



College of Health & Human Sciences / Spring 2024 Newsletter



Dean's Message

In the dynamic realm of health and human sciences, our students are not merely learners; they are catalysts for change, engaging in multifaceted roles of learning, research, advocacy, and clinical practice. Despite encountering formidable challenges along their academic journeys, these resilient individuals exhibit unwavering determination and grit. Whether immersed in groundbreaking research projects, passionately practicing with and advocating for marginalized clients and communities, or diligently honing their clinical skills, our students embody the spirit of perseverance and excellence. Through their tenacity and dedication, they not only navigate through personal struggles but also emerge as empowered graduates poised to be leaders who will make a meaningful impact in their health and human science fields. WE CONNECT PASSION TO PURPOSE.

Sincerely,

Audrey Shillington, Dean
College of Health and Human Sciences

Inspiring Tomorrow's Health Leaders: College of Health and Human Sciences' 2024 Health Programs Preview Day

By Enjoli Pescheta, Dean's Office



Over 100 high school students from three distinct districts were greeted with enthusiasm as they arrived for the College of Health and Human Sciences' Health Programs Preview Day on Friday, May 3rd, 2024. This initiative, launched by the College last year, aims to introduce students to various health-related careers and instill in them the importance of pursuing higher education in these fields from as early as their sophomore year of high school. After the success of last year's inaugural Health Programs Preview Day with Andrew Hill High School, the College expanded our pipeline programming to include San Jose High School and Milpitas Dual Enrollment School.

Led by our dedicated student ambassadors, the eager participants began their day with a comprehensive tour of San Jose State University's vibrant campus. Along the way, they were introduced to the vast number of resources available to students and the community at large. This immersive experience allowed the students to envision themselves as integral members of the Spartan Community, fostering a sense of belonging and aspiration.

After the campus tour, the students engaged in interactive discussions with faculty members and current students at our resource fair, gaining valuable insights into the diverse array of health programs offered at the College of Health and Human Sciences and in partnership with the Department of Psychology and Department of Communicative Disorders and Sciences. From nursing to public health, the students were exposed to the multitude of opportunities awaiting them in the field of healthcare.

Following the resource fair, the high school attendees headed to the dining commons to have lunch with their peers. Student ambassadors joined them at their tables, giving the high school students an opportunity to gain knowledge and insight into campus life.

Once the students were done eating lunch, they were divided into smaller groups to explore specific health related departments. During each department visit, students had the opportunity to interact with professors, ask questions, and participate in hands-on activities related to the field.

As the day came to a close, it became evident that the Health Programs Preview Day was not just a college campus visit, but rather a pivotal stepping stone in the educational journey of these young students. With newfound knowledge and inspiration, the high school students departed with a renewed sense of purpose and determination to pursue their academic and professional passions in the realm of health and human sciences.



NUFS Chronicles: Student Stories of Resilience, Passion, and Purpose

By Dr. Jacqueline Bergman, Assistant Professor
Department of Nutrition, Food Science & Packaging

In the bustling corridors of San José State University's [Department of Nutrition, Food Science, and Packaging](#), graduate students Adriana Fregoso, Kayla Mitchell, and Cassandra Boyd stand as testaments to resilience, passion, and purpose. These individuals, specializing in various domains of nutrition science, navigate their academic journeys at SJSU with unwavering determination and a commitment to making a difference in their respective fields.



Adriana Fregoso: Breaking Barriers with Resilience and Determination

Adriana's journey at SJSU began with challenges common to first-generation Latina students. Nonetheless, her tenacity led her to earn double bachelor's degrees in Nutritional Science and Spanish. After a hiatus, Adriana returned to SJSU to earn her master's degree with renewed purpose. Her most memorable moment as a master's student takes her back to her first day, sitting in the same classroom as she had five years earlier. She recalls feeling a transformative shift, more engaged, confident, and excited to finish what she had started. "It was a nice reminder of how far I had come..." Drawing from her experiences, Adriana's research focuses on addressing cultural food challenges among Latino students. She shares, "As a Latina college student, I found myself forced to change my eating habits, leaving behind a part of my cultural identity." Through her journey from uncertainty to empowerment, Adriana has learned to seek help when needed and support others facing similar challenges.

