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SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

As one of the largest community colleges in the nation, South Texas College is firmly committed to providing accessible, low-cost, quality education and career pathways to our students that they may not only gain the opportunity to earn college credit, but that they may also have the opportunity to transform their lives. Many of the students at South Texas College are first-generation college students who arrive at the doorstep of the college, hungry to learn but unsure about which direction to go. These students and their families recognize the importance of college and the possibilities it provides, but often times they are uncertain of which pathway to travel to best achieve their dreams.

Yet, we at South Texas College continually strive to help each student along their path, as we are devoted to their success. These successes and the achievement of these dreams would not be possible without the unwavering **support and dedication of our exceptional faculty members.** In order to better help our students, South Texas College faculty commit to: Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Student Success, Leadership and College Service, Excellence through Professional Development, and Community Service and Creating a College-Going Culture.

Thus, today the Division of Academic Affairs proudly celebrates and recognizes the entire faculty of South Texas College for their dedication to exemplary teaching and learning. Through the 2015-2016 edition of the *Faculty Spotlight*, we highlight educators who embody the values that the Division holds dear. We invite you to join us as we celebrate our legacy of service to our students and our communities.

DR. ANAHID PETROSIAN

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Chief Academic Officer South Texas College

Special thanks to the Office of Professional and Organizational Development, the Office of Public Relations and Marketing, Nathan England, April Castaneda and the Faculty Spotlight Committee: Dr. Anahid Petrosian, Lee Hudson Grimes, Dr. Murad M. Odeh, Dr. Eric Reittinger, Dr. Annie Liss, and Dr. Christopher Nelson.



South Texas College has endeavored to advance regional prosperity through the educational advancement of its students. Nevertheless, transforming our students' hopes and dreams into realities would not be possible without a strong foundation - the South Texas College faculty, who embody the College's mission and values. Thus, South Texas College seeks faculty who champion the Institution's core values: excellence, student success, innovation, professionalism, collaboration, community, and integrity.

A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

South Texas College faculty members exhibit the highest levels of professionalism, remain current and competent in their fields, and excel in a collaborative environment. Faculty members are familiar with diverse teaching methods and use these tools to encourage high levels of student engagement and student understanding.

A COMMITMENT TO STUDENT SUCCESS

South Texas College faculty members are committed to student success. They guide, advise, motivate, and enhance student learning through passion for their discipline and demonstrate compassion and patience for their students. In addition, they are innovative in their teaching and seek all opportunities to identify strategies they can implement, which will motivate students to succeed.

A COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP AND COLLEGE SERVICE

South Texas College faculty members lead at local, regional, state, and national levels. Faculty leaders at South Texas College recommend and develop programs, trainings, and curricula that meet the ever changing needs of the community. They contribute to student success by participating in committees and serving as student club advisors, mentors to students, and as a vital resource for new faculty.

A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

South Texas College faculty members are committed to life-long learning. They participate in professional development opportunities to improve their teaching, maintain currency with technological advances, and incorporate diverse teaching modalities into their courses.

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY SERVICE AND CREATING A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

South Texas College faculty members serve the community by participating in outreach initiatives, public speaking, dual enrollment, or community organizations. They interact with local businesses and schools to promote South Texas College's core values and strategic directions.

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE FACULTY - CHAMPIONS OF STUDENT SUCCESS



Faculty of the Year

Associate Professor Rachael Brown has been extremely active within her department, community and region. She provides leadership within her department and at the South Texas College Mid-Valley Campus. Brown serves on multiple committees, including the Mid-Valley Advisory Committee and the Library's Art Steering Committee where she serves as the Lead

Faculty for the Campus and helps with the college's art galleries and collections. She has taken an active role in the "Getting Out the Vote" activities on Mid-Valley Campus and provides Creative Wellness de-stressing workshops around the entire South Texas College district.

Brown's passion for the arts does not stop at South Texas College. She has presented, participated, organized, and sponsored numerous art shows and exhibits such as Girl's Day at College and Al Fresco Weslaco, an outdoor event for art and music. This event provides opportunities for students to display their work and allows community members to learn more about South Texas College and its programs. Brown also served as Regional Juror for the Visual Arts Scholastic Event (VASE).

Brown continuously seeks the opportunity for professional development by volunteering to participate in the FOCUS Academy to gain additional experience and knowledge about teaching strategies and their implementation in her art courses. Brown is a Fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities Institute, representing South Texas College to the national and international community of Mesoamerican scholars. As a member, she was able to travel and visit 30 different cultural sites in Mexico.



e-Faculty of the Year

Professor Richard David Lubben has taught online at South Texas College during the last 10 years and has continuously improved his instructional delivery and course strategy. He has designed courses in Art Appreciation, Painting & Drawing and has advocated the benefits of developing more online courses in the Art Department, including the use of Bb

technology to supplement traditional F2F courses. As the Art Department Chair he implemented a two-year plan to expand online studio art course offerings, leading to online AA degrees in Graphic Arts and in Fine Arts.

Lubben has demonstrated his passion for teaching online through his commitment to innovation and excellence. He has implemented various techniques that allow for greater student engagement. One of these techniques allows him to flip his class by creating and posting video lectures online. He takes great care in the design of his course, working closely with Distance Learning Staff to ensure his courses offer the best learning experience for his students. The Distance Learning Department recognizes Lubben's significant contributions to online education.



Student Success through Service Learning

Jenny Chamberlain's students do more than just discuss social reform in her classroom – they are out in the community making a difference. By finding creative ways to introduce the concept and practice of service learning, her students become empowered to help those in the local community.

S ervice learning, which involves learning above and beyond the classroom, creates a variety of opportunities for Chamberlain's sociology students to become aware of organizations and groups that are making a positive impact on the lives of others. For example, volunteering with the First Time Juvenile Offender Program allows students to become part of a team of mentors to non-violent offenders. In addition to helping guide local youth into a more positive future, students become certified for two years to work with judges, teachers, lawyers, law enforcement, and families. This experience exposes Chamberlain's students to a variety of career options while also broadening their professional network.

