

OPPORTUNITY

NEWS



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NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE

Burke appointed to Board of Trustees

Chad Burke has been appointed by the San Jacinto College Board of Trustees to fill the current term for Position 5, which expires in June 2027 and was vacated by the late John Moon Jr.

Burke is currently president and CEO of the Economic Alliance Houston Port Region. In his role, he and the team provide professional economic development services for the businesses and communities surrounding the 25-mile Houston Ship Channel. Additionally, Burke is active in the region, serving on the boards of the Harris County-Houston Sports Authority and the Greater Houston Freight Committee.

In 2025, Burke received the Latino Learning Center Humanitarian Award. In 2019, he was recognized as one of the Houston Business Journal's Most Admired CEOs and received the Associated Chemical Industries of Texas Leadership Award and the Texas Economic Development Council Workforce Excellence Award.

Burke holds a Bachelor of Science in economics from Texas A&M University. He and his wife, Shannon, reside in La Porte.



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Join us for College's 2026 Gala: Couture for a Cause

Step into the spotlight for an evening where glamour meets generosity at the 2026 Sinor Family and San Jacinto College Couture for a Cause Gala presented by the Meador and Torrison Families!

Join us Friday, April 24, 2026,



at the LyondellBasell Center for Petrochemical, Energy, & Technology for a dazzling night of runway-worthy fashion, fine dining, and community spirit benefitting the San Jacinto College Foundation. This signature event supports the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship, a last-dollar scholarship ensuring graduates from the College's taxing district can earn an associate degree or certificate debt free.

Celebrate the art of giving in true haute couture style as we turn the runway into a pathway for student success.

Tickets go on sale in February, and sponsorship opportunities are available now. Learn more at sanjac.edu/gala.

Students gain global insights at Breakbulk Americas

Dr. Ivy Jenkins, San Jacinto College logistics and supply chain management instructor, recently led 58 students to Breakbulk Americas, describing it as "a great experience for our students."

Education Day, a program within Breakbulk Americas designed for college and university students, gives participants exclusive access to the event and the opportunity to meet top industry professionals. San Jac logistics and supply chain management students connected with key players from Canada, the U.S., Mexico, and Latin America, gaining firsthand exposure to cross-border operations and international trade.

For students pursuing careers in logistics and supply chain management, this experience offered invaluable real-world perspective. They observed how professionals generate new business, strengthen relationships, and navigate the complexities of global trade.

"Our students saw how international logistics really works," Jenkins said. "They came away inspired and more confident about their future in the industry."

Scan the QR code to learn about the **logistics and supply chain management program**.



Photo courtesy of Ivy Jenkins

STUDENTS TURN CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS INTO ACTS OF KINDNESS

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

As the holidays approach, San Jacinto College instructors are finding creative ways to give back — transforming classroom projects into acts of kindness that reach nationwide.

Writing cards of kindness

English professor Bryan Corbin has partnered with nonprofit organizations since fall 2022 to help students make a difference.

In fall 2024, Corbin began working with the Dear Jack Foundation in addition to his ongoing partnership with Bring Smiles to Seniors.

“I wanted service learning projects that would not require students to commute anywhere or go off campus to complete,” Corbin said. “The concepts of kindness and perseverance unite my classes in ways that are not possible with other topics.”

Over the past three years, students have distributed more than 13,000 cards in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. The

project has expanded beyond English classes to include art, speech, Spanish, and psychology students.

In November and February, students across various disciplines on South Campus write cards for World Kindness Day and Random Acts of Kindness Day respectively.

“We have all wanted to give up or quit something that is challenging at some point in our lives,” Corbin said. “With kindness, we might be able to throw a lifeline to a person to help them persevere a bit more to get through life’s difficulties.”

Packing cheer for mariners

While Corbin’s students share encouragement through words, others are sending a different kind of message — one packed in a box.

For nine years, Amy Arrowood, director of maritime credit programs, has helped spread cheer by working with Christmas at Sea – On the River. This nonprofit organization provides handmade knitted items and cards to mariners

working far from home during the holidays.

As a mariner who received these gifts herself, Arrowood understands the program’s impact. When she learned the organization needed help packing and delivering gifts to maritime companies, she saw an opportunity for her students.

“I wanted to bring a sense of warmth, connection, and holiday spirit to those who keep vital maritime operations running,” Arrowood said.

Maritime students have turned the packing process into a well-oiled operation, creating an assembly line to box the handmade knits and cards.

The experience has come full circle for some maritime alumni who now work full time on the water and have received these gifts themselves.

“No one wants to be away from their family and friends at Christmas. When you are on a boat, it can be especially lonely,” Arrowood said. “Receiving a gift someone took the time to create for you makes you feel a bit more connected.”

