

FALL 2014

# SLECC

MAGAZINE

A portrait of Scott Vargas, a young man with short dark hair, wearing a grey sweater over a red and white checkered shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a clear blue sky with a large American flag waving from the top left towards the bottom right.

**Scott Vargas**  
STUDENT.  
PHILOSOPHER.  
MARINE.

Salt Lake  
Community  
College 

# SLCC Scene



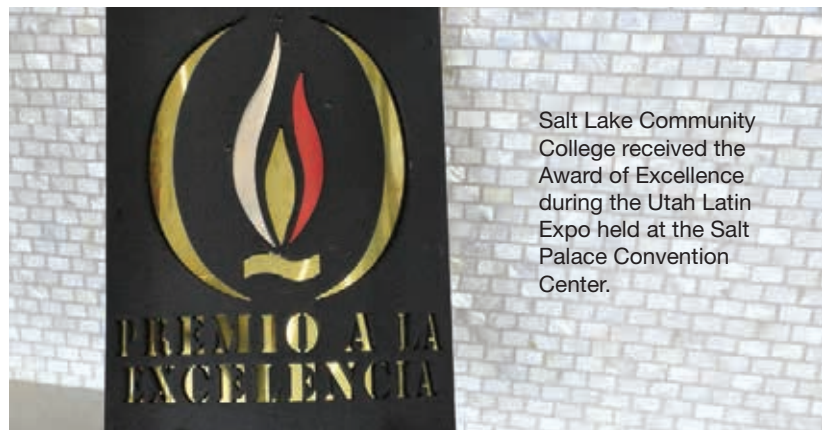
Graduates dance in the aisle to the song "Happy" during the 2014 Commencement ceremony in West Valley City's Maverik Center.



Retiring Athletics Director Norma Carr gets a hug during a ceremony in her honor over the summer.



SLCC Dance Company dancers perform the spring production of eMotion in the Grand Theatre at South City Campus.



Salt Lake Community College received the Award of Excellence during the Utah Latin Expo held at the Salt Palace Convention Center.



Former Bruins baseball players Tanner Banks, left, and Olympic medalist Eddie Alvarez were picked up by the Chicago White Sox last summer.



The SLCC Women's Volleyball team readies for a fall photo shoot in the LAC.



Art enthusiasts view the "Viva Frida" exhibit at the Center for Arts and Media.



Student Justine Tabligan serves up "mocktails" during the annual year-end Bruin Bash at Taylorsville Redwood Campus.



Staff and students have fun at a summer barbecue at South City Campus. Barbecues were held at the Jordan, Taylorsville Redwood and South City campuses.



A student celebrates his achievement during the 2014 Commencement, with the largest ever graduating class at 4,218.



A little chalk art beautifies the first-ever Bearfoot Music Festival at South City Campus, featuring live music, games and a shoe drive.



Participants in SLCC's annual "Slick Science Camp" at the Taylorsville Redwood Campus make robots out of Legos and finish camp by launching bottle rockets using two-liter soda bottles, air and water and a trigger system that employs a student pulling a rope.



# DR. HUFTALIN

NAMED PRESIDENT OF SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



**F**or more than two decades Utah native Dr. Deneece Huftalin served students, staff and faculty at Salt Lake Community College before being named interim president of the college.

When a national search was over to find the eighth president of SLCC, The Utah Board of Regents this past fall picked the school's beloved interim boss Huftalin to lead the college.

"I am thrilled and honored to continue leading Salt Lake Community College," said President Huftalin. "I will do my best to ensure that SLCC remains an inclusive, student-centered institution where individuals from diverse backgrounds can receive a high-quality, affordable education. I am eager to resume working with the trustees, faculty, administration, staff and students, and to continue our efforts to make SLCC a premier comprehensive community college."

A 21-member Presidential Search Committee narrowed the list down from an applicant pool of 55 to the three finalists announced after conducting an extensive nationwide search. Regents unanimously voted in favor of choosing Dr. Huftalin during a public meeting at

SLCC's Taylorsville Redwood Campus, where she was introduced to an applauding crowd as the school's newest president.

"President Huftalin is well known within the college community and outside of SLCC as very approachable yet someone with a well-honed intellect who is dedicated, energetic, loyal and vigorously devoted to the students here," said SLCC Public Relations Director Joy Tlou. "Dr. Huftalin's appointment to the top post here has been very well received."

Since January 2014, Dr. Huftalin had served as the interim president of SLCC.

**“ Dr. Huftalin’s appointment to the top post here has been very well received.”**

She has served the SLCC students, faculty and staff for more than two decades. Prior to joining SLCC, Huftalin held positions at William Rainey Harper College, Northwestern University, the University of Utah and the Institute for Shipboard Education. Huftalin teaches in the Education, Leadership and Policy

program at the University of Utah and serves on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and YWCA Utah. Huftalin earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Utah, a master's degree from UCLA and a doctorate in Education, Leadership and Policy from the University of Utah.

"With a large and diverse student population spread over multiple locations, the needs of this institution are complex and require a strong leader to be President," said Dan Campbell, Chair of the Board of Regents. "I believe President Huftalin is that strong leader, and she will continue to positively shape SLCC, and the Salt Lake region as a result, for many years to come."

"I believe President Huftalin is the right president for Salt Lake Community College, and her significant experience and strong commitment to students will be a great benefit to SLCC and the Utah System of Higher Education," added Dave Buhler, Utah Commissioner of Higher Education. ■



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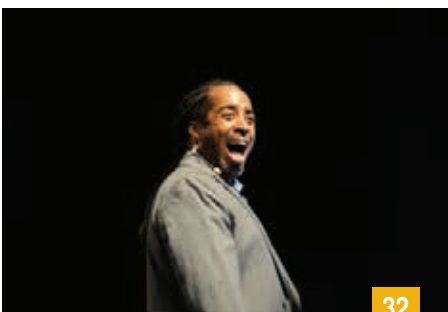


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# SLCC

MAGAZINE

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## SLCC Magazine

Salt Lake Community College

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*SLCC Magazine* was designed and launched to help showcase a few of the fantastic programs, happenings and people here at Salt Lake Community College.

In this, the fall 2014 edition, we get to meet an impressive young man by the name of Scott Vargas in our cover story “Student. Philosopher. Marine.” I personally met with Scott and a few of his professors earlier this year for an interesting, lively and insightful conversation that covered philosophy, the human condition and Scott’s own take on life, all of which is reflected in the article.

You will also find an article about another lively conversation sponsored by the SLCC Black Student Union in “The ‘N’ Word.”. The article shares an example of the power of language and demonstrates the breadth of discourse and debate alive at SLCC.

At another event captured in this edition, words were not needed...simply your eye to witness the level of skill, talent and creativity seen by hundreds at the SLCC Fashion Institute’s annual Raw Couture show. The story and images in this edition take you back to the runway for a glimpse of the professionalism and high fashion created by our students.

And finally, you will read several articles heralding the phenomenal programs ramping up at our amazing Center for Arts and Media. Take a tour of the facility through these pages and make a mental note to come visit in person. Industry and community leaders as well as students continually share comments about how lucky they are to learn and meet in such a state of the art facility. Even Sundance is in awe, as the Grand Theatre becomes a partner in the 2015 Sundance Film Festival- we’ll read and see more about that in the spring edition of *SLCC Magazine*.

I hope you enjoy your glimpse into what SLCC has been up to lately. More importantly, I thank you for your support of and interest in the College.

Most Sincerely,

Deneece G. Huftalin, PhD  
President

# Helping Hungry Students

## College, Utah Food Bank team up for new pantry

**W**hen Rose Gomez quit her job grooming pets to attend college full time, she thought she could get by with moving back home – and it never occurred to her that something as basic as feeding herself would become a problem.

Gomez, 26, a Salt Lake Community College student who someday wants to be a social worker, soon found that she needed help. And that's when she discovered the Bruin Campus Cupboard, which serves students and their families at SLCC's South City Campus in Salt Lake City.

"I decided one day to come up here and see what it was all about," said Gomez, who now runs the same small food pantry. "I've been helped so much by it."

Like dozens of others that the pantry helps each week, Gomez registered for the program, which allows its participants to fill two reusable grocery bags with non-perishable food items once a month. Everything from uncooked black beans, cereal, tuna and salad dressing to cookies, snacks, flour and a variety of canned fruits and vegetables, it's all at the pantry, located on the second floor at South City.

In the summer, the pantry is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from noon till 4 p.m. During the regular academic year, the schedule changes to include longer hours. It first opened in fall 2013, and as of this past summer the pantry had 125 registered clients,

with about 10 percent returning as regular customers.

SLCC social work student Justin Hughes was there from the beginning, noting it took almost two years of surveying, planning and generating support from the college before the pantry was able to open its doors.



"We're doing everything we can to advertise, to get the word out that there's a food pantry for students," Hughes said.

Registration at the pantry only requires providing basic information and answers to a few questions.

"Most people only use it when they really need it," Gomez said. "Most people don't take advantage of it."

The Campus Cupboard is a registered 501c3 nonprofit, a designation it needed in order to partner with the Utah Food Bank.

"It's been a great partnership so far," said Walter May, programs manager at the Food Bank. "We've really enjoyed it."

Campus Cupboard volunteers pick up Food Bank donations once a month, using a forklift to load an SLCC box truck. May said SLCC is the first college to work with the Food Bank, which has over 130 partners helping to feed the hungry throughout all of Utah's 29 counties. If SLCC wants to expand to offer perishable items or to open a second pantry at the Taylorsville Redwood Campus, May said the Food Bank is ready to help.

Food donations to keep it stocked have come from the Utah Food Bank, the Bountiful Food Bank, outside donations and food drives. But the toughest part about running the pantry, Gomez added, is finding volunteers to staff it.

She said all types of people use the pantry as it continues to serve more and more people – hundreds since it opened and expanded its hours – from all walks of life.

