

OPPORTUNITY

NEWS



2 News from
Your College

3 RJ Andrade's Path
to Musical Success

6 Abacus Partners
with New
Plumbing Program

NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE

Pledge now for Promise @ San Jac Scholarship

High school seniors who live in San Jacinto College's taxing district can now pledge for the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship.

This scholarship ensures all in-district high school graduates — including those in portions of Clear Creek, Pearland, and Humble ISDs, as well as all of Channelview, Deer Park, Galena Park, La Porte, Pasadena, and Sheldon ISDs — can earn a workforce credential or an associate degree with 100% of their tuition, books, and supplies covered. The scholarship doesn't have any GPA or financial restrictions, meaning all in-district graduating seniors qualify.

The deadline to pledge to become a 2024 Promise Scholar and apply to the College is Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024. To learn more about the scholarship and view enrollment and eligibility requirements, visit sanjac.edu/promise.

San Jac, Bezos Academy open tuition-free preschool in North Houston

In August, San Jacinto College held a ribbon cutting to celebrate the opening of Bezos Academy – North Shore, a tuition-



free, Montessori-inspired preschool on the College's North Campus. More than 40 elected officials, community members, and teachers and staff from the College and Bezos Academy gathered for the event.

Bezos Academy Houston – North Shore features four classrooms, with room for 80 students. The preschool offers year-round programming five days a week for children ages 3 to 5. The preschool's Montessori-inspired approach meets children where they are, helping them learn and grow at their own pace.

Bezos Academy covers operating expenses for the preschool at no cost to eligible families, providing everything the children need during the day, including meals and educational materials.

For more details on eligibility or to add your child to the waitlist, visit apply.bezosacademy.org.

Welcome back, students

San Jacinto College rolled out the welcome mat for new and returning students as the fall semester kicked off Aug. 28.

The College's ITS department held soft openings for its new campus service desks, with snacks and a spinning prize wheel. These new spaces will allow students to get in-person help with Wi-Fi access, network passwords, and more.

From Sept. 5-7, the Central, North, and South Campuses' student centers hosted Welcome Week activities —

from personalized airbrushed T-shirts and resource fairs to glow-in-the-dark arcade games.

View Welcome Week photos at bit.ly/WWFall23.



Photos by Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

RESHAPING DREAMS: RJ ANDRADE'S PATH TO MUSICAL SUCCESS

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

San Jacinto College alumnus RJ Andrade didn't plan to attend a community college, but thanks to the pandemic, his course changed — something he wouldn't have any other way.

"I had plans to go straight to a four-year university but decided against it as the world began to shut down," he said. "My experience at San Jacinto College was amazing and will stay with me forever. Despite my first year on Zoom, I recognized that the professors cared about their students while challenging them to rise to the occasion when needed."

Andrade, a music major, began attending face-to-face classes a year after his enrollment, and he dove headfirst into the college community, taking full advantage of the support and opportunities available to him.

"I recognized how special the community was that



Photo courtesy of RJ Andrade

San Jac built. There were resources everywhere to receive help with any situation imaginable," Andrade said. "It was comforting, especially after the pandemic scare, and put me in the best situation to succeed."

In the music program at the Central Campus, Andrade thrived and explored his musical interests.

"Through the small-classroom environment, I was provided the opportunity to try new things, such as composition, and explore who I was as a musician," he said.

A graduate of Sam Rayburn High School, Andrade did not always intend to pursue music. Initially more interested in baseball and football, he saw his dream of an athletic career fall apart after a foot injury in 2014.

"Initially, I was devastated that my sports career had completely halted, but it essentially forced me to practice my trumpet to avoid

boredom," Andrade said. "I finally opened my ears and was exposed to so much great trumpet repertoire that I wanted to learn it for myself."

In fall 2023, Andrade transferred from San Jac to Texas Christian University as a member of the Horned Frog Marching Band. The transfer process wasn't easy, but Andrade says it was worth all the work.

"The transfer process was stressful, and I was at the edge of my seat every day," he said. "For a music major, it's a unique process compared to others. Not only did I have to get accepted to the transfer school, but I had to get accepted into the school of music via audition and interview."

After this rigorous experience, Andrade was accepted to TCU about two weeks before his transfer deadline.