Building gingerbread for a cause

At the North Campus, culinary arts students are bringing joy to young cancer patients. For five years, students have created elaborate gingerbread displays for the MD Anderson Child Life Program Gingerbread Fundraiser.

San Jac joins the Houston Racquet Club, River Oaks Country Club, The Forest Club, and The Briar Club in the annual project.



Photo by Neesha Hosein, San Jacinto College

“I like the idea of introducing students to real-world scenarios and working with them from planning to completion so that they are better equipped to handle future challenges in the industry,” said Andrea Huerta, culinary arts program director. “This project is fun. They learn so much about quantity production, and it is all for a good cause.”

The gingerbread villages are donated to MD Anderson, where the organizer presents a check to the Child Life Program team. After Christmas, hospital patients smash the houses with rubber mallets.

“It is our way of spreading a little holiday spirit and goodwill.

The patients really love seeing it every year,” Huerta said. “The students unanimously agree that donating their houses to this cause is better than taking them home.”

A lesson that lasts

Whether it’s a senior citizen receiving an encouraging note, a mariner opening a gift miles from home, or a young patient smashing a gingerbread house, these small acts create ripples of connection and hope.

As these programs expand across San Jac’s campuses, they prove that meaningful lessons happen when students discover their power to brighten someone else’s world.



Photo by Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College



Photo by Neesha Hosein, San Jacinto College

SAN JAC'S DISPATCH PROGRAM TRAINS TOMORROW'S LIFELINES

By Neesha Hosein
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

When emergencies strike, dispatchers are often the first to respond.

San Jacinto College's criminal justice dispatch occupational certificate program prepares students to become that vital connection between crisis and help.

"The program is designed to give students the fundamental education and real-world experience required for a career in public safety and emergency communications," said Dr. Corey Rice, North Campus criminal justice professor.

Program structure

The 16-credit-hour program can be completed in two semesters and blends classroom learning with hands-on training.

In the first term, students take Introduction to Criminal Justice, Fundamentals of Criminal Law, and Police Systems and Practices to build an understanding of legal principles and law enforcement operations within the criminal justice field.

The second term focuses on practical experience through a capstone internship, crisis intervention training, and basic telecommunication certification.

"Through the internship, students can put what they have learned into practice in public safety or dispatch environments," Rice said. "The curriculum blends classroom education with real-world experience to equip students

for immediate employment as communications officers, public safety telecommunicators, or emergency management communicators. It also lays the groundwork for further criminal justice education."

Flexible course options

Classes are offered both online and in person, making the program accessible to students balancing work or family responsibilities.

Job opportunities

Graduates are eligible to apply for a range of entry-level jobs in public safety and emergency communications, including:

- Public safety telecommunicator
- Communications officer
- Emergency management communicator

- Police dispatcher
- Fire/EMS dispatcher
- 911 call taker or operator

These positions are part of police departments, sheriff's offices, fire departments, emergency management centers, and public safety communication centers. The certificate also provides a foundation for advancement into supervisory, training, or emergency management roles with additional experience or education.

What to expect on the job

"The best candidates for a career in public safety telecommunications are individuals who possess a combination of effective communication skills, emotional stability, and technical competence," Rice said. "Ideal

candidates are calm under pressure and able to think clearly and make quick, accurate decisions during high-stress situations."

In these roles, it is crucial to be excellent listeners and communicators, capable of gathering essential information from callers who may be frightened or confused, while relaying clear, concise instructions to emergency responders.

Dispatchers collaborate closely with police, fire, and emergency medical services personnel, so strong teamwork and communication skills are imperative. In this dynamic environment, often unpredictable, adaptability is a key trait.

Rice believes the program provides a clear route to a

respected and important career that emphasizes poise, service, and fast thinking.

"Dispatchers are the critical link between the public and emergency services, ensuring that help reaches people quickly and efficiently," he said. "Their composure, communication, and teamwork can save lives."

The dispatch occupational certificate provides the core training essential for emergency communication and management, focusing on the latest standards and practices in the field. The program invites students who aspire to be the one who answers someone's call when it matters most.

Scan the QR code to learn more about San Jac's **criminal justice program**.



MRI PROGRAM HELPS ATHLETIC TRAINER OVERCOME CAREER PLATEAU

By Courtney Morris
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

As a high school athletic trainer, Chad Whiteneck covered it all — freshman, junior varsity, varsity, and even junior high sports.

After 14 years of nights, weekends, and holidays spent on the field or the road without extra pay or promotion, he was exhausted.

“I wanted growth, advancement, and more opportunity to use my skills in a better way,” he said.

