



# HARTNELL COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

January 2024, Issue 1



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As we enter 2024, we would like to reflect on the significant achievements of 2023 at Hartnell College.

As a team, we introduced Swim Digital and partnered with Achieving the Dream, discussed and implemented process improvements

throughout, discussed the expansion of the Soledad Education Center, established MOUs to start an Early College High School in Gonzales, increased student enrollments and FTE, and more notably, witnessed growing enthusiasm and support for our students.

We are positive that this momentum will continue into the new year!

We also understand that change can bring challenges, but as Panthers, we know that we can overcome anything. You can rest

assured knowing that the administration of Hartnell College is fully dedicated to providing the necessary support and guidance for ongoing improvement, and ensure that we continue looking toward taking our college to new heights.

We are thrilled about the promising future that lies ahead in 2024, and with your help, we can make this year a truly remarkable one.

Welcome back and Happy New Year!

**Michael Gutierrez,**  
Superintendent/President

# UC Davis STEM Transfer Day

13 students attend UC Davis STEM Transfer Day

Hartnell's MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) program took 13 students to the UC Davis STEM Transfer Day Event. The students received information on transferring to UC Davis, and toured various STEM Research Labs during the event.



## Melissa Chin-Parker

Managing artistic director of The Western Stage



Melissa Chin-Parker believes telling and listening to stories represent the most human of acts. As the new managing artistic director for The Western Stage

— poised to celebrate its 50th year as a professional community-based theater on our campus — Chin-Parker will work hard to protect that legacy.

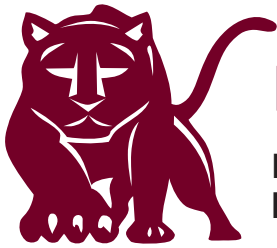
For many years Chin-Parker believed that her affinity and penchant for the creative/performing arts was a mere side pursuit. She spent time working as a recreational therapist, recreation programmer and even a K-8 teacher before her path led her to the stage. She joined TWS back in 1995 in a variety of roles before spending a few decades as artistic program director. Following 2½ years as interim artistic director (during the heart of the pandemic), she was given the full reins in June of this year.

“It was when I joined TWS that I found a place where all of my artistic talents and interests

were valued and put to full use,” said the Salinas native. “Theater is the great convening artform, and it was here that I got to try and learn the many different areas of theater performance and production.”

The field of theater arts is experiencing huge changes, and in a state that Chin-Parker calls vulnerable. “Many companies and programs have or are in danger of closing, and there are recurring obstacles being experienced nationwide by big and small companies alike,” she said. “I am grateful to have been able to re-open the program after the long Covid shutdown and to be able to say, ‘we’re still here.’”





# Employee Highlight

First generation college graduate Samuel Garcia Valdez makes his mark at South County Education Centers



Growing up in King City, Samuel Garcia Valdez never gave college a second thought. After all, no one in his family (originally from Zacatecas, Mexico) had ever reached that level of education, and Samuel kept busy working various jobs just to make ends meet.

Today, Samuel stands tall as a first-generation college graduate, employed as a Program Assistant at Hartnell's South County Education Centers in both Soledad and King City. His role? To help and support our centers with enrollment and retention, and conduct outreach within those communities to connect with students and make sure they are aware of what Hartnell offers.

For Samuel, the program is a revelation, something he wishes he had access to as an aspiring student at Hartnell.

"I wasn't the most studious person, and I didn't even think of college after high school," he said. "I worked really odd jobs that ultimately led me to enroll here at Hartnell. I took classes in the evenings, but before the expansion of our new Education Centers, classes were taken pretty much anywhere I could find them."

He eventually landed on Computer Science as his major, and graduated from both Hartnell and CSU Monterey Bay. While earning his Bachelor's, he worked part time on weekends at Hartnell, teaching students how to code in a program called CoderDojo.

