BIKE PATROLS ON CAMPUS

During the summer, two Police Officers were certified as bike patrol officers to roam the El Paso Community College Valle Verde and Transmountain campuses.

Along with ten other Law Enforcement Agency officers, Officer Jose Rodriguez and Officer Jazmin Amezcua, attended a 40-hour rigorous bike training course taught by the University of Texas at El Paso International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA) instructors.

The course teaches the soon to be bike patrol officers about Basic Nutrition, Physical Fitness, Maintenance and Repair, Cycling at Night, and Firearms. Each attending officer is required to pass all phases of the course in order to graduate. Since the training is Federal, the certification is recognized all around the United States.

IBMBA was established 21 years ago when the first bike patrol officers hit the streets of Seattle, Washington. Ever since, officers have been patrolling the streets, colleges in the United States and around the world in two wheels. It has been proven that bike units help cut crime down, as well as keep the officer in shape — reducing missed work and sick time. Bike units have also proven to help the Enforcement Departments on gas spending, since bikes only require physical work.

This is seen as a great way to reach out to the public, and make ourselves accessible without having a vehicle between us. So don’t be afraid to say hi to our two friendly bike patrol police officers.

Our Officer Rodriguez has been part of EPCC’s Police Department since June 2014. Before joining our family, he was employed with the Horizon Police Department as a Patrol Officer. There, he was able to acquire the knowledge of becoming a peace officer where he was able to serve and protect the citizens of Horizon, TX. He spent three years with the agency, before coming over to EPCC.

While at EPCC, Officer Rodriguez has not only become a certified bike officer, he’s also attended the El Paso Police Department Field Training school where he was certified as a Field Training Officer (FTO).

Upon completing his FTO certification, Officer Rodriguez was given the task to train and mentor Officer Amezcua, who was hired in May 2015.

Before becoming part of our family, she was also a Patrol Officer for the Horizon City Police Department for two years. Officer Amezcua is the first member of her family to be in Law Enforcement. She started her Law Enforcement career at a very young age of 22.

Now 25, she is very proud of herself to have two and a half years of Law Enforcement experience, and an Associates Degree under her belt. Officer Amezcua loves to inspire all females to become Police Officers. She is one of three female officers working for our agency.
All students face a number of obstacles when they try to enter the workforce; and military veterans are not the exception. On average student veterans don’t have a frame of reference as to the types of jobs that match the skills they developed in the military. They also tend to have difficulty describing their skills to employers.

Career Services Specialists use tools to meet the needs of student veterans. EPCC Career and Transfer Services kicked off its first successful Military Resources for Employment (MRE) Initiative with a Social Luncheon on September 2nd. The initiative was developed to assist military and veteran students navigate the world of work and its complexities. The following are some points EPCC Career and Transfer Services Department is doing to assist our military and veteran students:

• Become an expert and use key resources — Learn the military skills and terminology. Specialists use resources, such as the Occupational Network’s online military crosswalk, which allows users to search military occupations to determine knowledge, skills, abilities, and more, and give a clearer picture of a civilian equivalent occupation.

• Become a Green Zone – A Green Zone is an initiative to support student veterans by designating locations recognized as a “safe place”. It identifies faculty and staff at the college who are knowledgeable about issues faced by student veterans and the resources available to assist them. This is a way to be supportive and give back to those who have sacrificed for others. This helps faculty and staff provide supportive services necessary to ensure that veteran students are successful in their academic pursuits, adjust to the campus environment, and eventually transition to civilian employment.

• Hold one-on-one meetings—We meet with individuals and take discussions beyond the veteran’s occupation. Draw out the veteran’s level of responsibilities and accountability. Most jobs in the military have a civilian equivalent. Dig deep with the student veteran to identify skills that are valuable in the civilian work force, such as project management, problem solving, and process improvement skills. Once we identify these skills, we help students understand and be able to articulate their value to prospective employers.

• Accommodate the needs and account for the schedule of student veterans—Student veterans often are extremely busy. Many of them are active in the armed forces and some have additional part-time or sometimes full-time jobs. And most student veterans have significant family obligations. To accommodate these needs, we will offer online workshops and in-person workshops at the different campuses, and will deliver content through veteran-focused newsletters and webpages.

• Form a military/veteran advisory committee—We will form an advisory committee to include representatives from various departments on campus, such as student services, counseling, disability services, academic advising, and any student veterans clubs to share ideas, resources, and information; discuss concerns; and plan new initiatives. The work of the committee will also ease communication and referrals across staff and departments.

For more information about MRE Initiative and other Career and Transfer Services initiatives, please call us at 915-831-2636, or email us at careerservices@epcc.edu or visit us online at www.epcc.edu/careerservices.
I Paso Community College is excited to begin a new partnership with the Socorro Independent School District in the opening of a new Early College High School. Socorro Early College High School, is the 8th Early College High School in the El Paso Community, and the second Early College High School to open in the Socorro District. The unique aspect of this Early College High School is that it uses the "School within a School" model.

The "School within a School" model affords students the opportunity to attain an Associate of Arts degree, along with their High School Diploma. In addition, these students are able to participate in all sports and extracurricular activities that are offered at their High School.

The first Cohort registered 122 students. The Dual Credit/Early College High School Department Assistant Director, Ms. Leticia Guerra, coordinated with the administrator Mr. Andrew Halatyn, an Apply Texas evening (an online admission and scholarship application for all Texas institutions of higher education). This event took place at Socorro High School in the Summer of 2015. The event was well attended by students, parents, El Paso Community College, and Socorro District Partners.

