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Growing Power: SFCC Sustainable Agriculture Blooms

Spring in Northern New Mexico heralds new growth. Mayordomos in villages will oversee the release of water into the acequias that flow into farms. Water is valued, even more precious in years of drought. Many of SFCC’s programs reflect those rich, traditional rural cultural values of food production with sustainable water use practices.

“The college emphasizes sustainability through our practices on campus, our academic offerings and our outreach efforts,” said Camilla Bustamante, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Trades, Advanced Technologies and Sustainability. “Partnerships on campus and in the community align with our sustainability goals.”

A partnership to revitalize the Culinary Arts Garden was forged after Chef-Instructors Patrick Mares and Jerry Dakan met with instructor Beth Roop of The MASTERS Program, the Early College Charter High School based on campus. Roop credits SFCC’s Charlie Shultz, Lead Faculty for Controlled Environment Agriculture, with getting the initiative rolling. The MASTERS Program students take SFCC’s dual credit class in Greenhouse Operation and Management on Friday mornings, and then roll up their sleeves to work in the Culinary Arts Garden in the afternoon.

“Working in the Culinary Arts Garden is part of our service learning mission. Plus, The MASTERS Program students earn credits toward an associate degree,” Roop said. “Although only a few students have ever gardened, since they are assigned individual raised beds to cultivate and tend they are able to take real ownership.” Students are raising herbs, radishes, carrots, sugar peas, celery and bell peppers. Much of the produce from the Culinary Arts Garden is used in the student-run East Wing Eatery and the Culinary Arts labs.

“The MASTERS Program students see hydroponics and aquaponics as the wave of the future,” Roop added. Growing with soilless, closed-loop
systems in a controlled environment uses about a tenth of the water required for traditional soil-based production. The college’s new 12,000 square-foot greenhouse is expected to be fully operational later this year. It features a smart microgrid system supported by a U.S. Economic Development Administration grant and state funds, along with technical expertise and equipment donated by Siemens Industries.

“We’re extremely excited about the new greenhouse,” said Shultz. “This will allow students to further grow their skills.”

SFCC partners with industries to test equipment and systems:

- The Farm Pod is a shipping container that has been converted to raise fish on the first level and crops on the upper level. The crops are nourished with recycled, filtered water from the fish tanks below. The sponsoring company pays for a student position.
- Aqua Grove donated aquaponics equipment for students to beta-test and troubleshoot.
- Freight Spaces, LLC, provides a shipping container used for hydroponics as well as a paid internship for an SFCC student.

In addition to using state-of-the-art equipment, students are learning from industry leaders. Shultz is an internationally recognized pioneer in the field of integrating the production of fish and plants. Last year, when the devastating hurricane in Puerto Rico wiped out one of the aquaponics operations run by global leader Pedro Casas, Shultz saw the opportunity to help Casas and the college by encouraging him to teach at SFCC. With support from the Santa Fe Garden Club, Casas is teaching a new design-and-build class in which students gain valuable hands-on experience building their own systems. “This is a terrific opportunity for me and my family,” Casas said. “I love working with the students.”

Food self-sufficiency is a goal for many students. For Moustapha Idrissa, who works part time in the greenhouses, studying at SFCC is a dream come true. Now a U.S. citizen, the Niger native wants to eventually take back what he has learned to his homeland. “Where I grew up, during the cool season you could get tomatoes for a reasonable price. But during the warm season and the monsoons, tomatoes were ten times more expensive. The people in Africa love tomatoes, so I wanted to learn how I could grow them year-round in a controlled environment.”

