

2025

PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENTS' GALLERY



ISSUE
04



ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT
St. Philip's College



St. Philip's College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston poses for a photograph with San Antonio Mayor Gina Ortiz Jones.



Pictured here with St. Philip's College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston is Vice President of the San Antonio (TX) Chapter of the Links Inc. Velma Kemp.

President's Message

For 127 years, St. Philip's College has carried a tradition of excellence that defines who we are and inspires who we strive to be. Our college's history is rich in academic achievement and meaningful acts that have shaped our campus culture.

One tradition that dates back to the 1940s is our tea gatherings, when our founding president, Saint Artemisia Bowden, would invite students to join her for tea and tutoring. These tea gatherings were opportunities for mentorship, lessons in etiquette and teaching the kind of poise that extends far beyond the

classroom. By the 1950s, tea events had blossomed into campus clubs, faculty celebrations and occasions that blended hospitality with learning for all members of the college.

This August, we honored that legacy through our biennial High Tea and Hats. Nearly 200 remarkable women from across San Antonio gathered under the theme "Walking in Saint Bowden's Footsteps", which is a tribute to Saint Artemisia Bowden's extraordinary 52 years of service to the college. Tradition is more than a remembrance of the past;

it is a living promise to carry forward the values, vision and spirit that built this college. As we prepared to welcome over 20,000 students this fall, we did so with gratitude for those who came before us and with determination to honor their work through our own.

To the St. Philip's College community, thank you for walking beside us, so our students can walk in their passion. Together, we ensure that the legacy of Saint Artemisia Bowden and the tradition of excellence at St. Philip's College will continue for generations to come.





SPC Celebrates Future Healthcare Heroes

This summer, St. Philip's College proudly celebrated the accomplishments of students entering vital healthcare fields.

On July 22, graduates of the Surgical Technology Program were honored for their readiness to support surgical teams and ensure patient safety in the operating room. The celebration continued on July 24 with the Respiratory Care Technology Pinning Ceremony, recognizing students prepared to provide compassionate care to patients with respiratory needs.

In August, 18 Associate Degree Nursing students recited the Hippocratic Oath, followed by 39 Vocational Nursing graduates marking their transition into professional nursing. Together, these ceremonies highlighted the dedication, skill, and heart of St. Philip's students—future healthcare heroes who will make a difference in hospitals, clinics, and communities across San Antonio and beyond.



SPC Announces Boom Lift Certification



Shown here from left: Charles Cardenas, Joseph Murillo, Daniela Medina-Johnson, Instructor: Joseph Robledo, Eliceo Matapi, Ernesto Malazarte, and Raphael Sanabria.

St. Philip's College is proud to announce the launch of a Boom Lift Certification program, offering students in skilled workforce trades an opportunity to enhance their credentials and workplace readiness through industry-recognized training.

The certification, which aligns with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, demonstrates a student's ability to safely operate Mobile Elevating Work Platforms

(MEWPs), such as boom lifts and scissor lifts.

The inaugural cohort began in the summer 2025 semester, with participants from the college's Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) program. Students from the Allied Construction Trades and Diesel Technology programs are also eligible to participate in the training, which is offered at no cost to students.

Before hands-on instruction begins, students complete a rigorous online training

provided by John L. Grove (JLG) Industries, Inc., a leading manufacturer of access equipment. The program is led by staff members Daniel Giddens and Joseph Robledo and includes practical experience using brand-new machinery. The college's equipment inventory includes the JLG 450AJ Articulating Boom Lift and the JLG ES1932 Scissor Lift.

"All of our programs have a safety component embedded into the curriculum that fits nicely with the JLG course content," said Dr. Joseph Kulhanek, Chair of the Allied Construction Trades department. "The students must complete online modules that prepare them to operate the equipment in a safe manner. Once this portion has been completed, they then become eligible to demonstrate their skills on the actual equipment. Having both certifications on their resume makes them valuable to future employers."

St. Philip's College continues to expand its workforce training options in response to industry needs, giving students the certifications and skills to succeed in today's competitive job market.

SPC Celebrates Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for SWC Welcome Hub

On Aug. 6, 2025, St. Philip's College celebrated the ribbon-cutting of a new Welcome Hub at its Southwest Campus, a strategic addition designed to enhance the experience for incoming and returning students. The ceremony brought together college leadership, faculty, staff and students for a meaningful event focused on the college's mission of student success.

Andres C. Arredondo, Dean for Student Success, Enrollment Management, who served as event host, opened the program by welcoming attendees and recognizing all who contributed to the project.

