

TAX TIME

Del Mar College students help prepare taxes free for local residents.

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INTRAMURALS

Skate party helps kick off season, which includes Ultimate Frisbee.

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Del Mar hosts national art show

Artist Barbara Simcoe serves as judge for annual drawing, sculpture show

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The Art and Drama Department kicked off its 57th annual National Drawing and Small Sculpture Show on Feb. 17, with a lecture given the previous day.

This year's guest juror for the show, Barbara Simcoe, an artist and professor at the University of Nebraska-Omaha, gave insight into her life and vision for art using multiple mediums such as oil paintings and graphite. A lot of her paintings are based on photos that she has taken on her travels around the world.

The department picked Simcoe to be this year's juror after she won an award last year at the National Drawing and Small Sculpture Show. The juror's job is to send out a nationwide call for artists and select the featured artwork sent by the artists. She also decided the award winners when she visited the Cain Art Gallery for the opening reception.

"My goal was to pick out the best work in whatever genre, intentionality and content that I could glean from the work," Simcoe said. "What I'm always looking for is excellence, work that's thought through and has a conceptual foundation that emerges to the viewer."

Simcoe also answered the question about how she overcomes creative blocks.

"I went through a dry phase where I wasn't feeling engaged, but I still felt like I



Barbara Simcoe, guest juror for the National Drawing and Small Sculpture Show, presents her artwork at a lecture in Richardson Performance Hall on Feb. 16.

had to continue my practice," she said. "In a sense I was making myself work because I'm an artist and I feel compelled to make art. I didn't choose to be an artist; art sort of chose me."

The exhibit is free and open to the public. It will remain on display in the Joseph A. Cain Memorial Art Gallery through May 3. For more information, contact 361-698-1216 or art@delmar.edu.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Dr. Jewel (right) and other members of African Soul International lead students in a dance on Feb. 13 in the Harvin Center at Del Mar College's Heritage Campus.

African heritage on campus

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Del Mar College invited African Soul International to visit the Heritage Campus to display their talents and share their knowledge of traditional African dances for Black History Month.

African Soul International's mission is simple. "We present and preserve the best of African Culture through the dances, songs, rhythms, and stories of the African and African-American experience," according to the group's website.

This dance group has participated in and alongside performances of some of

the top names in the music industry, including Beyonce and Stevie Wonder. The group has also been involved with some major motion pictures as well, such as "Black Panther" and "Coming to America."

African Soul International was formed in 1998 by Dr. Jewel, formerly Sista Jewel, an artist who strived to make a difference not only within her community but also throughout the world. By educating, empowering, and bringing the music, and the traditional dances of Black history through classes and workshops for both corporate and educational settings.

Based in Los Angeles, California, the group offers a corporate wellness pro-

gram that has been used by companies such as NASA, Adidas and UCLA Healing Arts. Their corporate programming includes workshops, drum circles, corporate speaking engagements and other events that help corporations reach their goals and increase their productivity through an unique artistic teaching.

Del Mar College is offering a Black History Month Speaker Event on Feb. 27 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Harvin Center Retama Room. Speaker Alberto Rodriguez, associate professor of history and director of the Mexican American Studies Institute, will cover everything "From Slavery to Snoop."

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Regents approve tuition increase

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The Del Mar Board of Regents approved a tuition increase of \$2 per credit hour at its regular Feb. 14 meeting. The tuition increase will go into effect during the fall 2023 semester.

Administration staff presented proposals for a \$1, \$2 or \$3 per credit hour tuition increase to the board to aid in covering an increase in operating costs due to inflation as well as paying for past-due maintenance costs amounting to as much as \$150 million.

During the presentation, staff assured the board that the annual increase in financial aid grants provided to students would cover the increased tuition costs, but some members of the board voiced concerns over the effect the tuition rate increase would have on the 30% of students who do not receive financial aid.

Regent Laurie Turner was one of the members of the board to voice such concerns, as the 30% statistic includes students who go into debt to pay for college.

"That's the information I'd like to know," Turner said. "How many are actually getting loans; what is our average rate of loans?"

According to the presenting staff, 95% of graduating students will leave without debt, or with debt considered manageable based on their projected post-graduation earnings.

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Board of Regents appoints, swears in new member.
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Retired Air Force pilot speaks on her fight for flight

Custodio reflects on past and present challenges facing female pilots

LOLA PONCE | REPORTER
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She is the first female Latina pilot in the U.S. Air Force, instructor pilot at Laughlin AFB, and commercial airline pilot ranking captain.

Lt. Col. Olga E. Custodio shared her experience on Feb. 8, first in a class meeting with a small group of students and then a lecture at Del Mar Richardson Performance Hall.

Custodio has dedicated her retirement to doing lectures sharing her experience and encouraging the youth to follow their dream at all costs.

But her accomplishment didn't come easy. In a sea of men, in most of her pilot classes, she was challenged constantly.

"I was the only female in my class," Custodio said.

Erinn McComb, associate professor of History at Del Mar College, found Custodio's story inspiring. McComb requested to have Custodio's story told to Del Mar's students and after two years, was finally made possible.

"Stories do as Lt. Col. Olga Custodio do not make history books. You are not going to see it in your history books," McComb said while introducing Custodio at Richardson Performance Hall.

There was no female pilot to guide her. No one to lead the way or lift her spirits in her time of need.

"There was no one who's done this before," Custodio said in a class meeting at Del Mar.

Back when it was a male dominated workspace, before WWII, women had their place: in kitchens and nurseries.

Although Custodio managed to have two children and a husband, she continued to level up in her career.

"While cooking with my baby on one hip and dinner on the stove, I was still reading chapters in order to pass my tests," Custodio said.

