

# OPPORTUNITY

# NEWS



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## NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE



Photo courtesy of Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

### Student veterans honored for military service

“Duty, honor, country.” With those words, Gen. Douglas MacArthur rallied military cadets 60 years ago. On Nov. 11, San Jacinto College honored veterans who, in MacArthur’s words, have chosen the “stress and spur of difficulty and challenge” over comfort.

The Veterans Day ceremony at the South Campus recognized San Jac students and employees who have served in the armed forces. Eight veteran students also received San Jacinto College Foundation scholarships:

- **Central Campus:** Amber Molina and Bach Cao, both U.S. Navy
- **South Campus:** Joshua Lister, U.S. Army and Navy, and Henry Balerio, U.S. Navy

- **North Campus:** Curtis Thompson and Lydell Smith, both U.S. Navy
  - **Maritime Campus:** Noe Garcia, U.S. Air Force
  - **Generation Park Campus:** Adrian Martinez, U.S. Army
- “We can never repay our debt to the men and women who have served our country,” said Holly Morrison, manager of veteran services. “They deserve our lasting respect and gratitude.”

The Veterans Day celebration continued with receptions and honor walls at each campus veteran center. To view the photo album, visit [bit.ly/sanjacveterans22](https://bit.ly/sanjacveterans22).

### Give the gift that never collects dust

You can be a hero to students and our community.

As you wrap up 2022, consider a year-end gift to the

San Jacinto College Foundation. Not only will you help students complete their education or transfer to universities. You’ll also help the community gain skilled professionals in critical fields like nursing, technology, and teaching.

Your support will go toward initiatives like the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship. This last-dollar scholarship ensures in-district high school graduates can attend San Jac with tuition and books covered 100%.

“I am beyond grateful for receiving Promise funding because it is fulfilling my dreams, my career, and my future,” San Jac student Cynthia Jennings, a future nurse, said.

Some gifts collect dust. Others change lives. This holiday season, give the gift of education. To learn more, visit [sanjac.edu/foundation/ways-give](https://sanjac.edu/foundation/ways-give).

### Panel tackles truth on social media, promotes free textbooks

How do you spot truth on social media? San Jacinto College and Houston Community College philosophy faculty tackled that question with a joint panel discussion Oct. 25 at the South Campus.

“What Is the Real Red Pill? True and False in the Age of Social Media” gave students tips to apply critical thinking online. The event, which spotlighted the new OpenStax Introduction to Philosophy first edition textbook, included an OpenStax-hosted reception for students and other guests.

For more than 12 years, San Jac has partnered with Rice University’s OpenStax, a nonprofit initiative that offers free open educational resources to replace high-cost textbooks.

San Jac sociology professor Tonja Conerly and HCC philosophy department

chair Dr. Nathan Smith helped organize the panel discussion. Conerly helped write OpenStax’s Introduction to Sociology third edition textbook, and Smith, the new Introduction to Philosophy textbook.

Smith led the panel alongside philosophy professors Ferdinand Durano, Robert Gaddie, and Thi Lam from San Jac and Parish Conkling from HCC.

“With the promotion of the new philosophy textbook, we wanted to continue our joint efforts, creating a lecture on social media through the eyes of philosophers and involve students and faculty from both colleges,” Conerly said.

According to Conerly, open educational resources help make education more equitable for all. At San Jac, students can register for Open Books classes that use free or low-cost materials like OpenStax textbooks. So far, San Jac’s Open Books classes have saved students more than \$26 million in textbook costs.

To view event photos, visit [bit.ly/3U5izSP](https://bit.ly/3U5izSP).



Photo courtesy of Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

# PROFESSOR GOES BACK TO SCHOOL AT SAN JAC

By **Melissa Trevizo**

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Joseph Maire likes to stay busy. He works a part-time job for the Houston Astros, he's a Harley Davidson enthusiast, and he teaches math full time at San Jacinto College.

Not enough? He recently enrolled in the College's process technology program.

