

SLCC

Gail Miller
Distinguished Utah philanthropist gifts largest donation in SLCC's history

THE
Larry H. Miller
COMPANY

panoramic





Peace & Justice Garden

Salt Lake Community College alums Luis Novoa, Alan Ochoa and Miguel Galaz created this mural for the new Peace and Justice Garden located at South City Campus. The garden is a safe space where students can gather, build connections and heal.

Symbolic elements from the mural include a hand holding a lotus flower. The lotus grows in swamps but still finds a way to push through a harsh environment and bloom. The butterfly signifies the transformation of going through something difficult and birthing something beautiful.

slcc

Winter/Spring 2023

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Salt Lake
Community
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Learning Through Doing

“This has nothing to do with my life. I’ll never use this information,” grumbled my youngest son late one night while studying for a biology test. He may or may not be right, but his lamenting juxtaposed what I was hearing from the SLCC students I interviewed for the “Classrooms Without Walls” story (see page 16). Each student could directly grasp how what they were learning now would be applicable to what they would be doing once they graduated. They were in programs where more than half of the instruction takes place in a lab, doing hands-on, active learning. The lab might be a garage, a plane hangar, a film set, a truck cab, a kitchen, among others.

Learning through doing is not only how many students learn best, for some it is the primary path to learning. One student explained that he just didn’t retain information without the hands-on part. Studies confirm that “active learning puts students in the driver’s seat of their lessons and deepens understanding.”

Deepening understanding through experience is at the core of a new, modernized business building that will be finished by 2026 (page 10). This is the result of a \$10 million dollar gift from the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation; the gift will catalyze a new Business Scholars Program where students’ projects will benefit communities, create incubators for student business ideas and launch service-based learning opportunities with non-profit organizations. It sounds like more active learning, this time within the walls of a transformed business building.

Read on and discover more about the active learning and innovative teaching that is taking place across the College’s campuses.

Peta Owens-Liston
SLCC Magazine Managing Editor

slccbulletin

Surgical Technology Receives Grant for Student Scholarships

[Grant feeds the high-demand need in this field](#)

Salt Lake Community College was one of ten community colleges across the country awarded a \$100,000 grant for workforce education from the All Within My Hands Foundation (AWMH) as part of its Metallica Scholars Initiative. Among the recipients, SLCC was one of only two community colleges in the West to receive this grant.

“We are extremely honored to receive this award and are excited to reach out to the many prospective students who may otherwise not have access to this career path. This is a win-win opportunity for those students, Salt Lake Community College and our local health care providers,” says Dr. Robert Pettitt, dean of SLCC’s Health Sciences.

The grant will primarily be used to support students pursuing an Associate of Applied Science degree in SLCC’s Surgical Technology program through scholarships and micro-awards for students facing financial challenges.

“This scholarship will allow students coming from a financial disadvantage to obtain their certification as a surgical technologist and then, if they choose, allow them to branch out into other careers in health care that may not have originally been an option,” says Angela Belnap, interim associate dean of SLCC’s Health Sciences’ Allied Health division.

The grant will also provide valuable professional development for program instructors and will be used to promote this career path to the local population.

The AWMH Foundation selected SLCC’s Surgical Technology program because of its return on educational investment, the option for students to enroll during high school and for the high demand for graduates.



Launching Businesses and Pursuing Dreams

The Everyday Entrepreneur Program teaches most diverse cohort

Danny Morante is an audio-engineering student and a rapper who wants to take song writing and his recordings to the next level. He also wants to help his mother grow her tamale business. Alison Chen Yee wants to launch a new product to sell in her massage-for-athletes business. Jose Garcia recently launched his molé business. These were three of the 12 student entrepreneurs who participated in Salt Lake Community College’s Everyday Entrepreneur Program (EEP) at the Miller Campus (The Mill) this past summer.

Since the EEP launched four years ago, this class represents the most diversity of any class among the 250 students (20 cohorts) who have participated thus far. “Business ideas were as diverse as the students,” says Beth Colosimo, executive director, The Mill. “EEP students

brought their cultural backgrounds and experiences together in a way that created rich and meaningful classroom conversations and an understanding of one another’s heritage.”

Through the course, entrepreneurs learn to identify and validate a business opportunity, mitigate costly errors, then build a solid ‘go-to-market’ strategy to successfully launch their business. “There is nothing like this out there—no one is doing what we’re doing here at The Mill,” says Jon Beutler, who teaches the class and is the director of the Entrepreneur Center.

“A lot of the individuals are already doing something as a side hustle and want to bring it to the next step,” adds Beutler, who is now piloting an EEP 2.0 class. “For some of our students, starting their own business is really the only choice they have to build a career.”

Students from the Everyday Entrepreneur Program who learned how to turn a side hustle into a business.



The French Quarter, Cajun and Creole Culture

Students learn through travel on SLCC's first domestic study trip

Students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds participated in Salt Lake Community College's first interdisciplinary credit-bearing domestic study trip last summer, titled "A Taste of Louisiana."

"Historically, study abroad has been a program of privilege," says Lucy Smith, SLCC's Engaged Learning director. "As an alternative to studying abroad, domestic study trips require less time and funds but can be equally as educative." Most of the students who participated in the New Orleans trip received scholarships through funding that supports high-impact learning practices.

At the heart of these travel experiences is the opportunity for experiential learning. This allows students to explore cultures, life experiences and worldviews different from their own.

Students applied their experiences to the framework of their respective fields. "As a future animator, it's my job to study and value cultures in order to represent them as best as I can," says Brisa Aguirre Jurado, who is studying animation at SLCC. She enjoys learning about cultures and how they are represented in media.

A few stops on the trip's itinerary included the New Orleans French Quarter, cemeteries, the National World War II Museum, swamps, the Tabasco factory, a botanical garden and bird sanctuary, and a historic village.



"As an alternative to studying abroad, domestic study trips require less time and funds but can be equally as educative."

How SLCC Earned Three National Writing Awards Within One Year

Three national awards recognizing Salt Lake Community College's writing programs can be traced back to a simple finding that Professor Tiffany Rousculp relied on while developing a program that would shift the college's writing culture: Writing is a vulnerable act. Writing is infused with emotion. This is true not just for students, but for everyone who writes at SLCC: faculty, staff and administrators.

"People fear their own writing being judged, while they can also be judgmental of others' writing that comes their way," explains Rousculp, whose work and collaboration with others, including interviewing more than 80 students, staff and faculty, resulted in SLCC's Writing Across the College (WAC) program founded in 2014.

She set out to model a compassionate mindset when approaching another's writing. As the director of the WAC program she does this through faculty and staff workshops, one-on-one collaborations and online resources.

SLCC's WAC grew from an intentional resolve to not follow a typical approach to Writing Across the Curriculum, a national model found at many colleges and universities.

"I modified the approach because it just doesn't work at two-year colleges, and we had tried twice before and failed," says Rousculp, who founded SLCC's Community Writing Center in 2001. She drew from this experience, much

of which she shares in her book, "Rhetoric of Respect."

"I knew the Writing Across the Curriculum model would not work unless we focused on everyone's writing, not just students — everyone's writing had to have worth and be supported."

A Win-Win for Faculty and Their Students

When Rousculp (picture below, right) works with faculty, she focuses on several areas that can result in a win-win for both faculty and students. The first is to help faculty develop more compassionate relationships with their students in regard to writing. This can be especially important when addressing writing from an English-language learner or a student with invisible disabilities that are not immediately apparent, like dyslexia or ADHD.

"With a compassionate approach, a teacher will have more patience and understanding when met with writing that does not meet expectations," explains Rousculp. "The mindset needs to be that the student may be coming from a place of difference rather than from a place of deficit."