"They look like everybody else," Gomez said about the pantry's clients. "One man recently said he was homeless, but to look at him you would not have guessed that."

The SLCC Social Work Club received





the 2013-2014 “Best Club Service Project” award from the SLCC Student Association for its work in opening and maintaining the Campus Cupboard.

“What they have accomplished in a year’s time is amazing,” said Enrique Valasquez, associate professor in the SLCC Social Work program and advisor to the club. “I don’t know that most faculty and staff know the need of some of our students.”

Valasquez said he had a student who quit coming to class after she lost her

job and was forced to live out of her car. That student, he noted, benefitted from the pantry.

“This is really grassroots social work,” he said. “I think the College should be proud of the Social Work Club for being at the front line of programs that are facilitating the educational process of some of the students who are in need. We’re a community college, and we’re supposed to be grounded in and involved in our community. There is no better program than this at this point.”

Gomez doesn’t wax emotional about helping people who are in the same position as she once was. She knows first hand that it’s not cheap to be a college student, let alone a full-time student, and that many of her colleagues, who don’t make much money or have other means, might just need a little help from time to time.

“I kind of normalize it,” she said. “I know that it’s hard. If I think they feel awkward about it, I’ll help them through it. I feel like this is good for students, and being a student is kind of pricey.” ■

## Trucking students, Utah Food Bank partner on deliveries

In 2013, the Utah Food Bank delivered over 36 million pounds of food – the equivalent of 28.4 million meals – to 130 partner agencies throughout Utah. It wasn’t easy.

“It’s very expensive. It’s very time consuming,” said Ginette Bott, chief development officer for the Utah Food Bank. “But it’s part of who we are.”

Also last year students in the six-week truck-driving program offered at Salt Lake Community College were traveling the same routes as drivers for the 33 vehicles in the Utah Food Bank fleet. But the SLCC drivers were hauling empty trailers.

Talks in 2012 about teaming up turned into a partnership last year, and by late May 2014 SLCC students had hauled more than 20 loads for the Utah Food Bank to sites in Tremonton, Spanish Fork and Ogden.

“What we’ve been able to see in 2014



is really what I think is an incredible partnership,” Bott said.

Students like Charles Atuahne said the experience of driving for the Utah Food Bank has allowed him to volunteer for a worthy cause and get real-world experience.

“I think it gives the students more hands-on training in terms of driving long distances,” said Atuahne. “That kind of first-hand experience is good for the students. It’s a win-win scenario.”

SLCC truck driving instructor Bill Tovar said his students, with Utah Food Bank’s help, are getting on to shipping and receiving docks to check loads and look at manifests and bills of lading.

“You don’t get that anywhere else,” Tovar said. “There’s nobody else that does what we’re doing now.” ■



## Ions, Rube Goldberg, NASA covered at the Science, Math and Engineering Symposium



Steve Evans, Thomas Clark, and Trevor Pratt looked ready for work – neatly cropped hair, slacks, shirts with collars, and neckties.

They stood in front of a large poster board bearing the title, “Ion Drives in Application.” Suffice it to say these guys knew their stuff as they explained their research during the 2014 School of Science, Mathematics and Engineering Symposium.

“The application of using ion engines as a tugboat to go to Mars is possible,” Evans explained. When asking the three men who would like to go to Mars someday, Clark piped in, “Dibs!”

At the risk of butchering Pratt’s explanation, an ion drive is an engine that works by ionizing noble, or electrically neutral, gases like xenon and argon, which are attracted to two grids at the end of an engine. When the ionized

particles enter the space between the two grids and there is a resulting change in voltage, they immediately accelerate through the grid at a rate of about 30-50 kilometers per second.

In short, it’s a type of engine that gives one heck of a boost to whatever object it is attached to.

You’re probably wondering what guys like these, who as of the symposium in April, were pursuing their Associate of Pre-Engineering degrees, want to do in life.

“I really like doing cool things,” Evans said. Trying to break it down for the lay person, he said he’d like to build something useful or “sexy,” in terms of marketability, in the world of high-tech gadgetry.

Clark was a little more vague in his answer, which was to design something “cutting edge,” maybe along the lines

## Former SLCC Globe sports editor in NY Times



**Gerald Narciso** grew up reading Sports Illustrated, Time and People, gravitating toward features and human-interest stories.

Even in college, however, Narciso, 33, didn't imagine he'd one day write stories that would appear in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times and dozens of other newspapers, magazines and websites.

Narciso was born in Calgary, Canada, and at age 8 his family moved to Salt Lake City. He graduated from Judge Memorial Catholic High School. In 2003 he earned a degree in marketing from Westminster College.

Without any solid job prospects, he enrolled the following year in Salt Lake Community College to study graphic design. "I thought it would be a good complement to my marketing degree from Westminster College," he said.

Narciso started freelance writing while at SLCC, stringing for the Salt Lake Tribune as a high school basketball reporter. He also contributed to Utah Sports Magazine, Utahjazz.com and to the Arts and Entertainment and opinion sections of SLCC's The Globe newspaper.

Narciso graduated in 2006 from SLCC with an Associate degree in communication and an emphasis on print journalism. He was the sports editor at The Globe during his final year at SLCC.

"I had one of my favorite teachers and mentors I've ever had with (SLCC instructor) Nick Burns," Narciso said.

From there, initiative, skill and talent took over as he moved to Vancouver to work as a sports writer for Kidzworld.com and for the NBA publication Dime Magazine, which eventually brought him on full time and all the way to New York City in 2009.

That same year he began contributing to the New York Times, in which he estimates he had been published about 15 times as of last spring. But with the rapidly changing and daunting face of print journalism in recent years, Narciso went in search of a safer career path.

By 2010, he was working as a media relations coordinator for British Columbia Institute of Technology in Vancouver. In February 2013 he took a job as a "brand journalist" for the global company Avigilon, which makes HD video surveillance products.

"Now I work in content marketing, which is a trend for a lot of journalists nowadays," Narciso said. "It allows me to stay creative, write and edit. It is kind of a good mix between my marketing and journalism backgrounds." ■

of aerodynamics. But it might be Pratt people want to keep an eye on. "I want to save the world," he said. And he was serious.

Pratt is interested in aerospace defense and maybe inventing an energy shield that can keep nuclear missiles from entering U.S. airspace.

These are the type of students that symposium guest speaker Paul Karner hopes will take his place someday. Karner is currently the senior program manager over avionics and control systems for Utah-based ATK, specializing in aerospace and defense technologies.

Karner gave a stern warning about the direction this country is headed with relationship to the subjects of math, science and engineering.

"It's not easy. For some it comes easier, for others it takes a lot of work," he said. "It's a road that is becoming less and less traveled by our younger folks. Any country that leads in science, engineering and technology is what leads the world. I don't mean in a militaristic sense, I mean that in a peaceful sense. We as a nation just simply are not producing enough scientists and engineers right now. We're in a significant deficit."

Throughout the all-day symposium students and faculty gave presentations and listened to lectures.

Perhaps the most interactive poster of the day was presented by a group of students in SLCC's Fitness Technician Program, under the direction during the symposium of instructor Chad Harbaugh.

Clad in T-shirts, sweatpants and Lycra, this energetic group of students put willing observers through several tests that measure or determine an athlete's susceptibility to injury. The name of their poster was, "Determining a More Reliable Athlete: Functional Movement Screening."

Through the use of very specific, simple yet demanding movements, these fitness and physiology gurus-in-the-making were actually able to identify several athletes on SLCC's own baseball and softball teams who needed to check in with their doctors, trainers or physical therapists, perhaps saving them from future injury.

"There's lots of personal trainers out there who don't know what they're doing," explained group participant Arthur Hockwald. "You walk into a gym and see what they're doing and you cringe." ■





## Sisters combine skills, talents

**B**renda Gaytan and her sister Elizabeth are two of three children raised by Mexican immigrants.

They grew up poor in Taylorsville, living in the top half of a duplex with their aunt below. It was that aunt who purchased the family's first computer from a yard sale, despite no adults in the duplex knowing how to use it.

Yet both of them gravitated toward an interest in Salt Lake Community College's animation program, which requires an advanced knowledge of specific computer software.

Most animation students, according to associate professor Chad Erikson, are those with an artistic background, with some drawing and technical skills, a familiarity with computers and the patience to create and collaborate.

"The most successful students will be the ones who are the most collaborative," Erikson said. Animation students at SLCC are typically those either seeking a vocational degree or a transferable degree for a four-year institution. "I don't know any of them who are here just for fun," said Erikson. "It's a time-intensive, laborious process. After the fun wears off, we lose those students." And the students sticking around, he added, are those who

want to work in the industry, one in which jobs aren't always plentiful and where the work usually means toiling in a cubicle, lots of meetings and always having a deadline looming.

"It's a very nomadic type of job," said Erikson, who for the past six years at SLCC has enjoyed the stability of a teaching career in animation. Before teaching he had been laid off three times. "You get a lot of studio flare-ups, and then they'll collapse." So, what type of person

**“I loved it. It was hard to learn, but it was something that I actually wanted to sit through and find out how it worked. And I did pretty well.”**

stays with animation? "It's those who want to do it enough to weather that type of job situation," he added. "It's fun, but it's work."

With their sights set on Associate of Applied Science degrees in animation, the Gaytan sisters are the first in their family to earn college degrees. Getting the family computer to work at their duplex in Taylorsville fascinated Brenda

at an early age. "I sat there for hours just typing everything I could think of," she said. The fascination never waned, and now everyone in the family comes to her for help with computers. A self-described "forever" student who loves learning, Brenda started out in college interested in a teaching career, drifting into design, multi media and finally animation. "I found out I just really, really liked it," said Brenda. As she earned money at jobs while going to school, Brenda nurtured her sister Elizabeth's interest in art by purchasing

colored pencils and art supplies for her.

