

OPPORTUNITY

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NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE

Celebrating San Jac Champion John Moon Jr.

Longtime San Jacinto College Board of Trustees member John Moon Jr. passed away in July after helping shape the College's growth and impact for more than 15 years.

Elected to the College's Board in 2009, he served as vice chair and chair of the building committee, playing a key role in two bond initiatives totaling \$720 million to expand and modernize College facilities. Moon

also served on the San Jacinto College Foundation Board of Directors and taught as an adjunct professor.

A Pasadena native and Sam Rayburn High School graduate, Moon began his academic journey at San Jac before earning degrees from Southern Methodist University and the University of Houston-Clear Lake. Moon was a certified public accountant with more than 30 years in banking and real estate and was deeply involved in the community.

His legacy of service, leadership, and student-focused vision will leave a lasting mark on San Jac and the region.



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Online computer science program recognized nationally

San Jacinto College's online Associate of Science in computer science program ranks No. 10 in the nation according to TechGuide's 2025 list of Most Affordable Online Associate in Computer Science Programs. The ranking reflects San Jac's commitment to rigorous, accessible, and affordable education

for students pursuing careers in the growing tech industry.

TechGuide evaluated 25 accredited programs nationwide based on cost, academic quality, and student value. San Jac stood out for its strong, industry-relevant curriculum and fully online format that supports working students and families.

This recognition follows San Jac's recent placement among Newsweek's Top Online Colleges for 2025, ranking 42nd out of 250 institutions nationwide.

Learn more at sanjac.edu.



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Sept. 18-Oct. 16	SFA Printmaking Exhibition	Varies	North Campus Gallery, Grant Fine Arts Center (N1)
Sept. 24-27	Melodrama: "Battle Cattle Booty Betrayed"	7:30 p.m.	Tickets \$10 Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Sept. 28	Melodrama: "Battle Cattle Booty Betrayed"	2:30 p.m.	Tickets \$10 Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Sept. 29	Registration opens for spring and winter mini term		
Oct. 2	Financial Literacy Networking	6-7 p.m.	Generation Park Campus Contact sjc.cfe@sjcd.edu

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

NO EXPERIENCE, NO PROBLEM: BIOLOGY PROFESSOR INSPIRES INTERNSHIP TO GET STUDENTS CAREER-READY

By Courtney Morris
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

When it comes to landing real-world experience, some students get lucky. Others have Dr. Robin Wright in their corner.

The San Jacinto College biology professor saw a perfect internship partner in AGT Labs, a local food and environmental safety testing company. In fall 2024, Wright organized an AGT tour so her microbiology class could see their learning applied in real life.

“Off-campus visits are so valuable,” she said. “They show real-world application while helping students better understand the course content.”

Students’ excitement and Wright’s initiative inspired AGT to launch its first-ever internship program.

“Students were amazed by what we were doing, what their degrees or their future could lead to,” Ethan Valdez, AGT account coordinator, said. “When we saw those reactions, we decided to create an internship program because we want to inspire students to get into this kind of industry.”

Building resume

This April, Wright and chemistry professor Dr. Jean Nono invited AGT to speak at the Central Campus STEM Speaker Series. There, Valdez described the company’s work — from microbiological testing on food to hazardous waste analysis — and announced something new: paid internships.

From that visit and interviews, AGT selected San Jac students Shawn Grissom and Konner Lare, who stood out for their communication and initiative.

Interning since June, Grissom has been preparing media used to test for bacteria like *E. coli* and *Listeria*, while Lare handles data entry and client communication. The internships

provide a two-way benefit.

“Having the interns ask questions and look at our system — it helps bring new ideas and better efficiency [to our company],” Valdez said.

For Grissom and Lare, the experience could lead to part-time or full-time positions at AGT if they choose to stay or return after pursuing higher degrees. Regardless, it builds their resume.

Grissom, who completed a general studies associate degree in May, is applying for San Jac’s medical radiography program next.

“The internship is helping me... by

putting me in a similar work environment [to radiology],” he said.

