Those we serve ...
Imagine if you could control and contribute positively to what every person who came to the College felt before they ever entered the classroom or office. As a facilities professional, I remain keenly aware of our primary directive: Keep the lights on and A/C working, plumbing flowing, and cost of doing business under control – These, to me, are a given. But let’s take that directive to a more refined level. It’s not only the lights and A/C that create comfortable facility environments that motivate the faculty, students, and staff to spend a portion of their lives at San Jacinto College; it’s about aesthetics.

Building aesthetics: it’s that feel good tone and setting you get when walking into a place you could call home. The applicable definition; “noun - a philosophical theory as to what is beautiful.” In facilities, it translates to the effect of tasteful, orderly, and artistically pleasing landscapes, furniture, and buildings for those who experience them.

We expend extreme amounts of time and energy in the areas of student learning initiatives, employee organizational effectiveness, and institutional efficiency. I would argue that the energy spent fostering the aesthetic sense ranks right alongside the proverbial good breakfast, good night’s sleep, or academic preparation to the overall cause of delivering educational improvement for our students and community, it’s all about how you present yourself to the world – dressing for success.

Is this thought process a little melodramatic? I don’t think so. In addition to the immediate sense of well-being gained when walking onto an attractively maintained, well-designed campus, a long-term sense of pride is built. It’s the sense of pride that encourages students and employees both eager to profess their affiliation to the College. The eagerness to invite constituents, neighbors, and colleagues to their campus, the place they call home. And over time, it’s the pride that infiltrates the entire community that brings greater levels of success to the entire College mission.

So the next time you leave your car and are walking in to your classroom or office, take note of the trees, flowers, and nuances that make our facilities great. Realize that through this accepted norm, facilities services endeavors to provide that pleasant aesthetic and tone for each and every student, faculty, and staff member every day, because you are the ones we serve at San Jacinto College.

Stop and smell the roses

Bryan Jones
Associate Vice Chancellor Facilities and Construction
Knowing your right to safety

W e’ve all heard of OSHA around the office, but what is it? Ask around to any co-worker or within your social circles and your first (and almost immediate) response will be the generic “it has something to do with safety right ... yeah?”

ANSWER: The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) develops and enforces government standards that business and other non-governmental organizations are required to follow in order to prevent employees from getting sick or injured while on the job. It also serves as the watchdog for worker safety and discrimination at jobsites across the US.

HISTORY

OSHA was set up to stem the tide of disease, injury and death affecting workers in the workplace and let them know their rights under the law. As early as January of 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson called on the US Congress to enact a job safety and health program, saying that it was unacceptable for a modern nation like the U.S. to not have tougher regulations aimed at reducing the rate of worker deaths and injuries on the job. Johnson failed to garner support for creating such a program in ’68 but was picked up and passed with bi-partisan support by his successor, President Richard Nixon in 1970.

Congress enacted the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 which created OSHA. Since 1970, workplace deaths have been cut by more than 60 percent and occupational injuries and illness have declined 40 percent. In addition OSHA has conducted more than 39,000 inspections and issued more than 85,000 citations for safety violations.

POWER AND PROGRAMS

OSHA is part of the US Department of Labor; it employs inspectors who look into allegations of health and safety violations by employers levying fines on violators of safe OSHA standards and practices. Most industries and employment sectors fall under its regulations, with the exception of miners, transportation workers, Federal agencies that have their own worker safety requirements, employees of state and local governments, and the self-employed.

Wait, what did you say?

Yes, although OSHA completes worksite inspections for federal agencies, section 19 of the OSH Act makes federal agency heads responsible for providing safe and helpful working conditions for their employees and must comply with standards consistent with private sector employees.

OSHA also provides various programs to inform and protect employees and employers such as:

- Whistleblower program
- Blood borne Pathogens
- Fall Protection
- General Safety and Health Programs
- Hazard Communication Standard
- Lockout/Tagout
- Powered Industrial Trucks
- Respiratory Protection
- Tuberculosis

Although San Jacinto College is a public entity and not beholden directly to OSHA regulations, the College does fall under the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) which has adopted policies that are in line with OSHA regulations and guidelines, and also takes steps to go above and beyond OSHA’s guidelines.

“Safety still means everything to us,” said Ginger Lambert SJCD Safety director. “Even in the bid selection for general contractors, the College weighs heaviest on a contractor's past safety record (with OSHA) in the field during their selection process.”

The duties of OSHA are not to just enforce standards, but to educate the workforce and keep everyone in safe working conditions. For more information, please visit www.osha.gov.
With an education system servicing more than 30,000 students, staff, and faculty combined each semester, the San Jacinto College District (SJCD) Facilities and Construction department is a vast source of service professionals wired and geared to the needs of our college community. Whether it’s the need of electricians, mechanics, plumbers, maintenance, or access control, Facilities and Construction charges four individuals as its principal gate keepers and the key to coordinating efforts of the many skill sets in our large tool shed. I sat down with operations managers John Maslonka (Central), Jay Morris (District), Josh Johnson (North), and Ron Andell (South) to learn more about what they do from day to day.

