



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL GOULDING

Shayna Lathus of Orange reacts to getting her head shaved Nov. 25 at the annual Shave-a-thon, held to raise money for the St. Baldrick's Foundation bone marrow donor drive.

SHAVE-A-THON

FUNDRAISER NETS MORE THAN \$4,000 TO SUPPORT BONE MARROW DONORS

Event also teaches students how to organize a charity event

By Jennifer Karmarkar
contributing writer

Laughter and hilarity mingled with a sense of purpose to mark the annual Shave-a-thon at Santiago Canyon College, which supports the St. Baldrick's Foundation for childhood cancer research. Nearly a dozen people had their heads shaved at the Nov. 25 event, raising \$4,466 for St. Baldrick's Foundation Bone Marrow Drive.

Jared Kubicka-Miller, professor and speech and debate coach in the Department of Communication, started the charity event in 2009 to honor his brother, Scott Buehler, who died while rescuing a cat from a tree. Buehler had shaved his head to help raise money for childhood cancer research through St. Baldrick's Foundation. Kubicka-Miller created the event on the SCC campus to raise money and teach students in his Group Dynamics class how to organize a charity event. Students in his class have produced it ever since, raising approximately \$70,000 for the charity. **SHAVED » PAGE 5**



Harley Joseph Petit of Garden Grove is halfway done with his head shaving at the annual St. Baldrick's head-shaving event at Santiago Canyon College.



The product of several volunteers' participation at the St. Baldrick's head-shaving event



PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Student Services Vice President Christopher Sweeten stresses the need to support students.

SERVICES

New telehealth platform will roll out in January

Providing mental, general well-being help

By Jenelyn Russo
contributing writer

Santiago Canyon College has taken a significant step in supporting student well-being as the campus prepares to launch a new telehealth platform that will offer students free 24/7 access to mental health services. This initiative aims to address the growing demand for accessible and timely mental health care and will ensure that students have the resources they need to thrive both academically and personally.

Beginning Jan. 1, SCC students can log into TimelyCare, a virtual health

and wellness platform designed specifically for college students that provides on-demand access to mental health and general health consultations. Used by more than 350 colleges and universities across the U.S., TimelyCare allows students to connect with licensed professionals for counseling sessions, emotional support and self-care resources.

SCC's decision to offer this service comes at a critical time, as a surge in mental health challenges among students pursuing higher education has been well-documented coming out of the pandemic. The presence of disrupt-

HEALTH CARE » PAGE 5

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OPEN LETTER FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Grateful for the unwavering support of our community

As Chancellor of the Rancho Santiago Community College District, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our community for its engagement with Measure G on November's ballot. It is important to note that while all precincts have been reported, the election still needs to be certified. Currently, the measure does not meet the required 55.1% threshold for passage, but we are encouraged by the 91,357 votes cast in favor, representing over 51% of voters. This strong support highlights the shared commitment of many in our community to advancing education and opportunity for our students.



Marvin Martinez
RSCCD chancellor



“ The majority of voters who voted on election day clearly saw the need and supported our cause for the bonds, which would have funded school improvements. Unfortunately, the high bar for passage remains a challenge. Nonetheless, the need for campus improvements did not — and will not — go away. ”

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Thank you for your unwavering trust and support. With your continued partnership, we will keep pursuing opportunities to strengthen our community and ensure that education remains a gateway to success for all.

Sincerely,
Marvin Martinez
Chancellor, Rancho Santiago Community College District

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GRANTS

\$8 million will fund district's apprenticeship programs

Support for multitude of career pathways

By Lou Ponsi
contributing writer

On a mission to help meet the current and future demands of the region's workforce and provide opportunities for low-income students, who historically have not had access to certain careers, the Rancho Santiago Community College District has secured nearly \$8 million in grant funding from the state to fund a total of 16 pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs between the district's two colleges.

Santa Ana College has received \$720,000 for apprenticeships in automotive, culinary and computer support careers, as well as careers in forensics, human resources, and legal assistant and interpreter.