"Today, we celebrate the opening of the new Welcome Hub right here at our Southwest Campus," Dean Arredondo said. "This ceremony marks a milestone for the college that wouldn't be possible without the dedication and teamwork of so many individuals who share a passion for student success."

College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston delivered remarks highlighting the significance of the hub to the college's



broader goals. She reaffirmed the institution's long-standing commitment to workforce development and student achievement on the Southwest Campus, which has served the community since 1987.

"This center will serve as the starting point for students' journeys, providing access to admissions, financial aid, testing, advising, veterans' benefits and more, guiding students from enrollment all the way to graduation," Dr. Loston said.

The Southwest Campus hosts over 4,000 students across 13 programs and awarded

nearly 1,000 degrees and certificates last academic year.

Following Dr. Loston's remarks, she was joined by students and staff for an official ribbon-cutting. Guests, including Marcel Johnson, Senior Vice President of Talent & Technology Scouting & Identification at Port San Antonio, were invited to enjoy light refreshments, receive promotional items, and tour the new area, where student success staff were on hand to answer questions and provide additional information.

SPC Hosts Tiger Nation Family Day



On Aug. 16, 2025, St. Philip's College (SPC) welcomed new and returning students to the fall semester with Tiger Nation Family Day, the college's student convocation.

This event, held in the William Allen Hudgins Health and Wellness Center, introduced students and their families to campus with festivities that included a formal ceremony, campus tours, information sessions, a student organizations expo, a family-style dinner, and scholarship and prize giveaways.

Vice President for Student Success Wesley Wells opened the ceremony with greetings and encouraged students to "start with the end in mind" by picturing

themselves graduating. Student Government Association President Angelica Cordero and faculty representative Dr. Jen Osborne also addressed the audience, offering advice for a successful semester.

St. Philip's College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston, who led the leadership procession into the gym, reminded students that education is "a time of growth, discovery and transformation" and emphasized the support system available at SPC.

"As you embark on this journey, remember the path to success is not always a straight line," Dr. Loston said. "You may experience challenges, but each one is an

opportunity to learn and grow." Afternoon sessions included presentations on first-year experience, advocacy and accessibility services, career planning and small-group campus tours. The event wrapped up with an expo and dinner, giving students a chance to connect with campus clubs, organizations and academic departments.

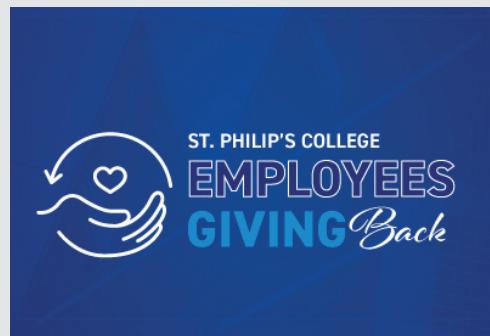
Tiger Nation Family Day remains a signature SPC tradition, dedicated to fostering community, sharing resources and celebrating the beginning of each student's academic journey.

SPC Carries Forward a Tradition of Giving

St. Philip's College (SPC) has kicked off its 2025 United Way Employee Giving Campaign, calling on faculty and staff to help raise funds for scholarships, programs and community services that support students and families across San Antonio.

The college has set a goal of reaching 45% employee participation during the campaign, which runs Oct. 1–31 as part of the districtwide Alamo GIVES BACK initiative. Last year, St. Philip's employees contributed \$106,344, more than any other college in the Alamo Colleges District.

St. Philip's College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston has now led the Alamo Colleges District as the top donor for ten consecutive years, underscoring what organizers described as a "lead by example" approach. The college's tradition of giving dates back to its founding president, Saint Artemisia Bowden, who



kept the doors of St. Philip's College open through tireless fundraising in the early 20th century.

"I grew up in a caring family, a giving family. I am richly blessed in so many ways, including financially. Because of that, I don't dare not give back. I don't dare not share what I've been blessed with," said Dr. Loston.

SPC Employee contributions can go toward United Way partner agencies or toward college-based scholarships, including the Artemisia Bowden Memorial Endowed

Scholarship, the Dr. Adena Williams Loston Endowed Scholarship, the Dr. Clarence W. Norris Sr. Endowed Scholarship, the SPC Alumni Association Scholarship and the SPC General Scholarship.

Donors also have the option of creating named scholarships. In the past two years, employees established 10 new funds through the campaign. The Dr. Adena Williams Loston Endowed Scholarship awarded \$28,600 to 26 students last year.