RJ Andrade continued on page 4

SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Through Oct. 12	Art Exhibit: Helen Glazer - Walking in Antarctica	Varies	Free/South Campus Gallery, S15.143 (contact bradly.brown@sjcd.edu)
Oct. 19-22, 26-29	"The Crucible"	7 p.m.	Tickets: sjcstheatreilm.ludus.com/South Campus Blackbox Theatre (\$15.135)
Oct. 20	Senior Wellness Expo	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	Health vendors, resources, giveaways, and more/Central Campus Interactive Learning Center (C1.102)
Oct. 23-Dec. 1	Art Exhibit: Ominous Passages	1-3 p.m.	Free/North Campus Gallery, N1.106 (contact joe.clark@sjcd.edu)
Oct. 23-Dec. 7	Group Art Exhibit: Like Dust, I Lose All Form Once I Hit Water	Varies	Free/South Campus Gallery, S15.143 (contact bradly.brown@sjcd.edu)
Nov. 2-16	Art Exhibit: Dia de los Muertos	TBA	Free/North Campus Gallery, N1.106 (contact joe.clark@sjcd.edu)

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



ALEGRÍA: SAN JAC CELEBRATES HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH WITH JOY

By Melissa Trevizo
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

San Jacinto College celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15) at each campus with face-to-face and virtual events and activities for students, faculty, and staff. The theme for this year's celebrations is "alegría" or joy.

"Often, when Hispanic people are represented in the media, it has a negative connotation. Instead, we wanted to celebrate the joy of Hispanic heritage," said Dustin Hixenbaugh, English professor. "The events we organized help students to celebrate the joy in their own cultures and in celebrating the cultures of others."

Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes the achievements and contributions of Hispanic American champions who have inspired others to succeed. With a Hispanic student population of over 60%, San Jac is designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution, making it even more significant to celebrate.

Hixenbaugh, modern language professor Yesenia Chávez, and accounting/general business professor Merrily Hoffman co-chair the College's Hispanic Heritage Committee. The committee enters its sixth year in 2023.

"As a committee, we have representation from each campus across many different specialties," said Hixenbaugh. "We have worked hard this year to develop comprehensive programming for our celebrations to immerse our community in Hispanic heritage and culture."

This year, the committee received a Student Success Initiative grant to help fund events and essay and art contest prizes for Hispanic Heritage Month. The contests are open to all current students, and winners receive scholarships up to \$500.



"We created these contests to highlight students' creativity and their art as a part of the celebrations," Chávez said. "This year, we asked students to design a 'máscara de lucha' and compose essays about joy."

As a Mexico native, Chávez finds a special connection with the celebration.

"I came to the U.S. when I was in high school," she said. "It wasn't until I was in college that I learned I was Hispanic. I'd never heard this before. It made me feel like I was a part of something larger. That is why we celebrate."

One special addition to this year's events is a traveling art exhibit in cooperation with Humanities Texas and the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin. "Miguel Covarrubias: Caricaturista" features the work of one of the foremost Mexican artists of the 20th century. View the exhibit at the Central Campus Gallery (C21) through Nov. 2.

"We hope the myriad of events will give Hispanic students a sense of belonging and let them know how welcome they are at San



Photos by Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

Jac," Hoffman said. "We also hope it will allow the students to share their culture with their non-Hispanic fellow students. With knowledge comes understanding and respect."

The Hispanic Heritage Month Committee is hosting cultural dance events, dance lessons, trivia, guest speakers, and a research poster display. View the photo album at bit.ly/SJC-Hispanic-Heritage23.

RJ Andrade continued from page 3

"I managed to apply to eight universities," he said. "I worked on the audition repertoire, essays, meetings, and finding scholarships.

Auditioning for eight universities was a fun experience because I got to explore each campus and grasp what each university wanted out of their students."

After TCU, Andrade plans to pursue

teaching to help students like himself while always striving for excellence.

"I see myself as a student who wants to learn something new every day so I can achieve what is the best version of myself.

It is a lofty goal, but I believe I can do it," Andrade said. "Even if my plans don't pan out the way I imagined, I think I'll be happy with having a positive impact on people's lives."

ROAD TO RECOVERY: ALUMNUS GIVES HOPE AMID DRUG EPIDEMIC

By Courtney Morris
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

“Can you give me one day clean?”

Jesse DeLeon, Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans treatment program manager, sits across from an 18-year-old addicted to crack. He instructs the young man, head down, slumped in his chair, to sit up.

