

SAN JACINTO COLLEGESM CareerFocus

Spring 2023 • Volume 4 • Issue 1



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A NEW CAREER
IN **CULINARY**
ARTS



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CHANGES

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BRINGS
EXPERIENCE
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TO **MARITIME**
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SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

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About San Jacinto College

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. The College is one of the top five community colleges in the nation as designated by the Aspen Institute, and was named an Achieving the Dream Leader College of Distinction in 2020. The College is a Hispanic-Serving Institution that spans five campuses, serving approximately 41,000 credit and non-credit students annually. It 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. The College is fiscally sound, holding bond ratings of AA and Aa2 by Standard & Poor's and Moody's.

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NEWS AND NOTES

FROM AROUND THE COLLEGE



Photo by Melissa Trevizo

STATE OF THE COLLEGE FOCUSES ON SERVING COMMUNITY, ADAPTING TO CHANGE

San Jacinto College Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer delivered the annual State of the College address Nov. 10 at the LyondellBasell Center for Petrochemical, Energy, & Technology on the Central Campus.

The theme for the 2022 State of the College address was “A focus on the opportunities that are enriching to yoU, the community,” which focused on changes in three areas: the needs of San Jac students, the landscape in hiring and retaining employees, and the needs of business and community partners.

SAN JAC COMMUNITY RECOVERS AFTER TORNADO

At San Jacinto College, our hearts go out to everyone whose homes, businesses, and lives were impacted by the severe weather Jan. 24.

Many in Pasadena, Deer Park, and Baytown will be picking up the pieces for some time after a tornado ripped through the community. The day after the disaster, San Jac opened the opportunity for our College community to give to emergency funds to help students and employees affected by this disaster. The San Jacinto College Foundation has been distributing these funds as quickly as possible based on need. Every donation, no matter the amount, is making a difference for those who were in the path of this storm.

Whether you donated, served meals, or donned work gloves and boots, thank you for helping our community rebuild. From tropical storms and hurricanes to tornadoes, our community unites after disasters. We are stronger together.

Emergencies happen anytime, but you can lessen the impact. Help San Jac students who are experiencing crises like severe weather, unexpected medical bills, and more. Visit sanjac.edu/donate and choose “Student Emergency Fund” to give.

Audience members included the College’s Board of Trustees, elected officials, industry partners, community leaders, and San Jacinto College Foundation donors.

Interesting facts the Chancellor highlighted in her address include:

- In 2021, San Jac awarded credentials to 6,675 unique students — the largest number of unique students in the College’s history and a 15.6% increase over the previous year.
- The College has created three new Chancellor advisory councils this year: bio-pharm

AND THE NEW COLLEGE-WIDE MASCOT IS ...

The wait is over! San Jacinto College introduces the community to its new mascot — the Raven.

In 2022, San Jac recognized the time to unify the College with one mascot representing its diverse community of students, employees, and alumni. But what best signifies the College spirit in mascot form?

More than 1,300 community members submitted ideas, with Ravens and Jaguars standing out as the two top contenders.

Last fall, the San Jac community voted. For one month, the lead mascot switched back and forth, showing how strong each contender was. Eventually, the Raven clawed its way to the top.

Now the process has begun to give the San Jac Raven life. San Jac will continue to work with the community to select a name, and the final design will be revealed in late spring.

While remembering its storied past with different campus mascots, San Jac is optimistic about the new Raven era and the traditions and memories ahead as one unified College.



manufacturing, cyber security and cloud computing, and global logistics.

- In September, the College partnered with LyondellBasell for its Global Day of Caring to distribute more than 2,500 trees to community members.
- San Jac created a Council for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Twelve teams comprising 120 employees are researching and recommending ways the College can better serve the needs of students, employees, and the community. ■

ARROWOOD BRINGS EXPERIENCE AND PASSION TO MARITIME PROGRAM

| By Melissa Trevizo

Captain Amy Arrowood, San Jacinto College's director of the maritime credit program, has a career that spans more than 20 years. During that time, she served in the U.S. Coast Guard and sailed U.S. flag vessels coastwide and internationally.

A graduate of Texas A&M University-Galveston with a Bachelor of Science in marine transportation, Arrowood joined the Coast Guard as a commissioned officer in 2002. She counts many memorable experiences while being in port in 15 countries.

"Once, my ship traveled to the Marshall Islands in the central Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and the Philippines," she said. "It's a remote island that most mariners wouldn't get to see. Our ship was one of the largest to ever call in that area."

She earned the U.S. Coast Guard Meritorious Team Commendation and Unit Commendation in 2004 and the U.S. Coast Guard Commendation Medal in 2005.

Dropping anchor at San Jac

Arrowood's connection to San Jac began in 2014, when she joined an advisory committee for the Maritime Technology and Training Center while working as a port captain and marine operations manager for J.A.M. Marine Services.

"Serving on the committee, I saw the architect's renderings for the building and got in early to set the foundation for what courses would be the most beneficial to our students," Arrowood said. "This facility and program were



Amy Arrowood

an answer to the needs of the industry to fill an educational gap for entry-level mariners."

After signing on as a maritime transportation program faculty member, she began teaching classes and curating curriculum in a temporary facility off State Highway 225 while the new center was under construction.

"It was a small program that filled up quickly, and I knew each of my students well," Arrowood said. "If they ever missed class, I was checking up on them to see if they were OK. Even now, if my students are absent or miss assignments, I'm waiting at the top of the stairs to catch them to see how they are doing."

Arrowood earned the 2018-2019 Administrator Excellence Award for serving as a role model, working collaboratively with others, meeting students' and other employees' needs, and exemplifying dedication, service, and involvement in the College community.

"Part of the joy of being an instructor is seeing the outcomes of our program," she said. "I love when a student lands a job and they circle back to let us know how they are doing. It's a great feeling when you see passion for the industry spark in a student and they see it through."

Captain Jennifer Del Angel, a San Jac maritime graduate, credits her drive

to prove she can be the best partly to Arrowood.

"Captain Amy is my mentor," Del Angel said. "She went to bat for me and helped me get my internships. I look at her as a strong role model of what women in our industry can achieve."