"I am truly honored to be selected. My career goals and personal aspirations are to become a social worker or a school counselor. This scholarship means so much to me because it is my very first scholarship, and my family is so proud," said Yulanda Johnson, a 2025 Dr. Adena Williams Loston Endowed Scholarship recipient.

SPC Celebrates Saint Artemisia Bowden's Feast Day



Shown here from the left: St. Philip's Episcopal Church Interim Rector Joyce Wilkerson, Father Kevin Fausch, Board of Trustee Vice-Chair Joe Alderete, Board of Trustee Chairman Dr. Clint Kingsbery, Board of Trustee Member Gloria Ray, Board Member Dr. Gene Sprague, St. Philip's College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston, Bowden's Niece Rose McGarity, Bowden's Great Niece Jennifer Walker, Bowden's Niece Margaret Coleman, Bowden's Great-Great Nephew Jeremiah Butler, Interim Vice President for Academic Success Dr. Kimberley Irving-Conaway, St. Philip's College Early College High Principal Ashley Barrientes and Student Government Association President Angela Cordero.

St. Philip's College (SPC) marked Saint Artemisia Bowden's Feast Day on Aug. 18, 2025, honoring the college's founding president with a campus event that included moments of historical reflection, family tributes and a "living museum" highlighting 10 key figures from the college's history.

The program featured remarks from St. Philip's College President Dr. Adena Williams Loston, Alamo Colleges District Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. Clint Kingsbery and Saint Artemisia's great-grandniece Jennifer Walker.

"Saint Artemisia Bowden changed the course of education in our city and set a foundation of excellence," Dr. Kingsbery said, noting that the Episcopal Church added Artemisia Bowden to its liturgical calendar in 2015 and that same year the Alamo Colleges District named her president emeritus in recognition of her decades of service.

Saint Artemisia Bowden arrived in San Antonio in 1902 to lead what began as a small school for the daughters and granddaughters of emancipated slaves. Under her leadership

across more than half a century, the school grew through financial hardship and social change.

"Saint Artemisia left St. Philip's College with a rich legacy that stands as a point of pride and also challenges us to strive for greatness," Dr. Loston said. "We have kept our focus on teaching marketable and leadership skills and giving our students the tools they need to achieve economic stability."

After the formal program concluded, attendees were invited to experience "Alive at the Library," an interactive historical exhibit. The living museum featured SPC employees portraying key figures who advanced St. Philip's mission under Saint Artemisia's leadership.

Saint Artemisia Bowden's legacy is deeply woven into the fabric of San Antonio, reflected in buildings named after her both throughout the city and on the campus of St. Philip's College, where a student-led restaurant also bears her name. Her contributions are further honored by numerous local institutions.



SPC Brings Stomp and Shake Cheer Style to San Antonio



St. Philip's College student cheerleaders are pictured in this 1973 photograph.



Shown here from the left is Assistant Cheer Coach Marquavious Vaughn and Head Cheer Coach Zenobia Tucker.



Shown here from the left: Emily Kierum, Tianna Jones Black, Taleah Faucett, Ashanti Webber, and Zoie Mills.



This 1954 yearbook photo captures student cheerleaders inside the college gymnasium.

Cheerleading has been part of St. Philip's College since the 1950s. Now the program is highlighting a newer addition to its sidelines: stomp and shake, a rhythmic, chant-driven style that arrived on campus in 2023 under the leadership of Cheer Coach Zenobia Tucker.

"I felt like this was the perfect opportunity to introduce HBCU culture to the only HBCU in San Antonio," Coach Zenobia said. "Just to give them a different vibe, a different feel when it comes to seeing cheerleaders, because we do see traditional cheerleading all over Texas."

The cheer team at St. Philip's College is an innovative spirit squad comprised of both high school and college students. The group has performed at San Antonio Spurs games, Fiesta events such as the college's CultureFest & Rib Cook-Off

and other campus celebrations. The Stomp and Shake cheer style emerged in the 1970s at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), in North Carolina and Virginia. The form blends elements of traditional cheer with stepping and dance, emphasizing synchronized stomps, sharp body shakes and powerful vocal chants.

Unlike many contemporary cheer programs that center on tumbling and high-risk stunts, stomp and shake focuses on precision, musicality and crowd connection. Performances are both visual and auditory, designed to drive energy in the stands while keeping attention on timing and voice.

With more than seven decades of cheer tradition, the style aligns with the college's history and identity while giving today's students a distinctive way to express school spirit.