Other service learning opportunities include volunteering at the Food Bank RGV, Sacred Heart Catholic Church Immigrant Assistance

Center, and mentoring at local schools. Attending events such as the Peace and Justice Conference at the Mid-Valley Campus, Human Trafficking Conference at the Pecan Campus and Islamic Mosque Community Day opens students' eyes to a range of social issues and allows them to express their point of view in the form of insightful research papers.

With a multitude of data showing that service learning does positively impact the academic and career success of students, it is no surprise that Chamberlain's students are not only putting in more hours than required, but also reaping the rewards from their volunteer efforts. Every year many of her students find fulfilling careers based on the connections they made while helping others. Furthermore, the energy and dedication that is a natural product of service learning makes the process of teaching more fun for Chamberlain. Students are more engaged as they strive toward the common goal of making the community a better place. As a result, they leave the classroom knowing they do have the ability to make a difference.



"I'm on Your Side"

Dr. Kelli Ann Davis has distinguished herself amongst her peers by proving to be an advocate for her students and going above and beyond to help them learn and succeed.

Dr. Davis took on a last minute online Mathematics class at Rio Grande City Early College High School Fall Semester, 2015. The students in her class were nervous because they had previously taken an online course and had a bad experience, but Dr. Davis established a strong rapport and open communication with the

students to ensure that they would receive the support and resources necessary to master the course material.

The students excelled under her direction and all completed the class successfully. Their positive experiences in Dr. Davis' course meant that these students ready and eager to take the next level Math course. Her commitment to her students and passion for her area of expertise are second to none, and this makes her an outstanding member among dual credit faculty.



A Rising Star for the March of Dimes Movement

On campus, in the community and now throughout Texas, Dr. Janene Israel is passionate about educating students and community members about prenatal and perinatal psychology. After joining South Texas College in 2010, Dr. Israel sought out additional opportunities to make a difference in our community. She reached out to the March of Dimes and in 2011, Dr. Israel was recognized by the organization for her abilities by being appointed as the Chairperson to the Region 10 Program Services Committee (PSC), now the Maternal Child Health and Impact Program Committee.

As Dr. Israel's responsibilities with the March of Dimes grew, so did her stellar reputation. She was asked to chair their statewide Curriculum Committee and additionally led the Strategic Mission

Initiatives. In doing so, Dr. Israel led the coalition to develop curriculum to be used in antepartum units across Texas hospitals. Most recently, Dr. Israel has been appointed as the new state level chair of the Maternal Child Health Impact Committee for the March of Dimes. As such, Dr. Israel continues to develop curriculum, while prioritizing volunteerism and advocacy.

Dr. Israel identifies with the March of Dimes' values, philosophies, and focus on pregnancy and birth processes. Through her work with the March of Dimes and championing of prenatal and perinatal psychology and health education, Dr. Israel is truly an example of excellence at South Texas College.



An Advocate for STEM Programs

South Texas College Engineering faculty member Martin Knecht is highly active in the community when it comes to conveying the opportunities STEM programs provide. Knecht demonstrates that there is a large variety of opportunities and jobs in STEM that students may not realize exists.

Knecht emphasizes that students need to be aware of what engineers do and what opportunities there are in the areas of engineering and other STEM fields. Modern engineers are quite engaged and play an important role in solving problems with different communities. As an engineering instructor, Knecht is able to provide that vital communication link between students and the real world.

Today, one of the most important messages Knecht says he can convey is that students' roles as future engineers means developing leaders who are involved in some of the most important pressing issues facing communities today. Thus, Knecht has coordinated

a robotics program for high school students and even started a summer boot camp to foster excitement among current students and recent graduates.

Moreover, the engineering department also has outreach programs including a portable planetarium and a "Traveling Chemists" program, created in conjunction with the Chemistry department. These programs travel to and perform at various schools, in cooperation with dual credit programs, throughout the year.

The goal, according to Knecht, is to bring real-world engineering issues into the classroom. Thus, Knecht and other faculty members endeavor to illustrate not only the value of the programs, but also to provide the students with relevant, applicable experience prior to the students entering the workplace. Through their work, they hope to that show engineers are creative problem-solvers who will shape our future in countless ways.



A Renewed FOCUS on Education

Instruction is the essential foundation to the transformation of the individual student. As an educator in the classroom, Dr. Sandra Ledesma believes every student deserves an education that is fair and challenging. An education should be an extension of their prior knowledge that is combined with learned knowledge. It is the combination of experiences that should help students create new ideas, solve problems, and promote self-growth.

As an educator, Dr. Ledesma says helping students accept and commit to their education can become a defining step toward living the life they most desire. Through her work with FOCUS Academy, she has the opportunity to teach with what she calls flerce compassion.

FOCUS Academy was one of three initiatives created as a result of a \$2.5 million Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program grant awarded to STC in 2014. The five-year grant was established for the implementation of the Academy and Active Learning Classrooms (ALCS) in order to enhance student learning and increase student retention and course completion. The FOCUS

Academy mission is to provide professional development for faculty to assist them in an ALCS environment.

Active Learning Classrooms appeal to multi-generational students and provide innovative teaching strategies that are designed for collaboration and real-world skills.

Dr. Ledesma is a facilitator for FOCUS. During last fall's kick-off event, she covered the overview and expectations of the FOCUS Academy. She additionally provided instruction on time management, student-centered lesson planning, pedagogy v. andragogy, setting the stage for the first day of class, and the "Rounds" process.

The semester-long academy consists of eight sessions. Participants are introduced to the six Common Instructional Framework Strategies, acquainted with the integration of educational technology, and taught how to utilize active learning spaces effectively. In addition, participants are able to learn from each other's teaching tools and techniques through sharing and observations during the "Rounds" process.