"I've always loved art, since I was in elementary school," said Elizabeth. "I started out with stick-figure comics and slowly moved on from

there. It's something I really like. But I was told that visual art isn't a real job, that you're not going to get any job drawing."

In high school she took an engineering class because she liked the problem-solving aspects of it. "But the math was too hard, and the physics was too hard for me to do," Elizabeth said. "That's when it stopped being fun, when I couldn't understand it."



Still searching for academic direction, she heard about a 3-D animation course being offered at Granite Technical Institute on State Street in Salt Lake City. “I loved it,” she said. “It was hard to learn, but it was something that I actually wanted to sit through and find out how it worked. And I did pretty well.” Next stop, college with her sister Brenda.

Brenda is a driven person, idealistic in the face of a reality about the animation industry that might drive most people way. Even the animation instructor is up front about how hard it can be to land or keep a job in animation.

“The biggest thing you have to think about is if it’s your passion and if you’re going to be working toward it,” Brenda countered. “That’s what is going to separate you from the rest. If you look at two portfolios, it’s pretty easy to see which one is passionate and which one does it for fun. Having some passion really separates you from the rest.”

She has heard that the job market in Utah is comparatively robust, with one of the biggest gaming “hubs” in the country that includes big names like Disney and EA (Electronic Arts) Games, who are looking for the type of skills Brenda and Elizabeth are acquiring at SLCC.



Animation students at the College learn the old-school drawing techniques in what Erikson called the “roots” room, while across the hall they use the latest software and technology, such as the industry-standard interactive pen displays (known as Cintiq), to work out animation projects on the computer.

The Gaytans love it that the entire animation program is now under one roof at the new Center for Arts and Media at South City Campus on State Street in Salt Lake City. Elizabeth recalled how some classes were at South City and others were at the main Taylorsville Redwood Campus. “And now it’s all here,” she said.

“And it’s beautiful.” Animation graduates from SLCC or from four-year institutions can end up working in video games, film or TV, and the work varies depending on a student’s focus during school. “We try to get them to specialize,” Erikson said. “You’re not going to find a job listing that says, ‘We want someone who does stuff.’” And that’s where the sisters Gaytan take collaborating as far as they can.

Brenda’s expertise is on the technical side with more classes under her belt, while Elizabeth’s strength lies more on the artistic side. Together they’re now trying to steer their 16-year-old brother, whose interest is mostly in playing video games, not in the animation behind them.

“We’re trying to mold him to be an audio editor, because we hate working with audio,” Brenda said. “We’re very visual, but when it comes to audio we’re horrible.” For now, the sisters have each other. “We’re able to work very well with each other,” Benda said, admitting it didn’t always used to be that way. “We kind of grew up. I think working together, we really shine.” ■



# LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

SLCC FILM SCHOOL CUTTING EDGE



**C**hanning Lowe crawls through a window from an equipment room, where he has just selected items that will help him teach his film students about lighting a scene here outside the Center for Arts and Media at Salt Lake Community College's South City Campus.

Lowe is light-hearted, loose and very involved during his film class, even if

it means using a window instead of a door to speed things along.

Everyone in a Monday-morning class moves outside to a plaza and begins setting up, fastening metal bars together that will hold huge light reflectors and tweaking a camera's controls before capturing a few short clips that they'll look at later in the classroom.

"Now we need some gaffing tape," Lowe shouts into the group of students. "Roll video," he says a short time later.

The whole scene has the look and feel of a real movie setting. And that's the idea for his film students, who hope one day to be working in the industry.

## HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The 2013-2014 academic year marked Lowe's seventh year at the College. He started teaching in the film program when it was still in its infancy. "We used to have these rinky-dink light kits," Lowe recalled.

They had a few cameras, tripods and computers. "And that was really it," he added. There was a classroom, and a converted automotive garage was the sound stage or, as Lowe remembers, more like an "echo chamber."

Lowe, who outside the classroom has worked at the local Fox television

capabilities and enough chains to hoist literally tons of set materials and lighting.

No one sits still in the sound stage, where creative minds collect and collaborate and come alive like you don't see students do in most classrooms.

## QUIET ON THE SET

Catherine Mortimer is the first to get her hands on the Canon camera the class will be using to shoot just outside of the Center for Arts and Media on a cloudy Monday.

Mortimer. "I love every aspect of it. I really like being part of the whole process. It's like a giant puzzle of putting everything together. I think it's a control thing, maybe," she laughed.

If she wasn't hooked before, the Center for Arts and Media has compelled Mortimer to stick with it.

"When I heard about this program, it's one of the big reasons I said, 'I'm going to go ahead and do this,'" she said. "All of this equipment is amazing. That's why I want to hurry and make projects while I have access to this equipment."

Mortimer and her colleagues have access to lights that run the gamut all the way to 5,000 watts, myriad professional-grade set materials and equipment and the same kind of Red brand cameras that are used by leading filmmakers to shoot movies like the recent "Robocop," "300: Rise of an Empire," "Ender's Game," "Captain America: The Winter Soldier" and "The Hobbit."

She also likes that the instructors are experienced in the industry, working in the same jobs that they're talking about in class. Combined, instructors Lowe and Mark Davis have decades of experience working in the film and video production industry.

"I really like that the teachers are also out there working in the field," Mortimer said.

In a classroom full of students, people like Mortimer and Jonathan Malaer stand out, remarkable in their ability to lead, to be the first to have their hands on equipment and to make the experience of working with them fun and comfortable.

## THE GOAL

Malaer and Mortimer both have their eyes on an Associate of Applied Science degree in the Film Production Technician program at the College.

They're learning how to operate camera equipment, how to compose and light a scene and the nuances of audio technology in film. And they'll have the skills to land a job as a camera or audio operator, floor or art director, a film or video editor, sound recording or light technician, a



station and on freelance jobs that include TV commercials, liked the idea of working in a burgeoning program that seemed destined for growth.

He had heard back then about plans to expand the Film program at SLCC. Finally, in 2013 the College opened the state-of-the-industry Center for Arts and Media, combining 17 programs, once scattered among several campuses, beneath one roof at South City Campus in Salt Lake City.

"I think we have, hands down, the best sound stage in the state at an actual school," Lowe said. "We're lucky to have that."

It's a 3,000-square-foot room built specifically for film production. It has sound-dampening features, catwalks above, industry-standard electrical

And on another day, she's the one in charge inside the sound stage, setting up a shot in an effort to recreate the lighting as seen in a clip from the Quentin Tarantino movie "Pulp Fiction."

Mortimer, has acted in a few commercials. But she also likes screenwriting, production, photography, cinematography and editing. Over the years she has waitressed at night, worked at a bankruptcy law firm during the day and has taken general college courses on and off.

But like a lot of college students, she wasn't entirely sure what she wanted to do – until she decided on studying film.

"I wanted to get more serious and know more about everything," said





“I think we have, hands down, the best sound stage in the state at an actual school.”

special effects technician or a motion graphic artist.

Malaer is also an actor, but he isn't content just waiting tables and holding out for the next acting gig to come along.

“It's nice to have all of the tools and to be able to use them,” Malaer said. “My long-term goal is to focus on acting, and when I'm not acting I want to do film production.”

He ranks the new Center for Arts and Media as one of the best of its kind in the state.

“There's a couple of friends I know in the industry who visited (the new Center),” Malaer said. “They have been speechless and completely blown away by our facility. It's pretty cool to be part of and to be able to have access to such a nice setup.”

He's restless, channeling his energy into setting up equipment before a shoot and then stepping in as an actor in front of the camera.

“I adopt the mentality of instead of waiting for things to magically fall on your lap, that we have all the tools necessary to go and create these experiences for yourself and to find

these opportunities,” Malaer said.

For the “Pulp Fiction” shoot, he played John Travolta's character Vincent Vega, constantly pacing while reciting lines and joking around. Silence seems like a wasted moment for Malaer, who someday would like to be a Hollywood A-lister either in acting or production.

“I love everything that has to do with film,” he said.

Just outside the roughed-in room inside the sound stage, Mortimer, Lowe and a small crew tried to solve the lighting puzzle on the set. Mortimer carried around a laptop computer,

pointing at the screen and then over to the room where she wanted to change the lighting scheme. Cradling the laptop like a baby, she moved in and out of the set, positioning people where she wanted them as everyone waited for that word, “Action!” ■



# THE “N” WORD

## DECONSTRUCTED IN DISCUSSION



**A**s a certified social worker, LaShawn Williams hears the “N” word plenty. And when she hears it while on the job, she doesn’t let it pass without at least a brief discussion of its meaning and use.

Salt Lake Community College’s Black Student Union brought Williams to speak on and moderate “The ‘N’ Word: An Open Discussion” at the Student Center on the Taylorsville Redwood Campus. She is also an adjunct instructor at the College, teaching social work and African American studies.

“Where did it come from?” Williams asked, trying to prime the pump with a series of questions. “What’s its history? Why are we still talking about it in 2014? We’re in a post-racial society, right? So, shouldn’t this be an era where we’re beyond this kind of a conversation? A lot of the questions being asked are about, ‘How did the word become so acceptable?’ How did it become something where we don’t flinch when we actually hear it? And the answer

to that is long and convoluted. There are questions about, ‘Can we actually reclaim the word?’”

Williams started off the discussion by showing excerpts from the 2004 Todd Larkins documentary “The N Word,” which uses celebrities, including whites and blacks, to talk about the first time they heard the word, the origins and politics of it, its different variations and the use of it in hip-hop music.

Four definitions of the word were discussed in the documentary, starting with one where a white person or other non-African American uses it to indicate that a black person is of an inferior caste. The documentary points out that it is used as an “affectionate leveler among African Americans, mainly male ones,” much in the same way Russian males might refer to each other as “mujiks,” which historically was used to refer to a peasant.

