

OPPORTUNITY

SAN JACINTO COLLEGESM

NEWS

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NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

Student-athletes earn all-academic recognition

The National Junior College Athletic Association recognized nine San Jacinto College student-athletes for their academic achievements during the 2020-21 season.

“Despite obstacles and adjustments, NJCAA student-athletes rose above challenges to display widespread academic success this year,” said Dr. Christopher Parker, NJCAA president and CEO. “It is incredible to see these individuals competing again and accomplishing rich athletic and academic success concurrently.”

Student-athletes are eligible to earn academic honors by achieving an overall GPA of 3.60 or higher for the 2020-21 academic year. The criteria for the three NJCAA all-academic teams are:

- First Team: 4.00 GPA
- Second Team: 3.80-3.99 GPA
- Third Team: 3.60-3.79 GPA

These nine San Jac student-athletes received the all-academic recognition:

- Walker Bordovsky, baseball, first team
- Catalina Cavazos, softball, first team
- Kaylee Thomas, softball, first team

- Maggie Childs, softball, second team
- Thomas Burbank, baseball, third team
- Luke Pectol, baseball, third team
- Chris Stuart, baseball, third team
- Nicholas Swanson, baseball, third team
- Kenzie Gates, softball, third team

“We are extremely proud of these players, as we are of all our student-athletes,” said Dr. Allatia Harris, San Jacinto College vice chancellor for strategic initiatives. “We take pride in our competitive athletics teams and our rigorous academics. Our student-athletes work hard on and off the field, and they deserve this recognition.”

This year, 2,336 student-athletes received first team, 2,640 second team, and 3,297 third team honors. To view the complete list, visit www.njcaa.org.

Students enjoy Weeks of Welcome as they return face to face

San Jacinto College welcomed students back on campus in fall 2021, many of them face to face for the first time since the College began altered operations in March 2020.



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Student engagement and activities helped greet these students with Weeks of Welcome events at Central, North, and South Campuses and online.

Starting on the first day of classes, Aug. 23, students enjoyed airbrush T-shirt art, GloCade arcade games, body art, painting, trivia, breakfast tacos, donuts with deans, and bingo.

The activities gave students a chance to visit the campus student centers not only to join in on the festivities but also to learn about resources available at SEA and other departments.

To learn more about the SEA offices on each campus, visit www.sanjac.edu/engage or follow SEA on social media @SanJacSEA.

College offers child care assistance for students

San Jacinto College students with children are eligible to receive free child care or be reimbursed for those costs through the new child care assistance program. This funding is granted through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.

Any student who is enrolled full or part time in credit or non-credit courses at San Jacinto College and has a child that is currently enrolled in a licensed child care facility is encouraged to apply at www.sanjac.edu/admissions-aid/scholarships-grants/childcare-assistance.

Interested students will submit an HEERF Childcare Assistance application and receipt or class schedule from the College. Assistance provided will be calculated based on need, class schedule, and grant availability. Applicants will receive full or partial child care funding based on these factors. Students will reapply for this grant each semester.

For students using San Jacinto College child care, the grant will be distributed directly to the provider. Those students who have their children in community care centers will be reimbursed for payments made to the provider.

“These new funds will assist the College as it continues to remove barriers that hinder students from achieving their educational and professional goals,” said Michael Everett, senior project director of HEERF.

College celebrates 60 years of service



San Jacinto College has been a pillar in east Harris County since 1961. This year, the College will celebrate its

60th anniversary. The College began in a rented storefront in downtown Pasadena. By the end of the first year, the College had 876 students.

Today, San Jacinto College boasts an enrollment of more than 42,000 credit and non-credit students each year. The diverse student body attends classes on five campuses and online, and training is provided at several extension centers throughout the district.

As San Jac prepares for its year-long celebration, the College invites you to share your San Jac story. Whether you are a former student, an alum, a parent or family member impacted by San Jac, or a business partner, the College wants to hear from you! You can visit www.sanjac.edu/60-years to submit your San Jac story and to learn more about the history of San Jacinto College.

DENTAL STUDENT GERAMIFARD THANKS MENTORS, WORK ETHIC FOR SUCCESS

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

When Arjang Geramifard began his higher education journey, he wasn't sure what pathway he would pursue. Now he is in his first semester of dental school, proving that hard work and great mentors can make a difference.

Geramifard was working as a car salesman at Honda of Clear Lake when the advice from a coworker helped change the trajectory of his career. Dr. Steve Bramlet, a retired pharmacist, was the internet sales director who recognized the potential in Geramifard.

