



# Educating the Adult Community



Centinela Valley Adult School | South Bay Adult School | El Camino College | Torrance Adult School | TASC

**South Bay Adult Education Consortium**



# Education That Makes a Difference



PHOTO BY SUSAN WEININGER

by Evan  
Tuchinsky

## Changes to adult education offer promise for community

**A**dult education might just be the best-kept secret in the South Bay. Sure, thousands of students have attended the four adult schools in the region, completing courses needed to receive a high school diploma, pass the GED exam, get a career certificate or increase English proficiency. Yet, many community members still don't know what these campuses and programs have to offer.

That may change in the coming months. State legislation — Assembly Bill 86 — calls for sweeping innovations for the 2015-16 academic year. Local school districts, which have administered adult education, will partner with community college districts to offer more comprehensive and connected educational programs for adult students.

Under AB 86, partnerships between adult schools and community colleges (called a “consortium”) must focus on making improvements in the following five areas:

- Elementary and secondary skills, including classes for a high school diploma or GED certificate;
- English as a second language (ESL) and citizenship;
- Education for adults with disabilities;
- Short-term career technical education with high employment potential; and
- Programs for apprentices.

The South Bay Adult Education Consortium, comprising El Camino College and four local adult schools, has embraced the

### Adult education leads to more engaged citizens and more vibrant local economies.

change. Representatives from each school meet weekly and are finalizing plans, which they and the 69 other consortia must submit to the state for approval by March 1, 2015. The state then will allocate funds, which will determine the extent of the programs' expansion.

Consortium campuses are looking forward to working together to provide a more seamless route for students between adult

school, college and career. Under the consortium model, adult school students will have access to the integrated programs offered by El Camino College. Students can complete courses at the adult school that lead into the community college for pursuit of an associate's degree. Alternately, students can earn a short-term career certificate, get a job in the field and pursue advanced certification at El Camino College, or use the short-term certificate to

strengthen qualifications for a paid apprenticeship.

Adult education provides accessible, affordable opportunities for advancement, leading to more engaged citizens and more vibrant local economies. For the strength of our communities, it's important to continue adult education's proud, 150-year tradition of offering educational opportunities for all. Schools in the South Bay Adult Education Consortium look forward to the progress that's being made and the next chapter that's being written.

**Read on for stories of student success and to learn more about the educational opportunities offered by members of the South Bay Adult Education Consortium.**

## MEET THE CONSORTIUM

The South Bay Adult Education Consortium is a group of five post-secondary schools working together to shape the future of adult education and how it is delivered to better serve the community.

**El Camino College:** Founded in 1947 in Torrance, California, El Camino College serves more than 25,000 students each semester. For more information, visit [elcamino.edu](http://elcamino.edu) or call 1-866-ELCAMINO.

**Torrance Adult School:** Torrance Adult School has three sites and serves more than 8,000 students each year. For more information, visit [tastusd.org](http://tastusd.org) or call 310-533-4459.

**South Bay Adult School:** Since 1918, South Bay Adult School has provided adult education at 11 sites in the South Bay community. For more information, visit [southbayadult.org](http://southbayadult.org) or call 310-937-3340.

**Centinela Valley Adult School:** Centinela Valley Adult School is located in Lawndale, California. For more information, call Michael Martinez at 424-255-4066.

**Inglewood Career Technical Education, Adult Education, Alternative School (ICAAS):** offers ESL, career technical education and GED preparation classes. For more information, visit [icaas.iusd.net](http://icaas.iusd.net) or call 310-330-4424.

**For more information on the South Bay Adult Education Consortium, visit [sbaec.wordpress.com](http://sbaec.wordpress.com).**