## Why process technology?

Maire isn't studying process technology to switch careers to oil and gas. Instead, he enrolled to better understand the terminology and real-world applications for his industrial math class, a course offered only to process technology and instrumentation students.

"Originally, I wanted to audit some of the process technology courses, but they are so in demand that there wasn't a spot for me," Maire said. "I wanted to help the students as much as possible, so I just enrolled."

Maire's students were surprised to spot their professor on their side of the classroom. Why was he sitting there?

"I often see the students I teach, and they think it's pretty cool I'm taking the courses with them," Maire said. "I try to do all I can to make their material relevant. If I don't, I lose them fast."

Maire is taking two process technology courses alongside his full-time professor duties. He teaches college algebra, industrial math, applied physics, and — thanks to a former industrial information technology career — principles of quality for the process technology program.

"I don't know how he does it," said Ryan Martinets, department chair of math and engineering. "He works hard at everything he puts his mind to. Enrolling as a student again shows his dedication to his students' success not only in the classroom but also in their careers."

## Where did it begin?

Originally from northeastern Ohio, Maire landed a computer programmer job with Brown and Root in Houston in 1978. After two layoffs in six months, he decided to change careers. With his wife and daughter both working in education, he considered teaching and enrolled full time at San Jac at 45. But what did he want to teach?

"There were some subjects I wasn't interested in teaching and some I didn't like. I landed on math after a process of elimination," Maire said. "I found myself in a college algebra class at seven in the

morning, and I thought, 'What have I gotten myself into?'"

Most of Maire's classmates had just come from high school with math fresh on their minds. For him, there was a bit of catching up to do. Eventually finding the College's tutoring center, Maire succeeded and became a tutor himself after his first semester. There he flexed his teaching skills for the first time.

"Not everyone learns the same way, and you have to have a backup plan," he said. "Tutoring helped me try out different teaching styles and learn what works for each student."

After graduating from San Jac and completing his bachelor's degree at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, Maire returned to the College as a part-time college prep faculty member. Now holding a master's degree in instructional technology, Maire is looking forward to his next graduation with an Associate of Applied Science in process technology.

"I'm taking only a few classes at a time, so I don't anticipate graduating for a few years," he said. "My goal is to walk across the commencement stage as the oldest graduate."



Photo courtesy of Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

# HERE'S A HOLIDAY SPIN ON A CLASSIC DESSERT

By **Neesha Hosein**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

This holiday season, San Jacinto College culinary arts instructor Melissa Menendez has put a seasonal twist on a classic dessert.

After a friend shared a sopapilla cheesecake recipe, Menendez, like any good chef, fine-tuned the ingredients.

“I tweaked the recipe to my taste, added pumpkin, and — voila! — a holiday tradition was born,” Menendez said.

The special recipe isn't one she teaches to her students,

but if they ask for a personal recommendation, this is one she gladly shares.

## Helpful tips

Menendez prefers serving the cheesecake warm, but it can also be chilled before serving.

Here are her tips:

- Let the cheesecake come to room temperature before slicing.
- Use a sharp knife to cut portions.
- Use a cake spatula to serve.

For those who like a little extra pizzazz, delicious additions include ice cream, whipped cream, or fruit.

## Holiday Pumpkin Sopapilla Cheesecake

### Ingredients:

3 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened  
1 1/4 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
2 cans crescent roll dough  
12 ounces canned pumpkin\*

### Topping:

1/2 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice or ground cinnamon  
1/2 cup softened butter (1 stick)  
Honey, as needed, for final topping



Photo courtesy of Neesha Hosein, San Jacinto College

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Prepare a 9x13 pan with cooking spray.
2. Beat the cream cheese, pumpkin, vanilla, and first measurement of sugar with a hand mixer or stand mixer paddle until well incorporated.
3. Unroll the crescent dough and use a rolling pin to gently roll out each piece into a 9x13 rectangle. Use one can for the top and one can for the bottom.
4. Press one piece into the bottom of the pan. Bake for 10 minutes until partially cooked. Remove from oven and let cool briefly.
5. Continue assembling the

cheesecake: Evenly spread the cream cheese mixture into the pan and bottom crust. Cover the cream cheese with the remaining piece of crescent dough.