About the program

Since Arrowood joined San Jac, the maritime programs have grown. Two years after starting maritime training, the College introduced the state's first and only associate degree for maritime transportation. This degree program combines Coast Guard- and Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping-approved maritime training with the college-level academics required of an associate degree.

The College also started a program for those who wish to work in other areas of maritime: an associate degree for cargo handling/logistics, transferable to universities.

In March 2016, the Maritime Technology and Training Center officially opened its doors to both credit and non-credit students. And in 2019, the center earned the prestigious Bellwether Award in Workforce Development.

"The goal moving forward is to keep growing the program and establishing more educational partnerships and transfer opportunities," Arrowood said. "The success of our students always comes first." ■

► Learn more about maritime training at sanjac.edu/maritime.

GUTIERREZ CROSSES FINISH LINE WITH HONDA PACT

| By Melissa Trevizo

When 22-year-old San Jacinto College student Yisel Gutierrez was younger, her brother introduced her to the world of custom cars. The car that sparked her interest? A Blue 1967 Camaro Super Sport.

“I loved the look of these vintage and custom cars, but I had to put it out of my mind,” Gutierrez said. “My mom was very strict and didn’t think working on cars was a good idea for a girl. As I grew up, I always had my eye on cars, but I thought it wasn’t possible for me.”

“Eventually my mom saw the passion I had for working on my car, and she realized it wasn’t going away. Seeing me so happy to dig in ‘with the boys’ made her understand that this is something I truly love, and it makes me happy.”

Looking to find a successful career in an industry that would please her parents, Gutierrez pursued medical assisting through dual credit and completed the certificate program at San Jac.

“During my clinical hours I realized that it wasn’t something I could see myself doing for a career,” she said. “I didn’t

know what was coming next, but I knew this wasn’t it for me.”

Lost on what she should do, Gutierrez enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. During boot camp just before the crucible — the final 54-hour training exercise that validates the physical, mental, and moral training recruits are put through to solidify their entry into the Marines — Gutierrez was injured.

“I was dropped, and I came home a little defeated,” she said. “But then I realized that I was holding my own the whole time during boot camp. If I hadn’t been injured, I would still be there today. It lit a fire in me to pursue my passion. I knew I had to follow my dream despite what anyone thought.”

Gutierrez bought a 1999 Honda Civic as a project car to learn on and taught herself to drive for the first time with a manual transmission.

“Eventually my mom saw the passion I had for working on my car, and she realized it wasn’t going away,” she said. “Seeing me so happy to dig in ‘with the boys’ made her understand that this is something I truly love, and it makes me happy.”

Eager to learn more about her car and pursue a career in the auto industry, Gutierrez found San Jac’s Honda Professional Automotive Career Training Program. She enrolled in spring 2022 and hasn’t looked back since.

“My younger self would be so excited to see that I’m in the shop every day working with cars and learning so much,” she said. “One of the first things



Yisel Gutierrez, Honda PACT student

I learned was about the car’s electrical system. I was able to apply that lesson and fix something in my car right away.”

As one of the only girls in the program and without much prior experience, Gutierrez was nervous about acceptance from her fellow students.

“Walking in the first day, I was worried that some of these guys would already know so much from working on cars their whole lives,” Gutierrez said. “They all welcomed me right away and showed me how to use the tools and the equipment in the shop. The instructors and students have been nothing but welcoming.”

Manit Bunnimit, San Jac’s Honda PACT program coordinator, counts Gutierrez as one of his best students.

“Yisel can take in a lot of information and retain it well,” Bunnimit said. “A lot of the time in class she is someone I

can rely on to help demonstrate skills to her fellow students. I’ll ask her to step in and work one-on-one with someone while I’m with other students.”

Once she graduates, Gutierrez aims to gain experience at a Honda dealership and eventually work toward her dream.

“One day I want to open a shop run completely by women,” she said. “My sister and my mom have been taken advantage of while getting their cars serviced, and I’ve taught them what to look out for to make sure their concerns are legit. I want to create a space where women can take their cars and trust that they will be taken care of.” ■

► Learn more about the Honda PACT program at sanjac.edu/program/automotive-technology.

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DIGITAL CADAVER TABLES

TAKE LEARNING TO NEW HEIGHTS

| By Neesha Hosein

Cadavers are not something commonly seen in community college science labs, but San Jacinto College has secured the next best thing for learning anatomy.

Five Anatomage digital cadaver dissection tables now call San Jac home with two at Central Campus and one each at the North, South, and Generation Park Campuses.

What is Anatomage?

The Anatomage tabletop, an interactive touch screen, comes loaded with four life-sized 3D cadavers based on real male and female cadavers imaged in 1-millimeter slices from head to toe. The table displays words and information that correspond with what the user is touching on the screen.

“The tables have high-resolution pictures of these cadavers,” said Dr. Teddy Farias, North Campus dean of health and natural sciences. “We can’t replace working with a real cadaver, but this is very close and a lot more cost-effective. It’s like a giant iPad.”

Compared to the vivid pictures in textbooks like Netter’s or Grey’s Anatomy, Farias believes the Anatomage table is an upgrade over a digital textbook.

Farias led the districtwide purchase of the five Anatomage tables last July, which were purchased with Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds.

Bells and whistles

Besides four human bodies, the Anatomage table also displays animals for digital dissection and other images useful for science and health science students to study.



Photo by Neesha Hosein

Anatomage table

“The company synthesized other specimens that are not based on a real cadaver but were created based on our knowledge of anatomy,” Farias said. “One example shows what a baby looks like in utero. There are several other scenarios, like a gunshot wound to the head, an inflamed lung, heart disease, MRIs, CT scans, and thousands of other case studies.”

The table comes equipped with a multitude of learning applications and is compatible with online classes. It can accommodate virtual tests and quizzes. Digital capabilities also allow it to be used via Zoom or to project images onto a screen for a class to view. Each campus has a designated lab for the tables, but since they have wheels, they can be moved to other labs or classrooms. The table can also be positioned vertically, which makes it easier to display to a face-to-face class.

Training sessions were held during College Community Week, but implementation is still in the early stages.