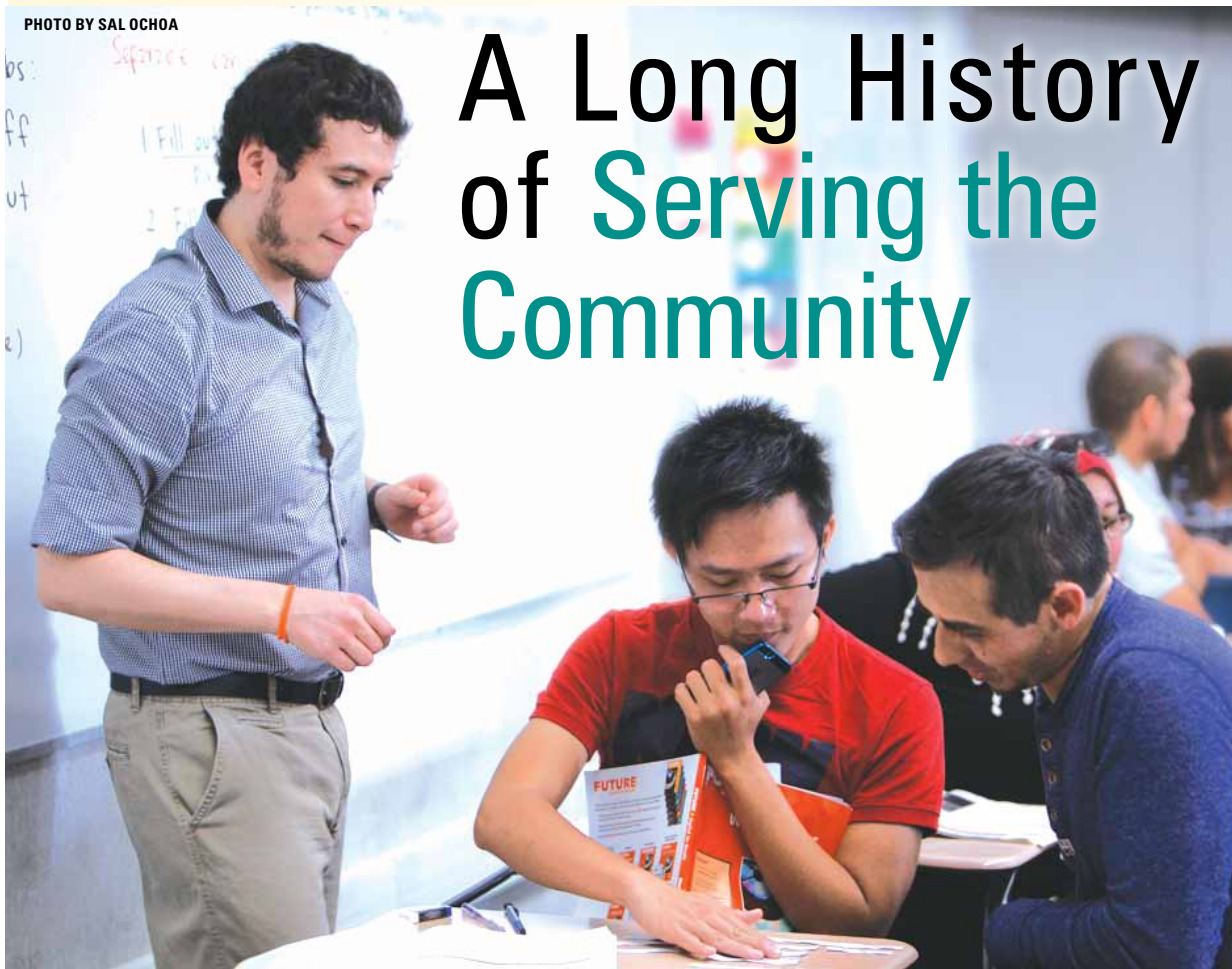


From left: Michael Martinez, Centinela Valley Union Adult Education; Wayne Diulio, Torrance Adult School; Vivian Ibarra, South Bay Adult School; Jose Anaya, El Camino College; and Debra Tate, Inglewood Career Technical Education, Adult School, Alternative School.

PHOTO BY SUSAN WEININGER

PHOTO BY SAL OCHOA

# A Long History of Serving the Community



by Evan Tuchinsky

## Adult schools offer vital education opportunities

Adult education has come a long way in 150 years. What began in a church basement in San Francisco as a modest attempt to spark literacy has grown into a statewide collection of adult schools with offerings only limited by the imaginations of their teachers and administrators.

“There is a perception of adult schools being only for credit recovery or to get your GED,” says Wayne Diulio, director of Torrance Adult School. “But every adult school is unique to each community’s needs.”

Adult schools typically operate in local K-12 public school districts, and exist to meet the continuing education needs of the community. Four of the five members of the South Bay Adult Education Consortium are adult schools — each varied in size and scope, yet all sharing the same basic philosophy, one that’s at the heart of the adult education mission.

“Adult learning is about lifelong learning,” says Vivian Ibarra, director of South Bay Adult School, “and we have always had classes that focus on career and educational goals. Over time, adult schools have adjusted to meet the needs of the community.”

Indeed, change may be the only constant in adult education, which also may be one of its strengths.

For instance, during World War II demand for manufacturing jobs led to job training for women. After the war, veterans sought classes to complete their high school graduation requirements. Today, adult schools emphasize GED exam preparation and short-term career certification

exams, as well as English courses for immigrants.

“Our goal as adult educators is to help you reach your goals,” Ibarra says. “Even a college degree isn’t an end goal, or shouldn’t be. An end goal is being a helpful member of society who is active in your community, successful emotionally, physically and financially. We have classes to help students reach their goals.”

California adult schools are evolving again, under AB 86. Starting in the 2015-16 academic year, public school districts are partnering with community college districts to provide adult education. The South Bay Adult Education Consortium, comprising four local adult schools and El Camino College, has been commissioned to fulfill this purpose.

“Needs of the adults were not being met,” Ibarra explains. “There were overlaps of services and overlaps of programs, but then there were gaps in programs. This is to look at what’s out there, bring it all under one umbrella and make it stronger for the community. If every school is working in isolation, you can’t meet the needs of the community.”

One thing Ibarra and Diulio hope won’t change is the “small-town feel” that distinguishes their schools. Their size allows them to give more individualized attention to students. Unfortunately, there’s also a downside to being diminutive.

“The thing about adult schools is that we’re somewhat the best-kept secret, where people don’t fully understand what we offer,” Diulio says. “Even with the ability to market and advertise, we still are an unknown commodity in our area and often in our own school districts.”

Soon, the secret may be out.

**“Our goal as adult educators is to help you reach your goals.”**

**Vivian Ibarra**  
*Principal of South Bay Adult School*

## AB 86 BRINGS CHANGE TO ADULT ED

Assembly Bill 86, Section 76, Article 3 — also known as AB 86 — is changing the way California provides adult education. State legislators and the governor have asked community colleges and public school districts to collaborate in planning adult education services.

The legislation appropriated \$25 million for 70 local consortia, including our local South Bay Adult Education Consortium, to develop plans that meet five goal areas:

- Education in basic skills, including classes required for a high school diploma or GED certificate
- Classes for immigrants in English as a second language, citizenship and workforce preparation
- Education for adults with disabilities
- Short-term career technical education with high employment potential
- Programs for apprentices

The consortia — made up of adult schools and community colleges — have already begun submitting proposals and must complete their planning by March 2015. The new system is set to take effect for the 2015-16 academic year, with funding for educational programs starting July 1.

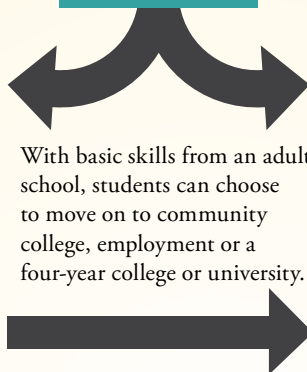
# Choose Your Path to Success

**A**dult schools and community colleges work together to offer opportunities for gaining the skills and experience that lead to career success. No matter what your needs, you can find a path to get where you want to go, and local adult schools and El Camino College can help.

## ADULT SCHOOL



## START



## EL CAMINO COLLEGE



### ESL & CITIZENSHIP COURSES

Adult schools offer English as a second language courses, preparing students with the communication skills needed for further education or employment. Students may take these alongside other academic and technical courses.

### GED & HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Adults who did not graduate from high school may earn a diploma or prepare for the GED exam, with an eye toward college or a trade.

### SHORT-TERM CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION

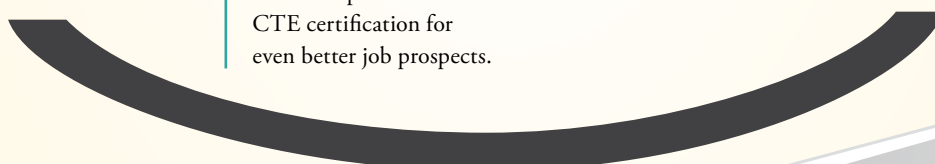
Students who complete short-term career technical education may earn a certificate that can help them land a job in their field. Then, they can receive more comprehensive CTE certification for even better job prospects.

### CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION

El Camino College offers career technical education for a wide range of professions, including health care, computers, fabrication and auto tech.

### ASSOCIATE DEGREE

Adult school students may be able to skip entry-level classes when they transfer to the community college for a two-year associate degree.



## APPRENTICESHIPS

Through adult ed or community college education, students can gain the skills needed to become competitive applicants for highly coveted apprenticeships. Apprenticeships offer pay and benefits along with job training and experience in trades such as welding or electrical.



Knowledge and skills from adult schools and community college can lead to apprenticeships, further education or directly to a career.

## FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE



### BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Associate degrees through community colleges give students a head start on bachelor's degrees at four-year institutions to prepare for professional careers.



## FINISH

### CAREER SUCCESS!

Graduates from adult schools and community colleges have an advantage in the job market — not only due to their diplomas or certificates, but also from the consortium's partnerships with local businesses.



Autumn Diaz struggled with ADHD for most of her life. The instructors at Torrance Adult School worked with her to ensure she stayed engaged. Today, she has a successful career in the medical field.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF TORRANCE ADULT SCHOOL

**GOALS FOR  
ADULT ED SUCCESS:  
CAREER  
TECHNICAL  
EDUCATION**

Many adults seeking career technical education (or CTE) cannot dedicate themselves to full-time study or job training without working at the same time. That's where short-term certification comes in.

Adult schools and community colleges offer students the chance to receive a certificate that qualifies them for jobs or apprenticeships in the field. Then, once employed, students can attend the full certification program, improving prospects for a higher-level position.

Programs vary depending on the campus but can include welding, medical assisting, medical billing and coding, nursing, computers and pharmacy technician.

More significantly, the relatively low cost to operate CTE programs through adult schools is passed on to the students.

"It's good for the students because it's affordable and regionalized," says Wayne Diulio, director of Torrance Adult School. "Also, if a student is willing to put in additional time and effort, they can seek additional training to advance their career. That's the partnership we're forming with El Camino College."

# Finding a Job to Love

**by Mike Blount** Student finds the right environment for success through adult school program

**A**utumn Diaz struggled with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) for most of her life. When Diaz was in grade school in the early '90s, she repeatedly got in trouble for distracting other students and leaving her desk in the middle of class. Teachers were not sure how to keep her engaged. By the time Diaz entered high school, she began to fall behind.

"I think the only motivation I had at the time was to stay on the soccer team," Diaz says. "I played soccer since I was 4 years old until I turned 17. By my junior year though, I was burned out. Everyone was concerned with me getting left behind, but didn't know what they could do for me."

Diaz started an independent study program her senior year. The program allowed her to make up credits and work at her own pace, which kept Diaz on track to graduate on time in 2006.

After she finished high school, Diaz struggled to find her place in the world. Because she had such a negative experience in school, she ruled out college. She worked various low-wage jobs for several years. But when she turned 25, she began to realize her options were running out.

"I couldn't just work food industry jobs for the rest of my life," Diaz says. "Those jobs are for young kids who are just starting out. I felt like no one was going to hire me because I was getting too old."

**"I have a job that I love now because of [Torrance Adult School]."**

**Autumn Diaz**  
*Torrance Adult School graduate*

Then Diaz heard about the medical assisting program at Torrance Adult School through a family friend, who had graduated from the school and gone on to a successful career. Diaz felt like she would be a good fit. She had always taken care of family members and friends when they were sick. But her ADHD was still a concern. She feared she would fall behind again learning in a classroom environment.

Once she started the program, those fears were completely put to rest. Diaz says her instructor worked with her to make sure she stayed focused. Diaz says the smaller, intimate classroom setting also helped keep her attention.

"I think she saw the obvious signs of ADHD and knew how to keep me focused before I became distracting to other students," Diaz says. "She would let me go into the lab early or give me special tasks to keep me interested."

Today, Diaz works at an urgent care facility in Redondo Beach, performing patient intake. She says Torrance Adult School changed her life and gave her the opportunity to live up to her potential.

"I think people are missing out if they don't go," Diaz says. "I have a job that I love now because of [Torrance Adult School]. I've never been this happy working somewhere before."



Through El Camino College's career training program, Amanda Gonzalez got an apprenticeship at Northrop Grumman. She now works for the company as a mechanic technician assembling electronic hardware for satellite equipment.

PHOTO BY SAL OCHOA

# Putting the Pieces Together

## GOALS FOR ADULT ED SUCCESS: APPRENTICESHIPS

by Mike Blount

### Veteran finds a successful career through apprenticeship

In 2011, Amanda Gonzalez had just finished serving two years in the U.S. Army Reserve and was contemplating her next move. She knew she wanted to do something with electronics because she enjoyed working with her hands, but she had no background in the field. It was important to her to find a school where she could start learning from scratch and gain valuable experience. She found both of those things in El Camino College's two-year program for electronics and computer hardware technology.

"Very few schools even had an electronics program," Gonzalez says. "But I wanted to do something challenging and new. I like the idea of building something that's bigger than yourself and seeing it come together. It's a great feeling."

Gonzalez says her introduction to the electronics field was an easy transition, thanks to her teachers. They worked with her one-on-one in the classroom and taught through hands-on projects, rather than reading from a textbook. If students needed more time on a particular lesson, tutors were also available to help them

after class. Gonzalez says the program gave her the foundation she needed to find a successful career in the industry.

"I'm more of a 'show me how to do it' learner, so the program at El Camino College was perfect for me," Gonzalez says. "I was new to all of it, but they gave me all the attention and time I needed to get the full understanding of how everything works."

**"Many universities don't provide the opportunities that El Camino College gave me."**

*Amanda Gonzalez  
El Camino College graduate*

Through the school's career technical education (CTE) program, she landed an apprenticeship at Northrop Grumman, one of the largest global aerospace and defense technology companies in the world. Gonzalez says it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"I learned all of the requirements and expectations for their technicians and the standards their employees uphold," Gonzalez says. "They taught us the skills we needed to perform the job. It was a great experience for me."

The apprenticeship was especially important to her because she was offered a job at Northrop Grumman after she graduated from El Camino College in 2013. Today, she works as a mechanic technician assembling electronic hardware for satellites.

