

BECOMING THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY'S EDUCATIONAL PARTNER

Karen Van Kummer stands at the center of a lively discussion in the Monrovia Public Library's community room. Desks encircle her as she moves attentively through a lesson on time management, a key principle of project management. As an instructor for the College of Professional and Global Education's (PaGE) new Project Management Certificate Program offered in Monrovia and Pasadena, Van Kummer views herself as a facilitator. She says,

"Students come to class eager to learn and they bring their relevant work experiences to share with the class. I often refer to them as my team."

Launched in spring 2018, the program emphasizes Cal State LA's position as an educational hub for the San Gabriel Valley. In bringing flexible programming directly to nearby communities, PaGE and extended education are bridging learning and training gaps across Los Angeles' sprawling urban landscape where traffic concerns and distance are barriers for working professionals and non-traditional students.

Already a popular option at Cal State LA Downtown, the program comes at a time of growing demand and diversification in the project management field.

Photo

➤ Karen Van Kummer engages with project management students.

In fact, by 2027, the Project Management Institute (PMI) predicts that employers worldwide will require 87.7 million additional project managers representing a variety of sectors. For Van Kummer, this growth is no surprise.

“Project management is a trending and highly desirable skill set because it enables employees to be more productive and enhance the success of project delivery, helping businesses execute their goals and objectives.”

The Monrovia program proved a perfect fit for working professionals like **Lea Fukutaki** and Cal State LA alumnus **Luis Barriere**. Both will pursue project management certification to advance their professional growth; however, each received immediate benefits from their courses. “When I started the course, I was a program consultant for CareMore Health, an Anthem, Inc. subsidiary. After utilizing the skills our instructor taught me, I received a promotion to senior project manager for the parent company, Anthem,” says Fukutaki.

For Barriere, a director of information technology for WLC Architecture, the program has provided practical, applicable solution for his workplace. “IT projects require constant collaboration and management. The project management program shows my dedication to the profession and provides me with tools to run projects efficiently,” he says.

Both students were excited by the program’s convenient location and enjoy its engaging curriculum. “The assignments and team projects exceeded my expectations and our instructor does a magnificent job of marrying theory with the workplace realities of project management,” says Fukutaki, who looks forward to class even after a long work day.

This engagement and hands on approach is critical for Van Kummer, who values collaboration and a sense of camaraderie with her students. “When people feel comfortable, they are more willing to engage, learn and grow,” she says. ○

OUR PROGRAM INSTRUCTOR DOES A **MAGNIFICENT** JOB OF MARRYING THEORY WITH THE WORKPLACE REALITIES OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT.



Photos

➤ *Lea Fukutaki (above) and Luis Barriere (below) enjoy the convenience of Cal State LA’s Project Management Certificate Program in Monrovia.*

➤ *Van Kummer’s team approach to teaching encourages active participation in discussions and presentations.*



THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SHOWS MY **DEDICATION** TO THE PROFESSION AND PROVIDES ME WITH TOOLS TO RUN PROJECTS EFFICIENTLY.