“If you can give me one day, you can give me three,” DeLeon says. “If three, then seven. Separate yourself from high-risk situations. One week from today, we’re going to sit down, and I’ll ask you the same question.”

Working with teens and adults struggling with addiction, DeLeon has learned to let them hit rock bottom. Only if they’re willing to change can he help.

Rising above dysfunction

DeLeon understands addiction firsthand. In the 1970s, he grew up in north Houston with a functioning alcoholic father and an enabling mother. Several of his seven siblings later struggled with addiction themselves.

“Growing up in that era was crazy,” he said. “Everyone was getting high. In school, people wore marijuana leaves on necklaces.”

At 13, tired of his dad stumbling in drunk and beating up his mom, DeLeon ran to an aunt’s house, where he lived throughout early high school. Only years later did he realize he’d grown up in a dysfunctional home.

Later working in IT in Dallas, DeLeon returned to school after the industry bottomed out. He pursued bachelor’s and

master’s degrees and a new career path: teaching developmental college classes. Once again, he came face-to-face with drug addiction, this time among his students.

In 2008, DeLeon moved back to Houston to help care for his dad after surgery. Just before his dad passed away, he told him he forgave him for everything he’d done to their family: “But I’m doing this for myself so I can move forward.”

“His whole life, he didn’t feel he did anything wrong,” DeLeon said. “That’s what addiction does to you. You live in denial and don’t realize what you’re doing to others.”

Becoming a drug counselor

Tired of the drug epidemic, DeLeon finally decided to become part of the solution.

At this point, San Jacinto College entered the picture. Cayman Tirado, currently San Jac’s mental health services program director, met with him to plan his academic path. In a year, he finished five drug and alcohol abuse counseling classes and became a licensed chemical dependency counselor.

“From the start, Jesse stood out as ambitious and dedicated to helping individuals with substance use disorders,” Tirado said. “He has unwavering compassion.”

In 2019, DeLeon went on to complete his associate degree in mental health counseling to become a full-time drug counselor. Today, he helps teens in juvenile probation and adults with DWIs and small drug possession charges in outpatient/reintegration court cases.

To commit to lasting change, each person must see the addiction lifestyle isn’t bringing success.

“When you show them dollar for dollar how much they’ve spent on drugs and alcohol for the last 10 years while living in a \$20,000 house, it’s getting them to make that decision themselves,” he said. “You can’t force change on anyone.”

Promoting change

In substance abuse counseling, DeLeon’s reward is not earning a fat paycheck but seeing someone get sober and move forward.

Up to 30% of clients, like DeLeon’s dad, deny the problem. The other 70% accept how drugs disrupt their lives and begin to think and carry themselves differently.

When former clients message him that they’ve bought houses, married, or reunited with kids, DeLeon always responds the same: “It wasn’t me. You did the work.”

Even so, he is playing a part, showing the path from dead-end addiction to hope.

“What’s the ultimate goal of a person’s being?” he said. “It’s leaving this world better than when you got here.”



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Be a Part of the Solution

Want to make a difference in the drug abuse prevention and counseling field too?

Learn more at sanjac.edu/programs/areas-of-study/health/mental-health.

REGISTER NOW

FOR SPRING CLASSES!

SPRING 2024 CLASSES BEGIN JANUARY 16

5 CONVENIENT CAMPUSES AND ONLINE

CENTRAL CAMPUS 8060 Spencer Hwy. Pasadena, TX 77505	SOUTH CAMPUS 13735 Beamer Rd. Houston, TX 77089	NORTH CAMPUS 5800 Uvalde Rd. Houston, TX 77049	MARITIME CAMPUS 3700 Old Hwy. 146 La Porte, TX 77571	GEN PARK CAMPUS 13455 Lockwood Rd. Houston, TX 77044	SAN JAC ONLINE sanjac.edu/online
--	--	---	---	---	--

APPLY, REGISTER, AND PAY ONLINE

AT [SANJAC.EDU](https://sanjac.edu)

An Equal Opportunity Institution

ABACUS PARTNERS WITH SAN JACINTO COLLEGE TO TRAIN FUTURE PLUMBERS

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Abacus Plumbing has partnered with San Jacinto College to outfit the new plumbing technology program at the North Campus.

Abacus sought out one of its longtime suppliers, National Wholesale Supply, to donate tools, equipment, piping, hardware, and other plumbing materials for students to use in their hands-on training lab.

