

COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOCUS

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PHOTO BY PAUL RODRIGUEZ, CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Marvin Martinez, left, chancellor of the Rancho Santiago Community College District, addresses guests July 27, 2021, attending the grand opening of the Johnson Student Center at Santa Ana College.

ADMINISTRATION

CHANCELLOR SETS AMBITIOUS AGENDA FOR DISTRICT'S FUTURE

Blueprint includes buildings, programs

By Lou Ponsi,
contributing writer

When Rancho Santiago Community College District Chancellor Marvin Martinez began his tenure with the district in 2019, he came with a resume that included three decades of leadership in higher education.

Martinez's accomplishments prior to RSCCD include improving outcomes for students, balancing budgets and overseeing millions of dollars in infrastructure upgrades.

With a new year just underway, Martinez is setting in motion an ambitious agenda for the future of the district, which includes new and upgraded buildings, the expansion of apprenticeship programs and programs serving specialized populations.

At RSCCD, Martinez leads a district with an enrollment of 50,000 students and 3,000 employees.

The district includes Santa Ana College, Santiago Canyon College, the Orange and Centennial learning centers and RSCCD headquarters.

Realizing the demand for skilled professionals in a variety of industries, State Chancellor Sonya Christian has called on Martinez to take the lead on the Apprenticeship Pathways Demon-

stration Project, an initiative established by Gov. Gavin Newsom to create 500,000 new apprentices by the year 2030.

With seven apprenticeship programs currently offered at Santiago Canyon College, Martinez has been tasked with allocating funds to enhance and increase the number of apprenticeships to 25 community colleges statewide.

The benefits of apprenticeships are two-fold, the chancellor said.

"We can convert all of the hours that you're generating as an apprentice into credit," Martinez said. "You get an apprenticeship, but at the same time, you get a degree."

The associate's degree attained through an apprenticeship can be the ticket to enrollment into a four-year university, he said.

The chancellor would also like to build on some specialized programs that cater to specific demographics.

One such program is the Project Rise Program, a statewide community initiative providing job training and educational opportunities to assist formerly incarcerated individuals in their transition into the workforce.

"A lot of formerly incarcerated people just don't get the chance," Martinez said. "If those populations couldn't come to us, where would they go to?"

Amid the decrease in the number

of students attending college right after high school, Martinez is hoping to build on the current adult and continuing education curriculums at Santiago Canyon and Santa Ana colleges.

"We needed to find other areas where our enrollments can come from," he said. "That area became adults."

While it might not be widely known, RSCCD offers a bachelor of science in occupational studies at Santa Ana College.

Martinez would like to increase the number of bachelor's degree programs to 10.

The total cost to attain a bachelor's degree in the district would cost about \$11,000, excluding textbooks, a fraction of the cost for a degree at a four-year university.

"Many of these individuals will probably be low income, middle income, or even higher income, but they'll be able to go and get a degree, an accredited degree from an accredited college so they can move forward with their career," the chancellor said.

Growing and forging new relationships with community groups is another goal.

The RSCCD currently enjoys symbiotic relationships with Santa Ana Unified School District, the Santa Ana Unified School District, the Orange County School of the Arts and other schools.

Martinez hopes to go deeper into the community to forge new relationships.

Orange County icons such as Disney, Anaheim Stadium and the Angels would make for beneficial partnerships to both sides, Martinez said.

One of Chancellor Martinez's large-scale goals, albeit costly, is to implement needed infrastructure upgrades throughout the district, particularly at Santa Ana College, which was constructed 100 years ago, he said.

At Santa Ana College, a new facility is needed to house automotive technology, welding and culinary arts programs, which all utilize hands-on learning classes.

A new student services and student life building is needed at Santiago Canyon College.

Some upgrades would likely require the passage of a bond measure, the chancellor said.

"We need to have the newest facilities and technologies so that we can prepare students for the jobs of today," Martinez said. "We can't do that on our own. So, we do need help from voters."