Another area involves helping faculty communicate clear expectations around assignments. "One of the main reasons students get frustrated is because they don't know what their teachers are expecting—WAC provides simple and straightforward ways for faculty to share expectations," explains Rousculp.



2022 Writing Awards

Conference on College Composition and Communication's (CCCC) Certificate of Program Excellence
Received: Spring 2022

The CCCC is the national organization representing composition and writing studies in higher education.

Nell Ann Picket Service Award for Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TYCA)
Received: Spring 2022

"The committee is impressed with the innovative and transformational work behind SLCC's WAC and writing center programs and recognizes the vision, leadership, labor and advocacy required to build and sustain such programs ... Additionally, Tiffany's efforts, which are nationally recognized, have elevated the two-year college voice in disciplinary conversations around writing programs."

2022 Exemplary Established Writing Across the Curriculum Program Award
Received: Summer 2022

"We admire the way the program has whispered its way into existence, aware of its institutional context: growing slowly, building off current structures and leveraging opportunities... Noteworthy initiatives include the student writing repository, commitment to anti-racist writing pedagogies, and the assignment transparency study and document. We found the program's dedication to a culture of writing open to all especially noteworthy."

Two-Spirit Powwow: Indigenous LGBTQ+ Pride Celebration

Utah's first ever Two-Spirit Powwow, hosted by the Urban Indian Center of Salt Lake (UICSL) and Salt Lake Community College's Gender and Sexuality Student Resource Center (GSSRC), gave students, faculty, staff and the wider community ample opportunity to celebrate and learn.

Kristina Groves, a Ute/Hopi Native American and counselor at UICSL, who uses the pronouns she/her, says that the "purpose of a powwow is to create community, to create connection and to be able to live in our culture." Groves says the event is the only two-spirit powwow in Utah and "a space where not only are people included but honored."

The half-day family-friendly event at SLCC's Student Center on the Taylorsville Redwood Campus featured non-competitive traditional and modern dance categories, emceed by SLCC student Eric Watchman and accompanied by Northern and Southern drum circles and singers.

"We, as Native Americans and Indigenous communities, have had LGBTQ in our communities—as part of our history and mythology for a long time," says Buffalo Barbie, a Native American powwow attendee, and dancer who identifies as two-spirit and uses the pronouns he/him.

The word two-spirit is an umbrella term that was first used by Dr. Myra Laramie in 1990 at the Third Annual Inter-Tribal Native American, First Nations, Gay and Lesbian American Conference and has since been adopted by many Indigenous people. It refers to a person who identifies as having both a masculine and a feminine spirit and is used to describe their sexual, gender and spiritual identity.

This event was a collaborative effort between UICSL and various groups at SLCC, including the GSSRC, the American Indian Student Leadership Club and the Student Writing and Reading Center.

A variety of dance categories by age, skill and style were featured throughout the day, such as the more technical dance pictured here. The day started with a grand entry processional with dancers presenting flags from the indigenous nations represented as well as the Pride flag and American flag which was posted by Utah Inter-Tribal Veterans. Navajo artist Michael Haswood, who identifies as two-spirit and gay, says he "felt honored to carry the pride flag."





A Gift that Reflects the Woman

SLCC NAMES BUSINESS SCHOOL AFTER GAIL MILLER

G

ail Miller did not set out to be a trailblazer for women. She left the workplace early in her marriage to stay at home and raise a family, which she did for four decades. But when her late husband, Larry H. Miller, passed away in 2009, she stepped up and out from behind

the scenes to be involved in the Miller businesses.

“I felt it was important that the company continue to operate the way Larry and I had intended,” recalls Miller. “I knew the mission, vision and values that were our guiding principles; I knew we needed to protect them and continue our legacy.”

In taking the helm of a business empire that included more than 10,000 employees at the time, Miller became one of only four women nationwide to own and run an NBA team, The Utah Jazz (since sold).

This past October, Salt Lake Community College received a \$10 million dollar gift from the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation to modernize its business school building and propel innovative student programming. To honor this gift, SLCC renamed the business school after Gail Miller, in recognition of her business acumen and philanthropy.

The Gail Miller School of Business will be the only public institution of higher education in Utah with a business school named exclusively after a woman and one of only a handful nationwide. SLCC’s business school is the college’s second largest school serving around 13,000 students annually.

“The Gail Miller School of Business amplifies Gail’s amazing skills as a business leader and the success she has achieved through hard work, courage, leading with integrity and a fierce

President Denece Huftalin thanks Gail Miller for her generous donation to the college. She describes Gail as someone who leads with love and courage.





“To have a business school named after a woman is empowering.”

SLCC students Genesis Ruiz and Cali Bourdos with Gail Miller at the unveiling of the new business school's name.

commitment to serving the community,” says SLCC President Denece G. Huftalin. “It is a powerful signal to young women that they too can achieve great success in the C-suite.”

Although it wasn't Miller's intention, she has become a role model for women as she has navigated roles and areas that had predominantly been dominated by men. “I became aware that women were watching me and hopefully thinking ‘if she can do that maybe I can do it too,’” recalls Miller.

One of those women watching her is business student Genesis Ruiz. “To have a business school named after a woman is empowering—women and their ideas are sometimes questioned more in the business world,” says Ruiz, who is working full time while attending SLCC. “When I see what Gail has done, it inspires me to pursue my dreams and to lead with kindness. She makes me want to be successful and to give back.”

This is exactly what Miller wants and she leads by example. She believes it is important to remember to live your values as you travel the road to becoming a successful businessperson. “Don't let making money become so much the goal that you lose sight of what you can do for humanity,” says Miller. “Larry and I didn't aspire to be rich, we aspired to help others. Helping others find their way and enriching lives, enriched our own lives.”

Four Decades of Supporting Salt Lake Community College

“We are deeply humbled by the generosity of Gail and the Miller Family and the extraordinary leadership they provide to our community,” says President Huftalin. “SLCC is a better institution because of their involvement and commitment to our students.”

The Miller family has a nearly four-decade long record of supporting SLCC’s students, starting with providing scholarships in the 1990s. (See Miller-SLCC timeline). As a member of the SLCC Board of Trustees since 2004 and as a Trustee Emeritus since 2017, Miller points out that the community college plays a critical role in the state’s higher education system.

“When I think of Salt Lake Community College, I think of opportunity,” says Miller, who describes the college as a place

“The exciting thing about education is you can share it, and it can never be diminished.”

where students from any life experience or background can get a start and move forward on their educational journey.

“The world needs leaders like Salt Lake Community College students who have overcome obstacles, who have beaten the odds, who have been dedicated to their education, and who have aspirations to make the world better,” adds Miller, who faced obstacles early in life that prevented her from attending college. At 19 years old she dropped out of college, when her dad suffered a stroke, to work full time as a telephone operator to support her family and care for her two younger siblings. When she reflects back on her childhood, she recalls a family that was poor but rich in love and faith.

“I felt like I missed out by not being able to go to college; it made me feel inferior,” says Miller, who is quick to point out that knowledge can be acquired other ways, but that you learn best how to apply that knowledge through your educational experience.

Miller is also quick to point out that her decades of raising kids and running a household helped hone skills that were useful in running a business. “You learn inventory control, financial management, anger management, communications and organizational skills,” says Miller, who seems like she could continue to add to this list but stops herself.

While Miller’s business acumen has been sharpened over her many years helping run the Larry H. Miller Company, there is another leadership quality that has made her stand out. “Gail leads with love,” says President Huftalin. “She leads with love and courage.”



A Business School Reflecting the 21st Century

The \$10 million donation from the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation allows SLCC to reinvent its business building and expand its academic business programs. With this generous gift came the renaming of the business school to the Gail Miller School of Business and the business building’s renaming to the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Business Building.

