San Jose Campus Housing Regions & Cities

Palmer College of Chiropractic’s San Jose campus is located in the northern part of San Jose (approximately 50 miles south of San Francisco), in the most rapidly developing region of the Silicon Valley, which borders the cities of Santa Clara and Milpitas.

With multiple apartment properties near the Palmer campus, many students live within walking distance, while others take advantage of the campus’ immediate proximity to two VTA light-rail stations (spanning the system’s 40 miles of track), which significantly expands the pool of student-housing options.

The Bay Area is an amazing and diverse region, depending where you live, you can be close to the beach, hiking trails, shopping and local tourist attractions. For new residents, however, deciding where to live can be overwhelming, given the number of options.

By sharing perspectives about the different regions and cities in which Palmer students, faculty and staff reside – and what makes their pocket of the Bay Area a special place – the following profiles will prove helpful as you decide where you want to live while attending Palmer’s San Jose campus!

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**BERRYESSA DISTRICT**

Peggy Chin (Student)

I live near the Great Mall, in a community of San Jose known as the “Berryessa district,” where I rent a room for $950/month (which includes all utilities). This area has a lot of single-family homes and provides easy access to the 680 and 880 freeways.

For those without a car, the VTA Light Rail is a short ride to and from the campus. There are also bike lanes throughout the Silicon Valley, and cycling to school isn’t more than a four- or five-mile trip.

The only “down side” to living in the Berryessa district is the extensive traffic on Montague Expressway between 4 and 6:30 p.m.

I live in a private room (with a private bath) in a home owned by a professional. It’s generally quiet. We all have odd schedules, so we rarely run into each other.

I recommend using Craigslist, when looking for living arrangement options in the South Bay.

**CLOSE TO CAMPUS: NORTH PARK APARTMENTS**

Chris Kasel (Student)

Don’t have a car? Don’t like sitting in traffic? Then North Park is a great fit for you!

There are a lot of positives about living here. One of the biggest advantages is the five-minute walk to school every morning. Other advantages on the North Park list are the many amenities, such as 10 pools and hot tubs; five gyms; one basketball court; an on-site Starbucks, Quiznos and mini-market; and a centrally-located, five-acre park.

A lot of students from Palmer live in these apartments, so getting a group together and meeting in the park for activities like soccer, volleyball, ultimate Frisbee, or yoga happen quite frequently. North Park also allows dogs in the apartments, so “Sparky” also is welcome to join!
The **VTA Light Rail** is located directly across from the property you can take it to downtown San Jose or other areas, such as Campbell or Mountain View.

A major consideration about living at North Park is the cost. The area is nice, and these are considered “luxury apartments,” so you do pay for what you get. However, there are some “Below Market Rate” (BMR) apartments available at North Park, which helps make things more affordable for students.

Another way to save money, which several students do (including myself) is to get an extra roommate. The apartments are large enough to put a curtain, or some type of divider up, in order to make an extra bedroom in the living room.

**DOWNTOWN SAN JOSE**

Diana Matson (Student)

The great thing about living in **downtown San Jose** is that it virtually eliminates the need for a car. Nearly everything is within walking distance, and there is easy access via the **VTA Light Rail** to get to most anywhere else.

Downtown San Jose is home to **San Pedro Square**, which is known for its restaurants and bars, and the **SAP Center** (home to the **San Jose Sharks** and location of many concerts and other major events) is a few blocks west of that. The entire area has a **good mix of restaurants**, including places for **wine tasting** and a few great **tap rooms**.

Living out here is never boring. Whether there is a **music festival at one of the parks** or one of the many special events taking place at the **Convention Center**, there is always something to do! You might even catch a glimpse of a celebrity staying at the **Fairmont Hotel**.

Not to mention, the **Tech Museum** has the largest **IMAX domed screen** in the west, there is a **Camera 12 movie theater** on the Paseo across from a gym, and a small theater above **Psycho Donuts** that plays cult classics.

