



PHOTO COURTESY OF CALE CRAMMER

The Santiago Canyon College Model U.N. team on the floor of the Model U.N. Conference in New York

## MODEL U.N.

# SCC'S 'CITIZENS OF THE WORLD' WIN PRESTIGIOUS HONOR

## Team brings home 2024 top award for Outstanding Delegation at conference

By Nicole Gregory,  
contributing writer

Students in the Santiago Canyon College Model U.N. team won the award for Outstanding Delegation at the recent Model U.N. Conference in New York — the highest award given. They competed against thousands of students from universities all over the world while practicing their skills of collaboration and communication.

"It's a really big achievement for our students," said Cale Crammer, associate professor of political science, who has coordinated the program at SCC for seven years. "The Delegation Award that they won is spectacular. I feel really good for our students, that they were able to reach that accomplishment. There were

also some individual awards and some partnership awards that really stand out because it's difficult to win those writing awards — the quality of papers that are written at the conference is very, very high."

The Model U.N. teams from SCC have won this award five times — in 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023 and now in 2024.

The challenge for students of Model U.N. is to study and collaborate to find solutions to problems in nations around the world. At the international competition in New York, the SCC team was assigned to represent Honduras and had to find solutions to complex problems Honduras face, including climate change, refugees and development issues.

"Honduras presents us with some interesting challenges for my students when one looks into the country's his-

tory and the country's positions," said Crammer. "I think that that's a big value of Model U.N. — we ask students to put themselves in the shoes of somebody else, to think from their perspective, to think from their point of view. There's a rich tapestry of countries throughout the world that have different interests and different perspectives."

The Model U.N. class at SCC embodies some of the newest trends in education, Crammer said. "It is really student-centric, student-driven, and focuses on active learning," he explained. Collaborating helps students develop professional skills as well as communication and interpersonal skills, which will help them ace a job interview, work with colleagues and collaborate in teams, he said.

"We certainly model the United Nations, and students have to get into the

role of thinking like diplomats," Crammer said. "But more concretely, students give a lot of speeches in class. They engage in deliberative forums where there are no winners and losers. It's about thinking about what's possible for us to do as members of the global community to address some of the most difficult issues."

Surprisingly, most of the Model U.N. students are not political science majors but rather STEM students who want to be able to speak and write well and be comfortable in social and professional situations.

At the New York competition, students got to sharpen those speaking and writing skills. For some, it was the first time they had traveled out of the state or stayed in a hotel in the heart of Manhattan.

"On the first day in New York, they

AWARD » PAGE 5



PHOTO COURTESY OF RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Teresa Hodges is taking courses at Santiago Canyon College that facilitate her work with the City of Carlsbad's Municipal Water District.

## WATER SCIENCE

# Thanks to SCC, Teresa Hodges has been able to map things out

## The Carlsbad utilities engineering technician is reaching her goal with classes aimed at her future

By Greg Hardesty,  
contributing writer

Teresa Hodges recalls seeing surveying data on maps while working for the City of Carlsbad and wondering what the numbers meant.

One day, she told herself, I'm going to learn about that.

And so, at 62 years old, she is.

Last year, Hodges took her first surveying course at Santiago Canyon College in Orange. The tough, 90-minute, one-way commute from her office in San Diego County a couple of times a week for three-hour evening classes didn't deter her.

Things got easier, driving-wise, the next semester, when Hodges took a follow-up course on advanced plane sur-

veying.

Now, she's also taking classes in SCC's water utility science program with the goal of becoming a wastewater treatment operator or water treatment operator.

"The instructors are all encouraging," Hodges said. "It's been a fabulous and wonderful journey."

The same could be said of Hodges' life.

## Encouraging upbringing

A former Marine with a varied professional career that has included managing a women's athletic clothing store, Hodges, along with her husband, Joseph, has raised four children who now are in their 30s.

Two decades ago, Hodges overcame two extended and potentially debilitating

SURVEY » PAGE 5

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REAL ESTATE

From relocation guide to Realtor to teacher, Alana Gates learned the job by living it

Moving from Australia to the U.S. kick-started her career

By Lou Ponsi, contributing writer

Alana Gates' passion lies in providing the tools needed to succeed in the multifaceted field of real estate.

With years of experience working in real estate from multiple sides, Gates said, she discovered her passion as an educator after witnessing the struggles of other industry professionals who had not received the proper training.

