

ASHLAND. NEWS

Entre Amigos: Guanajuato and Ashland college analyze small businesses.



SOU President Rick Bailey (back row, center, in gray jacket) hosted a welcome reception for visiting University of Guanajuato faculty and students Sunday at the Hannon Library on the SOU campus. Amigo Club photo

May 1, 2023

Business students and professors from the University of Guanajuato are in town to collaborate with SOU students.

By Kernan Turner

Two professors and nine business administration students from the University of Guanajuato (UG) arrived in Ashland Saturday for a week of collaboration with Southern Oregon University students, analyzing and evaluating three small businesses in the Ashland area.

At the end of an intense week of research, interviews, and analysis, mixed teams of Southern Oregon University and UG students will present the businesses owners with suggestions for further development.

The dynamic student exchange program, known as Global Innovation Scholars, was developed last year by the universities' business schools. The program's director at SOU, business school instructor Dee Fretwell, led nine students to Guanajuato last month, aided by adviser Vincent Smith and business school instructor Jeremiah Carlton. They presented tailored guidelines for further development of three small Mexican businesses.

The Guanajuato faculty members who accompanied the students to Ashland this week are professors Martin Pantoja and Lari Arthur Viianto.

Pantoja has referred to the program as "a new stage and diversification of collaborative options" in the Amistad Program, an academic exchange begun 54 years ago by the two universities as part of Ashland-Guanajuato sister city relations.

"The project offers several benefits to both communities, institutions, students, and the development of the Amistad Program," Pantoja said, adding that the University of Guanajuato already has created a new international course and SOU has updated courses to include international content.

He said the program provides students the experience of working in different cultures while developing international business-solving skills.

SOU President Rick Bailey hosted a welcome reception on campus Sunday, attended by SOU faculty and administration, the SOU and UG students participating in this week's project, and invited guests, including members of the Ashland Amigo Club.

The Amigo Club will host a farewell gathering at the Grizzly Peak Winery, where the Guanajuato visitors will be serenaded by violinists Karen Lucia Lopez Villanueva and Joaquin

Torres Hernandez, alumni of the Global Innovation Scholars program who are Amigo Club scholarship recipients attending SOU this year as exchange students.

The invitation-only gathering at Grizzly Peak is at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, May 6. All Amigo Club members are welcome.

Rummage sale

The Ashland Amigo Club will offer a fundraising rummage sale on Saturday, June 3, at the Ashland Physical Therapy parking lot at 275 Lithia Way.

The club promises no junk, broken, or malfunctioning items.

The sale will offer a wide variety of usable articles, ranging from clothing and accessories to camping and sporting gear, tools, books, household and kitchen items, jewelry and working electronics.

The rummage sale will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Amigo Club's Entre Amigos (Between Friends) column about Ashland ties to its sister city Guanajuato, Mexico, appears periodically. Longtime AP reporter and bureau chief Kernan Turner is an Ashland resident and Amigo Club member.