

## Meet New Continuing Education Staff

### Catalina Calderon



Catalina Calderon joined Cuesta in Summer 2024 as a Bilingual Continuing Education Student Support Assistant. With over eight years of experience in education, she has had the privilege of serving in various roles within the San Luis Coastal School District.

One of Catalina's favorite quotes is,

**"The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you."**

—B.B. King

Originally from Ecuador, Catalina earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration before moving to the Central Coast eleven years ago to support her husband's role at Cal Poly. Since then, her family, which includes her husband and two children, has embraced the vibrant community and its beautiful coastal lifestyle.

In addition to her professional work, Catalina has a passion for traveling and exploring different cultures, which continually broadens her perspective and enhances her ability to connect with students. She is also taking classes in Social and Behavioral Sciences and Human Services at Cuesta College, with the goal of pursuing a master's degree in social work.

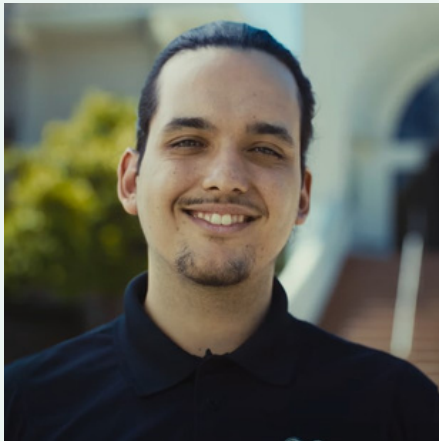
#### Contact Catalina

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SLO Campus 3133B



**Catalina says:** *My focus has always been on advocating for and supporting diverse student populations. I work to develop resources and support systems that empower disadvantaged students and their families, ensuring their success. I am passionate about encouraging and inspiring them to keep learning and never give up.*

## Jose Real Galaviz



Jose was born in Sinaloa, Mexico and moved to Turlock, California at the age of nine. He earned a B.A. in Language, Culture, and Society with a minor in Education from University of California, Santa Barbara. He plans to earn an M.S. in Linguistics and save enough to become a homeowner. During his free time, he enjoys hiking, exploring new food, and playing video games.

One of Jose's favorite quotes is:

**"The better we understand how identities and power work together from one context to another, the less likely our movements for change are to fracture."**

—Kimberlé Crenshaw

### Contact Jose

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**“** *Jose says: After I stopped teaching, I was a bit skeptical of where my future was heading. My objective has consistently been to uplift communities. Thanks to Cuesta, I now have the privilege of taking part in supporting students ready to take the next steps in their education. I hope to take this opportunity to truly support the different communities that are part of SLO County. From older adults, to ESL and GED students, and students with disabilities, I am determined to make a positive impact into their educational pathways.* **”**

## Basic Needs Pop-Up Markets



The Basic Needs Center has held Pop-Up Markets on the North County Campus, San Luis Obispo Campus, and South County Campus this semester. These markets have made it possible for evening ESL students to access fresh produce, snacks, and other pantry items that are normally available to Cuesta students during the day. Keep an eye out for future Basic Needs Pop-Up Markets on your campus!

**POP-UP MARKET:** a temporary retail space



# Basic Needs Center

**Sometimes, being a student can be challenging! Challenges might include finding childcare, looking for new employment, paying bills, buying groceries, or even finding a new place to live. Fortunately, as a Cuesta student, you have resources available to help you!**

## What does the Basic Needs office do?

The Basic Needs office is here to support students who are struggling to stay in school or do well in school because of life events happening outside of school. For example, students might be experiencing houselessness or food insecurity. Or they might be balancing their role as sole caregiver for a child or family member with the demands of student life in higher education.

## Who can access the services?

All currently enrolled Cuesta students are potentially eligible for Basic Needs services which include connections to on- and off- campus services for long-term stability as well as short term support like food, hygiene items, gas money, and more.

## How can students access the services?

Students can fill out a Basic Needs support form to be added to this term's cohort. They can also meet with Jack to talk about their unique situation and how Basic Needs may be able to help.

## What are basic needs?

- Nutritious Food
- Stable Housing
- Transportation
- Healthcare
- Mental Wellness
- Hygiene
- Financial Sustainability
- Dependent Support



## Meet Jack DePuy, Basic Needs Coordinator

### Tell us a little about yourself

I am from Steh-Chass and the traditional lands of the Squaxin Island Tribe (now known as Olympia Washington). I have experience as a community organizer in Portland, Oregon and Los Angeles, California working for environmental justice and food justice, as well as 2SLGBTQIA+ rights. My master's degree focused on methods for community-focused research for climate resilience. I speak English and French, and I am learning Spanish. My favorite book is Rachel Carson's *The Sea Around Us*.

