José Arreola and two students offer reflections on the first school year. José Luna and Kenya Chavez are both 6th grade students. They love school and look forward to attending classes each day. Both are eager to be the first in their families to go to college.

Two Students' Stories

José Luna is the youngest of six children and very outspoken. He is an avid reader; he especially liked reading the Harry Potter series (although he still needs to read book seven). Although he has a few more years before he goes to college he is very excited to say that he plans to attend National Hispanic University where he wants to learn to be a detective.

When asked about the high point of his year at the new school he spoke about his English teacher, Ms. Cabrera. "She reads with me" he said. When asked what he would say to her, he exclaimed, "Thanks for being a great, supportive mentor!"

Kenya Chavez is soft spoken, with a bright smile. When asked about her experiences as part of DCP-Alviso's first year, she is thoughtful about her responses. Her fondest thoughts about school are about Social Studies, "I like learning about things that happened in the past."

Kenya has known about DCP for a long time. She has an older brother and sister who both attend DCP-The Alameda. She is proud to be following in their footsteps. She is excited about the possibility of a future DCP-Alviso girls' volleyball team. She is eager to play.

When asked about her future studies, Kenya responded "I think I want to be a veterinarian."

Both Kenya and José recently attended the public charter hearing at the East Side Union High School District in support of DCP's third school, DCP-Alum Rock. They both worked hard to prepare thoughtful speeches to the school board and community members present. Unfortunately there was not enough time for Kenya to share what she had prepared, so we have included it below:

"Good Evening! My name is Kenya Chavez and I am a 6th grade student at DCP-Alviso. DCP is helping me go to college and I want to talk about why I want to go to college. I want to go to college to receive an education, to make my parents proud and so I can be successful and help those in need. Please join all my fellow classmates and me by supporting DCP-Alum Rock. Thank you for your time."

José Arreola Reflection

On August 26th 2008 DCP-Alviso opened its doors to 87 middle school students. After attending a SummerBridge program where they learned what would be expected of them at the new school, they were eager to embark on a journey that will lead them to a four-year university.

As the school year at DCP-Alviso comes to a close, Principal Arreola reflected on the first year.



"When we opened DCP-Alviso our goal was to have a school that would be accessible not only to students, but families as well. I am proud to say that we have accomplished that goal. Through the inspiring staff commitment to collaboration, we have created something very special for students in San Jose." José Arreola, Principal DCP-Alviso

Mr. Arreola went on to say that 96% of the 87 students who began in August have confirmed that they will be attending DCP-Alviso next year - a testament to the dedication of teachers, staff, students and parents.

DCP-Alviso is currently enrolling 6th graders for the 2009-2010 school year. For an enrollment application please visit www.dcp.org.



Kenya and José

Spotlight – DCP Science Department

DCP's science department includes courses in Integrated Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. All courses meet the requirements for admission to the UC/CSU college system. The department includes veteran teachers Lori Hartmann and Lauren Turner and newcomer, Jennifer Yee. All three teachers are extremely proud of their collaborative efforts noting the benefits of aligning the curriculum throughout the grades and working together toward the same mission.

“I have seen growth in students’ problem-solving abilities, mathematical reasoning and confidence. Now when they are introduced to a new equation they aren’t scared or intimidated.”

Jennifer Yee, Physics & Chemistry Teacher

“Many students show an extraordinary amount of ganas despite their limited abilities with English resulting in tremendous amounts of positive energy.”

Lauren Turner, Integrated Science & Biology Teacher



Left to right: Lauren Turner, Jennifer Yee and Lori Hartmann

Lori Hartmann - Biology & Chemistry Teacher, 5th year at DCP

Lauren Turner - Integrated Science and Biology Teacher, 4th year at DCP

Jennifer Yee - Chemistry and Physics Teacher, 1st year at DCP

“It’s great to see older students support their younger brothers and sisters. Seeing younger students get the additional help they need from their older siblings is truly inspiring.”