Grissom’s advice to other students?

“Work with San Jac to find internships wherever you can,” he said. “Even if it has nothing to do with your degree or goal, it still can be something useful.”

Exploring options

AGT is not the first or last local company to offer San Jac students an internship. The College has built many solid industry partnerships that link students to external learning. Internships offer real-world learning that counters

graduates’ frustrating loop of “no experience, no job.”

“Companies can’t find people with experience, so for companies to work with community colleges in the early stages, it helps build that experience,” Valdez said.

For now, AGT is accepting San Jac students who have taken some natural science or business/marketing classes. Valdez encourages students to pursue every opportunity they can.

“Keep applying, studying, and moving forward,” he said. “If you don’t apply, you’ll never know what paths you could go down.”



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

SAN JAC CELEBRATES 23 GRADUATES IN WORKPLACE ESL PARTNERSHIP

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning installers are getting customized English as a Second Language training thanks to San Jacinto College's first workplace literacy cohort with Abacus Plumbing.

Offered through the College's Adult Education and Literacy Grant, the 10-week intensive course helped Abacus employees improve their English proficiency with a workplace-specific curriculum. After putting in 40 hours of course time, 23 technicians — many of whom are new Abacus employees — earned a certification.

"We developed a curriculum that fits their needs based on the work they do day-to-day," said Roberto Mendez, adult education grants director. "We're not just teaching them ESL. We're teaching them ESL as it correlates to their job — customer-building skills, soft skills, and things like that. It's a win-win situation."

The program taught Abacus installers essential skills, such as greeting customers, explaining work procedures, and providing safety warnings when working in homes. Beyond technical language skills, they gained confidence in workplace interactions.

"One of the things they mentioned is that they now hold their head up high when they meet with their leaders," said Mendez. "In the past, they might have avoided conversation. Now they welcome that conversation with their leaders because they're more confident."

The program was strategically scheduled during winter, when HVAC work typically slows down, providing income for workers during what would otherwise be a period of reduced pay.

"The ESL class has been nothing short of transformative for our Spanish-speaking employees," said Lance Ellison, Abacus vice president of operations. "It

has significantly improved their English-speaking and comprehension skills, allowing them to interact with customers, peers, and the community with newfound confidence."

Following the success of this initial cohort, Abacus and San Jac plan to expand the program to other business areas, including their electrical and plumbing departments.

"We are committed to investing in our employees' growth and development. Our mission is to hire extraordinary people with the willingness and courage to do extraordinary tasks that improve their lives," said Tony Patiño, Abacus president. "This program is a testament to our dedication to providing opportunities for our team to enhance their skills and advance their careers. Thank you to San Jacinto College for their unwavering support and our employees for their hard work and dedication."

San Jac's grant-funded Adult Education

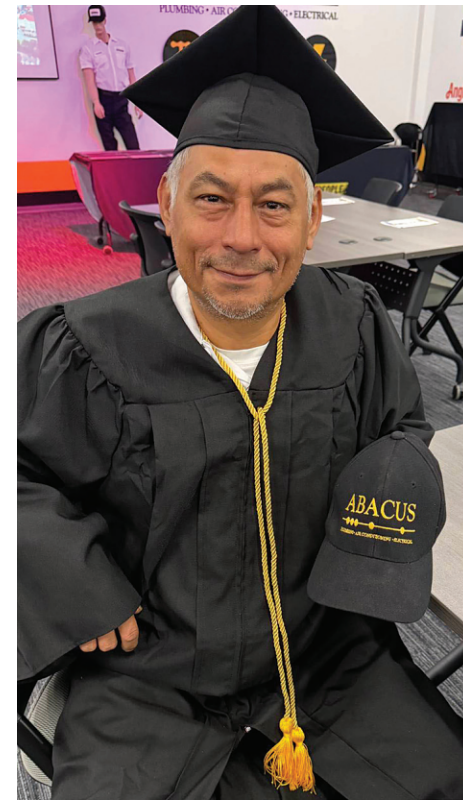
and Literacy program offers services to individuals and employers to strengthen the workforce in the community.

