

SPRING 2026



Roots & Wings

GROWING TOGETHER THIS SPRING

Dear Staff and Community

Spring is a season of renewal, growth, and fresh beginnings — and our Roots and Wings community is thriving. As we welcome longer days and new energy, we are excited to share updates, celebrate our staff, and introduce new classes designed to support learning, wellness, and connection for learners of all ages.

At the heart of our work are our core values of **Belonging, Safety, and Prosperity**. We strive to create spaces where every learner and staff member feels welcomed and connected, where physical and emotional safety are prioritized, and where education opens pathways to opportunity and lifelong success.

This season brings both exciting additions and heartfelt transitions. We are welcoming new staff members who bring passion and expertise to our programs, while also celebrating colleagues who are beginning new pathways. Their contributions have helped shape the strong foundation of our community, and their impact will continue to be felt in the work we do every day.

We are proud to offer a wide range of spring classes that nurture mind, body, and spirit — from parent education and specialty learning opportunities to older adult fitness and community wellness. Whether you are joining us for the first time or continuing your journey with us, you are an essential part of our Roots and Wings family.

Thank you for growing with us!
Barbara Martinez & Kristen Arps

**"To Plant a Garden is to
Dream of Tomorrow."**

So far this school year...

2,220 students served

3,541 enrollments

225,418 hours of instruction

261 class sections offered

1,105 P.G. residents served

College & Career Services

Over the past 2 years...

84 students served

2.1 average # of hours spent with each student

43 students employed following services

33 students enrolled in college following services

6 students enrolled in job training programs

27 students referred for supplemental services

16 post-secondary certificates, licensures, degrees

College & Career Services: IPP

Over the past 2 years in the Independence Pathway Program (IPP) for adults with disabilities...

23 students served

19 students enrolled in college

270 total college credits earned by students

18 students participated in volunteer activities

New Wings Joining Our Team!

Pacific Grove Adult Education is delighted to welcome our newest team members to our learning community.

Your expertise, dedication, and passion for education will help us continue to provide enriching, inclusive, and supportive opportunities for all learners.

Welcome to the PG Adult Education family – we're so glad you're here!

- **Christina Bronfeld**, Independence Pathway Program Aide
- **Amanda Garrett**, Clerk III
- **Sabrina Heilpern**, Clerk III
- **Jeddy Hubbler**, Independence Pathway Program Aide
- **Christopher Logue**, German Instructor
- **Cat Pennisi**, Independence Pathway Program Instructor

Staff Entering New Chapters

We want to take a moment to thank those who are leaving us to pursue new opportunities. Your dedication, hard work, and commitment to our students have left a lasting impact on our school community. We wish you nothing but success and happiness in your future endeavors. Once a part of the PGAE family, always a part of the PGAE family!

Maria Aranlopez, Independence Pathway Program Aide now working in the MPC Adaptive PE Program

A Season of Growth: Expanding Opportunities This Spring

Growing Skills
Growing Confidence
Growing Community

This spring, PGAE is offering new classes that celebrate learning, wellness and connection. Each class is designed to nurture personal growth while strengthening our shared values of belonging, safety, and prosperity.

New & Returning Spring Classes

- Chinese 1A
- German II
- Grafting
- How to Use Your iPhone
- This Week in Baseball
- Women's Hormonal Health Support

Unlock a New World
Brand-New Addition to Our Language Classes

We are excited to announce that we are expanding our language department! Starting this spring, we'll be offering a Chinese class to our students. This is a fantastic addition to our curriculum, and we'd love your help in spreading the word to anyone looking to challenge themselves with a new language.

Chinese 1A:

- Wednesdays
- 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Let's give this new program a warm welcome!

Spring Session Information

Important Dates to Remember

- **March 4, 2026**
 - Catalog Released
- **March 11, 2026**
 - Registration Opens
- **March 30, 2025**
 - Spring Session Begins
- **April 13 - 18, 2026**
 - No Classes/Spring Break
- **May 25, 2026**
 - No Classes/Memorial Day
- **June 13, 2026**
 - Last Day of Spring Session

School Safety

As part of our **“Growing Together”** theme this season, we want to reaffirm something essential: Our school is committed to being a **safe, respectful, and welcoming** place for all students and staff.