The **San Jose State Library** doubles as a public library, providing a nice and quiet place to study that isn’t home. But, if libraries aren’t your thing, there are four coffee shops on the Paseo de San Antonio alone that are great places to get some work done, too.

Getting to school isn’t bad, either. In the mornings, it’s usually about a 20-minute drive via Highway 87 (a.k.a. the Guadalupe Expressway), or a 40-minute ride via VTA Light Rail. At the end of the day, taking the freeway will get you home in about an hour; however, taking the surface streets will get you back in about 25 minutes.
And the best part about downtown San Jose: most businesses are “doggie friendly,” so you never have to leave your buddy home alone!

**MILPITAS**
Jackie Prins (Student)
The biggest draw of living in Milpitas (approximately 2-5 miles east of the campus) while going to Palmer is the close proximity, while still being distinct from living right next to school.

I live in the Cerano Apartments, which are located less than two miles from the campus. The commute is between seven and 20 minutes, depending how you hit traffic lights and rush hour, but you don’t necessarily need a vehicle to commute to school. You can also walk/bike/run, and the weather is usually cooperative to do so.

Cerano is a safe and accommodating apartment complex, with monthly events such as kids’ pizza parties, Mother’s Day brunches and pedicures, “breakfast on the go,” etc. The apartments are relatively new and similar to many others you’ll find in the area.

Residents and guests have free access to their pool lounge area and club house, along with a small (but fully functional) gym. The apartments are also “pet friendly” with the opportunity to bring them to a nearby park (a block away)! This park also has a children’s playground, and tennis courts.

Milpitas itself is a nice area with many restaurants, shops and friendly businesses. It has the Great Mall, which has a variety of stores (including many outlet stores) as well as numerous restaurants and a Century 20 movie theater.

Milpitas has a large Farmers’ Market every Sunday with an amazing selection. It is also a short drive to the San Jose Airport as well as Levi’s Stadium, which hosts the San Francisco 49ers and numerous concerts!

**MORGAN HILL**
Jennifer Drivick (Student)
If you enjoy a small town, family atmosphere, then Morgan Hill is a great place to live!
Located approximately 20 miles south of San Jose (just off Highway 101), Morgan Hill has a quaint downtown atmosphere with great restaurants and boutiques, and a wonderful Farmers’ Market, full of locally grown food from its neighboring town of Gilroy. The town offers a quick route to local hikes in the hills, Cross Fit gyms, town festivals and a safe living environment.

In terms of affordability, Morgan Hill is cheaper in comparison to San Jose, even when factoring in the commute. The commute can range from 60 minutes during peak commute hours to as little as 30 minutes during non-peak times (before 6:30 a.m. and after 7:30 p.m.).

Morgan Hill, home to Specialized Bicycle Components, also offers “Below Market Rate” (BMR) town homes and apartments. These homes require an application process and some waiting time. However, because the majority of Palmer students receive their “income” from loans, we are generally always eligible.

Approximately 10 minutes north of the Gilroy Premium Outlets (with more than 150 stores), Morgan Hill is an hour-and-a-half south of San Francisco and an hour east of Santa Cruz – all of which can be easily enjoyed during a day trip!

**MOUNTAIN VIEW**

Lori Anne Rios (Student)

I chose to live in Mountain View (approximately 13 miles north of San Jose), because it is fairly central between Stanford University and Palmer’s San Jose campus.

Our apartment complex is conveniently close to downtown and the VTA Light Rail. We live in a small, gated-complex with our own parking lot and garage. There is also a pool, barbeque, and we have our own laundry room. The cost is comparable to the apartments near the Palmer campus. The complex also is pet-friendly, which was a large draw when we were looking for a place.

From Mexican, Greek or classic American cuisine, Castro Street offers a diversity of dining options. My favorite restaurant is the Bangkok Spoon. Their roti with peanut sauce and drunken noodles are to die for! Whatever flavor you seek, affordable or fancy, the dishes are always good.
Any time I have a chance to catch a movie, the Century Cinemas is about a 10-minute drive from our place. They recently renovated and added reclining chairs -- but they kept their ticket prices the same! Plus, they accept student IDs for evening shows, which makes entertainment pretty affordable.

