

# SENIOR FOCUS

SUMMER 2024

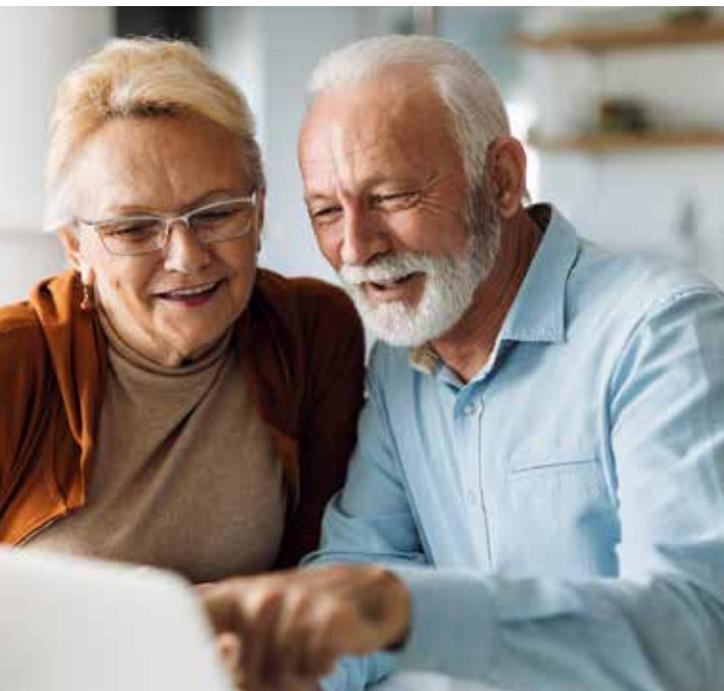
**FROM ART TO ZEN**  
INVEST IN YOURSELF THROUGH  
LIFELONG LEARNING



**HAVE YOUR BIRTHDAY CAKE  
AND ENJOY IT TOO**  
BOOST YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AS YOU AGE



**ENGLISH  
PROFESSOR**  
PROMOTES KINDNESS  
THROUGH SERVICE  
LEARNING PROJECT



# INVEST IN YOURSELF WITH **LIFELONG LEARNING**

San Jacinto College offers a variety of leisure learning courses to help you expand your horizons and have fun! You can enjoy our short courses year round, along with flexible schedules and easy registration.

**SUMMER 2024**

- **CERAMICS**
- **WELLNESS/FITNESS**
- **CAKE DECORATING**
- **INTRO TO COMPUTERS**



For more information and a complete list of courses, visit [sanjac.edu](http://sanjac.edu) or call 281-542-2020.

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Questions about San Jacinto College programs and services described in this publication should be directed to the Contact Center at 281-998-6150. Comments or questions about the publication can be directed to the San Jacinto College External Relations Department at 281-998-6152.

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Visit San Jacinto College online at [sanjac.edu](http://sanjac.edu).  
Call us at 281-998-6150.

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## About San Jacinto College

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 one of the top 10 community colleges in the nation as designated by the Aspen Institute and was named an Achieving the Dream Leader College of Distinction in 2020. The College is a Hispanic-Serving Institution that spans five campuses, serving approximately 41,000 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](http://sanjac.edu).

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# NEWS & NOTES

FROM AROUND THE COLLEGE

## San Jac prepares for new biotechnology spaces

San Jacinto College, exclusive provider of the National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training for the southern U.S., recently made major strides in the biotechnology field by breaking ground on a new Center for Biotechnology and hosting a ribbon cutting for the biomanufacturing training program.

On Jan. 26, the College broke ground on the Center for Biotechnology, a state-of-the-art facility being built at the Generation Park Campus in collaboration with McCord Development Inc. The center will provide comprehensive, hands-on training with realistic good manufacturing practices-simulated environments. The center is scheduled for completion in early 2025.

That same day, the College also celebrated the ribbon cutting for the biomanufacturing training program at the South Campus. This program kicks off the College's comprehensive biotechnology offerings, beginning with an onboarding certificate to equip new professionals with the skills and knowledge to seamlessly enter the field.