The grant funding also includes \$1.125 million each for Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon Colleges' Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship program and \$1.5 million for SAC's Bilingual Educator Apprenticeship program, which prepares students to become para-educational professionals for school districts.

Santiago Canyon College additionally has received \$480,000 for biotechnology, accounting, nursing and medical assistant programs.

SCC's grant funding also includes a \$2.69 million federal Department of Labor grant to prepare students from underrepresented backgrounds for high-paying occupations in energy, utilities and construction.

In addition, this project will provide outreach to build awareness of these opportunities, with the hope that those who are not aware of, or not usually in these occupations, will be encouraged and supported to enter these fields, Elizabeth Arteaga, SCC's dean of apprenticeships, and Sarah Santoyo, the college's vice chancellor of educational services, wrote in an email.

The project will also provide comprehensive training programs and support systems and engage in targeted recruitment and orientation and support to in-



PHOTO COURTESY SHUTTERSTOCK

A number of different professions are represented by the grant funding, including culinary, automotive, forensics, health care and early childhood education.

crease access to high-paying, in-demand middle-skill jobs to address income gap disparities in the region and inequitable representation in the industry, Arteaga and Santoyo wrote.

"Access is the critical issue for low-income and first-generation students," they wrote. "Taking classes does not directly lead to employment, especially for students without any connections to the industry. This is a hurdle that apprenticeships and other work-based learning models address."

SCC's CalOptima grants support the development of medical assistants and licensed vocational nursing programs that require clinical experience.

The trajectory for health care workers is trending upward, especially in Orange County where the population of seniors is projected to rise steadily over the next 10 to 15 years.

"These programs will provide a foundation to develop future apprentice-

ships to support the workforce need in health care," Arteaga and Santoyo wrote.

Apprenticeships also resolve other issues for students, regardless of their economic background.

Many students do not have professional connections in their fields of study, which puts them at a significant disadvantage.

After completing all the courses to earn a certificate or degree, students might still have difficulty finding employment in their field because they do not have connections in the industry to refer to or guide them.

Many students do not have professional connections in their fields of study or relevant work history or pertinent references on their resume.

Funding for apprenticeship programs is acquired through Proposition 98, a voter-approved initiative that provides funding for community colleges

through the California Apprenticeship Initiative and New & Innovative Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Grant Programs.

Prop 98 funding is based on a combination of state General Fund revenue and local property taxes set aside by the legislature to support community colleges.

The initiative is part of the California Community Colleges' ongoing efforts to meet the state's need for an educated and skilled workforce and the governor's goal of serving 500,000 earn-and-learn apprenticeships by 2029.

"Apprenticeships can help students gain skills for a specific career path," Arteaga and Santoyo wrote. "And research shows that apprenticeships (result in) higher earning potential throughout their careers, provide opportunities for upskilling and career advancement, and can help students develop a lifelong learning mindset."

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Aiming to put middle schoolers on path to higher education

Participants can earn transferable credits

By Nicole Gregory
contributing writer

Beginning in February, 64 middle school students at Santiago Charter Middle School will take a class where they'll learn about the college experience and explore possibilities for their own college journey. The course is the result of a unique partnership between the middle school and Santiago Canyon College and will be taught jointly by teachers from both schools.

"We're excited because this program marks a very significant milestone for us to launch a dual enrollment opportunity for middle school students," said Basti Lopez, associate dean of educational partnerships at SCC. "It's focused on sparking the early college interest as well as career readiness so that students can already start having those conversations and thinking like, OK, what is it that I'm really interested or passionate about?"

The community college and middle school are located just 2.9 miles apart in Orange, and the course will be held on the Santiago Charter Middle School campus. Though it will focus on potential college and career pathways, the course has been specifically designed for middle schoolers.

"This course exposes students to the opportunities of higher education, the support services SCC offers, and exercises in self-reflection, which will help them think about potential majors," said Dora Escobar, professor of counseling and assessment facilitator at Santiago Canyon College who helped launch the program.