Targeted to be completed by spring 2026, the building transformation will expand the current space by 18,900 square feet to include an open atrium, an expanded auditorium, modernized conference rooms and kickstarter business incubation space.

With the modernization, the school will kick-off a new Business Scholars Program where students create projects that benefit the local community. The school’s programming will also focus on entrepreneurship and service-based learning opportunities with non-profit organizations.

“This is a huge opportunity to revamp the learning environment head to toe, top to bottom, and put students in spaces that resemble the world of work now and in the future,” says Dennis Bromley, dean of the business school. “I’m really excited about the freshness of this new space and its ability to stimulate creativity and collaboration through its design.”

Timeline of Miller Support over the Years

The Millers have been champions of Salt Lake Community College for nearly four decades, when they began supporting student scholarships in the 1990s.

In the early 2000s, Larry and Gail approached SLCC with an idea of “cloning the American dream,” and that idea led to the Miller Campus in Sandy, which serves as a space where

anyone can learn business leadership skills, entrepreneurship, automotive repair or culinary arts.

In 2013, Gail Miller lent her name to the college’s golf tournament—the largest annual college fundraising event for student scholarships. It went from raising \$30,000 to \$200,000 annually.

1990-2022

Larry H. Miller Education Foundation begins a legacy in financial support and scholarships



2004-2017

Gail begins service on Board of Trustees. Served as Chair of Trustees and Trustee Emeritus since 2017

2013-2022

Gail Miller Utah Leadership Cup supports student scholarships

2000-2009

Larry and Gail Miller Campus is built in Sandy

2013-2014

Creation of Washington DC and Bridge Builder Scholarships





College launches first-ever public fundraising campaign

As part of its announcement for the Miller family's **\$10 million gift**, SLCC launched the public phase of its first ever comprehensive fundraising campaign. The campaign aims to raise money for student scholarships, student success programs, industry partnerships and new college spaces.

The theme of SLCC's campaign is "I'm In" and emphasizes the college's role in helping students launch careers that benefit themselves and their families. "We hope Utahns will say 'I'm in' with us, as we continue to make the transformative power of education available to everyone who wishes to pursue it," says SLCC President Denece G. Huftalin.

The campaign began in 2017, when SLCC Board of Trustee member Gail Miller challenged the college to pursue a multi-year fundraising campaign that would facilitate its ability to financially assist students in need. Since then, the college has raised \$44.4 million during the campaign's "quiet" phase and is now ready to take the fundraising effort public, hoping to raise an additional \$15 million by September 2023.

More information on SLCC's fundraising effort can be found at slcc.edu/imin.

2017-2022

Gail initiates first ever comprehensive campaign with a lead gift of \$2.5 million. Campaign has raised more than \$40 million

2022

Larry H. & Gail Miller grandchildren create scholarship fund for SLCC students

2016-2021

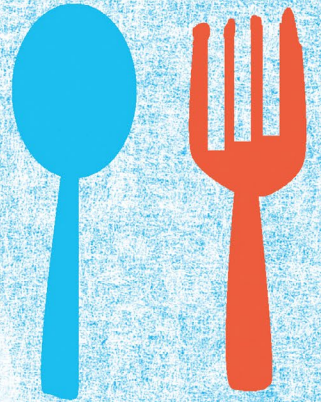
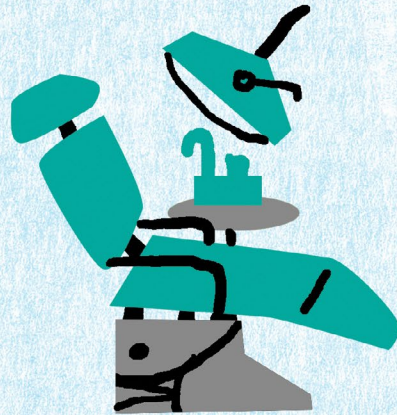
Athletic-directed support for facilities and student scholarships

2022

Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Building renovation gifted from Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation



CLASSROOM

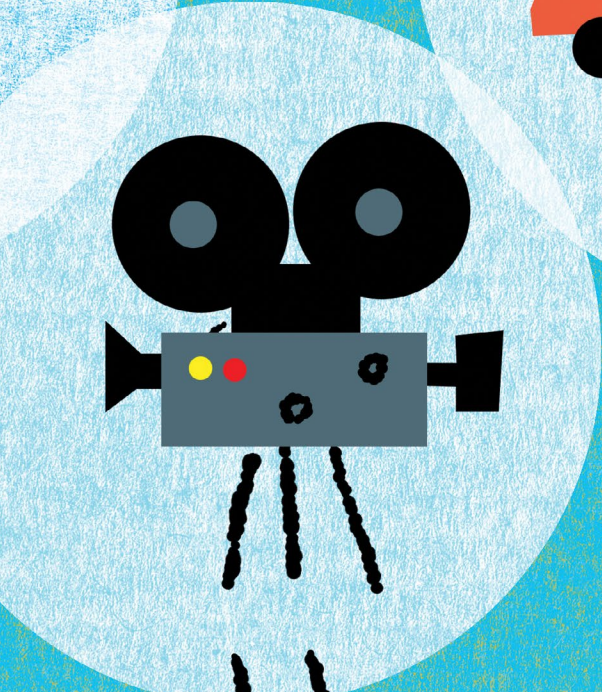
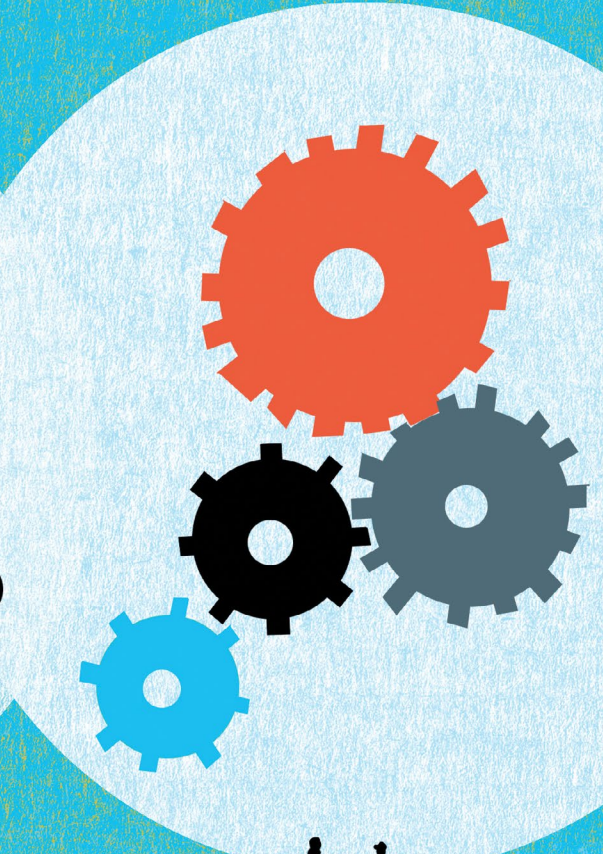


WITHOUT



MS

WALLS



Hands-on Learning Engages and Better Prepares Students for the Real World



“Giving students real-life settings to gain hands-on experience loops in students that might otherwise not seek out higher education.”

On any given weekday, across Salt Lake Community College’s campuses, dozens of learning scenarios are happening—in places where there are no desks or lecture-driven curriculums or even traditional classroom walls.

Thousands of SLCC students are earning degrees and certifications in programs that rely substantially on active learning, essentially hands-on learning. These learning spaces, often referred to as lab space, emulate the environments students will find in their future careers.

