

## Sequoia Adult School Scholars: Making College a Reality for Adults who Never Considered it a Possibility



More than 180 Cañada students are receiving funds for books and transportation to college — as well as additional support — thanks to an innovative non-profit called Sequoia Adult School Scholars or SASS. The vast majority of SASS recipients are immigrants who came to the United States as adults and are now working minimum wage jobs. As its tagline says, “SASS makes college a reality for adults who never considered it a possibility.”

Cañada ESL Coordinator and Professor Jenny Castello says that SASS has a significant impact on students’ ability to thrive in college. “SASS students are among our most successful because they have an additional level of support to help ensure their success,” Castello says.

SASS is funded by contributions from close to 150 individual donors as well as by grants from foundations such as the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Philanthropic Ventures, and the Palo Alto Community Fund.



Amado Flores, who is one of four SASS recipients who received an Associate degree from Cañada last May, is now attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo to study Civil Engineering. “What is amazing to me about SASS is it is made up of people who are willing to help people they don’t know, without judging them, without saying, ‘Oh, you are undocumented. Oh, you are Mexican. Oh, you are too old to go to school’.” Amado says, “Thanks to these people, I have been able to achieve what I didn’t believe I could achieve.”