



College Report – May 8, 2024

Patty Erjavec, PhD, *President*

Transform the student experience

Students earn SkillsUSA honors – PCC’s three-person welding fabrication team – Ryan Kent, Jake Mayes and Terrence Washington Jr. – won first place at the SkillsUSA Colorado State Leadership and Skills Conference and will take part in the SkillsUSA national conference in Atlanta.

Concurrent enrollment student Garrett Boerhave won second place in the individual high school category for welding.

This was the first year PCC had a team in the media communication category and two students placed in the advertising design competition: Sarah Iskra (second place) and Heather Raven (third).

Students earn awards at Rover Challenge – Student teams from PCC’s Southwest and Pueblo campuses participated in the Colorado Space Grant Consortium (COSGC) Rover Challenge at Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve on April 13. Both teams from the Southwest and one team from Pueblo were honored at the final ceremony for their autonomous rover designs.

Team Marvin the Martian (PCC Southwest) – Matthew Troyer and Jonathan Nez Jr. – won Outstanding Demonstration of Advanced Autonomy. **Team Sandy Britches (PCC Southwest concurrent enrollment students)** – Carter Tanner, Ben Carpenter, Leo Morey and Graham Messinger – were named Exemplary Team New to Robotics. **Team Rover^3 (Pueblo)** – Luciano Varos, Preston Terrell-Hefty and Jacob Padilla – won Outstanding Demonstration of Navigation/Locomotion.



Transform our own workforce experience

[New PCC president named](#) – Dr. Chato Hazelbaker, current president of Northland Pioneer College in Arizona, was named the next PCC president by Chancellor Joe Garcia. His first day on the job will be July 1. President Patty Erjavec will stay on to help with the transition before beginning her previously announced retirement.



Automotive chair receives state award – James Cordova, chair of PCC’s Automotive Service Technology program, was named SkillsUSA Colorado’s faculty of the year for his efforts to build and promote PCC’s program and his work promoting career and technical education. Cordova was instrumental in bringing the SkillsUSA Colorado State Leadership and Skills Conference to Pueblo in 2023 and the event returned to the city in 2024, hosting many of its competitions on the PCC campus.



Spring semester department presentations – The college hosted numerous presentations during the spring semester to help employees learn more about PCC, its processes and how to accomplish various tasks. Topics included the newly created staff council, D2L, FERPA, financial aid/FAFSA, student advising, budgeting and marketing.

Department chair featured on podcast – Shawna Tracy, the department chair of PCC’s respiratory therapy programs, recently appeared on a [podcast](#) for the American Association for Respiratory Care. She discussed her experience and collaboration with Health Occupations Students of America. In February, 1,700 high school students from throughout Colorado attended a HOSA conference in Denver. Tracy participated as PCC’s representative to promote the program and its career opportunities and serve as a judge in the respiratory therapy competition.



Create education without barriers through partnerships

[PCC Southwest collaboration receives grant](#) – A \$1.3 million Opportunity Now Colorado grant will help Axis Health Systems and PCC Southwest create Healthcare Education Access Launchpad Southwest, a work-based learning program to address the shortage of workers in the healthcare industry and expand career opportunities for students in rural areas. Axis will use the grant funds to build a health science learning lab in Durango, which will be operated by PCC Southwest.

PCC hosts SkillsUSA Colorado – For the second consecutive year, PCC was proud to be a host site for the SkillsUSA Colorado State Leadership and Skills Conference. More than 750 students from throughout the state came to Pueblo for the event April 9-11.

Raise value standards through excellence & accessibility

Employees and students honored – PCC's [2023 employees of the year](#) and [a group of outstanding students](#) were honored at the CCCS Commitment to Excellence and Student Excellence award ceremonies in April. President Erjavec was on hand to help recognize their accomplishments.

James Cordova, Lorna Jackson, Aaron Lucero and Maurie Lucero were PCC's employees of the year.

Derrick Downs and Dantzelle Yazzie were recognized as Rising Stars. The Phi Theta Kappa All-Colorado Academic Team honorees were Lillian Byrne, Sebastian Rivera and Richelle Stephens. Members of PCC's team of first-year mentors were recognized as Inclusive Excellence Champions for their work helping the Title V OPTICA grant close equity gaps for first-year students.

