

***Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy**

Sabbatical Report

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Program Description/Vision

The *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy at Lane Community College provides a holistic and contextual bicultural learning environment for Latinx high school students. The curriculum is responsive to Chicano / Mexicano, Hispanic, Latina/o and Caribbean experiences in the United States and the Americas. Leadership knowledge is based on re-claiming worldviews that students receive at home and bring to schools. *Puertas Abiertas* students possess first-hand testimonies reflecting subtractive schooling and diminishing societal experiences. The *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy allows students to re-frame their stories and re-center their place in humanity as individuals and communities worthy of respect and dignity.

Puertas Abiertas students receive a context to assess the integrity of systems presenting stories of legitimacy and neutrality. Students engage in critical thinking to explore the forces of culture and power in schools and society, as a way, to discern appropriate focus of leadership. Student learning is a process of critical self-reflection of their role and actions in sustaining and maintaining mentalities of emanation that is detrimental to themselves and all persons/beings. Our approach to teaching and learning allows *Puertas Abiertas* students to re-store meaning and dignity in their lives.

Our experience working with Latinx students the past 18 years is that they have engage in re-centering their lives as Latinos. They have emptied themselves of stories of deformation, which diminish themselves and others. They have created new stories and understandings that are just and compassionate, for themselves, and as Latinos. This re-centering is a life-long change for many students. The re-centering has led to their high school completion and entrance into post-secondary institutions as full bicultural human beings worthy of respect and dignity.

Recognition

In 2003, the *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy received the Oregon Diversity Institute Innovation Award for “creatively integrating culture and academic success for Latino students.” In 2011, the program received a nomination from ¡*Excelencia* in Education! a national organization affiliated with the White House Initiative on Hispanic Excellence, as an outstanding model for Latino students. Founded in 1995, ¡*Excelencia*! is a national organization dedicated to identifying and honoring programs and departments in the United States at the forefront of increasing academic opportunities and improving achievement for Latinx students. In 2015, PALA received a \$15,000 donation from the Straub family to create an Assistance Fund to support PALA students attending Lane Community College. The donation is still current as of 2021 and has totaled over \$80,000 to assist students with any financial situations that may impact their ability to finish their education at Lane. In 2016, The College Board recognized the *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy class, SLD 108 *Éxito*, as one of the efforts by Junction City High School, to ensure college readiness of Historically Under-represented Groups. In 2017, PALA received a three-year grant, totaling \$45,000, from the Oregon Community Foundation to support the *Ganas* middle school mentorship program. In 2019, PALA received a three-year grant, totaling \$46,000, from the Meyer Memorial Trust, to assist with college readiness efforts for Latino high school students. In 2021, The *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy received a nomination from ¡*Excelencia*! as a model program for Latino students in the United States.

History/Overview

Since 2002, the *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy (PALA) has evolved from a summer program, into the various components that currently comprises the academy in 2021. As participants in the Summer Leadership Academy since 2002, Latinx students have shared that their experience in k-12 school curriculum was absent, and consequently, they knew very little of Latinx contributions in the United States and the Americas. For many, if not all, *Puertas Abiertas*, was their first exposure to Latinx contributions and achievements. In addition, Latinx students encountered many diminishing

experiences in schools relating to their Spanish names or perceived documentation status in the United States. Since 2002, a curriculum has evolved, based on, and responsive to, the stories that students bring to *Puertas Abiertas*. The curriculum has a positive impact on their self-esteem as *bicultural* Latinos. Many educators noted a positive difference regarding their academic performance and school activity participation, upon their return to the high schools. PALA currently consists of two high school programs: (SLD 108 & SLD 109); three college classes (SLD 111,112 ,113); and one middle school mentorship program called *Ganas*. The *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy, was co-founded, and is coordinated by the Chicano/Latino Student Program Coordinator at Lane Community College.

Program

Initially, the program created an opportunity for students to become aware of Latinx history, literature, and contributions to society. Local K-12 schools offered little, if anything, in the curriculum regarding Latinx contributions or presence in the United States. History, Literature and Science courses simply did not include the Latinx contributions in these areas, and consequently, Latinx, and non-Latinx students graduated from schools with the impression that Latinos were of little worth in society. Because of this omission, the story of illegal immigration, agricultural workers, drug wars and gang violence, as promoted by popular culture and media, continued to be the single story of Latinos. Fortunately, many Latinx students did not believe in those stories, and rather, believed in the story that they experienced everyday in their lives: hardworking parents; students and parents negotiating diminishing spaces created by predominately White environments; and students wanting to pursue a college education, in spite of poverty, racialized educational environments and mainstream support services that did not culturally respond to their lived experiences. *Puertas* students emerged from the program with enhanced self-esteem, empowered with the sovereign story of the right to be bicultural in a monocultural world and returning to schools with an arsenal of concealed stories that created a foundation to create new stories for themselves.

An important, on-going, component of the program/curriculum, is community participation. As students were not aware of the contributions of Latinos via K-12 school curricula, they were equally not aware of exiting Latinx civic leaders, college/business professionals and organizations in the

surrounding community. The *Puertas* curriculum is about sharing of stories, and each community shared their personal and cultural journey *prior* to being in their current professional/community position. This storytelling model made a powerful impact in addressing the single story possessed by students regarding their identity as Latinos (everyone is Mexican, not speaking Spanish, not “looking” Latino); the price of success via assimilation; and the “correct” path of going to college. Our approach to storytelling allows for the listener to determine what is the message of the story being presented. Our goal is never to “tell” the story the students should pursue, but rather, expose the students to the multitude of stories of being Latino, with the hope that a story will resonate with a student. It is important for the student to conclude that, “Si Se Puede,” because of the *examples*, via real-life stories, that are shared in the program. Community members are not presented as “role models,” which infers that this is a story that one should follow—we are interested in having students exhibit agency in *creating their own* story for success-based on their cultural experiences and individual personality.

Curriculum

The Rites of Program first began with the African American program in 1998. Through a directive by the Lane Board of Education, three additional programs were created in 2002. Since this was a new adventure for the additional programs, all programs followed the curricular model established by the African American program. The classes began with a Tai Chi class at 9am, followed History class at 10am, Literature at 11am with a noon lunch. For the *Puertas* program, we invited community leaders to speak at 1pm followed by a Capstone Project activity such as mural painting at 2pm. Again, for the *Puertas* program, the day ended at 3pm to allow for students to go to their jobs or help with family matters.

2006 did not offer summer programs due to over expenditures of the budget and the need to reset programs. Because of our inexperience with these programs, we followed the curricular model established by the African American program. There was an emphasis in creating a strong cultural foundation relating to history and the creative arts. By 2005, program coordinators, with 3 years of experience, determined that the curricular model did not fit the needs of each cultural group. What resulted was culturally responsive programming for each Rites of Passage program. For *Puertas Abiertas* students, feeling a sense of empowerment via community presenters,

asked for something more than cultural education. In response, the *Puertas* curriculum incorporated more learning spaces to contend with diminishing experiences and enhance awareness of community organizations and resources that advocated for the Latino community.