“Faculty are just getting introduced to the tables, so it’s too soon to fully incorporate it into their curriculum,” Farias said. “Some faculty might be able to use it in place of a YouTube video or pictures to discuss specific subjects.”

Who will use the tables?

The Anatomage table will be used to teach anatomy and physiology but will also be a valuable learning tool in many courses. Farias believes this is a great opportunity for interdisciplinary use and will be beneficial to more than one program.

Farias described the table as a multi-functional tool that several of the health science programs could use, including nursing, respiratory therapy, surgical technology, paramedic, medical assisting, occupational therapy assistant, and physical therapist assistant. The material included in the table’s database is relevant for many programs and will serve as a visual tool for hands-on learning, remediation, and tutoring sessions.

The Anatomage tables were officially integrated into course curriculums starting in spring 2023.

“The biology department is brimming with excitement as we introduce classroom material created using the Anatomage table into our lessons,” said Lambrini Nicopoulos, South Campus life sciences department chair. “More importantly, we are looking forward to having every student engage directly with the table to visualize the different systems in the body, perform virtual dissections, and participate in content-specific case studies.” ■

PAVING THE WAY FOR WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

| By Neesha Hosein

With 48 years in the petrochemical workforce, Linda Brown has witnessed an evolution of change in the industry — more women, technology, and safety in the workplace.

Brown, a San Jacinto College process technology adjunct professor for 17 years, uses her hard-earned knowledge to train process technicians how to work safely and efficiently.

Teaching at San Jac is her “love job.” She relishes the opportunity to help others succeed.

“I train students to understand fundamental basics to become a process technician in the refinery and petrochemical environment,” Brown said. “That includes things like how to open and close valves, how a process system works, how units operate, safety, personal protective equipment, and routine maintenance.”

More than just an income

Salary draws many to petrochemical careers. Brown teaches there is more to this field than the money.

“First night of class, I scare them on purpose so they know the gravity of this career,” Brown said. “I tell them if you do the wrong thing you can jeopardize your life and lives around you, including the community.”

If students express self-doubt, Brown tells them “bear with me for about two weeks,” after which most stick with the program. Brown considers the course evaluations proof that students are learning a lot and enjoying her classes.

It wasn't always easy

Brown worked as a keypunch operator at NASA in the 1970s during the Apollo era. After a layoff, a recruiter told her about an industry position for which they wanted women to apply. Her husband, Jesse, a plant operator, was her inspiration for embracing the opportunity. She was one of only four women hired as a process operator at Charter Oil Refinery.

Although most of her male counterparts were unkind and management tried to talk her out of staying, Brown stuck with it, passed the probationary period, and became a permanent employee. While working full time and raising a family, Brown earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Houston.

“Being a female in this industry has made me challenge myself a lot,” she said. “I got to a point when I knew more than the men around me. Knowledge is power, and they could not manipulate me. That's a driving force.”

Knowledge and experience mean everything

Brown can boast several firsts.

“I am the first female to become a chief operator on a fluidized catalytic cracking unit on the Houston Ship Channel,” she said. “I am the first female to become a process expert lead supervisor in charge of four refinery operating units in southern California and to become a refinery shift foreman responsible for

operating the facility on the Houston Ship Channel.”

The Crown Central Petroleum refinery management team and employees named their Linda Brown Training Center in her honor.

Brown is proud to see how times have changed for the better.

“The tides have turned,” she said. “It's much better today. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission upholds regulations, and all the things I've experienced are no longer tolerated. I feel like I'm treated as a professional. Process technology is amazing.” ■

► Learn more about the process technology program at sanjac.edu/program/process-technology.



Linda Brown

Photo by Melissa Trevizo



GEAR UP

Photo by Melissa Trevizo

| By Melissa Trevizo

WITH TRUCK DRIVING

Truck driving is in high gear at San Jacinto College thanks partly to the Fast Track tuition discount program, which covers 100% of costs for programs that can be completed in less than a year.

The truck driving program has been at capacity for more than a year with potential students waitlisted for enrollment. Why else would the program fill so quickly? Industry need.

The American Trucking Association projects that trucking companies will need to hire nearly 1.2 million drivers over the next decade. Part of that is attributed to a rapidly aging workforce: The average age of long-haul truck drivers is 46, according to the group.

To complete the course at San Jac, weekday students can expect six weeks of training, and weekend students can take up to 12 weeks.

To qualify for the program, applicants must:

- Be at least 18 and pass a mandatory Department of Transportation drug test and medical examination
- Provide adequate proof of competency in English or pass the English proficiency test
- Have a valid Texas driver's license and Social Security number
- Be legally able to travel throughout Texas
- Possibly provide an original or certified copy of a birth certificate

“The full cost of the course is around \$4,300,” said Dr. Ken Tidwell, dean of continuing and professional workforce development. “You can be out and working in a matter of weeks and

making \$50,000. That makes a great investment.”

With the success of the commercial driver license truck driving program, Tidwell announced the inception of a new program for the division beginning this spring: CDL Class B Bus driving.

“Interest has grown among government entities and local school districts for a bus driving program at San Jac,” Tidwell said. “Some of the larger school districts recruit and train their own drivers, but smaller districts don’t have that capacity. By partnering with us, they can outsource the training and increase recruitment for new drivers.”

Hand-in-hand with the new bus driving program comes innovative technology via the Virage Simulation VS600M truck simulator.

The simulator offers full application of virtually any type of heavy vehicle from dump trucks, highway tractor-trailers, and semi-trailer applications to school buses. It comprises a 180-degree forward field of view plus rear-view mirrors with three high-resolution LCD displays.

“This new technology allows our students more practice time mastering maneuvers in backing, parking, and shifting in a virtual setting before entering the roadways,” said Tony Rich, director of continuing and professional development applied trades and transportation. “Over 75% of the class is devoted to actual behind-the-wheel training. We believe this gives our students a huge advantage as they start their truck driving careers.” ■

► Learn more about the truck driving program at sanjac.edu/CDL.