The sixth- and seventh-graders who've been accepted for the course have already been preparing for it.

"We've been very intentional about building a program that will best support students of middle school age in the college classes," said Ashley Pedroza, the principal of Santiago Charter Middle School. Students have toured SCC, explored the college campus and received ID cards. Each student has obtained a professional email account and has learned how to write a professional email, she said. "There are a whole lot of skills that are required to be successful in a college course that might be different from a middle school course."

In addition to Escobar, students will have a mentor in the classroom. Joan Ekdale, a dual enrollment coordinator from Santiago Charter Middle School who is overseeing the program, will be there to support the students and serve as a liaison to answer questions from parents. "She's a certificated teacher



PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Santiago Charter Middle School dual enrollment students, from left: Gavin Klovstad, Grady Klovstad, Adam Churney, Joey Francisco, Joe Velazquez

who will sitting in the class with the professor, hearing all that the students are expected to do, and then offering some office hours and being able to communicate to the parents when there are questions about the particular class," Pedroza explained.

Middle schoolers who complete the course will earn three UC- and CSU-transferable college credits to apply to a four-year university or community college, according to Lopez. "But also, dual enrollment really allows the opportunity for students to start their college and career planning ahead of time," she said.

This dual enrollment program aligns with Vision 2030, goals set out by California Community Colleges' chancellor and the state's governor to make quality college education accessible to more students, Lopez said. "We believe that it's a very proactive approach so that students are taking those steps onto a path that will hopefully lead them to greater success in their academic and career journeys," she said.

"In my opinion, exposure to college courses supports the vision of making college a reality," Escobar said. "Students who participate in dual enrollment are also more likely to be successful in other courses. My son started taking dual enrollment courses in middle school, and the skills he has learned in them have helped him now that he is in high school. I am also passionate about supporting first-generation college students, and providing access to these opportunities is a key."

Parents of the Santiago Charter Middle School students first learned about the dual-enrollment opportu-

nity through information sessions. "We're a school that provides different types of opportunities for students," Pedroza said. "To launch something like this that's so different, they weren't surprised by it, but more excited with a lot of questions."

An important piece of the course is teaching students that they can be successful, she explained. "A lot of the students that will be in this first cohort are first-generation college students, essentially. It's really important to not only us as a school but our community, that these students are able to showcase their academic potential, and this is the perfect opportunity to do that."

The middle school students are eager for the course to begin, Pedroza said. "We had an acceptance celebration and invited the students and the parents. And SCC was here, and our county was here, and our authorizing district, OUSC. The students were really proud. They put a lot of time and effort into the process to get into the program and they're excited."



From left are director of High School and Community Outreach at Santiago Canyon College Loann Tran, SCC President Jeannie Kim, professor and assessment facilitator Dora Escobar, Charter Middle School teacher and dual enrollment coordinator Joan Ekdale, dual enrollment student Kayla Vu, counseling and student services dean Jennifer Coto and Santiago Charter principal Ashley Pedroza.

EXTENDED OPPORTUNITY

Annual holiday party celebrates students who are parents

Program provides gifts for children

By Nicole Gregory
contributing writer

On Dec. 13 Santiago Canyon College will host its 27th annual holiday party for students who are parents and are part of Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, a celebration that supports them by providing gifts for their children.

The holiday party has been coordinated by Nena Baldizon-Rios, director of the program since it began in 1997, who is retiring this month after 30 years of teaching at SCC.

Having been a single parent once herself, Baldizon-Rios is passionate about supporting students who are parents juggling multiple responsibilities. The Extended Opportunity program provides services for students enrolled in community colleges who face economic, educational or other obstacles to success, and Baldizon-Rios said this event conveys the message that students are welcomed and cared for at SCC.

“It’s the thought of someone thinking of you, that the college is not here to give you just a degree or certificate, but the college is here to embrace who you are,” she said.

The party and gifts are all funded by donations. “I get money from faculty, from staff, from administrators, from local businesses,” she said. “It’s done with a lot of love because it’s a family thing. Everybody comes together, everybody donates. It’s something that began as a small idea that has just beautifully flourished.”

