

# OPPORTUNITY

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE<sup>SM</sup>

# NEWS

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## NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE

### Students explore apprenticeship, industry career options

Strong training — combined with hard work and determination — can lead to endless career opportunities, students learned in a recent 12-week San Jacinto College program.

Designed for students with disabilities from ages 14 to 22, Explore Apprenticeships 2.0 ran from March 26 to June 11. The program blended online and in-person learning with campus tours, degree/certificate program information sessions, career speakers, and more.

Students not only explored multiple career fields and apprenticeships through hands-on activities but also enjoyed field trips to places like NASA Johnson Space Center, Port of Houston, and Texas Carpenters and Millwrights Center.

Industries and career options covered included:

- **Information Technology:** Simulation and game design, level design, engine development, tool building, and multimedia programming
- **STEM:** Environmental science, biotechnology, chemistry, health care, and petrochemical
- **Construction/Trades:** HVAC, construction management, pipefitting, welding technology, and commercial/industrial planning
- **Transportation:** Highway design, transportation of people and cargo, laws/regulations, and safety
- **Aerospace:** Aerospace quality technician, mechatronics, and industrial automation technician
- **Maritime:** Deckhands, unlimited tonnage masters, and more

“Explore Apprenticeships 2.0 was a great success for our students and community,” said Dr. Janice Sullivan,



Photo courtesy of Nate LaValley

dean of community engagement, continuing and professional development division. “This is a unique, high-quality instructional program that teaches students about educational paths, industry-recognized credentials, and career opportunities. Students also get a paid job experience.”

CPD offered the program with Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Learn more about CPD programs and training at [sanjac.edu/CPD](http://sanjac.edu/CPD).

### San Jac students embrace learning opportunities in education

San Jacinto College students in the Texas State Teachers Association-Aspiring Educators group at Central Campus are stepping outside the classroom to broaden their education horizons.

TSTA-AE students participate in many service-learning opportunities — from tutoring children in local schools to writing grant proposals. They even received a \$2,000 grant from the National Education Association to buy books on diversity and wellness for a local kindergarten class and after-school program.

“TSTA-AE is an organization for aspiring educators that provides our students with professional development, networking, and leadership

opportunities,” said Dr. Judith Maima, education and child development professor and TSTA advisor.

Maima believes students can connect these activities with what they are learning in the classroom, sparking “rich and meaningful discussions that help them perform well academically.”

### Overcoming obstacles and embracing opportunities

Teachers face many challenges today. They must accommodate the needs of diverse populations, keep up with new technologies, and deal with safety, mental health, environmental issues, poverty, immigration, and more.

“Teachers must be prepared to work with students from ranging backgrounds and experiences,” Maima said. “They need to spend time acquiring knowledge about different group experiences to be culturally responsive to the different populations they will serve.”

TSTA-AE often invites guest speakers from local school districts and academic advisors from area universities so students can network and get valuable, real-world insight. Through these connections, some students have received job offers in school districts, and others get resources to plan careers and higher degrees.

### It’s all about student success

“Building relationships with my

students is at the center of my teaching,” Maima said. “Through this role as a TSTA advisor, I spend lots of time with my students outside the classroom, engaged in many different activities.”

Along with their advisors, the students attended the TSTA state convention in Austin March 4-6, 2022.

San Jac’s TSTA-AE won best T-shirt design in the state and took away a certificate of acknowledgment for substantial membership growth. Student Carol Hernandez walked away with a position as state secretary, which starts in August 2023. Hernandez also gets the credit for creating the state slogan that will govern the student organization for two years. The motto is “Todos los niños merecen ser entendidos,” which translates to “All children deserve to be understood.” Next year’s TSTA-AE T-shirts will sport the San Jac logo and new slogan.

TSTA members and current honor students also presented their group projects at the Great Plains Honors Council Conference in Kansas and locally at the College of Mainland Honors Academic Symposium.

Maima said her greatest sense of pride is in seeing her students “transform into confident, knowledgeable, and culturally sensitive leaders.”



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

# 'SMALL BUT MIGHTY': SAN JAC SENDS ONLY EMS TRAINING PROGRAM TO NATIONAL CONFERENCE

By Courtney Morris  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

There's a first time for everything. But most of these 10 paramedic students were experiencing three firsts at once: leaving Texas, flying, and attending a professional conference.