In his 20s, Idrissa lived mainly in the Washington, D.C. area where he worked in restaurants and drove taxis, but always kept the dream of learning how to operate a greenhouse. When he heard about a part-time internship with a greenhouse operator in Alcalde, New Mexico, he packed up his car with his pregnant wife and young son to drive across the country. He wanted to learn more, so he enrolled at SFCC. In addition to earning a certificate in Controlled Environment Agriculture, he’s pursuing a certificate in Water Treatment. He also is exploring ways to operate a food cart in Santa Fe that would serve West African-inspired cuisine. “Coming to the college has changed my life,” he adds. “I just love learning more every day.”
Resident Renaissance Man:
SFCC Chef Influences Cuisine, Poetry, Art

Have you ever noticed that SFCC’s Campus Center cafeteria and Campus Center Café often offer items with an exotic flair? Freshly made strained yogurt (often called Greek yogurt), Persian love cake, baklava, honey almond cake, cannoli, house-made feta cheese and entrées that reflect Middle Eastern, European or Persian influences are often menu favorites.

What you are experiencing when you taste those dishes are the culinary influences of Behzad Dayeny, Director of Food Services, who has served the college for 19 years. Dayeny grew up in Iran and lived for about six years in Europe, where he acquired much of his culinary training. He lived and worked in England and Greece and traveled through Europe before moving to the U.S., where he is now a citizen. While in England he met his wife, Zephyr, who is from New York and was working there as a corporate chef. “She grew up in an Italian family, so she had those cooking influences that she shared with me, as well. She encouraged me to pursue a career in culinary arts,” Dayeny said.

“...I wanted to offer more than typical cafeteria food.”

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Customers rave about his signature swan puff pastry. “I love to bake. I find it so relaxing,” he said.

When he’s not in the kitchen, Dayeny enjoys writing poetry, both in Persian and English. As a child, he memorized poems by the great Persian poets and he began writing poems when he was 14. He loves to read and study literature from around the world. He has had poems published in the Santa Fe Literary Review, reads his work to classes and at public events, and has had nine poems published in a limited-edition book created through the Book Arts Program. He regularly writes poems to accompany artwork by Printmaking and Book Arts Program Lead Patricia Pearce for her exhibitions at Vivo Gallery.

Dayeny began gaining his college credentials at SFCC before the main campus was built in 1988. He earned an associate degree in business from SFCC, a Bachelor’s in Business Administration from College of Santa Fe and a Master’s in Business Administration from New Mexico Highlands University. “I love the college and the people who work here,” he said.
The SFCC Foundation recently partnered with the oldest and largest food and wine society in the world, Chaîne des Rôtisseurs. Together they raised thousands of dollars for scholarships during a fundraising dinner, prepared by guest chefs Mark Connell, State Capital Kitchen; Cristian Pontiggia, El Nido; and Evan and Jen Doughty, the Palace Restaurant and Saloon with SFCC Culinary Arts Chef Instructors Patrick Mares and Jerry Dakan and Culinary Arts and Hospitality and Tourism students. SFCC was honored to host the competition on campus — the first time the contest was held in New Mexico. SFCC alumnus Kyle Pacheco (Kewa) won the top prize in the savory category and will compete next in the nationals. Capping the events, local and national representatives held a ribbon-cutting to induct SFCC’s Culinary Arts Lab into the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs.

Read more at www.sfcc.edu/foundation.
Los Alamos National Laboratory Regional Community Leaders’ Update

SFCC and the SFCC Foundation welcomed Los Alamos National Laboratory Director Dr. Terry Wallace and hosted the Community Leaders Breakfast. More than 200 guests met LANL’s new director and learned the latest news from the lab.

Graduation: SFCC Before High School

Karyn Dodier, a dual credit student at The MASTERS Program and SFCC, was selected for the New Mexico All-State Academic Team. Phi Theta Kappa and the New Mexico Independent Community College Association sponsor the annual recognition. Dodier will receive an Associate in Applied Science in Film Directing and Performance from SFCC one week before she graduates from high school. She received a certificate in Film Production in December.

Lovato Receives Welding Award

SFCC Welding Lead Instructor Jake Lovato has received the American Welding Society’s Howard E. Adkins Memorial Instructor Section Award. The honor recognizes quality instructional performance devoted to the promotion and expansion of welding skills and knowledge.

