



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **College-readiness program at Palo Alto College named national award finalist for second consecutive year**

Catch the Next, Inc. Ascender (CTN), a college-readiness program at Alamo Colleges District-Palo Alto College, has been named a finalist for the second consecutive year for the 2018 Examples of *Excelencia* award from *Excelencia* in Education, a national organization focused on using evidence-based practices to improve educational achievement for Latino students in higher education.

“We are excited to receive the nomination for the second year in a row,” said Dolores Zapata-Caballero, interim academic director of professional and technical education and CTN mentor. “The work of our faculty and staff is inspiring, and seeing the results of this program for our students showcases the value of these resources for underserved students.”

CTN is a non-profit college readiness and completion organization based in Austin, Texas, that implements its program in community colleges across the state and supports efforts to increase completion rates of underserved students. Through a unique learning approach, CTN creates a network for students that combines a rigorous literacy-based and culturally-relevant curriculum across disciplines, individualized advising and personal counseling, leadership development, and community outreach. PAC is the only CTN affiliate in San Antonio.

The annual Examples of *Excelencia* awards recognize programs that use evidence-based practices to improve educational achievement for Latino students in higher education from each of four categories: associate degree programs, baccalaureate programs, graduate programs, and community-based organizations. After a national review of 139 nominations from 25 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico, *Excelencia* announced that CTN is among the 21 finalists across all categories and one of five finalists in the Community-Based Organization category for 2018. A national announcement and presentation of *Excelencia* winners is scheduled for Oct.11 in Washington, D.C.

*Excelencia* in Education is a Washington, D.C.-based national organization that accelerates Latino student success in higher education by promoting education policies and institutional practices that support academic achievement. Founded in 2004, *Excelencia* in Education builds educational networks of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the U.S. economy’s need for a highly-educated workforce and civic leadership. For more information, visit [www.edexcelencia.org](http://www.edexcelencia.org).

Palo Alto College, part of the Alamo Colleges District, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and a recipient of the 2015 Texas Award for Performance Excellence,

a finalist for the 2016 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, and a top 10 finalist for the 2019 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. With over 10,000 students, Palo Alto College is accredited to offer associate degrees and short-term certificates. The College is located on the south side of San Antonio at 1400 W. Villaret Blvd. at I-410 and Texas Hwy 16 and online at [alamo.edu/pac](http://alamo.edu/pac).

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