The San Jacinto College Emergency Medical Services Program stood out as the only paramedic training program nationwide awarded full scholarships to the American Hospital Association's Advancing Care Conference in Chicago this spring.

The conference invitation stemmed from students' participation in Project Firstline, a CDC national training collaborative and conference sponsor. Since fall 2021, students had studied and practiced infection control in depth in the classroom and at clinical sites.

Now, at the conference, they were enjoying three days of intense interactive sessions with national health care leaders. Topics included managing conflict, practicing mindfulness, leading change in



Photo courtesy of Anna Robledo

infection control, and promoting the well-being of health care workers amid the pandemic.

Paramedic student Anna Robledo was excited to attend with the rest of her "small but mighty" cohort.

"The most important thing we learned as a group is that using our voice to stand up for areas of medicine that are forgotten and at times ignored is imperative in the flow of patient care and their clinical outcomes," Robledo said.

As the only EMS representatives at the conference, students had a captive audience with the nation's top hospital leaders, according to

Kristine Kern, EMS instructor and clinical coordinator.

"As the conference progressed, presenters sought me out to compliment our students for their thought-provoking questions, participation, excellent communication skills, and high emotional intelligence," Kern said. "But the greatest compliment was each student was described as 'an employee we would love to have on our team.'"

The first-time interactive conference combined in-person learning with virtual support, giving attendees the accountability and structure to make a positive impact on health care.

Students focused on their Project Firstline Grant outcomes, developing several new outcomes for their success.

Kern credits the conference with helping students kick off their health care careers — from networking and presenting themselves professionally to recognizing their ability to make a difference.

"I'm incredibly proud of our paramedic students," Kern said. "They are all poised for a successful career in EMS and will no doubt rise to leadership roles. I can only hope if I ever require EMS assistance that I will look up and see one of our graduates."

For Robledo, the conference and her San Jac training have prepared her for her next steps — expanding her work at La Porte EMS and applying for an emergency health science bachelor's program at University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio.

"San Jacinto is a college that embodies everything I stand for: providing opportunity," Robledo said.

Learn more about the North Campus program at [sanjac.edu/program/emergency-medical-services](https://sanjac.edu/program/emergency-medical-services).

## BRIDGING COLLABORATION AND STUDENT SUCCESS

By Neesha Hosein  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

San Jacinto College's Dr. J. Aaron Knight was named Clear Horizons Early College High School's 2022 Partner of the Year, an honor given by Clear Creek ISD.

"This is a great honor," Knight, the South Campus provost, said. "It brings me great joy to see Clear Horizons students back on campus. I am very proud of all of the work they have accomplished despite COVID-19 and am happy to have been a part of their educational journey."

Knight began his tenure at the College during the height of the pandemic in

July 2020 and has continued to be a source of guidance for the College and its partners like CHECHS.

### Prioritizing student needs

"The pandemic forced many students to pursue their educational goals in isolation," Knight said. "This kind of social isolation isn't healthy for anyone, especially developing youth. Knowing how much of a difference being on campus could mean for these young people gave our efforts added purpose."

According to Knight, many students wanted to return to normalcy and attend in-person classes, which meant being on campus, back in their familiar spaces.

Knight worked with CHECHS partners, instructional leaders, and faculty to make that possible.

### Creating a smooth transition

"We had to develop screening protocols for the students to enter the campus and instill in them a commitment to abide by San Jac's health and safety measures," Knight said. "We had to work with the early college team to find out which students would return, what courses they would need, and at what times."

This was all during a time when Clear Creek ISD students still had the option to remain fully online. Under these circumstances, Knight said a lot of



Photo courtesy of Courtney Morris

Left to Right: Tami Kelly, dean of student services; Joseph Hebert, dean of administration; Laurel Williamson, College deputy chancellor and president; Richard McKay, director of library services; Dr. Aaron Knight, provost; and Kristen Ross, dual credit director

communication and flexibility was needed to prepare for their campus return.