Custodio agrees that the barriers have been broken and now women are becoming more aware of their abilities.

Times have changed. Or have they?

Even in 2023 only 5 percent of professional pilots in training are women, according to Custodio. Custodio faced many challenges, even not being able to find a female pilot uniform.

Women pilots still use men suits and get them altered.

When Custodio first got started in the military they handed her a pair of men's boots and a men's pilot uniform. She was

told there is an assigned tailor to get her pilot suit made to fit her. Despite this she was willing to make it work.

Custodio wanted the suit to fit her comfortably, the male tailor protested. Eventually they came to an agreement and finally she looked the part which she worked hard to get.

She went on to AFMPC, Airforce Military Personnel Center, where she became the first female Air Force pilot in the 1980s.

There were numerous moments when Custodio was reminded of her sex.

At 16 years old Custodio applied for an ROTC unit in Puerto Rico. When she went to a sign-up location, the commander pointed Custodio toward a sorority claiming, "That is where you need to join."

She was determined to be a cadet. She stood her ground and after some time the commander sent her a test to complete. Later the commander told Custodio that she had failed the test.

SEE PILOT ON PAGE 3



Custodio was the first female Latina air force pilot in U.S. History

PILOT FROM PAGE 1

Accepting the news, she moved on only later, when she was at higher rank, she saw her official grade for that test, and she had passed.

Custodio recalls another instance when she went into an Army recruiter's office to apply, she was denied due to her being a wife and mother.

"That's OK. I didn't want to join in the Army anyway," Custodio said.

Even in her retirement, a recent incident while checking the fuels on her personal T-210, a male professional pilot stated to her husband, "Oh, checkride!" pointing at Lt. Col. Olga Custodio.

Checkride is a term for 'practical test' used by the Federal Aviation Administration examination which one must undergo in the United States to receive an aircraft pilot's certification, or ratings for additional flight privileges.

This pilot assumed that her husband, Edwin Custodio, was her practice test examiner.

Mr. Custodio came to her defense replying, "Oh no. She is the retired female pilot from the air force AND a retired American Airlines captain."

The pilot stood dead in his tracks, speechless as Mr. Custodio continued, "No. No. You got this all wrong, no checkride here. I am the passenger, and she is the pilot in command," Custodio recalled with a smile.

During an in-class meeting at Del Mar, Custodio gave an account of a time in 1943 when male pilots used women to fly the B-29 as guinea pigs. This was due to their engines catching fire. Once the women were able to find a solution to the engines catching fire, the men took over the B-29 flights.

Though the male pilots took the credit to flying the B-29s, it was still the women who made it possible. This was the take-away Custodio emphasized.

As a retired captain of a commercial pilot, Custodio takes to heart the lesson pi-



Lt. Col. Olga Custodio talks about her experience as the first female Air Force pilot during a lecture at Richardson Performance Hall on Heritage Campus.

LOLA PONCE | FOGHORN NEWS

lots are taught. Despite the constant challenges from her male counterparts, "Aviate. Navigate and communicate. When you aviate, you have to take control. When you

navigate, you have to make sure you know where your at and where your going. When you communicate your always talking..." Given all the challenges and success that

came along being a female Latina pioneer for the younger generation and females taking roles in a male-dominated job skill, "I am where I need to be," Custodio said.

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Following the presentation, Regent David Loeb voiced support for the \$3 increase, while Regent Bill Kelly spoke in favor of the \$1 proposal. Regent Carl Crull made a motion for the board to consider the \$2 proposal.

The motion to increase the tuition rate by \$2 to \$73 per credit hour was approved in a split 4-3 vote. Crull, Kelly and regents Turner and Rudy Garza, Jr. voted for the motion. Loeb, Vice-chair Nicholas Adame, and board Chair Carol Scott voted against. Regent Libby Averyt was unable to attend the meeting, and newly sworn-in regent Anantha Babbili abstained.

The rate increase will cause an overall increase of \$30 in tuition costs for a student taking 15-credit hours per semester, while providing an estimated \$270,000 in additional revenue for the college.

The allocation of the new funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year will not be determined until the board's July regular meeting.

New DMC regent sworn in

Anantha Babbili a former administrator, professor at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi

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The Del Mar Board of Regents appointed and swore in Anantha Babbili to the vacant at-large seat on Feb. 14. He will serve in the position through 2024.

Since the resignation of Linda Villarreal, effective Jan. 1, the Del Mar College Board of Regents has received and reviewed several applications to fill her vacant At-large seat. Before the board's Feb. 14 regular meeting, the board interviewed three candidates for the seat during a special called meeting.

Of the three candidates, the board elected to appoint Babbili, a former ad-

ministrator and professor at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, to the position.

Babbili has a bachelor's degree in botany, zoology and chemistry, as well as a bachelor's degree in journalism, from the University of Osmania, in Hyderabad, India. He also has a master's degree in journalism from the University of Oklahoma, and a doctoral degree in mass communication from the University of Iowa.

He served as provost and vice president of academic affairs for 15 years TAMUCC and served as dean of the Middle Tennessee State University of Mass Communication for over five years.

He currently serves as president and CEO of the World Affairs Council of South Texas, an autonomous nonprofit with the

stated goal of promoting citizen interest in international affairs and building local interest in global issues.



Babbili was appointed to a vacant at-large position.

"After literally 42 years of higher education in this country, I've impacted on many students' lives, who are now global, they're everywhere, many countries and the United States, and Texas particularly. It gives me much gratification that I'll be able to impact, if I bring that exposure, experience to Del Mar College." Babbili said in his closing statement during the interview, referring to Del Mar College as "a jewel among community colleges."

He was sworn in immediately after his appointment and took part in the board's regular meeting directly following his appointment.

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