Beyond the workplace literacy program with Abacus, San Jac's adult education department offers ESL and GED courses, workforce certification funding for eligible students, the Internationally Trained Professionals program, and more.

Students who enroll in the Adult Education and Literacy programs receive all the benefits of being a college student, including access to campus resources like libraries, computers, and the Marketplace.

"Our goal is to upskill our community," Mendez said. "The purpose of Adult Education and Literacy is to help our community get better skills for better pay and living."

Scan the QR code to learn more about **Adult Education and Literacy services.**



Photos courtesy of Abacus

BOISE FINDS PURPOSE THROUGH PREPAREDNESS AT SAN JAC

By **Neesha Hosein**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

For just over a year, Lyle Boise has served as the emergency response coordinator for the San Jacinto College Office of Emergency Management.

Boise creates response plans, leads coordination efforts with internal teams and external agencies, and is a point of contact during emergencies.

“Basically, I help keep the chaos organized for the San Jac community,” he said.

Boise sees emergency preparedness as a key part of supporting student success, helping learners feel ready for the unexpected and more confident on campus.

“We focus on mitigation efforts and host seminars and tabling events throughout the year that help students get ready for the unexpected,” he said. “We like to make it fun too. Who says you can’t learn how to build an emergency kit and walk away with free snacks and swag?”

Career inspirations

Before joining San Jac, Boise worked in aviation emergency response.

“While aircraft emergencies can be exciting, they don’t happen very often,” he said. “I wanted a role that incorporates emergency response but also keeps me busy in between emergencies. Be careful what you wish for because this role has kept me busy!”

As a token of remembrance from his aviation days, Boise keeps a patch from Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting Station 7 in his office, a gift from his aviation colleagues.

“We responded to dozens of emergencies together, and I was gifted the patch when I announced my departure,” he said. “It means a lot to me and reminds me how far I’ve come.”

What he loves about San Jac are the people and the culture of diversity.

“The diversity at San Jac still leaves me in awe every single day,” Boise said. “As a proud graduate of a historically Black college or university, I’ve always valued being in spaces that celebrate different backgrounds and perspectives. San Jac doesn’t just reflect diversity — it embraces it and makes it a core part of who we are. It truly feels like a safe and supportive place to show up as your full, authentic self and motivates me as a professional.”

Boise embraces the opportunity to work alongside subject-matter experts at the College. The benefit is a “collaborative environment where you learn something new every day and don’t even need a subscription.”

A subject-matter expert himself, Boise presented at the Texas Department of Emergency Management conference in May 2025 about higher education being an untapped resource in the world of emergency management.

“Getting to represent San Jac and highlight how higher education can be a game changer in emergency management was both fun and meaningful,” he said. “Plus, it’s not every day you get to be the person flipping the script on how people view colleges in this space.”

Simplicity and kindness for the win

Amid his often unpredictable line of work, Boise tries to keep some aspects of his routine simple.

“Goal #1: I try to make my bed every morning because I read somewhere that it’s the first win of the day and sets the pace for productivity,” he said. “Do I always succeed? Let’s just say some days start strong, and other days start with coffee and chaos.”

When it comes to leaving a first impression, Boise hopes people remember his kindness.

“There is a big difference between being nice and being kind,” he said. “Kindness is free, and it’s the best thing we can give to each other.”



Photo courtesy of Lyle Boise



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HOW PROMISE @ SAN JAC CHANGES LIVES: EMILY GARCIA

By **Melissa Trevizo**
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

For former Ravens softball player Emily Garcia, the path to higher education was made possible through athletic ability and financial support. Garcia found an academic and athletic home, thanks to the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship.

Recruited to San Jacinto College's softball program by coaches Kelly Saenz and Kelsey Walters, Garcia carefully considered her college options. The College's proximity to home was a bonus, but what truly influenced her decision to enroll was Promise @ San Jac.

This last-dollar scholarship covers in-district high school graduates' tuition, books, and supplies for up to three years, kicking in after all other forms of financial aid have been applied.