Mountain View also is home to the Shoreline Amphitheatre, an outdoor venue with reserved and general seating, which hosts concerts and festivals.

When I first moved, I didn't have a car. I was able to bike the 10 miles to school in about an hour. It's such a great workout and a chance to “de-stress,” while enjoying nature.

I'm able to take the VTA Light Rail easily between Mountain View and Tasman in 30 minutes. This is a great way to study on your way to school (or back home) – and a great way to save money on gas, too! The cars have bike hangers, so it is easy to bike one way and ride the other.

When I drive, it takes me 15-20 minutes to get to school. Driving is a convenient option when traveling to San Jose in the morning or back in the evening, because my commute is opposite to rush-hour traffic.

Overall, living in Mountain View is quite feasible and pleasant.

**Oakland**

Jennifer Nolan (Student)

Like all major cities, Oakland has its good parts and bad parts. However, unless you live in the Bay Area, you only hear about the bad parts.

Some parts of Oakland are really nice, such as Piedmont Ave, Rockridge and the Oakland Hills (the latter of which is where I live). I love living in Oakland because it’s diverse, has fantastic food and there’s tons of nature nearby -- I don’t even have to get in my car to go for a hike.

For runners and cyclists, there are some amazing routes in the East Bay and lots of hills for training! You also have super-easy access to indoor events and concerts at the Oracle Arena, home of the NBA-champion Golden State Warriors, as well as baseball and outdoor activities at the O.Co Coliseum.
Oakland is also centrally located in the Bay Area, which places me within reach of a number of fun places for a day trip: one hour to Sonoma/Napa for wine tasting … 2.5 hours to Yosemite for hiking … and just 20 minutes over the Bay Bridge to get to San Francisco.

The only “con” about living in Oakland while attending Palmer is the commute. During off-peak times (before 6 a.m. and after 7 p.m.), it only takes 35 minutes to drive to and from the campus. During commute hours, however, it usually takes about 60 to 75 minutes each way.

Another commute option is using the Amtrak station in Hayward, which connects to the VTA Light Rail, and gets you to Palmer in about 60 minutes. (And there is a bonus commuting via Amtrak: the trains have Wi-Fi!)

Rent in Oakland is about the same as San Jose. However, Oakland does have a greater diversity of housing options – not everything has a granite countertop. For those who already live in the Bay Area, or have family they could stay with, living in Oakland is definitely do-able!

**Pleasanton/Dublin**

Sara Binder (Student)

The Pleasanton/Dublin area is situated about 25 miles north of school, between the Sunol Hills and the East Bay. There are many apartment complexes in the area, and the city of Dublin continues to grow and add more every year. Dublin also has options for townhouses and other types of housing, if apartment living isn’t right for you.

I live with my husband in one of the apartment complexes. We don’t live in a BMR apartment (our complex doesn’t have them); however, there are several nice BMR properties in neighboring San Ramon that I looked at before getting married.

I chose our particular complex, Waterford Place, because it’s within walking distance of BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit system); has a weekly Thursday-night Farmer’s Market across the street; is pet-friendly; and has many fantastic amenities, including a pool, continental breakfast (to get to know your neighbors), cooking classes, and a gym with yoga classes.

Pleasanton is across the freeway from our apartment. The downtown area is very cute – it features all sorts of restaurants, shops, and city events (like concerts and art and wine festivals) are often held there.
I love living in Dublin because it’s very safe, and pretty much everything I enjoy on the weekends is within 10 miles of my apartment. Dublin has several running/walking trails, and Sunol (not even 10 minutes away) has some fantastic hiking trails. There are several shopping centers in the area with a mall, a big movie theater and lots of places to eat.