“To build an exceptional plumbing program along the Gulf Coast requires a great amount of support from industry, and Abacus has stepped up to support this project and ensure we have the right facility to fill the workforce gaps,” said Durrell Dickens, industrial technology department chair.

Abacus is a leading provider of plumbing, air conditioning, and electrical services in the greater Houston area. Established in 2003, the company has garnered a reputation for top-notch service and the highest quality workmanship.

“Abacus is committed to helping develop the workforce of the future by forming partnerships like the one we have with San Jac,” said Tony Patiño, Abacus president. “It is important for us to help provide a pathway to the industry for future plumbers and educate students about the opportunities that exist in the trades.”

The partnership began when Dickens happened to meet Abacus business development representative Joey Scheffler at the Houston Home Show.

“This has been a great opportunity for us to partner with an established college right in our backyard,” Scheffler said. “This gives us a chance to share our experience with a younger generation and encourage them to explore the trades.”

This fall, the College rolled out seven new programs to meet the needs of the

growing workforce in Houston and along the Gulf Coast. The plumbing technology program will ensure students learn how to identify the different types of water supply systems, read and sketch blueprints, understand plumbing codes, install and maintain plumbing piping and fixtures, and work with a variety of tools and equipment.

Graduates earning the plumbing technology occupational certificate will enter a field predicted to grow 22% in Texas over the next 10 years. The 16-credit hour, two-semester program

prepares graduates for their licensing exam through the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners.

“There isn’t a program in the Houston area quite like this, and it is meeting a huge industrial training need,” said Dickens. “With an aging workforce, there is a shortage of tradespeople, including plumbers. We hope to meet that need without requiring students to travel elsewhere for training.”

Though the program is starting with a small cohort of students this year, it will open to dual credit students in fall 2024,

and the College expects to see a boom in enrollment.

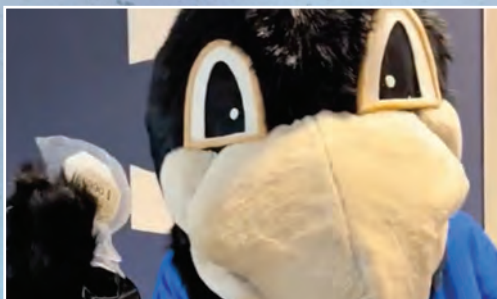
As far as the partnership between San Jac and Abacus? Patiño sees this as the start of something larger.

“Abacus started as a plumbing company, so this program is near and dear to us. But we don’t want to stop there,” he said. “We would love to partner with other programs like HVAC and electrical. This is just the first step of many.”

To learn more about the program, visit sanjac.edu/programs/areas-of-study/manufacturing/plumbing/.



THIS MONTH *IN* SOCIAL MEDIA



Instagram

College 101: Make sure to get your parking sticker before the first day of class so you can park your vehicle on campus. Remember that getting your parking sticker is free!



463 Likes | 9 Comments | 86 Shares



Facebook

Happy birthday to our legendary alum Patrick Swayze — you'll always be remembered as a heartthrob, an icon, and a cinematic legend.



55,683 Reactions | 996 Comments | 1,619 Shares



X

Fall 2023 classes start in two weeks — it's not too late to register if you haven't yet! Learn how: sanjac.edu/registration



4 Likes | 26 Link Clicks



LinkedIn

Almost 25 years into her hospital nursing career, Monica Manthey was done waiting. Manthey called a family meeting to discuss the next year with her husband and teen son: She had been accepted into San Jacinto College's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. She was not backing out this time.



53 Reactions | 4 Comments | 2 Shares

YOUR GOALS. YOUR COLLEGE.



SAN JACINTOSM COLLEGE

NORTH CAMPUS

5800 Uvalde Rd., Houston, TX 77049

CENTRAL CAMPUS

8060 Spencer Hwy., Pasadena, TX 77505

SOUTH CAMPUS

13735 Beamer Rd., Houston, TX 77089

MARITIME CAMPUS

3700 Old Hwy. 146, La Porte, TX 77571

GENERATION PARK CAMPUS

13455 Lockwood Rd., Houston, TX 77044

ONLINE

sanjac.edu/programs/online

Join San Jacinto College in achieving
excellence in higher education.

Find your next career:
sanjac.edu • 281-998-6150

Connect with us on



An Equal Opportunity Institution

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 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 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.