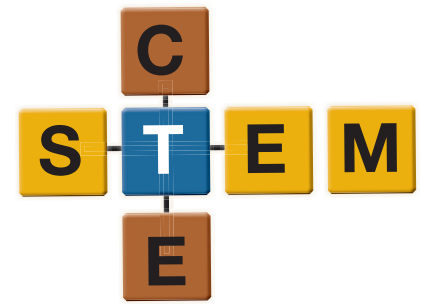
Another definition talked about in the film is when the word is used by an African American as a “class designation,” to describe a person of the same race as someone who doesn’t know

how to behave. The fourth definition Larkins depicts is one that is “quietly but increasingly prevalent” among non-African Americans, whereby the word is once again used as a “leveling” term while implying that the person is “okay” or a good friend.

Williams brought up how there is a divide generationally within the African American culture about who can use the word, how it can be used, why it can be used, when it can be used, or if it should be used. In a discussion that lasted almost two hours, topics swirled around how the word will never go away, what has been or needs to be done to reclaim it and thereby redefine the word, and how the word has and will evolve in its use.

“So, what do you do when you have a word that’s that defined, that diverse?” Williams asked. “How do you treat it? Does anyone stop and say, ‘Okay, so, I’m sorry, which way are you using the word so I know how to respond? ... How many of you feel you can comfortably discern between which way a word like the ‘N’ word is being used?’” ■





## College seeks to expand C.T.E. offerings at Westpointe Center

**A**lmost half of the students attending Salt Lake Community College – more than 28,000 – are enrolled in Career and Technical Education (C.T.E.) courses, fulfilling two of the College’s four core themes in workforce education and community engagement.

These C.T.E. courses are offered at SLCC across 29 programs, including biotechnology, nursing and visual art and design, help prepare students to enter the workforce immediately, provide hands-on skills and offer pathways to earning a degree. Those programs help educate and train workers to assist scientists and engineers, who typically rely on 4 to 6 technicians.

To meet the growing demand in the Salt Lake Valley for career and technical courses, the College has embarked on a strategic plan to expand its Westpointe Center, requiring about \$39.3 million to establish a 120,000 square-foot facility.

“Expanding the College’s C.T.E. offerings at the Westpointe location makes sense, in part because 63 percent of the state’s

population lives in Salt Lake County, where SLCC is the primary provider of C.T.E. courses,” said SLCC Public Relations Director Joy Tlou. “It’s an opportunity for Utahns to see a huge benefit for the state’s workforce and, ultimately, for the economy.”

The Westpointe Center will become a one-of-a-kind, one-stop hub for anyone interested in C.T.E. in the Salt Lake Valley. It will be a place where traditional students acquire skills in career and technical education to begin their careers, where incumbent workers enhance or improve their skills to increase their value to their employers, and where transitioning and underemployed workers can gain rapid training in a career and technical field that will allow them to successfully re-enter the workforce quickly.

“The vision for L-3 Communications was to work with SLCC to create a body of skilled, certified and competent manufacturing employees who will support our strategic initiatives and produce quality products,” said Stephen

Eiting, vice president of operations for L-3.

An expanded Westpointe Center also forges a stronger link to S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) offerings at SLCC, strengthening the College’s ability to focus squarely on technology-driven areas like aviation, electronics, engineering, electric power technology, manufacturing, logistics, non-destructive testing, skilled service technology and welding.

The College shifted its expansion focus from Meadowbrook to the Westpointe Center location when research revealed Meadowbrook would be constrained and its geographic location problematic. Not only that, but there would be a much greater sense of symbiosis between SLCC and its present and potential industry partners by being located next to or close by those businesses. The study also showed that it would be cost-prohibitive to retrofit an older building that was not designed as an educational facility and that is incompatible with state-of-the-art technology needed for C.T.E. courses. ■

### Industries Served

- *Aviation & Related Industries*
- *Electronics & Electric Power Technology*
- *Engineering & Manufacturing Technology*
- *Logistics*
- *Skilled Service Technology*
- *Welding & Fabrication*

### SLCC WESTPOINTE CENTER SERVES

- **traditional students** acquiring skills
- **incumbent workers** enhancing skills
- **transitioning workers** obtaining skills to re-enter the workforce
- **underemployed workers** gaining skills to improve employability

North Lake  
Community  
College



# Student. Philosopher. Marine.

## *Epiphany at SLCC helps Scott Vargas work through “duality” of mankind*

“If everyone took philosophy classes, the world would be a better place.” Those are Scott Vargas’ soft-spoken words, rooted in what studying philosophy at Salt Lake Community College has done for him.

As a Marine who has served in Iraq, Israel and Southeast Asia, Vargas has witnessed what he calls the “duality” of mankind, at its best and worst. “I’ve experienced enough to know that war is not a good thing,” Vargas said. In his military family he has also seen, and felt deeply, the toll that serving the country can take. Four people Vargas knew well and called friends committed suicide, leaving him to deal with what he called the “absurdity of life.”

As a young man and a rising star in the Marines (by 18 he was in a leadership role), the 2006 Layton High School graduate began grappling with an increasing existentialist mode of thought, asking questions that centered on career, spirituality and broader subjects that have perplexed philosophers since the time of Plato and his teacher, Socrates. “I was trying to find meaning and purpose in my life,” Vargas said.

Had it not been for a few teachers early on at SLCC, Vargas said he might still be searching for “something” to help give his life direction and to help answer – or at least begin trying to answer – those questions that were dogging him. Vargas is the youngest of four children, raised by religious parents who preferred that he go on a church mission or enroll in college after high school instead of joining the military. It’s about the only “wedge,” he noted, that has ever come between him and his parents.

Around 2012 Vargas researched schools, their math programs and how they worked with military veterans. SLCC seemed like a good fit. Vargas is one of about 2,000 military veterans enrolled in the College these days. That number was fewer than 500 less than 6 years ago, which speaks to the increased efforts at SLCC to serve more vets.

Vargas started taking classes, which included philosophy subjects. Vargas, now 26, started finding answers in a “glow” that he saw in the eyes of students actively and willingly taking part in lively discussions with Associate Professor of Philosophy, Dr. Alexander Izrailevsky.

“He had such a profound impact immediately on my life – he

made it worth it to stay at SLCC,” Vargas said about taking his first philosophy class at SLCC. Around that same time, Vargas took a math class from John Close and another philosophy course from Shannon Atkinson, both of whom he describes as dynamic instructors who teach with “passion” and a genuine concern for their students. His experiences in those classes, with those instructors, who Vargas said came along at the right time, gave him the clarity and direction – an epiphany – that he sought.

Something else quickly began to develop in Vargas – a pride in his school, one where he said the instructors take a personal interest in him and where he’s not treated like a number.

“I feel that too many people think community college is below them, that it’s not prestigious enough,” Vargas said. “Me, I own it proudly – I’m extremely grateful to be here.” His instructors are grateful to have him. Atkinson taught Philosophy of Religion to Vargas, whom he said offered “poignant and deep” remarks in the classroom.

“Socrates argued that when people have truly taken the time to examine their lives, they come to know who they truly are and become virtuous, what they are meant to be,” Atkinson said. “They then pursue this knowledge with a conviction and a passion that allows them, according to Socrates, to be excellent. Scott truly embodies this philosophy; he exemplifies it, and it is my pleasure to have been his professor and to be his friend. ... He knows himself and has examined his life, making it so worth living. In turn, I see him helping others do the same. I admire and hope to emulate such excellence.”

If you ask Izrailevsky, SLCC’s philosophy

department is in the business of shaping and changing lives, including Vargas’.

“We have to teach every one of our students, to the core of hers or his personality, not only how to be a smart, educated, knowledgeable person, but, even more so, how to live philosophy authentically,” Izrailevsky said. “It means we appeal not only to the brain of the student, but to her or his heart, value system, moral principles, social awareness, community engagement, sense of patriotic duty and responsibility

outstanding representative of this post-modern, post-nihilist generation,” Izrailevsky said. “The future belongs to the new stoics, American men and women who, like Marcus Aurelius, read the classics of Western Philosophy between the Marine Corps drills. Marcus Aurelius read Epictetus – Scott is reading Nietzsche and Levinas.”

During an event within the SLCC Philosophy Department, Vargas caught the ear of SLCC President Dr. Deneece Huftalin during a chance meeting. She



for family, community and country.”

He added how a lot of talk in American academia, mass media and in kitchens lately has revolved around a young generation that is hedonistic, highly individualistic, entitled and even nihilistic. In describing Vargas, he references the late German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who said that at the bottom of moral nihilism, a “ray of hope” will appear and a post-nihilism generation will “slowly grow up.”

“Scott Vargas, a student who every teacher may be proud of, is an

was struck by his “unique” way of sharing how philosophy has helped him reconcile life’s darker side and by his commitment to his teachers.

“I had never heard anyone speak about philosophy in such an applied way,” President Huftalin said. “He is genuinely thankful for the mentorship and care with which the faculty have approached him as a student. He used the parallel of loyalty he felt for his fellow Marines and extended it to the loyalty he feels for these professors.”

He graduated from Layton High on June

1, 2006 and reported to boot camp 10 days later. Vargas started out in a reserve infantry battalion, Fox Company, and has since moved on to the 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, Charlie Company, reaching the rank of sergeant. Vargas' job description as a "rifleman" in the Marines is, as stated on his resume, "Locate, close with and destroy the enemy by fire and maneuver and/or repel the enemy assault by fire and close combat." His rank, leadership position and training, however, belie the

out the Marines. "When we were growing up, he raised us with an innate sense of pride in this country," Vargas said. "Coming from third-world poverty to a substantially better life, he's just always been thankful for the opportunities he's had in America. He's always passed on that gratitude to us. So, since a very young age, I've always had this idea that I was going to serve and give something back."