On one hand, it’s obvious that the education in many fields should be rooted in engaged learning. Bill Tovar, associate professor, Professional Driving, puts it bluntly, “You can’t teach how to drive a truck in a classroom.” He recalls how over the last 15-plus years in-the-desk classroom time has diminished in favor of hands-on lab time. “You are still talking to your students about experiences, industry rules and driving instruction, but now it

happens predominantly in the cab of the truck.”

SLCC has a long track record of educating and training students for a wide range of industry jobs, and it has built a reputation that nearly guarantees its graduates jobs. Instructors and students believe this reputation is propelled by the small classes and the substantial hands-on instruction and learning, plus the decades of industry experience instructors bring into the “classroom.”

In smaller classes, students are getting more attention from their instructors than is typical in higher education. “The rigor is still there, validated by employers,” says Jennifer Saunders, dean, Salt Lake Technical College. “Students receive more immediate feedback in small classes, and this accelerates their learning so they can move more quickly into the workforce.”

It is common for employers to call, looking for students to employ, and it is why SLCC graduates have a competitive edge once they are in the job market.

“Dentists like to hire our graduates because they know they come out with strong skills and already have experience working with a variety of people in our community clinics,” says Renee Mendenhall, associate professor, Dental Hygiene.

One of the most important attributes of active learning in these nontraditional classrooms is providing up-to-date equipment that students learn to use so they are industry ready.

SLCC’s Automotive Department recently purchased an electric car and curriculum. “Cars are changing fast, and there is a big push for hybrid and electric cars, which entail a lot of technology knowledge that our students need to know,” says Dennis O’Reilly, associate professor, Automotive.

For students in SLCC’s film and TV production classes, providing them with cinema-grade cameras used in the movie industry means when they are on the set, they are familiar and unintimidated with the equipment. “It’s important that we teach students how to use the cameras. It can’t be taught through show-and-tell in class,” says David Lehleitner, assistant professor, Film Production.

Another advantage to hands-on learning is students get a taste of what the job will look and feel like in the “real world,” and they can find out early on whether it is a fit for them.

That’s Just The Way My Brain Works

Learning through doing is not only how many students learn best, for some it is the primary path to learning. “The way my brain works, I

just don’t retain [information] without hands-on,” says Teddy Dalton, a film production student.

“I will literally fall asleep doing paperwork. I used to in [high school] classes all the time,” says Ian Penderghast, an aviation maintenance student. “I was choosing between engineering and this,” adds fellow student KC Villiard. “I picked this because it is hands-on and I don’t have to sit in a cubicle.”

A growing body of research and practice, covering early childhood education to university classrooms demonstrates the benefits of moving beyond traditional lecture-driven approaches in favor of active learning. An article published in *Science Magazine* (2021), “Active Learning: ‘Hands-on’ Meets ‘Minds-on,’” states that these hands-on approaches put students more in the driver’s seat of their lessons and deepens understanding.

The findings state that active learning techniques encourage students to produce thoughts and get feedback through interactive settings rather than passively receiving information. Another study, from Harvard, found that while college students think they learn more in traditional lectures than through active learning approaches, they do not. Active learning produces better outcomes.

Community Colleges Play a Critical Role in Skills Training

“Giving students real-life settings to gain hands-on experience loops in students that might otherwise not seek out higher education,” says Rebecca Armitage, assistant director, Career and Technical Education.

Armitage points out that Utah is unique in its significant support for career and technical education programs. Each of the school districts offer access in these areas to a certain extent and then high school students can also take concurrent enrollment courses at SLCC for a deeper dive.

While this article focuses on just a handful of the college’s programs that are steeped in hands-on learning, there are many other SLCC programs that incorporate active learning into the curriculum, sometimes through field work and internships, community service, study abroad, and in competitions, such as SkillsUSA.

“As Utah’s largest community college, we are well aware of the importance of our role in preparing students for Utah’s workforce,” says SLCC President Denece G. Huftalin. “The skills, professionalism and passion our graduates take with them out into their careers not only reflects back on us, but it also directly, and positively, impacts our local economy.”



THE CLASSROOM



Hangar

On a warm, sunny day students in SLCC's Aerospace/Aviation Technology-Aviation Maintenance Program are inspecting a Bombardier CL-600-2B19 aircraft. Overhead is the steady drone of planes taking off and landing at a nearby airport.

The Aviation students spend about 50% of their time in the hangar, or out on the tarmac, working on or in one of the program's five aircrafts. The most recent addition to this fleet is the Bombardier, which provides a host of complex aircraft systems to learn from, including landing gear, flight controls and electrical systems.

Aja Seims and her peer Laura Kalkowski are doing inspections and systems operational checks on the Bombardier. "I've always liked mechanical stuff, but I thought cars were so boring. Then I thought, 'What about planes,'" she says. "I knew I wanted a profession where I could use my hands. When you can put what you are learning into practice, it makes everything click. You can really see how a concept is connected and how it works."

In the two-year program, students earn an associate's degree and are in classes that never exceed 25 students. By the time they graduate, they will have learned some 46 aviation trades (i.e., turbine engine repair, aircraft component repair, electronic repair) and will likely step into well-paying, high demand jobs.

"Graduates can earn up to 120K a year," says Associate Professor Todd Baird, adding that SLCC's aviation program is one of only a few programs like it in the state.

Film Set

In Channing Lowe's class, students have split off into small groups of three, where together they are dismantling a cinema camera and then reassembling. This is one of the first steps in becoming familiar with the primary tools of the trade in SLCC's Film Production Program.

"This practicing is giving me real-life experience so I will know how to do something by myself for when I'm in a job," says Daniela Mora, an international student from Venezuela. Fellow classmate Chase Meyers adds, "If you've been taught mostly based on just listening, not doing, then you just have half the picture going into a film production job."

In some of the program's classes, students may spend up to 75% of their time learning by doing. By the time they graduate with an Associate's of Applied Science degree, they will be proficient in the skills encountered on film projects, such as how to operate cinema cameras, grip and electric work, audio sweetening and mixing, editing and sound stage work.

Lowe rattles off some recent television shows that graduates have worked on, including Yellowstone, Real Housewives of SLC, and Dream Home Makeover. He says that graduates' skills are in demand not just for film and TV but for any business using video.

"Hands down we have the best facility in the state," says Dave Lehleitner, assistant professor, Film Production. He explains that most other colleges have a warehouse or large room for a set, not a 3,000 square-foot sound stage set with access to high-powered, cinema-style lighting.

"We successfully try to replicate the top 20 film schools in the country at a fraction of the price," says Lehleitner.



Semi-Truck

With eyes glued to his side mirror, Jacob Chilado is backing up one of SLCC's 74-foot-long semi-trucks between a narrow row of traffic cones with just a few inches to spare between the wheels and the cones.

"Backing up was probably the most challenging part of the program for me," says Chilado, who is in his last week of SLCC's six-week Professional Driving program. Soon he will be driving trucks for Nicholas and Company.

Each of SLCC's five semi-trucks serves as a classroom for typically one instructor and three students. "There's a lot of multi-tasking when you're behind the wheel, and you learn a lot too just from watching the other students drive and listening to the instructor," says student Slate Blackburn, who is three weeks into the driving program.

"We go over orientation and show the students their assignments on the first day, and then the rest of the time it's in the truck," says Bill Tovar, associate professor, Professional Driving. "Students drive on their very first day—it's the hands-on that is the most important part."

Ali Abid, who just passed his test, is all smiles. He will start driving for a friend who owns a truck. "When I started, I was like a baby, I had zero knowledge about driving a truck. The first day here I was okay. The second day, better. The third day, I was on the road with the instructor," recalls Abid. "The instructors patiently guide you through from day one."

