



## NEWS RELEASE

### Santiago Canyon College Celebrates National Apprenticeship Week

**ORANGE, Calif.** - Santiago Canyon College (SCC) joined the state and nation in celebrating National Apprenticeship Week, set from November 13-19. The week recognizes the role that apprenticeships play in creating opportunities and pathways to good, quality jobs and well-paying careers.

In the 2022-23 academic year, 5,288 students were enrolled in SCC's apprenticeship programs, where they gained practical skills while earning a solid paycheck.

"Apprenticeships play a pivotal role in providing workforce opportunities for people who have been traditionally underserved or adversely affected by poverty and inequality," said SCC Vice President of Academic Affairs Jason Parks, Ed.D. "Santiago Canyon is proud to be a leader among California's 116 community colleges in terms of apprenticeships."

Vicente Lopez was one of the 5,288 apprenticeship students in 2022-23, but his journey began in 2019.

"I had a job working in construction, but I was looking for a career," Lopez said. "But I didn't have a formal apprenticeship."

Through Santiago Canyon College's apprenticeship program, Lopez gained an apprenticeship with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) as a maintenance mechanic. The program provides entry to journey-level skills training to MWD's workforce in the technical, vocational, and trades occupations using a combination of structured on-the-job training, related classroom instruction, and home study.

Lopez had hoped to gain an apprenticeship as an electrician, as he worked as a construction electrician.

"You have to take a skills exam and I was last on the list, so I got placed as a maintenance mechanic (apprentice) at a water treatment facility," Lopez said with a laugh. "That's OK, because I wasn't an electrician until I started doing it."

SCC apprentices attend classes providing supplemental instruction directly related to their field. The classes are free and count towards college credit - depending on the program, students may be eligible to receive a higher-level degree or certificate. Upon successful completion, apprentices are issued a Certificate of Completion by the State of California, which officially designates the apprentice as a skilled journey worker.

Lopez completed his apprenticeship earlier in 2023.

"From Day 1, we go in and get on-the-job training and work on the job," Lopez said. "You get raises and promoted every six months. I started at \$18 an hour and when I top out, my salary will be in the six figures."

SCC currently offers seven apprenticeship programs in carpentry, cosmetology, electricity, maintenance mechanic/electricity, operating engineers, power lineman and surveying.

“We’ve been very successful in connecting students with industry sectors to make a living while getting on-the-job training,” Parks said. “We’re grateful for our industry sector partners and we look forward to growing our apprenticeship programs.”

To learn more about apprenticeship program at SCC, visit, [sccollege.edu/apprenticeship/](http://sccollege.edu/apprenticeship/). To learn more about SCC, visit [sccollege.edu/](http://sccollege.edu/). Questions about this press release can be directed to Eugene W. Fields, public information officer at [fields\\_eugene@sccollege.edu](mailto:fields_eugene@sccollege.edu) or 714.628.5936.

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#### **About Santiago Canyon College**

Santiago Canyon College (SCC) is designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution and is one of two colleges in the [Rancho Santiago Community College District](#), serving approximately 17,000 students annually. Accredited in 2000, this dynamic and award-winning institution is located in the city of Orange and provides an array of educational opportunities to more than 195,000 residents comprising the community. SCC offers 221 degree and certificate programs (including 28 associate degrees for transfer). SCC has been ranked among the “50 Best Community Colleges” in the U.S. by College Choice, recognized multiple times by The Chronicle of Higher Education as one of “The Great Colleges to Work For,” received Gold-level status as a Military Friendly School®, and boasts award-winning, dedicated faculty, high-quality and student-centered education, and has an excellent university transfer rate supported by transfer-guarantee programs.