Whiteneck often referred injured athletes for X-rays, so it was no surprise he considered San Jacinto College’s imaging training.

“Everyone I knew in the medical field who had done anything in imaging had gone to San Jac,” he said.

When he was ready to pivot, he turned to the place that could get him unstuck: San Jac’s new magnetic resonance imaging program.

Trainer pains

Whiteneck was an athletic trainer before he knew the role existed. As a high school baseball pitcher, he managed his own physical issues, such as talking to his biology teacher or his mom — a nurse — to learn how to flush lactic acid from his body.

“If I knew what worked, I did it,” he said.

That curiosity led to bachelor’s and master’s degrees in exercise and sports science and a long career in athletic training.

Although Whiteneck loved helping

athletes, the long hours and limited advancement left him feeling stuck. With flexibility and a strong job market, imaging offered a path forward.

“What would it take for me to pursue the imaging world? It was automatic — San Jac,” he said.

The radiography program’s hands-on training and on-site clinical instructors sealed his decision. In fall 2022, he enrolled.

Short-term sacrifice, long-term payoff

Transitioning wasn’t easy. Whiteneck took a pay cut and worked weekends as a hospital imaging patient care assistant while taking classes full time on weekdays.

“I was way overqualified for this position that didn’t require a degree, but I had a plan,” he said.

He appreciated instructors’ attentiveness in class and during clinical rotations.

“When you walk into a hospital and see students from San Jac, you see a huge difference,” he said. “They learn so much more here. San Jac has a clinical instructor at every site — that’s extra teaching moments.”

After completing his radiography training in May 2024, Whiteneck returned for the new MRI advanced technical certificate program in spring 2025.

“I didn’t want to go online or teach myself,” he said. “I stayed with San Jac — it was worth the wait.”

Despite less sleep and more hours away from home, he saw every challenge as a short-term sacrifice for a long-term payoff. His survival strategy? “Lots of coffee.”

Renewed future

Whiteneck is proof change can happen anytime.

“I am my younger self,” he said, laughing. “If you see an opportunity for growth and advancement, go for it.... Don’t ever feel too old.”

In September, he landed an MRI technologist position. This month, he graduates and looks forward to more time

with his 1-year-old daughter.

“I want to be more available to her,” he said. “Maybe she’s not going to see me as an athletic trainer, but she’s going to see me more.”

Whiteneck thanks San Jac for helping him get unstuck and his wife Kelli and faith for supporting him every step of the way. While juggling the program, work, and family were challenging, the reward lies just ahead: a fulfilling career and renewed family life.

“My faith played a vital role in this journey,” he said. “I believe each part — the timing, the challenges, and the milestones — has been guided by God.”

Scan the QR code to learn more about San Jac’s **medical imaging program**.



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College



Photo by San Jacinto College

DREAMS WITHIN REACH

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Life doesn't slow down, and neither do you. San Jacinto College makes it easy to keep moving forward with 26 associate degrees and 34 certificates you can earn **100% online** — anytime, anywhere, at your own pace.




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PARTNERS IN PEACE: STUDENTS CONFRONT HUMANITY'S DARKEST LESSONS

By Courtney Morris

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

“I want to tell them to go!”

Some students shook their heads, and others covered their mouths as they learned Elie Wiesel’s family almost escaped Auschwitz.

In Wiesel’s Holocaust memoir “Night,” a police inspector raps on the window to warn the Wiesels they’re about to be deported. The family misses the message. Hours later, they’re herded onto railway cattle cars — most never to return.

This is a typical moment from San Jacinto College’s honors humanities class based on a new Nobel Peace Center initiative, Partners in Peace.

Launched last spring, the class challenges students to confront the realities of war while learning how to build peace.

A Nobel idea reaches San Jac

Partners in Peace began after former Norwegian Nobel Committee vice chair Henrik Syse spoke to a spellbound crowd at the 2023 National Collegiate Honors Council convention.

Spurred by that energy, the Nobel Peace Center and the council created the Partners in Peace program, inviting U.S. students and faculty to study Nobel Peace Prize

laureates’ approaches to peace.

“Nobel had never done an agreement with another outside group,” said Dr. Eddie Weller, San Jac’s honors program director.

As the council’s president-elect, Weller ensured San Jac numbered among the first 16 institutions to participate — and decided to teach the Partners in Peace class himself.

A life-changing class

Few people would jump at the chance to tackle topics like war, genocide, and inhumanity with 18- and 19-year-olds. But few people are Weller.

The spring 2025 class focused on Wiesel’s Nobel Prize-winning memoir and nominee Erich Maria Remarque’s World War I novel “All Quiet on the Western Front.”