ROOMS ARE...

Dental Clinic

At Jordan Campus, dental hygiene student Maddie Church is reclining in a dental chair while fellow student Baylee Stephens injects her with local anesthesia. They are in their second year of the SLCC Dental Hygiene Program, and they are practicing injections in the Local Anesthesia Lab.

"I was excited for today, it's our first day learning how to do injections and receiving them," says Church, with a numb and lopsided smile. "If you know how it feels getting it, then it makes you better at calming and being empathetic with a patient."

Dental hygiene students will spend this entire semester doing peer-partner work, which includes cleaning and assessing each other's teeth, and practicing imaging and oral cancer screenings. Depending on where students are in the program, they will spend anywhere from 35% to 65% of their learning time in labs.

"You can't make the connection with what you're learning in class without the hands-on—it brings to life what I'm learning in the classroom," says Stephens, who was one of those kids who couldn't go to sleep until she had flossed.

With cohorts capped at 24 students, admission into the program is very competitive. Both Stephens and Church had to apply several times before being accepted into the two-year program. "The small cohorts help us provide a high-quality program, which gives us a stellar reputation in the industry," says Renee Mendenhall, program coordinator and associate professor, with decades of experience working in the industry.

All students are required to work with an instructor in SLCC's Dental Hygiene Clinic, as well as in several other community clinics that serve veterans and underserved populations. "This is a job for people who want to help people," adds Mendenhall.



Kitchen

Savory scents fill the dining room, as Culinary Arts student Brandon Clegg introduces each of the Hawaiian-themed dishes lining the banquet table behind him. This display of food, dishes linked to his own heritage, is the culmination of Clegg's capstone project necessary to earn his Associate of Applied Science degree at SLCC's Culinary Arts Institute.

"This is what our students will be doing in the industry, running kitchens or a catering business, so all our classes are hands-on with this in mind," says Keri Karabats, an associate professor and chef. "The capstone is about taking everything students have been learning and putting it into practice—from inception to fruition."

For his capstone project, Clegg took on the role of executive chef. This included selecting the menu and recipes, supervising preparations, delegating to his peers and guiding them in the cooking, and collaborating with another team on room and table presentation. "It felt weird, but it was fun to be running my own kitchen," says Clegg. Karabats points out that learning leadership and management skills is part of the capstone experience.

In SLCC's culinary classes, professors demonstrate and then students break up into small groups and follow the instructions. "It makes you look at food differently. The next time you cook at home, you look at a piece of meat differently because of all the cooking techniques you are learning," says Clegg, who wants to eventually run his own food truck business specializing in a fusion between Costa Rican and Hawaiian flavors.

While earning his degree, Clegg has worked in the food industry as a sous chef at Harmon's Cooking School and as a baker at Costco. "Since taking these classes [at SLCC], I've fallen even more in love with cooking."

Garage

At one end of the Drive Ability Lab at SLCC's Miller campus a group of students, new to the Automotive Technician Program, are gathered around the open hood of a car while an instructor reviews basics. Small groups of students are spread out across the mechanic's "garage" working on everything from transmissions, steering and suspension, to collision repair.

With classes capped at 20 students, these future mechanics will spend two years earning an associate's degree in Automotive Technology. The program is designed for students who have never had automotive classes or for those who took the first semester of the program via high school concurrent enrollment.

"Many of our students have a mechanical aptitude and want to take things apart and see how it is put back together," says Dennis O'Reilly, associate professor, Automotive. He estimates that lab time is around 65%.

"I've always loved tinkering with cars. I'm more of a hands-on kind of learner than a sit-down-with-a-book learner," says automotive student Russell Merkley. "I love that we actually get to put our hands on what we're learning, feel it, tear it apart, put it back together. And if it doesn't work, then you need to figure out why."

Students learn on state-of-the-art equipment, including a tire machine with a laser/sensor alignment system and another piece of equipment used to service autonomous driving systems. In the Engines and Electrical Lab, a series of new engines wait to be deconstructed, measured and rebuilt—then tested on a docking station to "turn them on" to see if they were successfully rebuilt.

"Cars are really complicated," says Sariah Larsen, who is in her second year. "All the info can be told to you, but it is very different when you get your hands on it—all the dimensions come into play."

Many of the students already work in the industry while they are earning their degrees and their employers are providing tuition reimbursement.



Instructors are teamed up with ESL support to help English language learners within a CNA course.





New Classes Help Meet Labor Demands

ESL support is now available within some classes for English language learners

Recently, Maria Ammar met a Ukrainian refugee who had worked on cars in his home country. He was learning English and figuring out how to make a living in Utah. Ammar, associate dean, English as a Second Language (ESL), told him about a new Salt Lake Technical College (SLTech) program for diesel mechanics that supports English learners.

This fall, Salt Lake Community College's SL Tech launched its first ever contextual classes in which ESL instruction is tailored to the subject matter. In both the college's Certified Nursing Assistant and Diesel Mechanic programs, ESL instructors team up with class instructors to teach and support English language learners as needed.

Instead of focusing on grammar and syntax, instruction focuses on vocabulary specific to the class and industry. Students may receive ESL instruction for several weeks prior to the class beginning and then during classes, both the ESL and class instructors are present to teach and support.

"What is key is that teachers are working together, talking to each other about the students' progress," says Ammar. "For example, the diesel tech instructor can say 'Hey, this student is having a problem in this area,' then the ESL instructor can review it with the student while in class."

"We know there is a huge labor demand, and we also see this untapped pool of potential workers who are English language learners."

Jennifer Saunders, dean of SLTech, frequently hears from local employers looking for career-ready graduates. "We know there is a huge labor demand, and we also see this untapped pool of potential workers who are English language learners."

Saunders has seen how SL Tech's programs can quickly turn around desperate lives. Students may be working two to three jobs and barely making ends meet; a degree or certification in one of the college's programs means graduates are able to secure a job that pays a living wage, launching their career path. "They have the work ethic, but they need the opportunity," says Saunders.



Students Excel in SLCC's First Dual-Language Biology Course

ESL instructors team up with class instructors to support English language learners

The scientific method, cell structure, cellular respiration, photosynthesis, mitosis and meiosis, DNA structure. These are some of the complex topics taught in Professor Emmanuel Santa-Martinez's biology classes; topics that are even tougher to grasp if you are an English learner.

"I saw that Latinx students in the intro to biology courses were struggling to succeed, so I wondered what the result would be if we removed the language barrier," said Santa-Martinez, who launched SLCC's first dual-language biology class in Fall Semester 2021.

More than 87% of the Latinx students passed with an A-, while in the previous all-English biology class, the Latinx students earned C grades. However, it wasn't just the improved grades that Santa-Martinez noted. "In the classroom, there was a tremendous change in how students engage—students were more comfortable and conversational and asked more questions."

He explained the dual-language approach is about providing accessibility and equality, so all students have the resources they need to succeed. In Santa-Martinez's biology courses, he provides resources in both Spanish and English; this includes all assignments, research materials, quizzes and exams.

Santa-Martinez emphasized that his Latinx students want to learn the concepts in English, but if they are tired or confused, they can refer to Spanish. "These students do not want an all-Spanish speaking class because they know they need to know English well for their future careers." He also emphasized that his biology classes are not designed to be Spanish classes for those who want to learn Spanish. "The goal of this course is to primarily support native Spanish speakers to learn biology successfully."

Student Annery Hansen said a dual-language class helped her understand certain ideas and terms that she would otherwise have a hard time understanding. "It is especially hard to



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is course with a lot
e acquired. Having a
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I have had in college.”

understand scientific terms in a different language, so this program of having dual-language classes has been such a benefit,” stated Hansen. “I believe [this class] has given me a lot of success in my schoolwork and eventually into my future career.”