► Visit [bit.ly/SJC-Biotech-Groundbreaking](https://bit.ly/SJC-Biotech-Groundbreaking) to see photos from the two events. Or scan the QR code to learn more about San Jac's biotechnology program.



## Glitz, glam for good cause

Lights, camera, action! Students get top billing in the San Jacinto College and LyondellBasell Hollywood Nights Gala presented by the Sinor Family on May 17.

The gala will help ensure any high school graduate living in the College's taxing district can earn a certificate or associate degree debt-free. All event proceeds — currently more than \$619,000 — will benefit the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship.

Hosted by the San Jacinto College Foundation, the gala will include testimonials from current Promise Scholars, as well as the presentation of the Legacy Award to longtime College partner LyondellBasell.

"We are grateful to LyondellBasell for their title sponsorship and the Sinor Family for being our presenting sponsor, along with many other companies, organizations, and individuals who have committed their support to our Promise Scholars," said Robert Cage, Foundation executive director. "It is going to be a fantastic evening celebrating the real stars — our students."

The Promise @ San Jac Scholarship is open to all in-district high school seniors, regardless of high school GPA or family income. Students must meet all application deadlines, enroll full time, and complete their certificate or degree within three years. The scholarship covers tuition, books, and supplies so students can focus on their studies.

► Learn more about the gala and the Promise @ San Jac Scholarship at [sanjac.edu/gala](https://sanjac.edu/gala).

# FROM ART TO ZEN

## INVEST IN YOURSELF THROUGH LIFELONG LEARNING

By Melissa Trevizo

San Jacinto College provides many lifelong learning opportunities designed to broaden your horizons while enjoying yourself. These short-term courses are available year-round, offering flexible scheduling and hassle-free registration.

### You can enjoy courses in:

- Arts and crafts
- Cake decorating
- Financial management
- Music
- Painting and drawing
- Photography
- Sports and recreation
- Wellness

Experienced professionals teach each course. Courses are accessible to even the most novice student, meaning you need little to no experience.

“I teach students the fundamentals from zero,” said Debra Hodge, cake decorating instructor. “You can come in not even knowing what a piping bag looks like, and I can take you up to an expert decorator.”

Perry Mayorga-Guerrero teaches kickboxing and martial arts in the lifelong learning program. He aims to boost self-confidence and discipline through these courses while teaching students karate and other martial arts techniques.

“Everyone has their own fitness level. There are things that some students can do that others can’t, and that’s OK,” Mayorga-Guerrero said. “I try to build people up that way because they can be hesitant and uncomfortable. If you are sweating and doing the work, you are already doing great. There’s no showboating in our class, only support.”

Dr. Janice Sullivan, San Jac dean of community engagement, continuing and professional development, teaches Gentle Yoga-Qi Gong and Qi Gong Flow for Balance and Strength at the Central Campus.

“I have been practicing qi gong regularly since 2015 and wanted to share it with anyone who may benefit from this beautiful practice,” Sullivan said. “Qi gong is a system of coordinated body postures, movements, breathing, and meditation used for health and overall wellness.”

Dive into a new hobby or learn a new skill at San Jac through lifelong learning. Scan the QR code to learn more or call 281-542-2020.





# HAVE YOUR BIRTHDAY CAKE AND ENJOY IT TOO

BOOST YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AS YOU AGE



Tara Bates

■ By Courtney Morris

**Adding another candle to your birthday cake this year?**

Some things, like growing older, are inevitable. Others, like declining mental health, are preventable.

According to licensed clinical social worker Tara Bates, aging comes with its share of physical challenges and transitions. But you can still maintain mental well-being with good support and coping strategies.

Bates, who teaches in San Jacinto College's mental health services program, shares these tips to boost your mental health. Say hello to a brighter birthday cake and stronger you!