Gonzalez says her life was changed by post-secondary education and she hopes more people utilize schools like El Camino College to learn marketable skills and find careers — especially the apprenticeship programs.

"Many universities don't provide the opportunities that El Camino College gave me," Gonzalez says. "I've always wanted to make a difference in the world and now I'm able to do that with my job. There's really no limit to how far you can go in life, you just have to find the right opportunities."

An apprenticeship offers a career opportunity for adults who like to work with their hands and are willing to train on the job for up to five years. The South Bay Adult Education Consortium seeks to increase those options.

"It's not to create new programs," says Jose Anaya, dean of community advancement at El Camino College. "It's basically to connect with existing programs in the community, so we become a bridge to those established apprenticeship programs."

Apprentices learn at job sites from qualified journeymen as well as in classrooms from experienced instructors. In addition to earning wages and receiving benefits, apprentices learn marketable skills. Successful completion of the program nets a certificate that signifies readiness to begin a career.

Adult schools and colleges can help individuals prepare to enter over 30 registered apprenticeship programs. Most apprenticeships require applicants to have a high school diploma or GED certificate; some require specific skills. All these requirements can be completed through the consortium's schools.

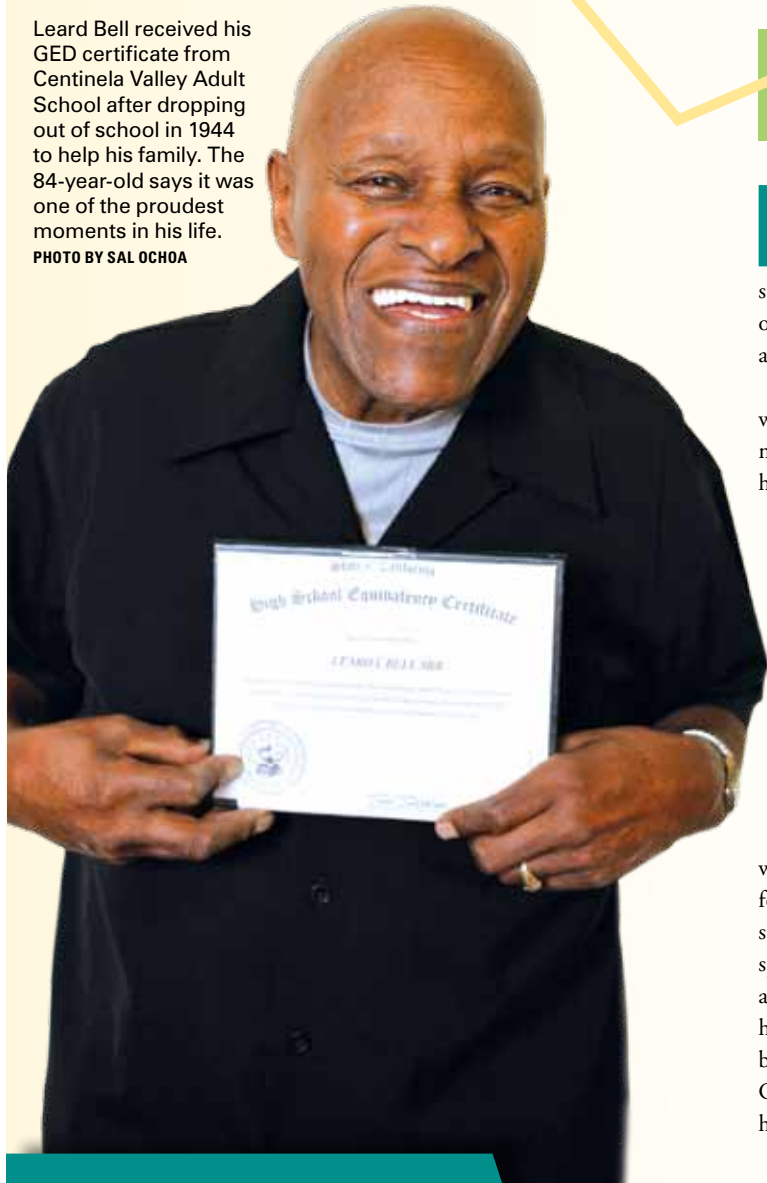
# The Beat of a Different Drummer

Senior achieves lifelong goal of earning GED certificate at 84

by Mike Blount

Leard Bell received his GED certificate from Centinela Valley Adult School after dropping out of school in 1944 to help his family. The 84-year-old says it was one of the proudest moments in his life.

PHOTO BY SAL OCHOA



Leard Bell learned at an early age the importance of an education. After his father left his mother in 1944, Bell had to drop out of school at 14 years old to help support his mother and three siblings. He took on various odd jobs, including shining shoes. But finishing school was always something he had in the back of his mind.

"I knew my education was important, but I had to go to work because we were a poor family and they depended on me," Bell says. "I always wanted to finish school, but I never had the time."

**"I cried when I walked on stage at my graduation ceremony because it meant so much to me."**

**Leard Bell**  
*Centinela Valley Adult School  
GED program graduate*

Shortly after he dropped out, Bell found his calling when his mother brought home a used set of drums she found for him. He practiced every chance he could and started playing with some local musicians. Word quickly spread of his talent, and he ended up becoming a sought-after session player. Bell was able to support himself and his family by playing with some of the hottest rhythm and blues artists of the time, including Little Richard, Sam Cooke and Etta James. But as the years went by, Bell says his education was still important to him.

In 1968, Bell decided to leave the music business and began working as a delivery truck driver at Los Angeles International Airport. He worked there for 37 years until he retired in 2005. After retirement, he finally had the time to finish school and began looking into adult school programs. Bell says finding a school was easy, but the transition back into a classroom after 70 years was not.

"When you get older, your memory is just not as good," Bell says. "I was taking a GED preparation class at a different adult school in South Los Angeles, but I wasn't keeping up. The first test I took was high on science and writing, but my math was real low. I heard about the program at Centinela Valley Adult School from a friend and decided to go there instead."

Bell says he could instantly see a difference in the learning environment at Centinela. The teachers were much more hands-on, working with students one-on-one to make sure they were prepared for the GED test. Bell says his math teacher, Race Headen, was instrumental in helping him.