Hansen’s sentiments were echoed in feedback provided by other students, such as Vanessa Alvarez, who added: “I finished this course with a lot of knowledge acquired. Having a bilingual class was one of the best experiences I have had in college.”

As an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution, in which almost a quarter of SLCC’s student body identifies as Latinx, offering a dual-language biology class is another step in supporting this population.

Professor Santa-Martinez’s dual-language biology class celebrates the end of the semester.





Mental Health Check-ins so Students Don't Check Out

During the dark days of the pandemic, Matt Merkel could see his students were struggling. As an associate professor of Communications, many of Merkel's classes had labs that required in-person attendance, like his TV Production or Video Content Creation classes. He knew his students had a lot going on outside of school too. "I think they felt like Sisyphus pushing the rock up the hill."

"I sensed that students felt reluctant saying, 'Hey, I'm having a really hard time processing everything going on,'" recalls Merkel. "I didn't want them to be struggling and then just end up missing class and dropping out—which happens. Students get overwhelmed, feel like they can't explain what is going on and just stop coming."

This somber atmosphere, in combination with studies showing the toll the pandemic was taking on students, prompted Merkel to do something out of the ordinary. He created daily anonymous mental-health check-ins and a new policy that allowed for up to four mental health days a semester.

This is how it worked: Merkel began each class with a genuine, "How are we doing today?" check-in. "Just making regular space for this created openness," says Merkel. Then he created an anonymous digital poll where he asked students how they were doing based on a one-to-ten rating system, much like a "rate-your-pain" scale. "This was my way of keeping a pulse on the mood of the class, and a way for me to keep them engaged and checking in with themselves."

Then, Merkel shared his new mental health class policy with his students. They each could take up to four mental health days a semester,

but they were required to check in with him prior to taking one. He made it clear that non-excused absences were not mental health days.

"I sensed that students felt reluctant saying, 'Hey, I'm having a really hard time processing everything going on.'"

A mental health day did not defer due dates for assignments or lectures but if needed, students could discuss options or plans with him.

At the second or fourth day taken, students were required to check-in with Merkel so he could make sure things were okay. This was an opportunity to talk, develop a plan or refer them to the college's Center for Health and Counseling.

With the pandemic in the rearview mirror, Merkel continues to incorporate these mental health check-ins and options. He has found that students have not abused the policy but rather appreciate the freedom to be honest about their mental health.

Associate Professor Merkel continues to implement mental health check-ins and options.

slcc roundup

Board of Trustees Welcomes New Member and Alumna



Tashelle Wright has been named the Alumni Representative to Salt Lake Community College's Board of Trustees. She started her higher education path at SLCC, where she earned an AS in Biology in 2014 and went on to earn a PhD in Public Health at the University of California, Merced. She is currently the director of the Office of Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Utah's School of Medicine, and she serves on the SLCC Alumni Leadership Council.

"Tashelle brings a wonderful new perspective to the Board of Trustees as a highly engaged alumna of Salt Lake Community College," says President Denece G. Huftalin. "As our 2022 Distinguished Alumni awardee, she is an exceptional advocate for community colleges and SLCC, and we welcome her leadership on the board."

While at SLCC, Wright was involved with a number of organizations including TRIO, MESA/STEP, the Black Student Union, the Society of Women Engineers and Latinxs in Action.

"When I first started at SLCC, I had plenty of drive and loved learning," recalls Wright, who is a first-generation student and a single parent. "At SLCC, my mentors saw something in me that I didn't see; they really inspired me to change my trajectory."

"At SLCC, my mentors saw something in me that I didn't see; they really inspired me to change my trajectory."

“I propose that,
when the sickness
that is nostalgia
comes to visit, I
invite her in, serve
her tea and cake,
before I bid her go.”

Former SLCC Poet Laureate is Named Utah State Poet Laureate

This line, and many other lines of poetry, fill the pages of three published books by Lisa Bickmore, who was recently named Utah's new poet laureate. A role she served at Salt Lake Community College as well, where she was the college's first poet laureate and taught English for 29 years before retiring in 2021.

“I'm deeply honored, excited and a bit daunted by [the appointment],” says Bickmore. “Utah is full of so many wonderful writers whom I admire.”

One of the primary roles of the poet laureate is to promote the literary arts in Utah over a five-year stint. Bickmore plans to build on the state's annual poetry festival and create a mobile micro-press where writers and writing groups across the state, including middle or high school students, can create chapbooks. This revived book-art medium would allow writers to experience their writing in print.

While at SLCC, she persisted in writing and publishing her own poetry while carrying a full teaching load. “Being a teacher fed my writing,” recalls Bickmore. “I'm grateful for having work that was humane and was about helping people find what they wanted and helping them develop skills so they could get closer to what they wanted.”

Bickmore adds that her poetry comes from her life in the broadest sense. “It's from being in the natural world, in relation with others, and increasingly I feel that I want to be able to respond to the world as it is.”



SLCC Welcomes the New Dean of Health Sciences

Salt Lake Community College welcomed its School of Health Sciences dean, Robert Pettitt, PhD, to the college this past summer.

“This job is everything I hoped it would be,” says Pettitt. “It is rewarding because we get to help the community by providing skilled graduates to help fill the high demand for health care workers.” He points out that it is also rewarding to see the benefits to students and the community through SLCC’s health sciences outreach clinics and community services.

Pettitt spent the early part of his career training athletes and then entered a phase of conducting research and mentoring master and doctoral degree students. He is formerly a full professor and chair at Minnesota State University, Mankato, and he was the director of Research & Sponsored Projects and a full professor at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. He earned a PhD in Exercise and Sports Science from the University of Utah and is a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine. Pettitt has published more than 90 articles and has authored the textbook, “Exercise Physiology Laboratories.”

For the past 12 years he has consulted for the Force Science Institute, evaluating human performance in police and SWAT officers.

A Few Fun Facts

What really won you over in taking this new position?

The clincher was interviewing with Associate Provost Jason Pickavance and Provost Clifton Sanders. When I first met these two, I knew right away I would like working with them. They have some of those hard-to-define qualities that make people great leaders.

What got you interested in the sports sciences?

I started out in athletic training/sports medicine treating injured athletes. Once I got into my PhD, I really got interested in the limits of human performance and the best ways to develop exercise prescriptions.

What do you do in your spare time?

I’ve done martial arts since I was 12 years old. I’ve continued to advance in styles of Isshin Ryu, Shorin Ryu, and Shimbukan to the point in which I now need to travel to Okinawa, Japan in order to train and advance in rank.

I practice martial arts when I can, but most of my time outside of work is spent being a dad to my two sons and three stepdaughters. I’m happy spending time with family.

Who was one of your mentors and why?

My former professor at SUNY Cortland, Jack Daniels, made me realize as an undergraduate that you could take theory and apply it to practice. He would take what he was teaching then apply it to his role as a running coach at the school, testing the runners. He was also a former Olympian and coached Olympians. I modeled a lot of his spirit of turning theory into practice in my career.

What accomplishment are you most proud of in your career?

I received the Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award when I was at Minnesota State Mankato in 2014, and the stipend from this award funded my sabbatical to Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia and the Australian Institute of Sport. I’m proud of this accomplishment because only two to three from over 700 faculty receive this distinction. In Australia I learned a ton and had a ton of fun too.





As Food Prices Spike, The Jam Man Connects Students to Resources

A typical Wednesday workday finds Basic Needs Coordinator Rene Zepeda on a two-cart shopping spree at Smith's Marketplace as he stocks up on supplies for the food pantry at Salt Lake Community College's West Valley Center. The carts are full of food staples and easy-to-grab items, many of which are more culturally familiar to the Hispanic population.

