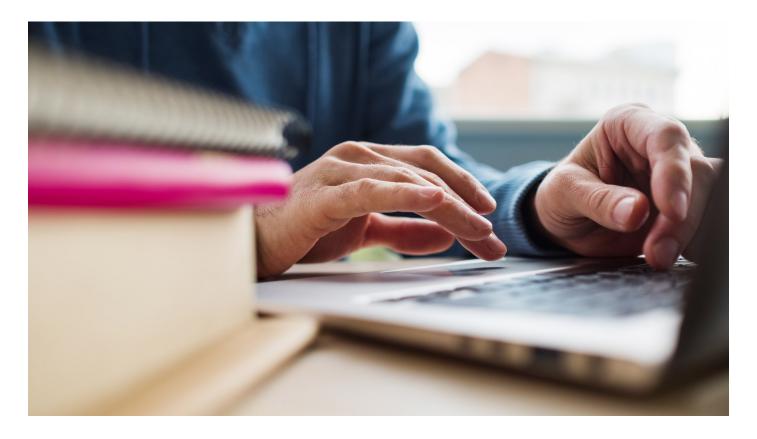
PrepaNet: 15 years offering flexible, online education



When he lived with his parents on an ejido (communal property) in the municipality of Aramberri, Nuevo León, **Adar Villa** didn't have an option to study senior high school, until he heard about **PrepaNet**.

Adar, founder and director general of the company **Mecatroniks**, which sells science and technology education services in schools, was a member of **the first class to graduate** from this **education program**.

Over the last 15 years, **PrepaNet**, a social program designed by **Tec de Monterrey** for people with limited financial resources who are unable to complete their studies in the traditional way, has been offering a flexible scheme that allows students to study in front of a computer at any time rather than attend classes.



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Villa tells **CONECTA** that his father found out about the option to study senior high school at a **Community Learning Center** (*Centro Comunitario de Aprendizaje*, **CCA**) and suggested he go and ask for information.

This was how he found out about **PrepaNet**.

"Back then it wasn't called **PrepaNet**; it was called **Online High School**. I would drive some 40 minutes by truck to reach a CCA on another ejido. These were like Internet cafés in rural communities."

He says he developed the **skills** that allowed him to **acquire** and utilize **knowledge** more easily, despite acknowledging that he struggled a little at the beginning.

"I didn't get passing grades at first and I said, 'I'm not suited to school. I'm just going to finish this term and that's it.' But then I understood that you have to be disciplined and teach yourself.



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"Discipline was what got me through. My grades improved. I ended up with very good marks, nines and tens, and that's how the following semesters went until I finished senior high school."

Adar believes that developing a **research methodology** is what led him to become the **most outstanding student nationwide in his graduating class**.

"When I didn't understand something, I would do some research. At the beginning, it took a long time, but afterward I liked it because **each time I had a query I knew the path I had to take** to finish quicker and better."



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He says that learning to be organized is something that has helped him with his business.

"PrepaNet also taught me to teach myself. Yes, I did have the support of tutors, but I learned to search for knowledge.

"Now, every time I don't know something or face a challenge, first thing I do is **investigate** and **resolve it very analytically."**

A NEW BEGINNING

For **Juan Carlos Barrios**, studying in **PrepaNet** was an opportunity to restart an unfinished stage of his life. He was able to finish senior high school, which he had dropped out of because of a lack of money.

He tells **CONECTA** that he felt the need to keep studying, not just as a work requirement or to get a diploma, but to **continue his education.**



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"I started to work. I **got married** and **had two kids.** My situation was a little more complex because I'm the father of a disabled boy.

He has **cerebral palsy** and has undergone a kidney transplant, so he had very special needs," he pointed out.

"Finishing senior high school was always foremost in my mind. As a parent, with work and little time, it was extremely complicated, so I started to look for options."



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About 10 years ago, while he was working at the **State of Mexico campus of the Tec**, he found out about **PrepaNet**. He asked for some information and got support for his education.

"I worked from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. **At night, I would log into the platform and work through the subjects.** It wasn't just an hour or so, sometimes I would work through the activities until two in morning.

I knew that I was at home, but I had to commit myself to putting together a schedule, create a calendar where I marked down my activities by date, so I could get my work in on time and not fall behind."

Juan Carlos was not the only one who enrolled in **PrepaNet**, he also registered his wife so that she too could continue her academic education.



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"We supported one another a lot; we started and completed senior high school together. The support was mutual because if I didn't understand something, she would explain it to me. If she didn't understand it either, then we would investigate it together.

"We made progress as a family. We wanted to set an example for our children and show them how they could get things done by facing up to any situation with commitment and dedication."

Juan Carlos currently works in the department of **Institutional Effectiveness at the State of Mexico Campus**. He's studying for a degree online and his wife also continues to study.

"Everything you learn goes directly to your work and everyday life. You become a highly disciplined person."

15 YEARS OF OPERATION

This November 25, **PrepaNet will celebrate 15 years of operation** at the **Borregos Stadium**, in a ceremony that will be attended by directors, coordinators, tutors, and volunteers.

To date, the program has managed to impact the lives of **3,185 people who have completed senior high school.**

CHARACTERISTICS OF PREPANET

The **PrepaNet** diploma is issued by Tec de Monterrey, legalized by the Ministry of Public Education, and is valid for continuing further education at any university in Mexico.

The program **involves Tec teachers and students**, who complete their community service as student tutors.

Anyone with the desire to continue their studies, regardless of age, can do so in **PrepaNet**.

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