Kayla Mitchell: Fearless Optimism--Navigating Paths of Passion and Opportunity

After high school, Kayla ventured from the Bay Area to Santa Cruz, enrolling at Cabrillo College. For five years, amidst the ebb and flow of retail work, she explored various courses. However, her true calling emerged when she discovered the introductory nutrition classes at Cabrillo College. Instantly captivated, Kayla's passion for food and cooking found its anchor, setting her on an exciting new path. As an SJSU transfer student, Kayla thrived while juggling work, achieved leadership roles in the NUFS club, and gained acceptance into the nutritional science's SAGE '24 cohort. Despite challenges, she graduated debt-free, crediting her peers and professors for their invaluable support. Reflecting on her journey, Kayla shared, "College can be an incredibly stressful and challenging time, but I was able to persist with the help and camaraderie of my peers and professors." With dreams of returning to SJSU as a professor, Kayla's story inspires others to embrace courage and seize their prospects.



Cassandra Boyd: Navigating Graduate School with Grit and Grace

Cassandra Boyd's journey from community college to earning her master's at SJSU embodies humble gratitude and endurance. Despite seven years of uncertainty, a nutrition class sparked her passion, propelling her to excel in undergraduate studies. Flash forward to graduate school, her impactful research on probiotics, including the renowned "Ten Foods with the Highest Prebiotic Content," garnered international recognition earning publications and featured in Newsweek, Yahoo, Everyday Health, and 50+ other news outlets. Her SJSU experience solidified her career aspirations in research, all while remaining humble and grateful for the supportive community. "I am most grateful for the community of people at SJSU who believed in me before I believed in myself." Through it all, Cassandra exemplifies the power of dedication, passion, and persistence.

Their collective experiences affirm SJSU's transformative impact, nurturing students to become catalysts for change in their fields and communities.

SJSU Receives \$3.4 Million Grant to Broaden and Build Health Care Workforce By Cassie Myers, University Marketing and Communications

The health care workforce in California is in desperate need of new employees, and San José State University is, as always, committed to reaching out to underserved and diverse populations to find the next generation of leaders in every field. So when the opportunity arose to combine these issues into a win-win proposition, the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) embraced it.

The resulting program, called “Broaden and Build the Northern CA Health Care Workforce,” just received a nearly \$3.4 million grant from the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI). “Broaden and Build,” the culmination of several ideas from CHHS chairs and directors, will “create low-risk/high-yield pathways for first-generation students to enter into a diverse range of health professions.” Outreach will primarily target high school students, but the program is also open to anyone looking to start an undergraduate degree with a potential interest in health care careers, especially those serving rural or other under-resourced communities.



“The SJSU Director of nursing regularly reminds us that there’s a dire need for nurses and certified nursing assistants,” Grzywacz says. “This grant will directly impact that shortage while also recognizing that a lot of first-generation college students confront the very real question of whether the financial investment in their degree is worth the amount they’re going to earn when all is said and done. This program is one way of offsetting that.”

“We are thrilled to be awarded this significant HCAI grant to support students and address the critical workforce needs in the U.S.,” says Audrey Shillington, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences. “This grant will alleviate the financial burden for aspiring healthcare professionals, allowing them to focus on their studies and training. This initiative represents a vital step towards improving healthcare access and quality, fostering a new generation of skilled and compassionate caregivers committed to serving underserved communities.”

A foot in the door

The first stage of the grant will focus on outreach and training. First, representatives from SJSU (school and department representatives and peer mentors) will travel to high-need regions, focusing on rural and health professional shortage areas (HPSAs), to speak to students about all the opportunities in health care education and careers.

One such opportunity will be a free six-week training to become a certified nurse assistant (CNA). The training is online and open to everyone enrolled in the “Broaden and Build” program, while experiential learning occurs in facilities around the state. If students qualify and pass the certification test after the training sessions, they can work as CNAs while earning their undergraduate degrees.

This is another win-win; the new CNA graduates are able to work to help benefit the community, all while earning money (roughly \$40,000 a year) to offset their tuition and getting their first taste of a health care career, a high-impact learning experience similar to some used before in CHHS. Grzywacz is quick to say that they’re not expecting all the students participating to become nurses; they may discover they prefer public health, for example, or dietetics or kinesiology. But the CNA certification is a foot in the door.



As he explains, “CHHS’s goal is to create a pipeline to the health professions. A lot of our students recognize that they want to help people, but the only way that they tend to think about that is in the very specific clinical realms of nursing. This grant was really set up to help people get started so that they have the opportunity to earn and explore different alternatives before they commit to one wholeheartedly.”