"I was reading manuals for vehicles, and we started discussing engineering and chemistry," Geramifard said. "He encouraged me to pursue more education, but I shook it off for a while. I didn't even know where to get started."

One day Geramifard came into work, and Bramlet said, "Have you found your school yet? If you stay here another year, I'm going to be so disappointed."

"I couldn't do that to him, so I decided to seriously look into it," said Geramifard. "I talked to my wife, and she was so excited about the decision."

After getting recommendations from family and friends and doing his own research, Geramifard started his higher

education journey with San Jacinto College in 2018.

"I researched local colleges online," Geramifard said. "I looked at the qualifications of the faculty and the college's rankings among other institutions."

Just to qualify for admission, Geramifard had to complete an English as a Second Language proficiency exam and a Texas Success Initiative Assessment, which measures college readiness in reading, writing, and math. He also took the Math Challenge Exam, which allowed him to waive his math prerequisites.

"In my second semester, I began taking physics I with Madhu Gyawali and found it challenging and exciting," said Geramifard. "I was still working at the car dealership and sharing my grades and discussing my courses with Dr. Bramlet."

It was through advice from Bramlet, once again, that Geramifard decided to quit his job and pursue his degree full time, taking 23 hours in spring 2019.

"It was challenging and exhausting," said Geramifard. "In order to succeed, I had to take extra measures to stay organized."

In his final semester at San Jac, Geramifard entered the Undergraduate Research Symposium, competing among 33 other students. He took first place with his research titled "Long-term Nitrogen Dioxide Trends over Large Cities in Texas: Comparing Satellite and Ground Observations." Through opportunities provided by Dr. Christopher Wild, South Campus dean of health and natural sciences, he also presented his research at the Valve World Americas 2019 annual conference and had his research published in the Fugitive Emissions Journal.

"Arjang is a great example of a student who seeks out opportunity and makes the most of it," said Wild. "He illustrates what can be accomplished outside the classroom in the form of scientific research at San Jacinto College and the benefits that can have on a student's future."

After completing 65 hours at San Jacinto College, Geramifard transferred to the University of Houston-Clear Lake to major in biologic physiology and minor in chemistry.

"I loved my experience at UHCL," said Geramifard. "Larry Rohde had a huge impact on me and helped me prepare for my dental school exams."

Dr. Larry Rohde, department chair of environmental sciences at UHCL, met with Geramifard and coached him on how to practice for the timed Dental Admission Test.

"I found Arjang to be one of those students who has an intense desire to learn. His enthusiasm for learning was contagious to the others around him," said Rohde. "With the world pulling at us from many directions, being able to build upon that desire is hard, but

Arjang did it."

Today, Geramifard is in his first semester of dental school at the prestigious Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry. With his GPA and DAT scores, he qualified for a scholarship through the Delta Dental Fund awarded to less than 10 first-year students annually.

"Through hard work, anyone can be successful, but having a solid support system is invaluable," said Geramifard. "I have so many people to thank for helping me get to where I am today."



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College



REGISTER TODAY!

WINTER MINI 2021
CLASSES START
DECEMBER 13

SPRING 2022
CLASSES START
JANUARY 18

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COLLEGE

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MASON REFLECTS ON 40 YEARS AT SAN JAC

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

As an 18-year-old data processing student at San Jacinto College, Gail Mason never imagined where her career would take her. Recently named manager of Blackboard Support, Mason boasts a 40-year career with the College.

While attending San Jac, she tutored other students and worked as a computer operations lab assistant. Shortly after her graduation, she took a job with the Harris County Justice Administration as a programmer, but it didn't take long before San Jac came calling.

"The division chair at the time reached out to me and asked if I'd be interested in being an instructor," Mason said. "I had truly not ever considered it, but I thought given my tutoring



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

experience that I could apply and just see what might happen."

Mason received a call from San Jacinto College's first president, Dr. Thomas Spencer, confirming her position with the College. In fall 1980, Mason began teaching data processing, mainframe, and key punch.

"I absolutely loved my job," she said. "The first few years, I almost felt guilty

getting paid to teach. It was so fun and rewarding."

Mason recalls teaching students, then their children, parents, cousins, and neighbors.

"I have seen firsthand the impact that education makes on whole families and communities," she said.

After 10 years in the classroom, Mason began taking on varied roles as co-department chair or rotating department chair. Ultimately, she became the department chair for business and information technology at the North Campus.

"I am so passionate about the difference teachers can make in students' lives," said Mason. "I'm not in the classroom anymore, but as a department chair, I was able to affect change on a larger scale."