**Q: What are the best ways to maintain good mental health?**

**A:** Take a well-rounded approach: Stay socially connected, engage in regular physical activity, and practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques. Also, find purpose and meaning in

daily activities, and seek support from friends, family, or mental health professionals.

In addition, you can find self-help books, TED Talks, and podcasts that focus on bettering yourself.

### **Q: Are physical and mental well-being connected in the aging process?**

**A:** Physical health and mental well-being are deeply interconnected. Even if you're facing health conditions that cause pain, limit mobility, or lead to feelings of isolation, you can maintain mental well-being through activities like social engagement, cognitive stimulation (brain games, conversations, and puzzles), and stress management. These can influence physical health outcomes and overall quality of life.

### **Q: How does pursuing lifelong learning or new hobbies contribute to mental health?**

**A:** It provides mental stimulation, fosters a sense of accomplishment, increases social connections, and promotes a positive outlook on life. Learning new skills or exploring new interests can also help you maintain cognitive function and adapt to life changes. Trying new things sparks creativity and reminds you that you can continue to grow.

### **Q: How important are relationships?**

**A:** Meaningful connections can combat feelings of isolation, provide emotional support during life transitions, and offer opportunities for shared experiences and joy.

You can create meaningful connections by joining a senior center, volunteering in the community, participating in group activities or classes, and staying in touch with family and friends regularly. If mobility or transportation is an issue, you can find a virtual group where people get together and spend time with each other using their computer or phone.

### **Q: When should I seek professional help? What free or low-cost services are available to me?**

**A:** Seek help if you experience persistent symptoms of depression, anxiety, or other mental health issues that interfere with your daily functioning and quality of life. Many community mental health centers, non-profit organizations, and online platforms offer free

or low-cost mental health services tailored to older adults. Most cities have federally qualified health centers that offer free or low-cost mental health services.

If you have insurance, the phone number on the back of your insurance card is a great place to start. Most insurance companies encourage members to seek mental health care because it is a preventive measure and can shorten or eliminate hospital stays.

### **Q: Will others judge me for seeking mental health support?**

**A:** Although attitudes toward mental health are slowly improving, social stigma surrounding mental health concerns still exists, particularly among older adults. But seeking help is becoming more normalized and encouraged in many communities.

Prioritize your mental well-being and seek support when needed. If you tell your family you are getting help, you will set a precedent for them to get help too.

### **Q: Anything else I should know?**

**A:** Mental health is not limited to a doctor or therapist. Boost your mental health by practicing gratitude, being helpful, starting a part-time job, and allowing others to count on you. There is such power when you focus your time and energy on a person, animal, or organization you care about.



## ENGLISH PROFESSOR

# PROMOTES KINDNESS THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

■ By Neesha Hosein

Dr. Bryan Corbin's lifelong bond with his grandfather inspired him to create a service learning project that has touched the lives of thousands of seniors nationally.

The San Jacinto College South Campus English professor Google searched his bright idea, "letters to senior citizens," which led him to several organizations that performed the service.

"I emailed over 50 of those organizations asking if they needed help with writing letters to senior citizens, and all of them said yes, but none of them could provide the material and postage to make it possible for me to implement a letter-writing project into my classes," Corbin said.

### Bring Smiles to Seniors

A representative from one of the companies advised Corbin to contact Bring Smiles to Seniors project founder Ron Tyson.

"They gave me his information, and — voila! — a project the College and I could afford was born," Corbin said.

Tyson agreed to fund the cards and postage, which meant Corbin would have a self-sustaining project.

Corbin introduced the project in fall 2022, and students wrote almost 1,500 cards. Since then, he's expanded participation districtwide.

"Other professors are now participating by having their own learners write greeting cards to fulfill course requirements," Corbin said. "Additionally, various clubs and organizations now have meetings dedicated to sending notes to seniors."

As word spread, some students have even taken extra cards home to have their children or family members write encouraging notes to



seniors. The project has almost reached 8,000 cards completed.

### In the name of kindness

Corbin's goal was to bring service learning into his classroom. Even better, the project teaches kindness, something about which he is passionate.