Thanking South Texas College Retirees

Since 1995, Associate Professor of Biology, Diane Teter, has taught General Biology, Nutrition, and Anatomy & Physiology in the traditional class/laboratory, in hybrid courses, through computer-aided instruction and through Distance Education. She was recognized in the STC Online Faculty Spotlight in 2015 during National Distance Learning Week, November 9-13, 2015. She received the Distinguished Teaching and Learning Award from STC in 2010 and 2014. She is the current President-elect of the Faculty Senate and has previously held the office of Secretary as well as Senator.

In addition to being committed to her students' student success, Teter is also committed to her fellow faculty members, as she has strived to recognize South Texas College faculty retirees for all of their contributions to the college.

As a result of her efforts, and for the first time in STC history, retirees have been recognized for their contributions to the college at a special ceremony as well as during the STC graduation ceremonies. For instance, in Fall 2014, through a suggestion by Teter, a unanimous vote by Faculty Senate, and support by Interim

V.P. of Academic Affairs, Dr. Anahid Petrosian, a medallion was presented to each faculty at the Retiree Recognition Ceremony held April 28, 2016, at the Cooper Center. At the Spring 2016 graduation ceremony, retirees were again recognized for their service. Currently in progress is the development of an STC Retirees' Association for which Human Resources, Faculty Senate, and Dr. Petrosian are presently writing the guidelines.

Along with the Faculty Senate, Teter has sought additional benefits for retirees. As a result, retirees should receive the same free or discounted admission to institutional events as faculty and staff has. This includes including athletic events, theater and music performances, or lectures. If retirees are admitted to these events, they will stay connected to our institution. Moreover, retirees can receive free or reduced parking fees. While most retirees do not visit the campus too often, such a benefit will continue to assist the college without placing much of a demand on the institution. South Texas College, like Diane Teter, values the work our faculty members perform and the service they provide on a day-in-day-out basis.



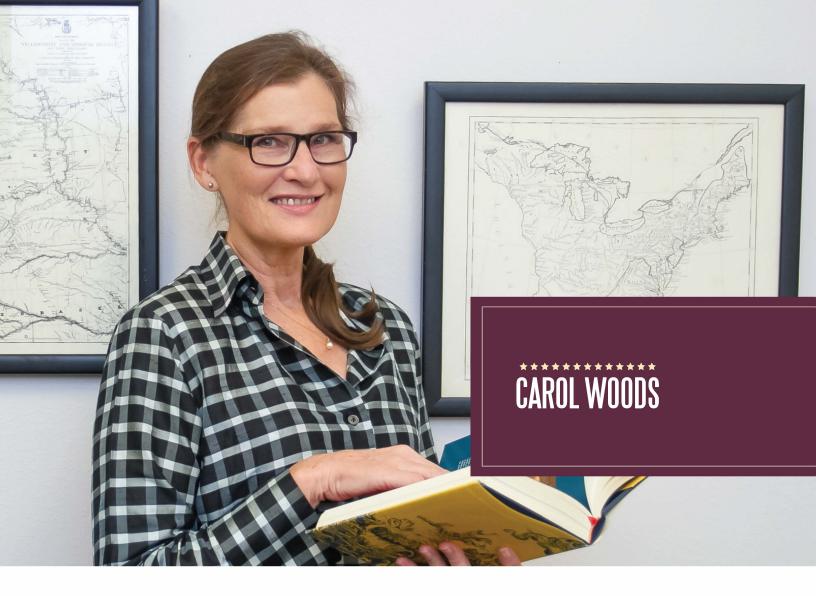
Going the Extra Mile for Students' Success

Suleyman Tufa is recognized for his excellent work as a Dual Enrollment Medical Science Academy (DEMSA) instructor for the BIOL 2421, Microbiology for Science Majors course during Spring 2016. He went above and beyond his role as an instructor by meeting with students on an individual basis who were struggling academically in his course.

In his role as dual credit faculty, Tufa spent countless hours outside of the classroom assisting students in understanding various concepts and providing them with unwavering support and guidance. Academy students spoke highly of his passion to ensure student success and of his assistance in preparing them for the

medical field. The students he instructed were high school students earning an associate degree, and were in their last semester before graduation.

Through his commitment, every one of his students passed. Tufa ensured that each student had the support and resources necessary to master the material and skills in his course so that they could proceed to the next level in their education. Many students he instructed are entering medical degree programs in the fall. Mr. Tufa's passion for teaching ensures that his students will succeed wherever they go.



Promoting Dual Enrollment Excellence

Described as easy-going and always easy to talk to, Carol Woods' demeanor is reflected in her teaching style. Always adaptable to students' needs, she excels in motivating high school students to embrace the level of rigor that is expected from college courses.

Woods is recognized for being able to instantly connect with students and being flexible while juggling a multitude of responsibilities. As a member of STC's dual credit faculty, she is at the forefront of a program that allows eligible high school students to enroll in college courses while attending high school, whether in place of, or in addition to the normal course load at their high school.

Dual credit programs exist throughout the state and country, and Woods has done her part to bring these programs to the

Rio Grande Valley. She instituted a dual enrollment program in Sharyland and PSJA while concurrently teaching five classes in these respective high schools. Her talent shines when she is pressed to adapt to the needs of the various schools where she teaches. She is highly regarded for her empathetic and easy-going demeanor that is appreciated by students and colleagues alike.

In addition to teaching dual credit, Woods has served as a Dual Credit Faculty Liaison and as an essential member of the Dual Credit Taskforce Sub-Committee on Professional Development, contributing significantly to Dual Credit Guides, Handbooks, and Dual Enrollment Conferences. She has been a mentor and source of information and support for both STC faculty teaching in dual credit and dual credit faculty.



Starr County Campus Psychology Club: Motivating Students to Become Leaders of Tomorrow

When Psychology Instructors Eli Sarabia and Alex Sarabia first established the Starr County Campus Psychology Club in 2009, they couldn't have imagined their efforts would produce one of the most active and largest student organizations at South Texas College. As natives of Starr County, the brothers felt it was important to give back to their community and, as a result, have embodied the club's core values of excellence, service, teamwork, communication, reliability, positivity, and the pursuit for higher education.