Another reset was Lane Community College's relationship with students who participated in the *Puertas Abiertas* Summer Leadership Academy. There was no systemic process of recording *Puertas Abiertas* students in Lane's system. From 2007-2009, class sections were created in Continuing Education to record the number of students participating in the summer academy. The classes reflected the changing focus of the program:

¿Quién Soy; Quiénes Somos: Chicano/Latino Identity

Voices/Voces in the Borderlands: Finding Space to Invent and Construct New Identities Through Writing

La Causa: Chicano/Latino Leadership Opportunities

El Orgullo y El Balance: Healthy Self and Positive Relationships

Puertas a Transiciones (For Latina students)

Speak Out! Responding to Everyday Acts of Oppression

Infórmate, Prepárate y Edúcate

From 2007-2009, 123 students participated in the *Puertas Abiertas* program. Lane was able to record this participation in its system and collect FTE earned via continuing education classes. The last class on the list above, reflects another major shift, based on students' feedback, to focus more on college information and preparation. This shift in curriculum has remained to this day and has been enhanced with the partnership established with the Downtown Languages, *Pasos al Futuro* program in 2014. The curriculum currently consists of:

Orientation for Students and Parents

Bonding Day Activities

Leadership Activities everyday

Entre Dos Mundos-Negotiating Bicultural Worlds

Financial Literacy

Resumé Writing

Healthy Relationships

Cooking Activity-Preparing Indigenous foods at the Lane Longhouse

Scholarship Writing

Day of Community Volunteer Service

College Visitations- Oregon State University and the University of Oregon

Field Trips to different venues in Lane County

Job Shadowing

Reflection Circle after each day

Graduation Ceremony/Community Celebration

Student Leadership Development 111,112,113

Based on the feedback and evaluations of summer academy students, 3 new courses were created for the *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy in 2009. The new classes responded to what students' felt what was missing in their k-12 education: Ethnic identity & Latinx diversity; contributions of Latinos; and creating events to celebrate Latinx experiences. These courses initially offered variable credits from 2-4 college credits. The courses offered an opportunity for Latinx high school students to participate at their high school for 2 college credits. The 4-credit option was available for any student attending Lane Community College. SLD 112 and 113 was only offered once at the high school due to the logistics of high school and instructor's schedule. Since all grade levels participated, there were a multitude of testing, classroom assignments obligations and athletic events that disrupted student attendance. Since 2010, these classes were solely offered on the Lane campus for 4 credits. Two dominant views of the creation and existence of Latino experiences are the focus of these classes:

1. Experiences imposed by forces of domination upon the social classes with subordinate social, political and economic status.
2. Experiences produced by and for subordinated people themselves.

The curriculum consists of:

SLD 111 ¿Quien Soy; Quiénes Somos?: Chicano/Latino Leadership I

- Examines the diversity that resides within the Chicano, Mexicano, Latino, Hispanic and Caribbean cultural experience in the Americas.
- Become aware of the cultural foundations/traditions of Spain, Africa, Asia and the Americas
- Exploration of ethnic/national identity formation and *Spanglish* spaces
- Provide a framework for understanding the ways in which distinctive social and cultural patterns arose, thus, bringing awareness of contemporary expression and their historical basis.
- Explore root causes to explain how the attitudes and behaviors of the Latinx community were shaped.
- Assess the ability to survive as Raza by fashioning syncretic adaptive strategies to the changing conditions since 1492.

SLD 112 Cultural Heroes: Chicano/Latino Leadership II

- Explore the concept of cultural heroes within the context of the Chicano/Latino experience.
- Identify socio-historic processes that serve to highlight or diminish Chicano/Latino cultural heroes, contributions, and achievements.
- Discuss and create strategies in which to celebrate and honor Chicano/Mexicano, Latino, Hispanic and Caribbean cultural heroes in school and community events.
- Explore the contributions and achievements of Chicano/Latinos in the Americas by surveying the Chicano/Latino historical presence in the social, economic, political, and cultural landscape of the United States.

SLD 113 Affirmation & Resistance: Chicano/Latino Leadership III

- Examine the impact of *La Leyenda Negra* (The Black Legend), Manifest Destiny and negative images assigned to Spanish/Mexican and Latino culture in the United States and Latin America.
- Provide a critical examination of Chicano/Latino cultural expressions in the public discourse with a focus on cultural/ethnic celebrations.
- Explore the production of Chicano/Latino culture and celebrations (e.g. *Cinco de Mayo*) via mainstream popular culture and culture produced by and for Chicano/Latinos (*Día de los Muertos*).
- Have increased knowledge of the historical origins of images assigned to the Chicano/Latino community
- Gain insight into the historical forces which creates contemporary Chicano/Latino cultural expressions
- Become aware of the cultural celebrations of Spain and Latin America
- Apply knowledge acquired in course to leadership activities in high school, college or in the community.

In 2013, students began completing all 3 of the leadership courses. The teaching and learning space resonated with students who wanted to further their learning and understanding to contextualize the Latinx experience. Most students were college students, however, several summer academy alumni enrolled as high school students. With the growing interest of high school students, the classes were offered late in the afternoon to accommodate high school schedules. The returning students played an active leadership role in small group discussions and assisted new students in acclimating to a new teaching and learning space. To recognize this effort, the *Puertas Abiertas* Director/Instructor created a *Puertas Abiertas* Scholar Award. Many of these “Scholars” served as Interns for the summer academy or classroom assistants for the *Éxito* class in the high schools. To date, about 15 awards have been presented.

***Éxito* Student Leadership Development 108**

In 2012, in response to student feedback from the summer academy, a new class was created called *Éxito* (College Success). Summer program students expressed a need for an earlier intervention in their schooling

experiences. This class was unique in that it was taught in the high schools. This allowed for more students at each school to participate in the learning space provided by the *Puertas Abiertas* program. In addition, the Chicano/Latino Student Program Coordinator received valuable insights into the school environments of each high school. This knowledge guided the work and strategies to outreach to Latinx students in the public schools.

The format of the class consisted of offering the class at the high school for 4 times at 5-hour blocks during a term for a total of 20 classroom hours. Students earned two college credits, receiving school supplies from Lane Community College and an *Éxito* t-shirt. The curriculum focused on assessing the school climate of Latino students, from their perspective, and how it may have impacted their interactions with the school environment and aspirations for college or career opportunities. Additionally, discussions on their own family expectations on students, especially those who are the oldest in the family, and how those expectations may support or diminish their success as high school students and college/career aspirations. It is not uncommon for Latinx students who are the oldest in the family to assume the role of translator (at an early age of 7) for the parents in various settings; be responsible for the care of younger siblings while both parents were at work, day and evening; having a personal presence of always serving the needs of others with little time or space to engage in individual expression of fun, growing up as young adults (not as adults) and expanding a circle of friends. Most importantly, is how these bicultural individuals were left on their own to negotiate the monocultural/monolingual worlds of their parents *and* educators-the *Puertas Abiertas* learning space provided a Spanglish space where they could be themselves, without satisfying the demands of an *either/or* world. In essence, *Éxito* enabled and empowered students to negotiate monocultural settings as bicultural beings. The SLD 108 class became a recruitment opportunity for students to continue their connection with *Puertas Abiertas* by attending the SLD 109 Summer Academy.

