

# OPPORTUNITY

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE<sup>SM</sup>

# NEWS

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## NEWS FROM YOUR COLLEGE

### San Jac promises to cover tuition costs for high school grads

High school seniors living within the San Jacinto College District have one less thing to worry about regarding their future as the College expands the Promise @ San Jac program.

This program ensures all high school graduates in Channelview, Deer Park, Galena Park, La Porte, Pasadena, and Sheldon ISDs and portions of Pearland and Humble ISDs, can earn a workforce credential or an associate degree at San Jac with 100 percent of their tuition and books covered.

Philanthropists MacKenzie Scott and Dan Jewett donated \$30 million to San Jac this spring — the largest gift in the College's 60-year history. The donation will help fund a Promise endowment supporting all in-district high school seniors who enroll and attend San Jac full time starting the fall after graduation.

“San Jacinto College is always looking at how we can remove barriers that students face in achieving their professional and educational goals,” said Dr. Allatia Harris, vice chancellor of strategic initiatives, workforce development, community relations, and diversity. “We are promising that in-district high school graduates who attend San Jac full time and work hard can have a bright future where paying for a quality education is no longer a concern.”

The Promise program is a last-dollar scholarship covering students' remaining financial need after federal and state aid, grants, and other scholarships are applied.

The program started in fall 2020 as a collaboration between the College and three Pasadena ISD high schools. Expanding Promise to cover all in-district high school graduates creates a stronger community and workforce.

To learn more about the Promise program and view enrollment/eligibility requirements, visit

[www.sanjac.edu/promise](http://www.sanjac.edu/promise).



Photo courtesy of Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

### Diversity, culture, and pride: College celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

San Jacinto College celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15) at each campus with a combination of face-to-face and virtual events and activities for students, faculty, and staff.

Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes the achievements and contributions of Hispanic American champions who have inspired others to success.

Jose Sada with Mixteco Ballet Folklorico said it's important for the Houston-based dance team to perform at events like the ones at San Jac because “many Hispanic students aren't able to travel to Mexico to explore their heritage. We help them stay connected to pride and traditions through dance.”

Besides cultural dance events, the Hispanic Heritage committees offered an essay contest, art contest, Hispanic guest speakers, digital bulletin, and a presentation of Hispanic students'



Photo courtesy of Lauren Lowe, San Jacinto College

haikus and poems.

The campuses culminated the month of activities with luncheons of classic cultural dishes and panel discussions featuring local Hispanic and Latino professionals from a variety of industries who discussed how and why they chose their degree pathways and the success their higher education has provided.

Learn more about Hispanic Heritage Month at [www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov](http://www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov).

### Give the gift of education Nov. 30

The season of generosity is almost here, so get a head start by giving the gift of education Nov. 30 on Giving Tuesday.

The San Jacinto College Foundation invites you to help provide scholarships for students who could not complete a degree or certificate without financial help. You may also select other funds you want to support, including Foundation programs and initiatives that directly impact students.

The Foundation's 2021 Giving Tuesday fundraising goal is \$10,000.

Foundation scholarships help students like Zahra Cope, who could not have completed her associate degree otherwise.

“The scholarships I have received through the San Jacinto College Foundation have provided a great deal of financial relief for me, and I can't thank these scholarship donors enough,” Cope said.



Photo courtesy of Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

Community support also encourages students like Antonio Moran to reach career goals one step at a time.

“This scholarship is like the stepping stone to the road of success,” said Moran, a Promise for Their Future Scholarship recipient. “I truly believe that with a little help and a strong will, anything is possible.”

A global day of giving back, Giving Tuesday began in 2012 on the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. Following Black Friday and Cyber Monday, Giving Tuesday inspires millions of people worldwide to collaborate and celebrate generosity.

Want to participate in the Foundation's Giving Tuesday campaign?

- Visit [sanjac.edu/giving-tuesday](http://sanjac.edu/giving-tuesday) on Nov. 30.
- Contact Courtney Hunter, alumni and annual giving coordinator, at 281-998-6104.
- Mail your donation (checks only) to 4624 Fairmont Parkway, Suite 210, Pasadena, TX 77504. Make payable to San Jacinto College Foundation. Thank you for giving students a gift that will last a lifetime!