"He would come and sit at the table and catch when you made mistakes and tell you how to do it the right way," Bell says. "He even called me during the winter break to see how I was feeling. About nine months after I started there, I felt good enough to take the test and passed."

Bell says earning his GED certificate was one of the proudest moments in his life.

"It was a big boost for me and a huge weight lifted off of my shoulders," Bell says. "I cried when I walked on stage at my graduation ceremony because it meant so much to me. I'm happy I finally did it."

GOALS FOR  
ADULT ED SUCCESS:

**DIPLOMA  
AND GED  
PROGRAMS**

For a wide range of reasons, some adults were unable to graduate high school as teenagers. Adult education offers a chance to complete coursework for a diploma or prepare to pass the high school equivalency exam for a GED certificate.

Not every adult school offers both choices, so an expansion under AB 86 "would definitely enhance the program," says Michael Martinez, principal at Centinela Valley Adult School.

He encourages students to come to their adult school, take an assessment, learn about both paths and then decide which to take.

"In our population, many have a jaded look at a GED — they'd prefer a high school diploma, because they have this perception that a GED is not equivalent," he says. "But once you explain what a GED means and how it can save time over a regular diploma, then a lot of them switch over or are agreeable. That in itself is a teachable moment."

# Hard Work Pays Off

by Mark Lore

English language classes give local business owner tools for success



Ramon Gutierrez applied what he learned in English language courses at South Bay Adult School to earn his contractor's license, open his own business and continue his education.

PHOTO BY SAL OCHOA

**R**amon Gutierrez didn't want to go to school. The 48-year-old father of three hadn't been in school since age 12, while still living in Mexico, and the thought of taking classes seemed like a daunting, if not impossible, undertaking.

"All I knew all my life was work — hard work," says Gutierrez, who's worked as a plumber and has done construction for the better part of 25 years.

But he did it. With encouragement from his wife, Gutierrez enrolled at South Bay Adult School two years ago in order to help him get his contractor's license in the state of California. And his hard work has paid off. Gutierrez now runs his own plumbing business, and is continuing his education at South Bay Adult School, which offers citizenship and English as a second language (ESL) classes, vocational courses and parent education.

Gutierrez is quick to point out that his success wouldn't be possible without the support and encouragement of his wife, who's a social worker.

"She says, 'Don't be afraid — it's never too late to learn.' It's

**"They treated me nice and gave me lots of support. They encouraged me to continue."**

**Ramon Gutierrez**  
*Student at South Bay Adult School*

been the best experience of my life," Gutierrez says.

Gutierrez moved to the U.S. from Mexico when he was 17. He went from growing up on a small ranch outside of Guadalajara to doing construction projects on multi-million dollar homes in Beverly Hills. By his early 20s he began picking up small plumbing jobs, and within a few years was working on the lavish homes of celebrities like Brooke Shields and Tom Hanks. Gutierrez says he learned by watching others, and his skill set grew.

While he's always been good with his hands, Gutierrez's communication skills weren't where he wanted them to be — or where they needed to be. As a native Spanish speaker, he wanted to improve his English, especially with aspirations to start his own business. He failed the state exam on his first attempt at getting his contractor's license. After some gentle coaxing from his family, Gutierrez signed up for ESL courses at South Bay Adult School and completed all of his English

benchmarks. One of his instructors even dubbed him the "Goodwill Ambassador" for the positive attitude and humor he brought to the class. Gutierrez promptly retook the state exam and passed.

And he's not finished. Since overcoming the fear of going back to school, Gutierrez now says he can't get enough. He's currently working on attaining his high school diploma and ultimately U.S. citizenship. In the process he's also encouraged and inspired his own children to go to college (two are currently attending).

On the business side, Gutierrez has already seen the results of better communication with his new clients. He's currently building his own plumbing business— slowly, Gutierrez says — as he works toward his goals at South Bay Adult School. The experience truly has changed his life.

"South Bay Adult School is wonderful. I recommend it to anyone," he says emphatically. "I was scared to go to school. But they treated me nice and gave me lots of support. They encouraged me to continue."

GOALS FOR ADULT ED SUCCESS:

**ESL AND CITIZENSHIP**

Across the South Bay area, one in-demand segment of adult education is ESL: English as a second language.

"ESL classes across the South Bay are full of students who speak a wide variety of languages," says Vivian Ibarra, director of the South Bay Adult School. "Our school alone has over 45 languages represented." Some students speak little or no English. Some speak well but need help in writing and reading. Others come to prepare for the citizenship exam or to acquire skills needed to function in

society, such as applying for a job or opening a bank account.

"Our job is to help all students develop skills they need to be successful in society, whether it is to find a better job, go on to college, or just learn how to help their child in school," Ibarra says. "The needs of ESL students are so varied, and our goal is to meet each student at their level and help them achieve their goals. We look forward to working together as a consortium and offering classes to meet the needs of our entire community."



# Meeting the Challenge

by Mark Lore

## Student with disabilities finds support at El Camino College

Vincent Meredith is as tough as they come. It's been a challenging stretch for the 58-year-old El Camino College student since the event that would forever change him. But it didn't change him in the way one might expect.

Up until 2007, Meredith had spent some 20 years as a pipe fitter, working 12 hours a day. It was brutal work. It affected his eating and sleeping habits. On the way home from work on a warm August afternoon, Meredith began feeling strange. That evening he collapsed walking to his bedroom.

"I dragged myself to the front door and waved for someone to call the paramedics," Meredith recalls.

The stroke left him paralyzed on the right side. Due to his overall health, Meredith spent six months immobile in the hospital, unable to "snap out of it" through physical activity or therapy. It was difficult time, made easier by the support of his family.

"They were there," he says. "They were there praying for me in the hospital. They got me through."

Two years later, Meredith enrolled at El Camino College with the encouragement of his sister. His goal was to rehabilitate through adapted physical education, which strengthens and re-educates muscles through individualized programs. Meredith began swimming

Vincent Meredith suffered a stroke that left him with partial paralysis and speech impairment. He found support for rehabilitation — and discovered a new passion, photography — at the Special Resource Center for students with disabilities at El Camino College.

PHOTO BY SAL OCHOA

to get his strength and mobility back.

But a real life change came when Meredith looked into academic courses. First he considered computer programming, but the limited function in his right hand made it difficult. He then tried photography and he loved it. "It's my passion, and I just went out there and did it," says Meredith, who had to train himself to take photos left-handed.