His even keel has helped Vargas rise in rank and responsibility, which these

10 years in the military by the time he's finished. He's working part-time at a plumbing supply warehouse. And he's pursuing his Associate of Arts degree in general studies at SLCC.

Vargas, who plays guitar and used to be in a band, is also president and cofounder of ProjectSLC.com, a web-based company that networks with local and national bands to post concert dates and interviews with band members. He is working on developing a nonprofit component for the company to bring

more music education into classrooms in low-income areas.

As a Marine, his unit has had rocks thrown at them, and they've had flowers given to them – the duality of mankind Vargas witnessed while in Iraq. Future deployments around the world could be just around the corner over the next two years.

"I've been lucky to see a lot of different parts of the world," said Vargas, who noted how those experiences abroad have made him grateful to live in the U.S. and have so many advantages people in other countries don't have.

But this Marine rifleman has his mind's eye trained on a PhD in philosophy and maybe a minor in

math, a path down which he wants to be well on his way by the end of his five-year plan. Not surprisingly, he'd like to teach someday, like those at SLCC who inspired him early on in his college career.

"I would like to lead the best life I can in the service of others," Vargas said. "I think a life in service to others is the best life you can have." ■

kind, gentle and generous man, who readily admits he's sensitive like his mother and father, despite his tough "Mexican shell." Vargas added. "When you get past that, he's actually pretty sensitive," he said about his father. And Vargas doesn't fit the stereotype of a person in a leadership position in the military. He's not one to yell all the time or liberally use foul language. "I think I stay pretty consistent – there's a time and a place for it," he said.

Vargas credits his father, Jorge, who grew up poor in the Mexican port city of Veracruz, with compelling him to seek

days lands him in a lead scout position during maneuvers like the ones that would take him down the tense, anxiety-ridden Route Michigan – or IED (improvised explosive device) Alley – while in Iraq. "The way I was raised is, whatever you choose and commit yourself to, you do it 100 percent," he said. "I think it paid off for me." Still, Vargas wasn't planning on making a career of the military. Yet he wasn't sure, after one semester at Weber State University, what he wanted to do.

Vargas signed on for another two years in the Marines as a reservist, giving him





## *SLCC students add extras, value to Herriman project house*



Working with their hands is something students said they loved about building a home from the ground up.

**A** young bull-rider with no home-building experience worked alongside a seasoned construction veteran to help build a rambler that its project manager claims is a better value than neighboring houses.

“We really stepped up the quality in this home compared to the homes around us,” said Boyd Johnson, a general contractor and instructor for framing and finishing at Salt Lake Community College.

Johnson was the project manager on a home in Herriman Towne Center when it was about the only thing going there other than the house down the street that gained national attention by being modeled after the home in the animated movie “Up.” Now there are about 40

homes occupied or under construction in that area.

Known as a student “project house,” construction began on the SLCC home in August 2013 when students in a structures class started framing ahead of students who were taking classes in cabinet making and interior finishing. About 60 students in six SLCC construction trades classes took turns working over the course of two semesters to finish the home by summer, 2014.

“It’s fun for me, to know that someone is going to be living in this house,” said Justin Manwill, 18, a Riverton High School graduate and burgeoning bull rider. As of early June, he was still trying to stick an official finish with an eight-second ride.





Featured in the 2014 Salt Lake Parade of Homes, winning awards for “Best of Category” and a blue ribbon for craftsmanship on its cabinets.

Manwill worked on, among other things, framing, finishing, molding, doorknobs and window wells alongside men like Vincente “Vinnie” Martinez, 53, who for the past 20 years has worked in construction management at refineries and semi-conductor plants.

“It was different, to say the least,” Martinez said about working with inexperienced students. “But when they had problems, they’d ask questions.”

Martinez wants to continue to work on government projects, but more and more he’s finding that jobs are requiring that he have what he called that “piece of paper,” as in a college degree. So, he went back to school, and now his goal after achieving an Associate of Applied Science in Construction Management

at SLCC is to continue at Weber State University for a bachelor’s degree.

Some of the students who worked on the Herriman home were like Richard Gatt, 58, a professional photographer who is going to school for his nursing degree. As a “lifelong” learner, Gatt enrolled in SLCC’s custom cabinet making course solely for personal reasons. “I own a house, and I want to learn to do my own cabinets,” Gatt said. “It’s something I’ve always wanted to learn to do.” Gatt and others used cherry wood to build the house’s cabinets from scratch, working eight hours a day twice a week for 16 weeks, which included installation.

“They turned out beautifully,” Gatt said. “You can’t find these at Home Depot.” Working with their hands is something

students said they loved about building a home from the ground up.

“I like building stuff,” said Gareth Keller, 22, who someday would like to manage construction projects. “I like to create things, to see things go from start to end, to say, ‘I did that.’”

When the home was done, its extras included granite countertops, closets with organizers and a painted garage. In a market that Johnson said “is going crazy,” the SLCC house expected to bring about \$350,000 for a 4-bedroom, 3-bath home with 3,000 square feet of finished space on the main floor and downstairs. It was in the Parade of Homes in early August. “I actually really like this home,” said Martinez. “I would live in it for sure.” ■



# SLCC STUDENT FASHIONS

## ENTERTAIN AND INSPIRE AT ANNUAL SHOW

From the opening when a sinister-looking mime took the stage to mimic playing a haunting piano arrangement, it was clear this would be no ordinary fashion show.

Salt Lake Community College Fashion Institute's annual Raw Couture Fashion Show drew hundreds to see 120 pieces that started taking shape last fall as sketches on paper. Dubbed "Façade, Shadows of Illusion" this year by the SLCC Fashion Show Production class, the 2014 event was the largest fashion show in the history of the program.

For the next four hours, a standing-room only audience at the picturesque Union Pacific Depot in Salt Lake City was entertained and

inspired by 12 designers and a cast of dancers, models, a DJ and even a fencing duo, who battled amongst the crowd to the theme music from the movie "Pirates of the Caribbean." Individual runway show names included "Warrior," "Secret Garden," "Geometry," and "Moths to the Flame."

"The show was so professionally and creatively done and a real tribute to the leadership and skills of our faculty and students," President Denece Huftalin said. Mojdeh Sakaki, director of the Fashion and Interior Design Program at SLCC, said the College's program provides employees for a "very robust fashion industry" in Utah, specializing in outerwear, skiwear, shoe and boot making, millinery, bridal,





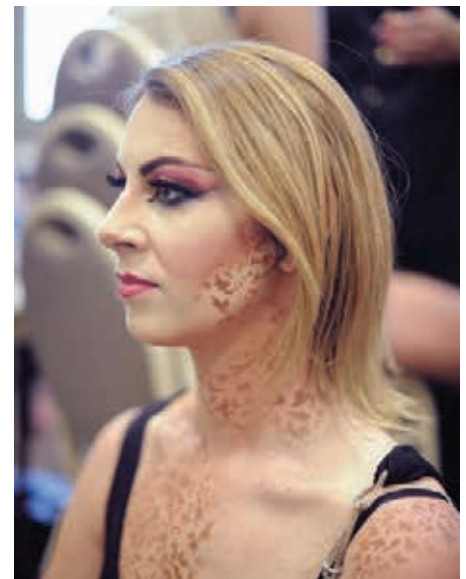
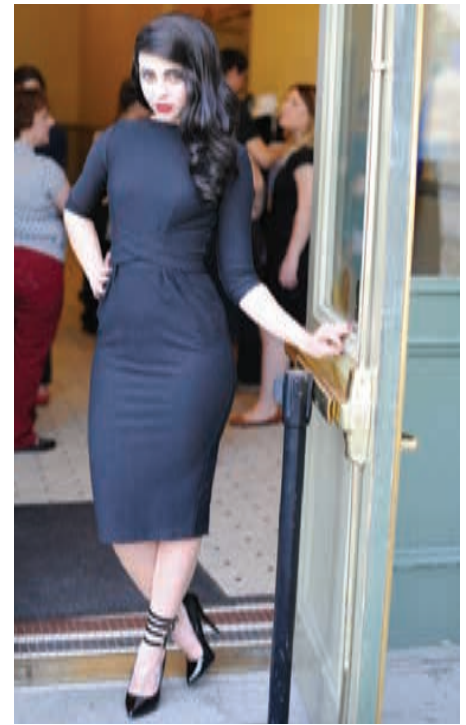
ur programs teach and mentor students to explore their creativity, learn the craft of their art form and then apply it to the real world.”





“We have the only fashion program in the state.”





costuming for movies and theater, alterations, accessories, sewing and pattern making.

“We have the only fashion program in the state,” Sakaki said. “This show introduces the community to the many possibilities that SLCC can offer to them.” Sakaki noted that students involved in this year’s show are working in the industry, starting their own lines of clothing, working for other companies like Nordstrom, Marmot and Juicy Couture or furthering their education in fashion-centric London and Paris.

SLCC School of Arts, Communication and Media Interim Dean Richard Scott was front and center for part of the show, which he called a “perfect example” of what the creative process at a community college can produce.

“Our programs teach and mentor students to explore their creativity, learn the craft of their art form and then apply it to

the real world,” Scott said. “The fashion show was all of that and more. Our students were able to show their work in a public forum in collaboration with each other to create an overall experience for the audience that was beyond just the showing of the art of fashion, delving deeper into a collaborative presentation – lights, music, dance, action.”

The event was produced by SLCC students with help from models, performers, designers and several companies for hair, makeup, flowers and decorations.