West Valley Center's Student Services Manager Idolina Quijada says that over 30% of the students who attend classes there are of Hispanic heritage. "Having food they know helps our Hispanic students feel like they belong here," says Quijada. Since they started stocking the pantry with more familiar items, the Hispanic population's pantry usage has increased.

Some 38% of Utah's technical, college and university students experienced food insecurity in 2021, according to the Food Security Survey of Higher Education Students in Utah report. The report also shows that first-generation students and students of color are more likely to experience food insecurity compared to white students.

At the weekly "Wednesday's Jam" sessions, Zepeda shares bread and new jams he has made with students. "The weekly Jam session is a way to connect directly with students," says Zepeda, who sees students then start to share the barriers they face in completing their education. He troubleshoots with the students and connects them to the appropriate resources at SLCC.

Zepeda knows that students who experience food insecurity are more likely to struggle with other basic needs such as health care, utilities and rent or mortgage payments as well as transportation issues. As students come and go between classes to grab a few items to take home from the pantry and taste the jam, Zepeda's schedule for individual sessions with students fills up too.

Extra Credit

Celebrating accomplishments from SLCC faculty and staff



TRANQUILINO "KINO" HURTADO
Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) initiatives director

Hurtado was named as the inaugural HSI initiatives director November 2022. He brings experience from New Mexico University and SLCC in college programs, teaching and community engagement, which will inform his work as SLCC moves forward as an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution.



STACEY VAN DAHM, PHD
English, Linguistics, and Writing
Studies assistant professor

Van Dahm, along with Lynn Kilpatrick and Marlena Stanford, spearheaded work on a major-specific and transfer pathway English Studies articulation agreement with the University of Utah. As a result, SLCC students majoring in English Studies who graduate with an AS degree can transfer to the U of U as juniors in their English major.



LYNDSAY FAIT
Occupational Therapy Assistant
program associate professor &
program coordinator

In April 2023, Fait will be presenting at The American Occupational Therapy Association conference in Kansas City, Missouri. She will be addressing strategies to implement successful telehealth services for children with sensory-based feeding and eating issues.



HAU MOY KWAN, PHD
Assistant professor in Computer
Science & Information Systems

In September 2022, Kwan was honored by the Women Tech Council (WTC) as one of the finalists at the Women Tech Awards. WTC is a national organization focused on the economic impact of women in the technology sector. Kwan was also one of the recipients of SLCC's Teaching Excellence Award for 2022.



JODY KATZ
New director of the
Disability Resource Center

Katz was named as the new director of the Disability Resource Center. She was recently recognized by the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education with the 2022 NASPA Region V Community College Professional Award for her work at community colleges.



DARIN JENSEN, PHD
English, Linguistics, and Writing
Studies assistant professor

Along with Christie Toth, associate professor of Writing and Rhetoric Studies from the University of Utah, Jensen received a \$10K grant, sponsored by Modern Language Association of America (MLA). The grant is part of a summer institute program used to train community college teachers and graduate students. The next annual institute for the western region will take place at SLCC in summer 2023.



STEPHANIE HOFFMAN
Assistant professor in Criminal
Justice

Hoffman presented at the 2022 International Association for Identification (IAI) Conference Forensic Educational conference. She was also appointed as the Science and Practice Subcommittee Chair for Forensic Photography and Electronic Imaging.



MARK BILBOW
Certified Nursing Assistant
program coordinator

Along with colleagues, Bilbow worked to launch a new program at Murray High School designed to engage high school students in health care careers. The program provides students with the opportunity to earn the CNA credential and connects them with Concurrent Enrollment classes that satisfy health care program prerequisites while in high school.



ROBERTO ROJAS-ALFARO, PHD
English, Linguistics, and Writing
Studies assistant professor

Rojas-Alfaro presented at multiple conferences in 2022, such as the National Association for Bilingual Education International Conference in New York in February and at the American Association of Applied Linguistics Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, in March. He also received a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grant through Faculty Development in April.



On a Journey to Share Stories: Indigenous Student Receives Radio Journalism Award

Radio and TV Production student Valene Peratrovich (pictured, left) took first place at the Utah's Society of Professional Journalist Headliners Awards for best public affairs talk show (2021-22) with Lara Jones, executive producer of KRCL's RadioACTIVE (pictured, right).

The award-winning talk show was a Thanksgiving special that Peratrovich hosted, and largely produced, that included local indigenous leaders and community members who "explored the truths" about the holiday.

"I'm honored by this award, but I just got lucky with the incredible panel involved who were so honest and truthful. They were the magic. At the end, all five of us were 'whoa.' It just felt like magic," says Peratrovich, who is Tlingit - Eagle Clan, Unungun + Athabaskan, from the Anchorage, Alaska area.

"Val didn't hesitate when I asked her if she wanted to do the Thanksgiving show," recalls Jones, who read an article Peratrovich wrote about Native American

mascots published in the Salt Lake Tribune. "She has great instincts, draws people into the conversations and her background brings a richness to what she does." Peratrovich is now hosting KRCL's Living the Circle of Life show, which focuses on Indigenous music and topics.

Peratrovich first came to SLCC from Oregon to learn how to be a storyteller. She describes this move as one of her "faith steps" that has helped her discover a passion for telling stories. She admits there have been challenges along the way, including a thyroid cancer diagnosis, but her desire to share stories and the ongoing, gentle encouragement of her professors have kept her moving forward.

This past summer, Peratrovich graduated with an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in radio and TV production and now she plans to pursue an AAS in film production at SLCC. "It's another one of those faith steps," says Peratrovich.

The panelists who participated in the Thanksgiving special radio show included:

- Nathan Cole is a professor of English and faculty advisor of the American Indian Student Leadership Club at SLCC. He also teaches a Native American Literature & Experience class.
- Orville Cayaditto is the director of Native American student success at SLCC and staff advisor to the American Indian Student Leadership Club at SLCC.
- James Courage Singer is a professor of Native American Ethnic Studies at SLCC and a local activist.
- Cynthia Sharma is a student and former president of SLCC's Pre-Medical Professions Club.

New Middle School Program Engages Youth While Building Community

This fall, while college students streamed back onto Salt Lake Community College's campuses, a new program focused on a much younger student population was taking root in the Glendale community. SLCC Youth, a pilot program to introduce educational pathways, is designed to deeply engage sixth- to eighth-grade students and their families. It focuses as much on leadership development, a sense of belonging, culture and values, as it does community building.

"Middle school is where students tend to need a lot of support," says Alonso Reyna Rivarola, SLCC's senior director for Institutional Equity, Inclusion and Transformation. "During this transition [to high school] is when we see young people of color get criminalized, pressured into certain vocational tracks or start to reject their culture." SLCC Youth can bridge this gap before these students become more jaded and harder to reach.

SLCC Youth is also a bridge to connect SLCC resources with families and the larger community. This is especially important for parents whose first language is not English. Itzel Nava Banos, SLCC's first middle school program coordinator, answers a range of questions, in both Spanish and English. Based on families and the students' interests, Banos brings in SLCC staff, faculty or alumni to talk about a range of topics from the Dream Center to financial aid, and from ESL classes to how to become an architect.

"Anything they show an interest in, I'll bring in people," says Banos, who grew up in the Glendale community and is finishing her master's degree in Education Policy and Social Analysis at Columbia University. Her own path is a model for what is possible.

Part of building trust with families and the community is dependent on being consistently present and supportive. Banos, along with SLCC's community partners, initiates health fairs, back-to-school carnivals and career exploration programs. "We're developing 360-degree support," adds Rivarola.