The curriculum comprised of four sections:

Session I: Self

- Afford an opportunity for students to uncover their *own* story. It is ok to pursue your personal aspirations without feeling selfish or needing approval from others.

- Assessing inventory of personality, academic and personal skill sets, etc. and how they impact college selection, program of study and career goals.

Session II: Family

- Discuss how challenging it is to pursue the college experience on your own. Most students are conditioned to do everything for family and seldom experience receiving support from others.
- Exploration of Latino family culture and how they provide supportive or diminishing experiences.
- Engage in identifying friends and high school staff who create supportive or diminishing experiences.
- Become aware of the support services available on college campuses that are not available in high school environments.
- Expand the notion of “family” to an extended family of staff, support services and resources.

Session III: College/Career

- Session I allowed students to claim their own story and now we are ready to explore college selection, program of study and career goals.
- Understand the different types of post-secondary opportunities: community college, private/public universities, technical/trade schools, etc.
- Steps to be taken while in high school to meet college criteria for college admission, SAT, high school courses, GPA, leadership activities, etc.
- Understand the programs of study available (majors/minors); types of certificates and degrees; graduate/professional school requirements.
- How high school/college courses can match career goal aspirations and attainment.

Session IV: Financial Aid/Scholarship Resources

- Understand the costs of post-secondary institutions
- Understand the vocabulary associated with financial aid, scholarship and college expenses

- Explore the scholarship and financial aid application process, adhering to deadlines and submitting the proper responses
- Reclaiming the knowledge about self in Sessions I, II, and III and how it may be expressed in scholarships essays and college applications.

Students

Admission to the program is not dependent on mainstream measures of aptitude, potential, and worthiness. GPA, leadership activities, test scores, college prep classes are not considered in the selection process. Rather, we offer a vision of teaching and learning that allows for more qualitative approaches towards understanding of potential and worth of students. Students who participate in the program are the students who voluntarily want to be there. These could be students who are taking classes to attend college (AP, Honors, etc.), taking ELD classes; or students who are on the path to graduation but with no post-secondary expectations.

However, all students have many things in common, including: pride in cultural heritage; living in two cultural worlds; experience with diminishing experiences as Latinos and perceived immigrant status; and having a desire to do something positive in their lives but receiving no mentoring, support, or acknowledgement of worth. Although any Latinx student may participate in the academy, the curriculum is more responsive to students who have experienced “subtractive” schooling and life experiences. Equally important is a student’s *desire* to find a better way of existence for herself/himself/theyself and family. The *desire* factor is exactly what mainstream measures are not capturing as an indicator for future success. Individual educators have identified this *desire* quality in students, but it is not captured systemically.

Over 90% of *Puertas* students reflect:

- Working class backgrounds
- Having both parents working, many who are monolingual Spanish
- Experience with ELD classes at one time in their schooling
- Being the oldest sibling in the family
- Immigrant background as a student and/or parents

- Qualifying for public assistance or free/reduced school meals
- Bilingual ability or monolingual Spanish speaking (in recent years, Indigenous speaking languages, followed by some Spanish, followed by some English)
- Experience with having to negotiate the demands of at least two cultural worlds
- Experiences with perceived notions of legal immigrant status, ability to speak English, ethnic identity (everyone being Mexican, you are not Mexican because you don't look it, etc.), being in the "right" class, Latino cultural expression being "un American."

PALA Student Enrollment History

2002-2019

YEAR	Female	Male	Total
2002	(F) 19	(M) 8	27
2003	(F) 10	(M) 6	16
2004	(F) 13	(M) 8	21
2005	(F) 15	(M) 7	22
2007	(F) 16	(M) 8	24
2008	(F) 28	(M) 14	42
2009	(F) 38	(M) 19	57
2010	(F) 11	(M) 6	17
2011	(F) 10	(M) 5	15
2012	(F) 13	(M) 4	17
2013	(F) 13	(M) 4	17
2014	(F) 9	(M) 6	15
2015	(F) 16	(M) 8	24

2016	(F) 12	(M) 12	24
2017	(F) 12	(M) 6	18
2018	(F) 16	(M) 8	23
2019	(F) 18	(M) 8	26
TOTAL	(F) 268	(M) 137	405

**PALA History School Districts
2002-2019**

<u>Bethel School District 52</u>	69
Kalapuya High School	1
Willamette High School	66
Cascade Middle School	1
Meadow View Middle School	1
<u>Central Linn School District</u>	3
Central Linn High School	
<u>South Lane School District 45J</u>	8
Cottage Grove High School	
<u>Creswell School District 40</u>	13
Creswell High School	
<u>Eugene School District 4J</u>	117
Churchill High School	37
North Eugene High School	44
Opportunity	1
Sheldon High School	11
South Eugene High School	11

Jefferson Middle School	2
Kelly Middle School	3
Kennedy Middle School	3
Madison Middle School	1
Monroe Middle School	4
Roosevelt Middle School	0
Spencer Butte Middle School	0
<u>Fern Ridge School District 28J</u>	1
Elmira High School	
<u>Junction City School District 69</u>	10
Junction City High School	9
Oaklea Middle School	1
<u>McKenzie School District 68</u>	0
McKenzie River Community School	
<u>Oakridge School District 76</u>	2
Oakridge Senior High School	
<u>Pleasant Hill School District 1</u>	2
Pleasant Hill High School	
<u>Springfield Public Schools 19</u>	169
Academy of Arts and Academics	4
Gateways	0
Springfield High School	157
Thurston High School	6
Springfield Middle School	1

Agnes Stewart Middle School	1
<u>Willamette Leadership Academy</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Out of State High Schools</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Network Charter</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Marist</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>GED</u>	<u>3</u>

Community Involvement

A critical and on-going component of the *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy is community involvement with all operations of the program. This role includes serving as guest presenters; facilitators of workshops; business vendors and primary staff members.

Staff

As of 2019, before Covid 19 restrictions stopped in-person operations, the program continues to receive the services from two community members. Since 2002, the current curriculum facilitator, first participated as a parent volunteer, assisting with general program operations. This person works in a local high school as a Minority Community Liaison for the school and a resource for students of color. She is bilingual, of personal experience of being an immigrant and learning English as a second language with extensive experience with Latinx parents. Her knowledge of real time/life Latinx parent concerns and schooling experiences of Latinx high school students, greatly enhanced her rapport with participants in the program. She brings integrity and authenticity to her passion and energy that she devotes to the inclusion of all students. Since 2002, her presence has captured the spirit of the program.