Since its founding in 2009, the Starr County Campus Psychology Club has served 400 members, held 150 regular club meetings, in addition to advisor/officer meetings, and hosted 62 fundraisers with over \$22,000 funds raised. These funds have been used for scholarships, annual trips, club socials, and donations for the Starr County Relay for Life.

The Starr County Campus Psychology Club is known for hosting several signature events throughout the year that have become a staple in Starr County, including the Starr County Role Models

Get Inspired Conferences, Starr County Mental Health Awareness Conferences, Starr County's Got Talent Shows, Starr County Campus Psychology Majors Orientation, and Crossing Disciplines Conferences. Since 2012, the club has sponsored 32 major signature events.

Student members additionally learn more about the field of psychology via workshops, guest speakers, club meeting discussions, and also by also participating in local events throughout Roma, Rio Grande City, Escobares, and La Grulla.

Through their work with the Psychology Club, the brothers are able to promote the importance of graduating on time and transferring to a four-year university. Since 2012, a graduating club member who demonstrates academic excellence and outstanding service to the college and community has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship. Through these efforts, the brothers are dedicated to motivating club members to become the leaders of tomorrow.



Broadening Students' Horizons through Study Abroad

At South Texas College, the study abroad movement continues to gain momentum thanks in part to the efforts of Delia Magdaleno, Chair of the World Languages & Humanities Department, and Dr. Kelli Davis, Interim University Relations Officer. Recently, South Texas College joined the Institute of International Education's (IIE) Generation Study Abroad initiative to help more Americans gain international experience through such programs.

IIE's Generation Study Abroad seeks to mobilize resources and commitments with the goal of doubling the number of U.S. students studying abroad by the end of the decade. STC's Study Abroad Program embraces the goals set forth by Generation Study Abroad. The program has a scholarship for study abroad participants and works to maintain affordable rates.

This affordability will further the goal of making the program accessible to underrepresented students in the college community. The Study Abroad Program has also pledged to improve curricular integration by pursuing an International Curriculum program and to better engage study abroad alumni in more activities.

In addition, four STC students were recently awarded the prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, in order to study abroad in Spain during the summer 2016 academic term. The students are among 1,150 American undergraduate students from 377 colleges and universities across the U.S. selected to receive up to \$5,000 to apply towards their study abroad or internship program costs. The program aims to diversify the students who study and intern abroad and the countries and regions they visit.

STC's Study Abroad Program was first launched in 2012 under the leadership of Magdaleno and with the dedicated participation of faculty members that included Gilberto Reyes, Jr., Associate Professor of History, and Patricia Ballinger, Assistant Professor of Art. The study abroad cohort continues to grow every year, with 12 students participating in 2015-2016. The academic component and caliber has also been raised as students now have the opportunity to experience a university environment at Universidad de Sevilla. Thanks to the success of the program started by Magdaleno, it has now been incorporated into the University Relations, Transfer and Articulation Center under the leadership of Dr. Kelli Davis. Dr. Davis is working to develop new study abroad programs and, starting this coming year, students will also have the opportunity to study in India as well as Spain.



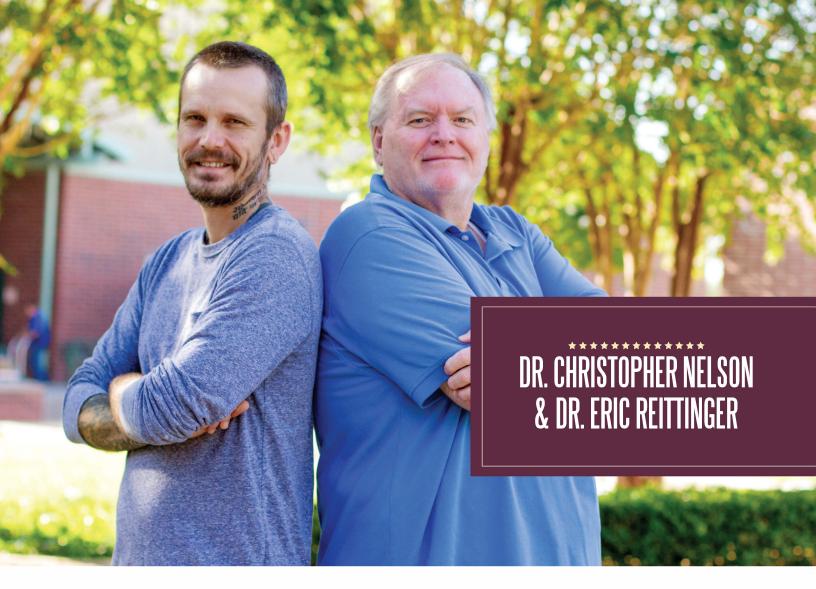
Biology Outreach

At South Texas College, the departments are known to provide excellent outreach activities for students, and the Biology department is no exception. Under the leadership of Dr. Mahmoudian-Geller and Athena Lemus-Wilson, the Biology department has reached out to many local elementary and high schools as well as the community at large. By utilizing their Biology Club, Dr. Mahmoudian-Geller and Lemus-Wilson are able to reach more students to promote health, ecology, and science education opportunities.

Some of the more popular promotions include student posters and awareness tables to endorse General Health, Awareness of Diseases and Breast Cancer Awareness. Along with the National Wildlife Refuge in RGV, the club assisted in invasive species removal and habitat restoration projects, and participated in Rio Restoration last year. The club also organizes exhibition tables

and hands-on activities for students of all ages at that the Coastal Science EXPO each year. This exposition is held to promote the conservation of coastal habitats and animals.