Mason reflects continued on page 7



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

COSMETOLOGY PROGRAM ADDS BARBER CREDENTIAL

By **Courtney Morris**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Tilting the mannequin head back, Hugo Martinez wields his gold razor blade around the hairline with the skill of an artist and the focus of a surgeon.

Although only a week into barber classes, he seems less a student, more a



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Get your barber credentials

Have a cosmetology license and want to add on barber credentials? Learn more:

- **North Campus:** 281-998-6150, ext. 7168
- **South Campus:** 281-998-6150, ext. 3587

professional. Even the razor he's using to practice has his nickname, "Juice Martinez," engraved in script lettering on the wooden handle.

The San Jacinto College cosmetology alumnus is returning to the North Campus this fall to pursue the new barber conversion program. Martinez hopes not only to expand his knowledge and offer more services to clients but also to become his own boss. After earning this extra license, he may open his own salon or barbershop.

"I am constantly evaluating my situation and [acting] on it," he said. "This is a great fit for me because it allows me to manage my work and lifestyle."

The barber conversion occupational certificate and Associate of Applied

Science degree are currently available at the North Campus and will be offered at the South Campus beginning in spring 2022.

The program teaches shaving, clipper cutting, and men's grooming and facials and prepares students to sit for the state exam to earn a Class A barber conversion license. Students entering the program must already have a valid cosmetology license.

According to North Campus instructors Kristin Harris and Tina Sanchez, the barber program grew from industry need. Cosmetology alumni can return to San Jac to complete the 15 college credits/300 hours to qualify for the state exam. More techniques, accredited courses, and an extra license add up to higher earning potential.

"At San Jac, we lead the industry in continued educational options for those wishing to advance their career," Harris said.

The North and South Campuses boast new cosmetology facilities with state-of-the-art labs and realistic salon settings

for instruction and client services. Barber courses are offered from late afternoon to evening, accommodating students' work schedules and any other classes.

Students will learn how to use a straight razor on beards, heads, and necks and do low and high fades and tapering.

"It makes it possible to be more diverse in the different cuts, styles, and options they can do for a customer or for their employer," Sanchez said.

Like Martinez, barber student Skylar Airhart has an entrepreneurial spirit. In middle school, she saw herself one day standing behind a salon chair, cutting hair and chatting with clients.

Although Airhart has stuck to that path, now she's dreaming bigger. After completing the barber program and her second AAS degree, she'll be ready to open a full-service salon.

"I am a proud San Jac student, and I always will be," she said. "I'm so grateful for the opportunity to grow and be the best person I can be."

'NURSING IS TEAMWORK' FOR FIRST BSN GRADUATES

By Courtney Morris
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

After almost 40 years in nursing, Glenda Haynie could have made her next career step retirement. Instead, she enrolled in San Jacinto College's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

The College's inaugural BSN cohort of 22 students graduated this summer. They celebrated with a capstone project presentation and completion ceremony on July 27.

Judged by doctoral-prepared nurses, Haynie's presentation, "Surgical Site Infections in Cesarean Sections," won first place.

Haynie works in a hospital labor and delivery suite that saw a rise in infections after C-sections last fall. For her BSN capstone project, she helped assemble a task force, research, and create an action plan to educate staff and mothers on infection prevention before and after these scheduled or emergency deliveries.

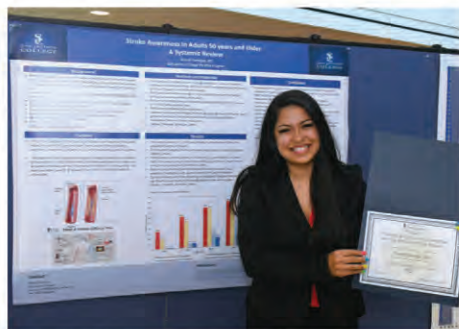


Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Thanks to the task force, the suite has been free of surgical site infections for almost three months, as of July 19. Based on judges' feedback, Haynie is even reconsidering her previous plan to pursue school nursing at private institutions.

"One of the recommendations I had was to do home health with our high-risk pregnancy mamas to make sure these C-sections are being healed," she said. "I think I'm going to go back to work and recommend that. And if it's something they want to implement, maybe I can just step into that program."

Second place for capstone presentations went to Abimbola Ogunleye for her project, "The Efficiency of Yoga in Maintaining Mental Health Wellbeing," and third place to Araceli Herrejon for "Stroke Awareness in Adults 50 Years and Older: A Systemic Review."

Launched in fall 2020 at the Central Campus, San Jac's BSN program is a cost-effective, convenient pathway for registered nurses to take the next

step in their career. Not only do more employers seek BSN-prepared nurses, but the COVID-19 era requires nurses with advanced training and leadership skills.