“I think the students and the audience had a wonderfully positive energy that made the event very fun and engaging,” said instructor and event organizer Heidi M. Gress. “The students from the production class, to collections, to the hair and makeup teams from the Aveda Institute, all took pride in creating a unique experience for all involved.” ■

## Bridge helps Horizonte students feel “I do belong here”

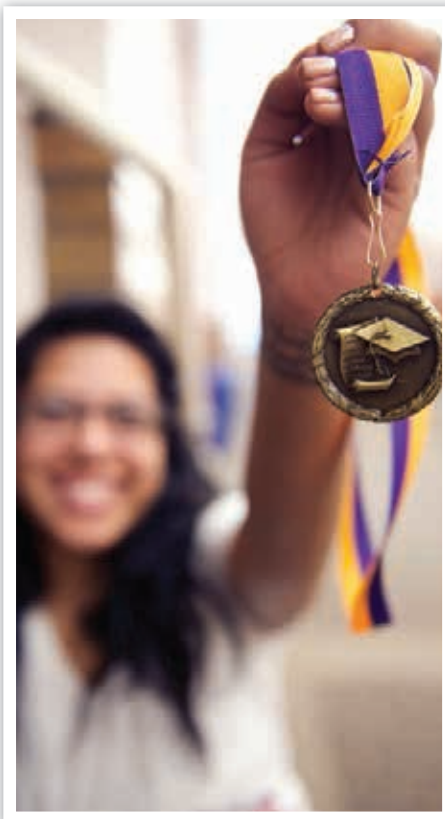


Stephanie Coria's \$500 scholarship, like scholarships for many students who in recent years attended an alternative high school in Salt Lake City, was in danger of going unused.

But a short class offered this past spring at Salt Lake Community College to students and graduates of Horizonte Instruction and Training Center is helping to make sure those scholarships are put to good use. Referred to informally as a “bridge” class, it helped Coria and about 20 other students learn a few basics and logistics about enrolling in and attending college.

“I would have lost (the scholarship) if I didn't come to this class,” admitted Coria, 18, of Salt Lake City.

Educators had blamed the broader scholarship-to-college disconnect among Horizonte Scholarship Fund recipients, which includes Coria, on language barriers, peer pressure, limited access to desired classes, income issues, lack of knowledge of course requirements and the difficulties associated with being a first-generation college student.



It's why Horizonte and SLCC decided to build the “bridge” class, designed to guide scholarship recipients through what organizers of the course say is the

sometimes time-consuming, confusing and complex college enrollment process.

The class was offered for the first time this past spring to 46 Horizonte students, who received Horizonte Scholarship Fund monies, the chance to visit SLCC's South City Campus in Salt Lake City three days a week for one hour in the morning each day for 6 weeks. The scholarships do not require that recipients attend SLCC, but it is where most of the students end up starting out their college career.

Kimball Young, who is on the Scholarship Fund's board of directors, said the goal of the class was to get participants ready for college life. “It turned out to be a very, very positive experience,” Young said. “We're going to be very successful in educating a larger percentage of our Hispanic population.”

Of the 46 students, about three quarters were Hispanic – 27 were high-school age, and the rest were adults 18 and older. They were given access to people at SLCC who helped them with registration, academic advising and financial aid as well as tutoring in writing.

On the last day of the class, students wore a graduation medal, which Ana Nielsen, 50, said she was going to take with her to her native Columbia and show her mother. “I'm going to show my mom I was working hard,” she said.

Nielsen, who now has a six-year-old son, moved to the United States when she was 35. Once upon a time, she dreamed of being a doctor, but it never came to fruition. Now she wants to be a health information specialist, starting with classes at SLCC. “I did this for me, my son and for my future,” Nielsen said about graduating from Horizonte and completing the bridge class.

“They didn't have to do this,” said Kevin Miller, SLCC director of student conduct and support. “But they found the value in helping them prepare for college.” ■



## *Students gain valuable experience from D.C. internships*

**S**alt Lake Community College student Scott Downs takes a car, a bus, then two trains – a 75-minute commute – to his internship as a research analyst in Washington D.C. with the Council on Hemispheric Affairs.

But the trip is worth it for the finance major, pursuing a minor in political science. He has big plans for the future.



**Amber Swan, D.C. Intern**

“My hope is to work for an international bank or non-government agency that works closely with South America,” Downs said. “Using knowledge of economies and regions, I hope to monetize my skills and passion for being a force for socio-economic improvement throughout Latin America.”

For summer 2014, there were three SLCC students working at internships

in D.C., thanks to the efforts of the College’s Student Life & Leadership offices. The internships last one semester, and students can apply for fall or spring internships for the 2014-15 academic year.

Downs, 34, his wife and their three young daughters elected to stay with a friend he made when he lived in the D.C. area years ago.

Intern Amber Swan, 27, shared an apartment in downtown D.C. on the George Washington University campus with three roommates from Florida, Missouri and the Czech Republic. Swan and her roommates are all doing internships through The Fund for American Studies program.

Swan interned with the D.C.-based nonprofit Washington Parks and People, credited for leading the transformation of the most violent park in the D.C. area into one of the safest over the course of its 24-year existence. Swan also took classes at George Mason University and worked with The Fund for American Studies Institute on Philanthropy and Volunteerism.

Swan is earning a master’s degree and wants to work as a social worker in a hospital. Her time in D.C. has been invaluable.

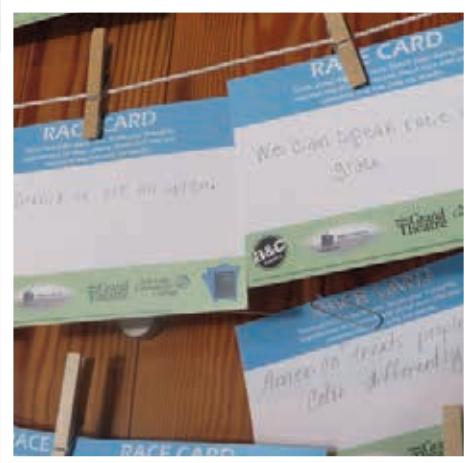
“I have gained experience working in the professional realm, and more specifically

learning how to do office work for a nonprofit and event coordinating,” Swan said. “I also have learned some valuable skills about career networking. I have greatly enjoyed discovering the city of D.C. and being in a more culturally diverse area. And my Ethics of Philanthropy class at GMU has been one of my favorites, and it’s applicable to the careers I’m interested in.”

The types of internships available vary widely, from working with the Smithsonian or a policy think tank to jobs in the political arena.

Downs was encouraged to apply for his internship by SLCC political science professor Shari Sowards and Tim Sheehan, SLCC vice president of government and community relations. He used the SLCC Writing Lab to refine his Curriculum Vitae and cover letter. After a phone interview went well, he was selected and landed in D.C. on May 12 for an 11-week internship.

“Working closely with Ivy League students on academic scholarships is a great opportunity to be reminded of how talented our peers are and what we can become if we focus as dutifully as they have in their studies,” Downs said. “Opportunities are abundant for those who are focused, reliable, talented and malleable.” ■



## SLCC's Grand Theatre hosts NPR's Michele Norris and "Race Card Project"

**H**ow do you condense a lifetime of experience and thoughts about race into six words?

That has been the challenge National Public Radio's Michele Norris puts to anyone willing to take part in "The Race Card Project."

Norris talked about race and the project earlier this year at Salt Lake Community College's Grand Theatre on its South City Campus.

"Norris' appearance at the Grand was an opportunity to take part in an important dialogue on a national stage about race in America," said SLCC Public Relations Director Joy Tlou. "There is no other project right now in this country that compares to the

significance, impact and broad scope of Norris' Race Card Project."

Race Card is an ongoing online project intended to be a catalyst for conversation about race, ethnicity and cultural identity in America. Norris created the project after publication of her 2010 family memoir, *The Grand Silence*, which raised "questions about her racial legacy and shed new light on America's complicated history."

Before Norris joined NPR in 2002, she was a staff writer for *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times*. For NPR she has hosted *All Things Considered*. In 2009 she was awarded "Journalist of the Year" by the National Association of Black Journalists. ■





Salt Lake Community College Executive Director of Development Nancy Michalko (l-r), SLCC Dean of the School of Professional and Economic Development Karen Gunn, SLCC President Dr. Deneece G. Huftalin, Chase Utah/Nevada Market Support Manager Brittany Westover, SLCC Corporate Relationships Development Officer Kevin Rusch, and SLCC Vice President of Institutional Advancement Alison McFarlane.

## *Gifts help fuel SLCC engine*

**S**alt Lake Community College's far-reaching impact in Utah is felt, in part, by generous donations from a variety of sources that help ensure continued access for anyone who wants to attend SLCC.

This past year, the College received gifts from Larry H. Miller Group owner Gail Miller, Zions Bank President A. Scott Anderson and Questar CEO Ron Jibson. Their donations will help students with scholarships that will pay for tuition, living expenses, childcare and transportation.

Miller's gift targets female students with the Bridge Builder Scholarship for incoming freshmen and continuing students. The Ronald and Janet Jibson Scholarship supports "... a hard working student for whom this scholarship makes a difference in them staying

in college and completing their degree." The Scott Anderson Bridge Builder Scholarship recognizes "... the important bridge that education creates to move an individual from one phase of life to another."