"You get your license, and you're literally thrown to the wolves," Gates said. "It's like sink or swim, and so many people sink."

Now, as a full-time professor and chair of the Real Estate program at Santiago Canyon College, Gates is being recognized for her many contributions to the field.

She is the recipient of the Advancing Real Estate Education Award for 2024.

Given by the California Community Colleges Real Estate Education Center, the award "recognizes faculty who have made exceptional contributions to advancing real estate and appraisal education."

Funded by a grant from the California Community College Real Estate Education Endowment, the center provides resources for educators and students seeking vocational real estate and appraisal education.

Of the 116 community colleges in California, 68 offer real estate courses.

Receiving the award is an honor, said Gates, who has served as both department chair and professor for five years.

"And, then, when I had grown the program enough to warrant a full-time faculty member to be hired, I was fortunate enough that I was the one who was chosen to be the full-time faculty," Gates said. "So, I was very proud to be hired on full time."

Gates has played a key role in develop-

ing new and specialized courses in the real estate curriculum on legal compliance, transaction coordination, tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities, and buyers and sellers seminars.

She has also streamlined the process of enrolling in courses.

"Alana is so collaborative across the state," said Emily Maynard, director of the real estate education center. "I think that's something that made her stand out in this year's pool. When she creates something, she's willing to share it with other faculty as well, so that adds to the development of real estate education. She's in so many of our collaborative efforts, not only on the real estate side, but also on the appraisal side."

Recognizing the diverse student demographics at SCC, Gates is working with instructor Barbar Cox in spearheading initiatives to support Hispanic students, including the development of an English/Spanish dictionary and offering select courses in Spanish.

"Alana is very open and receptive to any ideas that are going to help her students learn and help them in their endeavors," Cox said. "She just never shies away from a challenge, whether it's to develop a new program or a new course."

A native of Australia, Gates immigrated to California with her husband and two sons in 1999 when her husband was hired by Panasonic Avionics after developing the first in-flight on-demand entertainment system, she said.

"He always wanted to come to America, so we did," she said. "We upended our kids and said we're moving to America."

After navigating through the challenges of finding a place in a new country for her family to live, Gates started guiding some of her husband's colleagues, who had also relocated from other countries, through the process.

"And, because I was doing that, (my husband) said, 'You're really good at this, but you're throwing money away. You need to go and get your license to be a real estate agent,'" she said.

Gates followed her husband's suggestion, acquiring a real estate sales license and starting to sell homes.

But when health issues made it diffi-



PHOTO BY DREW A. KELLEY, CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER Alana Gates, professor and chair of the Real Estate program at Santiago Canyon College

cult to be out in the field selling, Gates' broker suggested she work in the office as compliance manager.

"The other thing that kind of motivated me was being in a compliance role where I was checking files and auditing files. I was seeing from a transaction coordinator's point of view and an auditing point of view the amount of people out there that didn't know what they were doing, had been thrown to the wolves and were trying to find their feet."

She discovered a love of the legal side of the business and "got a bee in my bonnet and said I want to get a degree."

Gates attended Irvine Valley College, where her counselor suggested she should pursue teaching.

Why not? she thought, and so it was off to college, where Gates earned an associate degree in real estate and then a business administration degree from Cal

State Fullerton.

By 2016, she was teaching at a community college.

"And so, I thought, OK, and I was hyper-focused on that and just ran with it, and I love it," she said.

Gates developed curricula with classes focusing on all aspects of real estate.

"People don't know about all the wonderful crossover," she said. "We have photography, drones. We have attorneys, people who love to decorate. We had the staging and design company."

Gates does outreach on and off campus.

In an event planned for October, 40 industry professionals will be set up on campus from whom students will be able to gather information.

"We did one in April," she said. "We did one in October last year. It just amazes students."

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Managing Editor: Jennifer Karmarkar  
Project Manager: Caitlin Adams  
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Director of Communications: Caroline Wong

Have a story idea or comment for the section? Contact Caroline Wong at [cawong@scng.com](mailto:cawong@scng.com) or 714-796-2202

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HEALTH CARE

# \$1.2 million CalOptima grant will expand education

Programs that will benefit include vocational nursing, behavior technician and medical assistants

By Jenelyn Russo, contributing writer

Opportunities for local students to launch their careers in the health care field will become more accessible, thanks to a recent \$1.2 million grant from CalOptima to Santiago Canyon College.