Training more health care professionals

The CNA training will be run by ProCareer Academy, an SJSU partner, with SJSU faculty occasionally participating in training and connecting with each cohort. The hope is that several recruited and newly-minted CNAs will begin their undergraduate careers at SJSU after they’re certified, earning money while taking classes toward a degree. The plan is to produce roughly 110 CNAs a year, and they’re hoping that over the grant’s five years, they can get at least 100 of the recruited CNAs into SJSU health care programs.

By reaching into rural and HPSA communities, “Broaden and Build” also hopes to educate students who can then bring their newfound health care knowledge and careers back home into their local communities, which may have an even greater need for health care professionals.

Expanding the grant

As of now, the grant is comprised of this CNA program outreach and recruitment, but CHHS chairs and directors hope to expand it, ideally including scholarships for studying health care at SJSU as well as peer mentoring, established faculty mentors for undergraduates, and paid internships at community health care organizations.

With this grant, Grzywacz says, CHHS hopes to “create a nice seamless transition from one thing to the next” for eligible students. “We don’t want people working an obscene amount of hours; we want them to enjoy their college experience,” he explains. “But at the same time, we also realize that they need some scaffolding, too. They need support. And so that’s part of what this program is about.”

On a personal level, Grzywacz adds, it also felt “fabulous” to receive this significant grant. “As a first-generation college kid, I remember working my way through school when tuition was \$650 for 13 credits, and I lived at home,” he says. “It’s a lot harder for young people today, so I’m all for anything we can do to support first-generation college students and help them get a degree without taking too much of a financial risk. That’s what I’m most excited about.”



[Keep up with the exciting new initiatives and programs from the College of Health and Human Sciences.](#)

Empowering Voices: Public Health Students Reflect on Key Takeaways from the 11th Annual CSU Health Policy Conference

By Dr. Ni Zhang, Assistant Professor, Department of Public Health & Recreation



A dozen enthusiastic public health students attended the electrifying 11th Annual CSU Health Policy Conference in Sacramento from April 15th to 17th. Over two action-packed days, they connected with legislators, public health professionals, advocates, lobbyists, and legislative analysts. When asked to share the most exciting highlights and key takeaways from the speakers, the students said:

- I like when the Secretary of State, Dr. Weber said, ‘if there are no seats at the table, bring your own chair.’ I took this to mean that you need to advocate for yourself when you believe you deserve better and to create your own path when it comes to finding a career. --- Suodaba
- When Mayor of Sacramento, Darrell Steinberg, said “be hard on the issues, be easy on the people and enrich your knowledge about the world by reading.” I also really liked what Ash Kalra said “don’t forget where you came from.” -- Raveena
- Dr. Aragon mentioned that when you’re talking to someone who shares different values or a different perspective on an issue you should: Listen and ask yourself 3 things: What can I learn about this person, what can I learn about myself, and what can I learn about the issue. -- Angelica
- From Dr. Weber: You should make people afraid to lose your support and your voice. By voting and advocating, people will listen to you because they are afraid of your power. – Reagan
- Policy is not just about passing bills, it is about working to make the future better in order for other people to not go through the same struggles we did. -- Dana
- One thing that stuck with me would be hearing Wendy Carillo speak about how legacy is planting a seed for a tree that we will not see because it made me reflect and think about the future I want to create for those that will come after me and it solidified why I want to go into public policy. -- Micole

SJSU has been active in planning and participating in this conference from the beginning. The conference is a unique convening of public health students and faculty across the CSU, all committed to government service and public health.



SJSU Online Launches Program to Prepare the Next Generation of Health Care Leaders

by Brian Cheung Dooley



Employment opportunities in medical and health services management professions are projected to grow 28% from 2022 to 2032, [according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). To address this demand, SJSU Online has launched a new bachelor's degree-completion program in [Health Care Leadership](#).

The innovative, unique curriculum places flexibility and practical skills at the core of the program, while weaving together health care leadership skills, financial principles, management strategies and standards to improve patient care.

“Our college spent a couple of years developing this program,” said Audrey Shillington, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences at San José State. “We examined market analysis data to determine the skill sets and knowledge bases in demand by employers in the health professions. Additionally, we gathered input from our college’s faculty chairs and directors as well as our executive advisory board, which is made up of industry leaders in our community.”