# LONGTIME DONOR HELPED FOUND THE FOUNDATION

By **Courtney Morris**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

In the office lobby of Houston civil attorney Daniel Snooks, you'll find Western oil paintings and his framed Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas diploma — pre-Texas A&M era.

On a side table sits a triangular wooden case holding a folded 48-star U.S. flag. This flag once draped the casket of his grandfather, a Spanish-American War veteran.

Snooks, an Army veteran himself, appreciates history. And when it comes to the San Jacinto College Foundation's history, he played a pivotal role from the beginning.

Serving as the College's legal counsel for the last 30 years, Snooks filed the articles of incorporation that established the Foundation as a non-profit corporation.

"The Board of Trustees in 1996 was very favorable to creating a Foundation," he said. "Their thought was there ought to be a scholarship for every student."

Fulfilling dreams was the Foundation's goal then and remains its goal now. A degree or workforce credential impacts not just the student, but also the community and economy.

Snooks has supported this mission not only with his legal assistance to the College but also his checkbook. Since 1996, he has donated to the Foundation annually, giving almost \$128,000 total. His generosity extends to providing suits for students to wear for job interviews, and nonperishables for the food market.

Between the two of them, Snooks and his wife, Margaret, a former university professor, have degrees from four universities. They value higher education but focus on San Jac when giving back.

"San Jacinto College has received the bulk of our financial support for an institution of higher education," he said.

As the College celebrates its 60th anniversary, Snooks remembers its early days. Then a University of Houston law student, he accepted a clerk position in Pasadena attorney Thomas Lay's office.

Another local lawyer, Stanley Baskin, was involved in litigation to maintain the College as a viable district when some citizens wanted to withdraw from the taxing district.

Those in favor outweighed those against in what local papers dubbed "the second battle of San Jacinto." Snooks calls the community "innovative and forward-thinking" in creating the College.

"[San Jac] has provided opportunities for graduates of six school districts who may not have had the opportunity to attend a major four-year university because of grades or finances," he said. "As a college, it is very efficient in the formative education of our young high school graduates."

While practicing law, Snooks served as an adjunct real estate instructor at San Jac in the '80s before becoming its legal counsel in 1991.

He is proud of every moment with San Jac — from working with trustees and chancellors behind the scenes in board executive sessions to attending



Photo courtesy of Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

Foundation golf tournaments and galas.

The Foundation gives everyone an opportunity to give the gift of education — from alumni to companies that want to help their employees and employees' children, Snooks said.

"It gives this medium for people of the community to give contributions to a school they attended," he said. "But it's also important that they're giving to a specific purpose — the education of the youth in their community."

For Snooks, the rest is history.

Learn more about the San Jacinto College Foundation at [sanjac.edu/foundation](http://sanjac.edu/foundation).



## A GRAND ENTRANCE: CELEBRATING NEW FACILITIES COLLEGE-WIDE

By **Melissa Trevizo**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

In fall 2021, San Jacinto College celebrated the opening of six new facilities to better serve the College community, including the new Generation Park Campus.

While the buildings officially welcomed students in 2020, the grand opening events were postponed due to

COVID-19 restrictions.

The College's Board of Trustees and Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer cut the ribbon to celebrate the Central Campus Welcome Center, South Campus Cosmetology Center, South Campus Engineering and Technology Center, North Campus Cosmetology and Culinary Center, the EDGE Center, and Generation Park Campus.

To learn about these events and

see more photos, visit

[www.sanjac.edu/grand-openings](http://www.sanjac.edu/grand-openings).



Photos courtesy of San Jacinto College

# 'PROUD TO BE CALLED A VETERAN': NAVY RESERVIST HELPS OTHERS TRANSITION FROM SERVICE TO SCHOOL

By Courtney Morris  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

Home. It was how Jeffrey Newcomb felt the first time he walked into a San Jacinto College veteran center.

The U.S. Navy reservist wanted a degree to fall back on, and a web search led him to San Jac.

"The veteran center is a place for us to be us," he said. "Our language and conversations are a lot different from students who are 18 or 19. We've experienced life in a different way."