The goal of the grant is to expand educational health care opportunities in SCC's Division of Continuing Education and create an employment pipeline between SCC students and CalOptima service providers.

"For us, it's a huge benefit to receive this grant," said SCC Dean of Instruction and Student Services Chrissy Gascon, who wrote the grant proposal. "Our goal is really to upskill, or give initial skills, and place a student into a job making livable wages."

SCC's Continuing Education programs are tuition-free, noncredit- or nonunit-bearing pathways, and the programs this CalOptima grant will expand include Behavior Technician, Medical Assistant and Licensed Vocational Nurse.

The nursing program is under development, and the grant funds will enable SCC to add this option to its Continuing Education offerings. One of the components of this new launch will include the build-out of state-of-the-art classrooms that will house the latest technology and equipment. Once developed, the 12- to 18-month program is expected to produce 60 graduates annually.

SCC's Medical Assistant program will also receive new classrooms and equipment, as the program is currently held off-campus at Hope Builders, a Santa Ana-based nonprofit that provides mentorship and skills training for young adults. With the estimated completion of these new classrooms in spring 2025, the relocation of the program to campus is expected to increase capacity to 150 students annually. Graduates who complete the program are prepared to work in a medical office setting assisting doctors or physician assistants.

The Behavior Technician program prepares students to follow a career in the field of behavior analysis. After completing four to eight weeks of online coursework, students can become certified and pursue positions that assist parents or guardians with children who are on the autism spectrum.

The current SCC program capacity for Behavior Technician is approximately



PHOTO COURTESY OF RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

SCC President Jeannie Kim, left, presents a certificate of recognition to Jakob Martinez. The CalOptima grant will benefit students pursuing careers in health care.

25-50 students. The grant funding will allow for up to 100 students and will provide student incentives upon employment as a way to improve retention in the field.

Certificate graduates who stay employed with their CalOptima provider for six months would receive a \$250 incentive. At 12 months, they would receive a \$500 incentive, and at 18 months, a \$1,000 incentive.

Another component of the grant will allow SCC to add the position of job liaison, someone to assist students after program completion with entering the workforce with CalOptima partners.

With the city of Orange and Orange County being a hub for several medical facilities, the need for medical professionals is growing.

"Students in these programs get all of the skills they need to get a career started, and what we're hoping for is that

they might come to our program and start and move up the line," Gascon said. "Someone becoming a medical assistant might then choose to get their RN and further their career."

SCC's investment in local students not only provides them with a career path but also shows a commitment to partnering with the local community in growing the workforce and the economy.

"What we're trying to do via our non-credit or continuing education programs and workforce development programs is to provide them with that lift up, the opportunity to be able to take classes for free so that they're able to move into higher paying jobs via promotions because they earned a certificate, gained a new skill set or they decided to make a complete career change," said SCC President Jeannie G. Kim. "It's not just for education's sake or knowledge's sake. It's really for that economic mobility and

being an economic engine for our local community."

The CalOptima grant funding will be awarded over three years beginning in July, in time for the start of SCC's new fiscal year. The hope is that the funds will cause a ripple effect of benefits that stretch from providing affordable education options to local students to achieving change within the local health care workforce.

"These kinds of efforts are incredibly important to any community that's trying to grow and trying to support its community members, whether they work here or live here or both," Kim said. "That's the singular focus of what we're trying to do here at Santiago Canyon College. ... We're very eager to be able to show what we can do, and we've already been doing it, but this funding will help us to be able to take that to the next level. That's what I'm most excited about."

U-VILLAGE

# Portable classrooms outgrow usefulness, will be decommissioned

College must determine how to reallocate space now and build for the future

By Nicole Gregory, contributing writer

The 30-year-old portable classrooms known as the U-Village on the Santiago Canyon College campus are no longer meeting the needs of faculty and students who use them for a variety of classes. In addition to being old, the portable classrooms were damaged by the past winter's rains and recent earthquakes, making them unsafe, said Jeanne G. Kim, president of SCC.

A plan is in place to decommission the U-Village, which means the campus community must re-evaluate its spaces and building needs now and for the future. The first step is relocating the programs that currently use the aging portable classrooms to other rooms on campus — no small task.

"We have quite a few classes and operations that are functioning from that location," Kim said. "So we're developing a plan. We have an entire campus task force that is working to figure out where some of these operations and classes will go onto the main campus.