The program has also been designed so that students can transfer their new knowledge and skills into a wide range of graduate programs or diverse health care careers. Graduates will be prepared to apply their experience into roles in clinical data development, health product management, health care research finance management, rare disease patient access management or workplace health specialist roles.

“We have intentionally designed the program so that students can ladder up into graduate programs like public health, social work, audiology, occupational therapy, nutrition or kinesiology,” said Matthew Masucci, associate dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences. “The skills and topics that we include in our courses such as ‘Introduction to Exercise Technology,’ ‘Introduction to Health Policy,’ ‘Introduction to Public Health,’ and ‘Leadership and Marketing in the Non-Profit Sector’ will also equip students to excel in their professional roles.”

SJSU Online’s programs create opportunities for adult learners with some previous college credit to earn the same bachelor’s degree as SJSU on-campus students with the same faculty, curriculum and accreditation. With three rolling application cycles and five eight-week terms each year, students are able to begin when it’s most convenient for them and make continuous progress towards their degree. Students can also maximize the number of credits they transfer to minimize their overall cost and time to completion.

Visit the [Health Care Leadership program webpage](#) to get started. Apply by July 15 to begin in August 2024 or from August 1 to November 15 to begin in January 2025.

Social Work Student Spotlight: Sophia Zarate

By Paola Quintanilla, School of Social Work



Sophia Zarate graduated from the [School of Social Work](#) with her Masters of Social Work (MSW) degree in Spring 2024. In April 2023, she attended Lobby Days in Sacramento and where she learned about the [23Strong Council](#). After researching what their mission is and how it aligns with her goals, she shared interest in becoming a representative for SJSU's MSW Program. Being a part of the 23Strong Council Board she got out of her comfort zone and enhanced her leadership skills by networking with others in the field of social work. Most importantly, her involvement with 23Strong Council developed a stronger experience in the macro side of social work whilst learning more about policy and advocacy work.

23Strong is a Council with the National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter (NASW-CA). The purpose of the 23Strong Council is for student leaders from the 23 accredited California social work programs to collaborate through organized efforts and calls to action to combat social injustices and change public policy that oppresses and marginalizes at-risk and vulnerable populations. They do this by addressing social issues through lobbying for policies that align with the NASW and council mission statement through the use of forums, written statements, and community organizing.

Sophia's role as the board President consists of being responsible for administrative duties related to the day-to-day leadership of the 23Strong Council with guidance and assistance from the 23Strong advisor, vice-president, and in collaboration with NASW-CA institutional regulations and policies. She assists with the recruiting, planning and the onboarding for incoming board members. Furthermore, she assists the treasurer in the facilitation of financial forecasts and forms, leads all monthly board and general meetings, and also facilitates the planning and implementation of three to five academic, informative, and/or educational events throughout the academic school year. Most importantly, as President she serves as a spokesperson for the student body at large, since representing the students of the 23 CSU campuses is the primary goal of the entire student council.

Some of the events that the 23Strong Council have organized are virtual career panels, workshops, Lobby days support, and Lobby Days Social Mixer. This year an initiative they have been supporting is stopping the tuition increases in the CSU system, as well as backing initiatives that support advancing issues related to Black women lacking proper medical care.

Having grown up in one of the lowest socioeconomic areas of San José, Sophia witnessed many of the injustices and inequities that people experienced. The older she became the more aware she was of how little representation these communities receive. Social justice issues are very important to Sophia on various levels, from the people who need social work services to those who provide them and the issues affecting them as a whole. The 23Strong Council affords her opportunities to support social work students and also to advocate and support initiatives aimed at improving the lives of those less represented in vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed communities. With her MSW, Sophia hopes to continue her path in social work at a macro level where she can help support, advocate, and initiate changes that support all shareholders within the social work field.

New Book by Dr. Ashwini Wagle, [Carbohydrate Counting: Traditional South Asian Food Lists for Management and Prevention of Diabetes Mellitus](#)

Dr. Ashwini Wagle, is a professor and the department chair for the Department of Nutrition, Food Science and Packaging at San Jose State University. She has worked for over twenty years as an educator and has over ten years as a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) in skilled nursing facilities and acute care hospitals in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her new book, [Carbohydrate Counting: Traditional South Asian Food Lists for Management and Prevention of Diabetes Mellitus](#), was recently published in March 2024.