### When did you start working at Cuesta? What do you enjoy about your job?

I have been the Basic Needs Coordinator at Cuesta since January of 2024. I love working with students and connecting them with community resources. I know that the work is never done.



**Jack DePuy**  
**Basic Needs Coordinator**

**Pronouns:** He/They  
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**Phone:** (805) 592-9954  
**Email:** basicneeds@cuesta.edu

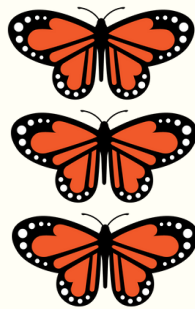


# Family Night

As part of the 8th Annual Undocumented Student Action Week, ESL students on the San Luis Obispo Campus were invited by the Monarch Dream Center to attend a Family Night, or Noche de Familia. The event aimed to share important immigration information with Cuesta students and members of the community.

Students listened to a presentation by Gerson Cortes the cofounder of UndocuScholarsLLC. The presentation by Mr. Cortes addressed common myths regarding immigration and undocumented individuals and provided the audience with accurate information on this topic.

Additionally, ESL students learned about community organizations that will support them and their families. These organizations included the County of San Luis Obispo, Community Health Centers (CHC), and San Luis Obispo Legal Assistance Foundation, all of which were present at the event.



## Who Motivates You?

Everyone here is studying English, and behind each student is someone who motivates them. This semester, we asked students who motivates them to study English and what that person means to them. Students also shared what those people say or do to motivate them and what they would like to say to them. Below are some of the students' responses.

**Alberto Cortez**  
ESL 703



My mother Maribel Chavez motivates me to learn English. Mom always worked hard for me and my sister to give us our own house, the things we needed for school, clothes, shoes, and our first car to be able to move faster. She is the best example that nothing is impossible. You just have to start and not give up.

Her encouragement is very important for me because she is the most important person in my life. Thank you for motivating me to persist and keep going forward.

**Silvano Vazquez**  
ESL 705 and 706



English is a difficult language but not impossible, especially when I have someone who motivates me to learn it. My little sister is the reason I continue to study. It was hard for her immigrating to this country, but now she is looking for new opportunities. I am studying at Cuesta College

because I would like to be an English teacher in the future and help others like my little sister.

**Hilda Rivera**  
ESL 705



My mom Celia has been the person who inspires me to improve my self. When she passed away, I made the promise to her to finish my schooling and get my degree. I already finished high school and received my GED. Now, I am going to continue to finish my English classes and fulfill my promise I made to her.

**Feliciano Ponce**  
ESL 701



My little brother Salvador motivates me to learn English. He always tells me, "You can do it!" His encouragement is important to empower myself. I want to thank him for all of his help.



**Marciela Basilio**  
ESL 703



My son Eric Ozuna motivates me to learn English. My son speaks English fluently and right now he translates for me. This motivates me to be able to speak on my own someday. Their encouragement is important to me because I want to be able to have a conversation with his friends. I

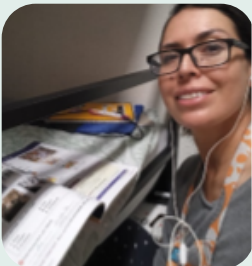
would like to tell him to keep fighting for his goals no matter what!

**Fnu "Vay" Rivayanti**  
ESL 735



My husband motivates me to learn English. His name is Shawn Harris. He said if I have better English, I can apply for another job and I can take the classes that I want to. This is important to me for my future but it's difficult for me because I don't have enough time to attend the English class.

**Gabriela Ruiz**  
ESL 797



Without a doubt, my children Luis, Abril and Heidi are the ones who motivate me to study English. Also, helping them with homework, going to medical appointments, ordering fluently at a restaurant, and talking to my lawyer are all reasons I stay motivated to study English at Cuesta College. I have a letter

from my son who told me, "I value all your hard work, and I love you." It reaffirms to me that the best values are the example. I believed at that stage of my life I was a weak person, but my children made me feel stronger than ever and thanks to them I did not stop, I am a witness that from the darkest moments we can build and open new ways. To them: "My children, I love you deeply, at that moment I thought I saved you, but you made me save myself and believe in myself."

**Angelina Saavedra**  
ESL 704



My husband, Fernando Ortiz Hernandez, and my family support me a lot and encourage me to keep going. My husband tells me to leave fear behind, start with the basic words of your English and change your mentality. For me it is very important to learn English. Knowing English

will make you a bilingual person and it will be easier for you to be employed in any foreign country. I am grateful to my husband who supports me and encourages me to come to classes to learn new languages. In the future, I want to be able to speak English fluently with my coworkers and clients. In life, I have many beautiful things, but the most beautiful and valuable is my family.