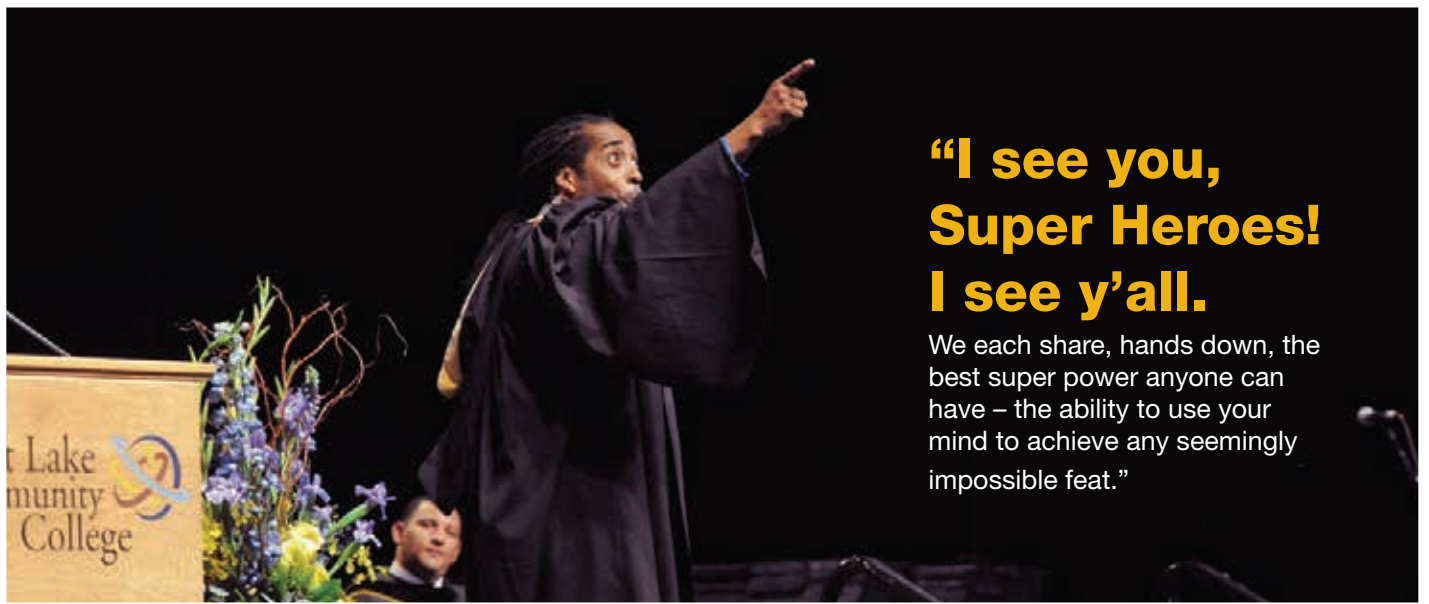
SLCC received a donation from Chase Bank for the College's School of Economic and Professional Development's "Cradle to Career" program. The College will partner with United Way of Salt Lake to use the funds to deliver workforce training and "... encourage continued education pathways in related areas to support immediate job placement and career advancement for unemployed adults and underrepresented populations."

Other gifts to the College have manifested in the naming of rooms at the Center for Arts and Media at

South City Campus.

For their continued support of a scholarship fund, the South High Alumni Association now has the east portion of the Multipurpose Room at the Center for Arts and Media named after it. Also at the South City Campus are the newly minted Edna Runswick Taylor Foyer and the Jenny Runswick Bennett Forum, both of which resulted from donations made by Jerald M. and Edna Runswick Taylor. Edna Taylor played Miss Julie on the popular KSL show "Romper Room" in the 60s and 70s.

Other rooms at the South City Campus and adjoining Center for Arts and Media have new names following gifts by Tim and Brenda Huval, Richter7, R. Harold Burton Foundation, Wheeler Foundation and Mark and Kimi Finlinson. ■



**“I see you,  
Super Heroes!  
I see y’all.**

We each share, hands down, the best super power anyone can have – the ability to use your mind to achieve any seemingly impossible feat.”

## National Poetry Slam winner studies audience before grad speech

**A**n audience of thousands filled the Maverik Center seats in West Valley City to witness students from the largest graduating class ever, 4,218, don caps and gowns for the May 2014 Commencement program for Salt Lake Community College.

After a few speeches and presentations, a spotlight shined down on one man, with dreadlocks pulled back in a ponytail and wearing a black robe, strolling to the front of the stage. The commencement address, the heart and soul of all graduation ceremonies, was about to begin.

Before the white-on-black words began rolling on multiple teleprompters, Sekou Andrews looked out at his audience and confidently smiled, about to command the attention of an entire arena. What would he say? How would he inspire? What words of hope and encouragement would he offer?

### **The crowd waited.**

Weeks before the commencement speech, Andrews began his research into SLCC – which, like so many others, he relishes calling “Slick” – over speakerphone with Vice President of Institutional Advancement Alison McFarlane and other SLCC staffers.

Like a journalist about to tell a story, he wanted facts and anecdotes, something compelling or funny or unique to the College, maybe some sort of experience common among its students. Emails in days to come picked up where the phone call ended.

And you might think that at this point in his preparation Andrews was trying to channel some sort of muse or tap into some sort of stereotypical heart-tugging form of inspiration. After all, he’s a poet.

“As far as inspiration and muses go, I really don’t have one,” Andrews said.

### **Stereotype broken? Check.**

“This joyful life of mine has me speaking to authors on Monday, cereal box designers on Wednesday and diabetes healthcare workers on Friday,” he explained. “Why go searching for any greater muse than that? At the end of the day I would probably say the only constant thread is the constant, universal stories we all share, no matter what those industries are.”

The presentations he ends up with in most cases sound more like stories being told via free verse. Listeners will hear a cadence, use of refrain and frequent shifts in imagery that seem to tap a creative vein similar to what you’d find in Allen Ginsberg’s epic poem “Howl,”

only much more positive and hopeful than the dark places Ginsberg takes his readers. In general, Andrews added, it’s his passion for the art form that continues to inspire him.

As he puts it, Andrews influences the influencers. If he’s speaking to educators, he urges them to look into the “pupils of passion-filled pupils.” His words bring grown men to tears. After one speech, a member of the military tore a patch from his uniform in a gesture of gratitude as he gave it to Andrews.

One uncertainty of his job lies in not knowing whom his messages will impact or what impressions they will leave. Like a true poet, Andrews addresses the topic with a quote from one of his own works called “Spit.”

“Just when I’m set to curse this wicked world that laughs at me, I hear the thirst in his voice as a desperate fan steps up asking me, ‘Spit one for me tonight Sekou, tell my story tonight,’” Andrews recites from memory. “And me, cursed to never know which one of y’all God sent me to touch so I know when I’m finally done, I spit one for everyone, on every mike, on every night until everybody leaves wet.”

There are certain messages, he noted,

that have broad applications and can be repurposed no matter who is in the audience.

“At the end of the day we’re seeking the same things,” Andrews said. “We’re proud of the same things. We’re accomplishing the same things. We’re

– the ability to use your mind to achieve any seemingly impossible feat.”

He was prepared with a story to tell and takeaways like the “soul selfie.” He capitalized on the trend of the cellphone photo “selfie” and urged everyone, grads and audience members, to take a soul selfie, to look at and celebrate what makes each individual “awesome.”

“Sekou was really interested in learning about individual and anecdotal student stories as much as the overall ‘SLCC student experience,’” said SLCC Institutional Advancement Events Coordinator Megan McDowell, who mined for information about the school and its students on Andrews’ behalf. “He has a really unique way of weaving those stories in with his

own inspirational message seamlessly and crafting it in such a way that it becomes relatable to everyone. His approach is as thoughtful as it is artistic, which resulted in a message that was

both meaningful and entertaining for everyone at the event.”

Throughout the arena and even outside, as families and friends posed for photos afterward, people held up one hand in front of their face in a claw-like manner, as Andrews instructed, and proceeded to take soul selfies with big smiles or fierce looks that depicted confidence and courage.

#### Andrews had reached his audience.

“Sekou’s commencement address was inspirational by intention,” said Alison McFarlane. “By taking the time and interest to learn deep details about the College, our students, and the spirit of the event, he honored the graduates and celebrated their accomplishments. His dramatic delivery and messages gave them a perfect poetic exclamation point on their SLCC experience.”

Black robe now gone and wearing a grey suit and blue shirt, he ended the address with the words of encouragement graduates seek in a commencement speech.

“Watch your future unfold into abundant success,” he said. “... Stay focused on your future. This is finish line and starting block, so, stay focused on the win but most of all, please, class of 2014 – **stay slick!**” ■



grappling and dealing with the same challenges.”

So, when the spotlight was on Andrews in the Maverik Center, he began by connecting.

“Screamers in the back, this is your time,” Andrews called out. “You with the afro, I see you!”

Andrews talked about being little, about how his Big Wheel was his imagined Batmobile. He played Rock, Paper, Scissors with Honorary Doctor Jesselie Barlow Anderson in front of the audience. He brought everyone back to their childhood, asking them to think about what they wanted to be when they grow up. Back then Andrews wanted to be a Super Hero.

His narrative continued, lamenting life’s greatest “super villain,” which was time itself, time to grow up, graduate from high school and then time to decide on getting a job or going to college – all of it the common thread that runs throughout every one of his audiences.

“I see you, Super Heroes! I see y’all,” he shouted into the crowd of graduates. “... We each share, hands down, the best super power anyone can have



# SLCC anatomy group presents project at national conference

**S**alt Lake Community College biology student Caris Cassady's hard work at SLCC paid off, earning her and her research group national attention among peers at four-year institutions.

Cassady was one of several students from Melaney Birdsong Farr's recent human anatomy class at SLCC who spoke in Florida at the 28th annual Human Anatomy and Physiology Society (HAPS) spring conference as recipients of coveted HAPS student grants.

"Receiving the grant from HAPS was surreal," Cassady, who already has a bachelor's degree in anthropology and sociocultural linguistics from the University of California at Santa Barbara. "It is an honor to be recognized nationally for the work we have been doing."

In all, six SLCC students won grants after competing nationally with graduate students and participants from two- and four-year schools.

Birdsong Farr has been involved with HAPS for about 15 years and has been trying to get SLCC students to be more creative and collaborative when it comes to science education.

"These students are not simply passive learners," she said about the SLCC grant winners. "They designed their projects, and most of my direction was simply in trying to clear obstacles and direct their focus."

One of those students was Jennifer Gebhardt, a ski patroller who also works at a non-profit physical therapy clinic that specializes in treating people with spinal cord injuries. She was able to use SLCC for pre-requisite classes before recently starting the Doctorate of Physical Therapy program at the University of Utah.