*Bridging collaboration on page 4*

# ONLINE PROGRAM TAKES CAREER SEEKER FROM UNITED AIRLINES TO PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM

By Courtney Morris

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Some people tell family when they're considering a career change. Shawnetta Thomas waited until she could hold up her brand-new San Jacinto College student ID card.

After several jobs that weren't quite the right fit, the 33-year-old had enrolled in the College's online early childhood education program.

"They were so proud," Thomas said, "and I hadn't done anything yet."

But she continues to make her family proud. From overcoming early fears to being only two classes away from earning her educational aide certificate, she is changing her career course through flexible online classes.

## Opening the mailbox

Since high school, Thomas had worked several jobs: nursing home personal care provider, personal banker, and — her last position — United Airlines seamstress assistant.

Helping others linked each role, whether she chatted with older adults while giving medicine or suited up flight attendants with perfectly altered uniforms. Now Thomas wants to share that helper's heart with preschool children.

"This is something I would enjoy doing for a long time in my life," she



Photo courtesy of Shawnetta Thomas

said. "Preschool kids are at that stage where it's important for them to get the proper learning. I don't want someone who's not skilled or trained going in there.... It should be someone who has the passion and is focused on their learning and behavior."

The wheels started turning in fall 2021 when Thomas opened her mailbox to find a San Jac postcard.

"I hadn't heard about San Jac before," she said. "Wow, it's close to my house! So I researched on the College's website and found this program."

After earning her certificate from San Jac, Thomas will be ready to take her Child Development Associate national credential test and work as a public school teacher's aide or a preschool teacher in an early childhood setting.

"Quality educators are in high demand, and this program allows students to complete coursework in less than a year," said Caresal Bolds, North Campus child development program director. "In addition, the credits students earn for this certificate will transfer to the Associate of Applied Science degree."

## Opening new doors

Since she left her United Airlines job during the pandemic, Thomas has been a homemaker. Financial aid has covered her San Jac program so far, and she babysits to bring in extra money while taking classes part time.

Picking up new computer skills and adjusting to online classes was tricky at first, but she prefers online now — no commute and 100% support from professors. Although she doesn't clock in for a daily job, she treats her classes, study time, and projects with the same commitment as an 8-to-5.

"I write down everything, make notes

about my weekly schedule and my workload for the week," she said. "I'm going to get up at this time, and from this time to this time, I'm working on this."

With "online anytime" classes, Thomas can log on to the Blackboard portal whenever she wants to view announcements, assignments, and any video lessons. Some teachers also offer weekly Zoom sessions for students to chat about projects and ask questions.

"Once I figured the computer part out, it was easy-breezy," she said. "Not having a teacher right there was OK because I could email my teachers and get quick responses."

Now a career change could be just months away. Thomas' advice to others considering an online program?

"Go for it," she said. "Don't be scared. I was so nervous just doing the registration paperwork: 'What am I doing? I can't do this.' Once I finished the first semester, I was like, 'Wow, I did it. I passed!'"

## You've got options online

San Jac offers many affordable online programs you can pursue from the comfort of home. Now is the time to go after that career you've always dreamed of!

Learn more about how you can earn your degree online at [sanjac.edu/online](https://sanjac.edu/online).

*Bridging collaboration continued from page 3*

Knight believes the successful collaboration sent the signal to everyone at CHECHS, including the students, that San Jac wanted them back on campus with access not only to face-to-face instruction but also to tutoring and library services.

## Teamwork pays off

"The staff at South Campus are really the folks who deserve recognition," Knight said. "The team really stepped up and supported the early college at every turn."

Knight sang the praises of a few key team members:

Joseph Hebert, dean of administration; Richard McKay, director of library services; Kristen Ross, dual credit director; and Tami Kelly, dean of student services.

Of the 93 seniors at CHECHS, 50% of them are Superintendent's Scholars, meaning they have earned an 85% or higher in Level I honors, AP, and dual credit courses and a 95% or higher in Level II courses; and 65% of them graduated with cum laude honors or higher.

Earlier this year, Knight received the Phi Theta Kappa Paragon President Award. Knight was nominated for this award by San Jac PTK students for committing to student success and creating more opportunities and stronger pathways to completion, transfer, and employment.

