



Rosalie Rendu Center ... where seeds are planted

2345 Pulgas Avenue, East Palo Alto, CA 94303

(650) 473-9522 • <https://www.rosalie-rendu-center.org/>

Spring 2022

**ROSALIE RENDU
C E N T E R**

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Dear Friends & Supporters,

Spring is in the air and some days it even feels like summer!

I've often referred to the Center as a growing garden. It's a fitting image now more than ever. Thanks to the lifting of COVID restrictions, we're seeing all kinds of activity flourishing at the Center!

We recently added a Spanish language citizenship class for those who qualify to take the U.S. Naturalization Test in their own language. Held at the Center, everyone is masked, fully vaccinated, and boosted — our protocol for all in-person classes.

Since the founding of the RRC, meeting the needs of our students as they come up has been important to us. So here I am in the middle of a new class, "Intro to English," every Wednesday at 5:30. God sent the students to us and we gladly responded!

Since the lifting of restrictions, folks are coming forth, looking for ESL classes. The ones who can be placed into one of our present classes are added to our rolls. What I am doing is more like "engaging with English" rather than "teaching." It's keeping me young and on my toes!

Our Language Partners have been busy reading, chatting, and making progress. The more comfortable the students become with speaking, the more satisfying the Partnership becomes. If you have been thinking about partnering with one of our students, please feel free to come to the Center and visit with us. I'd love to introduce you to our hardworking learners.

This month, one of our new Language Partners enlisted her husband, a very active member of the Kiwanis Club, to see what projects they might complete for us. Well, soon our front and back yards will have inviting and drought-resistant gardens. Watch for an e-News in your inbox in late May to see the RRC's new look!

Maria and I are busy planning our summer program. We will have some international cooking and exercise classes, and tips on how to speak to your doctor. These are just a few of the workshops we plan on having during the month of July. If you, or you and a friend, have a talent, interest, or hobby you would like to share with our students, please contact me.

Your support has been a blessing to me, personally, and to each of our teachers and students. Without your support we would not be able to serve them. Thank you so much for being a part of the fertile garden that is the Rosalie Rendu Center.

I leave with you one last request. Please pray for the protection of our suffering brothers and sisters in the Ukraine and for peace in the world.

Happy Spring! And I hope you had a blessed Easter or Passover. The Almighty hears all our requests. I ask that you and your families remain safe and healthy.

Gratefully yours,

Sister Trinitas Hernandez, D.C., Executive Director



MINISTRY SERVICES OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



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- The Importance of Friendships in the Process of Learning
- Project Cornerstone Partners with Our Students to Share the Factors that Create Thriving Families
- Profile of Sister Cristina, a Model Student
- Stanford Students Spark Love of Reading with Tips and a Trip to Kepler's Books





The Gift of Friendship

A key factor in the joy and effectiveness of learning at the Rosalie Rendu Center

By Carrie Du Bois

Moms who partake in the education and activities provided by the Rosalie Rendu Center reap many benefits, but the development of new friendships might be one of the most important.

Friends are a very important protective factor when it comes to thriving in life; they also help with learning new skills.

As we all know, the past two years have been extremely stressful due to the pandemic. Fortunately, the Center never stopped working to support our program participants. We continued to hold our Zoom classes and, as soon as it was safe, we opened for in-person learning.

Although the focus of the Center has always been learning, the social and emotional aspects of the program are what help move our students forward.

Having friends makes us happier and more successful. Friends believe in us when we lose confidence in ourselves and help cheer us on.

We also improve our parenting skills when we have close friends. Parenting can be very challenging at times and friends can help us navigate the stressful times when raising children. The Center is a safe place for sharing stories and frustrations because it is a positive and nurturing place.

The environment is such that our students can just be themselves and not feel judged. There is always time for sharing and spirited conversation during our classes. The Center also builds in many opportunities for fun activities and socials. It is during these times that meaningful conversations between our students take place and close friendships are often the result.

Friends feel happy for your success and sad for your struggles. This is a form of

caring that humans need to thrive in life. When many women first come to the Center, they feel very much alone in their communities. To be able to connect instantly with other students and with our teachers, new attendees have a reason to keep coming back to the Center.

One of the biggest topics in education currently is social emotional learning. If schools only focus on academics, students don't learn as well or feel as good about themselves. We are very proud that the Rosalie Rendu Center has always made the social and emotional side of learning a big priority. So here's to friendship and all of the outstanding benefits of close relationships with other parents.

Pictured above: Families make teddy bears for children at the Rosalie Rendu Center, an activity that strengthens relationships. Librarians from the Redwood City Main Library assist with the fun.



Help us find our next summer workshop!

Our student committee is collecting ideas for summer workshops to make this a fun yet productive break from classroom ESL learning. Suggestions, so far, include dancing, cooking, and assertiveness training!

If you have an idea, hobby, or skill that you would like to share with our students and/or their families, please send them our way at contact@rosalie-rendu-center.org.

Project Cornerstone Parent Education Workshop

Students learned strategies that help children and youth thrive

By Karen Engelbart

Project Cornerstone last spring was immensely popular among the Center's students who participated to learn key parental skills and factors that help young people succeed.