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COOKING UP A NEW CAREER IN CULINARY ARTS

| By Neesha Hosein



Dorothy Carter

Photos by Neesha Hosein

From crunching numbers to crafting gourmet food, Dorothy Carter chose San Jacinto College as her steppingstone to a new career. The culinary arts major will graduate in spring 2023 from the North Campus with a certificate of technology.

While cooking has been a lifelong interest, it was not her bread and butter.

“This major is a total career change for me,” Carter said. “I worked primarily in banking and real estate, but I chose culinary arts because cooking has always been my passion. Cooking is who I am.”

She chose San Jac because of its reputation and convenience to home.

Why the bold move?

Carter is a licensed Texas realtor and has also held the titles of real estate clerk and financial service representative. She believes “sometimes you just know when the time is right to make a change,” and the moment came when her lifelong love of cooking took the wheel.

“My love of cooking is not a hobby but stems from memories with my mother and grandmother in the kitchen,” Carter said. “The love and how to cook, not to mention the smells and conversation, put me right back there today. I still cook teacakes that are a hit, just as they were so long ago.”

Overcoming challenges

Going back to school in her 50s was a concern for Carter.

“I hesitated to become a student at San Jac because I thought the curriculum would be too difficult or challenging and I would get lost in the crowd of younger students due to the age gap,” she said. “Boy, was I wrong. It was the best experience ever, and the curriculum was actually a perfect fit.”

Once she realized insecurity was causing her hesitation, Carter found ways to overcome her anxiety.

Understanding the assignments was a challenge, one she overcame by asking questions. Building relationships has been her favorite part of the college experience, and Carter believes she pulled through because of her “faith, family, and the support received at San Jac” from professors and peers.

In the kitchen, comfort food is her favorite food to cook but with a healthier spin. She enjoys tweaking an original recipe to make it her own. In doing so, one aspect she finds challenging is learning to work with unfamiliar ingredients.

“Another challenge with cooking is the clean-up afterwards,” she said. “Even though it is imperative to clean as you go, there will always be clean-up at the end of a nice meal.”

Advice to others

“My best advice for handling stress is to communicate and not be afraid to ask for help,” Carter said. “For new students,



my advice would be to take school seriously, ask questions to get a better understanding, and do the work because it will pay off in the long run.”

To those who are considering a career change, Carter advises to go for it.

“People should believe in themselves and their decision to go back to college or adjust their career path later in life,” she said. “Do what you love. Don’t shy away from the challenge. Surround yourself with people who support your decision.”

What’s ahead?

Carter is looking forward to her new adventures in culinary arts.

“After graduation my career plans are to work in some capacity within the hospitality industry,” she said. “My dream job in the hospitality industry would be working in a culture where I can thrive and grow. I would someday like to own my own bed and breakfast.” ■

► Learn more about the culinary arts program at sanjac.edu/program/culinary-arts.

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PROMISE GRADUATE

FRAMING FUTURE AS ART TEACHER

| By Courtney Morris

At a Pasadena park, Ricardo Padron and his grandpa sit, observing.

Kids fly past, laughing and lunging for each other's arms in a game of tag. A jogger slows to a walk, mopping sweat with his sleeve. Ducks clump together under a cypress tree, necks tucked, asleep.

Years ago, Padron watched his grandpa sketch Looney Tunes cartoons. Now, seated side by side with pencils and sketchpads, the two draw together.

"With just a piece of paper and pencil, you can create art — you can do something exciting," Padron said.

His grandpa may have ignited his passion for art, but thanks to the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship, Padron is framing his future career path.

Choosing career over job

As the oldest of three, Padron wanted to help his mom and dad pay the bills any way he could. Should he study art or architecture? Both crossed his mind, but getting a job right after high school seemed safer than college loans and faster to help his family.

At Sam Rayburn High School, Padron's art teacher pushed him to compete in the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo School Art Program, where his art made the auction. His teacher's encouragement gave Padron the vision to teach art and guide others too.

"We have so much potential in this life," he said. "Anything is possible."

In his senior year, Padron learned about the last-dollar Promise @ San Jac Scholarship, which would let him attend San Jacinto College debt-free. With this, he could pursue his dream career, not just a job.

"My parents wouldn't have to spend as much money as they would have if Promise wasn't available," he said. "It gave me the opportunity to really think about my future."

Growing as an artist

Starting as a Promise Scholar in fall 2020, Padron pursued an Associate of Arts in teaching. Like his high school teacher, San Jac art professors pushed him outside his comfort zone — this time requiring him to judge his peers' art.

Padron found he could praise others' work while still suggesting changes in color or media to achieve the goal.

"It taught me valuable lessons," he said. "It's about pushing the other person to do better and keep practicing."

At San Jac, he also explored new techniques and matured as an artist.

"All my art classes were a fun, safe environment," he said. "With math, you follow certain rules to get the right answer. Art is a free environment to express yourself."

After graduating in summer 2022, Padron transferred to University of Houston-Clear Lake, where he is now earning a bachelor's degree to teach high school art. Once he gets classroom experience, he may pursue a master's degree to become a principal.

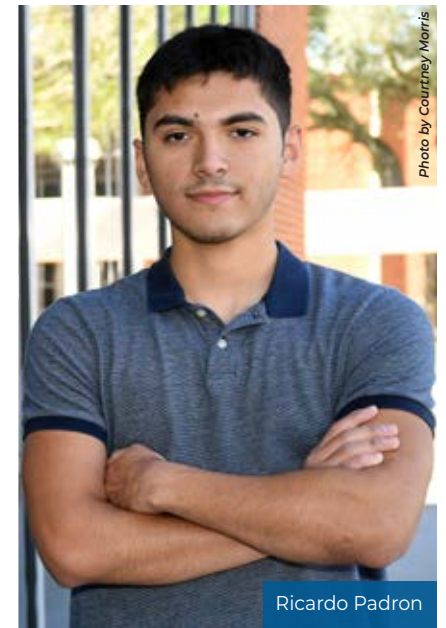


Photo by Courtney Morris

Ricardo Padron



About the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship

The Promise @ San Jac Scholarship promises a debt-free certificate or degree to all in-district high school seniors living in San Jac's taxing district. Learn more at sanjac.edu/promise.