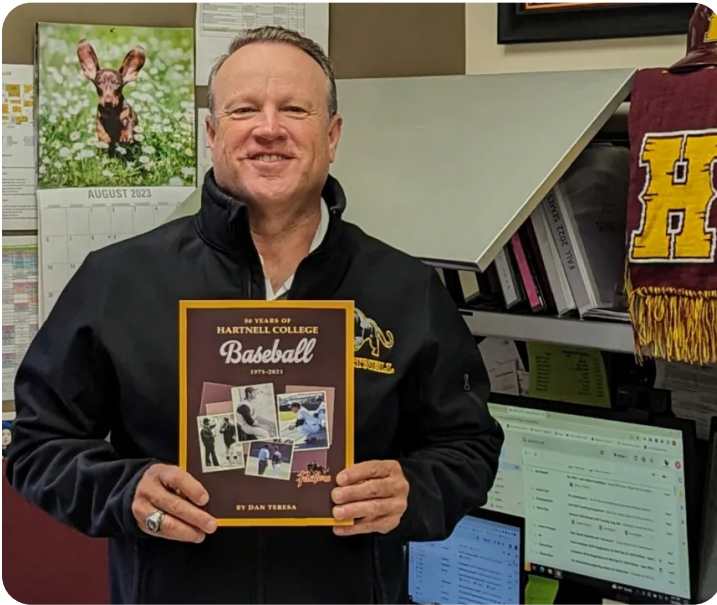
"This allowed me to grow out of my shell and I began developing passion in working with students and teaching," Samuel said. "I liked the program so much that after I graduated I worked part time running the same program that gave me the opportunity to refine my skills."

Samuel also ran a makerspace that allowed him to create workshops for students to make things such as 3D-printed keychains to create their own shirts on vinyl machines.

"I liked working with these machines so much that I now have a 3D printer and a cricket here at King City and hope to roll out some fun workshops for our students in the area," he said.

[Click here to continue reading](#)

# Athletic Director Dan Teresa publishes book celebrating 50 Years of Hartnell Baseball



In Dan's words, "This project was more than a pastime; it was a journey through the heart of our college's sports heritage, and I'm excited to share this story with everyone."

Celebrate with us the dedication and passion of Danny Teresa for Hartnell College's baseball history. His work not only honors the past but also inspires our current and future athletes.

For more details on this amazing story and insights into the book, [click here](#).

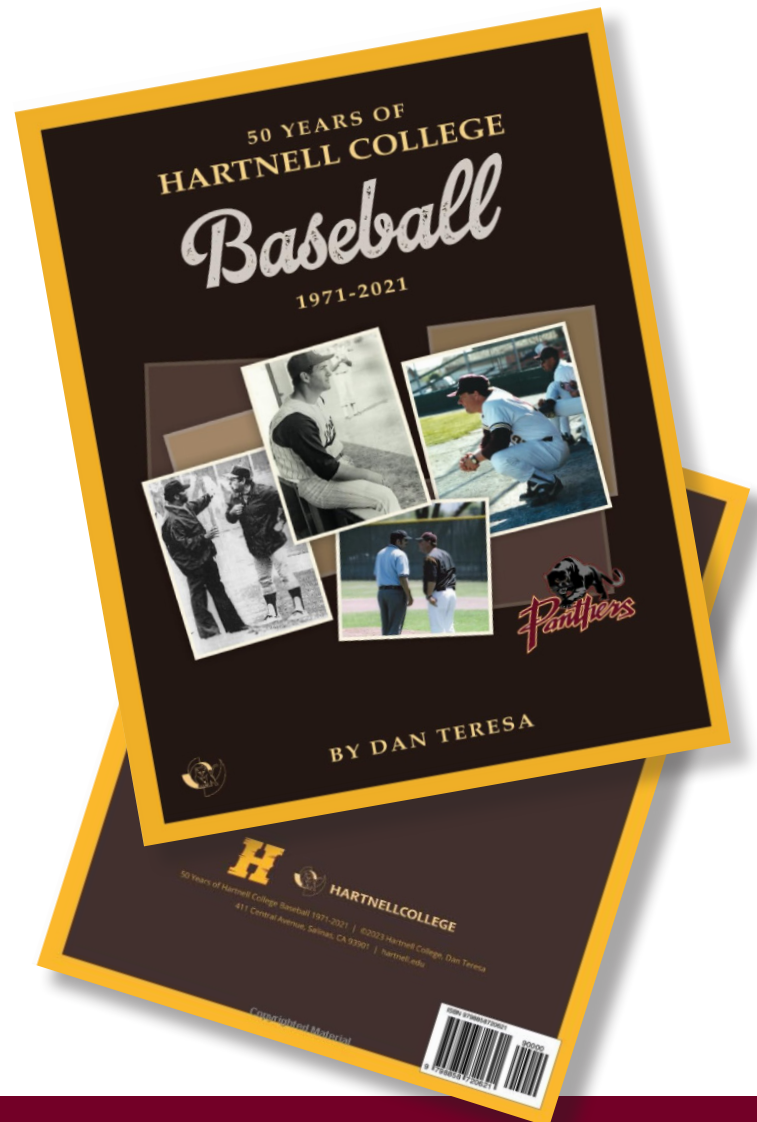
*Story Credit: John Devine, Monterey Herald*

Our very own Athletic Director, Danny Teresa, was recently featured in the Monterey Herald for his remarkable work on Hartnell College baseball history.