She also gets donations from SCC alumni who themselves were once Extended Opportunity students. “I get donations anywhere from \$5 to \$250,” Baldizon-Rios said, adding that today these are processed by the SCC Foundation, which streamlines the donation process.

The holiday party will begin with breakfast on campus at 9:30 a.m. In addition to food, an adjunct counselor will provide games for kids who accompany their parents. Toys donated by the Orange County Fire Department, the SCC community and other groups will be given to parents for their children to open on Christmas or at the party. Because parents so often put their own needs last, they, too, will also receive a few gifts, Baldizon-Rios said. Some years, these have included movie tickets and Target gift cards.

This year, approximately 276 students are part of the organization, about 50 of whom are single parents, according to Baldizon-Rios. She estimates 30 to 40 of them will attend this year’s holiday party. When she receives an excess of donations, she’s able to invite the program’s students who are not parents to join them. In addition to this annual party, she and her team also organize

food donations to program students for Thanksgiving and a Mother’s Day event in the spring.

Baldizon-Rios has many happy memories of the holiday parties over the years. One year the OC Fire Department donated 18 bicycles. At the party, a couple came to her in tears because the student’s husband had just lost his job, their daughter had asked for a bike for Christmas and they didn’t know what to do — until that holiday party provided the wished-for bike.

Another memory is of a program student who was undocumented and wanted to drop out of college. “He was a smart guy, and I said, ‘Let me help you,’” Baldizon-Rios recalled. “I talked to some faculty members and we were able to give him a job with a stipend. Fast-forward, he’s now a citizen. He was recruited a year before he graduated from UC Berkeley by Google, Microsoft and Apple. He’s another donor of the Christmas event.”

Baldizon-Rios is a champion of the Extended Opportunity program. “It’s the best support program you can provide for students who are financially and educationally challenged,” she said, adding that she’s seen many students go on to careers as firefighters, police officers and nurses, as well as attend prestigious four-year universities.

Currently, she and her team are busy getting ready for the holiday breakfast, which requires a lot of coordination to make sure gifts are sorted and organized. “I could not do this without my staff,” Baldizon-Rios said. “They are the best in the world.” She credits Susie Duarte, EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs/Guardian Scholar adjunct counselor, who personally requests donations for this party and who often thanks donors with homemade brownies.

Baldizon-Rios, 65, will retire as of Dec. 19 and said the parting will be bittersweet. She looks forward to relaxing, traveling with her husband and enjoying retirement while they’re both in good health, but “I will miss those daily blessings that I’ve had along the way,” she said. “The privilege and the honor that I’ve had of serving these students through the 30 years, there are no words.”



PHOTOS COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Prior to this month’s holiday party, the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services team worked to provide and distribute Thanksgiving foodstuffs for students with children.



From left: Nena Baldizon-Rios, EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs director; Juana Galvan, EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs counselor; Mariana Barrientos, counseling assistant; Susie Duarte, adjunct EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs/Guardian counselor; Rosie Gonzalez, Interim Student Services coordinator



Nena Baldizon-Rios welcomes students who are parents to the food distribution on Nov. 26. The program provided full Thanksgiving meals to 25 families ahead of the holiday.

DEBATE

Forensics team shines at national online tournament

RSCCD Communications

The Santiago Canyon College Forensics Speech and Debate Team achieved outstanding success Nov. 16 at the National Online Forensics tournament.

Competing against top talent from across the country, SCC debaters Emily Pogosova and Sara Ortiz excelled in the International Public Debate Association competition.

Pogosova earned a gold medal, demonstrating exceptional critical thinking, persuasive skills, and composure throughout four rigorous preliminary rounds and the final gold round.