An economic impact report recently published by the RSCCD showed that the district contributed nearly \$2 billion to the Orange County economy.

"I believe in getting out there and supporting the needs of the local community," Martinez said.

PAYOFF FOR ALUM

Yorba Linda mayor credits SCC for setting her course for higher education

Her early classes accelerated success

By Nicole Gregory,
contributing writer

Tara Campbell is a lifelong resident of Yorba Linda and has served on the City Council since 2016. She was first appointed mayor by the council in 2018, when she was just 25 years old. This made her the youngest woman mayor in the history of California, and the youngest female mayor in U.S. history for a city of 30,000

people or more — facts that drew a lot of media attention.

But that attention was not important to Campbell.

"What was big for me was the fact that it was my hometown," Campbell said. "To be able to be mayor of your hometown, there's something really special about that. Everybody's pretty much family and friends to me. And to be able to help people in my community and be mayor of my hometown was the greatest honor."

Campbell's family has strong roots in North Orange County, having lived here for more than 35 years. She attended St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School in Yorba Linda and then Rosary Academy in Fullerton.

She applied to colleges in the spring of 2011 and was accepted at University

of Southern California for spring 2012 admission. Taking advantage of the extra time during the summer and fall after high school, Campbell took general education classes at Santiago Canyon College, credits which transferred over to USC.

"I really loved my experience at SCC, and it really set me on a great course for my college career," she said. "I saved a ton of money and got to stay close to home, too."

As a sports fan and an athlete, Campbell's goal was to become a sports journalist. "I got to do that for a little bit, reporting from the sidelines for the football team and the basketball team," she said. "I really loved that, but I thought I better broaden my journalism experi-

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FILE PHOTO BY KEVIN SULLIVAN, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER/SCNG

Tara Campbell became the youngest female mayor in California's history when she was appointed mayor of Yorba Linda at age 25 in December 2018.

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JUVENILE JUSTICE

Project Rise removes barriers to education for youth offenders

\$1.5 million grant opens door to more students

By **Jenelyn Russo**,
contributing writer

Since 2016, Santiago Canyon College has been committed to supporting currently and formerly incarcerated students as they transition into higher education, equipping them with the skills they need for reentry into the community.

Beginning this fall, SCC will expand that support by offering credit courses and a full associate's degree program specifically for youth offenders in Orange County Juvenile Hall. This will be possible thanks to a \$1.5 million Juvenile Justice Program grant that was awarded to SCC through the California Community Colleges Rising Scholars Network.

In 2018, SCC formalized its support of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students through Project RISE, a bridge program that removes the barriers of higher education for these members of society through credit and noncredit courses, vocational certificate training, education planning and counseling support. The campus has served nearly 3,000 students in the adult jails.

Project RISE also serves juvenile offenders, which in the state of California can include those through age 25. SCC has offered credit courses to that group of students since 2021. California recognized that this specific population has unique needs when it comes to higher education and created the Juvenile Justice Program grant.

SCC will begin receiving disbursement on the five-year grant award this month and will use the funds to build a full credit program that focuses on dual enrollment courses, as well as Career and Technical Education training and the Associate Degree for Transfer.

"With the dual enrollment program, we can get them that dual credit, so when they get their high school diploma, they're already ahead of the game in college, whether they're taking the

college program inside the juvenile hall or they've been paroled and are joining a college outside of the hall," said SCC Vice President of Academic Affairs Jason Parks, who will oversee the expansion of the program. "The CTE will give them a certificate in training to get a job after they are paroled, and then the ADT program guarantees them a spot in one of the CSUs."

The students will be provided laptops, and a full suite of course offerings will be available either online or in person, hosted inside the facility. Counselors will guide students in meeting requirements for high school diploma completion, as well as degree advancement. Parks has a background working with the juvenile offender population and feels this approach will spotlight a path that many may not have considered.