The greeting cards project encourages students to learn, discuss, and write about kindness by reading David Hamilton's "The Five Side Effects of Kindness." The students then put what they learn from the book into action by writing greeting cards to seniors.

"I believe educators have a responsibility to use the podiums they helm to make the world a better place, so I try to give my students meaningful opportunities to serve others while still meeting course objectives," Corbin said.

After reading the book and writing their heartfelt messages, students get to see the principles of kindness come to life.

### Hopes for the future

All the cards are sent to Bring Smiles to Seniors headquarters for nationwide distribution, but Corbin strives for greater involvement close to home.

Finding local senior facilities willing to participate has been a challenge. Corbin hopes to spread the word and increase participation locally so he can someday reach 100,000 cards every year.

"This past spring semester when I introduced the project, I had a student come up to me in tears at the end of class," Corbin said. "She told me that later that day they were putting her mother in a nursing home, and she thanked me for creating the project. This really touched me and helped bring the project to life even more for me."

► Learn more about Bring Smiles to Seniors at [bringsmilestoseniors.com](https://bringsmilestoseniors.com).



# CAREER HITS 40-YEAR MILESTONE

## AT SAN JAC

■ By Neesha Hosein

Not many professors can say they were the first to graduate with a degree from the very program they now oversee — one San Jacinto College professor has that privilege.

A 1983 hurricane marked the start of Mary Lindsay's remarkable career at San Jac.

"It's kind of a joke that I flew in with Hurricane Alicia," Lindsay said. "I came to work at the Central Campus after the hurricane hit, and the campus had quite a bit of damage. We went to work with our building still leaking that first semester I ever taught."

Although her San Jac career has just crossed four decades, her origin story with the College goes back even further.

"I'm a first-generation college completer for my family," Lindsay said. "I received my Associate of Applied Science degree in cosmetology in 1976, so that's 48 years ago."

Lindsay was the first student at San Jac to receive a cosmetology degree in its inaugural year at the Central Campus. She moved to Brenham and owned a salon for many years until a dire need for cosmetology professors at her alma mater became her calling.

Today, Lindsay is the department chair for consumer and business technology, overseeing cosmetology, massage, and industrial trades at the South Campus. Her specialty is cosmetology, but she relishes the chance to engage with and learn all the areas with which she works.

### Childhood inspiration lasted lifetime

An early inspiration for Lindsay was a family friend who styled her mom's hair at her in-home salon. Teenaged Lindsay helped by looking after the neighbor's kids, all the while watching her interact with clients.

"She was an inspiration, and I always knew that I'd want to do something hands-on like she did," Lindsay said. "She started letting me work a little bit. When you finally get the taste that you've accomplished something, it makes you feel good about yourself."

Lindsay credits her high school teachers as another source of inspiration. She received her cosmetology license through La Porte High School in 1974 and attended Kilgore Junior College in 1975 for her instructor's license.



Mary Lindsay

"I was in the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America way back then, now Skills USA," Lindsay said. "I was around a lot of innovative cosmetology instructors, which was very inspirational as far as wanting to become one myself. I always had the passion to become a teacher."

### It's all come full circle

Lindsay's proudest moment was earning her bachelor's degree in 1991 from the University of Houston.

With 40 years in the business, Lindsay doesn't think a lot has changed in cosmetology. It's still a hands-on field and has remained in demand because people always want to feel beautiful.

"We do have much more educational technology on presentation methods today, which allows us to make a well-rounded presentation for all types of learners," she said.

Her favorite thing about the job has always been to see her students succeed, many of whom now work alongside her. To Lindsay, "it's a rewarding feeling" that proves she's come full circle.

"Some of my instructor students work with me now. We've known each other so long they're like family," she said. "They do such a great job, and I'm so inspired by what they've accomplished and how they've grown within the San Jacinto College system."

Scan the QR code to learn more about San Jac's cosmetology program.