Another community member began as a Lane student, who eventually earned a bachelor's degree in Human Services and a master's degree in Counseling. This person is known by many Latinx families in the Eugene/Springfield area through his involvement with the Spanish Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church (considered one of the largest regular gatherings of the Latinx community in Lane County). He is bilingual, with personal experience of being an immigrant and learning English as a second language. He brings integrity and authenticity to his unassuming and quiet demeanor,

that appeals to more quiet students. Students see him as a person who listens with respect and can provide confidential, safe spaces for conversation. Since 2002, he has provided steady, but influential, contributions to the program. Currently, he serves as Assistant Director of the program, bringing his wealth of experience with program operations, as well as being able to utilize his background in counseling.

Community Facilitators

Drawing on the wealth of Latinx community professional/organizers in the area, *Puertas Abiertas* invites the expertise of key community members who have earned exceptional reputation for their work with Latinx immigrant communities. These individuals have seen their time become more precious as they have progressed in their graduate education and professional careers. However, they also found time to accept our requests to be workshop facilitators, speakers to parents at our orientation and assist with our program development. In particular, two community members, have created a learning space for *Puertas* students to engage in courageous conversations: about diminishing experiences as Latinx youth; living and responding to the expectations of at least two cultural worlds; the challenges and anxiety of growing up as a young person in today's society. *Most importantly, they created a space and opportunity for Latinx students to reveal concealed stories and lifetime of incoherence, as a way to empty themselves of aspects of deformation, in order to pursue a path of a transformative, bicultural existence, devoid of colonized categories of identity formation, skin color, intellectual capacity, body shape, and language abilities.*

An additional, important attribute of these individuals being their immigrant backgrounds from countries in Central America. Although the majority of staff, students and presenters are of Mexican descent, there is a significant presence of Salvadoran, Honduran, Chilean, and most recently, Indigenous speaking communities from Guatemala. *Puertas Abiertas* has always made an effort to be inclusive of Latinx community experiences via the curriculum and presentations.

One key member has extensive community experience with the Latinx community through her position as Executive Director with a non-profit community organization, *Centro Latino Americano*, that has existed in the community since 1973. She continues to be an ongoing advocate, currently at the state level, to challenge mainstream institutions to be more responsive to Latinx experiences. Students see in her story, an immigrant, and a

professional, an inspiring tale of perseverance, courage, survival and strength as a female in a patriarchal culture and society.

It is important to note that, the majority of *Puertas Abiertas* students are female-close to 85%. This is the same for *Puertas* staff and presenters. This was not an intentional design of the program, but rather, is reflective of the desire of students to participate in a program as an opportunity, different than mainstream environments (embedded with a story of patriarchy). What results is a female-centric curriculum that is responsive to Latina experiences as a central narrative-an environment which is inclusive, nurturing, organic and minimizing of male dominant perspectives. For the males, it was a transforming experience to have an opportunity to learn in a space which allowed, encouraged female voices. Males, are able to contextualize the Latinx experience being not only racialized environments, but also, enter the territory of gendered realities.

Tapping into the expertise of these two individuals, and responding to the needs of students, *Puertas Abiertas* included two day-long learning spaces that focused on: (1) *Entre Dos Mundos* – living in the expectations of at least two cultural worlds and (2) Healthy Male/Female Relationships.

The second key member also has extensive experience with the Latinx community, especially Latinx youth. She is a founder and director of a non-profit community organization, *Juventud Faceta*, that coordinates community service activities and leadership development for Latinx high school youth. Many of her students have continued their leadership journey with the *Puertas Abiertas* program as high school and college participants/Interns. In addition to her extensive community involvement, her professional training as a Counselor offers a critical skill set to create spaces for courageous and profound conversations on racism, anger towards immigrants, youth-parent interactions, personal sovereignty to be oneself instead of meeting the expectations of others, perceptions of failure in monocultural worlds and assimilation as a “success” marker. In short, these spaces create opportunities for healing, by creating a space of trust and confidentiality for wounded voices. She responds as a person, a community member and a trained professional counselor.

“Counseling” in the immigrant Latinx community is a topic that is not seen as a value, but rather a failure of the Latinx individual and/or family. These spaces “open the doors” for viewing counseling as a resource for these Latinx students for their lives and for college success. Both, of these key

individuals have provided an invaluable contribution to the success of the program.

Community Speakers

Community speakers have a strong presence in the program. From 2002-2007, a specific time was dedicated in the curriculum to allow for community members to share their stories with students. The class, “Empowerment/Life Skills” afforded an opportunity for students to become more aware of Latinx professionals in the community. Over 75 community members participated in the class between 2002-2007. For many students, this was the first time meeting a member of their community with a Ph.D., J.D. or a college degree. Students were excited to hear the personal cultural journeys and path to college or careers of each presenter. So many of the stories shared during this time resonated with students: Living in two cultural worlds; confronting discrimination; maintaining bilingualism/loss of language, immigration or emigration to Oregon; gender expectations by family; not being considered an “American” or a student worthy of going to college.

Presenters shared the connection to their personal passion with their chosen careers, and the steps they took to resolve obstacles and to enhance their skill sets to achieve their goals. Presenters represented a diversity of Latinx cultural backgrounds and career positions including elected Latinx leaders; college staff and faculty; professionals in Human Services and community organizations. Although the majority of the local Latinx community are of Mexican descent, students were able to hear stories from Caribbean, Central & South American experiences. This served to affirm the stories of non-Mexican students as well as bring awareness to those of Mexican descent of non-Mexican experiences.

The class also provided an opportunity for presenters to engage in personal reflection of their cultural journeys. Most often, they have engaged in presentations which focused on their professional endeavors. For many presenters, this was the first time they shared their personal journey with an audience. As an observer of these presentations, it was evident how the presenters were affected by looking into the faces of *Puertas* students; sometimes entering an emotional space. All presenters were bicultural and many were able to do their presentations bilingually. The shared stories empowered *Puertas* students to be proud of one’s cultural background and

that, despite diminishing experiences, one can still attain a goal with the proper attitude and support.

From 2007-2019, the role of presenters became more focused in the curriculum, often serving as workshop facilitators. In addition to sharing a personal journey, presenters were able to demonstrate their skills and how their expertise is contributing to the community. Since 2010, The *Puertas* program incorporated field trips to the University of Oregon and Oregon State University as well as field experiences opportunities with the US Forest Service, cities of Eugene and Springfield and local non-profit organizations.

Although this has somewhat reduced the number of community presenters in the program, it has provided more quality time with students.

Community Organizations

Utilizing community knowledge is a continuing foundational piece of the program. Since 2002, the growing presence of Latino professionals in the community has strengthened this community component of *Puertas Abiertas*. The program continues to draw upon a multitude of community organizations, social services, and K-16 educators as they engage in diversifying their staff capacity to serve the Latino population. While mainstream, progressive community organization have increased their efforts to outreach and serve the growing Latino presence in the area, this effort did not parallel with building capacity for serving a diverse community.

