



**2** News From  
Your College

**3** Center for Biotechnology  
Grand Opening

**4** Alverio Achieves  
Her Dreams

# NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE

## Flourishing Together: Hispanic Heritage Month at San Jac

This Hispanic Heritage Month, San Jacinto College celebrated under the theme “Florecemos Juntos – Flourishing Together” with engaging events across all campuses.

Because San Jac is a Hispanic-Serving Institution with more than 60% Hispanic student enrollment, these celebrations held

special significance for the community.

The Hispanic Heritage Committee with student engagement and support organized diverse programming throughout the month.

Central Campus showcased a “Stig-Mata” art exhibition by Colombian-born artist Nela Garzón and an open mic event inviting students to share their own cultural experiences.

South Campus offered an “El Grito” presentation exploring Mexican independence and its heroes, along with a vibrant fiesta event in the student center. The fiesta brought the

community together with music, snacks, games, arts and crafts, and a communal “ofrenda.”

At the North Campus, the monthlong celebration concluded with the second annual El Homecoming dance. This college-wide event, co-hosted with student engagement and support and the North Campus provost’s office, welcomed students, faculty, staff, and alumni to celebrate together.

Scan the QR code to view the **Hispanic Heritage Month photo album.**



## State of the College highlights a Raven’s journey

San Jacinto College’s 2025 State of the College spotlighted “A Raven’s Journey” – a theme celebrating resilience, transformation, and discovery.

Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer shared stories of students, faculty, staff, and alumni whose paths were shaped at San Jac, from finding their direction and returning full circle as employees to launching new careers in high-demand industries. Together, their

journeys underscored how education transforms lives and strengthens communities.

The event also highlighted bold initiatives shaping the future: the launch of San Jac Online, programs offered nationwide, the new Center for Biotechnology, and the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship, which provides debt-free pathways for local graduates. These efforts reflect the College’s vision for removing barriers, building a skilled workforce, and guiding students toward brighter futures.

Scan the QR code to view photos and read more about the **2025 State of the College.**



Photos by Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

# SAN JAC CELEBRATES CENTER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY GRAND OPENING

**By Jacquelynn Conger**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

San Jacinto College celebrated the official grand opening and ribbon cutting of its new Center for Biotechnology at the Generation Park Campus on Sept. 26.

“The Center for Biotechnology represents our commitment to preparing students with the skills, training, and opportunities they need to step directly into high-demand, high-wage careers,” said Dr. Brenda Hellyer, College Chancellor. “At the same time, it provides industry partners with a reliable pipeline of talent that will help fuel innovation and growth for years to come.”

Built in collaboration with McCord Development, the Center for Biotechnology marks a major step forward in advancing a robust life

sciences ecosystem in the Houston region. The state-of-the-art facility offers comprehensive, hands-on training in realistic good manufacturing practices—simulated environments, preparing students and industry professionals with the critical skills to succeed in the fast-growing biopharmaceutical sector.

San Jac offers stackable certificates and an Associate of Applied Science degree in biomanufacturing technology, along with shorter training options for postgraduates and industry professionals. These pathways meet workforce demand quickly, safely, and cost-effectively while helping students launch meaningful careers in biomanufacturing and biotechnology.

“Having a well-prepared biomanufacturing workforce is a national imperative and a regional priority,”

said Dr. Christopher Wild, biotechnology assistant vice chancellor. “This new center gives our students and corporate trainees hands-on experience in environments that mirror real-world manufacturing from day one of their training.”

San Jac, the exclusive provider of the National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training program for the southern U.S., ensures that the Houston region will benefit from world-class biopharmaceutical training, bolstering the local

talent pipeline and positioning the city as a hub for innovation in life sciences.

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



Photo by Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

## SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Through Nov. 20	Art Exhibit: “Joe Clark: How to Say I Love You in 200 Words or Less”	Varies	North Campus Gallery, Grant Fine Arts Center (N1)
Nov. 5	Steel Band Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Slocomb Auditorium (C13)
Nov. 7	Veteran and Military Affiliate Resource Fair	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Free   Central Campus, LyondellBasell Center for Petrochemical, Energy, & Technology (C45)
Nov. 8	Find Your Flock: First-Generation Day	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Free   North Campus, Grant Fine Arts Center (N1)
Nov. 13	Financial Literacy Networking	6-7 p.m.	Generation Park Campus   Contact <a href="mailto:sjc.cfe@sjcd.edu">sjc.cfe@sjcd.edu</a>
Nov. 17	Guitar Ensemble Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Nov. 24-30	Thanksgiving Break	Closed	All campuses and online
Dec. 4	Practicum Student Showcase	TBA	South Campus, Flickinger Fine Arts Center, Proscenium Theatre (S15.151)
Dec. 4	North Art and Design Winter Art Sale	9 a.m.-9 p.m.	North Campus Gallery, Grant Fine Arts Center (N1)
Dec. 4	Jazz Ensemble Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Dec. 4-6	“Santa’s Christmas Magic”	7:30 p.m.	Tickets: \$15   Central Campus, Powell Arena Theatre (C13)
Dec. 5-6	Evolve Dance Concert	7 p.m.	South Campus, Flickinger Fine Arts Center, Proscenium Theatre (S15.151)

