

Southwestern College

Student Success

STUDENT SUCCESS NEWSLETTER

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SWC Clinical Program Lauded in State Study

A Southwestern College arrangement with Kaiser Hospital in San Diego that provides clinical work for students training to become medical laboratory technicians has earned praise in a statewide study by the Center for the Health Professions at UC San Francisco.

Licensed medical laboratory technicians are a relatively new concept in California. MLTs were introduced here in part to address the declining number of clinical laboratory scientists (CLS), a situation projected to get worse with the aging of the existing CLS population. Training for MLTs is not as advanced as for a CLS, but they perform moderately complex testing and can be invaluable at hospital laboratories.

The study, done for the Health Workforce Initiative at the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, looks at clinical programs for medical laboratory technicians (MLTs) at five medical centers in the state and examines how the MLTs have been integrated into hospital staff. When Southwestern approached Kaiser while looking for clinical sites for its students, Kaiser officials "jumped at the opportunity, realizing that their laboratory could easily manage an MLT internship program onsite," states the report released last year.

"Laboratory administration values the fact that the program that was established at Southwestern College is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) and has a very good reputation for producing well-trained students with high pass rates on the national-level exam," the report said. "The Kaiser San Diego laboratory has been fortunate in that it has been sent very good MLT students who were desirable as employees. This has gone a long way in convincing even the cynics that including MLTs into the laboratory workforce is an acceptable strategy to addressing pending workforce shortages."

The report found that MLT wages average up to 80 percent of those of CLSs, and the profession provides a career step between a lab assistant and a CLS. And programs such as the arrangement between Southwestern College and Kaiser, in which clinical laboratory scientists mentor students, "keep CLS skills fresh." ♦

Southwest Regional Apprenticeship Program Graduates its First Class

Hard work and determination paid off for 20 Southwestern College students who became graduates of the college's Southwest Regional Apprenticeship Program's (SWRAP) inaugural class.

Created in 2010 and patterned after a similar program at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, SWRAP was created to train and employ future experts in ship repair and maintenance.

Students earned their journey worker certificates from the Department of Navy and Department of Labor and also earned a certificate of proficiency in leadership and supervision from Southwestern College.

SWRAP has been a huge success, beating all other California apprenticeship programs academically with a total graduate Grade Point Average of 3.651.

Puget Sound Apprenticeship Program Administrator Bryan Watland said many of the instructors in the program were once apprentices themselves. Their expertise helped build the program over the last four years, Watland said. These new graduates have a bright future, he said, and he hoped they would follow in their instructors' footsteps to help train the next generation. ♦



STUDENT SUCCESS NEWSLETTER

Success is happening in classrooms throughout Southwestern College. This newsletter is designed to highlight those successes, as well as provide updates on our college-wide initiatives. If you have photos and story ideas, please send them to Lillian Leopold in the communications office, lleopold@swccd.edu

PTK Committed to Academic Excellence

It was a busy fall for Phi Theta Kappa students. The club kicked off the semester by inducting 15 new members into the chapter. And the new members quickly honed their leadership and organizational skills as the Southwestern College chapter organized and hosted the Fall Leadership Conference. With a theme of New Frontiers: The Spirit of Exploration, and with representatives from among the 99 PTK chapters in the California-Nevada region, the conference was an opportunity for our students to shine.

Shortly after the conference, PTK students demonstrated their commitment to academic excellence by organizing the "Commit to Complete" signing event. Chapter members were on hand to inform students of all that Southwestern College has to offer, and why it was important to graduate with an AA or AS degree.

At the end of the Fall semester, PTK members teamed up with the Student Veterans' Organization to help "Deck the Halls" of Balboa Naval Hospital. PTK members held a collection drive for items to give to each wounded warrior and then helped stuff nearly 300 gift bags to distribute at the hospital. It will be an even busier spring semester with the recent installation of 67 new members.

Through academics and community service, PTK members live the meaning of Phi Theta Kappa—wisdom, aspiration and purity. ♦



Architecture Students Gain Hands On Experiences

For the last three years, members of Southwestern College's Architecture Club have learned the importance of teamwork and community partnerships as they have competed in the annual Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo Design Village.