Historically in Lane County, mainstream institutions expected community groups of color to do everything, even though these same institutions had the responsibility and resources to serve *everyone*. With the *Puertas Abiertas* program, these community organizations expected *Puertas* staff to do all the Spanish/English translations. (Unfortunately, this same experience applied to Lane Community College departments and staff. This issue is covered more in depth in the Institution Support section.) The *Puertas Abiertas* staff did not feel respected/comfortable with predominately White organizations expecting people of color to do *their* work.

Eventually, some organizations began to hire bilingual staff to outreach to the Spanish-speaking/Latino community. *Puertas Abiertas* prioritize these organizations to present in the program with the limited time available in our intense 3-week curriculum. Beyond having a bilingual staff person, additional issues surfaced with serving our students. Materials available for students were only in English. Each organization had evaluations for their

presentations, again available only in English. The Director of *Puertas Abiertas* had to be very proactive in communicating with these organizations about or expectations for their participation with our program. Organizations were offered the opportunity to address these issues prior to their participation.

This interaction with community organizations allowed *Puertas Abiertas* to bring attention the gaps with their outreach efforts and many did respond by diversifying their staff and translating documents. In 2014, when Downtown Languages partnered with *Puertas Abiertas* with their *Pasos al Futuro* program, the merger and transition, went extremely well due to their capacity to serve a diverse, bilingual, immigrant Latino community. Downtown languages and *Centro Latino Americano* are innovative examples for other mainstream institutions to follow. Some organizations that have collaborated with *Puertas Abiertas* are:

Cascade Raptor Center

Centro Latino Americano

Causa-Oregon Immigrant Rights Coalition

City of Eugene-Human Rights Center

City of Eugene Recreation

City of Springfield Police Department

Community Alliance of Lane County (CALC)-Back to Back Allies

Downtown Languages

Food for Lane County

Goodwill Industries

Grupo Latino de Acción Directa (GLAD)

Huerto de la Familia

Lane County Health & Human Services-Riverstone Clinic

Lane County Legal Aid-Domestic Violence Clinic

Lane County Looking Glass/New Roads

LULAC of Lane County

NEDCO Community Lending
Next Step Recycling
Northwest Youth Corp/Willamette National Forest
Oregon Employment/Workforce Development
Oregon Human Services-Adult & Family Services
Oregon Toxic Alliance
SELCO Community Credit Union
United States Forest Service

In 2016, The *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy established an award for Community members who have contributed to the success of PALA since 2002. The *Puertas Abiertas / Pasos al Futuro Madrina/Padrino* Award honors and recognizes community members who supported, and participated, in the creation of *Puertas Abiertas*. The *Padrino/Madrina* award is a recognition given to community members for their ongoing, consistent, and strong support for *Puertas Abiertas/Pasos Al Futuro*. Like a godparent who is present for important milestones of a child's life, a *Padrino/Madrina* also participates and celebrates in the development, growth, rite of passage and achievements of youth. Culturally, a *Padrino/Madrina* is a person who voluntarily accepts the life commitment to be a support person, offer guidance, attention, affection and protection. They take the role of a second parent to a person and for that reason it is the second highest kinship given to someone. The award states:

In recognition of your continuous commitment, support and presence since 2002. Thank you for your guidance, attention, affection, service and protection of our community

PALA *Padrino/Madrina* Community Awards List

2016 Guadalupe Quinn	Causa Immigration Rights Advocacy
2016 Francisco Garcia	Work Source Oregon
2017 Francisca Leyva-Johnson	City of Eugene Human Rights

Elmira School District Board Member

2017 Carmen Urbina	Deputy Director, Oregon Department of Education
2017 Luis Sámano	Retired, Eugene 4J School District, Mechanic
2017 Dr. Emilio Hernandez	Assistant Vice-President, Institutional Diversity & Inclusion, University of Oregon State Board of Education, Member Springfield Schools, Board Member
2017 Connie Mesquita	Counselor (Retired), Lane Community College Co-founder, <i>Puertas Abiertas</i> Rites of Passage
2018 Patricia Cortez	Social Worker
2018 Dr. Michael Sámano	Ethnic Studies Coordinator, Lane Community College
2018 Paulina Romo Villaseñor	Director, Downtown Languages
2019 Fernell López	<i>Ganas</i> Middle School Mentorship Coordinator Kelly Middle School, Eugene School District 4J
2019 Phillip Martínez	Dean, Social Science, Lane Community College
2019 Rose Mary Villanueva	Bilingual/ELL Teacher, Eugene School District 4J Co-founder Misión San Pablo; Raza Sin Fronteras
2019 Beto Montes	Counselor, Looking Glass; Bilingual Family Liaison, Eugene 4J School District

Staff

Initially, from the years 2002-2009, staffing of the summer program ranged from 10-12 members. This included administrative/operational staff, teachers, student volunteers and workshop presenters. In 2010, as the program became more focused on college information, the staff leveled off at about 6, not including student interns, which vary from year to year. Whereas

in 2002, many *Puertas* staff were Lane Community College staff, since 2010, many staff members came from the community outside of Lane. However, two of the staff members have been with the program since the beginning, and the majority of staff, had attended Lane or were Lane students at the time of their service.

The presence of staff with Lane experience reflected a valuable resource in that staff could speak, not only of their familiarity with the campus and its resources, but also of their personal experience as a Lane staff person or student. A caveat to this is that the staff had minimal/no experience with the administrative operations of the college, as community members, students or teaching faculty.

From 2002-2005, three staff members had more experience with the general college operations in their role as Diversity Coordinator or Multi Cultural Center Coordinator. From 2002-2005, these staff members were available to respond to issues regarding program interactions with the administrative bureaucracy of the college. Since 2007, the Chicano/Latino Student Coordinator has assumed this role albeit being the sole source of information regarding administrative operations of the college. Unfortunately, this role has taken up an unusual amount of time away from the *Puertas* Director, due to the lack of responsiveness from administrative operations of the college to address the program needs. This issue will be addressed in the Institution Support section of this summary.

As stated earlier, community involvement is an on-going strong component of the *Puertas Abiertas* program. We are very fortunate to have a wealth of resources in the local community. Another strong component of the program is the involvement of students, whether currently enrolled at Lane, the University of Oregon, and other universities in Oregon. *Puertas* alumni have served as presenters, keynote speakers, volunteers and more recently, as interns receiving Co-operative Education credits.

More than 101 students have served as staff members from the years 2002-2019. This number increases to 134 when including students who served as presenters/speakers in classes, graduation, or orientation ceremonies. Initially, *Puertas Abiertas* actively identified Lane students who could serve as volunteers. This was a fruitful experience, however, many of these students were unprepared to serve as mentors, with little background in leadership experience or Latino studies coursework. Between 2008-2010, as

the program transitioned into Continuing Education classes, fewer mentors were needed.