Additionally, each semester the Mobile Biologist Team of students visits local elementary schools and shares their enthusiasm for science education by doing fun and educational activities with school kids. Some of the most popular activities include recycled papermaking, microscopy, and simple experiments with carbon dioxide that promote awareness of greenhouse gasses and water pollution. The club also participates in the Great American Clean-up in McAllen and the South Padres Island clean-up. It is through these efforts that Dr. Mahmoudian-Geller and Lemus-Wilson hope to provide students with real life applications of scientific knowledge and awareness in the community.



A Year of Service

The success and growth of our students at South Texas College would not be possible without the dedication and service of so many faculty members. At South Texas College, we believe student success is possible with the unwavering support of the institution's faculty and staff. This year, we would like to recognize and thank both our past President of the Council of Chairs, Dr. Christopher Nelson, and our former Faculty Senate President, Dr. Eric Reittinger for their service.

Dr. Nelson says, through his position as President of the Council of Chairs from 2014-2015, he wanted to explore the development of mutually-beneficial relations between faculty and administration. The job is threefold:

- To convene and conduct productive meetings of the Department/ Program Chairs once a month;
- To serve as a two-way conduit of information and concerns between the office of the VPAA and the Faculty via the Program/ Department Chairs;
- To serve on various standing and ad hoc committees, councils, task forces and project teams.

This includes the Planning and Development Council, the Academic

Affairs Council, the Dual Enrollment Task-Force, the Textbook Committee and Open Educational Resources Task-Force, the "Achieving the Dream" Coaches Visit Team, the Calendar Committee, the Travel Committee, and other groups as assigned per the VPAA. Dr. Nelson's input and leadership on these various teams and taskforces has been instrumental for the continued growth and development of our organization.

In the same manner, Dr. Reittinger's role fostering communication among the faculty and leadership at South Texas College was invaluable. During his term as Faculty Senate President, Dr. Reittinger was instrumental in establishing a document entitled Essential Qualities of South Texas College Faculty, which outlined a one-year project that required large involvement of all faculty. Through that involvement, faculty members pledged to serve the community by participating in outreach initiatives, public speaking, dual enrollment, or community organizations. Faculty agreed to interact with local businesses and schools to promote South Texas College's core values and strategic directions. The Faculty Senate of South Texas College would not be able to have accomplished its mission without the unfailing leadership of Dr. Reittinger.



Breaking Down Barriers for Women in Technology Fields

It has often been said that education is the great equalizer. For this reason, South Texas College is doing its part to help break down barriers that still exist for women interested in pursuing careers in business and technology-related fields.

For the past six years, the college has hosted its Women in Technology event, which focuses on educating new and current female students, in addition to members of the community, about the many program options available at the Technology Campus. These programs range from Information Technology to Business Administration and are more often pursued by men. However, they have lucrative salary potentials tied to professional opportunities that all students, male or female, should consider pursuing.

Every year, the Women in Technology event has evolved to include more educational components. This includes inviting

prominent women from the community who have found success as leaders in business and technology careers.

In addition to the free public forum, workshops were held specifically for high school female students who were interested in technology and business-related programs. This is the second year STC has incorporated this additional component in an effort to elevate the educational aspects of the event.

"The earlier we make female students aware of the variety of business and technology programs offered at the college, the more likely they will choose related career paths," explained STC Business Computer Systems Instructor, Angelita Teniente, who also headed the Women in Technology event committee. "There is a demand in the workforce now for qualified candidates and this is the perfect place to send students on the right path."



Building Little Free Libraries and Literacy in the Community

Take a book, return a book — This is the simple yet brilliant method behind the Little Free Libraries, a nationwide movement with a mission to promote a sense of community, reading for children, literacy for adults, and libraries around the world. South Texas College has now joined the cause with the creative collaboration between the Architectural & Engineering Design Technology Department and the ACD2, the Xi Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta, the English Honor Society, during the 2016 Sketcharette competition in March.

During the competition, eight teams of students constructed Little Libraries that were inspired by an author's life, by the typical architecture of the author's time period, or inspired by the architecture depicted in one of the author's works. Trophies in the shape of books were awarded to First, Second and Third Place, along with a People's Choice Award.

Assistant Professor Sara Lozano, Program Chair of the

Architectural & Engineering Design Technology Department; Laura Salas, Assistant Professor of CADD; Darci Cather, Assistant Professor of English; Margarita Vanguelova, Assistant Professor of CADD; Dr. Rebecca Millan, Associate Professor of English; Dr. Brett Millan, Professor of English; Sam Saldana, CADD Instructor; and Robin Bell English Instructor all worked together to make the project possible

The Sketcharette competition encompassed one of the main purposes of the Little Free Libraries, which is to build community. After the event, each team was charged with placing their Little Free Library into the community and finding a steward.

In addition to creating a book exchange network throughout the Rio Grande Valley, the Little Free Libraries also serve as conversation pieces and create more awareness regarding enhancing literacy and access to books. As of June 2016, 40,000 Little Free Libraries were registered worldwide.



A Dynamic Year for South Texas College Faculty Advisors

It was a banner year for the Faculty Advising Program at South Texas College. Through the efforts of STC Coordinator of Faculty Advising Dr. Laura Lopez, working in tandem with a stellar team of lead faculty advisors, the program surpassed its target goal to train 70 faculty a year, and instead certified 114 faculty through advisement training.