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

# ALVERIO PROVES DREAMS ARE WORTH THE WAIT

By **Melissa Trevizo**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Priscilla Alverio stood in her third grade classroom last year, lesson plans piling up, her son's busy schedule demanding attention, and four college courses weighing on her mind.

When she disappeared from her online classes for two weeks, Dr. Albert Talley, San Jacinto College's senior director of child development and education programs, showed up to check on her.

"I literally started crying," Alverio recalled. "I told him, 'It's just a lot for me right now. I'm sorry I didn't reach out.'"

Rather than judgment, she received support. Her professors helped her create a plan to catch up, and in May 2025, the 28-year-old graduated with her bachelor's degree in early childhood education and teaching from San Jac — more than a decade after she first started taking dual credit courses through Pasadena Memorial High School.

"Sometimes students only need to know someone is in their corner and wants to see them succeed," Talley said. "Our students will make an even bigger impact on children in our community if they leave San Jac knowing how much we have invested into their success."

Alverio's story reflects the challenges many non-traditional students face



Photos by Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

and the flexibility San Jac's Bachelor of Applied Science in education offers. The program, which launched in spring 2024, provides an affordable pathway for students to earn bachelor's degrees without transferring to a four-year university.

Now in her second year teaching third grade math at Beta Academy, Alverio balances her career with being a single mom. When her son was born in 2016, her studies slowed, but she refused to quit.

"I made sure that I went to at least one class every semester," she said. "I just slowly tried to get it done. I knew I couldn't stop."

In 2019, she began working as an infant and toddler teacher while continuing her studies. She earned her associate degree in early childhood education in 2021 and was accepted to the University of Houston-Clear Lake. But when advisors recommended taking additional transferable classes, she returned to San Jac to pursue its new Bachelor of Applied Science in education with an emphasis in early childhood education.

"I love online school, and I'm able to manage it well," Alverio said. "It just fits my life better."

She had already completed most of the required classes for the bachelor's program, the cost difference was significant, and the familiarity with professors she already knew also factored into her decision.

"It is so much more affordable than going to a university," Alverio said. "That is one of the biggest things for me, especially as a single parent."

While working as an administrative assistant to the dean at Beta Academy, Alverio substituted and taught reading classes before becoming a full-time third grade teacher. The hands-



on experience, combined with her coursework, created unique learning moments.

"Everything I was learning was happening in the classroom daily," Alverio said. "When I see my scholars have those light bulb moments, I'm so grateful for my education because it's helping them as well."

Through it all, she embraced an important lesson: "As long as I'm always doing my best in the present moment, then it is OK," she said. "You can't worry about what will happen tomorrow. Just focus on today."

Alverio had a full circle moment when Tiffany Carr, her own third grade teacher, sent a box of math books for her classroom with a note of encouragement.

"I cried when I saw it," Alverio said. "This was my third grade teacher, and now I'm a third grade teacher."

Her lifelong dream of teaching — which began when she made her little sister play school and taught her about photosynthesis — now drives bigger aspirations. Alverio hopes to work toward advanced degrees and eventually open a bilingual school.

For now, she focuses on building the kind of classroom and becoming the kind of educator her students deserve.

"I believe that we need more educators who care. I want to be the teacher who makes everyone feel welcome," she said. "My scholars deserve a teacher who not only educates them but also teaches lifelong lessons. I want to help build a strong foundation in each child I work with."

Scan the QR code to learn more about the **Bachelor of Applied Science in education**.



# SAFETY TIPS FOR HOLIDAY TRAVELERS

By **Neesha Hosein**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Planning a trip this fall? San Jacinto College Police Department's Lt. Darrell Hollie has some tips that could help travelers keep holiday travel stress to a minimum.

Most thefts and scams are crimes of opportunity.

## Think before you post

It's not uncommon to see people posting travel plans online, sharing daily — sometimes even hourly — updates of their activities.

"Keep your digital footprint small," Hollie said. "Save vacation photos and daily updates for when you're back. Real-time posts let the wrong people know your home is empty."

## Securing the home and property

Arrange for others to keep an eye on things while you're away.

"Have family members or friends swing by to monitor the place," Hollie said. "Or get to know a neighbor well enough to trade phone numbers and simple favors, like picking up packages or moving a car in the driveway to make it seem like someone is there."