6. Stir together the topping ingredients and spread over the top layer of dough.
7. Bake about 40-45 minutes or until the top layer of dough has puffed and turned golden brown. Remove from the oven. While it's still hot, drizzle with honey.
8. Serve warm or cold. It's best baked and served the same day. Happy baking!

\*Baker's note: You can eliminate the pumpkin and make a plain version. Reduce the sugar in main ingredients by 1/4 cup.



Photo courtesy of Neesha Hosein, San Jacinto College

## SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Dec. 4	“Santa’s Christmas Magic: The Musical” (Matinee)	2:30 p.m.	Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Dec. 5-6	Auditions — “You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown!”	6 p.m.	Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13; open to public, ages 12+)
Dec. 8-10	“Santa’s Christmas Magic: The Musical”	7:30 p.m.	Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Dec. 9	Fall Commencement	7 p.m.	Minute Maid Park
Dec. 11	“Santa’s Christmas Magic: The Musical” (Matinee)	2:30 p.m.	Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Dec. 22-Jan. 2	Winter Holidays	Closed	Administrative offices closed

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



# ONLINE PROGRAMS OFFER SAME RESOURCES PLUS FLEXIBILITY

By **Neesha Hosein**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Online education means many things these days. To some, it's never stepping inside a classroom. For others, it's a mix of face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses.

If attending 100% online is the goal, students at San Jacinto College have a myriad of career options, including accounting, real estate, business, computer science, criminal justice, health information management, and medical billing and coding.

"Personal preference is what makes the difference," said Niki Whiteside, assistant vice chancellor, instructional innovation and support. "There is also the convenience factor. Some students might have a full-time job and are unable to make it to campus, and others may not have a caretaker for their loved ones. By having the different modalities available, it helps them fit the pursuit of higher education into their lives."

Juan Trevizo, a husband and father of two, is a returning San Jac student. Although he wasn't ready for college the first time around, he is now motivated and ready to focus on a computer science degree. Studying online means no conflicts with his unpredictable work schedule and fewer family milestones missed.

"Time really gets away from you when you're busy," Trevizo said. "My kids are growing up, and they start to notice their father is always working and missing out. The time has come for me to commit to myself, my children, and my education. That's why I'm more committed than ever to earn this degree."

## Online vs. brick and mortar

English professor Penny O'Neal believes online education can provide the same quality as a traditional classroom.

"Many online students use that modality because of barriers or access issues to a



Photo courtesy of Juan Trevizo

campus classroom," O'Neal said. "For example, over the years I have taught a lot of military personnel who were overseas, as well as nursing mothers, those with physical mobility issues, and students who travel for work a great deal. Those students deserve a quality class taught by someone who is proficient and up to date on the latest best practices."

Whether it's a face-to-face or online course, the instructor sets the tone and chooses the best teaching materials for the course. Course materials include traditional textbooks, e-books, video presentations, downloadable products, temporary access to teaching aids, and interactive and digital content.

"I use instructional videos I create, presentations with my picture or fun Bitmojis of me, voiceover on presentations, grading videos, and twice weekly announcements," O'Neal said. "A consistent presence in a course helps students feel more connected to the instructor, and hopefully that leads to better engagement."

O'Neal helps her online students by breaking up the course into smaller segments with accompanying videos, quizzes, and interactive scenario-based discussion boards. She shares feedback and informal video wrap-ups to highlight what students need to work on.

## Support network available

Online students have the same resources as face-to-face students — from library services, tutoring, and student services labs

to events and professors' office hours all available remotely. Students can also use live chat and schedule remote appointments with student services staff via the College's website.