"Inside juvenile hall, there is a lot of forced programming, and college is suddenly giving them agency," Parks said. "We're going into this space and we're saying, 'Tell us what you want to study. Tell us what you're interested in, and we're going to come back and provide options that cater to your interests.'"

SCC Dean of Instruction and Student Services Joanne Armstrong prepared the Juvenile Justice Program grant application and has seen firsthand how Project RISE can open the minds of the students it serves.

"The entire point (of Project RISE) is exposure and access," Armstrong said. "It's hearing them say, 'I didn't know I could learn until I learned. I didn't know I was capable until I was in your class.' It's those kind of things where you're planting a seed somewhere that somebody cared enough to be there to support them, regardless of where they're at."

Armstrong also notes the impact of higher education on the family unit and how these opportunities can work toward breaking a cycle.

"Incarceration impacts entire family systems, and so when you change even one degree of somebody's trajectory, you change the path of their life," Armstrong said. "We like to call it pivot points. If I catch you at just the right time, it may be



PHOTOS COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

The Project RISE program offers its students supplies, scholarships and clinics to support their higher education goals.

a pivot point where we just shifted the direction of your life minutely now, but the trajectory is really going to make an impact on that whole family."

The program currently serves 20-30 juvenile students with credit courses, but with the Juvenile Justice Program grant, Parks is looking to double that number. SCC will also be providing counselors who are specifically trained in the ins and outs of credits and transfer eligibility to further support these students on their academic journey.

Above all, Parks envisions a future that includes graduation ceremonies where these juveniles are dressed in regalia and able to celebrate their accomplishments and their commitment to a better path.

"We're working with a population of human beings who didn't come into life and live their youth with a lot of advantages," Parks said. "This is an opportunity for them, while they're paying their time, to find a way back into society and rejoice as productive citizens, without starting over."



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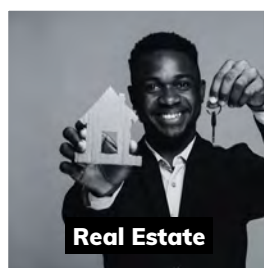
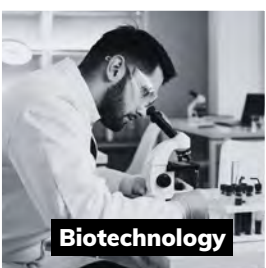
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GENERAL EDUCATION

New accelerated learning program eases student load

Hawks Flight Path launching

By Nicole Gregory,
contributing writer

Santiago Canyon College is launching a new Hawks Flight Path program next month — a sequence of three General Education courses that will help students more easily focus on their majors.

“We acknowledge that our students have a lot of demands on them,” said Jason Parks, vice president of academic affairs. “They’re working and they have familial responsibilities. When you think about a full load of 30 units a year, that’s four to five classes a semester—a big challenge for students who have a family, plus a job.”

The Hawks Flight Path was created to ease the burden.

Parks conceived of the program, but he is quick to credit a team of colleagues, including faculty and deans, who put it together. “The team got together and really thought it through about how we would work to benefit the students the most. I think it’s really well-designed. The spring is the soft launch for it,” he said. “Next fall we will target incoming freshmen who need all of their prerequisites.”

The first class is in public speaking (Feb. 12–March 24) followed by a class in nutrition (March 25–April 28), and, finally, an introduction to cultural anthropology (April 29–June 9).

“We have knowledge of what classes go well in those shorter times and where students thrive, so we’ll choose those classes (accordingly),” Parks said.

Since the Hawks Flight Path classes will fulfill General Ed requirements, students will be able to put more hours and effort into the classes that are part of their major. This is particularly helpful for students whose majors require a lot of time, for instance, if they must work in a lab.

“They can take those three classes and then take an overlying major’s course, something that they maybe need to spend quite a bit more time on, such as a calculus, chemistry or physics course,” Parks explained.