With materials donated by the Home Depot and purchased with Southwestern College Education Foundation funds, the teams of student architects have designed "live in" structures as part of the competition. The structures must be carried by hand up the steep hills of the Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo campus and constructed on site. Guided by Professor Diana De La Torre—a Southwestern College alumnus—students have built a pyramid, an origami structure and a crawler as part of the competition over the last three years. This year the club designed two entries. Designed to withstand the winds and shelter the students during the three-day event, the structures provide valuable lifelong lessons.

"This was more of an experience than learning in the classroom," said JR Fabrigas, president of the Architecture Club when the team won the People's Choice award in 2013. "It changed my whole outlook of architecture. There are no limits in architecture."

The architecture students extend the competition by spending the remainder of the week visiting universities. Past

tours have included UCLA, USC, California College of the Arts, Southern California Institute of Architecture and UC Berkeley. ♦



Students write about race, culture and identity

A trio of Southwestern College class assignments that explores race, culture and identity has blossomed into a book.

"The students' work was so good, we decided to publish it," said Introduction to Literature instructor Dr. Rachel Hastings. "It's been awesome."

The literary anthology, entitled "Author's Anonymous," grew from the introductory literature class Hastings taught last spring. Assignments included a six-word story of a student's racial experience; a personal narrative in the form of a poem; and a dialogue between two people or between two parts of each student's identity.

The result is a 126-page paperback that is available on Amazon.com, lulu.com and other online sites. Proceeds will be used to help fund cultural events on the Southwestern College campus.

"The result of these endeavors is a collection of literary writings that speak to this generation's understanding of race, culture and identity," Hastings wrote in the book's introduction. "By sharing their voices, both with one another and with those outside of the class, the students are not only able to write against the prevalence of dominating cultural perspectives, but are also able to archive parts of our history from their side of the debate. May their efforts be embraced and encourage the next generation to write their own histories and stand their own ground."

So how much can students write about a racial experience in six words? "There are some really profound narratives," Hastings said.

Wrote one student: "No one chooses, neither did I."

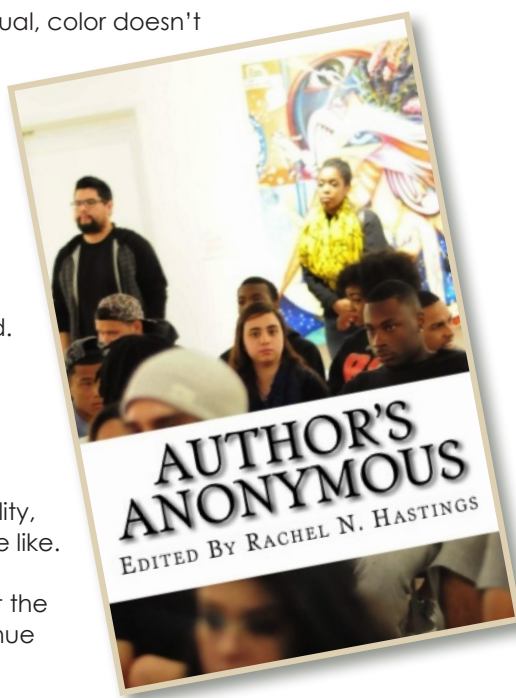
Penned a second: "I'm Hispanic! Not Mexican. BIG DIFFERENCE!"

Stated a third: "We're all equal, color doesn't matter."

The personal narrative in the form of a poem required a spoken word performance in class when it was completed. "The students really got to know each other in a way they didn't expect," Hastings said.

And the dialogue between two parts of each student's identity yielded some interesting conversations between religion and sexuality, race and nationality and the like.

"We're pretty excited about the work and we hope to continue doing this in the future," Dr. Hastings said. ♦



The Sun Shining Brightly

Southwestern College's student newspaper continues to outpace its colleagues across the country. Last fall, The Sun captured the National College Pacemaker award—the highest award given—by the Associated Collegiate Press. The Sun was also named Best of Show for all colleges and universities at the Associated Collegiate Press convention. El Sol magazine was ranked #2 in the nation. Sun Senior Staff Writer Lina Chakar was named the National College Reporter of the Year for two-year colleges.

The Pacemaker award was the crowning jewel of a semester full of recognition. In October, Southwestern College journalism students won 20 of the 30 awards presented by the San Diego Press Club to all San Diego County colleges and universities. The Sun was named Best San Diego County College Newspaper and El Sol was also honored.