We understand that questions sometimes arise regarding immigration policies and procedures. We want to remind everyone of the following:

- Our campus is dedicated to providing access to education in a safe and supportive environment.
- Student information and records are protected in accordance with federal and state privacy laws.
- Any requests from outside agencies must follow proper legal procedures and are handled by administration.
- Staff should not provide information or grant access to anyone without proper authorization.

If any outside officials request access to campus or student information, staff should immediately refer them to the front office or site administration. Do not attempt to handle these situations independently.

Education thrives when students feel secure. We remain committed to fostering a learning environment built on dignity, inclusion, and respect for every member of our community.

Together, we grow stronger when everyone feels safe to learn, work, and belong.

CA Adult Education Updates

Federal Funding Update

After a four-day partial shutdown that concluded February 3rd, Congress passed legislation to fund the U.S. Department of Education (ED) through the rest of the federal fiscal year (September 30, 2026). Under the final bill, adult education is level funded, avoiding proposed cuts. The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) will use this funding appropriation to run the requisite funding formula to decide preliminary awards for states and territories.



This school is a
**Safe & Inclusive
Place for All**

For more on our legal rights & resources, visit us.

Learning About Safety in ESL Classes

Students in PGAE's English as a Second Language (**ESL**) classes have been learning about how to interpret warning signs and symbols (e.g. Danger - High Voltage!), respond to emergencies, and avoid unsafe situations, such as common injuries and choking, environmental hazards like heatstroke, and household hazards like mixing cleaning chemicals. Students have found it very valuable (although one student said she now has to find a new formula for cleaning her windows!).

Part of the state's English Literacy & Civics Objectives ("**EL Civics**") requirements, teachers create lessons and assessments that integrate language learning with civics-related content in a way that connects literacy to students' lives and reflects their experiences as community members, parents, and workers. Covering topics related to health and healthcare, government, banking, housing, employment, parenting, etc. in an ESL class connects school-based learning with personal knowledge and experience and enables real-life application. Adult schools receive federal funding for EL Civics because, according to Congress, to effectively participate in education, work, and civic opportunities in this country, immigrants and other English Language Learners must not only master English but be able to understand and navigate governmental, educational, workplace, financial, and other key systems.

While this quarter our ESL classes covered first aid, last quarter they learned about U.S. government-related topics on the USCIS Citizenship Exam and next quarter they will learn about important county resources, from social services to recreational areas.



The Month of March

Ramadan

As you may know, the Islamic holy month of **Ramadan** began on February 17/18 and will conclude on March 18/19 this year. Observed by millions of Muslims worldwide, Ramadan is the holiest month of the Islamic calendar—a sacred time of fasting, prayer, reflection, and spiritual growth. The month concludes with **Eid al-Fitr**, a joyful three-day celebration and one of Islam’s most significant holidays, anticipated to begin on March 20/21, 2026.

We want to ensure our school community is aware and able to support our students, families, and staff during this important time. In PGUSD’s ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive Culture of “We,” Pacific Grove Adult School has once again designated the **Parents’ Place Library** as a prayer room for Ramadan, effective immediately. This space is available to both daytime and evening students and staff.

Please be mindful and respectful of daily prayer times, which vary each day. The prayer timetable is attached to the original email and will also be posted outside the Parents’ Place Library.

Please note:

- Prayer typically lasts 30 minutes to one hour.
- The room should remain private and not be entered while someone is praying.

For those unfamiliar with the location, the Parents’ Place Library is at the front end of the Parents’ Place wing, across from the multi-purpose room and next to the driveway. Anyone needing assistance may stop by the front office for guidance.

Thank you for helping us continue to build a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all!



Celebrating This Month

March is a meaningful time to recognize and celebrate both **Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month** and **Women’s History Month**.

These observances provide valuable opportunities to highlight inclusion, accessibility, resilience, and the many contributions women and individuals with disabilities have made throughout history and in our communities today.

We’d love to hear how you’re integrating these themes into your lessons!

Whether you’re featuring influential figures, incorporating diverse voices in your curriculum, or leading classroom discussions around equity and inclusion, please share your ideas and activities. Your creativity and collaboration help enrich learning for all of our students.