A little farther out, for those who enjoy sightseeing, San Francisco is about a 40-minute BART ride away, and Napa is about an hour-drive. Rent in Dublin is similarly priced to San Jose; however, with so many growing complexes in the area, you will find many different types of apartments with varying prices.

Similar to any city more than 10 miles north of Palmer, the negative aspect of living in the Dublin/Pleasanton area is the commute. Before and after rush-hour it only takes about a half hour to get to campus (possibly less, depending on where you live, and the closest freeway access). However, during commute hours (6:30 to 9:30 a.m., and 3 to 7 p.m.), it can take around an hour.

Dublin is on the BART line. However, the most-southern BART station is Fremont. So, to reach the Palmer campus, you’d need to transfer to a VTA bus or Amtrak train to reach San Jose. (BART is extending into the South Bay and is scheduled to begin San Jose service in 2017.) Or better yet, you can take the ACE (Altamont Corridor Express) commuter train that runs in the morning and evening.

**SAN MATEO**

Meg Spicerreddy (Summer ’15 alumna)

San Mateo is located on the northern peninsula, roughly a halfway point between San Francisco and San Jose. My husband and I chose this town for our first home purchase due to the location, convenient access to a walkable downtown community, and lots of sunshine.

The Palmer campus is approximately 30 miles south of San Mateo. I found a classmate to carpool with most days of the days of the week. Utilizing the carpool lane, an average morning drive to the campus takes 45 minutes to an hour (approximately 30 minutes during the non-commute hours).
Although the drive may seem like a great distance to travel (with respect to all of the traffic on Highway 101), the time in the car provides a good chance to decompress from the day.

Public transportation options to the Palmer campus from San Mateo include Caltrain to VTA (transferring at the VTA Light Rail station in Mountain View), which takes about one and a half hours each way.

The public schools in San Mateo rank very well, and the community is safe. San Mateo and the peninsula is not an area of low cost to rent or buy.

However, getting established here as our place to stay for a long time provides opportunities for me to network with area doctors with whom I will be practicing alongside.

**Santa Clara**

Jessika Parham (Student)

I live in a townhome in a part of Santa Clara where the neighborhood is very quiet and the residents are primarily families and tech-industry workers.

Within walking distance is a park that is surrounded by the Guadalupe River Trail. The park has playground equipment and tons of extra space for volleyball games or any other outdoor activities. The Trail is great for those who are interested in scenic-biking, hiking or walking.

The commute to Palmer from my residence is less than 10 minutes any time of day. VTA Light Rail is easily accessible, which provides another commute option.

Also a short walk away is the Rivermark Plaza, which has everything from a Safeway grocery store to a GameStop.

I share a three-bedroom, three-bathroom townhome with two other Palmer students. The rent is $1,000 per person, and utilities (power, gas, Internet and trash) average an extra $30 per person. Our home is also located less than one mile from the new Levi’s Stadium.
I found my housing through an ad via the Palmer housing website. It’s great living with fellow Palmer students, because it allows us to exchange ideas and motivate each other. I strongly suggest that you place an ad on the Palmer housing website, so that you can see what housing opportunities are available.

SANTA CRUZ
Aaron Van Brunt (Student)

Santa Cruz is a wonderful place to call home. This unique beach-side city (approximately 35 miles from coast to campus, over Highway 17) offers the best of both world: a laid-back surf town that is nestled at the base of the beautiful redwood-forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Santa Cruz is famous for surfing with world renowned surf spots such as Pleasure Point and Steamer Lane, while also being a popular mountain-biking destination to trails in the Forest of Nicene Marks state park and Wilder Ranch state park.

If you’re looking for a day of fun at the beach, the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk (California's oldest amusement park, founded in 1907, and one of the few seaside parks on the West Coast of the United States), boasts one of the country’s oldest roller coasters (the Giant Dipper), as well as an arcade, bowling alley and mini-golf.

Santa Cruz has a very comfortable climate as well. You’ll hear many locals say they can wear the same wardrobe all year long: flip-flops and boardshorts. If beach volleyball sounds fun, there are multiple courts around the Boardwalk area, as well as Yacht Harbor.