These are our OPSMEN...

Dedicated to the needs of the many.
What is an operations manager?

**JOHN:** We liaison, we work between maintenance and all of the end users — whether be faculty members, staff members, administrative dean, or any of the deans of department chairs — if there is a problem they — can’t get solved by any other means they come to us. We also take on various projects assigned to us by the District office.

**RON:** The day-to-day operations of the campus, yes. The deans will come to us and say ‘Hey, I’ve put in a work order for this with the carpenters and it’s been about a month . . .’ or ‘We just put this work order in a day ago, but we REALLY need it, can you expedite this?’ At which point, we’ll give a call to Jay to see if he can prioritize it.

**JAY:** And, a lot of the time the holdup is due to room scheduling, finding out when a room is available for us to work in is also part of it. We also oversee the landscaping contractors and janitorial contract with SSC.

**JOSH:** But mostly what we oversee is the RFS (Request for Facilities Services) that come from the campus. We meet with the customer, look at the project and start to gather proposals, going from there and once we receive funding approval, we watch and manage the project from start to finish and make sure it meets the customers’ expectations.

**RON:** Or, many times, we go to the campus and say ‘hey, we need to pressure wash the exterior of this building and shut it down, when can we do that?’

**MORRIS:** We don’t wait for someone to tell us when something needs to be done; we actively look for safety concerns and inspect the buildings.

When it comes to John (Central), Josh (North), and Ron (South) you are all beholden to your respective campus. But Jay, you’re district wide, what is different for you in your duties to the College?

**JAY:** The main difference for me in reference to the others is manpower. We are a limited pool of people and trades that are pulled from campus to campus, if there is an issue, I’ll prioritize where that manpower needs to go. I also deal with a lot of the contracts the College has and where the final dollar line goes. The fire alarm systems district wide fall under me too, I make sure they are all up to code and in proper working order for the safety of our faculty, students, and staff.

I keep hearing a lot about the “Bat phone” and I’m half anticipating (John) Maslonka to jump out in a Batman costume yelling with a burly voice, what is the Bat phone?

**JAY:** What is it? (Chuckling) It’s a little flip-phone.

You know what I mean.

**JOSH:** It’s an after-hours contact number that the police dispatch can reach us in case of an emergency, like if there is a water leak, roof leak, door that’s locked that shouldn’t be; really, anything maintenance related that is an emergency.

**JOHN:** MY calls usually begin around 10 p.m. but I’ve gotten a few at 4 a.m. about leaks in buildings. It’s funny you say we work our own campuses respectively but that just isn’t true. If we’re on call we are equally responsible for anything in the district, it’s not just for Jay. For instance, here in the South Science there was a leak in the fire suppression system that had a check valve or something fail with a leak running out of the front of the building. To get more information I had to call Ron, and Ron being where he was would say “I’m right here I’ll handle it,” we have to work hand-and-hand with each other to cover the College, communication with each other about what’s happening on all campuses is key to keeping everyone informed.

With the Bat phone, what is the most outlandish call you’ve received?

**RON:** I received a call from central dispatch around 2 a.m. one morning saying that there was 10-feet of water in one of the rooms on North campus. So I hung up thinking ‘Ok, wait a minute’ and I called them back and I said, ‘Did y’all say 10-feet of water?’ She said, ‘yes!’ I asked, ‘where again, which building?’ She told me, so I hung up again and thought ‘Let me wait a minute and make sure I’m fully awake and understanding this.’ I waited about 15 minutes and waited for them to call me back; they didn’t, so I called them back again and I said ‘Ten-feet of water, in a room? (Which means up to the ceiling)’ and she goes, ‘Yes!’ I said, ‘Can you verify that?’ She calls the guy on the radio and I hear him say, ‘Yes! There’s 10-feet of water in the room.’ I heard it, so I hung up and I called Don (Netherton) and I said, ‘I got a good one for you, they’re telling me there’s 10-feet of water up there.’ Don goes, ‘Are you sure?’ I told him I verified it three times and he said, ‘I’m going to get dressed and see this one for myself if that’s the case.’ We get up there and it was a puddle of water 10-feet wide, not 10-feet high.

**JAY:** There are humorous ones, but you just never know when you’ll get that one bad call though.

What has been the worst call?

**JAY:** The worst call I ever responded to had to be the North campus ILC when it was just two years old. There was blue chilled water all over the place running out of the hallway and out of the front door when I pulled up. The calls froze and it was Thanksgiving Holidays, and when it thawed it just started blowing blue water everywhere. It flooded the whole left end of the building and out of the front door; it was about a foot away from spilling into the computer pit.

**What are your final thoughts?**

**RON:** We’re problem solvers. You have to have thick skin and a personable nature to work in maintenance because you deal with a lot of varying personalities to resolve them, we are customer service.

**JAY:** It’s like Disneyland every day, there is always a new adventure or ride and I wouldn’t have it any other way.

**JOHN:** There’s a comradery between everyone in this department and that’s what makes it so great. It was a lot like that back when I was in the Air Force. There are so many people here in the maintenance departments who have similar interest or values that make them really easy to get along with and we also get a lot of fun projects we get to see done from start to finish.