PG Events & Happenings

PG PRIDE - Taste of PG

We're excited to highlight The Great **Taste of PG**, a beloved community event benefiting PG P.R.I.D.E., the nonprofit that raises funds for educational enrichment in the Pacific Grove Unified School District. This annual celebration brings together the Monterey Peninsula's finest restaurants, local wineries, and unique brews for an unforgettable Sunday afternoon of food, drinks, and community spirit. There's also a fun silent auction and a wine cork pull to help raise even more for our schools. Every ticket sold helps support programs that enrich the classroom experience for our students.



Saturday, April 4, 2026
5:00 PM–8:00 PM
The Inn at Spanish Bay
21+ event



If you were thinking about attending or supporting in any way, this is a fantastic opportunity to enjoy great food and wine while giving back to our schools and students!

Good Old Days

Mark your calendars! The 67th Annual **Good Old Days** Street Festival takes place:



Saturday, May 2 9:00am–6:00 pm

Sunday, May 3 9:00am – 5:00 pm



This FREE, rain-or-shine event brings thousands of locals and visitors to historic Lighthouse Avenue for the largest gathering of arts and crafts vendors in Monterey County. Enjoy unique handmade goods from vendors across multiple states, delicious food booths, and a lively community atmosphere all weekend long.

Be sure to check out other favorite traditions happening that weekend, including the PG Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast, the PG Rotary Good Old Days Parade, and the Kids Firefighter Challenge. It's a fun-filled weekend you won't want to miss!

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, Only love can do that."
- Martin Luther King Jr.

How PGAE Celebrates Black History Month

+ copy of a section of Bixa Butler's quilted portrait titled "Dear Mama," reproduced in oil paint by Kelly Coyle.

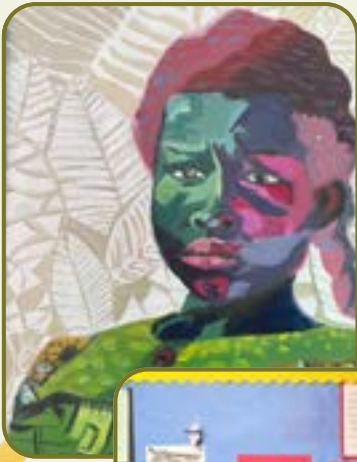


Pacific Grove Adult Education proudly celebrated **Black History Month** through art, reflection, and student leadership.



In **Art in the Evening: The Masters**, led by instructor Diane Grindol, students honored Black History Month by composing artwork inspired by master artists. The resulting pieces created a vibrant display that celebrates Black culture and artistic excellence. Visitors passing through the hallways are greeted with powerful visual tributes that showcase the talent of our students and the importance of representation in the arts.





Donnel Zuniga

Donnel Zuniga from the **Independence Pathway Program** shared how meaningful it was to see artwork representing Black culture displayed throughout the school.

He expressed that the celebration left a strong and lasting impression on him and made him feel seen and valued. Donnel spoke about how much he appreciates the inclusive environment created for both students and staff.

In class, Donnel led a powerful lesson on Black history and emphasized the importance of unity, reminding classmates that people of all races can come together and share a seat at the same table. He recited Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s *"I Have a Dream"* speech and guided fellow students in writing reflections about Dr. King's legacy and impact.

Donnel's passion, leadership, and enthusiasm inspired everyone in the room. Through art, dialogue, and shared learning, Pacific Grove Adult Education continues to foster belonging, respect, and appreciation for the rich contributions of Black history and culture.

Our Littlest Learners



Happy Valentine's Day!

As we have been focusing this month on friendship and kindness, our youngest learners had the sweetest time baking "Love Muffins" for Valentine's Day! Each child added an ingredient to the mixture, making our muffins extra special because they were truly made with love and teamwork. It was a wonderful hands-on activity filled with learning, laughter, and lots of heart!



Roots & Wings: Celebrating Our Parent Champions

On Thursday, February 26th, we proudly celebrated our newest group of **Parent Champions** as they graduated from the Family Meals Challenge workshop series.

This three-part bilingual workshop empowers families through the simple yet powerful routine of shared meals. Throughout the program, parents explored meaningful communication strategies, gained practical tools for managing screen time, and developed healthier planning and shopping habits to support their families' overall well-being.