## Outside the work life

When he isn't working hard toward San Jac student success, Knight enjoys strumming his guitar, cheering for the Houston Rockets, and studying the Stoics.

"One of my favorite pieces of advice is from Voltaire's novel 'Candide,'" Knight said. "At the close of the book, Candide says, 'We must cultivate our garden.'"

He means it isn't enough to hope or pray for good things to come our way. We have to act intentionally — in the real world, good outcomes don't just happen; they only follow and are nurtured from sustained, right actions. That is how we make this the best of all possible worlds."

# PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS OFFER WORKFORCE EXPERIENCE TO DUAL CREDIT STUDENTS

By **Melissa Trevizo**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

When Adrian Moreno graduated from Channelview High School in May 2022, he had already earned his associate degree in electrical technology through a pre-apprenticeship from San Jacinto College and secured a telecommunication apprenticeship with Pfeiffer and Sons Ltd.

“I’ve been working towards these goals for two years,” Moreno said. “I was determined to show everyone that I could stick to it and make it happen, but I didn’t do it alone.”

The groundwork for Moreno’s pre-apprenticeship began in 2016 when Dr. Sarah Janes, San Jac associate vice chancellor for continuing and professional development, was asked by the Department of Labor to facilitate a committee including community colleges, industry, and school districts. This committee’s original charge was to review the DOL Registered Apprenticeship Evaluation Process and to compare the requirements for instructors of registered apprenticeship programs with those of community college instructors.

Since that time the committee has grown along with its mission. Today, the Houston Area Apprenticeship Advisory Committee seeks to educate high school students and others about apprenticeships, to encourage more companies to develop apprenticeships, and to develop crosswalks recognized across the state that move completers of

apprenticeships into associate degree programs.

“Channelview High School was one of the first schools to join our apprenticeship committee,” Janes said. “They were an early adopter of pre-apprenticeship programs and eager to learn more to offer these opportunities to their students, and it has paid off wonderfully.”

Now, through funding from the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Janes leads a team of college faculty, staff, and industry experts to manage registered apprenticeship programs in 11 areas: carpentry, electrical technician, HVAC, machinists, masonry, mechatronics, millwright, pipefitting, plumbing, sheet metal workers, and welding.

Each registered apprenticeship program can offer an accompanying pre-apprenticeship that creates a starting point toward a successful career path for under-represented job seekers.

Moreno is the first student to complete the program and accept a telecommunication apprenticeship. Through the partnership with Channelview High School, Moreno worked closely with career and technical education counselors who monitored his progress and provided resources to pay for books and other expenses.

“We are very thankful for the opportunities provided to us from San Jac and Pfeiffer,” said Mia Young, director of CTE, Channelview HS. “This is exactly what we want to give

to the students in our CTE program. All the work that Adrian put in while in high school and enrolled in dual credit has come to this, and it’s his time to shine. We are very proud.”

To celebrate the success of the program and commemorate the first pre-apprenticeship through this partnership, the College and high school came together for a ceremonial signing with Moreno and Pfeiffer and Sons.

Moreno sat alongside Nicole Matthiesen from Pfeiffer and his mother, Maria, to mark the important moment.

“We received Adrian’s resume, and we could see that he was ambitious and

ready to work,” Matthiesen said. “He’s always on time, early even, and you don’t always see that today. We’ve been excited to offer this partnership for Adrian and other students in the future.”

Charles Pfeiffer, president of Pfeiffer and Sons, has worked with San Jac and Channelview HS to create a smooth transition into the workforce for students in the pre-apprenticeship program.

“With partners like Pfeiffer and supportive school districts, the pre-apprenticeships can be abundantly successful,” Janes said. “I look forward to how these partnerships grow in the future.”



Photo courtesy of Melissa Trevizo

Adrian Moreno signed his contract with Pfeiffer and Sons surrounded by family and his support system from Channelview HS and San Jacinto College. Back row (l to r): Robert Laird, Channelview HS principal; Dr. Sarah Janes, San Jac associate vice chancellor of CPD; Erin Bowman, Channelview HS CTE coordinator; Stephanie Green, Channelview HS assistant principal; Neysha Small, Channelview HS career counselor; Dr. Mia Young, Channelview HS CTE director; Dr. Alexander Okwonna, San Jac North Campus provost; and Dr. Sowanda Henderson, Channelview HS career counselor. Front row (l to r): Nicole Matthiesen, Pfeiffer and Sons; Moreno; and his mother, Maria Moreno.

## SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

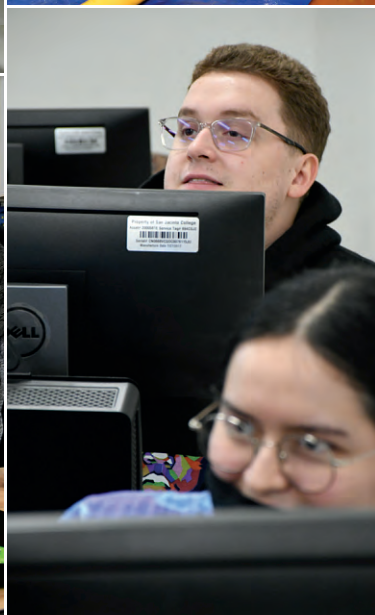
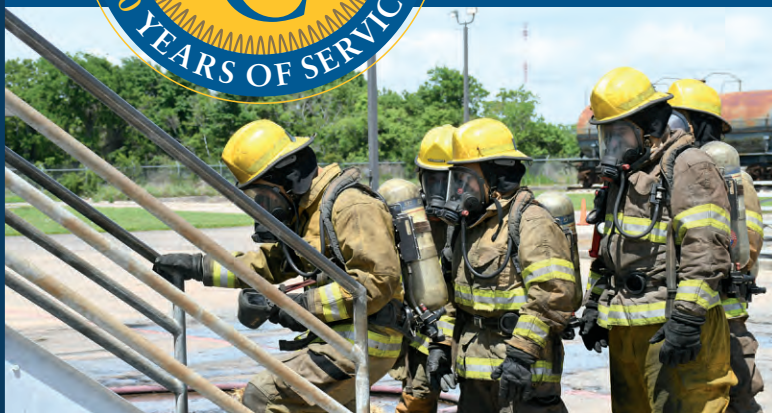
DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Aug. 12	Maritime info session	10-11 a.m.	Maritime Campus (register at <a href="https://sanjac.edu/form/maritime-information-session-registration">sanjac.edu/form/maritime-information-session-registration</a> )
Aug. 22	Fall semester starts		All campuses, online
Sept. 5	Labor Day holiday	Closed	All campuses, online

All times and event schedules listed are subject to change. For more information, visit [sanjac.edu](https://sanjac.edu).





# SAN JACINTO COLLEGE THROUGH THE YEARS: 2020-2021



[sanjac.edu/60-years](https://sanjac.edu/60-years)

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# INJURY ENDED HIS MARINE MISSION, WHILE SHARING HIS STORY BEGAN ANOTHER

By Courtney Morris  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

U.S. Marine Cpl. Donald Daughenbaugh didn't know what to expect as his convoy left the Green Zone around the Baghdad airport. But it certainly wasn't for a roadside bomb to explode, blowing apart one truck's engine and spraying the driver with shrapnel.

"That was our wake-up call that it was real," Daughenbaugh said. "Welcome to Iraq, Day 1."

Daughenbaugh's story numbers among 25 veteran interviews San Jacinto College has filmed and archived so far with the U.S. Library of Congress. Anyone researching veteran history and firsthand accounts can access these interviews to grasp the realities of war.

Since 2011, San Jac's Veterans Oral History Project has given World War II to Iraq War veterans the chance to share their service experiences — from enlisting and engaging in combat to returning to civilian life.

## A night to remember

Daughenbaugh shared his story while a San Jac student in 2012, seven years after a life-altering injury while serving at Forward Operating Base St. Michael in Mahmudiyah, Iraq.

He recalled good memories, like helping children who were plagued with sores after drinking from a polluted



Photo courtesy of Donald Daughenbaugh

| Today with his family

irrigation canal. The Marines showed the parents how to sanitize the water by boiling it and adding iodine.

"It changed their outlook on us, what we were doing there," he said.