After a recent deployment to Iraq, Newcomb returned to the College this fall, where he is pursuing a natural science degree while working in the Central Campus veteran center. He shares what led him to the Navy, how he navigates school and service, and why it's important to honor veterans.

**Q: Why did you join the military?**

**A:** I joined the Navy to be a carpenter. One of my motivations is that both my grandfathers were in the military. My grandparents had a huge influence on my life. I'm a Christian, and I thought [being a carpenter] would also bring me a little closer to my faith.

I'm part of a much larger community — we are the Navy mobile construction engineers. We get deployed all over the world to



Photo courtesy of Courtney Morris, San Jacinto College

support our fellow soldiers in all branches. As an engineering unit, we do everything from keeping a camp running to building hospitals, runways, and providing a better quality of life for our fellow soldiers.

**Q: How has San Jac helped you transition back from deployment?**

**A:** When I contacted the educational planners here, they were very supportive ... and immediately offered me to come back as a work-study student, which got me back into a routine after deployment. Having a good support team here has definitely allowed me to continue to pursue my degree.

**Did you know?**

San Jacinto College salutes those who have honorably served our country! Approximately 600 veterans and their dependents currently attend San Jac using Veterans Affairs GI Bill and Texas State Hazlewood Act benefits. Learn more: [sanjac.edu/veterans](http://sanjac.edu/veterans)

**Q: What is your role as a student worker?**

**A:** My job starts when a veteran walks through the door ... whether it's helping them to log into the computer, search for classes, navigate websites and apps like SOS and Blackboard, or access student email. If they want information about any state or federal benefit, we provide the latest info we have.

**Q: What advice do you have for others attending school during or after their military service?**

**A:** It goes along with anything else you do in life: You want to make a plan. Make sure you can find classes that work around your schedule or get a job that can work around your classes. Make sure you can give each class enough time so that you can succeed. If you're in class six hours a week, you need 12 hours of study to get that A.

*Proud continued on page 5*

## SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

DATE	EVENT	TIME	SITE
Nov. 9	Orpheus Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Nov. 10	CPD: Conversational Spanish	12-1 p.m.	Register at <a href="mailto:community.engagement@sjcd.edu">community.engagement@sjcd.edu</a> or call 281-476-1893
Nov. 15	Jazz Ensemble Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Nov. 17	Steel Band Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Slocomb Auditorium (C12)
Nov. 22	Guitar Ensemble Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Nov. 24-28	Thanksgiving Break – no classes		All campuses and online
Nov. 29	Wind Ensemble Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Nov. 30	Vocal Area Recital	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Dec. 1	Choir Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Dec. 2	String Orchestra Concert	7 p.m.	Central Campus, Monte Blue Music Building (C5)
Dec. 3	Evolve Fall Dance Concert	7 p.m.	South Campus, Fine Arts Building (S15)

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



# HATTAWAY REFLECTS ON NEARLY 50 YEARS OF TEACHING AT SAN JAC

By **Melissa Trevizo**  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

When Dr. Karen Hattaway set foot on San Jacinto College's Central Campus, NASA was still prepping to send a man to the moon. Her career as an English professor spans 48 of the College's 60-year history, making her the most senior faculty member on staff.

Fresh out of the University of Oklahoma with her master's degree, Hattaway was looking to start her career. Her husband, David, held a chemical engineering degree and accepted an offer at the Deer Park Shell refinery.

"I had never been to Houston before," she said. "I was working for OU's office of advanced studies, but I hadn't found a job in Texas yet. I heard there was a college in the area, so I called to ask if they were in need of teachers."

When Hattaway placed the call, it was commencement day 1969. With most of the staff busy preparing, Dr. Thomas



Photo courtesy of Melissa Trevizo, San Jacinto College

Spencer, San Jac's first president, answered the phone himself.

"Dr. Spencer told me that there was a local candidate for the job, but I was welcome to come the following Monday to interview for the position. After my interview, I thought I'd never hear from the College again," she said.

Checking the mailbox one last time before leaving Oklahoma, she discovered a letter from San Jac offering her the English professor position. In fall 1969, 25-year-old Hattaway began teaching English Composition I to the growing student body.

"We were gaining about a thousand students a semester," said Hattaway. "As a new teacher with 40 students in each class, I was overwhelmed, but encouraged by great mentors."