“In all honesty, I don’t remember much about the day, it all went by so quickly. Those 30 minutes I spent in each debate felt like 30 seconds. Preparing for the debates, gathering research, crafting and brewing arguments and counterarguments, preparing an opening, managing my anxiety, and formulating my strategy, my heart pounded in my chest, my lungs quickly inhaling and exhaling, my mind running wild, worried at the endless permutations and outcomes of the debate,” Brookschmidt said.

“Once I was in the debate my entire undivided conscious and subconscious attention was devoted to it. I recited arguments while doing my best analyzing dozens of factors from the pitch and cadence of my voice to questions to ask during the cross-examination portion. As I was in the debate my nervousness and anxiety completely faded, in those moments I was stress and anxiety free, only focused on winning the debate through rhetoric, optics and evidence,” she said.

Ortiz also made her mark, securing a silver medal.

“I never saw myself participating in extracurricular activities, especially something as scary as debate, but here I am, at my second tournament with my second medal! The supportive environment created by my team on the day of the tournament helped me feel less anxious and more confident as I prepared for my rounds,” Ortiz said. “The true GOATs, however, are my coaches, who



PHOTOS COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Emily Pogosova; Emma Singh; Ralph Castellanos, SCC Speech & Debate Club Advisor/Forensics Team coordinator

provided immense support not only on the tournament day but also in the days leading up to it. After every round, they were there to discuss what we did well and what we could improve on, which helped us perform better and better in each round.”

Both students displayed the team’s

dedication to excellence and commitment to fostering an intellectual and competitive spirit.

This tournament marks another milestone for SCC’s Forensics Team, which continues to establish itself as a formidable presence in the world of collegiate speech and debate. The team’s success

at the National Online Forensics tournament reflects their months of hard work, preparation, and collaboration under the guidance of their coaching staff.

The SCC Forensics Team was scheduled to compete this weekend at the PSCFA Fall Champs tournament, at Mt. San Antonio College.

INFRASTRUCTURE

New facilities director is all about teamwork

Drawing on nearly 30 years experience

By **Larry Urish**
contributing writer

When Francisco Gonzalez of Santiago Canyon College is asked a simple question — “Is there anything of a material nature on campus that isn’t ultimately your responsibility?” — his answer is even simpler: “No.”

As SCC’s new director of Physical Plant and Facilities, Gonzalez oversees all of the college’s buildings, teaching spaces and ancillary rooms, furniture, equipment and land (sports fields, gardens, trees, roads, pathways and the like). In other words, everything on campus.

“We’re also responsible for all of the utilities that serve the college,” Gonzalez said. “The generators and back-up generators, the ‘chiller plants’ for the air conditioning systems, all of that.”

It’s no accident that, when referring to his position, Gonzalez chooses words such as “we,” “us,” and “our.” While his job-specific qualifications are impressive — he has nearly 30 years of experience managing facilities, maintenance, design and construction projects ranging from small to huge school-campus developments —

Gonzalez is committed to fostering an empowering, team-oriented environment.

Gonzalez said three key departments fall under his supervision: maintenance (HVAC, electrical, plumbing and general building repairs), groundskeeping and custodial services, which includes event setups. His team consists of some 30 employees; given the broad nature of his responsibilities, it’s a smaller-than-expected group. “We’re a very busy bunch,” he said.

Gonzalez’s path to Santiago Canyon College began when he earned a bachelor’s degree in architecture from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. He worked in architecture for 10 years, primarily for clients in education, designing buildings and entire campus developments. He later transitioned to a builder and construction manager, working with some 10 school districts, including K-12 schools, colleges and universities. One of these districts, the Grossmont-



PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

SCC’s new director of Physical Plant and Facilities, Francisco Gonzalez, has been in his position since Nov. 4.

Cuyamaca Community College District, later hired him to serve as Cuyamaca College’s facilities director. He’s been at SCC since Nov. 4.

While problems can arise from any number of sources, Gonzalez was clear about his most significant challenge. “Any time we have a power outage, whether it involves Southern California Edison or something on campus, it’s a big deal. We have to get all the equipment back up and running. It involves resetting the equipment: chillers, boilers, elevators, all the IT. All communication is lost, and to get everything back up takes some work. It affects everything on campus.”