South Asians account for the highest prevalence of diabetes mellitus and coronary artery disease worldwide. Its dietary practices and habits make up for a complex cuisine that varies from different regions and states throughout the Indian Sub-continent. The cuisine is also influenced by religion, which dictates food restrictions and whether the diet is vegetarian or non-vegetarian. This nutrition education tool was developed with the purpose of prioritizing South Asians as an at-risk population and providing effective patient/clientele education and training. This tool will help healthcare professionals such as Registered Dietitian Nutritionists and Certified Diabetes Educators provide nutrition education and flexible meal management customized to the clientele to increase meal choices and make meal planning easier and more conducive.



Inaugural Interprofessional Collaboration Symposium Fosters Learning and Networking

By Dr. Luis Arabit & Dr. Courtney Boitano, Department of Occupational Therapy



The College of Health and Human Sciences, partnered with the Connie L. Lurie College of Education, hosted the Interprofessional Collaboration Symposium for World Health Day on April 12th. This symposium was an opportunity to join colleagues and students in interprofessional dialogue from the departments of Audiology, Communicative Disorders & Sciences, Child and Adolescent Development, Social Work, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Recreation Therapy, Public Health, and Kinesiology.

The inaugural Interprofessional Collaboration Symposium held recently was a resounding success, bringing together attendees from various healthcare disciplines for a day of enriching discussions and

hands-on learning experiences. Hosted with the aim of promoting dialogue and collaboration across disciplines, the symposium proved to be a valuable platform for students and instructors alike.

Throughout the event, attendees engaged in discussions that bridged different disciplines, allowing them to explore how their respective theories and frameworks could be applied to diverse populations and conditions. Moreover, participants had the opportunity to interact with testing equipment used in biofeedback, hearing screenings, and vestibular evaluation, enhancing their understanding of diagnostic tools and procedures across disciplines.

The symposium's learning objectives were carefully crafted to facilitate holistic learning and preparation for interprofessional collaboration settings. By increasing awareness of healthcare professional roles in various settings, fostering dialogue around collaboration, and providing practical experiences, the event aimed to equip participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective teamwork in educational, fieldwork, externship, and service learning environments.



Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing appreciation for the opportunity to network with peers from different departments and gain insights into interdisciplinary collaboration. The symposium's success serves as a testament to the dedication and vision of its organizers, who worked tirelessly to create a meaningful and impactful learning experience for all participants.



Dr. Audrey Shillington, the Dean of CHHS stated, "as the symposium sets a precedent for future collaborative endeavors, it heralds a new era of interdepartmental networking and collaboration within the healthcare community. Congratulations to the organizers for their efforts in orchestrating such a successful and impactful event, and here's to many more opportunities for learning and collaboration in the future!"

Connecting Across Borders: Japanese Nursing Students visit The Valley Foundation School of Nursing

By Dr. Lisa Rauch, Director, The Valley Foundation School of Nursing



On March 14th, seven nursing students from Miyazaki Prefectural Nursing University in Japan visited The Valley Foundation School of Nursing on a Study Abroad program. It is a study-abroad program where students earn three units by participating in the program and completing course assignments. This program has been on hold for four years due to the pandemic, and it restarted this year.

The visiting students were invited to attend the Nursing Health Assessment and Skills II course where they participated with SJSU nursing students led by Dr. Renee Bilner Garcia, a lecturer in the School of Nursing, in a hands-on Tracheostomy competency activity. The visiting students explained that they are first- and second-year students, and many have not been in a hospital setting at this point of their education. They were excited to learn that SJSU students get the opportunity to participate in clinical sites in their first semester, and the level of hands-on experience they participate in the first and second year of the nursing program. The visiting students visited all the simulation labs where they saw the advanced innovation of safe nursing practice and were excited to observe the mannequin's ability to communicate. We were invited to also bring SJSU students back to Japan to visit the affiliated nursing school campus and learn about how the nursing program is different in their country.

Coordinator of the visit: Junko Linafelter

Email: junko.linafelter@sjsu.edu

Coordinator of the SJSU study abroad program at Miyazaki Prefectural Nursing University in Japan



SJSU OT Professors Receive Coveted AOTA Awards. By Dr. Luis Arabit, Assistant Professor, Department of Occupational Therapy

The 2024 [American Occupational Therapy Association \(AOTA\)](#) annual conference, held in Orlando, Florida, was not only a gathering of professionals but also a celebration of excellence within the field. Among the distinguished recipients of national awards were Dr. Winifred Schulz-Krohn and Dr. Luis Arabit, whose contributions have significantly impacted the occupational therapy (OT) profession.