Veteran teachers helped Hattaway navigate not only the College's culture but also relationships with department chairs and other administrators.

"Faculty mentors help to create a sense of community. I'm so grateful to the ones who have mentored me — and to have served as a mentor many times over the years myself," she said.

Finding her place at the College,

Hattaway helped start the first English as a second language courses at San Jac.

"The College has always been reflective of the community, and we saw a need for ESL classes," she said. "In the first cohort, we had 28 students from 16 countries with various levels of competence."

Many of Hattaway's ESL students were international students, with both language and cultural challenges.

"We were teaching them English with cut-out photos from Montgomery Ward catalogues and homemade worksheets we created ourselves," she said. "We also helped them assimilate to a completely foreign environment."

Besides her ESL work, Hattaway helped create an early version of the honors program.

"Several of our surrounding school districts requested that we offer an honors option for their graduates," said Hattaway. "We started with English and history, and the program blossomed from there."

In 1983, Hattaway earned her doctorate from Rice University, thanks to encouragement from colleagues.

"I thought there was no way I would get accepted to the program," she said. "I didn't think I would pass the GRE, I didn't have the money, and I was too old."

To her surprise, she passed the GRE exam and received an acceptance letter to the Rice program. Soon after, Hattaway won a Delta Kappa Gamma Society International scholarship, which covered the program expenses.

"There were no more excuses at that point," she said.

In 2015, Hattaway was selected by the League for Innovation in the Community College to author the prestigious "Cross Papers #18," an in-depth monograph that has shaped teaching strategies in many of the nation's community colleges.

She has also directed the Eisenhower and Teacher Quality Grants, which brought together Galena Park and Sheldon ISD teachers to improve student learning.

With nearly 50 years of experience, Hattaway still loves teaching, even though the technology and generations of students continue to change.

"Teaching is the only profession where what is created never goes out of style or wears out. Education is forever," she said.



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College



Photo courtesy of San Jacinto College

*Proud continued from page 4*

**Q: What does it mean to be a veteran?**

**A:** A veteran is anyone who has served in the military. Veterans represent less than 7 percent of the population, and to me, it doesn't matter where they've served, how many years on active duty or reserve status, I would never want someone to feel they're not included in that definition. We all serve as a

cohesive unit.

I've done four tours overseas, four deployments, and I'm proud to be called a veteran.

**Q: What makes veterans feel most appreciated year-round?**

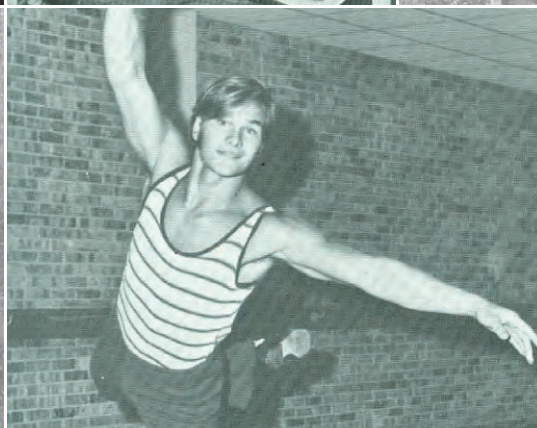
**A:** Veterans Day is for those who put their lives on the line to defend people we do not know and property that is not ours. It is the sacrifice we all make when we

put that uniform on.

We're not really looking for overboard recognition or a pat on the back. As a proud citizen of our great country, I believe I have a duty, and, in fact, we all do. If you notice someone who is an active-duty member or a veteran, have a conversation with them and just thank them for their service. By showing veterans some appreciation throughout the year, you would not believe how far that goes.



# SAN JACINTO COLLEGE THROUGH THE YEARS: 1970-1979



[sanjac.edu/60-years](http://sanjac.edu/60-years)

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# GLOBE-TROTTING ALUMNA REACHES DESTINATION THANKS TO CURIOSITY AND TIME

By Courtney Morris  
SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

At negative 40 degrees, the Celsius and Fahrenheit scales line up.