"What's amazing with some of our students is their persistence," says Dipte Patel, director of the Special Resources Center at El Camino College. "The majority of them have the ability to learn — our role is to break down the barriers to give them an opportunity to learn."

The results have been promising. During the 2013 spring and fall semesters, 67 percent of students passed or completed their courses; 85 percent remained enrolled through the end of the term. At the conclusion of the 2013-2014 school year, 174 students went on to a four-year college or university.

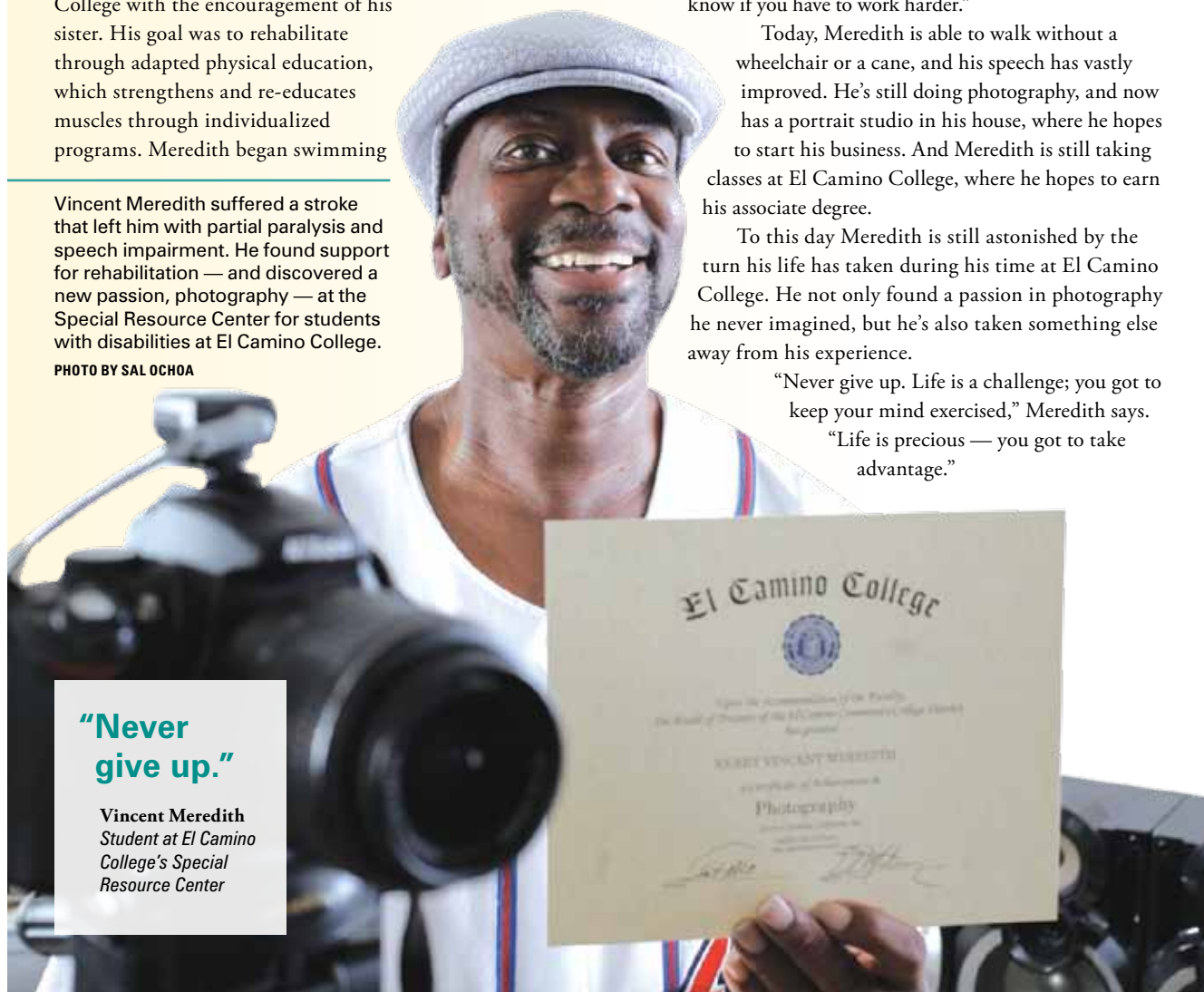
"They're so good to me," says Meredith of the faculty. "They don't just pass you because you're handicapped — they let you know if you have to work harder."

Today, Meredith is able to walk without a wheelchair or a cane, and his speech has vastly improved. He's still doing photography, and now has a portrait studio in his house, where he hopes to start his business. And Meredith is still taking classes at El Camino College, where he hopes to earn his associate degree.

To this day Meredith is still astonished by the turn his life has taken during his time at El Camino College. He not only found a passion in photography he never imagined, but he's also taken something else away from his experience.

"Never give up. Life is a challenge; you got to keep your mind exercised," Meredith says.

"Life is precious — you got to take advantage."



**"Never give up."**

Vincent Meredith  
Student at El Camino  
College's Special  
Resource Center

## GOALS FOR ADULT ED SUCCESS: EDUCATING ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

One of the areas of focus for the South Bay Adult Education Consortium is to provide expanded support for adult students who have disabilities. While community colleges have support programs, and school districts have resources and funding at the K-12 level, adult schools have not always been in a position to serve every individual with physical and/or cognitive challenges.