Lori Hartmann, Biology & Chemistry Teacher

SENIOR PROFILES

José Manuel “Manny” Alvarez As a high school senior, Manny Alvarez is excited about his future. He has spent four years at DCP preparing for college and the pride he has in his accomplishments shows through in his warm and gentle smile.

He credits DCP with providing opportunities to learn more about himself, gain confidence in his abilities and foster a complete understanding of what it means to go to college.

“DCP introduced me to Summer Search - a leadership program for low-income students. Through the program I spent three weeks in a Wyoming wilderness camp the summer of my sophomore year and six weeks at Cornell University the summer of my junior year. Both experiences were tremendous. At Cornell I got the chance to see what college life would be like. I stayed in the dorms and took college level classes.”

Manny has been accepted to Occidental College, Whitman College, University of Puget Sound, UC Santa Barbara, CSU Stanislaus, and UC Davis. He has received full scholarships to Occidental College and University of Puget Sound. Although he has not made a final decision on the college he will attend, he is seriously considering Occidental College to study Psychology.



Carolina Rodriguez Class of 2009

“At DCP there is a constant focus on going to college which has left me feeling well prepared and eager to attend a university in the fall.”



As the first in her family to go to college, Carolina “Nina” Rodriguez is excited about her future. She has been at DCP for four years and says “I would not be where I am today without the support I have received.” As a freshman she thought all the talk about going to college was “ridiculous.” However, with the encouragement and support of her teachers she started believing it was possible.

Nina is eagerly looking forward to her upcoming graduation. She has received a full scholarship to Smith College, a women’s college in Massachusetts, where she plans to earn her undergraduate degree in Liberal Studies. After receiving her degree she plans to attend graduate school to study Business. Her career goal is to work in advertising with an emphasis in graphic design.

SENIORS

The Dominguez Family

Francisca Dominguez is an active parent volunteer who has been connected to DCP since 2005 when her daughter Mayra started as a freshman. She chose DCP for her daughters, Mayra (Class of 2009) and Viviana (Class of 2011) so they might realize the dream of going to college. Growing up in Mexico with her grandparents Mrs. Dominguez was not encouraged to go to school. When she came to the United States as a young adult she had only a first grade education. Despite the lack of formal training, she excelled and learned all she could in the jobs she worked. After working as a housekeeper, daycare provider, cook, auto body repairperson, and factory worker Mrs. Dominguez was hired by Hewlett Packard where she was employed for 15 years. At HP she began as a custodian and quickly moved to a supervisory role.

Today Mrs. Dominguez and her husband José are dedicated volunteers and strong DCP advocates. In addition to their dedication to DCP's mission of sending underachieving first generation students to college, they also help in a variety of other ways. Their support includes assisting with school mailings, updating marketing packets, monitoring crosswalk and parking lot safety, assisting with food service, making phone calls to the parents of prospective students and providing leadership to the parent committee.



Mrs. Francisca Dominguez

On April 24, 2009 Mr. and Mrs. Dominguez received certificates of appreciation at the Junior League of San Jose Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. They were nominated by DCP for their exemplary dedication and hard work. Mayra and Viviana joined Mr. and Mrs. Dominguez at the luncheon to celebrate their recognition.

When asked her thoughts on the help she provides to DCP, Mrs. Dominguez modestly replied, "I wish I could do more."



Left to right: Mayra, José, Francisca, and Viviana Dominguez

"I see DCP as a bouquet of flowers. Teachers, staff, administrators are all a unique part of a beautiful program that helps students go to college." Francisca Dominguez

GANAS COMINIDAD ORGULLO

DCP Alum Rock

by **Julia Gonzales Luna, New School Leader**

In 1992 California adopted the Charter Schools Act. As the second state (after Minnesota) to enact charter school legislation California hoped to open up opportunities for alternative types of education with a goal of expanding learning experiences for students who are identified as academically low achieving.

Downtown College Prep reflects the spirit of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 by creating rigorous college-prep schools for low-achieving students. In a highly personalized, academic environment, students have the opportunity to meet the highest academic standards established by the State of California.

