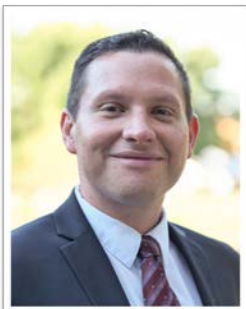


STEAL THIS NEWSLETTER

The Word on the Street from the Office of Learning Advancement

OER Champions!



Roberto Rojas-Alfaro (Full-Time Faculty): “As a community college instructor, I believe OERs help break down financial barriers to education, allowing students from all economic backgrounds to access quality

learning materials without the burden of additional costs. Integrating OERs into our curriculum fosters a more inclusive and diverse educational environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed. Furthermore, OERs provide an adaptable framework for instruction, empowering educators worldwide to continuously update and refine learning materials, ensuring that students receive the most current and relevant information.”



Simone Flanagan (Adjunct Faculty): “My goal for all students is to have easy access to course materials and be excited about them. OER maximizes the use of digital platforms for students, and because OER is adaptable, every

semester can be easily revised and improved. While I believe in challenging my students academically, I also empathize with the anxieties of modern life and look for ways to make their lives less stressful. Writing and sharing high-quality OER material is one way I can do that.”

Dalia Salloum (Full-Time Faculty) believes firmly in the ever-elusive idea that education is a fundamental human right for all human beings and that it should be free and accessible to all, but especially to those who are most marginalized by society.

Salloum is passionate about creating meaningful and transformative experiences for her students that change the way they think about themselves and their abilities. She believes in walking the talk - that buzzwords about equity and inclusion mean nothing if faculty do not take significant and meaningful action to realize those words both in the classroom and in the community at large.



Corey Stevens (Staff in eLearning): “My favorite thing about OER is that it is intentionally created to be adaptable. It can be customized, curated, and sequenced to fit the curriculum and the needs of our students, while static educational

resources require the opposite. OER allows instructors and designers to more easily align course objectives with learning materials, activities, and assessments, which greatly improves educational outcomes and the student experience. Students get all of this at low or no cost to them.”



Staff Spotlight: Debby Huber

Debby Huber is the new Specialist for the Prison Education Program, but she's not new to prison education or Salt Lake Community College. She and her husband volunteered for 20 years in the Religious Services program at the Utah State Prison when it was at the Point of the Mountain. From that experience she realized that education could play an important role in the lives of incarcerated individuals.

Debby has worked in the Office of the Registrar and Academic Records for 17 years before taking the position with the Prison Education Program. "When I was a volunteer at the prison," she recalls, "I was asked by another volunteer if I would be interested in a part-time job at SLCC in what was then called the Data Center. I took the job and eventually helped administer the data for students enrolled in the prison program."

She is passionate about the prison program because incarcerated students faced roadblocks that other students don't. Services available to traditional students aren't available to people who were enrolled through the prison, so it's important to make sure that their records are complete. Debby advocates for them on an individual basis because she knows that can make a difference in their success.

Debby's passion for the program and its students is palpable: "I have to say the highlight of working in the PEP is the interaction with the students. It starts with admissions and registration and then moves on to gathering documentation that will help them reach their goal of graduating. My very favorite event is the graduation ceremony! Seeing these students accomplish their goal and being able to share that with their families is a unique and exciting experience for me. Many of these students never thought this was possible. These are dreams that really did come true."



Debby Huber



Debby was born and grew up in San Francisco, California. She met her husband, Chuck, and moved to Salt Lake City after they were married. They opened their home to foster children and raised three boys of their own. This summer she and her husband plan to spend time with family and friends and make upgrades to their home and yard.

Says Huber, "I am especially grateful for the experience and growth which I have had with the college, and I am looking forward to making positive strides to make that happen for others who have any connection with the Prison Education Program."

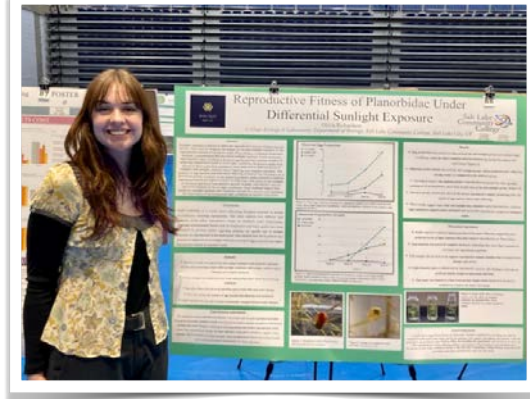
—David Hubert

Spring Commencement Program

Spring UP₃RC Photos



Engaged Learning Celebration



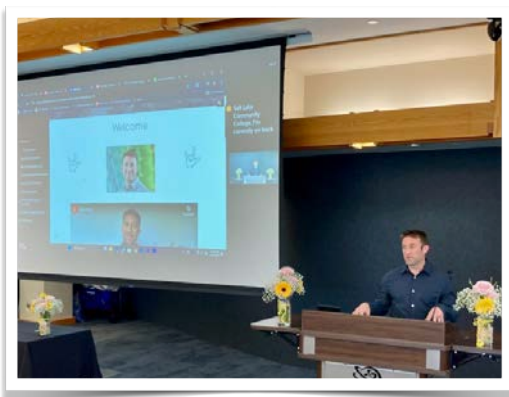
Student's First Undergraduate Research Project



