

# ST. CHARLES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – APRIL 2021



## St. Charles Community College Ranks Among the Top Online Associates in Psychology Degree Programs

St. Charles Community College has earned a top ranking for Best Online Associates in Psychology Degree Programs by *Intelligent.com*. The comprehensive research guide is based on an assessment of 1,280 accredited colleges and universities.

“SCC is a great place to explore the science of psychology,” said Mitch Harden, psychology assistant professor and department chair. “We offer a wide variety of topics for those interested

in child development, psychological disorders, pharmacology and neuroscience.”

Each program is evaluated based on curriculum quality, graduation rate, reputation and post-graduate employment. According to the *Intelligent.com* website, “we only included schools that have regional accreditation. This guarantees a high standard of quality in the education provided, and that the credits and degree you earn will be transferable to most four-year colleges. Our top picks for

the best degrees in psychology are a good value and well-respected.”

The need for psychological services in mental health facilities, hospitals and schools is increasing. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts 26,100 new jobs in this field by 2028.

“Psychology is a great associate degree to pursue,” said Harden. “It can easily become a minor after transfer, and it shows potential employers that you understand how to work with people.”

## Professor Engages Local High School Math Students Through Competition

To say SCC Professor Joe Howe loves math is a bit of an understatement. Over the years, he's taught it all – from pre-algebra to statistics to calculus.

"I've enjoyed learning and communicating mathematics ever since I can remember," Howe said. "I was very fortunate to have an excellent math teacher in high school."

She instilled a work ethic in Howe that still exists today.

"We had homework almost every night, but I learned so much," he said. "Sometimes it was tough, but on the other side, it was phenomenal."

His passion for math extends into his classroom every day.

"A successful instructor is constantly thinking as a student would," he explained, "and as best as they can, seeing through a student's eyes. Where and why will a student understand or have trouble understanding?"

Howe believes math plays a critical role in life. He admits it is a challenge, and it can take a lot of time to understand the subject. He knows it's worth the effort.

"Math ultimately facilitates problem solving,"

he said. "From managing their own finances and saving money to investing, math is everywhere."

Howe's dedication to students goes beyond SCC. For more than 20 years, he's helped host a high school math tournament at the College in partnership with *MathLeague.org*.

"As technology becomes even more important in the world, anything we can do to help students begin to think of STEM majors as realistic and attainable is positive," said Howe, "It's crucial to reach out to K-12 students because they are our future at SCC."

Due to the pandemic, the event was canceled in 2021.

"This event has been a great way for students to showcase their mathematical abilities and hopefully qualify for the state competition," he explained.

"We certainly hope we can bring it back next year."

"The tournament is extremely well-organized, is a nearly full-day event, and involves coordinating around a hundred or more students and 20-25 faculty volunteers," said Mara Vorachek-Warren, dean of business, science, education, math and computer science.



To his peers and colleagues, Howe is a shining example of what an educator should be.

"Joe has likely taught thousands of community members over the years he's been at SCC! He consistently demonstrates his passion for his students ensuring his students feel confident in his classes," said Vorachek-Warren. "He has high rates of student success, and his students love his classes and often will take multiple courses with him."

In 2017, Howe was named an Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award winner. The program annually recognizes more than 100 educators in the St. Louis metropolitan area – from kindergarten teachers to college professors – who are examples of excellence in their field.

"Joe is a consummate professional in every way. He is consistently looking for ways to help other faculty in their teaching. He is a kind, considerate colleague," added Vorachek-Warren.

"Through mathematics we help students learn how to learn," Howe stated. "As they do, they hopefully see and understand the world a little better."

## Spring Sports Are Back in Action at SCC

Spring is in the air, and sports are back in action at SCC. Last year, the SCC Track and Field Team's season was canceled due to the pandemic. They are making up for time lost, as the men's and women's team are ranked #5 in the nation by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association. Additionally, two athletes, Ryan Pendergast and Elisabeth Dunn, were named national athletes of the week by the organization.

"Ryan and Elisabeth are competing at a high level," said Tim Brix, athletic director. "They recently competed against NCAA Division I schools in the McKendree Bearcat Classic and finished in the top 10 in their events. They are very talented athletes."

The SCC Baseball Team currently sits in second place in the region. Several players are having successful seasons, including Chyran Cruse. He leads the team in RBIs and has 22 stolen bases. It's quite the feat considering he has yet to be thrown out on a steal. On the mound, Bryce Mayer is off to a great start. He has a 4-1 record with an ERA of 1.59. He also leads the team in strike outs thrown at 47.

The SCC Softball Team is holding steady at fourth place in the region, but there are some promising players giving the team momentum. With the most at bats on the team, Maggie Dooley has a stellar .396 batting average and 24 stolen bases. Emma Becker is slugging hard this season with a team-leading eight homeruns.



On the mound, Lauren Montgomery has seven wins this season with an ERA of 3.41.

For the first time, the Men's Soccer Team was ranked in the preseason by the NJCAA (#14). Since that time, the team has a pair of wins and losses. Claudio Tipote leads the team with four goals. In the net, Palblo Costa leads the team in save. Meanwhile, the Women's Soccer team sits at 0-3, but there are still a lot of games left to play.

# SCC Students, Program Honored by Phi Theta Kappa Organization

St. Charles Community College is proud to announce its Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) chapter, Alpha Xi Chi, has been named a 2021 REACH Chapter. The recognition is part of PTK's REACH Rewards program, which celebrates and rewards Phi Theta Kappa chapters excelling in membership development.

