SFA earns recognitions from Colleges of Distinction

Accolades recognize business, education, nursing, engineering, military support, career programs

For the third year in a row, SFA has been named a College of Distinction for supporting undergraduate experiences grounded in a philosophy of well-rounded, individualized engagement, with graduates entering the workforce ready to adapt in an ever-changing society.

Already honored in 2020 and 2021 for its high-impact approach to education, SFA has again been recognized for impactful business, education, nursing and engineering programs, as well as honors for military support, career development, and equity and inclusion.

The Colleges of Distinction selection process comprises a sequence of in-depth research and detailed interviews with the schools, accepting only those that adhere to the four distinctions: engaged students, great teaching, vibrant community and successful outcomes. These principles are all informed by the ways institutions enable students to have a fulfilling, individualized college experience both inside and outside the classroom.

"When we focus all of our attention on how schools stack up against one another, we lose track of what really matters: the students themselves," said Wes Creel, founder of Colleges of Distinction. "Every student has individual needs and their own environment in which they're most likely to thrive. We want to extend our praise to the schools that prioritize and cater to students' goals."

The equity and inclusion recognition is given to universities that provide noteworthy support to underserved students. SFA's recognition, according to the university's Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Michara DeLaney-Fields, was in part a result of the adoption of SFA's diversity and inclusion statement approved by the Board of Regents in 2021. She also credits the creation of the Diversity and Inclusion Certification Program offered to faculty, staff and students through the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

"The equity and inclusion recognition from Colleges of Distinction means that we are positively affecting relationships with the administration, faculty, staff and, most of all, the students," DeLaney-Fields said."Engagement and education are paramount. We are here to ensure everyone has a positive educational experience in an inclusive and welcoming environment. However, that cannot be accomplished without each stakeholder's commitment and the SFA community's support. When you add it all together, you can see that we are succeeding."

The career development recognition is given to institutions who have proven to meet the demands of the ever-changing job market while also preparing students to do the same. This is accomplished through ample career preparation resources, like résumé, cover letter and interview assistance, among others.

SFA's Center for Career and Professional Development has accomplished this and more by integrating services and a career development framework into the student experience.

"This recognition is an acknowledgement that, as a center, we continue to place the necessary emphasis on all phases of our students' career development," said Brent McLemore, CCPD director. "From their first days with us to their graduation and beyond, we are providing services that help them find both support and success on their professional journeys."

Since 2000, the Colleges of Distinction website and guidebook have honored schools throughout the U.S. for excellence in undergraduate-focused higher education. The schools in the Colleges of Distinction consortium distinguish themselves through a focus on the undergraduate experience. The website and guidebooks provide dynamic college profiles, customized tools and resources for students, parents and high school counselors.

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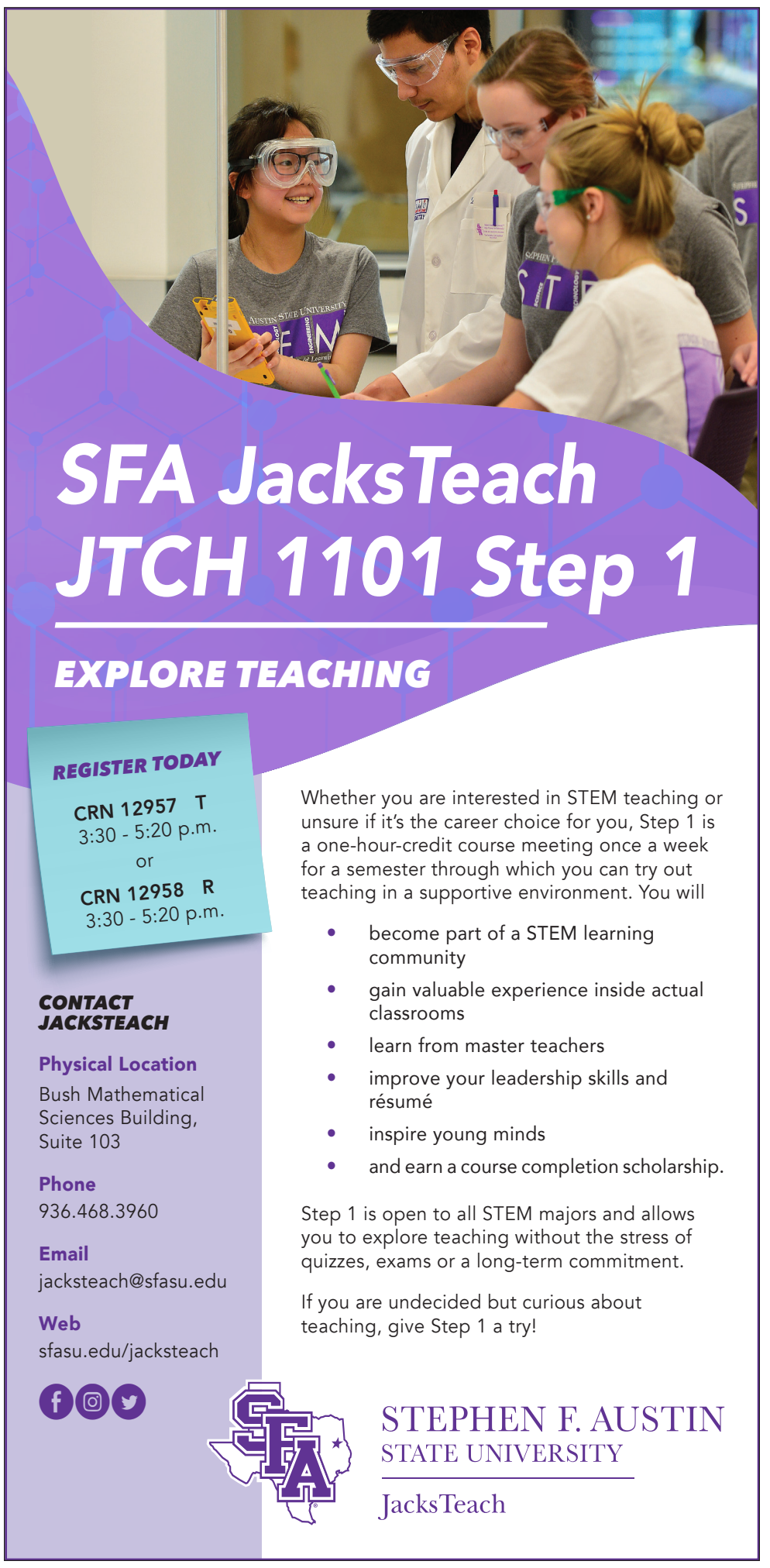
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