Each participant received a certificate of appreciation from Superintendent Adamson in recognition of their commitment to strengthening family routines and building positive connections at home.

Most importantly, our Parent Champions left with renewed confidence, stronger strategies to support their children, and deeper connections with one another. Their dedication reflects the heart of Roots & Wings: strong families building strong futures.

We are proud of their commitment and look forward to seeing the continued positive impact in their homes and throughout our community.

WORKSHOP SERIES
4888 Woodhouse Avenue at your child's school
Please call us for more information or visit our website: 503.948.6388

- Family Meals Challenge**
This 3-part workshop is designed to strengthen families through meaningful mealtimes. Each workshop focuses on building healthy habits in communication, technology use, and nutrition - leading to stronger relationships, better routines at home, and greater student success.
- Parenting Partners**
Parents gain insight, proven strategies to create productive study routines, positive discipline, and strong skills communication. The series includes family visits, discussion questions through shared meals, and support families with how they can best immediately support student success.
- Calm & Kind**
This workshop series helps parents build the ability to support their child's emotional well-being. Families learn how to create a healthy home by learning, practicing skills, and building relationships through shared meals. The workshop includes an overview of the Calm & Kind program and a certificate of completion. Families are encouraged to continue the program at home and share their experiences with other families.



Independence Pathway Program

Supporting Student Goals of Independence and Employment

The **Independence Pathway Program** continues to support students in building the independent living skills needed to achieve their personal goals, including attending college and pursuing meaningful careers. A key part of this work is helping students prepare for and enter the workforce with confidence.

Petra Solomon, the IPP College and Career Navigator, recently helped student **Sean McAuliffe** connect with the Workforce Development Board and pursue a career in technology – a milestone that reflects the power of partnership and persistence.

Read more about Sean on the next page!



Student Spotlight

Sean McAuliffe



Meet Sean McAuliffe

Sean McAuliffe is a student in the **Independence Pathway Program** who once had doubts about finding employment. He worried that employers might not accept him or that he wouldn't be able to meet job expectations.

With the support of the program, Sean connected with a job coach through Workforce Development, and that guidance helped open new doors. Sean has now secured his dream job, where he will train and work with businesses to help grow their social media presence and followers.

He has completed his onboarding paperwork and is set to begin training on March 2, 2026. While Sean will be greatly missed in the program, we are incredibly proud of him for reaching his goal of employment and taking this important step toward his future.

In the photo, Sean is completing his onboarding paperwork as he prepares to begin this exciting new chapter. Congratulations, Sean — we are so proud of you and can't wait to see all you accomplish!

Staff Spotlight

Barbara Kraus, ESL Teacher



Barbara

At nearly 97 years old, **Barbara Kraus** still walks into her classroom at Pacific Grove Adult School with the same sense of purpose that has guided her for decades. She calls teaching “the most wonderful way to spend my old age” — and for Barbara, it truly is a lifelong calling

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Born in 1929, Barbara grew up during one of the most challenging chapters in American history. As a young student in California, she attended school alongside families displaced by the Dust Bowl who had come west in search of work in the fields and orchards. During her high school years from 1943 to 1946, World War II was unfolding across Europe, shaping the world around her.

In the decades that followed, Barbara raised her children during the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 60s. She instilled in them a simple but powerful belief: people should be judged by their actions, not the color of their skin.

Today, she is proud not only of their professional accomplishments, but of the compassionate, principled people they became. Her family legacy now includes five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren — with the possibility of great-great-grandchildren on the horizon. As Barbara says with a smile, “Who knows?”

Barbara Kraus cont.

What she does know is that teaching remains her joy.

Barbara's professional journey has been as remarkable as the eras she has lived through. She began by teaching all subjects in an underfunded middle school, later transitioned to high school physical education and dance, and ultimately found her passion in English as a Second Language. Over the past 24 years, she has dedicated herself to ESL — 14 years as a volunteer and 10 years as a teacher — transforming the lives of countless adult learners.