SPC's Health Sciences Division Celebrates State and National Recognitions



The St. Philip's College's Health Sciences Division is celebrating a wave of state and national recognition for its students and faculty.

Elisa Medellin, a Health Information Technology (HIT) student, recently received the 2025 Texas Health Information Management Association (HIMA) Scholarship for Outstanding HIT Student. The \$1,000 scholarship is awarded annually to one student across the state.

Several HIT faculty members also received honors from Texas HIMA. Beatrice Avila was recognized for her service

as 2025 president, Patricia Lamson received the Volunteer of the Year Award, and Melissa Torres was named a Rising Star. In addition, HIT faculty and advisory board members shared their expertise at the Texas HIMA state conference. Melissa Torres and advisory board member Julissa Avila co-led a session titled First Steps in Your HIM Career. Beatrice Avila, Patricia Lamson, and Sylvia Alcalá presented a statewide Coding Roundtable, while Julissa Avila and Patricia Lamson also led an Educator Roundtable.

Beatrice Avila's leadership was further recognized nationally with her election to the American Health Information Management Association's Council for Excellence in Education.

Beyond HIT, other Health Sciences faculty also achieved significant milestones. Dr. Williams of the Medical Laboratory Technology program earned Allied Health Instructor certification from the American Medical Technologists on July 2, 2025.

In the Physical Therapist Assistant program, Amy Quesenberry was appointed to a two-year term as a panel member with the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, where she will review accreditation reports and uphold professional standards. The program also celebrated a 94% first-time pass rate on the national licensure exam.

Alumni Spotlight: Anthony Ramirez



Anthony Ramirez will walk the stage this December as one of the first graduates to earn a Bachelor of Applied Technology in Cybersecurity from St. Philip's College.

Anthony works for the U.S. Department of Defense. He began his academic journey when the COVID-19 pandemic began, taking all his classes

online. He first earned two associate degrees, one in Information Technology Cybersecurity Specialist in Fall 2022 and another in Technology Network Administration in Spring 2023.

He then transitioned straight into St. Philip's College's bachelor's program, finishing in August 2025.

"It's a growing field, and a lot of people make beaucoup money," he said. "We have such a heavy military presence in town, and I knew it would be easy to find a job."

Encouraged by his supervisor, a veteran who stressed the importance of education, he pushed through years of long days and late nights.

Balancing full-time work and full-time school was incredibly difficult. I would work a full shift and come and do schoolwork. It felt like balancing spinning plates," he said. "A lot of caffeine got me through, but professors and campus resources really helped." Inspired by his mother, the only person in his immediate

family to hold a degree, Anthony said he wanted to go further than she had been able to. His next goal is to pursue a master's degree in business administration with a focus in information technology management at Western Governors University.

"My courses at SPC opened my eyes to the possibilities available in my career," he said. "One of the things I was able to do was work in virtualization and cloud computing. Eventually, I want to get into cloud networking."

To students facing similar challenges, he offers encouragement.

"It will get difficult, but stick in there," he said. "You're going to experience a lot of classes that will challenge you, but your faculty and fellow classmates are there to help. Reach out and don't be afraid. There are resources available. It will be worth it. It wasn't easy, but my future has never been brighter."



SPC Earns 2025 VEERA Gold Level

St. Philip's College has earned the 2025 Veteran Education Excellence Recognition Award (VEERA) – Gold Level by the Texas Veterans Commission, recognizing the college's dedication to providing exceptional educational services to veterans and military-connected students.

St. Philip's College has held this prestigious recognition for the past five years, demonstrating its consistent efforts in fostering the academic success of its veteran students.

The application process for the VEERA award is highly competitive, involving rigorous eligibility criteria. Applications are first screened by the Veterans Education Department to ensure compliance with the Texas Education Code. Then, an award committee conducts a more comprehensive evaluation.



SPC Launches Parent Student Support Group

St. Philip's College launched its Parent Student Support Group on Aug. 20, 2025, to help more than 3,300 student parents build community and tap into campus and community services that support academic success, personal well-being, and family stability.

The group, which began Aug. 20, meets twice a month. The new group is designed to foster a sense of belonging. Facilitated by Victoria Palafox and Veronica Munis-Ochoa, the group connects parents with presenters across key service areas, while introducing participants to wellness, safety, and financial resources that are already available but not always widely known.

"The Parenting Student Support Group was created to give parent students a space to connect, share resources, and feel supported on campus," Victoria said. "Our hope is that every parent student leaves knowing they have a community here that truly understands and supports them."

