

# STEP BY STEP

## Adult school student who enrolled to learn English inspired to continue education and career development

By Kathleen Vivaldi

Jose Ernesto Quijada Hernandez had been living in the United States for a few years and was finding it difficult to learn English on his own. Then he moved to Poway and began an ongoing journey towards a better education and better employment.

“I decided to attend the free ESL (English as a Second Language) classes provided at Poway Adult School. In the beginning, it was difficult to get to class, since I didn’t have a car. I used to walk over three miles to attend school. But after a few months, I was able to see the progress.”

Hernandez praised Poway Adult School’s flexible class offerings, which include day and evening options, for enabling him to fit school into his busy schedule. But his most heartfelt appreciation goes to the career resource specialist and other school staff, who he says have supported him tremendously.



Jose Ernesto Quijada Hernandez stands at the display case of the popular French Oven Bakery and Cafe in the Scripps Ranch area of San Diego where he works in the kitchen cooking the sweet creations on display. Hernandez started at adult school to learn English, and now aspires to become a nurse. Photo by Charlie Neuman

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**Jose Hernandez,  
Poway Adult School student**

The ESL classes were motivating and Hernandez was inspired to go further with his education. He took the next step and enrolled in the school’s High School Equivalency course, where he could take

the exam in Spanish. He studied, worked hard and, in October 2019, passed the test and earned his General Education Diploma (or GED).

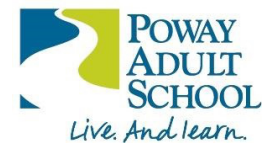
“The [Career Resource Specialist] helped me build professional skills and prepared me to take my GED test,” he says. “The counselors were always there for me ... the learning center and staff were always there to help me. I just can’t thank them enough.

“I am grateful to be part of the school. Everyone provides support in every aspect of the journey.”

In fact, attending Poway Adult School continues to have a huge impact on his life. Hernandez is enrolled in the adult basic education program and continues to improve his English skills for his career. While attending school, he is working as a lead baker and cake decorator at a popular

local bakery. Hernandez’s ultimate career goal is to become a registered nurse.

“Poway Adult School is a great option,” he said. “Many people are afraid to go back to school due to many reasons, but Poway Adult School is open to anyone who wants to learn. School helps to get better opportunities in this country.”



Poway Adult School is one of almost 300 adult schools in California that are operated by K-12 school districts. California Adult Schools provide education, training, and support services to ensure that adult learners reach their education and workforce goals. For more information, visit [powayadulthoodschool.powayusd.com](http://powayadulthoodschool.powayusd.com) or call (858) 668-4012.