Her father once told her that old age wasn't for sissies. Barbara has spent a lifetime proving her strength, resilience, and determination. Barbara exemplifies Pacific Grove Adult School's core values of Safety, Belonging, and Prosperity. In her classroom, safety comes first. She creates an emotionally secure environment where English learners feel comfortable taking risks, making mistakes, and practicing language without fear of judgment. She meets students where they are, honoring their stories and ensuring that every learner feels respected.

Her classroom is also a place of deep belonging. Generations of community members speak about how Barbara changed their lives while they were learning English. Whether tutoring at a café, helping someone learn to read at the library, or exploring new technology to share with her advanced class, Barbara consistently shows her students that they matter.

Through her instruction, she supports prosperity by equipping learners with the language skills that open doors to employment, education, and civic engagement. She uses differentiated instruction, multiple teaching modalities, and a lifelong growth mindset to challenge students to achieve more than they ever thought possible.

Barbara Kraus cont.

Barbara Kraus is dedicated, energetic, and compassionate. She understands the academic, social, and emotional needs of English learners and is willing to do whatever it takes to help them succeed.

And as she reminds us — she's not ready for the alternative anytime soon.

Staff Spotlight

Manuel Villagomez,

IT Technician & Technology Instructor
"Our Tech that Keeps us Flying"

My name is **Manuel Malagón Villagómez**, and I am from La Deseada, a small community in Uriangato, Guanajuato, Mexico. Uriangato comes from the Purépecha language and means "the place where the sunset occurs." As a child, I loved learning new words in kindergarten.



I remember forming words with rice on paper and carefully pronouncing each letter. Our classroom even had a small playhouse filled with musical instruments. I especially enjoyed singing while playing the xylophone — a memory that still makes me smile.

I have worked as a computer technician for more than eighteen years. In Mexico, I assembled computers in Uriangato and ran my own business renting computers to the community. After moving to the United States, I worked at Hartnell College, Greenfield High School, and Robert Down Elementary School.

Manuel Villagomez cont.

It was there that I rediscovered how to be a child again while teaching technology to young students.

Today, I proudly serve at Pacific Grove Adult Education as a computer technician and computer teacher. I feel deeply motivated by the gratitude I receive when helping students and staff solve technology challenges or learn new skills.

Outside of work, music is my passion. I play the guitar, enjoy composing my own songs, and am currently learning piano and accordion to expand my musical creativity.

I have also dedicated part of my career to helping adult students earn their high school diploma through the HEP program at Hartnell College. Through that experience, I learned that when you teach something, you truly master it. I firmly believe education is the greatest tool we have to improve our lives.

We are grateful for Manuel's dedication, talent, and heart for service in our school community.

Staff Spotlight

Marta Dalhamer,
Fitness Instructor,
Active Older Adult Classes
& Pickleball Classes



Marta

Marta Dalhamer brings a lifelong connection to Pacific Grove and a deep passion for health, movement, and community to her work in adult education. A proud member of the Pacific Grove High School Class of 1995, Marta's roots in the community run deep. She went on to earn her degree in

Kinesiology from California State University, Chico in 2000, laying the foundation for a career centered on physical well-being and lifelong fitness.

Before stepping into the classroom, Marta spent 12 years working in the field of physical therapy. That experience gave her a strong understanding of the human body, injury prevention, rehabilitation, and the importance of movement at every stage of life. This clinical background continues to inform her teaching, allowing her to design fitness classes that are safe, effective, and adaptable to a wide range of abilities.

Marta has been teaching fitness classes at Pacific Grove Adult School since 2012, where she has become a valued and familiar presence. Her approach goes beyond exercise alone. As she puts it, "I love working with the older population. We not only focus on the importance of building strength, but also social bonds that are equally as strong. All my classes are a tight-knit group that look after each other." Creating a welcoming, supportive environment is central to her teaching philosophy, and her classes are known for fostering both physical progress and meaningful connections.

Marta Dalhamer cont.

In addition to adult education, Marta dedicated many years to youth athletics, coaching girls' basketball at Pacific Grove High School from 2000 to 2012. Her coaching background reflects her long-standing commitment to mentorship, teamwork, and personal growth through movement and sport. Marta has been married for 17 years to her husband, Matt Dalhamer, also a PGHS Class of 1995 graduate.

Together they are raising two children: Charlotte, born in 2012, and Will, born in 2014.

