



Trinidad State College Report of Activities August 2023

Rhonda M. Epper, Ph.D., President

Transform the student experience.

Faculty member and Second Chance Pell Lead, LiAnn Richardson, reports the powerful and meaningful successes with Colorado Department of Corrections. Richardson reports, “Trinidad State College participated in seven graduation ceremonies, with over 50 students graduating from different correctional facilities throughout July and August. One of those ceremonies took place at Colorado State Penitentiary. CSP was a very special graduation because they were one of the very first facilities to come on board with Trinidad State College under the Second Chance Pell program. These graduates have been with us from the beginning, earning their degree three, two, and even one class at a time. This is because unlike other facilities, there are no CTE programs offered at CSP.

Two of the students gave graduation speeches that were impactful and memorable. One student started crying during his speech when he made the comment that this was the first time, he had ever heard the National Anthem sang (My husband joined me to sing the National Anthem 🥰). CSP is also the facility where we have our first two Second Chance Pell graduates that are serving life sentences. CSP did an amazing job of hosting Trinidad State College and repeatedly stated they were so pleased with the outcome of the ceremony since they had never done anything like this prior. TSC and CSP look forward to making this an annual event.”



Welcome Week BBQ was fun on the Trinidad Campus last week.

TSC Welcome Back Events. First week of welcome back events kept students busy outside of the class time. Events and activities included welcome back BBQs at both campuses; sponsored movie event; tail-gating games; s'mores at the student center; and cheering on the lady Trojan volleyball team at the SoCo Tourney. At Trinidad Campus Sodexo provided a BBQ dinner that was attended by 220 students along with faculty and staff. Club sponsors were at sign-up tables sharing exciting and fun club information with students. Scrumpy Moo's (from Monte Vista) provided the BBQ lunch at the Valley Campus that was attended by 120 students, faculty and staff.



Students, staff, and faculty enjoyed a Welcome Week Lunch on the Valley Campus.

TSC Orientations. Between June and August, three in-person orientation sessions were offered at each campus. Session topics covered student login for email and portal; how to's of D2L; financial aid overview including payment plan set-ups, how to's of bill pay; and student resources both on-campus and off campus. All students and their guests were provided a continental breakfast and lunch. Fall 2023 attendance rate was 79% with 184 students attending out of 233 registrations. This was a 20% increase in attendance rate compared to Fall 2022 orientation attendance.



Community Connections. In June, Trinidad State participated in community summer festivals. These were fun days meeting community members and promoting all that Trinidad State has to offer. Booth visitors at the Summer Fest on the Rio in Alamosa and at Santa Fe Trail Days in Trinidad enjoyed learning about the expanded program, certificate, degree, and transfer opportunities through Trinidad State. Both young and old visitors had photo ops with Titus and at both locations there were games to be played and free giveaways.



Trinidad State Cosmetology department hosted back to school free haircuts for area K-12 students. 60 students from area K-12 districts received haircuts. The department also gave out 50 backpacks with school supplies to students as well. This was a collaborative effort as cosmetology department organized, student services members and marketing spread the word, and students gave of their time and talent. Thanks, Cosmo!

Artist Lecture Series: Trinidad State College presented Cody Kuehl as the August visiting artist lecturer. Kuehl is a Colorado born New Western Artist currently residing in northern Colorado for the last 15 years. Cody's work seeks to tell one image stories of the west which is a genre of art that often glorifies a fundamentally flawed American character study. His work is found at Kuehl Fine Art in Trinidad, Gallery 1505 on South Pearl Stret in Denver and Valkarie Gallery in Lakewood. Kuehl is the board president at the A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art in Trinidad, on which Dr. Epper serves.



Trinidad State College Volleyball Team loved team play this weekend at the Volleyball SOCO Classic at Scott Gym. Trojan Volleyball defeated Clarendon (3-1) and Yavapai (3-0) on Friday and Frank Phillips (3-0) on Saturday, while they were bested by Garden City in a 1-3 loss.

Great job, TSC Volleyball!



TSC Trojan Citizenship on Display!

Members of the **Trinidad State College Cross Country - Track & Field Team** scoured the Alamosa area, picking up trash.

Thanks Team!



Transform our own workforce experience.

Micah Velasquez, Business and Computer Information Systems Faculty, is engaged this academic year with multiple initiatives supporting our business and CIS students. He is Trinidad State's UCCS Ethics Initiative Champion and will be talking with multiple colleges/universities across Colorado and introducing a whole new professional industry partnership to the Ethics Initiative that introduces Financial Crimes Prevention to the ethics and student community, and create many new career opportunities for students. He has created our first business internship for a student with the City of Trinidad, and a number of work-study positions to develop students' business experience. A student Business Club and a new Outdoor Recreation Club are ramping up this year too with Velasquez' and housing director, Omar Cano's leadership.