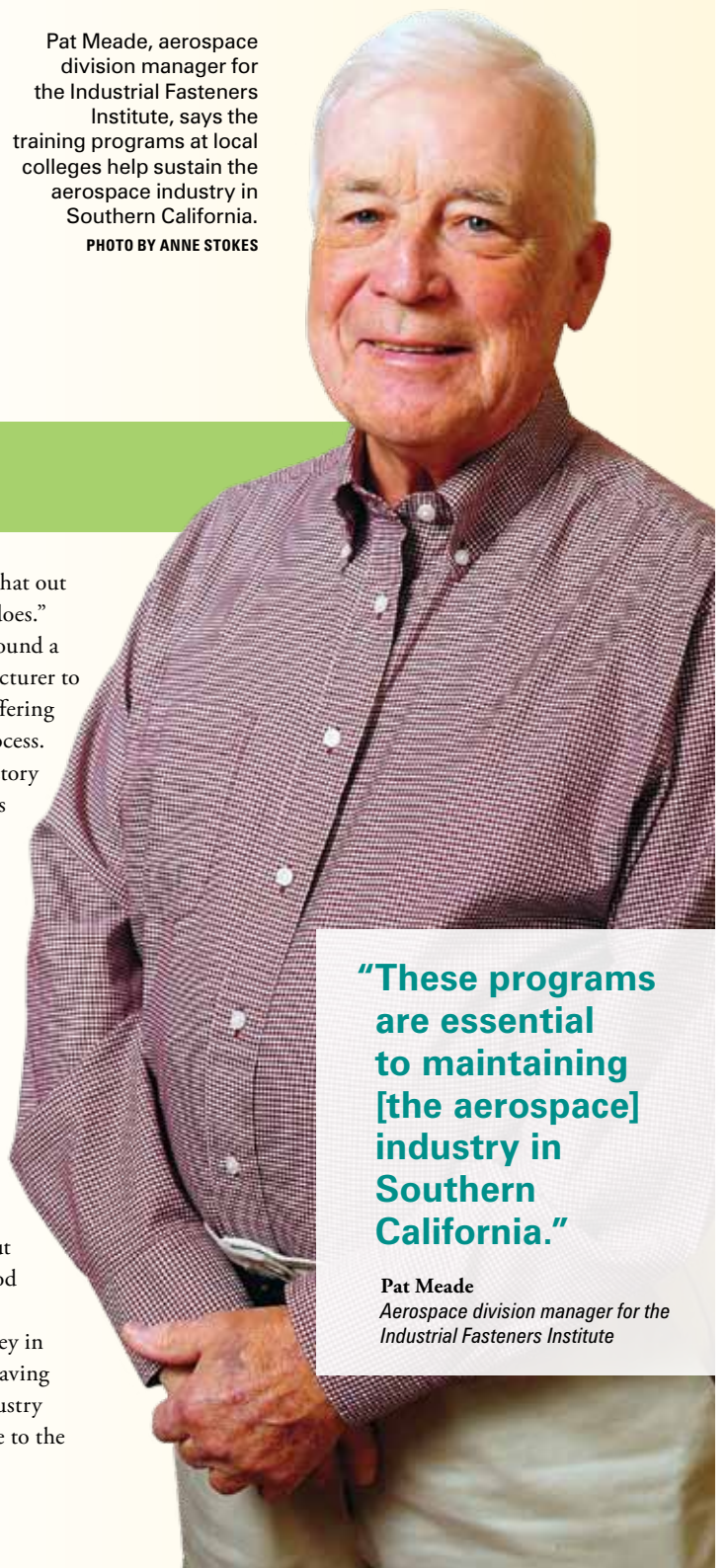
"Students with disabilities should have the same options as anybody else when it comes to adult school services," says Debra Tate, principal of Inglewood Career Technical Education, Adult Education, Alternative School. "Even with their accommodations and modifications, they should be able to be addressed at the adult school level. They should be able to enroll in the classes, which they are; it's just a matter of the adult schools being able to facilitate their needs."

New priorities and fresh funding could make a difference, as one of the five goals of AB 86 specifies educating adults with disabilities. Their needs vary widely.

"In adult ed, we assist every student. This new program will allow us to provide more opportunities to support students with disabilities," says Wayne Diulio, director of Torrance Adult School.

# Holding it All Together

Pat Meade, aerospace division manager for the Industrial Fasteners Institute, says the training programs at local colleges help sustain the aerospace industry in Southern California.  
PHOTO BY ANNE STOKES



by Evan Tuchinsky

## Aerospace industry depends on local skilled workforce

Unless you work in the aerospace industry, you may not realize the significance of fasteners. These are the parts that hold airplanes and spacecraft together — they must be strong and well made.

Roughly three-fourths of all aerospace fasteners used worldwide are made in Southern California. Local manufacturers employ 15,000 workers. Countless more people work for suppliers and other businesses that support the manufacturing efforts.

Yet, this vital economic sector “is ours to lose,” says Pat Meade, aerospace division manager for the Industrial Fasteners Institute (IFI), a trade organization with 125 member corporations nationwide. Other states would love to lure the manufacturers away.

A significant incentive to stay is a supply of reliable skilled employees — “willing workers,” Meade calls them. Manufacturers face significant challenges in recruiting and retaining the personnel needed to man fastener factories.

In response, IFI teamed with El Camino College to create a training program. It’s based at ECC Compton

Center, and Meade hopes it will expand to other locations. Since launching six years ago, the program has introduced around three dozen students per semester to manufacturing, and 70 have gone on to get jobs in aerospace fastener companies.

“Because we’re looking for people to actually run machines, we want to give them an opportunity to have a hands-on experience,” Meade explains. “It’s not an environment like for an [information technology] person, a Silicon Valley type. It does provide the understanding of what it’s actually like to manufacture a product.”

Meade brought together IFI member companies to develop the curriculum and donate equipment, as did IFI. The manufacturers may be competitors, but they united for mutual benefit.

“What they’re getting is people who have shown an interest in the industry because they’ve been doing it for 16 weeks,” Meade says, “as opposed to hiring somebody off the street who may come into the factory and say after a few weeks, ‘Gee, I don’t want to do this. I don’t want to get my hands dirty.’ You don’t want to hire somebody, invest a lot of money in training them and have them walk off

the job. You’re better off finding that out sooner, and that’s what the class does.”

IFI and El Camino College found a retired aerospace fastener manufacturer to become the course’s instructor, offering an overview of the fabrication process. Once a student gets hired, the factory provides specialized training in its particular, proprietary methods.

This form of adult education has wide-reaching benefits. Students get the opportunity for what Meade calls “a career that will sustain them for the rest of their lives,” while serving as the lifeblood of manufacturing enterprises that pump vitality into the local economy.

“These programs are essential to maintaining [the aerospace] industry in Southern California,” Meade says. “Without these programs, there’s a likelihood the industry could move to areas that are willing to invest tax money in getting companies to move. So, having this program assures that the industry will stay and provide that tax base to the community.”

“These programs are essential to maintaining [the aerospace] industry in Southern California.”

Pat Meade  
Aerospace division manager for the Industrial Fasteners Institute

## BY THE NUMBERS

An adult or post-secondary education can have a significant, positive impact on a person’s livelihood and happiness.