Headline: "College Sports: Teresa Publishes Book '50 Years of Hartnell Baseball'"

Danny Teresa, a dedicated member of the Hartnell College community and an alumnus himself, took on an inspiring project during the challenging times of COVID-19. With sports activities paused, he dove into the history of our beloved baseball team, compiling decades of stats, stories, and memories.

His journey through the archives not only rekindled cherished memories but led to the creation of a comprehensive book titled "50 Years of Hartnell College Baseball." This book is a tribute to the rich legacy of Hartnell baseball, covering the eras from his father, Tony Teresa, a former 49ers and Raiders running back and a celebrated coach, to his own tenure as a coach.



# Early College High School in Gonzales



During the second annual College and Career Fair at the Gonzales High School (GHS) campus, Gonzales Unified School District (GUSD) officials presented Hartnell College with an award recognizing Hartnell's commitment and support to students. GUSD and Hartnell are working to create an Early College High School (ECHS) at GHS.

Early College High Schools (ECHS) are unique partnerships between public secondary schools and local community colleges or universities like CSUs or UCs.

Additionally, ECHSs offer students the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit in just four years or less. ECHS operates as a small, independent institution that seamlessly integrates high school and college education into a comprehensive program.

One of the key benefits of ECHS is that it provides greater access to college-level courses for at-risk students, those from low-income backgrounds, and students of color. By participating in ECHS, students have the chance to earn college credits and a higher likelihood of staying in school and pursuing post-secondary education. Additionally, hardworking students are rewarded with the opportunity to accelerate their academic progress at minimal cost.

Hartnell College is committed to continuing the valuable work in South County, aiming to provide equitable opportunities for our communities. We eagerly anticipate the future and the positive impact it will bring.



# P.A.W.S. for faculty/ student sunsets this Spring!



P.A.W.S Self Serve

Get ready for a more streamlined and efficient semester at Hartnell College. Starting in Spring 2024, we're saying goodbye to P.A.W.S. for Faculty/Students in My Hartnell and hello to the new and improved P.A.W.S. Self Serve system.

This exciting change means that add authorization, drops, census, and final grades will now be handled through the P.A.W.S. Self Serve system. No more juggling multiple systems - everything you need will be in one convenient place.

We're thrilled to provide you with a seamless and efficient system so you can focus on what really matters: our students. With P.A.W.S. Self Serve, all academic data will be easily accessible, making processes smoother than ever before.

## Key Features of the New System:

- User-friendly interface
- Less restriction on drop windows
- Auto save when submitting final grades

To ensure a smooth transition, we have prepared a [video](#) and [user guide](#), which will be available on the Faculty Resources website. You can refer to these resources at any time for assistance.

## Teacher Pathway Program

### TPP student featured in Teach for the Bay Conference

Hartnell's Teacher Pathway Program's staff facilitated an online workshop for the Teach for the Bay 2023 conference in collaboration with Cabrillo College and MPC. TPP Cohort 8 participant Daniel Larr-Martinez represented Hartnell and shared insightful information on the consistent support TPP has given so far on his academic journey. Daniel is a returning student who plans to become an elementary teacher to help empower and engage future generations. He will graduate from Hartnell in 2025 and hopes to continue his education at CSU Monterey Bay.



## STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

# A Gavel for Uzo Ebo

## Aspirations to Become a Future Supreme Court Justice

Uzo Ebo, 25, felt on top of the world in elementary, middle, and most of high school. She was used to having the top scores in her class and thought she could do anything. But that changed just before enrolling at Hartnell College. She said she felt pressure keeping her from achieving her academic goals.

“I was struggling all of a sudden; I was drowning in a sea of doubt,” she said. “But that’s when I found Hartnell College, and the support system here helped me get back on track through the EOPS program and counseling.”

Uzo’s mom is from Kenya, and she completed her university studies there. She applied for a scholarship to complete a master’s degree in Monterey County, which was granted, giving her and her two children (Uzo has a twin brother, Uche Ebo) the opportunity for a better life in the United States.

“My mom is my inspiration,” said Uzo. “She earned a Master’s in International Studies. Thanks to her, I have always had a passion for academics.”