It was a beautiful day at the SLV Ski-Hi Stampede Parade in Monte Vista. What a fun day! Thank you to Juliana Chaparro, Amaya Atencio, Yvette Atencio, Jim Kynor, Pat Martinez, and Dr. Epper for making it all happen.

Trinidad State's Continuing Education Department completed another successful session of summer Gunsmithing and Heritage School courses. Courses included machine shop, knifemaking, benchmetal, tig welding and many others. Hat making continues to be a wildly popular class even attracting its first international student who came from Australia. Three students completed the Gunsmithing Technician certificate including the first female student (Carol W. from Truth or Consequences, NM) to complete the certificate. Many students, particularly those taking machining classes, indicated they were attending summer courses for professional development either for their own business or for their employer including some government contractors and law enforcement personnel.



Nicole Shannon is the new Director of Adult Education Services for Trinidad State College. She has worked in the education field for over fourteen years with the majority of that time spent as a jr. high school classroom teacher. Nicole was born and raised in Utah and she and her husband moved to southern Colorado to be closer to her in-laws. During her free time, she likes to create art and explore back roads with her husband, Tommy, and two dogs: Maggie and Henry. The program remains strong through the transition of directors.

Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships.

Trinidad Chronicle News, June 29, 2023 excerpt.

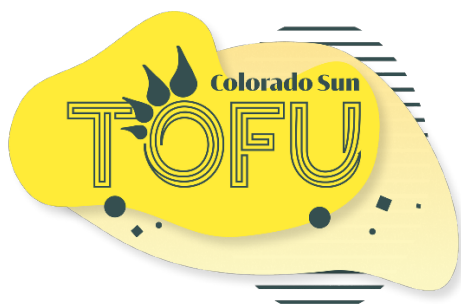
Emergent Campus - Trinidad

Trinidad State College and Trinidad School District No. 1 are hoping to create an eco-system of high-demand jobs on its campuses that can keep Trinidad graduates within the city, following in the footsteps of a Fremont County initiative called Emergent Campus.

“The long and short of it is, this is about our kids,” TSC President Dr. Rhonda Epper said. “This is about building a Trinidad where our kids have opportunities to thrive, to be educated and to have pathways into career fields that lead to a sustainable living wage. We want our kids to stay in Trinidad. We want them to be able to be educated in a field in which they don’t have to leave town in order to pursue viable career opportunities, or go to the big city to find work.”

<https://www.trinidadstate.edu/emergentcampus/index.html>

Trinidad State College President Dr. Rhonda Epper pitches an idea to bring new business to the community to members of the Trinidad community.



Rural Jump Start: A first for Trinidad State, the City of Trinidad, and Las Animas County took place with the approval of the Rural Jump Start application of Colorado Sun Tofu in Trinidad. Trinidad State sponsored the application and will be working with Colorado Sun Tofu to create apprenticeship opportunities and classroom presentations for Trinidad State students. Colorado Sun Tofu is part of a family, women, and veteran-owned small business group. They are focused on workforce development and community.

Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development, and operational excellence.

Trinidad State welcomes a new Advisory Council Member. Former Alamosa mayor and longtime businesswoman Kathy (Rogers) Woods currently serves as economic development director for the City of Alamosa. Woods has served on multiple area boards including the Alamosa County Chamber of Commerce, the Upper Rio Grande Development Council, the Trinidad State College Foundation Membership, and the Adams State University Foundation Board. Woods is a member of the El Pomar San Luis Valley Regional Council.

Woods previously served on Alamosa City Council and as mayor for a combined total of 12 years. She served as president and CEO of Rio Grande Savings and Loan for three years. Prior to that position, she was vice president and director of development, marketing, foundation, customer service and operations for San Luis Valley Health for 14 years. Other simultaneous experience includes six years as a victims’ advocate for the Alamosa sheriff’s office.

These varied positions demonstrate Woods commitment to community, to health care, economic development, education, and working together for the better of all. She will be a valuable member of the TSC Advisory Council and will fill the position vacated by Alamosa City Manager, Heather Brooks.



Dr. Epper was pleased to catch up recently with artist and **TSC alumni, Paul Milosevich**, in Santa Fe. Paul grew up in Trinidad, studied with A.R. Mitchell at Trinidad State, continued his career teaching art at Odessa College, then Texas Tech, before concentrating on his art full time. As Texas Tech celebrated their 100th Anniversary, Milosevich was honored in their publication “100 Years, 100 Voices.” Trinidad State President’s Office hosted a Milosevich art show “The Fisher’s Peak Series” in 2019 and Mr. Milosevich recently donated an original painting from that show entitled “1910 Harley” to the college. <https://www.milosevichart.com/>