### ADULTS WITH A GED CERTIFICATE OR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA:



Earn almost **\$10,000** more per year than those without a diploma working full time.



Are half as likely to be living in poverty.



Contribute **\$2.5 billion** in tax revenue and reduced expenses to federal, state and local governments.

### ADULTS WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AND SOME COLLEGE:



Earn almost **\$14,000** more per year than those without a diploma working full time.



Will be competitive in the future job market. By 2018, **63%** of all U.S. jobs will require higher education.

# The Future of Adult Ed

by Evan Tuchinsky

A Q&A with Wayne Diulio and Jose Anaya

**A**dult education has provided crucial opportunities to generations of adults in our region, helping them gain the skills to contribute meaningfully to the local economy and community. The South Bay Adult Education Consortium, guided by AB 86, meets regularly to improve and ensure continued access to quality adult education programs. Consortium members Jose Anaya, dean of community advancement at El Camino College, and Wayne Diulio, director of Torrance Adult School, discuss the future of adult education in our community.

## Why is adult education important?

**JA:** It addresses a need that isn't currently being filled by any other service in the state. Adult schools educate immigrants who come to this country without the language skills needed to find a job and assist individuals who did not graduate high school to obtain a GED certificate or high school diploma. Without adult education, we're looking at a population that would find it very difficult to reach their full potential.

**WD:** Adult education is important because it provides access to opportunities to learn English, acquire a high school diploma or improve job skills. Adult schools meet the needs of their communities by offering classes or job training that is unique to their area. It regionalizes education and allows for targeted instruction or new problems to meet the individual needs of their students. The strength of adult education is its ability to offer the classes that are needed to support local industry and job markets.

## What are the benefits of the collaboration between El Camino College and four local adult schools?

**JA:** Probably the best benefit to the student is a seamless transition through the different resources. They don't have to go outside the consortium to attain their goals; they can go through a progression of steps to attain a certificate or a degree, or maybe just get the language skills that they need to get a job.

**WD:** The strength in collaborating with community colleges is the ability to offer improved access to students so they have additional opportunities to progress in our society. Adult schools need a pathway for students to easily enter a local community college or improve their job skills to acquire a better job. Through the consortium model, more adults will be able to attain literacy skills and job training to improve their lifestyle.

**JA:** Initially when we gathered, there was a lot of uncertainty, a lot of unknowns. But during the process, something magical happened. It clicked, and we saw the value for our students of this seamless pathway.

## How is the consortium ensuring the community's needs are met?

**JA:** We've gathered data and determined what the needs are in the community, and we're trying to craft the program to meet the needs not only of the students but also of the business community, to make sure that the skilled workforce that they need will be there. Here in our area we have a large manufacturing base, and there's a skill shortage. Manufacturers are looking toward adult schools and community colleges to provide skilled workers.

**WD:** Local business needs will be analyzed and the consortium will partner with local businesses to assist in the training and placement of employees.

## Will adult education programs and sites be preserved?

**JA:** The goal is to continue to grow and have that presence, and in fact grow that presence.

**WD:** Adult education programs should be preserved, but will have a new look. As the consortium is redesigned to meet the needs of the community, we will see new class offerings aligned to local businesses. In addition, the consortium funding piece is very important. Existing infrastructure must be utilized in order to minimize costs to students and taxpayers.

## What progress has been made and what are next steps?

**WD:** The South Bay Adult Education Consortium has done an enormous amount of planning surrounding the five program areas identified in AB 86. We have made tremendous progress identifying the community needs. The final plans are due in March 2015. The next step is for the governor to provide a funding model so final development and full-scale implementation can be completed.

**JA:** In 2015, we have to have our plan completed and submitted to the state. The state will look at our plan and formulate some kind of funding structure. That funding will basically dictate how much of the services we can deliver. That's very much a concern; we recognize the need in our community, and there are 69 other consortia in the state doing the same thing we are.

**"Without adult education, we're looking at a population that would find it very difficult to reach their full potential."**

**Jose Anaya**  
Dean of community advancement  
at El Camino College



From left: Wayne Diulio, director of Torrance Adult School, and Jose Anaya, dean of community advancement at El Camino College.  
PHOTO BY SUSAN WEININGER

# Learning Builds a Better Today, Brighter Tomorrow

Adult education helps our community thrive

**A**dult education has been an important part of public education opportunities in California for more than 150 years. By providing adults with the skills, knowledge and experience to make a positive contribution to our economies and communities, adult education helps us all thrive.

The South Bay Adult Education Consortium is working to ensure that the future of adult education, and our community, is bright. Guided by AB 86, the consortium is expanding and improving adult education services and linkage between adult schools and El Camino College.

Open, affordable access to continuing education opportunities is essential for a thriving community and local economy.

## Find Out More!

### SOUTH BAY ADULT EDUCATION CONSORTIUM



**Follow** the work of the South Bay Adult Education Consortium. Visit the consortium blog to check progress and leave comments or feedback in the suggestion box! Go to [sbaec.wordpress.com](http://sbaec.wordpress.com).

**Learn more** about AB 86 at <http://ab86.cccco.edu>.



PHOTO BY SAL OCHOA

Contact any of the five schools of the South Bay Adult Education Consortium to find out more about programs and enrollment:



#### CENTINELA VALLEY ADULT SCHOOL

Centinela Valley Union High School District  
4409 Redondo Beach Blvd.  
Lawndale, CA 90260  
424-255-4066



#### EL CAMINO COLLEGE

El Camino Community College District  
16007 Crenshaw Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90506  
310-532-3670  
1-866-ELCAMINO  
[elcamino.edu](http://elcamino.edu)



#### INGLEWOOD CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION, ADULT EDUCATION, ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL (ICAAS)

Inglewood Unified School District  
106 E. Manchester Ave.  
Inglewood, CA 90301  
310-330-4424  
[icaas.iusd.net](http://icaas.iusd.net)



#### SOUTH BAY ADULT SCHOOL

Redondo Beach Unified School District  
3401 Inglewood Ave.  
Redondo Beach, CA 90278  
310-937-3340  
[southbayadult.org](http://southbayadult.org)



#### TORRANCE ADULT SCHOOL

Torrance Unified School District  
Multiple locations in Torrance, CA  
310-533-4459  
[tastusd.org](http://tastusd.org)