Want to help make debt-free college possible for more students? Visit sanjac.edu/promise-partner.

Taking the right steps

Padron is the first in his family to earn a degree. His mother ended at intermediate school, and his middle brother dropped out of college to

pursue a job. Now — closing in on his career goals — he tries to be an ear for his youngest brother, a high school senior still figuring out his path.

Padron quotes Proverbs 13:20: "He who walks with the wise will be wise."

"For me, it means to drop what's foolish and make good decisions," he said. "If you make mistakes, make sure those mistakes help you become a better person."

His advice for current high schoolers mirrors what he shares with his youngest brother: Think first, act second.

"Think about what your next step will be and what you see yourself doing," he said. "If college is where you're going to be successful, take the Promise pledge." ■

TAKE FLIGHT:

STEM HONORS STUDENT PIVOTS FROM HO-HUM JOB TO RICE PATHWAY

| By Courtney Morris

In that moment between chucking your pillow at the alarm and sliding your feet from covers to carpet, you pause.

“What am I doing with my life?”

Jorge Medellin asked that question. Three years after high school, he was still working at the chemical plant where he had interned. He wanted to reach higher for his family and community.

So Medellin pivoted. Today, not only has he finished two semesters of San Jacinto College’s engineering program. Thanks to perfect timing, he also numbers among the College’s first students pursuing Rice University through the new Take Flight STEM Pathway.

Launching into higher degrees

Established in spring 2022, Take Flight is for high-achieving San Jac and Lone Star College students exploring science, technology, engineering, and math fields. It aims to increase STEM engagement and position community college students to pursue higher degrees at top universities.

How does it work? If you’re a strong freshman pursuing a STEM degree, San Jac’s honors program may identify you to pursue Take Flight.

You’ll participate in ...

- Virtual information sessions with Rice admissions, engineering/natural science schools, and student organizations
- Summer STEM seminars

Earning a Higher Degree at a Lower Cost

Interested in Take Flight? Not only does San Jac offer low tuition, but through its Rice Investment financial aid program, Rice University covers ...

- Full tuition, fees, room, and board for students from families with incomes and assets below \$75,000/year
- Full tuition for incomes below \$140,000
- 100% of demonstrated need for families outside the income ranges

- Academic conferences with industry networking
- A Take Flight day with visits to a Rice classroom, residential college, and undergraduate research symposium
- Research presentation opportunities

If you want to apply to Rice, you’ll also complete ...

- Core STEM courses and a San Jac associate degree with advising from both schools
- A research experience for undergraduates, or REU
- A summer transition program

This past summer, Medellin participated in Rice’s Nanotechnology Enabled

Water Treatment REU, which grew his communication and determination. He sees the experience as a launch pad rather than a landing.

“I came out more eager to get done what I need to get done,” he said. “I have to work harder and be more focused to be at the level of Rice, my dream school.”

Preparing for takeoff

For the past 15 years, Rice has brought community college students like Medellin on campus for REUs. Faculty encouraged Rice leaders to expand that partnership.

In fall 2020, San Jac and Rice began discussing how to meet the national need for more STEM graduates together.

“Not getting accepted into a four-year school is a common misconception about why students choose community college,” said Dr. Rachel Garcia, San Jac’s associate vice chancellor of teaching and learning. “We have high-achieving students with 4.0 GPAs whom we need to serve and help achieve their academic goals.”

The conversation went from growing students’ research skills to preparing them to transfer to institutions like Rice, which has accepted few community college transfers.

“What the board, provost, and I have put at the forefront is getting the talent from our own backyard,” Dr. Matthew Taylor, Rice’s associate provost, said. “We have good community colleges in town with good honors programs and first-generation, low-income students.



Jorge Medellin

We should look for that talent and develop that talent.”

Enter Take Flight.

Reaching higher

When Medellin thought about getting into a competitive REU, three words came to mind: “There’s no way.” Then, hands shaking, he opened the acceptance email on his phone.

“A lot of times, we know what we want, but we can’t see it,” he said of his REU. “If you can see these doctors and engineers at work — and work alongside them — you can see yourself there.”

Medellin will be the first in his family to finish an associate degree. The first to apply to a top university. The first to pursue a career in electrical engineering and research.

Perhaps next spring, hands shaking, he’ll be opening a Rice acceptance letter. ■

► Learn more about Take Flight at sanjac.edu/honors or stempathway.rice.edu.



PTK STRETCHES PAWS

FOR HONORS IN ACTION

By Melissa Trevizo

Studies show therapy pets can boost energy levels, self-esteem, and mood and decrease depression, but is that still true when the animals are mechanical?

The San Jacinto College South Campus Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society chapter explored this with its annual Honors in Action project. This community service project helps the chapter maintain its five-star status, which it has held for the last 16 years.

“Becoming a five-star chapter takes a lot of work,” said Elizabeth McKinley, San Jac professor and PTK advisor. “Our students dedicate a lot of their time to these projects and their success.”

The theme for the 2022 Honors in Action project was “The Art and Science of Play.” With that in mind, PTK members spent weeks researching to find a fitting project.

“One student brought us an idea for mechanical pets to use as therapy animals,” McKinley said. “We thought it was a fantastic idea.”

Students contacted Ageless Innovation’s Joy for All Companion Pets and received six donated mechanical dogs from the company to kick off their project. With help from a \$1,000 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant, the group bought eight cats as well.

“When we received the animals, everyone immediately fell in love with them,” McKinley said. “Department chair Dr. Connie Gomez calls two of them Dixie and Beamer for the cross streets nearest the campus. Our faculty members have asked us to bring them to their classes for exam anxiety relief. We didn’t anticipate the connection the students and faculty would have for these animals.”

For their Honors in Action project, the PTK students chose to take their mechanical therapy pets to a local nursing home, Park Manor - South Belt Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

For their first visit to Park Manor with their mechanical pets in November

2022, 12 students and their PTK advisors took the animals to visit the elderly residents, unsure of how they would react.

“Our residents were thrilled with the animals,” said Bianca Partida, Park Manor activity director. “They were infatuated with how the cats and dogs moved and reacted to their touch. It brought so much joy to them that we’ve decided to apply for a grant ourselves to purchase our own mechanical pets.”