Dr. Schulz-Krohn, Emeritus Faculty in the Department of Occupational Therapy, received dual honors: the AOTA 2024 Distinguished Educator Award and the AOTA 2024 Retired Educators Commendation Award. With over 30 years of experience, Dr. Schulz-Krohn has embodied the essence of a distinguished educator through her servant-leader-educator approach. Her commitment to promoting others is evident in her extensive support for students, launching them into successful careers as occupational therapists. Notably, her pro bono services spanning two decades at a local shelter for unhoused families have provided invaluable research opportunities for students, resulting in numerous presentations at state, national, and international conferences. Additionally, her efforts in securing an endowed scholarship at San José State University underscore her dedication to supporting future OT professionals.



Dr. Arabit, Assistant Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy, was the recipient of AOTA 2024 Award for Excellence in the Advancement of Occupational Therapy. Dr. Arabit has generously shared his extensive expertise with colleagues, students, and others to move the OT profession forward. He has “made significant contributions to the advancement of occupational therapy” in political and professional advocacy and leadership. He organized events and provided presentations and lectures on the importance of advocacy and legislation impacting occupational therapy. His advocacy and leadership positions include elected and appointed positions at the local, state, and national levels. As OTAC VP, he was instrumental in increasing membership in the Occupational Therapy Association of California and as the American Occupational Therapy Political Action Committee (AOTPAC) Region V Director and AOTPAC Ambassadors Co-Chair he has inspired students and practitioners to actively support the profession and advocate for consumer access to care.

The recognition of Dr. Schulz-Krohn and Dr. Arabit at the 2024 AOTA conference serves as a testament to their exemplary dedication and outstanding contributions to the field of occupational therapy. Their unwavering commitment to education, advocacy, and leadership continues to inspire and elevate the profession, leaving a lasting impact on the lives of countless individuals within the community.

SJSU Kinesiology Students Shine: Research and Prestigious Doctoral Acceptances By Dr. Michael Dao, Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology



The San José State University Department of Kinesiology (SJSU KIN) had two outstanding graduate students defend their master's theses this spring semester. Ivanna Anderson-Villella under the supervision of Dr. Cole Armstrong, Associate Professor in the Department of Kinesiology, explored the beliefs, values and norms of Division 1 student-athletes on topics related to environmental sustainability. Her study is one of the first to explore this specific population in relation to environmental sustainability. Utilizing semi-structured interviews, Ivanna found that Division 1 student-athletes are influenced by the university athletic departments agenda on environmental sustainability, but also resist and challenge the departments in order to bring attention to the pressing issue. As a result, the participants recognized their agency in being change agents regarding sports role in environmental sustainability. The second student is Dwhanil Shah under the supervision of Dr. Lamont Williams, Assistant Professor in the Department of Kinesiology, explored how the Netflix documentary on Formula 1 racing "Drive to Survive" influenced fandomship among the sport, particularly for those who were not familiar with this global sport. His study emphasized how sports media and entertainment are pivotal in garnering new fans to the sport and how they influenced perceptions of Formula 1. Both of their projects were robust qualitative research studies that incorporated a high-level of attention to research practices.

An amazing feat is that both Ivanna and Dwhanil were accepted and will be starting their doctoral program at prestigious universities in their fields. Ivanna was accepted to the University of Toronto to pursue a Ph.D. in

Kinesiology, while Dwhanil was accepted to Florida State University to pursue a Ph.D. in Sport Management. Ivanna and Dwhanil continue an exceptional tradition of the department of kinesiology graduate students being accepted to top-tier doctoral programs.

When asked about how the department of kinesiology nurtured their academic growth, both students highlighted how faculty members helped them learn about academic research, put their learned skills to practice and the robust curriculum challenged their critical thinking skills. Dwhanil indicated that the sport management faculty in the kinesiology department "put him in a position to continue on his academic research exploration and pursue a Ph.D. in Sport Management after graduation." As faculty members immersed in ongoing research, Dr. Armstrong and Dr. Williams also created an environment for both students to begin their academic research journey. Ivanna stated "I knew SJSU would help me achieve the educational objectives offered, such as having the capacity to expose myself to the sports industry while using analytical methods in research." Ivanna and Dwhanil exemplify the caliber of SJSU graduate students and are the future of Kinesiology as a field. The department of kinesiology congratulates them on their successful thesis defenses, graduation, and their future academia journeys at the Florida State University and the University of Toronto.