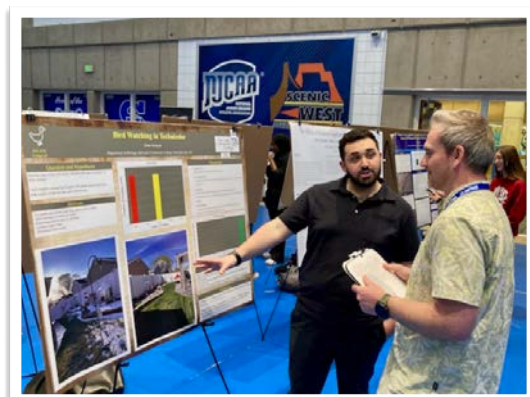
Business Oral Presentations



ePortfolio Showcase



Engaged Learning Celebration



Poster Presentation

Faculty Spotlight: Brent Smith

Brent (Darrell) Smith, an associate professor of machining in the Salt Lake Technical College, taught adjunct for 21 years before becoming a full-time faculty in 2018.

Passionate and dedicated to student success, Brent is always looking to improve his effectiveness in the classroom and the machining lab. He completed the Faculty Guild and the ACUE training and loved them both.

Brent brings industry experience to his work at Salt Lake Technical College. He worked at a machining company for many years and eventually bought it! He still operates that company and teaches for the SLTC in the evenings, which matches the busy lives of his students. He has four employees.

"Everything you're doing in class," Brent tells his students, "I did today at my company. What you learn in here is not just from the textbook, but comes 100% from the real world." He takes a very interrogatory approach to his teaching. He begins each session with students by asking what they did last time so everyone is up to speed on how their previous work will inform their current work. He also solicits formative feedback from his students by asking, "What should I stop doing, what should I start doing, and what should I continue doing (or do more of)?" Brent wants prompt feedback from his students, and he knows that his students want prompt feedback from him on their work.

Brent's enthusiasm for teaching is accompanied by his enthusiasm for engaging with the campus community. "Chris Blankenship is incredible," he says, commenting on what he's learned about program assessment. He has served on the General Education Committee, the Faculty Senate, SLTC working groups, search committees, and program advisory committees. Currently, he serves on one of the Vision Matrix committees.

Student success is critically important to Brent. His program has one of the highest completion rates in the SLTC. Even so, he says "We need to find out what's going on with students who don't finish SLTC and SLCC programs." Faculty and academic administrators need to know how to adapt curriculum, teaching styles, scheduling or other factors in our control to help students stay in our programs and complete their credentials.



Brent Smith in the Machining Lab



Lathes in the Machining Lab

—David Hubert

Honors Students Presented at Metro State University



Eighteen SLCC Honors students traveled to Denver to present their research at the Western Regional Honors Conference (WRHC), hosted by Metropolitan State University from April 3–5. Throughout the weekend, they shared their work through poster sessions and engaging presentations, connecting with fellow students and faculty from across the region.

Their projects spanned a wide range of timely and relevant topics, highlighting both academic excellence and a strong commitment to real-world issues. SLCC stood out as the largest student group in attendance and the students were recognized for their creativity, thoughtfulness, and dedication to community impact. We're incredibly proud of their passion and hard work!

We want to express our gratitude for the continued support of the Honors Program and the HIPs funding that helped make the WRHC experiences possible. We also want to thank 2024–25 Honors Faculty: Sahar Al-Shoubaki, Cindy Fierros, Lynn Kilpatrick, and Melissa Helquist Honors Faculty Mentors: David Hubert, Kati Lewis, Michael Young, Sahar Al-Shoubaki, and Honors Program Team: Kathy Tran-Peters, Jevahjire France, Natalie Cabrera, Pinky Fabian, Ana Carrillo Leon, Angele Traore, Camila Thompson, and Yana Yan.

—Kathy Tran-Peters

Honors Students Named Provost Grads of Excellence

Natalie Cabrera is an exceptional Honors student and Peer Mentor who is graduating with her associate's degree in Psychology and continuing her academic journey at the University of Utah. Her passion for the field is evident in her dedication to research, particularly in the areas of youth mentoring and imposter syndrome among college students. Natalie has presented her work at the Western Regional Honors Conference, first in Long Beach and most recently in Denver. In addition to her academic achievements, Natalie is a talented writer. Her poem, "Yes, I am an American," was published in this year's issue of FOLIO, SLCC's Literary and Art Magazine. She also served as the 2024–25 Phi Theta Kappa Chapter President and was recently honored with the 2025 Provost's Graduates of Excellence Award in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.



Tawananyasha (Tawana) Dzenga is an international student from Zimbabwe, pursuing a double major in Computer Science and Business. A dedicated scholar and emerging global leader, he is an active member of both the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa.

Tawana has demonstrated a strong commitment to service and civic engagement, having led two service-learning trips through the Thayne Center's Alternative Breaks program. He currently serves on the Utah Global Diplomacy Youth Advisory Council, where he helps amplify youth voices in international dialogue. In recognition of his academic excellence and leadership, Tawana was named a New Century Pathway Scholar and received the prestigious award at the 2024 AACC Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. At the 2025 commencement, he is also being honored as a Provost's Graduate of Excellence for the Gail Miller School of Business.