Family plays an important role in Marta's life, and a fun fact many don't know is that she is a triplet. She, her sister Layla, and her brother Jamil all graduated together from Pacific Grove High School in 1995.

Another special part of the Dalhamer family story is their strong connection to Hawaii. Matt's family has been vacationing in Kauai for more than 50 years, and the islands remain an important and meaningful part of their lives.

Through her experience, warmth, and dedication, Marta Dalhamer continues to inspire adult learners to stay strong, stay connected, and keep moving— together.

Wellness Ambassadors

Pacific Grove Adult School is proud to spotlight our **MCSIG Wellness Ambassadors, Kyle Neeley and Ivy Tharpe**, who are helping cultivate a culture of wellness across our campus. As part of the Monterey County Schools Insurance Group (MCSIG) Wellness Ambassador program, Kyle and Ivy are dedicated to promoting employee health and well-being by building a healthy worksite culture that supports informed, positive lifestyle choices.

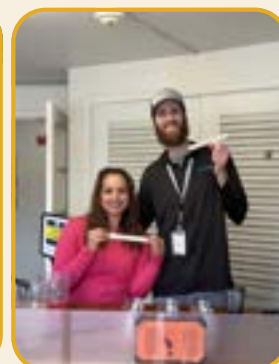
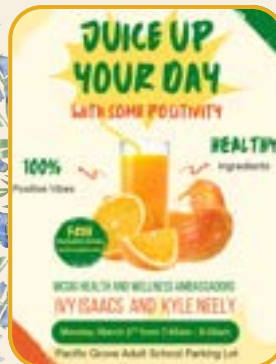
On Monday morning, they welcomed students and staff with uplifting words of affirmation and a healthy treat to help everyone start the day energized and inspired. It was a simple yet powerful reminder that small gestures can make a big impact.



In their roles as Wellness Ambassadors, Kyle and Ivy:

- Increase Visibility by distributing wellness information, posting flyers, and making brief staff announcements to keep health and wellness top of mind.
- Build Camaraderie by interacting regularly with staff and forming teams to participate in wellness events and challenges.
- Inspire Change by serving as agents of positive transformation— leading by example and supporting colleagues on their individual health journeys.

Their leadership reflects our shared commitment to creating a supportive, connected, and thriving school community. Thank you, Kyle and Ivy, for helping us prioritize wellness and reminding us that taking care of ourselves strengthens our entire Pacific Grove Adult School family.



Refresh Your Space, Recharge Your Mind

As the days get longer, it's the perfect time to clear the clutter—both on your desk and in your schedule. A tidy environment can **reduce stress** and help you **focus** on your learning goals. This month, we challenge you to spend just 15 minutes *'spring cleaning'* your work area. You'll be surprised how much lighter you feel!

Did You Know?

- Students who feel a strong sense of **belonging** are significantly more likely to complete their programs/classes and reach their goals.
- A **supportive** and **safe** learning environment improves confidence, participation, and overall success.
- Small acts of **kindness** – like learning someone's name or offering encouragement – can increase a person's sense of connection.
- When communities celebrate progress (even small wins), **motivation** grows.
- **Prosperity** doesn't just mean financial success – it also means growth in skills, confidence, and opportunity.

This spring, we're not just teaching classes – we're building something meaningful together!



Word on the Street: We're Growing!

Ready to grow? Then let's dig in! Search to find every hidden word that represents something we're building together this spring!

Growing Together WORD SEARCH

B	E	L	O	N	G	I	N	G	G	I
O	P	P	O	R	T	U	N	I	T	Y
S	R	N	C	S	A	F	E	T	Y	T
E	O	T	O	G	F	U	T	U	R	E
M	S	E	M	R	L	S	I	I	Y	S
P	P	A	M	O	E	P	N	T	I	U
O	E	M	U	W	A	S	S	U	M	P
W	R	W	N	T	R	C	P	L	P	P
E	I	O	I	H	N	T	I	E	A	O
R	T	R	T	E	P	S	R	R	C	R
N	Y	K	Y	T	I	R	E	S	T	T

WORD LIST

Belonging Opportunity Empower
 Safety Prosperity Community
 Future Growth Impact
 Respect Teamwork Support
 Inspire Learn