To this end Downtown College Prep is proud to announce the submission of the charter for its third campus in the San Jose community of Alum Rock. DCP's philosophy that students should have access to DCP's mission in their own neighborhoods and that all students deserve the opportunity to graduate from high school ready for college success.

This belief - that all students are capable of academic success - is the cornerstone of my commitment as New School Leader of DCP-Alum Rock. As a history teacher at DCP-The Alameda for four years I have seen first hand how a dedicated team of individuals can make a difference in the lives of young people.

When students, teachers, administrators, staff, family members and community partners work together everyone can realize academic success. I am extremely proud to be a part of this extraordinary team and look forward to the day when we open DCP's third school to provide another education option to underserved students in San Jose.

DCP-Alum Rock will open in the fall of 2010 with 100 sixth graders.



Julia Gonzales Luna

DCP College Acceptances

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
California State University, Bakersfield
California State University, Chico
California State University, East Bay
California State University, Long Beach
California State University, Los Angeles
California State University, Monterey Bay
California State University, Northridge
California State University, San Bernardino
California State University, Stanislaus
Hispanic National University
Humboldt State University
Mount Holyoke College
San Diego State University
San Francisco State University
San Jose State University
Santa Clara University
Smith College
Sonoma State University
University of California at Davis
University of California at Merced
University of California at Riverside
University of California at Santa Barbara
University of California at Santa Cruz
University of Puget Sound
University of San Francisco



Jim Patterson assisting Abbie Koopman with Geometry

DCP Volunteer Corps

DCP is launching a new volunteer program to effectively engage volunteers to meet school-identified needs and create a broader community to support DCP's mission and success. This project is being developed with plans to support activities at both campuses for the upcoming school year.

Recognizing the Bay Area's vast talent pool, DCP is establishing a formal "Volunteer Corps" dedicated to enhancing student-learning opportunities, and operational effectiveness. The new program will be focused on key projects designed to meet specific outcomes. Long-term and short-term projects will be included.

Please visit DCP's website for updates on opportunities to get involved or contact Debra Jones, Development Director, at 408.27-1730 x267 or djones@dcp.org!

DCP partners with Accenture Technology Labs

In September, DCP began a partnership with Accenture Technology Labs to provide students with an opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Accenture employees have been coming to DCP every week to work with students on an innovative product that could be launched into a local business.

The project they have been working on is a prototype of a computer program that will allow consumers to secure parking spaces prior to arriving at their destination. Raul Pier, class of 2010, has been working on the project from the beginning and says, "We are learning to program in html. It's been a great experience."

The project will continue through the 2009-2010 school year.

"It's been
a great
experience."
- Raul Pier



Left to right - Daniel Ruiz - DCP student,
Deziree Sousa - DCP student,
Marcelo Worsley - Accenture

Left to right - Fausto Inestroza - Accenture,
Mauricio Vacas - Accenture,
Raul Pier - DCP student

DCP Juniors Attend Rotary Education Leadership Conference

Every year San Jose, Los Gatos and Los Gatos Morning Rotary Clubs sponsor the Education Leadership Conference, a three-day conference at Asilomar for local high school juniors to enhance their leadership skills. This year six DCP juniors participated in the conference where they worked with other juniors from local bay area high schools to develop a "virtual" business of their own.

During the conference students were assigned to small groups where they took on roles associated with running a business. Roles like Chief Executive Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, and Chief Technology Officer. They

worked together to define their organization's mission and vision, created products, determined target market(s), developed an advertising plan and established a three-year revenue projection.

At the end of the conference students presented their products to the rest of the students and a group of potential investors. Vincent Aguilar, DCP Class of 2010, recalled, "Our group was very independent. We determined what we wanted, stayed focused on it and accomplished it. If I had the chance to participate in the conference again, I would - I loved it!" Vincent's group



won first place, they created a steering wheel cover that detects when a driver is falling asleep. To download a copy of his presentation visit <http://www.elc-rotary.org/ELC/> and click on 9th Degree.