



OUR Promise FEATURES



Integrity - Perseverance - Inclusivity - Innovation - Excellence



Patty Garcia' Club Mexico Impact CMS Students

Currently serving as the Athletic Director and PE Teacher at Creekside Middle School, Ms. Patricia (Patty) Garcia has been with the district both officially and unofficially as a substitute for over 20 years. In that time, Ms. Garcia coached 16 seasons of Co-Ed Soccer at CMS, 6 seasons of PHS JV Boys Soccer (winning 3 championships,) and in her only season coaching Girls Varsity Soccer at Patterson High School, Patty led the team to a CCC Championship and won Coach of the Year. But it isn't her Athletic accolades that take the forefront this time around. In this month's "Our Promise Features," we'll take a dive into the heart of one of Patty Garcia's most treasured associations, Club Mexico.



A time to celebrate

Patty Garcia founded club Mexico at Creekside in 2018, after arranging for a small group of students to host a Cinco De Mayo celebration during lunch-time.

"I asked our [Administrators] if it would be ok for us to do Cinco De Mayo to integrate our kids and make them feel like they were [a part of our campus]," said Patty.

After getting approval from Admin, Patty and a group of around 20 students decorated the CMS campus with colorful papel picado and posters showing the regions their families are from in Mexico. They hosted games like Loteria and Pin-the-Tail on the Burro, had samples of different Aguas Frescas, picture booths with Zarapes and Sobreros de Charros, and there was even a DJ.

"There were decorations everywhere," said Patty. "The whole thing was verde, blanco, rojo."



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“The kids ran the whole show...Once it was done there was this joy. This feeling that it wasn’t just about this particular group of kids and their culture. They wanted to show other kids that it was ok to have their culture shown. The fun part of what their culture is, and that’s how we started.”

Today, Club Mexico has grown to over 100 members, and have expanded to host celebrations for el Dia de la Independencia in September, which is one of Club Mexico’s largest celebrations of the year and consists of carnival style games, music, food and drinks. They also host Dia De Los Muertos in November, a Parent Student Dance during the Holidays (Winter Magic with your Parent), and field trips to visit CSU campuses and locations.

Dia De Los Muertos

Often celebrated during the first week of November, Patty and Club Mexico celebrate Dia De Los Muertos as a club, drinking hot chocolate and eating pan dulce while reflecting on their loved ones together.

“It’s more than a tradition for us,” said Patty. “For those who have seen Coco, it really resembles that movie. [Students who participate] write a letter to someone within their family who has passed away and who they feel they didn’t have closure with and we have [their pictures] laminated and we sit down during lunch with chocolate and pan dulce, and we put some music on and reflect on why we are celebrating.”

Winter Magic

Something new that Club Mexico rolled out this year is the Winter Magic With Your Parent Dance, which the club hopes to make a yearly tradition.

“The dance was a really big hit. We ended up having easily about 100 of our kids and parents go and have a good time...It was a beautiful success that we think we are going to try to continue not just for the club but to open it up to the rest of the school and to make it a tradition.”

Monterey Bay/Invest In Me

In March, Club Mexico teamed up with Invest In Me to visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and CSU Monterey Bay. Over 80 Club Mexico students and chaperones filled two buses en route to the Central Coast.

“CSU Monterey Bay was so awesome. They took us on a tour of about an hour and half and the kids had some awesome questions about [grade point averages], and the latino population. I wasn’t aware that 51% of their population were latino kids. Our kids started to think like ‘Oh ok, maybe I can come here too.’”

After their visit to CSU Monterey Bay, Club Mexico toured Cannery Row and visited the beach.

“Just seeing all the kids in their Mexico shirts walking down Cannery Row. A lot of them aren’t familiar with these cities and a lot of them don’t go on these types of excursions. We heard things from people like, “Are you guys coming from Mexico?” and the kids were very respectful saying, “No, we are Club Mexico.’ When we went to the beach you could tell some of these kids had never gone to the beach before. Some of the kids were jumping in the water knowing they were gonna come home with their pants wet...When we [got ready to leave] some guy yelled ‘Viva Mexico!’ and the kids got so happy. We stopped at Santa Nella and took over the In-N-Out and just sat down, relaxed and saw the big smiles on their faces. They had a great day.”

The collaboration with Invest In Me provided an opportunity for Club Mexico students to participate in multiple workshops. Including a workshop called Love Notes, which focuses on empathy, self-worth, and maintaining healthy relationships with those in your life.

“[These workshops] have helped [strengthen] relationships between [Club Mexico students] and their parents. Just being able to ask them, ‘Where are we from? How was it when you were young?’ It has really helped out with relationships at home.”



“It’s important that we have an open door for the kids to feel wanted and to feel pride for wherever they are coming from.”

Patty Garcia’s affection towards Club Mexico comes from her own personal experiences growing up and seeing those same patterns in many of her students today.

“I am a migrant. I’m a complete migrant, [my family] were migrants. I lived at the housing authorities camp, El Campo...[Our family] would go to Mexico for 6 months, come back for 6 months. I went to school in Mexico and I have my little diploma from Kindergarten to 6th grade...My parents worked and we left 7 A.M. sometimes to catch the bus and we didn’t see them until they got back from work [in the evening]. We fended for ourselves and I see it today. It has not stopped. Sometimes we feel like it has stopped, but it has not stopped. You still have these kids, you still have these families. When I drive over here to Creekside you have these little tiny tikes just walking to school and you’re just like ‘oh my gosh.’ You still have a lot of people migrating not just from Mexico but from Central America.”

Patty talked about the importance of recognizing the struggles that many of our migrant students still face today, empathising the need to provide them with a place where they can feel welcome, understood, and accepted.

“It’s important that we have an open door for the kids to feel wanted and to feel pride for wherever they are coming from.”

“I constantly have 60 to 80 kids staying after school on a Friday. To me, that means you are doing something right. These kids wan’t to be here.”

The future is bright for Club Mexico. With more students making their way from Central and South America, a partner club at PHS called Club Familia is advised by PHS Teacher Osiris Gonzalez. Club Familia will be the next step for Club Mexico students once they enter PHS and will focus on celebrating and learning about the cultures of all Latin America.

“We are growing, and in between our meetings our kids have to deal with some type of growth. They are finding out where they are from, they are [having conversations with their parents], and we are playing [games] and just getting away from the stresses of everything. I constantly have 60 to 80 kids staying after school on a Friday. To me, that means you are doing something right. These kids want to be here.”