"It will create a little bit of a crunch on the campus, but we are trying to explore every opportunity to be able to maximize and do some additional space utilization planning around all of that."

The disruption may have positive consequences. "We now have the opportunity to revisit how the campus spaces are being used and plan for better uses for some," said Denise Foley, acting Dean of Business and Career Education.

Fortunately, the shift will not happen overnight.

"The move will occur in stages," Foley said, "and we do not anticipate a negative impact on the academics. In fact, for some programs, the move to new and better spaces will be an improvement of the facilities, so the academics should be positively impacted.

"Overall, we are looking forward to the move and are hopeful that it can be accomplished in a short time frame with as little disruption to all the programs and offices in the U-Village and entire campus as possible."

Santiago Canyon College needs campus improvement and growth, according to Kim — specifically for the SCC Career Technical Education programs as well as the Veterans and Student Life Center



PHOTOS BY DREW A. KELLEY, CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The collection of temporary structures, known as the SCC campus U-Village, is slated to be removed.



The structures have also been damaged after the unusually strong rainstorms of the past winter.

— if the funding can be put in place. "The RSCCD District has been considering a bond," she said. "The board of trustees, I hope, will be able to move forward on that decision in June. I'm hopeful we will be able to build a Career Technical Education center and a middle college high school, which would handle all of our medical occupations programs."

Middle college high schools are schools that are located on college campuses with a traditional high school program as well as access to college classes in a specialized field.

Kim hopes to include a middle college high school near SCC's Career Technical Education program that would emphasize workforce development related to medical occupations. Development of the middle college high school would be in partnership with Orange Unified School District.

"We would have those high school students who are interested in these medical occupations," Kim explained. As a part of their high school degree, the students could become certified as nurse assistants or lab technicians.



After serving as classrooms and meeting space for 30 years, the portable buildings are no longer safe.

"They could also earn an associate's degree and also get all of the college credits for their Cal-GETC requirements, a transfer ability to UCs or to the CSU," she said. "They would graduate high school as rising juniors in college. We already have a program like that called the Early College Academy that we operate in partnership with Orange Unified School District out of Orange High School. So, we want to model it along those lines."

Students who want to work upon graduating high school would be certified for jobs in hospitals, such as medical billing or medical coding, filling the need for workers in the medical field in Orange County.

"What we see is the proliferation of a lot of hospitals and a lot of medical centers — we're becoming a real hub," the president said. "All of them require a workforce, and we need to get students involved and excited about it from the time that they're in high school. A lot of our students may not necessarily even be thinking about four-year institutions. But coming to a community college, going to a high school, that opens them up to occupations within the medical arena — not just doctors and nurses — that would benefit this community."

That said, the immediate task is decommissioning the portable classrooms, which should begin in 2025, coinciding with the college's 25th anniversary.

While envisioning hopes for the college's immediate and distant future, Kim's focus is on students. "What we're looking at is to figure out all of our educational needs and ensure we're supporting our students."

ESPORTS

# Have keyboard, will compete

## SCC's digital warriors, aka the esports team, are leaders in the field's growth

By Larry Urish, contributing writer

If you were to picture a college athlete in action, might you envision a bookish, headphone-wearing teen sitting in a darkened room, leaning toward a computer monitor, frantically hammering a keyboard and barking out instructions to nearby teammates?

Didn't think so. Yet, in the not-too-distant future, that image may become more widely associated with collegiate sports.

That's because the growth of esports, which encompasses the world of competitive organized video gaming, has been nothing short of stunning. Worth an estimated \$1.98 million in 2023, the global esports market is expected to grow to \$10.9 million by 2033, according to Market.us.

To see this trend reflected at the collegiate level, look no further than the new esports team at Santiago Community College. While the squad is currently composed of five students who compete in local and regional events, SCC is committed to an esports program rooted in expansion and success.

In April, Norco College invited Santiago Canyon College to compete in three exhibition games against the Norco squad. "It was part of a larger event to encourage local high school students to visit the campus and consider attending college," said Roshan Uma, SCC's esports coordinator. While Santiago won 3-0, Uma downplayed the victory, noting that the event was all about helping prospective students.

Not too long ago, Uma served as president of Norco College's Esports Club, then worked professionally in developing esports at the school. After his boss at Norco, Jason Parks, moved to Santiago Community College to serve as SCC's VP of Academic Affairs, he hired Uma in February to help develop the esports program.