While walking through downtown Santa Cruz, you’ll see dozens of different restaurants and cuisines. Many restaurants pride themselves on serving local, organic food, and there are multiple farmers’ markets throughout the week.

Between the plethora of outdoor activities and wide array of fare, if you enjoy living a healthy lifestyle, Santa Cruz is the city for you.
SUNNYVALE/CUPERTINO
Samantha Jennings (Student)

I grew up in Sunnyvale -- so I may have a bias in saying that it’s an awesome place to live!

Located approximately 12 miles north of San Jose, Sunnyvale is a great place to consider living. It’s a bicycle-friendly community, and there are plenty of parks throughout the city that offer a nice escape (and a breath of fresh air) to clear the mind: Fair Oaks, Ortega, Las Palmas, Lakewood, Serra, Panama, Ponderosa, Raynor and Washington, to name a few.

Most of these parks even offer a nice place for a BBQ get-together, with plenty of open space to run around, play sports, bring pets and more!

Neighbors are friendly and it feels safe to live here, particularly on the Cupertino/ Sunnyvale border. In fact, Sunnyvale consistently ranks as one of the safest cities in the United States!

The downtown region of Sunnyvale is located along Murphy Street. It has a few local, quieter (but fun!) bars, which offer trivia nights, dancing and some variations of the standard night clubs.

Sunnyvale is only a 10- to 15-minute drive away from some of the most beautiful spots to view the Bay Area, including the mountains.

In about an hour, the Caltrain station in Sunnyvale can drop you off within a short walking distance of AT&T Park – home of the three-time World Champion San Francisco Giants. You can take the train back to San Jose after a night game – which makes dealing with the parking in San Francisco a lot more manageable.

Alternative transportation is encouraged in Sunnyvale, so it’s a bicycle-friendly community. However, it’s still best to err on the side of caution when wondering if a person in a vehicle sees you.

The commute to the Palmer campus from Sunnyvale is about a half-hour. If your classes start at 7:40 a.m., traffic is relatively light. When classes start at 8:30 a.m., plan your commute with additional time, because roadway traffic starts getting heavy around 8 a.m.

Cupertino, the home of Apple Computers, is approximately 12 miles from the Palmer campus. Vallco Shopping Mall, one of the South Bay’s largest shopping malls, includes many popular restaurants, as well as an ice-skating rink and Bowlmoor Cupertino, which features glow-in-the-dark lanes, a dining room, sports bar and bocce courts.
**Willow Glen/Campbell**

Jennifer Nathan (Student Services Specialist, Palmer’s San Jose campus)

I live in southwest San Jose (approximately 10 miles from the Palmer campus), adjacent to the city of Campbell and near the San Jose neighborhood of Willow Glen.

These little hamlets are like “cities within a city,” and each boasts quaint downtowns that feature an eclectic array of shops, restaurants, weekend farmers’ markets, community events, and top performers at the Heritage Theater.

There are a lot of apartment complexes in the area. I lucked out, because my apartment offers affordable housing, and has two swimming pools, Jacuzzis, a playground, tennis-court and a workout room.

What I enjoy the most about where I live is its proximity to Whole Foods and Trader Joe’s. I try to eat healthy, and it’s nice to have markets that offer healthy-food choices.

The Willow Glen/Campbell area is a quick drive to Santana Row and Valley Fair shopping malls, downtown San Jose and Los Gatos. Several VTA Light Rail stations provide quick and easy access to the Palmer campus, which is quite convenient – especially if you don’t have a car.

I usually take the Highway 87 to reach the campus. The morning traffic moves well, if you’re on the road by 7:30 a.m. (during the evening commute, the traffic tends to move a bit slower).

The Willow Glen/Campbell area is a great place to live. The commute to Palmer is less than 30 minutes (depending on traffic), and the rent tends to cost a little less than living really close to campus.