Facilitated by Project Cornerstone's coordinator Claudia Unida Garcia, the six-week workshop held in the evenings at the Center focused on what parents can do to help their young people grow up to be healthy, caring and responsible adults.

Understanding that there is a measurable difference in behavior and success among the children whose parents are engaged, the mothers and fathers who attended the Project Cornerstone workshop developed a close-knit community.

According to Claudia, the exchange among parents — learning from each other what works and what doesn't — is critical. The workshop is a safe place to share experiences.

The RRC students loved the program and the aspect of learning from one another. Laughter and tears flowed as they shared and learned from both positive and negative experiences.

"It was a beautiful experience," Claudia reported. "I'm just so grateful they opened up with me and with each other. Even the men!"

"You can have lovely parents but the children can still head in the wrong direction. Maybe it's the community or kids at school that can steer a child the wrong way. That's why it's important that we help parents communicate. We encourage them to connect with their children and teenagers by really listening to them."

It's also important that parents open up about their own challenges so their children will open up to them about theirs, says Claudia.

"We also talked about the importance of the parents getting in the habit of reading to

their children every night; being good role models, avid readers themselves. The children pick up on that."

WORKSHOP TOPICS

- Positive family communication
- Parent involvement in their children's school
- Instilling a commitment to learning
- Helping children find support from non-parent adults such as aunts and grandmothers
- Developing positive values such as integrity, responsibility, and good decision making
- Constructive use of time
- Building cultural pride
- Helping young people build self-esteem, a sense of purpose, and a positive view of their future

Sister Cristina

A bright and diligent student is on her way to U.S. citizenship.

By Jane Stern

The first thing you notice about her is the smile! Sister Cristina brings light into the rooms of the Rosalie Rendu Center.

From Mexico, Sister Cristina was born in Merida, Yucatan and worked there for twenty-two years. After spending two years in Rome — and mastering Italian! — she was sent to East Palo Alto where she is working with young people at St. Francis of Assisi Church.

Ever exuberant and optimistic, she began taking English classes at the Rosalie Rendu Center and also enrolled in the citizenship class.

Nervous at first, Sister Cristina has grown by leaps-and-bounds, according to her teacher, Jason Sugimura.

"Not only is she now a more confident conversationalist," Jason reports, "but she is also fully engaged in writing and reading lessons; and she does her homework, too!"

Her Language Partner, Carolyn Brennan, is equally impressed.

Carolyn, also an Advisory Board Member, reports that Sister Cristina is so bright and eager to learn, she makes tutoring a delight.

Meeting every week, they often work on the Sunday Liturgical reading. St. Francis of Assisi Church congregants come from the English, Spanish, and Tongan speaking communities of East Palo Alto. Sister Cristina uses her English with bilingual youths in her catechism and Bible classes.

"Life in the convent is not boring!" says Sister Cristina. "I think there is no time to think about this word because we are never without something to do."

Sister Christina also says about her work, "I want to make Jesus known to people who speak only English, and go to other places in the USA to continue to evangelize."

Oh, and also: Sister Cristina has passed the citizenship test and is now on her way to become a citizen of the United States!



Thank You!

Thank you to our friends who supported us from April 1, 2021 through March 1, 2022.
Our apologies if we have missed anyone. Please let us know if we missed your name inadvertently.

<i>Cris Adair</i>	<i>Karen O'Leary Engelbart</i>	<i>Chuck and Aaron Jones</i>	<i>Chris and Naomi Peters</i>
<i>Lucie Marie and Keith Albee</i>	<i>Sara Englis</i>	<i>Fr. Luigi Juárez</i>	<i>Beatrice Peterson</i>
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<i>Sr. William Eileen Dunn DC</i>			
	<i>Delia Itanen</i>		



Stanford Students Instill Love of Books with Reading Tips and a Trip to Kepler's

By Sally Falkenhagen

The Center is fortunate to have had seven Stanford students working with us again during winter quarter. Enrolled in the Cardinal Course “The Well-being of Immigrant Children and Youth,” students from Stanford have worked on a wide variety of projects with our students over the years.

The Center began partnering with Stanford Professor Amado Padilla in the spring of 2016. Cardinal Courses are one of the service pathways offered to students by the Haas Center of Public Service.

Three of the Stanford students this winter served as Language Partners providing English conversation opportunities.

After meeting and conversing with the Center’s students about their own childhood memories related to books and reading, and their children’s attitudes and habits, two Stanford students developed a top 10 tip sheet to encourage reading. They also led a workshop on family literacy.

One of the Stanford students’ parents, Pamela and David Hornik, generously donated funds for a shopping trip to Kepler’s Books in Menlo Park. The Center’s students selected books for their children and themselves.

It was the first time one of our students had ever been in a bookstore. She reported “the store filled with books was so beautiful!”

Two Stanford students researched the topic of student attendance and retention. They also developed a student survey, in collaboration with the RRC’s Student Committee, that will help guide the planning for next year’s programming.