The one-year program includes both online and face-to-face learning opportunities and accommodates working RNs' busy schedules. Students focus on health care trends, community health nursing, public/global health policy, legal/ethical considerations, leadership, and other advanced topics.

The second cohort began in fall 2021. Dr. Edward Nichols, BSN nursing professor, is teaching all the classes.

"The students in this inaugural cohort demonstrated the ability to manage a career while completing the RN-to-BSN program with excellence," Nichols said. "Their outstanding capstone project presentations were evidence of their success."

Dr. Rhonda Bell, Central Campus dean of health and natural sciences, helped



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Earn your BSN degree. Apply now!

The third BSN cohort starts in spring 2022. Apply now through Oct. 30, 2021.

Applicants must...

- Have completed an Associate of Applied Science in nursing from an accredited program
- Be working nurses with unencumbered Texas RN licenses
- Have completed or be completing 10 credit hours of prerequisites while applying
- Fulfill other entrance requirements

Contact: Dr. Veronica Jammer, 281-476-1842 or sanjacbsn@sjcd.edu
Visit: www.sanjac.edu/bsn

develop the BSN program. In a year that challenged everyone, she said this first cohort showed resiliency and leadership.

"I was privileged to see their first presentation in semester one followed by their capstone poster presentation in the final semester," Bell said. "The professionalism and growth as baccalaureate-prepared nurses were noticeable, and they exemplified the profession of nursing. They made me San Jac proud!"

Haynie credits family support and her four BSN teammates with helping her reach the finish line.

"Nursing is teamwork," she said. "It's exactly what got us through [the BSN program].... I recommend it to anyone. I have thoroughly enjoyed it and learned a lot from it."

SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Oct. 4	Ten-Week Classes begin		All campuses and online
Oct. 6	CPD: Conversational Spanish	12-1 p.m.	Register at community.engagement@sjcd.edu or call 281-476-1893
Oct. 14	Sing! Fall Choir Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Oct. 15	Devotion Art Exhibit final day	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	North Campus Galeria del Norte (N1)
Oct. 22	Seven-Week Weekend Classes begin		All campuses and online
Oct. 25	Don't Call It a Comeback Art Exhibit begins		South Campus (S15)
Oct. 28	CPD: Fall Prevention Expo	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	Register at community.engagement@sjcd.edu or call 281-476-1893

All times and event schedules listed are subject to change. For more information, visit sanjac.edu.



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OCTOBER

THIS MONTH IN SOCIAL MEDIA



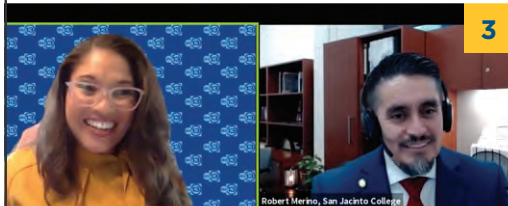
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San Jac kicked off the fall 2021 semester with Welcome Week activities for students at North, South, Generation Park, and Central Campuses!

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The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program announced that Central Campus Provost Van A. Wigginton is one of 40 leaders selected for the 2021-2022 class of the Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship.

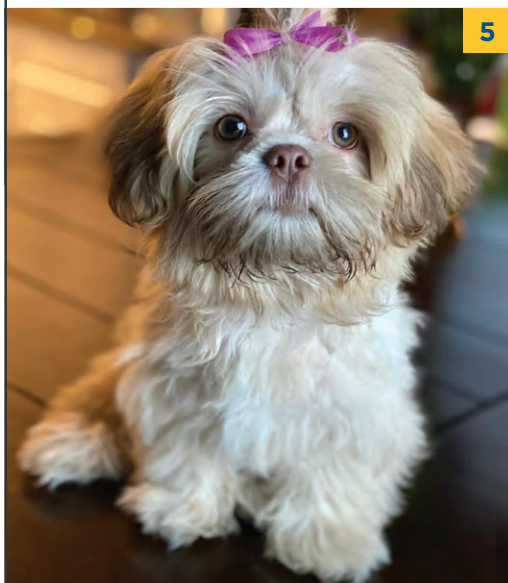
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Dean of Financial Aid Services Robert Merino and Dean of Enrollment Services Jose DeJesusGil answered questions about enrollment, financial aid, tuition assistance, and more during a Facebook Live hosted by ABC13 Houston.