However, in 2011, some trends arose when students expressed interest in returning to the summer program for a second or third year. Parallel to this, students enrolled in the *Puertas Abiertas* leaderships classes created by the *Puertas Abiertas* Director in 2009 and offered on campus during the school year, expressed interest in volunteering for the summer program. These trends addressed the earlier issues presented on the mentors/student volunteers in 2002: After 2011, students had experience with the program; had taken leadership classes; and had assumed leadership activities with the Lane de MEChA student organization.

It is important to note that this was not an intentional vision of the *Puertas* program, but rather, a response by the Director to an expressed energy and interest of students who wanted to continue their participation with *Puertas Abiertas*. Students continuing their participation as *Puertas* students, Interns or presenters reflected a demonstration of the impact of their program experience with *Puertas Abiertas*. Every single student exhibited passion, commitment, leadership and professionalism. They served as great examples and mentors as to what was expected in the *Puertas Abiertas* program. In recent years, a more formal process was created which involved an application process and the opportunity to earn co-operative education credit thru Ethnic Studies or Human Services.

Lane Staff

Puertas Abiertas Staff

From 2002-2005, there was significant participation of Lane staff with the *Puertas Abiertas* program. This was due, in part, to the brand-new idea of having a Rites of Passage program for Latinos. There was a need to draw upon the existing Lane Latino staff as part of the *Puertas* staff. Additionally, Lane Community College had made intentional efforts to build capacity, via the work of Lane's Diversity Team's 1998 Diversity Plan. The Diversity Plan advocated for a Diversity Coordinator position as well as a designated Counselor for students of color. By 2002, the first year of the program, *Puertas Abiertas* had the benefit of having the previous Diversity Coordinator, who later received the Counselor position for Diverse Populations, and the current

Diversity Coordinator. Both staff members had extensive experience with Lane college operations as well as connections in the local community.

From 2002-2005, along with the Multi-Cultural Center Coordinator who had experience with Lane students, these three positions formed the administrative/operative component for *Puertas Abiertas*. The Diversity Coordinator and the Counselor for Diverse Populations also served as Instructors for the program. A faculty member and a Lane administrator rounded out the *Puertas Abiertas* teaching staff.

In 2002, the Diversity Plan advocated for the creation of positions to specifically work with students/communities of color and oversee the rites of passage program. No such position existed until 2005, when, upon the retirement of the Multi-Cultural Coordinator, the position was reassigned to create the Chicano/Latino Student Program Coordinator. Presently, only 3 Coordinator full time faculty positions have been established, with the Asian/Pacific American Student Program Coordinator lacking a similar permanent status.

In 2004, per Lane's diversity plan, two Counseling positions were created to specifically address the retention of Lane students of color. Ideally, these positions would complement the outreach efforts of the rites of passage programs. One of these counselors served as an instructor for the program from 2004-2005. The experiment of creating a formal retention program for Rites of Passage students attending Lane only lasted two years. Throughout the duration of the Rites of Passage programs at Lane, the college has continuously engaged in budget cuts throughout the college. Unbeknownst to Rites of Passage Coordinators, by 2005, the Counselor for Students of Color positions were re-assigned to the general student population. The initial idea to have a retention counselor for Rites of Passage students fell by the wayside, although the idea that rites of passage programs be a retention program did not change. The issue of changes in administrative policies or initiatives, without informing or consulting with Rites of Passage Coordinators, will be addressed in the Institution Support section of this summary.

Individual Lane Latino staff members have **always** expressed interest in sharing their stories with *Puertas* students. The challenge has, and continues to be, whether the supervisor offers approval for staff to dedicate their time away from their "work": This is especially true for classified staff. *Puertas Abiertas* is a Lane initiative, not an initiative by the Multi-Cultural Center. This lack of acceptance of *Puertas Abiertas* as a Lane initiative, as directed by the

Board of Education, by supervisors represents a barrier that ranges from resistance to benign neglect. This issue will be addressed further in the Institution Support section.

With Lane Latino staff participation, *Puertas* students receive a valuable opportunity to become acquainted with Latino professionals who successfully navigated bicultural spaces, immigrant experiences, educational attainment and working in predominately White spaces. Latino students do not see this diversity in their schools and therefore experience a lack of examples of bicultural success. *Puertas* students become aware of additional resources at Lane that will lead to student success as a college student. This, along with community members sharing their stories as part of the curriculum, is critical for re-centering *Puertas* students to see themselves worthy as individuals and being successful high school and college students.

Lane Staff Involvement

Academic Advising/ Career Coach

Associated Students of Lane Community College (ASLCC)

Career Pathways/ Pass Lane

Counseling

Diversity Coordinator

Ethnic Studies Coordinator

Enrollment Services/Financial Accounts/Financial Aid

Faculty-Literature, Economics, Languages,

Gender Equity Center

Lane Family Connections

Library

Multi-Cultural Center

Student Outreach & Recruitment Coordinator

Title IX Coordinator

Transiciones Program

Trio Program

Writing Center

Budget

This continues to be an ongoing issue since the creation of the rites of passage programs at Lane. While it should be noted and commended that the college provides \$10,000 for each program from the general fund, where, in the Lane budget, does the money comes from is another issue. Many similar programs at other institutions are usually funded by grants. However, the lack of transparency on the budget significantly impacts the planning process, which begins in March. It was not uncommon for a Coordinator to receive confirmed information on funding in late June. This issue will be further noted in the Institution Support section.

From 2000-2005, the funds for all rites of program came from a general ROP source. Programs did not have individual assigned budgets as transportation and meal costs were taken from the general fund. The only controlled costs for each program focused on staffing, books, and supplies. Scheduled field trips such as White-Water Rafting were also taken from the general ROP fund. Although student participants in every program ranged from 15-25, this did not affect individual budgets since, regardless of the number of students in each program, the costs were absorbed from a general fund.

In 2007, all programs created a distinct approach towards serving their communities which encouraged a need to establish individual budget allotments (i.e. \$10, 000 per program). Although this change maximized the opportunity to effectively serve each community in a specific cultural context, it did lead to inequitable budget realities as programs serving 15 students received the same amount as the *Puertas* program which were serving up to 50 students. 50 students absorb \$10,000 more, than 15 or so students, when paying for meals, t-shirts, graduation stoles and bus transportation.

From 2002-2005, the costs for *Puertas Abiertas* ranged from \$10, 000 - \$16,000 in 2005. Due to the lack of transparency and oversight of the overall rites of passage budget since 2002, all programs were cancelled in 2006 to compensate for the overspending of the previous years. 2006 afforded all programs to take time for strategic planning and thinking on how to progress further in 2007. The idea of creating unique programs that are more responsive to the unique needs of each community became the future model.

In addition, the idea of having individual budgets assigned to each program became the new reality. Even with the new budget format, issues of transparency and confirmation of existing monies continue to this day.