The 14 mechanical pets can look, feel, and sound like real animals. They respond to petting, hugging, and motion much like the real ones but don’t require any special care or feeding.

“We can bring a rich, comforting experience to some of our aging population through this scientific innovation without fear of animals, allergic reactions, safety concerns, or costly veterinary bills,” McKinley said.

PTK student president Elsie Bura is eager to see where this program will take them. The chapter plans to visit pediatric wards and veteran centers this spring.

“When we began, we had no idea it would be this impactful for our community or this exciting for our members,” Bura said. “We can’t wait to expand it to other organizations and groups in 2023.” ■





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sanjac.edu/program/surgical-technology

An Equal Opportunity Institution

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT STUDENT SERVICES CHANGES

| By Courtney Morris

Whether you've attended San Jacinto College several semesters or just applied, changes in student services will improve your journey from enrollment to transfer.

Beginning Oct. 1, the College restructured some departments and services to help you define your education goals, stay on target, and have advising support after office hours.

The student services changes include ...

- Career Services = Now Career and Transfer
- Career Specialists = Now Career and Transfer Specialists
- Educational Planning, Counseling, and Completion = Now Advising, Career, and Transfer
- Educational Planners = Now Program Advisors
- Student Engagement and Activities = Now Student Engagement and Support

Advising, career, and transfer department directors **Chalen Rice** and **Adriana Elizondo** share what these changes mean for you and how they'll boost your San Jac experience.

Q: Tell me about these changes.

Rice: We are streamlining the advising process for students and our teams. Many institutions are moving toward a case management model, which reduces how often students repeat their story and allows advisors to build rapport with students as they navigate college.

Elizondo: In October 2022, we launched Phase 1 — department name changes to ensure our names matched the services we're offering students. By end of spring 2023, in Phase 2, we'll begin assigning advisors to students in their appropriate program.

Q: I'm a current San Jac student. What changes will I see?

Rice: For consistency, you'll now have an assigned program advisor who is a content expert in your field. You can schedule online and in-person appointments

to ensure a dedicated time to discuss your needs with your advisor.

Q: I'm new to San Jac. What can I expect?

Elizondo: During onboarding, you'll discuss your major and career goals with admissions while completing all enrollment steps. During your first semester, you'll see the first available program advisor, but your assigned program advisor — your go-to — will reach out before your second semester to introduce themselves and guide you throughout your academic journey.

Q: Will registration change?

Elizondo: You'll still register the same way, but we are thinking creatively how to offer different registration/advising opportunities for you to connect with us earlier. We want to make these processes easier and as beneficial as possible for you.

Q: How can career and transfer specialists help me?

Rice: They'll help you identify a program of study if you're still undecided with 30 credit hours or more. They'll also help you prepare for job interviews and transition to the workforce or transfer to a college or university to continue your studies.

Q: Will mental health counseling look different?

Rice: Mental health counselors are still in our suites to give you the support you need, but their focus has shifted solely to mental health and outreach. They provide support groups on topics like managing mental health and creating balance and other opportunities for you to connect and engage.

Elizondo: Neurodiversity services is a new support office as well. It provides individual support to neurodiverse students, focusing on self-advocacy, self-management, and access to campus resources. Neurological differences can include autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and more.



Photo by Courtney Morris

Virtual Advising 101

Have a quick question after office hours? Virtual advisors can help Monday – Thursday, 2-11 p.m., and Sunday, 5-10 p.m.:

1. Visit the live virtual lobby (www.whos-next.com/sanjac/actvirtual).
2. Sign yourself in.
3. A virtual advisor will send you a Zoom link.

Also check out the live chat option in your SOS account.

Q: I'm busy during the day. What help can I get on weeknights and weekends?

Elizondo: We now offer virtual services during late-night hours to be more accessible for you. These new positions include two full-time and two part-time virtual advisors who can help any student. For academic planning, you should still go to your assigned program advisor. But these virtual advisors can handle quick questions about registration, account holds, and degree plans.

Q: Anything else I should know?

Elizondo: Navigating college can feel overwhelming, but our student services staff are here to help you every step of the way. We're excited for these changes and hope they'll make your time here as seamless as possible.

Rice: We hope these changes will encourage you to connect with us throughout the year. We're here to help you navigate your college experience from the time you begin at San Jac until you transition to whatever comes next. We do more than help you select classes — we point you in the right direction. ■

CHOOSE YOUR PATH

At San Jacinto College, we empower you to achieve your goals, redefine expectations, and explore new opportunities. With our 200-plus degrees and certificates across eight areas of study, you can get the training and tools to find a rewarding career and pursue the life you've always wanted.

Before registering, discuss your career goals with a San Jac advisor. Whether you pursue workforce training or earn an associate degree to transfer, we'll connect you to the program that's perfect for you. Learn more at sanjac.edu or call us at 281-998-6150. ■



Art, Humanities, Communication, and Design

- Art and Design
- Audio Engineering
- Communications
- Dance
- English
- Interior Design
- Modern Languages
- Music
- Speech
- Theatre and Film

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Art, Drama, and Music Teachers (Postsecondary)	\$76,793
Broadcast Technicians	\$40,050
Choreographers	\$50,323
Editors	\$58,786
English Language and Literature Teachers (Postsecondary)	\$78,129
Film and Video Editors	\$51,822
Graphic Designers	\$47,943
Interior Designers	\$60,798
Interpreters/Translators	\$43,179
Lighting Technicians	\$50,000
Media and Communication Equipment Workers	\$57,861
Music Directors and Composers	\$78,581
News Analysts, Reporters and Journalists	\$54,920
Producers and Directors	\$57,874
Proofreaders and Copy Markers	\$36,483
Public Relations Specialists	\$59,635
Sound Engineering Technicians	\$61,800
Special Effects Artists and Animators	\$62,244
Technical Writers	\$77,026



Business

- Accounting
- Business Administration
- Business Management
- Business Office Systems and Support
- Economics
- Entrepreneur
- Long Term Care Administration
- Paralegal
- Real Estate