Deep Dive in 5: The SJSU Nursing Program by Cassie Myers, University Marketing and Communications



San José State's [Valley Foundation School of Nursing](#) has been helping its community for decades, shepherding countless Spartans through nursing degrees and connecting them with hands-on experiences and many chances to bring their knowledge and expertise out into the wider world.

The school's mission is simple and noble: "Provide educational excellence in the science and art of professional nursing to empower our graduates to be responsible and knowledgeable clinicians, leaders and scholars who strive to meet changing global healthcare needs."

We spoke with Audrey Shillington, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences, and Lisa Rauch, director of the School of Nursing, to learn more about what makes the SJSU nursing program unique as we recognize National Nurses Week from May 6-12.

How does the SJSU nursing program engage students interested in nursing, building pathways from high school to community college and beyond?

We start our outreach activities by going to local high schools and junior high schools to present nursing in healthcare settings. We have interacted over the last academic year with approximately 160-200 high school students, and we often visit community colleges at educational fairs to present pathways for moving from an associate's degree to a bachelor's degree.

We have a partnership with Evergreen Community College (ECC) which combines nursing students attending the ECC RN program with students at SJSU in the baccalaureate program. This allows students entering nursing at the community college level to complete their RN and bachelor's degree in the same amount of time as traditional nursing students — 5 semesters. Students begin at community college and take online courses from SJSU, finishing with a bachelor's of science in nursing (BSN) degree in the same amount of time as transfer students into the BSN program. ECC nursing students are integrated with the existing Advanced Practice students to ensure a smooth and timely transition to a bachelor's degree.

This is a Concurrent Enrollment (CEP) Program, which means the students are actually admitted to both Evergreen Community College and SJSU. They take classes from both programs each semester for the first four semesters and then finish the fifth semester taking the remainder of their coursework at SJSU.

Furthermore, the College of Health and Human Sciences has recently received extramural funding from the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) for nearly \$3.4 million for our Broaden and Build Program. The Broaden and Build Program will expand the healthcare workforce, including addressing the shortage of nurses. Over the next five years, the program will train and place over 500 Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) at no cost to the student, and establish bridges to advanced credentials in nursing and other health fields.

What makes the SJSU nursing program unique, particularly with its location in Silicon Valley?

San José State University is the first California State University (CSU) institution, and also established the first CSU-based baccalaureate nursing program in 1959. We are committed to our local hospital partners and have long-standing relationships with them. In fact, we are very proud to note that many nurses who have graduated from our seven nursing programs currently work in leadership roles in the local community. Many of our faculty are also alumni of our nursing programs. Our diverse faculty are representative of our diverse student population, as well as the community at large.

Can you describe some of the community partnerships within the SJSU nursing program?

Our school is distinctive in Santa Clara County for our dynamic community health clinical programs, including our Nurse Managed Centers (like the [Hilltop Manor program](#)), which provide community-based nursing services to underserved, at-risk populations, and our partnership with the Santa Clara County Public Health Department. Through both of these initiatives, symptom management, health education and early intervention are provided to hundreds of community clients weekly during the academic year.

Our partnerships within the hospital systems are also robust. A few examples include our Dedicated Education Unit at San José Regional Medical Center, which provides students with a one-on-one clinical practicum in advanced medical surgical units, and our collaboration with the Veterans Administration for their [nursing residency](#) program. We also partner with low-income schools to provide health education and screenings. Our students also get involved with community activities such as the Mass Casualty Incident, where students are volunteers in a simulated mass casualty event with the county hospital.



How are we preparing students to take what they've learned from the classroom to the hospitals and clinics?

Nursing education is necessarily practice-based. Throughout the years of instruction and training, SJSU nursing students are continuously receiving skills practice in a variety of environments. For example, our various simulation labs provide a safe learning environment where students learn collaboratively and apply their nursing theory into practice, and the health assessment and nursing skill labs provide opportunities for students to practice hands-on nursing interventions multiple times with faculty guidance. In the classroom setting, students are taught the theoretical foundations for each area of nursing and also utilize virtual simulations to solidify their knowledge.

In addition, students take several leadership courses that build their soft skills, such as communication across cultures, managing and delegating to people, understanding the role of the professional nurse and the legal aspects of providing care. They learn how to make an impact in health policy, self-care and palliative and end-of-life care and communications.