There are two major costs for the program each year: personnel and student meals. After 2010, the program set a limit of 25 students to have a better control on costs. In 2014, Downtown Languages became a partner with *Puertas Abiertas* adding \$5000 to the summer academy. With the additional money, more field trips were added with a major expense being bus transportation. Also in 2014, the *Pasos al Futuro* grant covered additional student Interns; breakfast, meals associated with field trips, orientation and graduation ceremonies. Other major expenses are:

LTD bus passes: \$1500

Graduation stoles and printing: \$1000

T-shirts and printing: \$450

Lunch Card Meal: \$2000

Other Meals: \$1000

Beginning in 2019, more budget transparency and clarity became a welcome change. This was, in part, due to a change in leadership responsible for the rites of passage programs and an intentional hire for a position who can be the administrative overseer of finance and budget protocols, as well as a point person for all the grant money being awarded to Lane. As a result, Coordinators received sufficient notification of available budget resources early in the school year to engage in program planning that reflected resources that were confirmed, and not estimated.

The rites of passage administrative coordinator position required a specific skill set, given the complex nature of interacting 4 rites of programs with diverse community members and the college system. Previous attempts to assign this role to existing staff, with minimal experience with rites of passage, and not able to devote full time attention to all four programs at the same time, or, were not hired for the specific skill required in this role, created stressful challenges for everyone involved.

***Puertas Abiertas* Budget Allocation by Year**

2002 \$5,500

2003	\$15,400	(Operations=\$7490)	(Personnel = \$7450)
2004	\$11,600		
2005	\$16,536		
2006	No Program		
2007	\$7200		
2008	\$4000		
2009	\$7,615.50		
2010	\$5100	(Personnel)	
2011	\$6500		
2012	\$9,751		
2013	\$10,000		
2014	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> Grant	\$5000
2015	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> Grant	\$5000
2016	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> Grant	\$5000
2017	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> Grant	\$5000
2018	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> Grant	\$5000
2019	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> Grant	\$5000
		Plus \$15,000 Meyer Memorial Grant	
2020	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> grant	\$5000
		Plus \$15,000 Meyer Memorial Grant	
2021	\$10,000	Plus <i>Pasos al Futuro</i> grant	\$5000
		Plus \$15,000 Meyer Memorial Grant	

Institution Support

In 2000, the Lane Board of Education directed the President to establish four rites of passage programs for the college. The President communicated with Lane staff of color to initiate conversations towards creating rites of

passage programs for the four communities of color. An on-going theme that impacts the performance of rites of passage programs is the lack of institutional support from Lane staff and departments. It is unclear whether the President communicated to division Deans and mid-level managers to support rites of passage coordinators. There is a mindset of rites of passage being an MCC program, and not a Lane initiative, directed by the Lane Board of Education.

Faculty coordinators are responsible for recruiting students, identifying community members, and creating the curriculum. On several occasions, *Puertas Abiertas* was expected to: initiate enrolling and registration of students; prepare lunch meals for students; create marketing materials; provide statistical data, receive compensation that did not reflect collective bargaining agreements: all which Lane has established departments and staff to handle these responsibilities. Unfortunately, a good deal of the Coordinator's time was spent engaging with colleagues who were questioning their role for supporting rites of passage. The Dean of Student Activities was assigned overall supervision of the programs from the beginning in 2002. This included being an advocate for the programs and sharing with mid-level managers, the needs of rites of program staff. This did not happen.

There is a need for the overall Lane organization to be more responsive to the operations of the *Puertas Abiertas* program. All aspects of the Lane community should be aware of the rites of passage programs, via communication by senior level administrators. Policy changes at the senior level should be communicated to mid managers (in a timely manner), especially the manager responsible for the overall operations of the rites of programs. This would minimize disruption of innovative approaches to serve students of color and provide a more rewarding experience for coordinators, participating community members and organizations, and students of color and parents. The *Puertas Abiertas* Coordinator has made a significant effort to shield participating students, staff, parents, and community members from the on-going resistance/benign neglect from the Lane organization-an experience, if known, would certainly infuriate all of those community members, parents and students, who have benefited from the *Puertas Abiertas* program.

Since the founder of the first rites of passage program, worked in the Multi-Cultural Center (MCC), it was decided that the MCC would serve as the hub for all four programs. Unfortunately, this assignment to the MCC did not include additional staff to handle the additional responsibilities. In effect,

existing staff were expected to handle the additional workload, with no attention for support staff, compensation (per collective bargaining agreements) or attention to specific skill sets required for the new programs. The original coordinator of the rites of passage program was left, not only to coordinate his own program, but to serve as the point person for the remaining three programs.

The above serves as an example on the legacy of Lane administrators' response to supporting rites of programs operations. In the years since 2002, issues continue to surface on Lane's ability to support programs for students of color. Below are some examples of those issues.

Faculty Coordinator

As faculty, Coordinators are responsible for creating a curriculum and budget, identifying staff, and recruiting students from the local school districts. Unfortunately, issues such as compensation for Lane staff or community members, enrolling and registration of students, feeding students and other administrative tasks, were also left for the coordinator to navigate. This situation was especially challenging for community members coordinating a rites of passage program. Ideally, the supervisor of all rites of programs should have been at the forefront of creating processes to accommodate the needs of program operations. In addition, an administrative staff person was assigned (not hired as a new position) to assist with rites of passage programs, however this role was limited to payroll. It would have been beneficial for coordinators to provide feedback on program needs that could have been incorporated in the duties and responsibilities of the administrative staff position.

Compensation for Lane faculty coordinators has been an on-going issue since 2002, and only resolved, in 2019. Compensation arrangements did not reflect existing collective bargaining agreements. The salary for coordinators reflected more of the budget allocation of all program expenses (\$10,000), including salaries, rather than collective bargaining agreements. In 2016 and 2017, the PALA Faculty Coordinator had not received any official notice of a salary for the summer work up to the last week of the contract year ending June 15. On one occasion, the PALA Coordinated asked his supervisor in June for clarification of salary for summer work and the supervisor could not verify any funds were available. On another occasion, the PALA Coordinator had made all the arrangements for a summer program but still had not received notice from Human Resources regarding summer compensation. It

was the next to the last day of the contract and the Coordinator had to communicate with the President to inquire about the agreement that was reached the previous year regarding summer compensation. In effect, there was a summer program ready to go but no one to coordinate it!

Lane Policy

In 2008, the Vice President approached the rites of passage coordinators to establish a more formal presence and interaction of students with Lane. The *Puertas Abiertas* Coordinator responded by creating classes in Continuing Education and eventually classes for credit. With this new expectation from Administration, there was no parallel communication to departments whose responsibility is to enroll students at Lane and for Continuing Education to utilize their process and staff for registering *Puertas* students. Once again, the PALA Coordinator was expected to handle all the paperwork, including enrolling and registering students for classes. Furthermore, the question of Lane faculty teaching Continuing Education classes as it related to collective bargaining agreements and compensation was not addressed by the supervisor or the Vice President.