Standing on the deck of a research boat in Antarctica with glaciers looming in the distance, Laura Taylor Barnett experienced this phenomenon herself. And beneath the balaclava shielding her nose and mouth, the San Jacinto College alumna was beaming.

In January 2020, two months before the pandemic shut down the world, Barnett boarded the Nathaniel B. Palmer in Chile and cruised to Antarctica for the Thwaites Glacier Offshore Research Project.

The undergraduate student traveled with a team of 26 geologists, geophysicists, and oceanographers who were collecting sediment cores, seismic and multibeam data, and water samples. Their goal? To understand what drove ancient and modern glacial retreat.

Just eight years earlier, Barnett would have pictured herself far from the southernmost continent. Back then, she was pursuing criminal justice at San Jac, hoping to become a correctional officer.

“I was young and wanted to change the world,” she said. “Then I got disheartened by the correctional system.”

While figuring out her new path, Barnett wound up in a physical geology class as a science credit. She had never clicked with science before, but the course content and her “young, hip” professor, Dr. Liana Boop, changed that. It was Barnett’s “of course” moment.

“I had always asked a bunch of



Photo courtesy of Laura Taylor Barnett

questions but didn’t connect that curiosity to a research mindset,” she said.

Barnett finished at San Jac as a physical science major and enrolled in the University of Houston’s geology program, “the stepping stone that made the most sense.”

While pursuing her bachelor’s degree, she took three graduate-level classes from Julia Wellner, a professor who sidelined as chief scientist for expeditions to analyze the Thwaites Glacier. Dubbed the “Doomsday Glacier,” Thwaites could raise sea level 2 feet worldwide when it melts.

After spying Barnett’s interest in climate change, Wellner invited her to be an alternate for an upcoming trip. Two weeks before departure, Barnett was tapped to join the team.

“I was the alternate who got lucky,” she said.

Before leaving on the research boat, Barnett and her teammates borrowed parkas, fleeces, and boots at the U.S. Antarctic Program station in Chile. Her “hideous” orange-red jacket soon offered welcome protection from subzero temperatures.

Barnett’s team not only collected sediment cores off glaciers but also discovered a newly exposed island. The predominantly female science team named this island Sif after the Greek goddess and wife of Thor.

Antarctica exceeded Barnett’s wildest expectations.

“It was beautiful beyond words — spectacular,” she said. “The sun never set while we were there. It was kind of trippy. There were even seals and penguins that had never been exposed to humans. They’re not scared of us and don’t run away.”

Beyond Antarctica, Barnett has studied the North American monsoon ancient record in Mexico, collected geophysical data of the Walvis Ridge offshore from Namibia, and investigated the Grand Canyon’s age of formation.

In fact, counting layovers in Europe, Barnett has only Australia left to have stepped on every continent.

While some students earn their



Photo courtesy of Laura Taylor Barnett

associate degrees alongside high school diplomas, Barnett took the opposite route — “not feeling a lot of pressure to graduate at a young age.” She started at San Jac at 19, then completed her bachelor’s at 28. Most semesters, she took fewer than 12 hours, focusing on exploring her interests and asking questions.

Now 29, the former undecided major is pursuing a doctorate in marine geology and geophysics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology-Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute.

“I’m studying ancient hurricanes in the North Atlantic and the ancient

oceanographic conditions that impacted their frequency — to better understand how future hurricanes will develop under rising sea levels and warming oceans,” she said.

Boop, her former San Jac professor, isn’t surprised.

“Only 5 percent of the oceans are explored, so I think this curiosity will serve Laura well in the field of marine geology,” Boop said. “The wonderful thing about research is you can let your questions and curiosities guide you. You don’t have to know exactly what you want to find. You just have to keep asking questions and answering them.”

Time, it turns out, was the best gift Barnett could give herself.

“I never had the mindset ‘I didn’t graduate at 22. I’m a failure!’” she said. “My Ph.D. is so specific. I don’t think I would have gotten there if I hadn’t given myself time.”



## GIVING TUESDAY

### November 30, 2021

Give the gift of education!  
Help the **San Jacinto College Foundation**  
raise \$10,000 for students.

**GIVE TODAY!**

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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 spans five campuses, serving approximately 45,000 credit and non-credit students annually, and 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.