"Our model is to place youth at the center," explains Rivarola. This includes drawing on "knowledge holders" within the community. For example, this summer Banos collaborated with students' parents or guardians to take turns leading a cooking class, sharing what they had grown in their gardens (or the Community Learning Center garden) and family recipes.

As part of SLCC, Banos' role is to be embedded in the community. She partners with the Glendale-Mountain View Community Learning Center, which includes both Mountain View Elementary's after-school program and Glendale's middle school program. She oversees the latter, which the middle school students named 104 Youth reflecting their zip code, 84104.

"At the heart of this approach is to build relationships with young people—and from there, relationships with their families and community," says Banos. She interacts with parents who want to find a way to go back to school, or older siblings who have questions about accessing college.

The successes and lessons learned from the SLCC Youth pilot program will help replicate this program in other Title I school communities. SLCC will work with middle schools that feed into high schools where SLCC's PACE programs are in action.

"I truly believe that through this model we can create close-knit communities, with SLCC being a critical part of that equation," concludes Rivarola.





A Resonant Voice and a New Lens

Juone Kadiri helps lead SLCC's equity and inclusion effort



More than six months into her new position, Juone Kadiri, PhD, the new vice president for Institutional Equity, Inclusion and Transformation (IEIT), sat down to talk about a variety of topics ranging from why transformation fits into equity and inclusion, to reflecting on the forces that have shaped who she has become, and how she uses song to engage people.

Kadiri's undergraduate degree was in social work from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She worked in a hospital's labor and delivery unit before going on to pursue a master's in social work at the University of Georgia, in order to focus on program development and community empowerment. In 2014, she completed her doctorate in African Studies from Howard University.

At SLCC, she has taught both social work and ethnic studies classes and worked as an equity, diversity and inclusivity coordinator. During this time, she spearheaded discussions, workshops and initiatives at SLCC on ways to integrate inclusive approaches to teaching and working with communities and professionals.

Since you started this new position, how has the transition been?

It's been a big transition. The connecting to people and building relationships are pieces I brought with me. Understanding how the college works and all the pieces outside us has been a learning curve. I'm always thinking big, but now I need to think big in a way that includes a lot of different groups, representing a lot of different areas.

The pace has also been a transition. I don't want to create a vision without people participating in what can be a messy process—this takes a lot of time and involvement from others and a willingness to be comfortable with uncertainty as we work toward answers.

Who was your first mentor?

My mom was my first teacher and she instilled in me a love for learning. I knew how to read before I was in kindergarten because of her.

What about other mentors?

Growing up, there were people who unknowingly influenced me. One oversaw our church's youth council, and she would arrange rides for me or drive me. In the car, she would talk to me about college. She understood the struggles of my family and sensed my desire for more independence.

In college as a student leader, we would be invited to the home of the vice president of student affairs. She helped me get housing and her support was a safety net for me. The fact that she was a woman and a vice president, and that she remained connected to students caught my attention. I've reflected on her a lot now as an administrator.

What were you like as a young girl? Can you tell us a bit about your childhood?

I loved reading, swam on swim teams, and sang—I've been performing since I was three years old at church and in our community.

As a kid, I was adaptable. I had to be. I grew up in Alabama, lived in public housing, and both my parents came from families that had struggled with abandonment, addiction and poverty. My parents did not graduate from college, and we did not have much money, but they wanted things to be different for me and my brothers and sisters.

In middle school, I got good grades but started getting in trouble for talking a lot and a push-back attitude. I was bussed to school and sometimes felt like we were looked down on. A lot was going on: our housing situation had changed, my dad moved away and a good friend became pregnant.

As I transitioned to high school, I started seeing what was happening around me. I became absolutely determined to go to college and not to be poor. I became more serious and really focused on my grades and classes. My friend group started changing.

All I knew about college was that I had to have good grades. There was no money for application fees or college tours. I depended on financial aid and scholarships in college, also my mom was a college employee, and that helped. My senior year, I had five jobs and stayed on the dean's list.

I understand many of the first-generation hurdles that our SLCC students face.

“Transformation” is in your title and the office name—Equity, Inclusion and Transformation—can you talk about the decision to include this word?

The COVID-19 crisis, racial unrest, as well as becoming an HSI institution have created a changing world—an environment open to transformation. It's like clay, so often hard and dry, is now damp and this is our chance to mold it into something good.

The words equity and inclusion can lead to transformation. Equity and inclusion for me speaks to all of us and should not just be equated with race. Equity is about making sure people have what they need. If I don't need shoes, don't give me shoes. Give shoes to someone who needs them.

Inclusion is about how do we include everybody—not just giving them what they need, but are they being included in the conversation? This cuts across race, socio-economic background, gender, ability, neurodivergence and intersectionality.

As an institution, how each of us can apply this can be guided by SLCC's Equity Compass, a tool that we are building workshops around and honing based on feedback.

Singing is often a part of your presentations. Why do you incorporate singing?

For me song has always been a place of comfort. It also brings joy and healing, and I believe it does that for others. It also brings people together.

I use song to say what I'm saying in a different way—people may hear what I have to say through song more so than if I were to speak it. I find the power of song really transforms spaces and provides a connectedness.

“Inclusion is about how do we include everybody—not just giving them what they need, but are they being included in the conversation?”

SLCC Athletics Banner Fall Season

Salt Lake Community College Athletic Department advances to the NJCAA tournaments in each of their respective sports, posting several high national finishes

It was another historic season for the Women's Soccer program, with the Bruins finishing as the NJCAA national runner-up. SLCC won the Region 18 tournament to advance into the NJCAA tournament field, then downed regional rival Arizona Western in the NJCAA Western District final. SLCC dropped a 1-0 decision to Iowa Western in the national title match.

Men's Soccer was the No. 1 team in the NJCAA for much of the season, entering the national tournament as the No. 4 seed. The Bruins advanced to the NJCAA semifinals, earning wins over Eastern Oklahoma State and Iowa Western before falling to Arizona Western, 2-1, in the semifinals.

The Volleyball program placed fifth in the NJCAA tournament, earning a 3-2 win over Western Nebraska in the consolation bracket. Salt Lake also earned the Region 18 championship earlier in the season, along with winning the Scenic West Athletic Conference regular season title.

In its first year, the SLCC Women's Cross-Country team finished third overall and Men's Cross-Country team finished eighth at the NJCAA Championship meet in Florida. The program is filled with Utah student-athletes, capitalizing on the Beehive State's tradition of producing nationally competitive distance runners.



SLCC Honors NBA Star Gary Payton II

Former SLCC student-athlete and current NBA player Gary Payton II was honored during half time at the SLCC vs. Northwest basketball game. Coaches, fans, players and SLCC leadership attended to celebrate the retiring of Payton's jersey, # 1. "For basketball, SLCC was one of the best conferences to play in and a good opportunity from a basketball standpoint to gain recognition. And it worked," says Payton. He said the support he received from teachers and his coaches, "just made it smooth" for his two years here, while he earned an associate's degree in business.



Top left, clockwise: Women's and Men's soccer matches, Women's volleyball team, Gary Payton II, and Women's Cross-Country team.





Seventy-five years ago, Salt Lake Community College opened its doors near downtown Salt Lake City to 246 students—many of whom were World War II veterans. The college was known as the Salt Lake Area Vocational School, it had 16 programs of study and 23 faculty members.

Today, SLCC has 10 locations and is an accredited, student-focused and comprehensive college designed to meet the diverse needs of the Salt Lake Valley. With 8 areas of study and home to more than 40,000 students each year, the college is Utah's number one provider of workforce development programs and applied technology programs and the largest supplier of transfer students to Utah's four-year institutions.

In 2023, we look forward to celebrating 75 years of being *your* community college.







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