“The initial thought was let’s target our students who may be pre-nursing or health sciences,” he said. “For those students, the hope is that they would take those three classes and then maybe an anatomy and physiology class that would last the entire term. The amount of time you have to spend in the laboratory is a lot, so we would want to give them that opportunity to spend that laboratory time doing the work that is going to be most pertinent to their career as they move along.”

The plan is also designed to relieve exam stress. Rather than having five final exams at once, exams will be spread out over the semester.

And because the three GE classes are sequential, faculty members will be able to share with each other information about students who may be struggling or those who need more challenge.

“The idea is to create an ecosystem where those faculty members communicate with one another about the students who are incoming, Parks said. “This will be an advantage because most faculty members get students cold. You just walk into your classroom and you need to learn about your students starting on day one. But if one of your colleagues has said, ‘Hey, this group kind of needs help there, and this group is accelerating over here,’ then you’re not walking in cold.”

The ultimate intention of the Hawks Flight Plan is to make it easier for students to stay in college, Parks said. “We know that our most vulnerable students, we don’t lose them at the very end of completing their degree, we lose them at the beginning,” he said. “And so, we want to help them to persist.”

The number of students enrolling for credit programs at Santiago Canyon College recently jumped more than 12%.

“(They are) our target audience, absolutely,” Parks said. “This particular program is going to target more of the traditional college age, which is in the 18 to 24 range, because we are trying to get them in, get their associate degrees and out into a career. Or if they’re looking to transfer, we want to help them to transfer to a university to earn a bachelor’s degree.”

Santiago Canyon College also has a tutoring center that encourages students to support each other in their studies. “I’m just the old guy telling them college is good,” Parks said. “But if their colleagues are telling them that you can do this, and they encourage one another, that’s worth more than I could ever tell a student.”

Other forms of student support at SCC include a basic needs center, a food pantry, and financial aid. “We’re trying to hit them from all angles to make sure that they feel supported and they have everything they need to get through college,” Parks said.

Santiago Canyon College

Hawks Flight Path

How Does Hawks Flight Path Work?

SCC’s Hawks Flight Path is a sequence of accelerated General Education (GE) courses that helps you quickly progress toward your degree in just 16 weeks! Students take three GE courses per semester. Each course only meets once or twice per week and the rest of the work is done online. You can take courses in your major and complete your pathway.

What Courses Are Available?

Spring 2024 Hawks Flight Path Courses:

- Public Speaking (40722) | Feb 12 - Mar 24 | W: 1:30 - 2:55 PM
- Nutrition (40677) | Mar 25 - Apr 28 | W: 1:30 - 2:55 PM
- Intro to Cultural Anthropology (40729) | Apr 29 - Jun 9 | M/W: 1:30 - 2:55 PM

What is the Format?

- 9 Planned Units
- 1 Semester
- 1-2 Days Per Week
- 1 Class at a Time

What Degrees is Flight Path For?

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PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Santiago Canyon College Library on the college campus in Orange

Alum

FROM PAGE 1

ence to something other than sports.”

A summer internship for C-SPAN in Washington, DC, fell through at the last minute, so Campbell scrambled and got another at a bipartisan nonprofit that was trying to get members of Congress to work together.

“We were working on some common sense legislation and thought we were doing all this great work, but then the government shut down. That was in 2013,” she said.

Returning to her hometown she discovered the same gridlock she’d seen in Washington was happening on the local level, too.

“In my hometown of Yorba Linda, our city council was in the midst of a recall. I was like, ‘What is happening in my local hometown? We are a great community.’ I found out that that wasn’t too uncommon for Yorba Linda. We had a number of potential recalls. I realized, ‘OK, if you want to see a change, be part of that change.’”

She decided to get involved and started serving on the city’s Parks and Recreation Commission while still in college. She added political science as a major and then went on to get a master’s degree in public administration at USC.

“By going to SCC and getting my GEs done, I was able to start my master’s courses while I was a senior at USC,” she said. “I got my undergrad and master’s at USC in five years.”

She credits Santiago Canyon College

for giving her the early boost she needed.