# NAMING CEREMONY CELEBRATES PICKAVANCE'S LEGACY AT MARITIME CAMPUS

■ By Melissa Trevizo

Rear Adm. William W. “Bear” Pickavance Jr., U.S. Navy, was honored in a ceremony March 6 at the San Jacinto College Maritime Campus for his contributions to the campus’ establishment and construction.

“I’m awestruck by this honor,” said Pickavance. “I never thought something like this would happen. There are so many people who put their efforts into building this program, and I’m happy to be among them.”

The ceremony marked the naming of the student lounge area near the campus entrance, which Pickavance designed. Thanks to an anonymous donation, the area will be named the Admiral’s Lounge.

“Do you know why there’s a lounge there? I built it,” said Pickavance. “The campus needed a place for people to congregate and enjoy the view of the turning basin. When a ship turns, you feel like you can reach out and touch it.”

Pickavance joined San Jac in 2013 as a consultant after Chancellor Dr. Brenda Hellyer asked him to assist in creating a maritime program and campus.

“When we were working on the maritime program, we knew we needed an expert,” said Hellyer. “Admiral Pickavance answered that call and helped bridge the gap between

higher education and industry. His passion and dedication to creating the best possible program and facilities can be seen in every corner of this campus.”

After a year-long construction stall with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pickavance helped move things along and started to work on the program and building.



“I loved being with the people at San Jac, and I always felt at home,” he said. “I knew how to command and get things done from my military experience. I think my reputation preceded me, but I never had to use anything like that. We were all working towards a goal together, and it turned out beautifully.”

## A Decorated Career

Pickavance served as an officer in the U.S. Merchant Marines and spent 32 years on active duty as a commissioned officer with the U.S. Navy. He commanded two carrier squadrons, an F/A-18 wing, a support ship during Desert Storm, and the aircraft supercarrier U.S.S. Kitty Hawk. As a flag officer, he commanded a carrier battle group. He has 200 combat missions over North Vietnam and more than 800 carrier landings.

After retiring from the U.S. Navy, Pickavance served as vice president for a space operations company responsible for space shuttle launch and recovery systems at the Kennedy Space Center. He later served as superintendent of the Texas Maritime Academy at Texas A&M University at Galveston.

A Texas A&M University and Naval War College alumnus, Pickavance holds Master of Arts and Master of Science degrees. He has served on the Navy Staff in Washington, D.C., the NATO Supreme Allied Command Headquarters in Belgium, the U.S. Pacific Command staff as director for operations (J-3) in Camp Smith, and as a military adviser to President Donald Trump.

He was influential in developing and constructing San Jac’s Maritime Campus. Many of the campus features, including the Houston Pilot’s maritime simulation suite and more, directly result from Pickavance’s diligence. His dedication and hard work, along with the groundwork he laid before construction began, have been instrumental in shaping the Maritime Campus into what it is today.

► View ceremony photos at [bit.ly/SJC-Rear-Admiral-Lounge](https://bit.ly/SJC-Rear-Admiral-Lounge).



# SAN JAC HAPPENINGS

## May 3

### Piano Area Recital

3:30 p.m.

Free | Central Campus, Blue Music Building, Corbin Hall (C5.151)

## May 3

### “Dancing on Steel”

7 p.m.

Free | Central Campus, Slocomb Auditorium (C13)

## May 4

### “Dancing on Steel”

8:15 p.m.

Free | Miller Outdoor Theatre

## May 14

### Spring Commencement

7 p.m.

NRG Stadium



## May 17

### Summer Hours Begin

College offices close every Friday at noon through Aug. 9

### Hollywood Nights Gala

6-9 p.m.

Central Campus, LyondellBasell Center for Petrochemical, Energy, & Technology (C45)



## May 27

### Memorial Day

Closed

All campuses, online

## June 3

### Summer classes begin

All campuses, online

## June 19

### Juneteenth National Independence Day

Closed

All campuses, online



## July 4

### Independence Day

Closed

All campuses and online

## Aug. 19

### Fall 2024 Semester Begins



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

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HOUSTON, TX 77089

**GENERATION PARK CAMPUS**  
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