While one obvious goal is success on the digital battlefield, Uma continually stresses how exposure to esports can benefit students in helping them learn the value of practice, planning, teamwork and calm execution. Student welfare remains a common denominator in what he calls the "three pillars" of SCC esports: community, curriculum and competition.

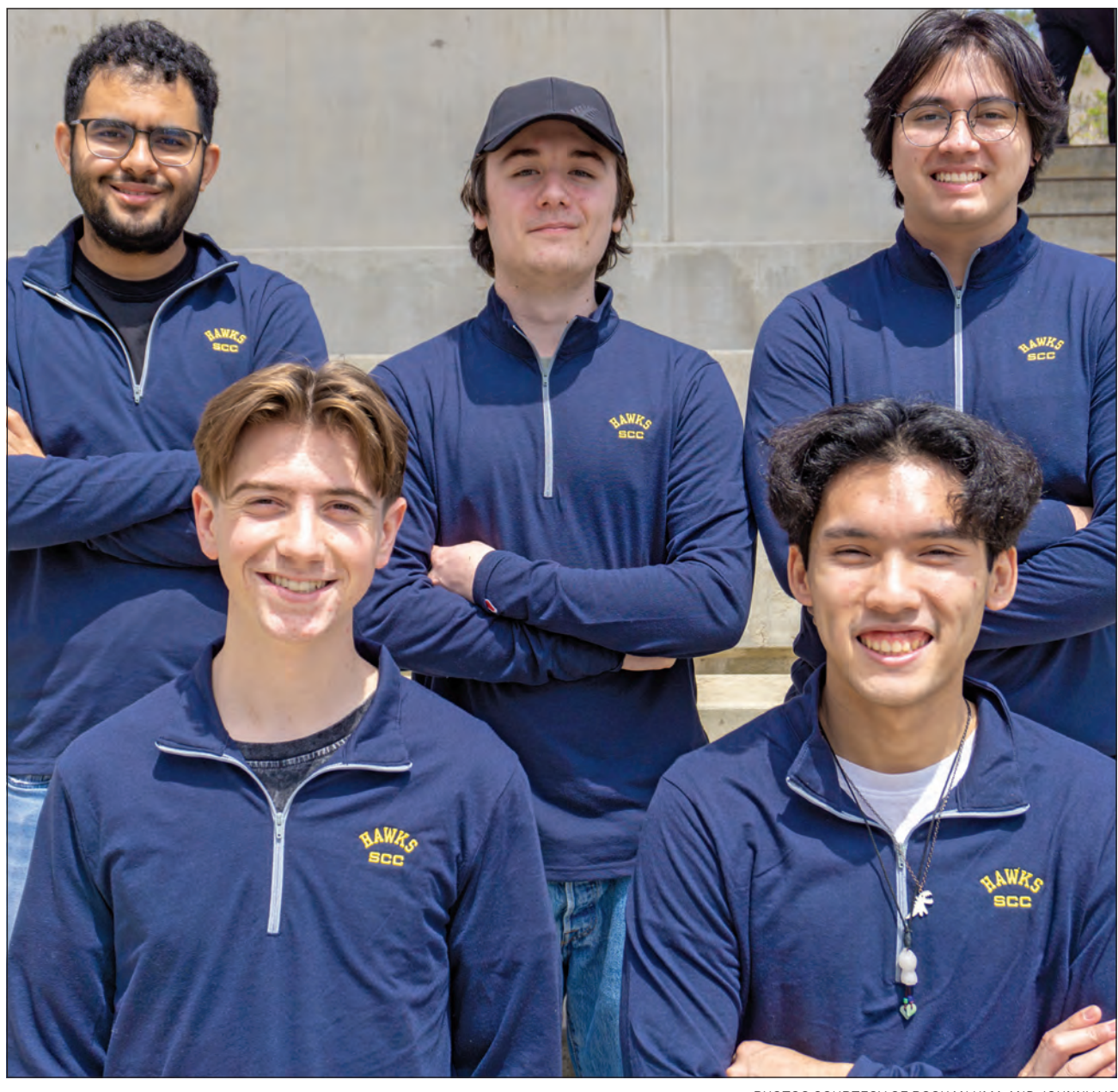
Regarding the first pillar, "Esports allows students to be in a like-minded community," Uma said. "It also involves connecting with the college as a whole. We're making sure that esports is embedded in the campus culture and that other college programs can lean in and work with us."