“SCC really set me up for success down the line. It was a huge benefit for me. We have this great institution so close by where you can set your career — not just your education, but your career — in a great trajectory.”

Yorba Linda’s City Council members elect their mayor every year, and Campbell is starting on her eighth year on the council. The job has its challenges and conflicts, she said.

“I’ve tried to lead by example of being a problem solver and being able to engage and talk to everybody and hear all sides so that I can make the best decision for my community,” she explained.

Campbell’s style of leadership has earned the respect of her constituents, even those who don’t agree with her views. And her dedication to Yorba

Linda is obvious.

“Yorba Linda is an amazing community because you still have that small-town feel, but you also have all the great amenities. We just built a beautiful, state-of-the-art new public library and cultural art center. We just built a town center. We just built Adventure Playground, which is now year-round.”

Campbell notes with pride that Yorba Linda has a balanced budget and a crime rate far below the average for a U.S. city.

“I might be biased because I’m the mayor, but I think Yorba Linda is a great place to call home, a great place to raise family, and one ranked in the top of the safest cities in California,” Campbell said. “There’s no doubt in my mind that I wanted to come home to this great community and help set it on a great course for generations to come.”



PHOTO BY PAUL RODRIGUEZ, CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

From left, Yorba Linda city manager Mark Pulone, and council members Beth Haney, Tara Campbell, Gene Hernandez, Janice Lim and Carlos Rodriguez join in cutting the ribbon for the newly renovated Adventure Playground in Yorba Linda on April 14, 2023.

FIRST SHOW

Alumna artist's work to be featured at Santiago Canyon College Art Gallery

RSCCD Communications

Santiago Canyon College's first art show and reception of the Spring 2024 semester is set for 4 to 6 p.m. Feb. 20 at the SCC Art Gallery.

Selected works of SCC alum Janaise Sanchez are set to be featured in the exhibition in the D Building, The Illuminated Gaze. After earning an associate of arts degree from SCC, Sanchez earned her bachelor's degree in visual art from Cal State Fullerton. She is a candidate for a master's degree in fine art at the Laguna College of Art and Design.

"We try to feature an SCC Art department alumnus every year and Janaise was chosen because of her amazing skill and academic pursuits," said SCC Professor of Art and Gallery Director Robbie Miller. "Getting an MFA from LCAD is a huge accomplishment and we want to highlight the beginning of her journey, which started at SCC."

Sanchez's talent will be showcased and a nod given to her academic journey through the depiction of moths. The exhibition bills itself as a hidden sanctuary, known as the "Luminarium," where the material and spiritual worlds intersect. The Luminarium is guarded by ethereal moths, who are in turn attracted to light cast by the Eyes of Insight.

According to the exhibition's concept statement, "moths and eyes come together to create a harmonious blend of transformation, illumination and spiritual guidance."

"The synergy of these symbols forms a unique narrative where the artist navigates the sanctuary, guided by the ancient wisdom encapsulated in the Eyes of Insight and the transformative power of the moths' ethereal dance."

In addition to community members, Miller hopes current SCC students will visit the exhibition.

"We do this to inspire our current SCC Art students and show them what they can accomplish if they put the work in," Miller said.

The Illuminated Gaze runs through March 21, with gallery hours from noon to 3 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday or by appointment.

To learn more about the SCC Art Gallery, visit www.sccollege.edu/artgallery.



PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Artist Janaise Sanchez's exhibition, The Illuminated Gaze, features symbolism of transformation and harmony.

EDUCATION

Program addresses need for more child care providers

RSCCD Communications

In Orange County, around 60% of young children (ages 0-4) have both parents in the workforce. Quality childcare is paramount for children's emotional, social, and cognitive development; however, the demand exceeds the current capacity. Even if only a third of infants and toddlers required childcare, the licensed capacity would still only cater to 1 in 7 children.¹

This underscores the urgency for initiatives like Rancho Santiago Community College District's Early Childhood Education Apprenticeship Program, which strategically addresses the shortage by training more quality childcare providers to meet the growing demand in the region.

