



**CERRITOS
COLLEGE**

Teacher TRAC

25 Years of
Transforming Students
into Leaders in their
Schools and Communities

History and Impact

In August 1999, Cerritos College launched the Teacher Training Academy, known as Teacher TRAC. This pioneering program graduated the first cohort in California from a community college teacher preparation program to transfer to university and complete an integrated elementary teacher preparation program in just two years, including earning their bachelor's degree, student teaching, and preliminary credentials. Over 25 years, these graduates have become educators, administrators, and community leaders.

Since its inception, Teacher TRAC has grown to become one of the college's most successful learning communities, serving more than 5,000 students and involving over 150 faculty members. The program has awarded students \$15,000 in scholarships annually and maintains regional partnerships with five districts and 79 schools. Over 550 teachers open their classrooms and mentor our Teacher TRAC students, significantly contributing to their success.

Teacher TRAC has been recognized among the top 10 Community College Teacher Preparation Programs nationally (source: American Association of Community Colleges). Community colleges, including Cerritos College, play a vital role in California's teacher education landscape, with transfers comprising 65% of teacher education enrollments in recent years. Teacher TRAC offers specializations in early childhood, elementary, secondary, and career technical education (CTE), focusing on science, mathematics, and special education.





Addressing Challenges and Mission

The program was established in response to the critical shortage of teachers (with over 10,000 vacancies in California public schools) and aims to retain quality educators who can make a lasting impact on their students, schools, and communities. By offering a streamlined pathway from community college to university and into the teaching profession, Teacher TRAC is dedicated to equipping future teachers with the skills, support, and passion needed to thrive in the field of education. This includes allowing students opportunities to explore the teaching profession through teacher education coursework, internships, workshops, conferences, mentors, vested faculty, and wrap-around student services. These elements form a solid foundation that transforms them into teacher leaders, ready to innovate and inspire in classrooms across the region.

Equity and Access

As a community college, Cerritos College serves diverse and often under served populations, with many students receiving financial aid. By supporting these students, the college helps pave the way for future educators who are dedicated to creating positive change through education. Additional funding is essential for expanding scholarships and support services, easing financial burdens and enabling students to focus on their studies and professional growth.

From Challenges to Classroom Leadership: The Inspiring Journey of Jacqueline Cardona

“Teacher TRAC has changed my life forever. It gave me the tools and support to overcome obstacles and become a teacher who understands and empowers my students.”

Jacqueline Cardona, a middle school English teacher at Ellen Ochoa Learning Center and a graduate of Teacher TRAC’s inaugural class, exemplifies the transformative impact of the program. Despite facing personal challenges—including being one of eight children of immigrant parents with limited education—Jacqueline persevered through college while managing pregnancies and her husband’s deployment. Her firsthand experiences with adversity inform her teaching and leadership, driving her to establish mentorship programs and advocate for marginalized students within her school community.



Sue Parsons and Jacqueline Cardona

Congratulations! Teacher TRAC Class of 2024



Call to Action

Teacher TRAC provides a guided pathway for aspiring educators at all levels and subjects. External funding has been instrumental in launching and supporting critical programs and services for Teacher TRAC.

Join us in supporting the vision and mission of Teacher TRAC. Your contribution will directly impact the next generation of educators, ensuring they receive the resources and support needed to excel academically and professionally. Together, we can continue to empower diverse leaders who will transform education and communities.

To contribute to the future of Teacher TRAC, please visit:

Your support makes a difference in the lives of aspiring educators and their ability to make a lasting impact.





A Message from Retired Cerritos College President/Superintendent Dr. Fred Gaskin

When Teacher TRAC was developed, I had the privilege of serving as the president of Cerritos College. The program originated from a conversation between Robert Maxson, then president of Cal State Long Beach (CSULB), and I. We recognized that we were educating

a highly diverse student population and identified a critical need for elementary teachers who reflected that diversity. This led us to consider a partnership between Cerritos College and CSULB.

The concept was straightforward: create a seamless pathway for students at Cerritos College to identify as prospective teachers and transfer to CSULB to complete their training. The program's success is due to the dedication of many individuals, particularly Sue Parsons at Cerritos College and Dr. Jean Houck, then dean of education at CSULB.

Over the past 25 years, the program has been remarkably successful, becoming a leading teacher training collaboration between a community college and a university. Teacher TRAC has served over 5000 students, with most becoming teachers and many advancing into administrative roles. The program has also expanded beyond elementary education to include early childhood education, secondary education, and Career Technical Education pathways.

As we celebrate 25 years and look toward the future, we recognize that the need for this program is greater today than it was in 1999. The program's success is also tied to several enhancements, such as internships, mentorships, student support coaches, conference attendance, and scholarships.

This major funding campaign aims to secure discretionary funds to support even greater opportunities for program completion. Your assistance will not only impact the students in the program but also the countless young students who will benefit from having Teacher TRAC graduates as their teachers. The multiplier effect is significant—one teacher can impact thousands of students over a 30-year career. I invite you to join us in celebrating 25 years of success and to make a financial commitment to the future of Teacher TRAC.





We are teaching the children in our community.

Our students see themselves in us.

We prepare the workforce.

We are students from the community.

We are first in our families to go to college.

We are mentor teachers for the next generation of teachers.

The future depends on us!

We are TEACHERS!

We are TEACHER TRAC!!

www.cerritos.edu/teachertrac