Santa Fe, New Mexico’s New Historian

Associate professor Andrew Lovato, Ph.D., has been named the City of Santa Fe’s third historian. An author and lecturer, Lovato’s plans include a lecture series on Santa Fe’s forgotten voices and looking at its history from different angles. He is interested in celebrating Santa Fe’s diversity and diverse cultures and in recording oral histories.

Fab Lab Santa Fe Launched at SFCC

SFCC’s Innovation Center has launched Fab Lab Santa Fe in the Trades and Advanced Technology Center. Fab Lab Santa Fe is a part of the international digital FABrication LABoratory network based at MIT. Fab Labs democratize access to the tools of digital fabrication. Fab Lab Hub, LLC, a New Mexico company whose mission is to foster New Collar job training and entrepreneurship, operates Fab Lab Santa Fe at SFCC and Archimedes Fab Lab at the Santa Fe Business Incubator. Fab Lab Santa Fe brings a Digital Badging program to SFCC for technical skills needed in smart manufacturing. Digital Badges are portable credentials that verify attaining expertise in a specific area of study. Fab Lab Santa Fe can make molds, prototype parts, microfluidic and wearable electronic devices, and furniture, among other services.

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For every $1 invested in SFCC taxpayers receive $2.50

Learn more:
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New Associate Deans

Brooke Gondara is the new Associate Dean of the Schools of Trades, Advanced Technologies and Sustainability and of Business, Professional Studies and Education. Gondara has taught at the university level and at Tribal and community colleges. She earned a doctorate in Education with an emphasis in Community College Leadership and a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Oregon State University and completed post-doctoral studies in presidential leadership at Harvard University.

Colleen Lynch is the new Associate Dean of the School of Sciences, Health, Engineering and Math and the School of Fitness Education. Lynch started her career at SFCC more than 25 years ago as a Learning Lab Manager for Developmental Studies and then became tutor coordinator, grant writer and Tutoring Center Director. She has been lead faculty and chair or co-chair of Mathematics since 2006 and also chaired the Curriculum Committee. She is actively involved in the New Mexico Statewide General Education Steering Committee. She holds a B.A. from the College of William and Mary as well as an M.A. in Liberal Arts from St. John’s College.

Shalimar Krebs is the new Associate Dean of the Schools of Liberal Arts and of Arts, Design and Media Arts. Krebs previously taught for SFCC in Media Arts for five years and served as the Coordinator of the Tutoring Center. He has a Master’s in Educational Leadership and a Bachelor’s in Documentary Studies from New Mexico Highlands University, as well as associate degrees in Physical Sciences, General Engineering and Biological Sciences — all from SFCC.

SFCC Welcomes Santa Fe Century

The Santa Fe Century is partnering with SFCC to relocate its annual rides and races to the college’s campus beginning this year, on May 19 and 20. The new, larger venue will provide ample parking for the Century’s 2,400 expected riders, will allow for more vendors during on-site registration and packet pick-up and for a more expansive Vintage Bike Celebration on May 19. Relocating to SFCC allows the Century to add a mountain bike ride for the first time in its 33-year history. The Century is giving the opportunity for registrants to donate to the SFCC Foundation on their registration form, funding that supports student success. The Santa Fe Century is the first major cycling event in the spring in the Southwest and is open to riders of all ages and abilities. More at www.santafecentury.com.

SFCC Receives Energy Efficiency and Solar Training Award

The International Center for Appropriate and Sustainable Technology (I-CAST), in partnership with the U.S. Economic Development Administration, has awarded SFCC contracts to develop and deliver energy efficiency and solar training for a Youth Workforce Development Program. One contract will help disadvantaged youth across Colorado and Utah and a second is for youth in New Mexico and Texas. SFCC’s EnergySmart Academy will train the instructors in the various communities and provide tools and resources.
REGISTER NOW FOR SUMMER & FALL CLASSES!
Check www.sfcc.edu for the latest events.

SFCC is an equal opportunity/ADA-compliant institution.
SFCC es una institución de igualdad de oportunidades en conformidad con ADA.