RSCCD is proud to announce that both Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College have been selected as recipients of the prestigious ECE Apprenticeship Program, a groundbreaking 18-month registered apprenticeship program designed to provide comprehensive support for aspiring professionals in child development.

Apprentices enrolled in the program will be employed up to 30 hours per week at one of the district's child development centers/lab schools. This



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSAN WAHL, CENTENNIAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER DIRECTOR

The Centennial Child Development Center is a laboratory school that provides child care for families and practical experience to students preparing to be early childhood teachers.

unique opportunity allows participants to build on-the-job learning experiences centered around developmentally appropriate practices and various aspects of the child development field, including child supervision, early childhood

curriculum planning, parent engagement and professional development.

As apprentices progress through the program, they will engage in comprehensive child development and general education college courses. The struc-

tured curriculum enables the apprentices to accumulate the necessary units and experience for obtaining a California Child Development Teacher Permit—an indispensable credential for those aspiring to teach in state or federally funded child development programs.

"The significance of this program lies in its power to shape the future of early childhood education. By blending practical experiences with theoretical knowledge, apprentices are equipped to make a lasting impact in the lives of young learners," emphasizes Janneth Linnell, Child Development Executive Director for the District.

Participants will receive guidance and support from lead educators, faculty, and peers, with access to all support services available at SCC and SAC.

Applicants for this transformative experience must have the legal right to work in the U.S., be 18 years of age or older, and be willing to undergo a health screening/TB assessment, along with required immunizations.

For more information about the apprenticeship program, contact:

Santa Ana College: Janet Deussenberry at ECEAP@SAC.EDU 714 564-6794

Santiago Canyon College: Sarah Shawesh at ECEAP@SCCOLLEGE.EDU 714-628-5954



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSAN WAHL, CENTENNIAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER DIRECTOR

Children play at the Centennial Child Development Center.

SPORTS

Men's basketball team soars past Cypress

RSCCD Communications

Joey Longo and Eli Arthurton scored 14 points each and Kai Smith added 13 points with seven rebounds to lead visiting Santiago Canyon College to an 89-51 Orange Empire Conference victory over Cypress College.

The Jan. 19 victory kept Santiago Canyon (14-5, 5-2) in sole possession of second place in the conference. The Hawks entered the game ranked No. 18 in the state, according to the California Community College Athletic Association.

SCC played to its strength, shooting an impressive 57.4% from the floor, which included 15 three pointers. The Hawks outrebounded Cypress by a ratio of 33-26 and dished out 20 assists to the Chargers' five.

SCC rebounded from a tough loss to Irvine Valley on Jan. 17 and the Hawks took their collective frustration out on Cypress. SCC's defense was on display all night as the Hawks limited Cypress to 31 points in the first half, followed by just 20 points in the second half. SCC forced 16 turnovers that transitioned into 21 points, while also holding Cypress to an abysmal 2-for-22 from long range.

The Hawks forfeited the lead only once, but it was after the opening minute of play and cruised the remainder of the way. Sophomore guard Longo scored 14 points in just 27 minutes, knocking down a team-high three three-pointers and pacing SCC with a game-high four assists.

Arthurton, a freshman, came off the bench to score 14 points. Freshman guard Damien Parker finished with 10 points, while freshman guard Trevor Manning produced 12 points in 16 minutes of action. Freshman bench tandem Dane Kiefer and Marly Jaisel each scored six points as well.



The 2024 Santiago Canyon College men's basketball team

PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

SOFTBALL

Coach Brandice Cutspec finds her field of dreams

By Brian Robin,
contributing writer

Brandice Cutspec looked through the chain link fence and realized she needed to be back on the other side of it. Badly. Yes, the barrier that kept her from her personal field of dreams was once self-imposed because being a community college assistant softball coach isn't quite akin to taking a vow of poverty — but it's in the discussion.