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Accountants and Auditors	\$79,540
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$46,117
Budget Analysts	\$89,086
Credit Analysts	\$74,966
Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	\$61,638
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	\$42,572
Human Resources Specialists	\$61,567
Insurance Underwriters	\$75,191
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	\$59,375
Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	\$48,087
Project Management Specialists	\$97,802
Real Estate Brokers	\$58,317
Real Estate Sales Agents	\$38,337



Construction, Industry Manufacturing, and Transportation

- Air Conditioning Technology (HVAC)
- Automotive Technology
- Biomedical Clinical Equipment Technician
- Construction Management Technology
- Diesel Technology
- Electrical Technology
- Electronics Technology
- Environmental Health and Safety Technology
- Global Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- Instrumentation
- Maritime Transportation
- Non-destructive Testing
- Pipefitting
- Process Technology
- Welding Technology

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Automotive Body and Related Repairers	\$46,837
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$46,706
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	\$49,625
Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	\$111,098
Chemical Plant and Systems Operators (Process Technology)	\$81,190
Construction Managers	\$98,969
Electricians	\$52,204
Environmental Science and Protection Technicians (Including Health)	\$49,830
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	\$49,087
Medical Equipment Repairers	\$54,966
NDT Technicians Level I	\$74,392
Occupational Health and Safety Technicians ..	\$56,766
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$56,182
Sailors and Marine Oilers	\$46,794
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	\$49,118



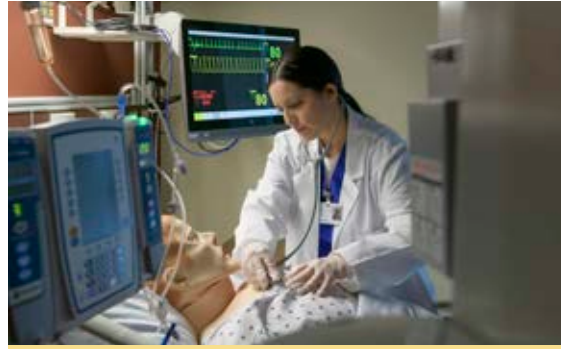
Education

Child Development / Early Childhood Studies
Teaching

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Career/Technical Education Teachers (Secondary)	\$62,424
Child Care Workers	\$22,752
Education and Child Care Administrators, Preschool and Daycare	\$51,458
Elementary School Teachers (Except Special Ed)	\$62,424
Preschool Teachers (Except Special Ed)	\$28,696
Secondary School Teachers (Except Special Ed and CTE)	\$62,424
Substitute Teachers (Short-term)	\$28,558
Teaching Assistants (Except Postsecondary)	\$23,243



Health Sciences

Cancer Data Management
Diagnostic Medical Sonography
Emergency Medical Services
Eye Care Technology
Health Information Management
Medical Assisting
Medical Billing
Medical Coding
Medical Laboratory Technology
Medical Radiography
Mental Health Services
Nursing
Occupational Therapy Assistant
Personal Trainer
Pharmacy Technician
Physical Therapist Assistant
Respiratory Care
Surgical Technician

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Certified Ophthalmic Assistants	\$42,500
Certified Tumor Registrars	\$54,049
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	\$55,323
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	\$77,036
Emergency Medical Technicians	\$36,355
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	\$38,635
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	\$74,805
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$50,912
Medical Assistants	\$36,763
Medical Records Specialists	\$43,571
Occupational Therapy Assistants	\$75,737
Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	\$36,156
Paramedics	\$40,495
Pharmacy Technicians	\$37,309
Physical Therapist Assistants	\$71,899
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	\$62,881
Registered Nurses	\$78,962
Respiratory Therapists	\$64,236
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	\$46,833
Surgical Technologists	\$58,436



Public Safety and Human/Consumer Services

Chef Training
Cosmetology
Criminal Justice
Fire Protection Technology
Massage Therapy
Pastry Chef
Personal Trainer
Restaurant Management

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Bakers	\$27,151
Chefs and Head Cooks (Including Pastry Chefs)	\$38,773
Firefighters	\$47,678
Food Service Managers	\$60,453
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	\$26,374
Massage Therapists	\$42,861
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	\$61,968
Private Detectives and Investigators	\$63,841
Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists	\$48,221
Skin Care Specialists (Estheticians)	\$36,360



Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

Applications / Programming
 Biology
 Chemistry
 Cloud Computing
 Computer Science
 Computer Simulation and Game Design
 Cyber Security
 Desktop Support and Network Administration
 Engineering
 Engineering Design Graphics (Drafting)
 Environmental Science
 Geology
 Mathematics
 Microsoft and CISCO
 Physics
 Web Design

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Agricultural Technicians	\$35,334
Architectural and Civil Drafters	\$60,255
Chemical Engineers	\$154,811
Chemical Technicians.....	\$77,610
Civil Engineers	\$98,025
Computer Network Support Specialists	\$62,457
Computer Programmers	\$93,140
Computer User Support Specialists	\$48,391
Database Administrators	\$94,981
Environmental Engineering Technologists and Technicians	\$40,923
Food Science Technicians	\$39,434
Information Security Analysts	\$101,380
Mechanical Drafters	\$66,209
Software Developers (Applications)	\$102,567
Web and Digital Interface Designers	\$76,515
Web Developers	\$62,458



Social and Behavioral Science

Anthropology
 Government
 History
 Philosophy
 Psychology
 Sociology

Career Opportunities

*(some may require a bachelor's or master's degree)**

Anthropologists and Archeologists	\$60,924
Clergy	\$53,456
Clinical and Counseling Psychologists	\$78,994
Museum Technicians and Conservators	\$43,946
Philosophy and Religion Teachers (Postsecondary)	\$78,015
Political Scientists	\$95,888 ^(statewide)
Psychologists (All Other)	\$109,470
School Psychologists	\$78,749
Social Science Research Assistants	\$44,272
Sociology Teachers (Postsecondary)	\$77,327

* Salary source: texaswages.com, Gulf Coast Region, 2021 Annual WDA Wages
 ** Salary source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Noncredit Classes for Professional and Life Long Learners

Whether you're preparing for a career or picking up a new hobby, the San Jacinto College Continuing and Professional Development Division offers a variety of noncredit courses for workforce training and lifelong learning. Workforce courses keep employees up to date on the latest industry technology and are available through contract training, open enrollment, and grant funding. You can also pick up new skills you've been eager to learn. CPD offers lifelong learning courses to promote leisure learning and to help you extend your horizons. Learn more at sanjac.edu/cpd.