This sense of community extends beyond the campus. For this year's Orange Chamber of Commerce May Parade, SCC President Jeannie Kim suggested that esports represent the college at the parade, Uma said. "So we built 'Star Wars' spaceship floats and took them to the May the 4th parade. ... Like Dr. Parks, Dr. Kim has been one of esports' major supporters toward our growth and success."

The benefits for students are appreciated. "There is the community aspect of gaming, where people come together with a similar mindset and enjoy the same things," said SCC child development major Izzy Nguyen, one of SCC esports' student leaders who, while not a competitor, helps Uma run the program. "It helps me socialize more with students and learn to be more of a leader."

Computer engineering major Johnny Vo, another esports student leader, concurs. "Esports has given me an outlet to network outside of school and unwind from rigorous academics."

When discussing the second pillar, curriculum, Uma encourages anyone involved in SCC esports



The SCC esports team, clockwise from top left: Zayd Abou-Abdou, Kyle Sanchez, Kevin Billings, Will Tran and Brendin Bish

to apply what they learn about various aspects of the endeavor to a broader range of professional opportunities and life skills. "Students will see an immense overlap between general courses they've taken and how what they've learned can be applied to the esports industry?"

In addition, Uma said, "When developing esports curriculum, it's important to have both the academic professional and the industry professional in the same room." Moving forward, involving industry pros in the SCC esports curriculum will be a top priority.

Competition, the third esports pillar, starts with the team selection process. "Now that we have a team, we'll have tryouts, giving everyone a fair shot at joining," Uma said. "Returning team members will also have a say in who joins them."

While SCC esports teams participate in four different sports — Uma stresses that what many see as a digital "game" is considered a completely separate sport — he noted that, "Currently, the only active team that we have competes in Valorant." Each competitor in this "tactical hero shooter" sport acts as an agent, either attacking for or defending the team.



Competitive esports is becoming a fast-growing addition to collegiate sports.

As far as the other digital sports, "I'm looking ahead to when we have more competitors to fill the ranks of the (future) teams," Uma added.

Grateful to be coordinating the esports program at Santiago Community College, Uma wants to pay his good fortune forward.

Along with his whip-smart intelligence, organizational skills and desire to help others, Uma maintains that, when it comes to his involvement in esports, "I got lucky landing in my career. I'm dedicating my career so future students don't have to be as lucky."

TRANSFER PROGRAMS

# SCC and CSUF agree to mutual transfer program

## Memorandum of Understanding would let SCC students take university courses

fine and performing arts programs.

Another feature of the agreement includes free shuttles taking students between the two campuses. SCC and CSUF students will be able to participate in programs on both campuses and use

campus resources including the libraries, career services and CSUF's student union with their joint college/university student ID cards, which will feature logos of both institutions.

SCC students will benefit from the up-

per-division courses CSUF will offer in person at SCC. SCC students can enroll in these courses at SCC tuition rates using the concurrent enrollment program available for up to 12 units at any CSU or UC campus.

RSCCD Communications

Members of the Santiago Canyon College President's Cabinet recently participated in a Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony with California State University, Fullerton.

The May 6 ceremony, complete with banners, balloons, specially printed T-shirts and an exchange of signed documents between SCC President Dr. Jeannie G. Kim and CSUF President Dr. Sylvia A. Alva took place on the Cal State campus. The agreement establishes a Guaranteed Transfer Program from SCC to CSUF and CSUF's first year would receive Reverse Transfer Program. It begins in summer 2024.

Under the terms of the memorandum, Cal State Fullerton students who drop out or are academically disqualified during their first year would receive a second chance at college.

"The Reverse Transfer Program will encourage students who left CSUF in the last 5 years to enroll at SCC," Kim said. "By enrolling full-time at SCC and successfully completing one year with us while maintaining a 2.8 grade point average, they will be re-enrolled at CSUF as transfer students."

The Guaranteed Transfer Program from SCC to CSUF applies to students with a minimum 2.8 GPA for all majors except nursing, criminal justice and/or



Seated, Santiago Canyon College President Jeannie Kim and Cal State Fullerton President Sylvia Alva are joined by staff and administrators from both campuses for the signing ceremony.

RANCHO ACADEMY

# DEI program offers potential for diverse knowledge and opportunity

## Graduates gain opportunity for employment with community college districts

RSCCD Communications

Rancho Academy, a pioneering initiative under Rancho Santiago Community College District's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, embodies the district's commitment to fostering diverse talent in California's Community Colleges.