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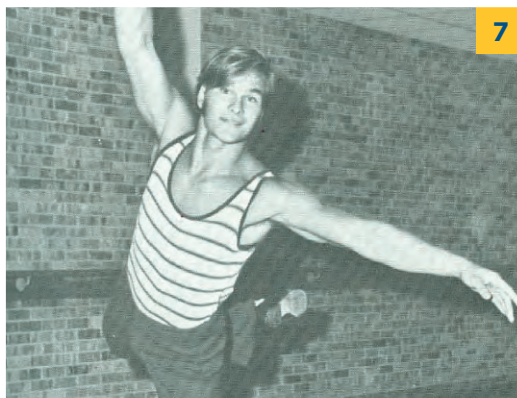
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The College celebrated the official grand opening of the Central Campus Welcome Center.

4

5

Students shared their cutest pup pictures with us for National Dog Day.



7

The office of outreach & recruitment hosted Welcome Back Block Parties on each campus, featuring free food, games, and representatives from different departments.

6

7

San Jac commemorated our most famous former student, the late Patrick Swayze, on his birthday.

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COLLEGE, TEXAS A&M-CORPUS CHRISTI ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERSHIP

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

San Jacinto College and Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi created a formal articulation agreement that will help students transfer more easily between the institutions.

College Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer and TAMU-CC President and CEO Dr. Kelly Miller signed the partnership agreement during the San Jacinto College Board of Trustees meeting Aug. 2.

“We are very excited about the possibilities and opportunities this agreement will have for our students,” said Dr. Hellyer. “Student success is at the heart of our mission, and this agreement



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

San Jacinto College Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer (right) and TAMU-CC President and CEO Dr. Kelly Miller signed the partnership agreement during the San Jacinto College Board of Trustees meeting Monday, Aug. 2.

will provide students not only a seamless transfer opportunity but also a chance to complete their bachelor’s degree at one of the top institutions in Texas.”

As part of the agreement, interested students may apply to TAMU-CC any time while at San Jac and enjoy a waived application and admission fee.

College students earning an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Arts in teaching with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or greater will be guaranteed admission to TAMU-CC. A maximum of 66 semester credit hours earned at San Jac with a grade of C or better will be accepted and applied to designated TAMU-CC degree plans.

“We are extremely honored to welcome San Jacinto College as members of our Islander community,” Miller said. “Through this new partnership, we are establishing new and clearer pathways for students to transform their collegiate journey into life-long career opportunities.”

In addition, San Jacinto College partners with more than 20 other universities to assist in transfers and is the only Texas community college in the Transfer Scholars Network through the Aspen Institute. This network allows students to apply to some elite and Ivy League institutions.

To learn more, visit

www.sanjac.edu/transfers.



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

TAMU-CC President and CEO Dr. Kelly Miller spoke to the San Jacinto College Board of Trustees before signing an articulation agreement with the College.

Mason reflects continued from page 4

As the department chair, Mason was integral to the Pathways project, streamlining the student onboarding and admission process as well as creating seamless transfers to four-year institutions.

“I was one of the first faculty members to join Pathways, and it is a continuing effort,” said Mason. “The work is so important to remove barriers that students might encounter in college, making it as easy as possible to succeed from the moment they step on campus.”

San Jac has changed many things throughout Mason’s career, but one thing has remained consistent: the committed staff and faculty and continuous improvement mindset.

“I love how it is emphasized at the College that

whether you are an instructor or groundskeeper, you serve a profound purpose helping students become successful,” said Mason. “I’ve heard my colleagues mention many times that they advise and teach students in a way they would want someone to treat their own children. That level of dedication and care is deep and sincere.”

The culmination of that dedication happens when students graduate and transfer. Mason recalls the many commencement ceremonies she has participated in over the last 40 years.

“Some of my fondest memories are when my students invite me to meet their loved ones and even join them for a graduation celebration,” Mason said. “There are no words to describe the feeling of seeing students who were initially apprehensive in the first semesters

develop into the graduates ready to conquer the world.”

In 2020, Mason received the Minnie Piper San Jacinto College Faculty Excellence Award, which goes to a faculty member who is a role model, collaborates with others, possesses exemplary attributes or qualifications, helps address or meet the needs of students and other employees, and is dedicated to service in the College community.

This September, Mason took on a new position as manager of Blackboard Support at the Central Campus.

“I have spent the last 40 years at the North Campus, and it has been a joy,” Mason said. “I love San Jacinto College and how much the employees care about students.”

Laughing, she said, “I hope to spend the next 40 years at the Central Campus.”

YOUR GOALS. YOUR COLLEGE.



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CENTRAL CAMPUS
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MARITIME CAMPUS
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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.

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 45,000 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.