Most importantly, they learn how to work with diverse individuals in a fast-paced, ever-changing healthcare system. Our students have approximately 785 hours of direct care practice at the completion of their program, as well as additional virtual and in-person simulation experiences.

What kind of interdisciplinary opportunities are available to nursing students?

A top priority for the College of Health and Human Sciences is interdisciplinary and interprofessional education. Faculty in the nursing school have been instrumental stewards of this strategic pillar. Interprofessional education occurs when students from two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes. Once students understand how to work interprofessionally, they are ready to enter the workplace as a member of a collaborative practice team.

This is crucial for nursing students as they will be working with a variety of other professions. Across health care settings, care coordination and delivery is integrated and interdisciplinary. Interprofessional care has been shown to improve patient outcomes.

In our school, collaborations among nursing, occupational therapy, and social work have led to a number of interprofessional learning opportunities. This includes patient simulations and [family or community simulations](#) in an equipped apartment.

CHHS also just hosted its first Interprofessional Practice Symposium where nursing students and faculty spent the day working with interdisciplinary teams. The departments of communicative disorders and sciences, occupational therapy, recreational therapy, audiology, nursing, kinesiology, public health, child and adolescent development, and psychology all came together to learn about other disciplines, apply their disciplines' theory and framework to different populations and conditions, and engage with testing equipment used in biofeedback, hearing screenings, and vestibular evaluation.

[Keep up with the Valley Foundation School of Nursing's programs and opportunities](#)

SJSU Student OT Association (SOTA) Hosts Various Events on Campus

By Dr. Luis Arabit, Assistant Professor, Department of Occupational Therapy



Since the start of the Spring 2024 semester, the [Student Occupational Therapy Association \(SOTA\)](#) at San José State University (SJSU) has been buzzing with activity, dedicated to fostering community, peer education, fundraising, and collaboration between students and faculty. Their journey began on February 2, 2024, with a CommunOT Picnic/Field Day. Despite the rain forcing a shift from the SJSU lawn grounds to a classroom, the event was a hit. Both masters and doctoral OT students, along with faculty, participated enthusiastically in OT Olympic-designed games, forging bonds and strengthening teamwork.

The momentum continued with a Kinesiotaping workshop on February 3, led by a passionate Pediatric Occupational Therapist. Masters and doctoral students came together to learn foundational skills, discovering the therapeutic benefits of Kinesiotaping in providing support and reducing pain and swelling.

On February 9, fifteen masters students volunteered at “Night to Shine,” hosted by the Tim Tebow Foundation, a prom event benefiting children and young adults with special needs. Accompanying honored guests, they spread joy and assisted with activities throughout the evening.

Then came the highlight of February: the inaugural OT Valentine’s Prom Night on February 16, organized by SOTA’s AOTA representatives. With attendees donning semi-formal attire, the event sold 133 tickets, raising \$1,402 for the AOTA student conference fund, AOTPAC, and SOTA general funds. The night was filled with dancing, dinner, and various activities, culminating in the crowning of the Prom King and Queen.

March and April saw more community-building efforts with “Social at Guildhouse” events for first and second-year students. But SOTA didn’t stop there. On March 19-20, they hosted a two-day garage sale, raising funds for the MSOT 2024 graduating class celebration. Donated items flew off the shelves, from clothing to games, all contributing to the cause.

The grand finale came on April 2 with the Spring Apparel Fundraiser, which raised an impressive \$2,281 for SJSU OT Clinics and their clients. The funds will go toward purchasing essential items for clients undergoing OT interventions, a testament to SOTA’s commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.

Through their tireless efforts, SOTA demonstrated the power of unity, compassion, and dedication in the pursuit of bettering communities and enriching lives.



There are many more educational events that were scheduled in April, and they include a Workshop on Women’s Health, Prenatal and Mental Health and a Workshop on Interviewing, Negotiation, & Mentorship Post graduation. The masters and doctoral OT students have been active and on the move since the start of the semester coordinating numerous departmental and on campus events. They are caring, dynamic, energetic, and tireless OT students. Most of all, they are the future of Occupational Therapy! Thank you SOTA for all you do! The future for Occupational Therapy is bright!



Congratulations Class of Spring 2024!

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We are interested in hearing from you for our college blog, social media, site updates and newsletter. Share your news by sending an email to health-human-sciences@sjsu.edu



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