

# GROW MORE OPPORTUNITIES

The Superintendent of the Corning Union High School District has a commitment, “to grow more opportunities,” this has translated to an innovative Student Support Program made possible through the partnership between the District, Corning Promise (the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians), Butte College and Shasta College. The aim of the Student Support program is to decrease summer melt for college-intending students, increase retention rates of college-going students and lower students’ barriers to success by introducing a Corning-based academic support program that takes neighboring college advisors/counselors from their traditional college setting to the rural community of Corning. This feeder relationship has far-reaching results.

The innovative project rolled out at the end of the school year, in time for the college advisors to share with high school students the new opportunity to receive a wide range of personal, career, and academic support during the months of June, July, and August, ALL, without leaving Corning. With gas prices spiking, this program helps families reduce travel costs by engaging in one-to-one-sessions with a college advisor in their hometown, allowing them to redirect saved funds to college tuition and other associated college fees. This is a valuable resource for low-income families who already face financial challenges. Further, with research showing a relationship between early connectedness and a student’s retention in college, this approach is increasing the chance students will be successful with connections to the college community established before the school year starts, and a supportive counselor navigating the murky waters with college-intending students from initial interest.

The partnering colleges, Butte College and Shasta College, have demonstrated their investment in the success of the project by offering their most qualified bilingual (English and Spanish speaking) counselors/advisors. The college counselors/advisors were selected based on their ability to meet the linguistically diverse needs of the Corning student population.

The Corning Promise Project Director, Dawna Holiday-Shchedrov, a first-generation college graduate, is a product of other’s willingness to “*grow opportunities*” and work collaboratively to help others succeed, she believes, “*without incredible people who work towards a shared vision, I wouldn’t be where I am today.*” The Summer Student Support program is a prime example of how organizations can work together to produce change in the lives of people.