Established in 2020, Rancho Academy offers a pipeline for those interested in part-time faculty positions at RSCCD or other California Community College Districts. With an emphasis on increasing diversity within the district, the program consists of a 10-week online program covering topics including the history of California community colleges, shared governance and educational frameworks. Once they complete course work, program graduates earn a certificate of completion signed by RSCCD Chancellor Marvin Martinez. Alumni of Rancho Academy have gone on to work at Santiago Canyon College, Santa Ana College and the RSCCD district office as adjunct professors, program specialists, counselors, ODEI coordinators or Title IX specialists.

"I am super glad that I took advantage of this opportunity because it's presented me with valuable resources and information that has made me more knowledgeable and confident in my aspirations of being a future educator, especially within the community college system," said Dayra Lopez Magana, an alumnus of the Rancho Academy.

my Program. "I really have appreciated this emphasis on diversity and inclusion and on the wellness of the students and the staff."

The program targets individuals who have attained a master's or doctorate degree or are a current master's or doctoral student and are interested in teaching at community colleges. The free, 10-week course offers participants job interview training, resume help and valuable networking opportunities with hiring managers, administrators and faculty from RSCCD, with the potential to be hired straight out of the program.

"We want to be a resource, not only to within our CCD, but also to other people who want to be able to teach and don't have the people to bridge them into the system, because sometimes we get connected into jobs because of the people we know," said Emelyne Camacho, a program coordinator for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Camacho and Jasmin Hudson, who also works in the district's DEI office, are graduates of Rancho Academy and praised the program for the networking opportunities and connections they were able to make within the college district. Hudson says that since they have expanded the program, her team has also begun hosting job fairs for past cohorts, which have a hiring rate of around 80 percent.

Applications for the June 2024 Rancho Academy cohort will be accepted beginning in May, with 25 available slots. The deadline to apply is June 2; the program will begin June 12.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Rancho Academy is a new initiative of the RSCCD's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and aims to recruit new part-time faculty roles.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

The program will target educators at the master's and doctoral level and provides free job interview training, resume help and networking opportunities.

## Survey

FROM PAGE 1

tating illnesses to return to college. Her thirst for learning comes from her parents.

"They always encouraged us to be avid readers and to get a good education," said Hodges, who grew up in Dayton, Ohio. She started in the Carlsbad Municipal Water District's transportation engineering department in 2018 as an engineering technician but made a lateral move to her current position - a utilities engineering technician - in 2021.

In her current position, she uses computer tools such as Autodesk Civil3D to work with civil engineers in a 3D model-based environment to produce such things as location maps for complex infrastructure projects.

### Serious health issues

In high school, Hodges became interested in fashion merchandising as well as drafting.

She was 17 when she entered the military on the delayed-entry program. Hodges served four years in the Marines, working in supply and later as a chaplain's assistant, and settled in Macon, Ga., after being honorably discharged in 1984.

She got married while working as a store manager and taking business courses at a junior college. In the early 1990s, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and, after that, polymyositis, an autoimmune disorder.

Those serious health issues brought

her family to Southern California so she could be treated at Naval Medical Center San Diego (her husband works for the U.S. Navy).

After doctors got those diseases in check with no serious lingering issues, Hodges started taking college courses in 2005 - first at MiraCosta College in Oceanside.

"Going back to school was a marker, a signifier of me regaining my life back from these illnesses," Hodges said.

She went on to earn an undergraduate degree in history at Cal State San Marcos, where she was on the honor roll, and she also took water technology and wastewater technology classes at Palomar College in San Marcos.

"I've always been interested in history," Hodges said, "and when I took my first wastewater class, I simply fell in love with the history of it and the microorganisms that help clean up the water. I was just fascinated by that."

She found out about SCC's surveying course while attending a water education seminar there in 2021.

"Oh, my goodness!" Hodges recalls thinking. "There's a surveying program here? I couldn't believe it."

### High level of education

Hodges, who lives in Oceanside, plans to continue taking classes at SCC through 2025 and then work on becoming certified in wastewater and water treatment.

She said all the professors at SCC have been very approachable.

"You can ask them any questions," she said, "and they're always available."

Hodges is grateful for the high level of education she's receiving at SCC.