But Cutspec realized that marketing pet food and then running her own marketing and design company wasn't going to give her the voice or the fulfillment she wanted in her life. You don't get back to the other side of the fence plugging pet food or designing websites.

Which is where the Voice comes in. The Voice — her Voice — could get Cutspec back to the field. She'd literally talk her way back to the Santiago Canyon College softball field, back to the other side of the fence.

"I literally got to the point where I realized I needed softball back in my life," she said. "I realized I do love it more than anything else and kept asking myself, 'How do I get it back?' Well, they needed an announcer, so I went back as an announcer. It's me. Done. I would have gone back as a volunteer coach. I didn't care how I got back to the field. I needed to be back on the field."

And that's how SCC found its next softball coach. Only the second one in school history.

One year after announcing lineups, Cutspec is making out lineups. One year after announcing who's coming to bat, Cutspec is figuratively — if not literally — back in the batter's box. She's back on the field, back on the other side of the fence.

The first-year SCC coach has a big act to follow. She took over from her mentor, former coach and former boss, Lisa Camarco, who built the SCC program from scratch when it began in 2007. Camarco retired as coach after leading SCC to state championship appearances in 2014 and 2016. The 2016 team won SCC's first state title, becoming the first team since 1996 to lose the first game in the double-elimination tournament and come back to win the title. That team also became the first team since 2005 to mercy-rule its final opponent, when it dismissed Sacramento City College, 8-0, after five innings.

During her initial four-season stint as an assistant coach (2014-17), Cutspec was a part of both teams. In fact, all four of those teams would reach the state Super Regionals and the 2016 team would earn National Fastpitch Coaches Association California Junior College National Coaching Staff of the Year honors.

Before then, Cutspec was an all-conference first baseman for the Hawks, who helped SCC make its first regional appearance in 2011. And before that, she was an all-league first baseman for Ocean View High, who powered the Seahawks to the 2008 CIF Division 4 championship via a fifth-inning grand slam off Bishop Amat's Amy Lwin — one of the best pitchers in the division.

So yes, the bona-fides now established, Cutspec looks around her new digs and still finds reasons to pinch herself. Her voice now carries louder than the PA system that reopened the door to the other side of the fence.

"Honestly, of all the jobs I had, that was the hardest. I couldn't be on the other side of the lines. It was tough for me," she said. "I've been the athlete. I've been the coach. But when you don't know what's going on, and when you're not on

that side of the field, it's hard. But had I not taken that job and done that, I don't think I would be in the position I'm in today."

And yet, even Cutspec's infectious confidence, outgoing presence and electric personality that pulsates with every word found doubts. She left the sport in 2017 because of that pesky meager paycheck. Cutspec decided it was time to turn her natural curiosity, love of writing and designing everything from websites to brochures loose in the corporate world. After spending nearly every waking moment on a softball field since she was 4, Cutspec felt a different tug, one that included picking up an MBA at Chapman University and starting up her own marketing company.

But after flexing her voice and talking to Camarco, who recruited her out of Ocean View, then brought her into the coaching ranks, could Cutspec reinvent herself again?

"To be honest, I was nervous. Being away from it for a lot of years — five or six years — the game's the same. But it's been a while," she said. "I felt nervous that I'd been away from it for so long that maybe I wouldn't be as effective as I could be if I stayed in it the whole time. But I trust Lisa so much. She wouldn't have handed the program she built over to me if she didn't believe in me. There's a big confidence factor that she believed in my ability to continue the legacy she built."

"I think I feel more pressure to continue the culture she built and continue what she's turned Santiago Canyon College softball into. Being an athlete and a coach, I have a strong understanding of it and know how important it is to help the girls who come through our program."

Cutspec's outgoing personality helped the transition. So did the journals she's

kept since she was 7. For as long as she can remember, Cutspec embraced writing, using a journal. It provided power, release and growth when she was trying to figure out who she was as a person. Not only did it help Cutspec make sense of the world around her and build her writing voice, but it provided another side gig.