“There’s the saying ‘wars and rumors of wars’ — boy, have we had wars,” Weller said. “This gives students the chance to discuss it nonjudgmentally.”

In more than 40 years of teaching, Weller calls this class his favorite. So do students like behavioral science major Katelyn Busby.

“It spotlighted the importance of treating people with the utmost humanity, no matter who they are and how you feel about a situation,” Busby said. “Always act out of kindness.”

Students also examined pro-peace and

pro-war songs — from the Civil War’s “Battle Cry of Freedom” and Vietnam War-era “Ballad of the Green Berets” to anti-Putin songs written by imprisoned Russians.

Through journals and discussions, they wrestled with war’s realities while gaining a new appreciation for peace.

Peace beyond classroom walls

Partners in Peace activities expanded beyond the classroom.

The North Campus held a book club on John Hersey’s “Hiroshima,” while at the South Campus, history professor Dr. Abbie Grubb and fine arts department chair Jeffrey McGee led students in creating and displaying banners featuring American Nobel Peace Prize winners.

The Central Campus also hosted speakers like sociology professor Tina Mougouris on the Holocaust and philosophy professor Thi Lam on the philosophy of war and his family’s experience fleeing Vietnam.

“The beauty of San Jac is the people who are experts are willing to share their wisdom and knowledge,” Weller said.

The semester culminated in a panel of local religious leaders sharing views on war and peace. Some students, Weller noted, came ready to reject certain faith perspectives. Instead, they left with more understanding.

Wrestling with weighty questions

Throughout the class, students raised different views but stayed respectful. Weller laid the ground rules early.

“They had strong opinions, but after listening to one another, they would say, ‘I could see why you would think that,’” he said.

At semester’s end, Weller’s students presented him with a “certificate of excellent teaching.”

“I looked forward to going to class, but they did too,” he said. “They got there early. They did the reading. They were thinking deeply and got down to the deep root issues.”

With Nobel approval, San Jac will continue Partners in Peace this spring. Weller looks forward to more students eager to grow.

“I would love to have students who care that much all the time,” he said. “It was a big part of who they were that semester.”



Photo courtesy of Jeffrey McGee

SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Dec. 10	Wind Ensemble Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Slocomb Auditorium (C13)
Dec. 11	Financial Literacy Networking	6-7 p.m.	Generation Park Campus Contact sjc.cfe@sjcd.edu
Dec. 11-13	“Santa’s Christmas Magic”	7:30 p.m.	Tickets: \$15 Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Dec. 12	Fall Commencement	9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.	Grace Church
Dec. 14	“Santa’s Christmas Magic”	2:30 p.m.	Tickets: \$15 Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Dec. 15	Winter Mini Term Begins		
Dec. 22-Jan. 1	Winter Break	Closed	No non-instructional activity
Jan. 12	Spring Term Begins		

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

THIS MONTH *IN* SOCIAL MEDIA



Facebook

A New Era Begins at Generation Park

We officially celebrated the Grand Opening of the San Jacinto College Center for Biotechnology during Biomanufacturing Week — and what a milestone it was!

With over 250 attendees, including industry leaders, community partners, and future biotech professionals, this event marked a major step forward in advancing biotechnology education and workforce development in the Greater Houston area.

Our state-of-the-art facility is designed to train the next generation of skilled professionals in biomanufacturing, pharmaceutical production, and the life sciences industry.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in this celebration — the future of biotech starts here.



135 reactions | 1 comment | 6,191 impressions | 1,209 engagements



Instagram

San Jacinto College is celebrating 64 years!

Since 1961, we've grown from a renovated storefront in Pasadena serving a few hundred students to five campuses across the region with more than 90,000 graduates.

We're proud of our history and excited for what's ahead.



559 likes | 21,355 impressions | 607 engagements



LinkedIn

The San Jacinto College Board of Trustees is still accepting applications through Sept. 26. If you have a passion for education and a desire to serve, we encourage you to apply.



22 reactions | 266 post-link clicks | 14,500 impressions | 249 engagements

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MARITIME CAMPUS

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VISION & MISSION



Vision — Together with our community members and business and industry partners, San Jacinto College sets the standard for educational excellence, economic growth, and social mobility characterized by innovation and responsiveness.

Mission — We change lives through education, community engagement, and partnerships.

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 25 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. The College is ranked second in the nation among more than 1,100 community colleges, as designated by the Aspen Institute and was named an Achieving the Dream Leader College of Distinction in 2020. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution that spans five campuses, plus an online college, San Jacinto College serves approximately 45,000 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+ by Standard & Poor's and Aa2 by Moody's.

For more information about San Jacinto College, visit sanjac.edu.