**Guadalupe Miranda**  
ESL 703



The people who motivate me to learn English are my two daughters Mitzi and Jaqueline. The days after class, my daughter Jaqueline asks me how it went and what I learned. She checks my homework and reviews what I saw in class. I want them to be proud of their mom. It is never

too late to study no matter how old you are. Now is always the best time to make changes and improve your way of life. I have tried several times before, and I did not finish. This time, I will reach the end of all the courses. I want to be a nursing assistant.

**Hugo Pereda**  
ESL 705



My daughter Paloma motivates me to study English. She speaks English and Spanish, so she encourages me to improve my English and be a better version of myself. I want to show her that I can get better at English while spending time together and having great conversations.

**BELIEVE IN  
YOURSELF**

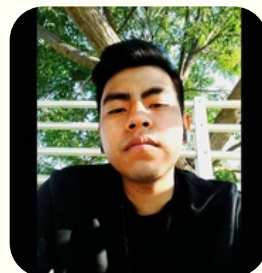
**Marcela Pina**  
ESL 704



The main motivation has been my family—the Palacios Pina. I need to know what people are saying at work, understand what they ask me, and know how to respond to their questions. My family encourages me to go to school with messages for me to start practicing. Their support is

important to me because they care about my progress. One day I will be able to speak English and not have to look for someone to interpret for me. I want to say thank you for your support. They are the driving force in my life. For them, I go out every day to give the best of myself. I want to say thank you mainly to God who is the one who makes all this possible.

**Serafin Solano**  
ESL 704



I do it for myself because no one else is going to do it for me because I know that one day in the future, I will thank myself. I will be grateful and proud of myself. I do it for the people who suffer from not understanding it. So, I am going to take advantage of this opportunity to improve and

have a better life. In my situation, no one told me anything. I just realized that not knowing English made my life more complicated. I like learning new things and new cultures. I just put interest and challenge into my life so that I could progress and surpass myself. I wouldn't like anyone to make fun of me, especially my loved ones.

**Olha Safarian**  
ESL 701



My family motivates me to study English, especially my grandson Aaron. They always help and support me with my homework and practicing English. I want to tell them, "thank you" for their help.



**Juan Figueroa**  
ESL 702



My son Tadeo motivates me to study. When they tell me that my son is happy, I become motivated to study English. Sometimes I get tired, but his photos and videos motivate me to continue. He is my greatest motivation and for him I would do everything in life.

# Visit the Cuesta College Library



The SLO and North County Libraries offer many options for students to practice and improve their reading skills. In the ESL section, you can find lots of books for every level. Check out the color chart to figure out which books are right for your current class level. You can read a book at the library on a comfy couch or check one out and take it home.



To check out a library book, you need to have your student ID number. Take the book you want to check out to the front desk, and have the librarian check the book out to you. You can borrow most books for two weeks.



Look at the color of the label on any book in the ESL section to see if it's a good level for you.

**701 and 702**

**703, 713, 704, & 714**

**705, 715, 706 & 716**

**797, 798, & CSS 789**

## Library News



### Need a laptop or better internet connection?

You can check out a Chromebook or hotspot (for Wi-Fi) to help you study at home. Stop by the SLO or NCC library and ask any librarian to help you. Your teacher can also give you a link to a reservation form.

### Spanish Language Books

Both the SLO and NCC libraries are adding to their collection of books written in Spanish. You can even request a book to add to the collection! Just ask a librarian.



# ESL Classes for Spring 2025

Before the fall semester ends, your teacher will talk to you about the best class to take in the spring semester. Classes are scheduled from January 21 through May 23, 2025. It is very important that you complete the CASAS test so that you can have priority registration. Classes will be offered in Paso Robles, San Luis Obispo, Arroyo Grande, Cambria, Oceano, Nipomo, and online. Make sure that you attend the first class session, or you might lose your place! Contact the Continuing Education Office for questions: (805) 591-6273 (NCC) or 805-592-9463 (SLO).

Fall Semester	Spring Semester
ESL 701: Literacy 1	ESL 702: Literacy 2
ESL 702: Literacy 2	ESL 703 or ESL 713: Beginning
ESL 703: Beginning-Low	ESL 713: Beginning
ESL 704: Beginning-High	ESL 714: Low-Intermediate
ESL 705: Intermediate	ESL 715: High-Intermediate
ESL 706: Low-Advanced	ESL 716: Advanced
ESL 797: College and Career 1	ESL 798: College and Career 2

**WANT TO LEARN  
AND PRACTICE  
MORE?**



**TAKE A CONVERSATION CLASS  
BEFORE YOUR MAIN CLASS,  
FROM 5:00 TO 6:20PM.**

- In NCC, Students in ESL 701–703 can take Beginner Conversation ESL 721.
- In NCC and SLO, students in ESL 713–714 can take Intermediate Conversation ESL 725.
- Students in ESL 715, 716, and 798 can take High-intermediate Conversation ESL 735 online.