Cutspec sells her Daily Journal templates to "give people an opportunity to be able to do that and to find the same pleasure and growth from it that I've had." These templates are brought to you by Cutspec.

But her journals? They're more than a sideline. They're a guiding light.

"To this day, I haven't told very many people this, but when I would feel lost in the mix of things, if I felt lonely or I didn't feel like I belonged, I would take my favorite TV show and write myself my own character, so I could make myself feel like I belonged somewhere," she said. "I could create myself wherever I wanted to be and throw myself into my favorite TV shows and oh my God, I felt perfectly safe there. That would make other parts of my life feel better."

Those parts are feeling better these days. Cutspec found the other side of the gate, the side that allows her to mentor young girls, provide them those oft-told life lessons and navigate some of the trickiest, most stressful times of their lives. Her voice has the same passion, the same caring intensity it had before she picked up — and put down — the PA microphone.

"I see myself doing this for the foreseeable future. Right now, I only coach here, but I would love to teach at the college and be a professor," she said. "I definitely want to grow in my role. And I don't plan on leaving anytime soon."



Softball coach Brandice Cutspec, top center, with the 2024 Santiago Canyon College team

PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

CURRICULUM

New, expanded courses fill Spring 2024 semester

RSCCD Communications

New courses and expanded offerings for existing courses to better assist students in reaching their educational and/or professional goals are included in the 2024 Spring semester catalog at Santiago Canyon College.

The most recent pathway is the Hawks Flight Path, a sequence of accelerated General Education courses that allows students to quickly progress toward their degree in by taking nine units, one course at a time, over 16 weeks. Students take three GE courses per semester, with course meetings 1-2 times per week and the rest of the work completed online.

Courses offered in Spring 2024 as part of Hawks Flight Path include Public Speaking, Feb. 12–March 24; Nutrition, March 25–April 28 and Intro to Cultural Anthropology, April 29–June 9.

A new standalone three-unit course offering is Communication and New Media. The course is billed as an introduction to emergent technology and mediated communication, with an emphasis on the impact that new media has on human communication, including on-line dating, gaming, social media, blogging, and podcasts.

“This course offers valuable insights and networking opportunities, ensuring you stay ahead in a digital-first world,” said course instructor Jared Kubicka-Miller. “Students will meet like-minded peers and engage with exciting content that speaks to technology enthusiasts.”

Courses like Astronomy 103, Introduction to the Solar System, Astronomy 100L, Astronomy Laboratory and Physics 100, Conceptual Physics are mainstays in the SCC offerings. However, the Division of Mathematics and Sciences also continues to cater to students’ needs by offering a variety of lecture and lab courses in both Biology and Chemistry on Fridays and Saturdays. Examples of courses available on Fridays and Saturdays are Fundamentals of Biology Lab, Biotechnology, General Microbiology, General Human Anatomy, and General Chemistry.

“We have been offering an array of Friday and Saturday courses to accommodate students with unusual schedules for two semesters now, and they have proven to be popular and successful,” said Division Dean Martin Stringer. “We are constantly exploring new ways to help students fulfill their course requirements and support them on their journey.”



PHOTOS COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Instructor Jared Kubicka-Miller is teaching the new Communication and New Media course at Santiago Canyon College.



Santiago Canyon College Foundation 2024 Golf Tournament Pelican Hill Golf Club | March 28, 2024 | 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The Santiago Canyon College Foundation is excited to announce its 22nd Annual Golf Tournament, a fantastic opportunity for golf enthusiasts and supporters of higher education to come together and make a meaningful impact. Join us for a day of hitting the links and building futures as we raise money to support student programs and scholarships.

Greens Fees: Foursome: \$2,500

Golf for 4, Golf Cart, Range Balls, Food & Drinks

Also includes entry into all the games and contests on course, 2 mulligans, gifts cards and prizes

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