"Promise meant that I could go to school and not worry about how much it would cost, and it meant that my dad did not have to stress over money," Garcia said.

Her father, Michael Garcia, echoed her sentiments.

"The scholarship meant we didn't have to struggle to send my daughter to school. It meant a lot knowing that she could go to college and earn her associate degree debt-free," he said.

Garcia earned an associate degree in education in May, following a long-held dream of becoming a teacher.

"Something about helping children grow and learn makes my heart so happy," she said. "I want to become a first-grade teacher and create a safe classroom environment for my future students. No matter how hard things are at home, I want them to know that they are

safe and loved when they are in my classroom."

Her time at San Jac has been "overwhelmingly positive."

"I've had a lot of help when I needed it with my academics," she said. "In the iConnect Center, the staff helps read over papers, and there's someone available for every subject. This support system has been crucial to my success."

Garcia first learned about Promise @ San Jac through announcements during her senior year at North Shore Senior High School and quickly shared the news with her family.

"When my daughter told me about the Promise program, we both agreed it was the best option for us," her father said.

The application process was straightforward: Dad and daughter completed it together in just one day. For prospective students considering the scholarship, Garcia's advice is clear and simple.

"You have to sit back and think about how paying for college will affect your family," she said. "The Promise Scholarship is so worth it, and you can earn your associate degree without debt."

Her father shares the same enthusiasm in his advice to other parents.

"Take the opportunity. If you think college isn't in the budget but want your child to attend, this is the best option," he said. "One of the main points I bring up when they ask why Emily is at San Jac is Promise and, of course, softball. Getting a good education is my No. 1 priority."

Scan the QR code to learn more about the **Promise @ San Jac Scholarship**.



Photo courtesy of Emily Garcia

THIS MONTH *IN* SOCIAL MEDIA



Facebook

San Jacinto College and Texas State University have officially teamed up! You can now work toward your Texas State University bachelor's degree in business — right here at San Jac! More options, less stress, and your goals within reach!



1,027 Reactions | 36 Comments

170,216 Impressions | 4,759 Engagements



Instagram

Hats off to all 1,900 (!!!) amazing graduates who walked across the commencement stage!



1,823 Likes | 42,390 Impressions | 2,121 Engagements



LinkedIn

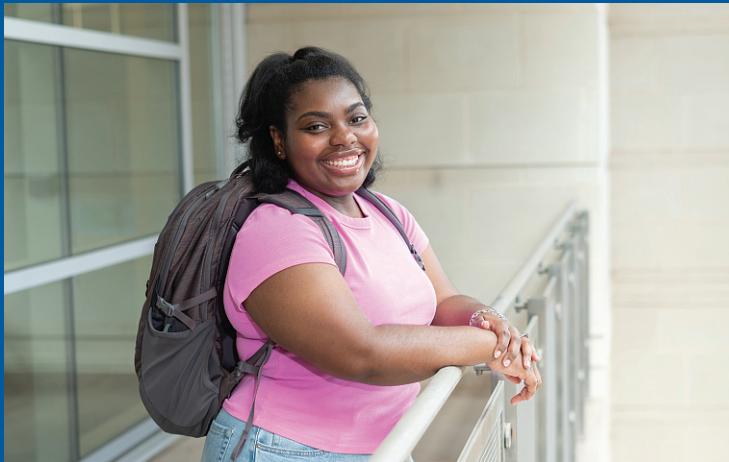
San Jacinto College and the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation have partnered on a new program that accelerates students' entry into the cosmetology industry. About 130 students in cosmetology, barbering, massage therapy, manicuring, and esthetics took their final and state licensing exams simultaneously, getting them into the workforce much faster.



123 Reactions | 212 Post-Link Clicks

7,006 Impressions | 351 Engagements

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SAN JACINTO COLLEGESM

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SOUTH CAMPUS

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MARITIME CAMPUS

3700 Old Hwy. 146, La Porte, TX 77571

GENERATION PARK 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.