"I can't believe I've been afforded the opportunity to learn surveying and water utility science at Santiago Canyon College," she said. "There are so many aspects to both. It's blown my mind."



PHOTO COURTESY OF RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Teresa Hodges at her job with Carlsbad Municipal Water District

## Award

FROM PAGE 1

go into a grand ballroom, and there were thousands of people in this room," Crammer said. He instructed his students to go around the room, introduce themselves to people and start conversations with strangers.

"There were delegations from Japan, from Ecuador, from China, from Middle Eastern countries like the United Arab Emirates," Crammer said. "We had a large number of colleges from Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy. These students come from everywhere across the world."

Crammer accompanied the 18 students to the New York competition, as he has done for nearly 20 years. "I think all my students would say hands down it was something they'll always remember. They get to go to the United Nations and hear from diplomats. The last three secretary generals of the United Nations have all spoken to teams of mine."

The Model U.N. program is designed to broaden awareness and build confidence.

Crammer was in the Model U.N. program as a student at Cal State San Marcos and during graduate school at UC Riverside. In the beginning, he was terrified of speaking in front of people, but, eventually, he could speak in front of thousands.

"It transformed my life," he said.

"It teaches students to be citizens of the world," he added. "I tell them that it is a humanistic endeavor, and it is a belief that citizenship must take on a more global perspective."

Crammer's students already grasp this.

"I think they see themselves more than just understanding the importance of being globally minded for employment reasons," he said. "I think they see that today's problems don't have passports. Climate change doesn't stop at the border between the United States and Mexico, so they have to think about issues that cut across the way that we might traditionally think about politics."



PHOTO COURTESY OF RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

The SCC Model U.N. team was assigned to study and propose solutions to real-world problems facing Honduras, including climate change, refugees and development issues.

CHILD CARE

# Child Development Centers fill community needs and train tomorrow's caregivers

For 80 years, RSCCD program has provided support and education for students and families

RSCCD Communications

For over 80 years, Rancho Santiago Community College District has provided essential support for families in the community with its Child Development Centers, offering day care services and far more.

With their focus on holistic child development and family empowerment, the centers provide individualized programs, including wellness checks, comprehensive assessments and professional consultations.

Among the centers' initiatives is an apprenticeship program launched in February that is designed to cultivate the next generation of child care professionals. The effort has proved invaluable in the face of significant shortages of qualified early childhood educators after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Child Development Centers serve approximately 600 children, including children of RSCCD students and kids from low-income families in the community.

Among the family services provided by the centers are home visits for newborns as young as 2 weeks old, life planning assistance and consultations with an on-site nutritionist.

"We are here for the benefit of our students, first and foremost. All of our students are eligible to receive child care at any of our centers," said Janneth Linnell, the executive director of Child Development at RSCCD.

RSCCD has provided child care services to students and faculty since World War II. The huge influx of women into the workforce at that time created a need for low-cost child care, and the program was born.

My Le Pham, the department's quality assurance director, noted that over the past eight decades, numerous people who were helped by the development centers as children later pursued their education at RSCCD schools.

Pham, who began as an infant and toddler teacher over 20 years ago, says that she has run into former students at RSCCD colleges years later.

"You know that you're doing well when parents come back and they let you know that they've succeeded and that they appreciate the program," she said.



PHOTOS COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Maria Toro is a student worker and apprentice at the RSCCD Child Development Center, which provides child care services while training early childhood educators.

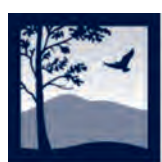
The centers' apprenticeship program is designed for students looking to begin a career in infant and child education. Participants in the 18-month apprenticeship program gain approximately 2,000 hours of practical, paid child care experience, laying a solid foundation for a future career in early education. Additionally, they enjoy above-average wages within the industry, enhancing both their professional development and financial stability.

"We're one of the biggest employers of student workers," Linnell said. "Depending on our need, we employ anywhere from 100 to 200 student workers every year."

RSCCD forms a cohort of student workers from each of the colleges — 25 per school and 50 per semester. The district will train a maximum of 150 apprentices by the third semester of the program in spring 2025.

"By the time they leave, they will be fully trained in a public preschool program, which is higher quality than private," Linnell said. "We have a lot more regulations, so they will be fully versed in everything."

The Child Development Centers at RSCCD serve as a pillar of support for students and families, fulfilling their commitment to nurturing future generations and supporting student success.



## Santiago Canyon College

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