**JOSH:** Most people are here in maintenance, us included, because they really enjoy where they work what they do providing quality service to others.
What can maintenance do for you?

DON NETHERTON
Facilities@sjcd.edu

D o something for me: Google “What does maintenance do?” You’ll find several different answers fitting varied venues and positions. Now, let’s narrow that to a college theme you’ll notice when arriving on a campus; the grounds are well kept, the hallways are clean and shining, the lights are on and the temperature of the building is just right for the season. So, what does maintenance do? Maintenance is responsible for all of the above and more.

San Jacinto College Maintenance Department provides wide-ranging services to all of the District’s buildings and grounds which now total more than 2,600,000 square feet and approximately 500 acres. Sixty-seven maintenance employees utilize their expertise to provide a clean, safe, comfortable learning/teaching environment. Often while the college is on holiday leave the maintenance staff duties continue by performing preventative maintenance on air conditioning, heating, electrical and plumbing equipment. These work days are designed to help limit mechanical interruptions to the normal class schedule.

Yet, with all the preventative measures, mechanical equipment will sometimes fail and maintenance’s duty is to react as swiftly as possible to resolve issues. This sometimes means coming out late at night in the middle of a storm to restore power to a campus, to repair an underground water line break, or to rescue a campus vehicle stranded on the roadside. Most often the call is for routine matters such as resolving temperature concerns, lock/key issues, or help in tracking down an odor. Removing critters such as raccoons, bats, snakes, or more recently a momma spider and her babies is also a maintenance service.

Over the years the department has actively kept pace with technology. Air conditioning and heating equipment is operated from a computer housed on Central Campus. The operator can control approximately 85 percent of all areas on the three campuses from this location. Building access control is also located on Central but can unlock doors in many District buildings and classrooms by computer software. A sophisticated computer program controls each campus fuel site by tracking usage by pump operator, vehicle and department. All work orders are recorded by computer software tracking costs and man hours as well as reconciling an ever changing inventory. All of these technologies aid the maintenance department in resolving approximately 20,000 work orders per year.

Again, what does maintenance do? The answer changes daily to fill the needs of the College administrators, staff, faculty, and students. What can maintenance do for you today?

Don Netherton is the maintenance and facilities director for San Jacinto College District.

OUT AND ABOUT

With SJCD Facilities & Construction

JULY 2013
EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Robin Denis Hammock
Electrician

Resides in Friendswood
Been with SJCD: 11 years
Hobbies: “I enjoy fishing and watching football.”
Interesting facts about me: “I sing and do carpentry projects on the side.”
Daily motivation: “Self-motivated to get the job done.”
What I like the most about SJCD: “I enjoy the close proximity to home, I grew up in Pasadena. I also enjoy being around the faculty and students at the College.”
if you’ve had the opportunity to visit South campus recently, you may notice a stunning change to the skyline while driving along campus. Standing as a megalithic testament to the College’s commitment and dedication to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) is Building One, the South Science/Allied Health facility. At 155,000 square feet it is the fourth, largest, final, and most anticipated of the Science/Allied Health buildings designed by IBI Bay Architects to open its doors this August to faculty and students alike.

“The energy here on campus is undeniable,” said Alexander Okwonna, Dean of Natural and Health Science - South campus. “Everybody is pumped up about this building, I talked to a faculty member on the first day of class and she said she couldn’t sleep. This is a faculty member who’s been here for more than 16 years saying to me ‘I could not sleep last night I was so excited about today!’”

“The students have really taken notice too,” said Mary Wisgirda, Natural Science department chair - South campus. “They’re coming in saying ‘this looks like a real four-year university’ comparing us to places like Texas A&M and they’re really excited by that!”

Very seldom does faculty get to have a hands-on input to what kind of facilities they need to offer their students the most realistic working environment.

“Okwonna continued, “In building this building we were able to say, ‘this is what we need to help our students succeed and progress to the next level.’ Every bit of technology, lab design, room design just everything has been a ‘tell us what you want and we will build it’ and it is and more!”

South Science/Allied Health opens for fall courses and future opportunities.

Jacques Bourgeois
Facilities@sjcd.edu

STANDING OUT

South Science has a very unique feature that most other four-year universities do not; its own observatory. A feature so rare, it’s only the sixth observatory in the state of Texas slated to be for community use.

With functionality similar its predecessors on Central and North campus, South Science/Allied Health stands three stories high with similar layouts for student traffic and accommodate each program’s needs.

The building is also garnering attention from other four-year institutions and Johnson Space Center for future opportunities benefiting students and the community at large.

“We are actually now looking into the possibility of offering an engineering program where students can do their first two years associates degree here at San Jac,” said Okwonna. “We would partner with a four-year institution to offer the other two years here on our campus and students leave with a bachelors degree from let’s say Texas Tech or a nursing degree from the University of Houston - Clear Lake, but they do all four years right here; it’s a really exciting notion to share our new building with other academics.”