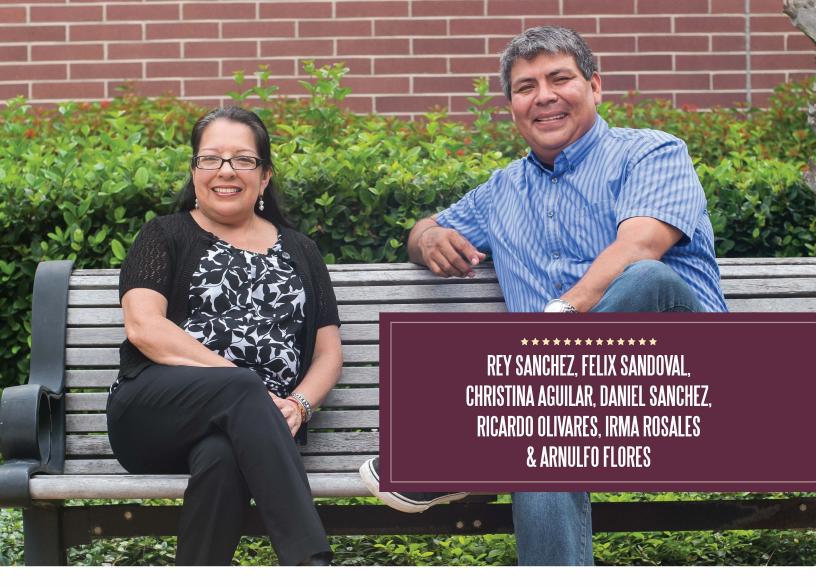
The lead faculty advisors being recognized include Laura Nunn, Dr. Annie Liss, Cynthia Salinas, Dr. Oscar Rodriguez and Sara Lozano. The lead faculty advisors represent the major education divisions at the college: one representative for Business and Technology (BT), one representative for Nursing and Allied Health (NAH), one for Math and Science (MS), and two for the Literature and Social Science Division.

All of faculty advisors were instrumental in assisting with New Intent Faculty Advising (NIFA), training and curriculum development. Faculty advising was one of three initiatives created as a result of a \$2.5 million Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program grant

awarded to STC in 2014. The five year grant was established for the redesign of the Faculty Advising program, and was expanded in order to update faculty advisors on best practices and college programs, as well as to recruit and train new faculty advisors.

Within one year, the lead faculty advisors worked with Dr. Lopez to revamp the entire program. Their charge was to provide program updates at division meetings in order to promote the program. As the student body has grown, DegreeWorks was implemented and a custom-designed tool, the Graduation Progress Meter was used to support the student and their advisor with real-time degree pathway status and progress to degree information.

With three more years left in the grant, the Faculty Advising Program is already looking ahead to the fall. During the 2016-2017 school year, the lead faculty advisors, Nunn, Dr. Liss, Dr. Rodriguez, and Lozano, and Salinas will mentor newly trained faculty advisors and will continue to update the various divisions about the new initiative.



Building Homes and Volunteerism in the Community

Many students have the desire to make a difference in their communities, but often do not know where to start or lack the confidence they need to make such a difference. With this fact in mind, a group of South Texas College Technology faculty members set out to provide their students with the opportunities they require. What three years ago started out as a faculty initiative to motivate electrician technology and construction supervision students to practice out in the field, has now evolved into a student-driven priority to help those in their local community. Because of the inspiring examples set by faculty members, a total of ten homes were built for Proyecto Azteca and Habitat for Humanity during the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters with major contributions from students.

In 2013, faculty members collaborated to develop innovative methods to provide students with practice in their various fields while assisting the less fortunate. As chair for the Architectural & Engineering Design Technology, Electrician Technology, Construction and Heating, Ventilation and A/C & Refrigeration Programs, Rey Sanchez has the opportunity to work with many dedicated faculty members on a variety of projects, which include building homes for

Habitat for Humanity. In the same manner, Felix Sandoval, lead electrician instructor, and his fellow electrician assistant instructors, which include Christina Aguilar, Daniel Sanchez, Richard Olivares and Arnulfo Flores, saw the projects as learning experiences that were invaluable opportunities for their students to practice in real world environments. Irma Rosales, who provided guidance for construction supervision students, was also integral in creating an educational and hands-on experience for her students on the job sites.

With support from the Dean for Business & Technology, Mario Reyna, plans to continue incorporating labs at job site locations during the school week are set to continue. In addition, a growing pattern of students who are happy to volunteer on Fridays and Saturdays alongside their instructors shows the positive impact of leading by example.

Whether faculty or student, helping to build homes for those less fortunate in the community holds a special purpose for everyone who volunteers their time. By providing such opportunities to students, faculty members give them a chance to transform not only themselves, but also our communities.



Providing Quality Distance Learning to Students

Distance learning faculty at South Texas College all have a unique approach to the Quality Matters rubric that was created by faculty in order to enhance student success online. While it is impossible to highlight all of our excellent distance learning faculty, we would like to feature a few you have made great strides in the field of distance learning: Dr. Kelli Davis, Gabriel Pena, Irma Rodriguez, and Cynthia Sanchez, who also serves as a Quality Matters Peer reviewer.

For Dr. Davis, the key to being an effective educator, whether online, face-to-face, or in a hybrid classroom is to keep on learning and doing research on the best practices. Having completed the Eteach sequence several years ago, Dr. Davis has undertaken to complete the sequence again to make sure that she is taking full advantage of everything the online platform offers. This year she also volunteered to attend the first ever Online Course Redesign Academy where she learned about the Quality Matters rubric.

Similarly, Gabriel Pena says teaching online has been an amazing, exciting, and incredibly rewarding experience. He enjoys the flipped classroom approach and likes to incorporate Web 2.0 tools for communication and collaboration among his students. As

the program chair for the Respiratory Therapy Department, he says hybrid courses in respiratory therapy are preparing graduates with better skill sets for employment. Graduates adapt better with advancements in technology that go along with electronic health records.

Another example of a stellar distance learning faculty member is Irma Rodriguez. Irma serves on the Distance Learning Advisory Committee and is a Distance Learning Mentor. Irma says her approach to teaching is composed of three components: teaching styles, cross curricular/collaboration, and technology integration. Online teaching, she says is now woven into society, and she seeks to provide a challenging, self-directed experience for her online

Finally, as an online instructor, Cynthia Sanchez sets the tone for students' performance, and she attempts to model best online practice strategies. Sanchez maintains a constant presence in her online courses, as she provides bi-weekly mass and personal emails to students, personalized videos and lectures, regular course updates and postings, and timely return of assignments with thoughtful feedback.