Daughenbaugh shared hard memories too, like the night patrol Oct. 12, 2004, that ended his service in Iraq.

After setting up a random checkpoint, he and his squad were searching vehicles for weapons and explosives. Instead of stopping, one driver started yelling and hit the gas. Then he pulled an AK-47 from under his seat.

While everyone else ducked behind vehicles and fences, Daughenbaugh had no cover and dropped to a prone position on the ground.

"I saw loud flashes in my direction," he said. "Then it was lights out.... I could smell skin burning, and I couldn't talk."

A bullet had broken his jaw, shredding nerves before lodging in his brain. After his squad rushed him back to the base, a helicopter medivacked him to a Baghdad hospital.

## The power of story

Today the bullet remains inside Daughenbaugh's skull — too dangerous to remove. With severe nerve damage and a collapsed jaw, he still struggles eating and talking.

Despite post-traumatic stress disorder, Daughenbaugh has not let his injury rule him. After a long recovery, he enrolled at San Jac and finally shared his story publicly through the Veterans Oral History Project.

"When I talk about serving and being

away from family, it always brings up the best memories but also some sad ones — losing friends, getting injured, and the long road to recovery," he said.

Sharing helped Daughenbaugh recover some memories and heal emotionally. It also motivated him to continue telling his story.

After earning his associate degree from San Jac in 2015, Daughenbaugh pursued bachelor's and master's degrees in business management/administration. Today he serves as spokesperson and vice president of operations for the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, which supports wounded veterans and their families.

## Wanted: Your firsthand account

San Jac faculty, students, and staff team to record stories through the

Veterans Oral History Project.

"Our goal is to preserve history and honor both people associated with San Jac and the rest of the community who served in any branch of the military," Luis Reyes, history professor, said.

This fall Ross Kelsey, director of campus, evening, and weekend services, plans to pick up the interviews again in person and via Zoom.

"An event can be retold numerous times by numerous people, but the impact of hearing firsthand what happened is immeasurable," Kelsey said.

Are you a veteran who lives near San Jac or attended school here? Preserve your story for future generations. For more information, email [ross.kelsey@sjcd.edu](mailto:ross.kelsey@sjcd.edu).

To view veterans' interviews, visit [bit.ly/3Q3vuDM](http://bit.ly/3Q3vuDM).



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

| Interview in 2012

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## VISION & MISSION



**Vision** — San Jacinto College will advance the social and economic mobility of all members of our community. We will be known for our excellence in teaching and learning, our intentional student-centered support, and our commitment to every student. We will be the preferred workforce and economic development partner in the region and a champion for lifelong learning. San Jacinto College will inspire students to explore opportunities, define their educational and career paths, and achieve their goals and dreams.

**Mission** — San Jacinto College is focused on student success, academic progress, university transfer, and employment. We are committed to opportunities that enrich the quality of life in the communities we serve.

## SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS



A gift to the San Jacinto College Foundation transforms lives, enriches our community, and provides tomorrow's community leaders. For more than 20 years, the Foundation has helped thousands of students reach their goals. Our former students and graduates have filled vital roles in hospitals, classrooms, executive offices, manufacturing plants, and laboratories across our region and beyond. They have also won the World Series and NBA championships, starred in major motion pictures, and created major theatrical productions. Help our students today with the gift of education. Contact the San Jacinto College Foundation at 281-998-6104 or visit [sanjac.edu/foundation](http://sanjac.edu/foundation).

## COMMUNITY IMPACT



Surrounded by monuments of history, evolving industries, maritime enterprises of today, and the space age of tomorrow, San Jacinto College has served the people of East Harris County, Texas, since 1961. San Jacinto College is among the top five community colleges in the nation as designated by the Aspen Institute for Community College Excellence in 2021 and was named an Achieving the Dream Leader College of Distinction in 2020. The College spans five campuses, serving approximately 41,000 credit and non-credit students annually, and offers more than 200 degrees and certificates across eight major areas of study that put students on a path to transfer to four-year institutions or enter the workforce. San Jacinto College's impact on the region totals \$1.3 billion in added income, which supports 13,044 jobs. The College is fiscally sound, holding bond ratings of AA and Aa2 by Standard & Poor's and Moody's.