Earlier in October, journalism students won 30 awards at the Journalism Association of Community Colleges fall conference, including awards for The Sun, El Sol and theswcsun.com newspaper website. ♦



Successful MESA Night

With internships at such places as SPAWAR, UC San Diego Medical Center, NASA, Cooke Bridges and the Moores Cancer Research Center, our MESA students had a fulfilling and educational summer. The 23 students participating in those internships presented their research and findings at the annual MESA night Sept. 19. Their parents and the mentors who helped them over the summer were on hand to celebrate their accomplishments. Special thanks to Dr. Raga Bakhiet for her ongoing efforts to bring these opportunities to our math, science and engineering students. ♦



Southwestern College Landscape Design Students Remake a Corporate Headquarters

A group of Southwestern College landscape design students are contributing to the transformation of a large outdoor area at the corporate headquarters of a leading San Marcos-based firm.

The seven students were enrolled last spring in an Advanced Landscape Design class at Southwestern College. The course focuses on advanced design skills and the design of public spaces, and students' final project involved developing design concepts to remake a 1.3-acre outdoor area at Hunter Industries.

Hunter Industries is a major manufacturer of irrigation equipment for the landscaping and golf course industries. It was seeking ideas and plans to convert a simple grass-covered park beside San Marcos Creek into an employee retreat and an area to demonstrate their products.

Goals for the project included reducing turf and lowering water use; creating an edible garden; developing a place for the Hunter corporate community; and allowing for recreational opportunities.

Design elements crafted by students included raised vegetable beds, citrus trees, grape trellises, paved pathways, outdoor kitchens and areas for picnics and barbecues. The top seven designs from the class were presented to Hunter representatives in May.

Hunter Industries officials were impressed. The students' work will be incorporated into remaking the 1.3-acre expanse during the first quarter of 2016, said Jeremy Handler, Hunter's corporate and social responsibility manager.

"The students were able to capture the requirements that we had while also thinking outside the box to provide some very professional designs," Handler said. "We were very impressed."

Taking part in the effort were students Onie Hadloc, Daniel Tirado, Danielle Moher, Jamille Gabionza, Lucretia Trapero-Fabrega, Eddy Palmerin and Keegan O'Neal.

The students were not novices. Hadloc, for example, was working for a landscape architecture firm and had a degree in architecture from the Philippines before enrolling at Southwestern College to secure an associate degree in landscape architecture. Moher was seeking a two-year degree in landscape architecture to add to her master's degree in Urban Planning. O'Neal has already transferred to the University of Oregon's master's program in landscape architecture.

Hunter Industries has long supported Southwestern College's Landscape Design program, hosting field trips and providing guest speakers. ♦



Career Tech Program: A Recipe for Success

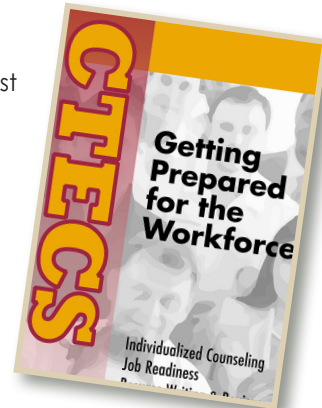
One enrolled in a computer class at Southwestern after raising two sons and is now teaching web design at other community colleges. A second didn't have a clue about computers when she came to Southwestern College at age 51, but is now thriving in her business and has landed gigs with several local media companies. A third came to Southwestern for courses ranging from web design to Flash animation and is today teaching at the college.

There are but a few of the success stories from former students who have enrolled in Southwestern College's Computer Information Systems Career Tech Program, a program that enables students, including working professionals, to quickly learn in-demand job skills.

"My career success is entirely tied to the education and training I received through career tech and I am eternally grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of the Southwestern College Career Tech Program," said Marianne Gibson, who now teaches at the Grossmont-Cuyamaca and San Diego Community College districts.

"The classes weren't just beneficial, they were life-changing," wrote Barbara Chandler, Principal/Creative Director at Creative Catalyst Media Communications, who has worked for several local television news programs.

"I have taken what I've learned at Southwestern College and now I give it back to a new generation of students," said Southwestern instructor Victor Campos, Jr. ♦



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