The Distinguished Teaching and Learning Award (DTLA) was established to recognize full-time or part-time faculty members who have established an exemplary teaching technique, practice, or activity at South Texas College.



Instructor, English, Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Division



Teaching Technique: Online Peer Review Using the Wiki Tool in Blackboard

In her courses, Robin Bell emphasizes teaching her students how to look at their own writing and evaluate its effectiveness. Traditionally, students practice assessing the writing of others through peer revision, but this often produces mixed results as students are reluctant to be critical of others' work. To address this issue, Bell uses the wiki tool in Blackboard. She creates a Wikipedia-like page that can be accessed and edited by anyone in the class. She created online groups, or "rooms" where students can read each other's work, provide feedback using the comments feature in Word and then repost the document.

The end result was students gaining confidence in their ability to identify areas of writing needing improvement and offer meaningful, often insightful, advice to their peers. This, in turn, gave them insight into their own writing and awareness of the importance of audience.

EDMUNDO GARCIA

Instructor, Associate Degree Nursing Program, Nursing & Allied Health Division

Teaching Technique: Enhanced Learning through Simulation and Role Play

Edmundo Garcia brings a wealth of knowledge to the ADN Program due to his vast experience as a nurse, his ability to simplify and clarify information, and his use of simulation. Garcia's use of laerdal mannequins and his employment of NLN scenarios have made him an expert in his field and a relieable source of information. The expertise Garcia has gained in his many years as a Med-Surg Instructor enhances his simulation and role play techniques. Garcia has the ability to integrate the use of mannequins to accomplish basic nursing skills in a simulated environment and increase the students' learning and experience.



ERIC GARCIA

Instructor, Mathematics, Math, Science & BAT Programs Division

Teaching Technique: Active Learning, Student Engagement, Emotional Intelligence (Self Awareness), Multi Media, Computer Application

Eric Garcia uses a combination of web-based technology, open-source software and emotional intelligence skill-building to improve student performance. Lectures are constructed to develop self-awareness in students. Garcia implements humor, positivity and shares his own past struggles with mathematics to challenge students' preconceived notion of mathematics education. Students learn to address "math anxiety" or "test anxiety" by identifying their stress triggers and adopting appropriate stress responses. He also utilizes video conferencing during office hours via Skype. Additionally, Garcia implements web-based applications such as GeoGebra, Desmos, and SymPy in his lessons and encourages his students to use these free web-based applications to further their understanding of mathematical concepts. Garcia also requires students to use free and opensource software, such as R and G numeric, in statistics courses. This improves computer proficiency and introduces coding concepts to students.



Instructor, Culinary Arts, Business & Technology Division



Teaching Technique: Blogging Towards Deliciousness in a Culinary World

Chef Guerra is always looking for ways to improve her class instruction and engage her students through technology. She has implemented a technique for each student that encourages them to create a blog via Blackboard of all their projects. Each student has to write an entry in which they critique their work on whatever they cook or bake and explain what came out well and what did not. If the student writes down why the project did not turn out well, she provides clarifying feedback and asks the students to research ways to improve their product next time. This technique allows the students to "document" their work from day one, all the way to their practical exam. This also encourages the students by allowing them to see the improvements they have made which, in turn, empowers them to do better. In addition, Chef Guerra encourages the students to collaborate and provide constructive criticism on each other's work.



Instructor, Electronic & Computer Maintenance, Business & Technology Division



Teaching Technique: Using Nonrepudiation Screenshot Software for Authentic Blackboard Lab Submission

Electronic and Computer Maintenance classes require students to provide screenshots of their work as they progress through the lab. In an online class, students take screenshots and copy/paste them into a final PDF document prior to submission. The problem is that there is no software to uniquely identify student lab work as authentic. In order to meet his students' needs, Meliton Hinojosa wrote a software that students use on their screenshots to watermark them, which prevents replication of their work. The software's watermark includes the date and time, which ultimately prevents and discourages the students from plagiarising or duplicating for semesters to come.

NICHOLAS HINOJOSA

Instructor, Computer Science, Math, Science & Bachelor Programs Division



Teaching Technique: Improving Student Comprehension through Visualizations that Model Complex Processes and Abstract Concepts

As a tactile learner, Nicolas Hinojosa believes instruction is best delivered using a hands-on approach. He additionally teaches mostly by example in both his face-to-face and online courses. Hinojosa has produced over 25 hours of instructional videos and provides online tutoring by conducting remote desktop sessions with his students.

Hinojosa takes pride in being a creative and logical thinker. He is a former South Texas College graduate with an associate degree in Mathematics and a bachelor's degree in Computer and Information Technologies. He also has a master's in Information Technology and is experienced in computer programming, human computer interaction (HCI), interface design, database management, networking, web development, cybersecurity, drawing, animation and graphic design.



Instructor, Education, Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Division



Teaching Technique: Student Centered Lesson Planning

Dr. Sandra Ledesma believes understanding andragogy and providing a safe and orderly environment is an essential foundation to student success. Moreover, understanding students as part of a community and being aware of their personal struggles enhances learning. Students come to value classroom time when the educator has not only modeled but has sincerely created a relationship with the students. Dr. Ledesma emphasizes the importance of making a positive impression at the beginning of the school year. This can be done by making students feel that they are the most important people in the classroom and you are there for their success. Sharing personal human experiences with students can help create a bond and an understanding of how everyone struggles, perseveres, and can set and attain goals.

DR. REBECCA MILLAN

Associate Professor, English, Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Division



Teaching Technique: Using the Arts to Teach Social Responsibility and Plagiarism

Dr. Rebecca Millan uses a teaching strategy involving an interdisciplinary approach to engage the students and teach them about social responsibility and plagiarism. Using various technology and media, Dr. Millan presents students with cases in which media has been "reused" or "repurposed" for new projects. Dr. Millan fosters active learning and critical thinking through in-depth discussion and written analysis about social responsibility. She has additionally found a great way for students to engage in an interdisciplinary understanding of how concepts, such as public domain, proper use of other's work and creative understanding, all foster a sense of social responsibility in one's own work.