While the course mode may differ, due dates, assignments, and exams still span the whole semester. Whiteside believes time management is one of the keys to being successful in online education. Prioritizing study time, completing assignments, and meeting weekly deadlines are ways students can avoid falling behind in their courses.

"It takes discipline to focus and get the assignments completed on time," Trevizo said. "Navigating Blackboard was challenging in the beginning. Once I figured out how to access the assignments and all the resources my professors offered, I felt optimistic going back to school was the right choice."

To learn more about San Jac's online programs, visit [sanjac.edu/online](https://sanjac.edu/online).



Photo courtesy of Juan Trevizo



## San Jacinto College Foundation

### Generosity Inspires Success

Every dollar invested in the **San Jacinto College Foundation** changes students' lives and provides economic prosperity to local families and communities. Whether it's a degree, a certificate, or workforce training, you can fund dreams that have a lifelong impact!



Once I received the Promise Scholarship, I began to excel in academic life at San Jac... I am beyond grateful for receiving Promise funding because it is fulfilling my dreams, my career, and my future.

**Cynthia Jennings,**  
Promise Scholar

It's not too late! Make your charitable contribution before the end of the year. Learn more at [sanjac.edu/foundation](https://sanjac.edu/foundation).



The San Jacinto College Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. All donors will receive a letter of receipt for tax purposes.

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# SAN JAC GALLERIES OFFER CULTURE TO COMMUNITY

By **Melissa Trevizo**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

San Jacinto College's galleries have been busy this fall, with six exhibits at the Central, North, and South Campuses. The galleries, an extension of the art and design program, welcome guest artists to bring culture to the campus community and expose students to different media.

## Central Campus

The Central Campus featured "Dear Black Boy" by philanthropist, photographer, and cinematographer Brian Ellison Sept. 20 to Oct. 13 in tandem with the FotoFest Biennial 2022.

Central Campus will continue to nurture its relationship with FotoFest, an internationally recognized Houston arts organization, as a biennial participating space.

Ellison's exhibit documented the everyday experience of young Black American males and the "expiration" of their childhoods. The artist's work challenged Black masculinity ideas and racial injustice through the education-to-prison pipeline.

From Oct. 25 to Nov. 22, the Central Gallery presented "Fresh Cut: A Still Life Remix" featuring collages by artist John Forse. Set against a rainforest backdrop and



Photo courtesy of Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College



Photo courtesy of Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

amplified by 1990s electronic music, the fractured collages came to life in a multi-sensory experience.

"Each show at the Central Gallery speaks not only to our campus demographic but also to our community," said Carmen Champion, Central Campus gallery coordinator. "Exposure to various exhibits fosters critical thinking and introduces new ideas that transfer to other disciplines. This connects our students, faculty, staff, administration, and the public."

## North Campus

The North Gallery kicked off the fall with "Off-Kilter," a collection of Houston artist Heather den Uijl's new paintings, Sept. 8 to Oct. 6.

Den Uijl created abstract paintings with hyper-saturated colors, complex interwoven layers, and abstract geometrical forms that slip, slide, float, and wobble past each other. These immersive visual experiences functioned as independent hybrid environments where distillation, flattening, and fragmentation resist closure.

From Oct. 20 to Nov. 17, the North Gallery presented San Jac adjunct instructor Tiffany Nesbit's mixed media collection "Bluegrass Nest." Nesbit crafted the pieces from childhood memories, when she helped shepherd

her family's small farm and protect the domestic animals from nighttime "monsters" that come from the woods and waterways. Her characters use humor and play to memorialize the animal's spirits that once lived there.

"North Gallery is an educational resource for our students — a tool to help young artists on their path to living a creative life," said Joe Clark, North Gallery coordinator. "At the same time, we are very aware of and grateful for the opportunity to serve our community. As the longest-running art space in East Houston, we strive to host shows that are visually and conceptually challenging."