A house that shows small signs of activity is less tempting than one with a dark porch and a bulging mailbox.

"Lights and sound help. Smart plugs or basic timers can flip a lamp or television

on and off at set hours," he said. "Lock doors and windows, set the alarm before you go, and don't leave keys in exterior locks or in hidden places outside. Lock vehicles and remove visible electronics and key fobs. An unlocked car with earbuds or a laptop on the seat creates an easy target."

For mail, the U.S. Postal Service has an option to put mail delivery on hold for up to 30 days. Sign up is free and can be done online or in person at the local post office. A P.O. box is another option to prevent mail from piling up.

## Do your homework

Choose lodging with security in mind. "When possible, book interior-corridor hotels and avoid the first floor as these are most easily accessible," Hollie said. "Use the deadbolt and swing latch, and consider a portable doorstop or under-door alarm for extra peace of mind. A simple camera detector can help you sweep vents, alarms, and outlets if you're concerned about hidden devices. These are things you can order online. Carry only the documents and valuables you need, and use the in-room safe, if available. Calling ahead to ask about key-controlled elevators, security practices, and camera coverage is a wise move as well."

Look up recent reviews for your lodging and check crime reports for the surrounding area. When booking excursions, stick to reputable operators with current, detailed feedback and credentials.

Hollie advises to be friendly with staff and guides "but keep healthy boundaries and avoid private meet-ups that pull you away from public spaces or your group."

## Money matters

Credit cards generally offer faster fraud protection and instant alerts than debit cards.

"Enable notifications, carry only modest cash, and consider a prepaid card as a buffer," Hollie said. "If you're heading abroad, exchange a bit of currency before you go so you can pay for taxis or tips on arrival without hunting for an exchange service that could hike rates."

## Situational awareness

On the ground, awareness is essential. Hollie advises to leave flashy jewelry at home or wear it to specific events rather than leisurely.

"Stick with a buddy or group when possible," he said. "Alcohol impairs

judgment, so plan spending and transportation before the night starts. When you enter a venue, note the exits and trust your gut. If a spot feels off, leave. Watch for distraction scams — an overly helpful 'bystander' at an ATM or a crowd that boxes you in."

## Plan for emergencies

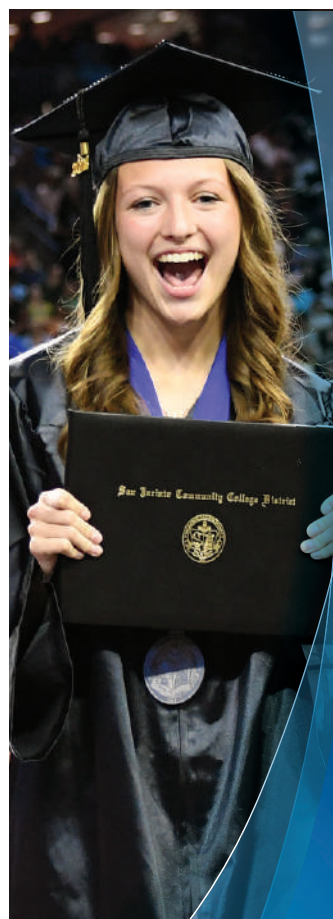
Call health insurance providers to confirm what's covered out of state or overseas, and consider travel medical insurance.

"Keep copies of IDs and cards separate from the originals," Hollie said. "Store emergency contacts and local police numbers in your phone and on paper, locate nearby hospitals and emergency rooms, and know the nearest embassy or consulate if you're abroad."

A little preparation goes a long way to ensure a safe and enjoyable travel experience.



Shutterstock image



IT'S THE SEASON OF

GIVING

Be the reason a student's dream comes true — give to the San Jacinto College Foundation this **Giving Tuesday, Dec. 2.**

**SAN JACINTO**  
**COLLEGE**

FOUNDATION

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# FROM CAMO TO CAMPUS, YOUR NEXT CHAPTER AWAITS

By **Courtney Morris**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

If you've served in the military, San Jacinto College is here to serve you! The College supports more than 1,300 veteran students, with 17% older than 35.

Holly Morrison, veteran services manager and a U.S. Navy veteran, started her education journey at 40 at San Jac and graduated with a master's from Sam Houston State University at 54.

"I understand what it feels like to be the oldest person in the classroom," she said. "Being older helped me stay focused on improving my skills and my family's well-being. Serving in the military taught me I can do anything I set my mind to!"

San Jac offers the possibility to change your life at any age. Morrison shares tips to help you ease back into the classroom.

**Q: What is the cut-off for using GI Bill® or other VA education benefits?**

**A:** If you served before Sept. 11, 2001, you may have hit a delimiting date, but the best way to see if you qualify for education benefits is to apply.