GINA MIOUIABAS

Adjunct Instructor, Developmental Math, Math, Science & Bachelor Programs Division



Teaching Technique: Bringing Math to Life

Gina Miquiabas currently teaches Algebra and Geometry in the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD where she is also certified in composite science and has taught Human Body Systems and Medical Interventions. As an Adjunct Math Instructor at South Texas College since 2009, her love for problem-solving continues to grow. She is also a graduate student at Harvard University in Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies, a field of mathematics for teaching. Her classes at Harvard have shaped her passion in mathematics tremendously.

As a second-time recipient of the Distinguished Teaching & Learning Award, Miquiabas is on a mission to inspire and challenge her students to love learning. Adventure, creativity, discovery and exploration are just some of the many experiences she provides her students in the classroom. She takes pride and joy in watching the bricks of their strong mathematical foundation take form.

DAPHINE MORA

Instructor, College Success for Healthcare, Nursing & Allied Health Division



Teaching Technique: Changing Behaviors in Students to prepare them to be Successful in Health Care

Daphine Mora focuses primarily on changing behaviors in the classroom. The most elementary behavior that must be learned is classroom civility. Mora demonstrates both classroom civility and incivility. On the first day of class all students are greeted courteously and are expected to reply kindly. Mora chooses to demonstrate incivility during one class period by being extremely disagreeable and demanding. She intentionally raises her voice and makes demands to students. After 10 minutes, Mora stops and asks students how they felt about her behavior. She opens dialogue about respect and civility from all parties in to begin the education process. This technique helps students understand the need to support their fellow students and be able to better understand the need to conform to classroom rules. Mora believes that civility is the foundation for learning and demonstrating new behaviors.



DR. RAVINDRA NANDIGAM

Instructor, Physical Science, Math, Science & Bachelor Programs Division

Teaching Technique: Applying the KISS Principle (Keeping It Simple for Students)

Dr. Ravindra Nandigam demonstrates his teaching technique by applying the KISS Principle: Keeping It Simple for Students. He makes the complex Physical Science content and curriculum easy to understand for all student learners. Some of the strategies he employs include showing educational and relevant videos, and applying hands-on activities in group work, all while making it fun.

JORGE SAENZ

Instructor, Electronic & Computer Maintenance, Business & Technology Division

Teaching Technique: Providing Students with Additional Educational Opportunities through Content Specific Workshops

Throughout his years of service, Jorge Saenz has worked in conjunction with the Technology Campus CLE Workshop Series to provide students with additional educational opportunities that will help prepare them for the industry they will enter upon graduation. The content for the workshops is specific to the industry and may be derived from a number of different avenues, including more in-depth conversations about key topics in the curriculum, industry certification exam reviews, practical application of theories discussed in class, emerging technology, industry trends, simulation exercises based on workplace scenarios and general troubleshooting of hardware. Saenz hosted 49 workshops with a total of 384 attendees in the spring semester alone.



CYNTHIA SANCHEZ

Assistant Professor, Business Administration, Business & Technology Division

Teaching Technique: Teaches through Relevance, Innovation, and Strong Engagement (or RISE)

Cynthia Sanchez' teaching philosophy is based on three areas: relevance, innovation and engagement. All the materials and teaching techniques utilized in her courses are relevant to her students. Ms. Sanchez makes sure that students can connect, find usefulness in the material, and the material is suitable for the class level. In both her online and traditional courses, she utilizes innovative technology including Blackboard enhancement in traditional courses to collaborative lectures in her online courses. Sanchez has also implemented the "flipped" classroom for selected courses and believes students must be engaged and interested in the teaching techniques that she is utilizing. A few engagement tools that Sanchez uses include group applications, application labs, web enhancements, paychecks every two weeks rather than grades and games such as Family Feud, Who Wants to by a Payroll Accountant, Who Wants to be a Cost Accountant, and Double Jeopardy.

DAVID SHEPARD

Associate Professor, Psychology, Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Division

Teaching Technique: A Video Teaching Archive That Makes Visual Examples, Humor, and Stories Available in ANY Classroom

David Shepard has developed a point and click database of over 300 videos that can be accessed by any professor in any classroom to provide easy in-class demonstrations to illustrate important points on any subject matter. Subjects can range anywhere from bullying to human genetic disorders to World War II. Shepard makes these videos available to students taking regular courses or on-line courses to help improve and engage students in discussion.

ACADEMIC CLASSIFICATION CLASS OF 2015-2016 ****

South Texas College is committed to serving the students and communities of South Texas by recruiting and retaining faculty who are committed to academic excellence, integrity and scholarship. Four titles are granted to convey faculty classification. In ascending order these are: Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. Criteria for the designation of academic classification for faculty include: Education, Years of Service, Teaching Effectiveness, Service to College, Service to Community, Professional Activities, and Scholarly Pursuit.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Pablo Cortez
Dr. Janene Israel
Auristela LungEducation/College Success

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

James Blair	
Moraima Cardenas	
William Green	
Dr. Sandra LedesmaEducation	
Robert Luckett	
Lyda Neal	
Ana ValladarezBusiness Administration	

FACULTY RETIREES ***

South Texas College would not be the nationally recognized and award-winning institution it is without the dedication and commitment of its exceptional faculty members. The faculty members of South Texas College truly care about the students and their success. Thus, we would like to recognize the following members for their loyalty and unwavering commitment to our college and our students.

FACULTY RETIREES

Elizabeth Dietz
Arnulfo FloresElectrician Assistant
Oscar G. Flores Electronic and Computer Maintenance
Aparna Banerjee Ganguli
Mukul Chandra GanguliBiology
Francisco De Jesus GomezHuman Resources Specialist Program
Clyde Sydney Greenlees
Grace Little
Lyda L NealDevelopmental Math
Howard S. PriceDevelopmental English
Esteban Salinas