On August 13, 2015 the New Cohort visited the El Paso Community College Valle Verde Campus, coordinated by the Dual Credit/Early College High School Office in conjunction with Recruitment, and Campus Life. The students received their EPCC Student ID Cards and took a tour around the campus. After the tour, the Early College High School brought food, which the El Paso Community College Office of Recruitment prepared at a well-deserved cook-out.

EPCC Dual Credit/Early College High School Department in collaboration with the Socorro Independent School District partners have successfully admitted all of the new Cohort to start their college journey at El Paso Community College, “The Best Place to Start!”

The Texas Pathways project will continue working with area school districts in the Texas Pathways project. This project mainly consists of data disaggregation as the team looks at state-wide data for the core content areas: Math, Science, Social Studies, and Science. The data is used to inform school district administrators and high school principals where students seem to struggle the most once they enter an institution of higher education.

Faculty from area high schools meet one evening a month to create interventions presentations to present to their high school principals in helping students transition to higher education.

The Texas Pathways project will continue working with area school district faculty to write interventions presentations and ensure they are presented at high schools during professional development days. All four content areas will be represented at each monthly meeting. An end of year symposium will be held where all educational professionals will be invited to attend and be educated on best practices on bridging the gap to college. If you are interested in participating in this project contact Cynthia Aguilar at cagui128@epcc.edu, 831-4701.
PICKING THE RIGHT COLLEGE

CAREER SERVICES IS HERE TO HELP.

icking the “perfect” four-year college, is one of the most important decisions a student will ever make, though, a significant part of that decision is visiting the campus.

By touring the decided college, the student can learn about admissions and transferring requirements, scholarships, financial aid, and important deadlines.

Sometimes, due to the student’s workload, or school, they might not be able to make a trip to the chosen university. However, El Paso Community College Career Services Department, brings universities every semester to help students explore different schools.

This Fall, Career Services will be hosting a Transfer Fair on October 29th. The fair will take place at EPCC’s Valle Verde Campus, Cafeteria Annex from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. The attendees can expect to visit with over 20 university representatives to obtain information on their academic programs, admissions, campus life, transfer guides, and scholarships, to make a smooth transition from EPCC to the selected four-year university.

Some of the universities that will be attending this fall semester are, Texas State University, Santa Fe University of Art and Design, New Mexico State University and more. This fair offers students the opportunity to have a one-on-one experience with different university representatives.

Since Transfer Services is a component of Career Services, we host several universities throughout the semester in our main office (Student Services Center at Valle Verde). This provides convenience to our students’ on campus.

For more information about university representatives at EPCC Campuses for the fall semester contact the Career Services Department at (915) 831-2636 or visit our website at www.epcc.edu/careerservices for updates on university schedules.

Here are some common questions you can ask a university representative at the Transfer Fair:

• How many of my college credits will be accepted when I transfer?
• Are there any transfer scholarships available, if so, what are the requirements?
• Once I am accepted, how soon can I register for classes?
• What are the admission requirements for transfer students?
• What is the deadline for transfer applications?

*Don’t be afraid to ask different questions that you think can help you transfer properly to the college of your choice.
very year, new students and seasoned scholars, should apply for Financial Aid online, or visit their closest El Paso Community College Financial Aid office.

The Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs Offices’ mission is to provide financial aid assistance options to help students meet their educational goals.

Our offices can provide you with information on scholarships, federal and state grants, college work study, federal student loans, and exemptions. We also offer veterans educational assistance programs such as, Post 9/11, Chapter 33, and the Texas Hazlewood Program, among others.

The office staff is always available to answer questions you might have regarding assistance in completing applications, such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), completion of financial aid files, and certifying VA program eligibility.

Financial Aid Offices are located at all five campuses, with a VA staff available at the Valle Verde and Transmountain Campus.

Our office hours are Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m.

In order to make the financial aid process as easy as possible here are a few time proven hints:

- Avoid standing in line. Always apply early. Our priority date is March 15th.
- Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) annually.
- Apply for institutional scholarships before April 1st.
- Read your EPCC email for reminders and notifications (all students have one).
- Visit our web site at www.epcc.edu/financialaid.
- Once you receive any form of financial assistance, be aware of the requirements that must be met to continue receiving it.
- Always check with the Financial Aid and VA Office if you plan to drop classes.

For any questions you can always reach us at 915-831-2561.

How is your department helping our students at El Paso Community College?

"New Student Orientation is a brand new office at the college which will provide orientation programs in the future for new incoming students to assist in their transition to EPCC. Currently, the New Student Orientation programs are being coordinated district-wide by the Counseling department.

Our goal is to establish an office which offers an engaging and informative orientation experience which will provide important information about support services, academics, and getting involved outside of the classroom. Orientation is meant to provide the basic tools for new students so that they may be able to succeed during their first semester and continue with their academic career."

What tips would you give students?

"Time Management is key! View your college career as a job, in order to be successful at your job, you need to put in hard work and dedication which means learning how to manage your time."

What are some fun facts you would like to share?

- Studies indicate that students who attend orientation have a higher success rate in their first year of college.
- The history of orientation dates back to the mid-1600’s when some of the first colleges were being established, with more formalized programming beginning in 1888 at Harvard and Boston College.
- New Student Orientation programs are offered at each EPCC campus.