Additionally, Abigail James and Kelvin Otieno have received Phi Theta Kappa All-Missouri Team rankings this year!

Students from each of Missouri's 25 Phi Theta Kappa chapters apply to be on the All-Missouri Academic Team. Less than 50 students

are selected each year. Each student will receive a cash scholarship and a medallion from the Missouri Community College Association.

Students were honored for their achievements virtually this year. The PTK virtual event was held on April 21.

Phi Theta Kappa is the international honor society of two-year colleges. Members of the All-Missouri Academic Team are selected based on the extent to which they meet the definition of the word "scholar," which Phi Theta Kappa defines as "one who excels in the classroom, has the intellectual curiosity to pursue an academic

career and cultural enrichment outside the traditional classroom, shows evidence of substantial development of talents in academics and technical education and has demonstrated an ability to share this development with others."

For more information visit [stchas.edu/ptk](http://stchas.edu/ptk).



PHI THETA KAPPA  
HONOR SOCIETY



## Spring Week of Service Called a Success

Each year, St. Charles Community College students, faculty and staff volunteer their time to help the community. Day of Service exemplifies SCC's commitment to serving the local area by focusing on student success and lifelong learning.

Just like the Fall 2020 Semester, Day of Service was transformed into Week of Service to expand opportunities to volunteer.

"We were really happy with the results of our first Week of Service last semester," said Bryonie Carter, service-learning and civic engagement program chair, "With the pandemic still affecting our daily lives, we decided to continue in the same direction for the spring semester. It's important we continue keeping our commitments to our community and social justice."

SCC's Week of Service consisted of many remote and virtual project opportunities – like creating craft kits for children for the Great Circle organization. The agency provides a unique spectrum of behavioral health services to children and families.

"My three-year old and two-year old had the opportunity to shop for the supplies and fill the bags with me," said SCC student Nicole Roberts. "It was such a great opportunity to explain to my kids what we were doing and why. It was so fun to watch them both helping. I also felt I learned such a great deal about Great Circle and how these kits would benefit children within the facility."

Additionally, a handful of low-contact activities were available for volunteers.

SCC students Anna Mertens (left) and Sara VanAmburgh (right) volunteered somewhere very familiar this year. Growing up, the cousins attended summer camps at the Boys and Girls Club in St. Peters. This was the first time they had been back to the facility since middle school.

"A lot of things have changed since I was a kid," admitted VanAmburgh, "but some things are still the same. It felt really great to come back and volunteer my time."

The pair helped organize the gym storage room and prepare an outdoor plot for a new playground during a volunteer shift.

## Faculty/Staff Update

English Assistant Professor

**Joe Baumann** recently won the Andrews College Illumination Prose Prize for his story “*There Is Love Under This Mountain*.” The story will appear in the next issue of the college’s journal, *Spire Light*.



**Dr. Vi Rajagopalan**, psychology department professor, has been appointed to the Higher Learning Commission’s Institutional Actions Council (IAC). She will join at least 40 other members representing academia and the public to conduct reviews and take actions on the majority of accreditation recommendations. Dr. Rajagopalan will also present at the April 29 “Assessment Matters” virtual conference.

**Stacey Thater**, physics associate professor, was recently awarded the “Thanks Badge” by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri. It is the highest volunteer award a person can receive from the organization. It honors an individual whose ongoing commitment, leadership and service had an exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals and priorities of the Council or the entire Girl Scout Organization.

Biology Professor **Dr. Monica Hall-Woods’** Introduction to Animal Science students have been active with service learning this semester, volunteering at the St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center and TREE House of Greater St. Louis. SCC students are the first volunteers to be accepted at TREE House in nearly a year because of the pandemic.



## SCC Foundation “Be Transformed” Gala & Auction Raises \$47,000

The SCC Foundation hosted its first virtual gala on Saturday, April 10. The “Be Transformed” Gala & Auction raised nearly \$47,000 for student scholarships and academic enhancements. The virtual program was anchored by a video featuring emcee Mike Elam and featured powerful student and donor stories. More than 100 viewers watched the event via YouTube and Facebook, and nearly 100 participants bid on silent auction items. Thank you to everyone who helped support this event and St. Charles Community College!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Tuesday Tips (Test Anxiety)

Noon-1 p.m.  
Monday, April 27  
Virtual

### Culinary Therapy: Easy Meals to Cook Your Way to Better Mental Health

6-7 p.m.  
Monday, April 28  
Virtual

### Center Stage Performance - Rabbit Hole

Saturday, May 1 –  
Sunday, May 2  
Virtual

### Serenity As Our Superpower With Goli Gabbay

12:45-1:45 p.m.  
Monday, May 3 &  
Tuesday, May 4 Virtual

### SCC A+ Orientation Nights

6-7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, May 4  
Virtual

### Guided Coloring Party Hosted by Natalie Keller Pariano

12:45-1:45 p.m.  
Wednesday, May 5  
& Thursday, May 6  
Virtual

### SCC Music Ensembles Performances

Monday, May 10  
Virtual

### SCC A+ Orientation Nights

6-7:30 p.m.  
Thursday, May 12  
Virtual

### Young People’s Theatre Performance - Tuck Everlasting

Friday, May 21  
- Sunday, May 23  
Virtual