As for the SCC campus, “Buildings A and B are showing a lot of wear and tear, and that needs to be addressed,” Gonzalez said. “It’s something that the college is looking into. We’re also looking at decommissioning the portable buildings (a collection he calls the ‘U Village’). Most departments that were there have been relocated to other spaces on campus.” A back garden area, once an example of sustainability, has essen-

tially been abandoned, he said.

Gonzalez has noticed that “the college puts a lot of time, energy and resources into sustainability. It’s a big deal that involves our irrigation and lighting systems.” From a broader perspective, “it also involves designing ‘green buildings,’ constructed with sustainable materials.”

For now, Gonzalez is currently going through his “analysis and observation phase,” getting the general lay of the land ... and everything else on campus. Team building, he repeatedly stressed, is paramount. “I’m getting to know everyone here, fostering a sense of community. It’s important that everyone feels supported and empowered as employees, that they understand ‘the why’ behind what we do.

“A well-maintained campus is essential. Everyone here should feel important, because they are. If our facilities team isn’t here, the campus shuts down. Hopefully, very soon we’ll be a very strong facilities family, and we hope to bring a lot of value to this campus.”

One of Gonzalez’s most unique

challenges involved fire mitigation at Cuyamaca College. “I solicited quotes from landscaping firms, and it would’ve cost \$250,000 to \$500,000.”

So he hired goats. Actually, he hired a goat service, for \$70,000. “College friends and co-workers would joke with me. ‘You went to Cal Poly and have an architecture degree. You’ve built massive buildings ... and now you manage goats.’ But last spring we received a sustainability award for bringing them in.”

When he’s not on the job, the Escondido resident, married with two daughters (both of whom recently finished college), serves on the board of Encuentros Leadership. The North San Diego County nonprofit supports and mentors middle school and high school Latino boys, inspiring them to stay in school.

“We bring in as many Latino professionals — doctors, educators, lawyers — to hold workshops and share their educational journey. We also work with parents to help them get more involved, as well.”

Involvement. Empowerment. Teamwork. That’s what Gonzalez is all about.

Health care

FROM PAGE 1

tions such as social isolation, academic uncertainties and financial hardships highlight the need for mental health support systems.

A key aspect of this program is that TimelyCare will be available to all SCC students, whether they are taking classes for credit or noncredit.

“For us, it’s (about) trying to identify a means to be able to support students who are in our Division of Continuing Education, which is noncredit, and to be able to also provide them additional support that is outside of our traditional student health and wellness,” says SCC Vice President of Student Services Christopher Sweeten.

SCC students enrolled in credit classes pay a health fee and have access to the campus Student Health & Wellness Services. While noncredit students do not participate in this program, they will now have full 24/7 access to the telehealth platform.

“By being able to leverage funds and resources, we can bring on TimelyCare to be able to support students who are taking courses through continuing education with their mental health, as well as their physical health needs,” Sweeten said.

Once the platform is launched in January, SCC students will use their single sign-on to log into TimelyCare, where

they can schedule virtual appointments with a licensed physician or mental health professional. Access to the platform will also feature a “talk now” feature for “on-demand mental and emotional support, health literacy guidance and crisis management by masters-level mental health care professionals.”

Sweeten and the SCC team reviewed several different platforms before landing on TimelyCare. It was the company’s ability to be responsive to a wide range of student needs, along with its track record of working with two-year and four-year institutions, that made it the clear choice. Sweeten also acknowledged TimelyCare’s ability to provide physicians and clinicians who speak multiple languages, as well as those who can support students based on their specific needs.

“We know that there is a comfortability if you are, say, a trans individual who feels more comfortable talking to someone who’s from the LGBTQ community or who specializes in that, they have those individuals available,” Sweeten said. “Or if you feel more inclined to talk to someone who may be closely aligned to your spiritual or religious beliefs, they have that availability as well in terms of their filter.”