Gebhardt and three other SLCC

students, including Cassady, shared an interest in the central nervous system. Part of their end-of-year project, they decided to dissect the spinal cord and spinal nerves from one of the cadavers available to the College's anatomy classes and then write a paper about it.

That paper earned Gebhardt and her group a grant and an invitation to the May HAPS conference. Another group of SLCC students earned a grant through

their creation of a rare but useful photographic cadaver prosection (dissected body parts) database for anatomy students, who will use the database as a visual complement to their laboratory experience. ■

**"These students are not simply passive learners, they designed their projects, and most of my direction was simply in trying to clear obstacles and direct their focus."**

## New automotive internship named after Roger Miller

**S**alt Lake Community College this year began offering a new, for-credit class through an automotive internship, fulfilling a wish of the late Roger L. Miller. Miller was a racing enthusiast and a member of one of the most successful automotive families in the country.

Roger, the son of Gail and the late Larry H. Miller, was "instrumental and inspirational" in the creation of the class, according to Rick Bouillon, Dean of SLCC's School of Technical Specialties. "His vision for on-the-job, real world training will have lasting, positive effects for those seeking a career in automotive

technology," Bouillon said.

"Roger inherited his father's passion for cars, racing, and business," said Gail Miller, owner of the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies. "I know that he would be so pleased to see his vision for this course come to fruition. His wife Cheri and I look forward to supporting this program and students who enroll by encouraging their interest in automotive industry careers."

Second-year students working toward an Associate of Applied Science degree in SLCC's Automotive Technician program will be able to earn six credit hours by taking the Roger L. Miller Automotive Internship Class. Currently there are no restrictions on the number of students.

Through the ongoing class, which began this past summer, students will work in paid and unpaid internships at a variety of participating companies and receive

at least 180 hours of on-the-job training. Students will need to meet specific requirements before taking part in the class, which is a new offering. ■



# Mobile bar business owner finds ‘tools’ to grow, prosper



In 1996, Maine native Casey Metzger moved to Salt Lake City to ski the Wasatch Mountains and transfer to the University of Utah. To earn money, he waited

tables and tended bar, working his way up to manager at the Spur Bar & Grill in Park City.

He grew to love the food and beverage industry, but Metzger wanted something more.

“The love of my trade was realized by my experiences working behind the bar,” he said. “The joy of entertaining guests combined with my passion for the bar culture is what got the ball rolling for Top Shelf Services.”

Metzger started the business with just himself, a pickup truck, ambition and an idea to open a bar without brick and mortar, landing the Sundance Institute as his first big client during its annual film festival each January in Park City.

“At the time, I didn’t foresee many opportunities for this kind of business besides working with the festival once a year,” he said. “Over the next couple of years, Top Shelf continued to slowly grow as a bartender-for-hire, and my interest and passion for the business grew as well.”

But as months turned into years of offering a mobile bartending service in the Park City area, Metzger decided he needed a push and a little guidance.

He heard about a program at Salt Lake Community College called Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses that would teach him about finances, planning, staffing and growing Top Shelf Services, now in its sixth year of operation.

“I’m good at what I do,” Metzger said recently after a 10,000 Small Businesses graduation ceremony at SLCC’s Grand Theatre in Salt Lake City. He and more than 80 other graduates from three classes of business owners completed the program. “I love what I do. I have great ideas. But I just didn’t have the tools and resources.”

Metzger needed help with better understanding the financial side of his business. Program participants attend networking events with other business owners and clinics that focus on the legal and financial aspects of running a business. Through 100 hours of instruction, 10,000 Small Businesses scholars like Metzger reach some game-changing realizations.

“There was never a budget,” Metzger said. “There was a lot of finger crossing and hoping and telling myself everything would be alright.”

In truth, there were a lot of sleepless nights, worrying over what would become of a dream that started in 2008, around the time his first of three children was born.

Prior to the program at SLCC, Metzger, joking about it now, thought “metrics” had to do with a tape measure instead of a means to track his company’s performance. He needed help painting a picture of what his business could

be and he needed a “road map” for getting there.

“The program opened my eyes to the key components of a successful business and forced me to take a hard look at me as the leader who will drive its growth,” he said.

Metzger was a veteran of the restaurant industry, starting out as a busboy, then moving on to server and manager. He worked for The Spur Bar & Grill for 14 years as a bartender and manager. Drinks were his focus. “I’ve always been a real student of the beverage service,” he said. In particular, Utah’s unique liquor laws ‘fascinate’ him. “If I could get my PhD in that, if they offered one, that would be a great thing,” Metzger laughed. Knowledge of the industry, ambition and a more solid business sense after taking part in the Goldman Sachs program is paying off.

“There have been many struggles with starting my business,” Metzger said. “I worked two jobs for a long time just to pay the bills and was barely getting by. For a long time I would work for nothing just to get the experience. I sacrificed lots of valuable time working late nights researching the market and brainstorming ways that my business would work.”

His business has grown to include several trucks, vans and trailers and up to 25 part-time employees, depending on the size of an event. His goals now include diversifying, to begin a training program for restaurants and to do more off-site bartending. These days Metzger has a clearer direction for Top Shelf after graduating from 10,000 Small Businesses. ■

## SLCC program helps fourth cohort of business owners

Salt Lake Community College has been helping entrepreneurs by offering a program that brings together business owners and local resources to network and ultimately grow their businesses. The fourth cohort of scholars in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program gathered this spring at the College’s South City Campus to meet with small business experts and

potential funding partners. The program scholars in the fourth cohort represented businesses that do things like sell coffee, First Aid kits, Greek food, hair products and power cords that don’t get tangled. A total of 26 participants in this group of scholars employ about 500 people – half of the businesses are owned by women. Revenue as of the most recent yearly report for those business owners was

about \$23 million. This fourth cohort marked the first one with scholars who represent non-profit and veteran-owned entities. Nationally, the program is investing \$500 million in helping small businesses create jobs and grow local economies by providing those who are selected as scholars with “a practical business education, access to capital and business support services.” ■

**KEVIN DUSTIN**  
DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS



"We are excited to have someone of Kevin Dustin's caliber joining the SLCC athletic program. I believe Kevin will carry on Norma Carr's legacy of leading the athletic program with integrity," said Interim Vice President of Student Services Nancy Singer. "His development experience, high school athletics experience, and his ability to build collaborative partnerships will serve the College and our student athletes well."

**NANCY MICHALKO**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



"Nancy joins SLCC with deep development experience and an attitude of excellence," said Vice President of Institutional Advancement Alison McFarlane. "She is poised to engage the College's present and future donors and move the College's development office to new heights."

**NICOLE OMER**  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROJECTS



"Nicole brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in grant management to the College," said Tim Sheehan, Vice President of Government and Community Relations. "She has a great understanding and appreciation of the importance of community colleges in higher education, and she is deeply committed to helping the College secure additional

funding that will provide for programs, personnel and resources needed to help our students succeed. We are very fortunate to have Nicole lead our Office of Sponsored Projects."

**DR. JOANNE WRIGHT**  
DEAN OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"I am happy to welcome Dr. JoAnne Wright as the Dean of the School of Health Sciences," said SLCC Interim Provost Dr. Clifton Sanders. "She joins Salt Lake Community College with valued experience in academic, clinical and professional positions including professor, chair, and director. I look forward to working with her as she leads the school forward."

*SLCC 2014 commencement:  
Largest graduating  
class ever*



**S**alt Lake Community College's 2014 graduating class was the school's largest ever at 4,218. While all of the graduates were not in West Valley City's Maverik Center May 8 during SLCC's Commencement program, it's a number that landed the College the 8<sup>th</sup> top producer spot in the country for total associate degrees awarded. "The size of this year's graduating class is a quantifiable reminder of the important role this college plays in the community," said SLCC Public Relations Director Joy Tlou. "That's 4,218 celebrations this weekend – each one as sweet and significant as the next."

The College presented Jesselie Barlow Anderson and Ronald W. Jibson with Honorary Doctorate degrees. Barlow Anderson served two full terms from 2005-2013 on the SLCC Board of Trustees, chairing the Board for one term. Her many accomplishments at SLCC include a key role in establishing the College's Washington D.C. internship program. Jibson, through his employer Questar and personally, has contributed toward an existing SLCC scholarship program and was pivotal in helping the College establish an energy grant that has benefited students.

The College welcomed back Sekou Andrews as Commencement speaker after giving the school's Convocation keynote last fall. He is a two-time winner of the National Poetry Slam and has won numerous awards for his words and the way in which he delivers them. Andrews' "cutting-edge" style of delivery that he calls Poetic Voice blends "speaking, strategic storytelling, poetry, theater and comedy."

The SLCC Distinguished Alumni award was given to Comic Con founder Dan Farr, the late Utah County Sheriff's Sgt. Cory Blake Wride and the late Draper City Police Sgt. Derek Ray Johnson. Farr was able to draw more than 75,000 people one weekend last September to what he describes as the largest first-year Comic Con event in the history of North America. Wride, who was killed January 30, 2014 in the line of service after 19 years in law enforcement, was honored in March at the Capitol by the Utah Legislature, which



moved to name about a 15-mile section of state Route 73 the Cory B. Wride Memorial Highway through Saratoga Springs to the Tooele County line. Johnson, who was killed in the line of duty on September 1, 2013, received the Life Saving and Distinguished Service awards, and he was the 2012 Community Policing Officer of the Year. According to his obituary, he loved hunting, running, hiking and serving others.

Melissa Helquist was named the 2014 SLCC Distinguished Faculty Lecturer. Helquist joined SLCC in 2002 and is currently an associate professor in the English department, where she teaches composition, technical writing and disability studies courses. The 2014 SLCC Teaching Excellence Award recipients were Bill Tovar, Melissa Tillack and Emily Dibble. ■



# SLCC

preparing students for the world stage...