Visit the Veterans Affairs website ([va.gov/education/how-to-apply](https://va.gov/education/how-to-apply)) to learn more about applying for education benefits. If you're a disabled veteran, you may qualify for Veteran Readiness and Employment (Chapter 31) benefits.

**Q: Do you offer credit for my military experience or prior training?**

**A:** Yes, San Jac's records management will review college and military transcripts for classes that apply toward your degree.

**Q: I've been out of school for a while. How can I get help with math, writing, or study skills?**

**A:** San Jac offers in-person and online tutoring, study resources, success workshops, textbooks, and test preparation. Each veteran center also has computers, printers, and a quiet study area just for veterans. Other veterans love to help you succeed too!

**Q: Will I feel out of place as an older student? Is there a veteran or adult learner community on campus?**

**A:** Our College supports all ages. At our spring 2025 graduation ceremony, graduates ranged from 16 to 70.

Visit your campus veteran center to meet other veteran students and dependents. Our veterans often build relationships that go beyond the classroom to the next level of education.

**Q: Are there flexible classes to fit my schedule?**

**A:** San Jac offers weekend, evening, face-to-face, hybrid, and online classes. If you want adventure, you might consider non-credit truck driving and maritime courses, which are approved for Hazlewood and federal benefits.

**Q: What short-term programs do you offer for someone looking to reskill or start a new career?**

**A:** San Jac offers over 200 degrees that fit a variety of interests. Certificates like biomanufacturing offer skills for employment after completion of the first semester.

You may use our career services staff to determine the best career for you.

**Q: Who can help me with**

**enrollment, benefits, and support?**

**A:** Each of the three veteran centers are staffed with school certifying officials and educational planners who support veterans and their dependents' educational goals. You may call or visit us:

- Central Campus: 281-998-6350 ext. 1032 | Welcome Center (C27.1400)
- South Campus: 281-998-6350 ext. 4672 | Academic Hall (S8.2066)

- North Campus: 281-998-6350 ext. 7384 | Spencer Building (N8.117)

Or you can schedule an in-person or virtual advising appointment by choosing "Veterans" at [whos-next.com/sanjac/appointments](https://whos-next.com/sanjac/appointments). We're here to help you take that next step to invest in yourself.

Scan the QR code to learn more about **veteran support**.



Photo by Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

## Veteran and Military Affiliate Resource Fair

Learn about education benefits, community organizations, and other resources for veterans and their families!

**Date/Time:** Friday, Nov. 7, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Location:** LyondellBasell Center for Petrochemical, Energy, & Technology (Central Campus, Building C45), 7901 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena, TX 77507

**Contact:** [veterans@sjcd.edu](mailto:veterans@sjcd.edu)

**Register:** Scan the QR code to register for a free lunch



# THIS MONTH *IN* SOCIAL MEDIA



## Facebook

Today we celebrate the birth of one of San Jac's most famous alums, Patrick Swayze. Did you know Swayze received a gymnastic scholarship to San Jac before he became Hollywood royalty? What's your favorite Swayze movie?

✦ Pursue your passion: Whether you want to become a performer, teacher, or choreographer, we provide you with the opportunities and training you need to succeed. Let his legacy motivate you to take that first step towards your own stage!



234 Reactions | 13 Comments

10,807 Impressions | 994 Engagements



## Instagram

With the peak of hurricane season approaching, now is the perfect time to sign up for SJC AlertMe if you haven't already. Just in case we need to send alerts regarding storms or other urgent events, please make sure your contact info is correct!



463 Likes | 26,799 Impressions | 516 Engagements



## LinkedIn

🎓 Be a trailblazer in the classroom.

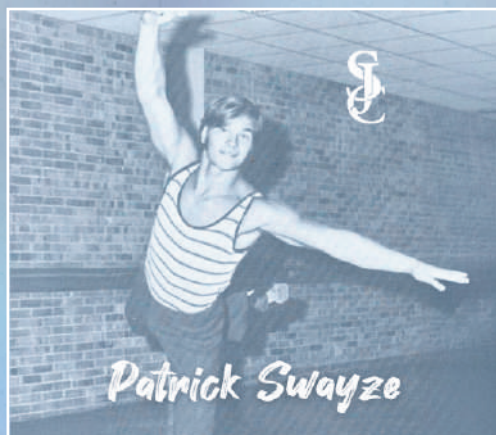
Community college bachelor's degrees are changing the game — more affordable, more accessible, and built for real-world success. Policy shifts are opening new doors, and you can be part of the first wave.

Your degree. Your future. Your terms.



131 Reactions | 361 Post-Link Clicks

7,240 Impressions | 506 Engagements



# YOUR GOALS. YOUR COLLEGE.



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

**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** — 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](https://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](https://sanjac.edu).