She is majoring in Law, Public Policy, and Society and will transfer to a university to pursue a law degree. Uzo was inspired to practice law after witnessing the lengthy process of becoming a U.S. citizen. She wants to help others and create policies to expedite the process.

At age 11, Uzo earned the John Hopkins Scholarship for Academic Achievement. This was the type of attention she was used to. But she said that circumstances



in life threw curveballs her way, and that’s when she felt lost

“I applied to Hartnell College, and that’s when I found all the support I needed,” she said. “Thank you, Hartnell, for reigniting my passion for learning!”

The future looks bright for Uzo. She is hoping to attend Monterey College of Law next fall. In addition, she is looking forward to marrying her fiancée Casey, whom she took to Africa so he could learn about her family there. Casey met her grandma and asked for her permission to ask Uzo to marry him.

“It was important for me to show him a simpler way of life, which can be cool too,” she said.

One of the Hartnell professors who has positively impacted Uzo’s life is Dr. Jason Hough in Communication Studies. “He believed in my abilities and showed me the right path towards success,” she said.

“I am Uzo Ebo, and one day I will be Supreme Court Justice Ebo,” she said with the utmost confidence.

As she looks to the future to graduate, study law, and get married, Uzo enjoys life to the fullest. She plays the guitar and the violin and loves cooking, hiking, and spending time with her three cats.

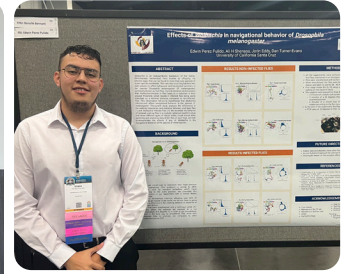
[Read this story and more at hartnellfoundation.org/](https://hartnellfoundation.org/)

*Content Credit: Hartnell College Foundation*

# STEM

## STEM celebrates national diversity at conference

Hartnell's STEM faculty, staff and students attended the SACNAS Conference in Portland, the largest multidisciplinary and multicultural STEM diversity event in the country. Nine MESA students were on hand at the event in late October, with three of them presenting research posters. Hartnell STEM faculty and staff also held a session on the Micro-internship Program at Hartnell.



## Cal Fire

### CAL FIRE brings heavy equipment, expertise to Alisal campus

CAL FIRE's San Benito-Monterey Unit visited the Auto-Heavy Duty Diesel students at Hartnell's Alisal campus. The students received valuable recruitment information from Heavy Fire Equipment Operators, Fire Captains and Chiefs. Two engines, a dozer transport and CAL FIRE vehicles were displayed for the students to ask questions and get an idea of the day-to-day operations as a mechanic in the fire service. This was a great opportunity for interaction and learning!



# HARTNELL COLLEGE STUDENT SUCCESS CONFERENCE 2024

**Keynote Speaker:** Dr. Frank Harris III

**Advancing Equity to Achieve Student Success:**  
Implications for 2024 and Beyond

**Thursday, January 18**

All Faculty  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Friday, January 19** All-campus

Faculty - 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Staff - 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

[View the agenda, times and locations here!](#)



# FFA New Member Field Day

Field Day celebrates Future Farmers of America

Hartnell's CTE Department hosted its first-ever FFA New Member Field Day at the Alisal campus. This was an effort to support our local FFA Chapters in their pursuit of leadership development, personal growth, and career success.

CTE hosted 47 students from Salinas, Everett Alvarez, Rancho San Juan, Gonzales and Hollister high schools.

Future Farmers of America is the largest secondary Career Technical Student Organization for Secondary Education students in the nation, focusing on agricultural education. Part of the FFA is career development where students participate and compete in career development events. The competition events occur at Field Days.

Hartnell's New Member Field Day targeted mostly high school freshmen in agriculture, but was open to any new students interested in ag.

The event gave students a sample of some of the Career Development Events offered in the FFA: Ag Mechanics, Ag Welding, Agronomy, Farm Power, Soil and Land Evaluation, Vegetable Crop Judging, and Best Informed Greenhand (test on the procedures of the FFA and Parliamentary Procedure).

The students participated in a sample round of each event. Scores were tabulated, and some schools and students won awards. Rancho San Juan FFA placed first overall, Everett Alvarez second, and Hollister third.



## *Have something important to share?*

The President's Report highlights accomplishment, engagement, progress, and success for and within the Hartnell College community. Please send information and photos to [vagonzalez@hartnell.edu](mailto:vagonzalez@hartnell.edu).