TimelyCare is secure and fully HIPAA compliant, and the platform will report out daily to SCC’s Health Services department so that on-campus physicians and nurses can follow up with students as needed. TimelyCare will also be able to access Orange County area resources to

support students’ needs, and the platform has a wellness component that can provide students with modules such as yoga and breathing techniques.

This telehealth initiative, which is completely free to all SCC students, will be funded, in part, by designated mental health services funds from the state of California, along with other campus operational funds. With approximately 18,000 students enrolled in both credit and noncredit courses, SCC’s launching of TimelyCare reflects its commitment to supporting the mental health and wellness of the entire student body.

“It’s a means for us to be able to continue to explore how we meet the multifaceted needs of students and be able to support them,” Sweeten said. “We want to make sure that we can meet all of their needs so that as they either transition into a career, or upscale in terms of their career, or transfer out to a four-year university, they have tools and resources at their beckon to be able to ensure that they can continue to thrive throughout this journey of life.”



PHOTO COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

The new telehealth platform provides free 24/7 access to mental health resources, including counseling and general health consultations.

Shaved

FROM PAGE 1



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL GOULDING

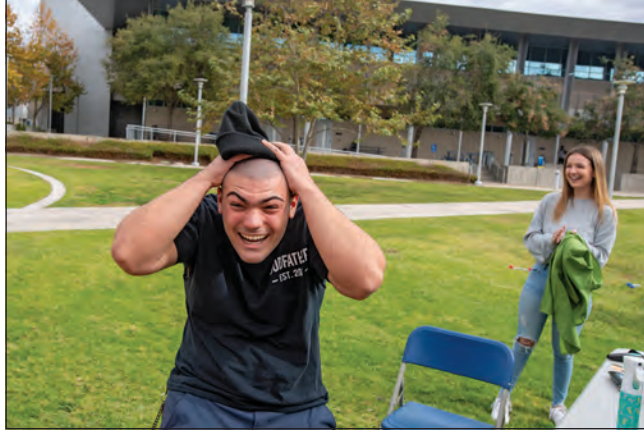
Mark Kane of Yorba Linda volunteers his hair at the annual Shave-a-thon at Santiago Canyon College.



Social Media students Andrew Lima, left, and Chris Christopher interview Mark Hatch as he sits in the barber’s chair.



Shayna Lathus of Orange hugs her barber, Payton Sedlak, after getting her head shaved.



Harley Joseph Petit laughs as he gets used to his new look.



Payton Sedlak lays out her tools for her part in the fundraiser.

HAWK'S NEST

Thanksgiving Food Distribution serves hundreds of student family members

RSCCD Communications

Santiago Canyon College's Hawk's Nest Basic Needs Center hosted its annual Thanksgiving Food Distribution Event, providing nearly 400 student families with essential ingredients for a Thanksgiving meal, Nov. 14-15.

Through a partnership with the Orange County Food Bank and Albertsons grocery store, the event offered recipients a whole turkey alongside classic holiday sides, including stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, rolls, green beans, and yams. Albertsons also stepped in to store additional turkeys when the Hawk's Nest Market exceeded its freezer capacity. This year's distribution supported a total of 1,704 family members, including 384 children, 1,062 adults, and 258 seniors.

"We're grateful for the opportunity to give back and help families create joyful Thanksgiving memories," said SCC Vice President of Student Services Christopher Sweeten. "This event reflects the heart of our community—neighbors supporting neighbors to ensure everyone has a chance to gather with those they love with respect and dignity."

The Thanksgiving Food Giveaway was part of the Hawk's Nest Basic Needs Center's ongoing commitment to support students holistically with the intention they can complete their desired goals to attain a living wage career and/or transfer to a four-year university.



PHOTOS COURTESY RSCCD COMMUNICATIONS

Nearly 400 families were provided with Thanksgiving meals, a total of more than 1,700 individuals.



Distributed foodstuffs included whole turkeys, stuffing, potatoes, green beans and yams.



Recipients line up at the distribution event.



SPRING ENROLLMENT AT SCC

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