Workforce Development and Job Training

Applied Technology and Trades
 Business and Professions
 Computers, IT, CNC, PLC, and Robotics
 Health Occupations
 Maritime

Corporate Training and Consulting

Task/Job/Organizational Performance Analysis
 Training Needs/Gap Analysis
 Measuring Training Effectiveness and ROI
 Implementing Effective On-the-Job Training
 Apprenticeships
 Transitioning Training from a Functional Unit to a Business Unit
 Train-the-Trainer for Regulatory Compliance
 Strategies for Selecting, Training, and Qualifying Shift/Relief Supervisors
 Approaches to Team Training and Diagnostics
 Organizational and Human Performance Needs Assessments

Community Programs

Aerospace Education and Workforce Education
 Life Long Learning
 Youth Programs

Grants

Adult Education and Literacy
 Health Career Pathways Partnership Grant
 TPEG
 TWC Business Funding Opportunities

^^ Salary source: PQNDT 2019 Salary Survey
 ^^ Salary source: Payscale, Houston Region

ALUMNA TRADES WAR ZONE

FOR OPPORTUNITY-RICH CYBERSECURITY FIELD

| By Courtney Morris



Nevin Coco

On Sept. 11, 2001, Nevin Coco was on a U.S.-bound plane when the World Trade Center attacks shut down airspace. Plane diverted, she found herself stuck in Amsterdam for several weeks.

This began a journey that would take the 19-year-old from limited opportunities in war-torn Palestine to successful cybersecurity engineer and San Jacinto College adjunct faculty member two decades later.

Finding home away from home

Coco grew up with four older sisters in Bethlehem. Their father passed away early, leaving their mother to manage the family alone. In 2001, a sister who had moved to Houston and earned a San Jac technology degree offered to help her get a student visa.

“She wanted to help me make something of my future, knowing the limitations we had back home,” Coco said.

Arriving in Houston, speaking only Arabic, Coco started with ESOL classes at San Jac. Then she picked the associate degree that seemed the fastest way to support herself: business.

Beyond English lessons were cultural ones. One professor, future South Campus provost Dr. Brenda Jones, took the young woman under her wing.

“She was truly the best teacher, mentor, and leader I have ever had,” Coco said.

Sometimes, long after other students had left, Coco would stay in the classroom, digesting the material. Jones never rushed her, just smiled and said, “Take your time.”

Later, Jones encouraged her to apply for a part-time position in the South Campus business and technology department. In three months, she went from part-timer to administrative assistant. Interacting with the IT community and talking to her sister and husband — also IT professionals — she decided to pursue technology too.

“I knew I wouldn’t be hurting for opportunities, knowing the demand and shortage of workers,” she said.

Proving herself

With a business degree already under her belt, Coco fit San Jac networking and security classes around her work schedule.

She transferred to University of Houston-Victoria, where she earned her bachelor’s degree in 2019. Within 30

days of graduating, she landed a job with a top firewall security company.

Today, even small companies seek to protect themselves from cyber threats. As a technical enablement lead, Coco trains techs to secure apps from vulnerabilities and misconfiguration.

Did she have to overcome barriers as a woman in this field?

“That is definitely still a thing,” she said. “When you show the customer you know your stuff, it disappears, but you have to prove yourself.”

Showing her value has also meant quick promotions, top pay, and the chance to globetrot. During a recent business trip to London, Coco fired a miniature cannon at King Charles’ first birthday celebration at Windsor Castle.

Investing in future IT professionals

In 2020, South Campus business and technology dean Kevin Morris invited Coco to teach part time in the computer information technology program. Outside her full-time job, Coco now teaches online cloud computing and cybersecurity classes.

“It was a learning curve to enter the industry,” she said. “That’s why Mr. Morris picked me to help part time. He wanted to hire people who knew the needs and demands to get students ready to go into the market.”

Coco also helps revamp the CIT curriculum to align better with industry.

“What matters to me is not the quiz or the test,” she said. “Are you learning?”

Are you getting the hands-on? Am I getting you ready to go in the field and talk about security and networking?”

Two decades ago, Coco landed in Houston unsure where to start. Today, she boasts a thriving career and coaches the next generation of IT professionals.

She tells San Jac CIT students they’re in the right path and right place. With just an associate degree and industry certifications, they can land solid IT jobs.

“Cybersecurity is a great choice because it’s the future,” she said. “If you have a passion for it, there are so many opportunities. They don’t have enough people to fill these jobs. That’s job security for you forever.”

► Learn more about CIT programs at sanjac.edu/CIT.

Train for Tech Field

Interested in a tech career? Choose from these San Jac programs:

- Application/Programming
- Cloud Computing
- Computer Science (transferrable A.S. degree)
- Computer Simulation and Game Design
- Cyber Security
- Desktop Support and Microsoft Network Administration
- Network Administration Cisco Specialty
- Web Design



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Helping other people look and feel their best is one of the most **fulfilling career** paths you can take. San Jacinto College has the **training you need** to be a hairstylist, esthetician, manicurist, eyelash extension specialist, and more. **Enroll today!**

Learn more at sanjac.edu/cosmetology



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Inspectors are key for manufacturing facilities to maintain safe operations. The demand for quality inspectors is high in the Houston area, with opportunities in petrochemical, oil and gas, welding, pipeline, aerospace, and many other industries.

Learn more at

sanjac.edu/program/inspection-technologies

A photograph of three students walking on a college campus. On the left is a young woman with dark hair, wearing a denim jacket over a grey t-shirt and blue jeans, carrying a black backpack. In the center is a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans, also carrying a backpack. On the right is a young man with short brown hair, wearing a black t-shirt and a black messenger bag, with a necklace featuring a cross. They are all smiling and looking towards the right. The background shows a modern building with large windows.

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