## South Campus

The South Gallery presented an exhibit from the Burning Bones Press, a Houston-based printmaking studio founded in 2011 by Carlos Hernandez and Pat Masterson. Open Sept. 5 to



Photo courtesy of Tiffany Nesbit, San Jacinto College

Oct. 13, this exhibit featured more than 70 artworks by 22 members and affiliated artists. Students and the community could also attend workshops led by artist Cathie Kayser to learn how to hand-fold books using traditional origami techniques.

From Oct. 31 to Dec. 8, the South Gallery featured "REDUX," an exhibit

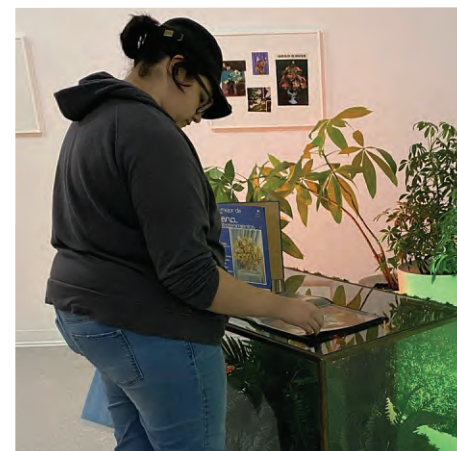


Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

of works by 11 visual arts alumni who have established diverse, successful art and design careers after studying various media. Together, these artists represent 10 years of excellence in arts education.

Featured artists were:

- Amaechina Blot
- Imhotep Blot
- Karolina Cantu
- Rodrigo Gamarra
- Michael Karydas
- Disha Khakheria
- Eden Lopez
- Matthew Napoli
- Ariel Rivera
- Jeri Venegas
- Tristan Veronie

"The exhibits we have hosted this past semester have really made me feel like we are back on track after pausing during the pandemic," said Bradly Brown, South Gallery curator. "We remain committed to bringing engaging, thought-provoking exhibits on a variety of topics to our students and the local community."



Photo courtesy of Bradly Brown, San Jacinto College



1



1 For Hispanic Heritage Month, we talked to Hispanic students about what “familia” means to them.



4



2

2 Accomplished entrepreneur Tilman Fertitta shared tips and tricks for success at North Campus.

**HAPPY  
TEACHERS' DAY!**



Tiny Tours:

MARITIME TECHNOLOGY  
&  
TRAINING CENTER

5

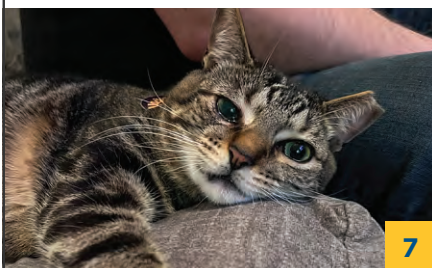
3 South Campus gallery curator Bradly Brown gave us a walk-through of the gallery’s latest exhibit, a collaboration with Burning Bones Press.



3

4 Current and former students sent shoutouts to their favorite San Jac instructors for World Teachers’ Day.

5 Maritime transportation students gave us a tour of the Maritime Technology & Training Center.



7



6

6 Soon-to-be graduates prepared for commencement and beyond during Grad Bash.

7 Members of the San Jac community shared photos of their fuzzy friends on National Cat Day.

# YOUR GOALS. YOUR COLLEGE.



## SAN JACINTO<sup>SM</sup> 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

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## VISION & MISSION



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

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

## SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS



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

## COMMUNITY IMPACT



Surrounded by monuments of history, evolving industries, maritime enterprises of today, and the space age of tomorrow, San Jacinto College has served the people of East Harris County, Texas, since 1961. San Jacinto College is among the top five community colleges in the nation, as designated by the Aspen Institute for Community College Excellence in 2021, and was named an Achieving the Dream Leader College of Distinction in 2020. The College 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. San Jacinto College's impact on the region totals \$1.3 billion in added income, which supports 13,044 jobs. The College is fiscally sound, holding bond ratings of AA and Aa2 by Standard & Poor's and Moody's.