One year, meal cards provided by Food Services were going to be discontinued. There was no communication from the supervisor to the PALA Coordinator that such a change was happening. In June, the PALA Coordinator discovered by accident, about the meal card change. How were we going to feed PALA students in the summer without a meal card? This had to be resolved in two weeks. For that year, the PALA staff had to prepare sandwiches for the students—a scene that students of color are familiar with seeing people of color doing things when other staff are responsible for providing the same service. The following year, the PALA Coordinator actively worked with Food Services to create a food voucher for PALA students: This advocacy should be the role of the supervisor.

College Support

In 2013, the Summer Academy became a college credit class as requested by the Administration. The faculty's role was to create the class, SLD 109, and design a curriculum. However, the coordinator also enrolled and registered all the students. This responsibility should fall within Enrollment Services. There was no acceptance of this responsibility from the supervisor of Enrollment Services until it was brought to the attention of the Board of Education. The PALA Coordinator was invited at the Board to be recognized

for the work with *Puertas Abiertas*. At this meeting, the Coordinator was asked if there were any additional support the Board could provide. The Coordinator shared stories of institutional benign neglect at best and institutional resistance at worst within the college. After dealing with Enrollment Services for several years, the responsibility of enrolling students at Lane became very clear in the days following the Board meeting and the department finally assumed the responsibility.

Budget

In 2002, Lane created an account to fund the four rites of passage program. This account paid for general expenses of bus transportation, student lunches, field trips and materials for all programs. After the general expenses, specific amounts for each program varied depending on the number of staff, books, and capstone projects. In 2007, the programs went away from a general framework followed by all four programs and created unique approaches towards serving specific populations. With this new approach, each program received the same budget of \$10,000 to operate their programs.

As Lane continued to endure budget cuts, money for the programs no longer came from one account but rather, depended on unspent funds from throughout the organization. Although coordinators were expected to organize summer programs, there was no guarantee of how much funds, if any, would be available. This proved to be a challenge because preparation and planning began in March of each year, and yet, the amount of funds available was not known until June. Furthermore, the rites of passage budget became sufficient only if the compensation for the faculty coordinator stayed within the budget, and not reflective of existing collective bargaining agreements. Recently, it is now acknowledged that faculty compensation should come from another source, and be reflective of collective bargaining agreements, so as not to take away potential services and materials from participating students.

The above highlights a central theme of a lack of strategic thinking and planning, on the part of senior administrators, with the rites of passage programs serving students of color. Since 2002, coordinators have shared their concerns and requests for support with minimal response. Fortunately, this has changed in recent years with the presence of new leadership that is responsible for overseeing rites of passage programs.

How It Should Be

The Diversity Plan of 2000 recommended student program coordinator positions, specifically to work with each student of color population, including the rites of passage programs. In 2005, the idea expressed in the 2000 Lane Diversity Plan came to fruition with the establishment of the Chicano/Latino Student Program Coordinator.

In 2019, a newly created classified position was established to facilitate more transparency, clarity and management of the budget for rites of passage programs. Since 2002, there has always been a need to have a staff person, specifically hired for a skill set to manage grants, budget and general college operations to support rites of passage coordinators. Coordinators are now able to communicate with one person and receive timely responses to inquiries on the status of funding. This attention to the budget is especially critical now that the rites of passage programs are receiving hundreds of thousands of dollars from grants.

In 2014, the *Puertas Abiertas* Coordinator began recognizing, at the graduation ceremony, Lane staff and departments who provided valuable support and service for the program, from the very beginning. These departments, staff saw no difference in providing services and contributing to the success of *all* students. They saw no need to receive a directive from supervisors to do what they were hired to do at Lane. In addition, the Coordinator recognized their personal/professional passion for serving students of color; using their authority to change regular operations to be more responsive to people of color experiences; and willingness to interact with diverse populations as a teaching and learning experience. In effect they modeled several principles expressed in Lane's Core values:

- Working together to create a learning-centered environment
- Recognizing and respecting the unique needs and potential of each learner
- Fostering a culture of achievement in a caring community
- Welcoming, valuing and promoting diversity among staff, students and our community
- Cultivating a respectful, inclusive, and accessible working and learning environment
- Working effectively in different cultural contexts to serve the educational and linguistic needs of a diverse community
- Developing capacity to understand issues of difference, power, and privilege

- Supporting creativity, experimentation, and institutional transformation
- Responding to environmental, technological, and demographic changes
- Anticipating and responding to internal and external challenges in a timely manner
- Acting courageously, deliberately, and systematically in relation to change
- Encouraging and expanding partnerships with organizations and groups in our community
- Fostering an environment of respect, fairness, honesty, and openness
- Minimizing financial, geographical, environmental, social, linguistic, and cultural barriers to learning
- Integrating practices that support and improve the health of systems that sustain life

Below are some examples of this recognition:

Foundations Office-Tiana Marrone-Creech, Jeri Steele

The Foundations Office staff have created, administered a *Puertas Abiertas* Assistance Fund account, with donations totaling over \$75,000 since 2016.

High School Connections-Deron Fort

High School Connections assisted with the SLD 108 Éxito Class (College Success) with enrollment and registration of over 100 high school students in Lane County schools since 2014.

Cooperative Education/Social Science-Beverly Farfan

Assisted with providing Cooperative Education credits in Ethnic Studies for college student interns for the *Puertas Abiertas* Leadership Academy since 2014.

Lane Bookstore-Lisa MacDonald/Roberta Wong

Lisa has provided exceptional customer service in providing educational supplies, graduation tassels, gowns and caps for *Puertas Abiertas* students.

Roberta Wong created a student-friendly process to allow bookstore charges to be paid by the *Puertas Abiertas* Assistance Fund.

Center for Meeting and Learning Conference Services-Eila Sontag

For providing conference spaces and equipment to support *Puertas Abiertas* Orientation and Graduation Ceremonies. In 2019, with Lane food services closed for the summer, Catering Services provided exceptional lunch offerings for *Puertas* students.

Social Science/Ethnic Studies Coordinator-Dr. Michael Sámano

Since 2002, for on-going support for *Puertas Abiertas*, as a staff and community member, always responding to requests to participate in *Puertas Abiertas* as a presenter. In 2009, assisting the Chicano/Latino Student Program Coordinator with navigating the curriculum process and protocol for establishing 5 *Puertas Abiertas* courses, 3 of which fulfill Cultural Literacy and AAOT Social Science requirements.

Division Dean/Social Science-Phil Martinez

Since 2002, for on-going support for *Puertas Abiertas*, as a staff and community member, always responding to requests to participate in *Puertas Abiertas*. In 2018, as Interim Dean, initiated a process to strengthened the education program at Lane by infusing more bilingual and multicultural content. This is in response, to *Puertas Abiertas* students, who expressed interest in careers in education. Along with the *Puertas Abiertas* Coordinator, facilitated conversations with teacher education programs in the state to facilitate transfer opportunities. An example of his efforts resulted in a *Puertas Abiertas* student achieving a scholarship at a four-year university and completing a master's program in secondary teaching with endorsements in English for Speakers of Other Languages. The student is now teaching in a local school district she attended as a high school student.