The group's mission statement underscores the focus: to empower parenting students at St. Philip's College by providing a supportive community, resources, and advocacy that promote academic success,



SPC student Hortencia Rodriguez Hernandez, pictured here with her children, attended the Parent Student Support Group meeting in the month of September.

personal well-being, and family stability. Sessions scheduled for the fall semester include presentations from campus and community partners such as the San Antonio Food Bank, the college's Child Development Center, and financial wellness coaches. The fall schedule runs through Dec. 10.

Student Spotlight: Tyra Williams



SPC student Tyra Williams poses with her professor, Christa Mitchell, as she receives recognition as a member of the honor society, Lambda Beta Society.

St. Philip's College respiratory care student, Tyra Williams, has become the first recipient in the history of the Respiratory Care Foundation of Texas (RCFT) to earn its prestigious grant two years in a row.

Tyra, who anticipates graduating in Fall 2025, was honored June 8, 2025, during the RCFT Celebration Dinner in Lubbock, where nearly 15 St. Philip's faculty members and students attended in support. She received a \$4,500 grant, taking first place in 2025 after placing second last year.

"It meant so much more to me to have support from my fellow students and faculty," Tyra said. "It is always nice to receive an award or scholarship, but to have my second family present motivates me in a different way."

Her winning application included a research paper on Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome. Applicants must submit a recommendation from their program director, maintain a GPA of at least 2.2, and complete a research paper.

Tyra was motivated to pursue respiratory care after her son suffered an asthma attack and she witnessed the specialized care provided by a respiratory therapist.

"I knew I wanted to help people, I just didn't know how," she said. "Now, I know how to catch all the signs of his asthma attack."

Since starting at St. Philip's in Fall 2023, Tyra has been active on campus, serving as treasurer for the Respiratory Club, participating in Phi Theta Kappa, the National Society of Leadership and Success, and the Lambda Honor Society.

She said her two sons are her greatest motivation. "This grant will go directly towards a savings account for my two boys. I want to be able to offer them the head start I didn't have," Tyra said. "I do everything to help them succeed and set the example."

SPC Supports Thousands of Incoming Students with Enrollment Services



Certified Enrollment Coach Logen Rodriguez poses for photograph with students from Sam Houston High School.

Each school year, the St. Philip's College Student Onboarding and Recruitment Office helps thousands of students take their next step towards higher education. Through the College Connections program, the college works closely with

16 high schools across San Antonio and the surrounding communities.

Certified Enrollment Coach Logen Rodriguez guides students through the enrollment process, providing one-on-one support, group presentations, and attending outreach events.

"We meet students where they are, in classrooms, at College Hubs, and even in auditoriums, to make sure they understand the college options available to them and make them feel supported," Logen said.

The busiest season comes in April and May, right before graduation, when multiple visits are scheduled each week. At three San Antonio ISD campuses last spring, Logen helped more than 100 students register for classes in just a

four-week span. Because the Student Onboarding and Recruitment Office maintains close collaboration with high school counselors and a regular presence at schools year-round, many seniors complete the entire enrollment process before the end of the school year.

"I was able to help register students for classes and check their college schedule all before they even walked the stage with their diploma," Logen said. "These students graduate well prepared to start their higher education journey with confidence."

The St. Philip's Student Onboarding and Recruitment Office is a small team of five staff members who collectively assisted nearly 14,000 students last year.

SPC Chef Instructor Honored at Texas Culinary Convention

St. Philip's College Chef Instructor John Munoz was named Educator of the Year and received the National Presidential Medallion for Culinary Excellence at the Annual Texas Chefs Association State Convention earlier this month, an event that aligned with the American Culinary Federation.

The two-day convention, held on Aug. 8-10, featured professional development sessions, product demonstrations, and hands-on presentations highlighting the latest tools and techniques in the culinary industry. Attendees mingled over workshops, sharing knowledge and celebrating innovation in the field.

Chef Munoz, who represented the San Antonio chapter, was recognized during the President's Gala. He said the honors reflect not just his work, but the collective effort of the culinary department at St. Philip's College.

"I felt an overwhelming sense of pride not only for myself but for our entire school and department," Chef Munoz said. "These awards are not just



Show here from left: Justin Rowlands, Nick Snyder, St. Philip's College Chef Instructor John Munoz, and Joanna Bryant.

personal accolades, but a representation of the collective effort and passion shared within our culinary community."

The convention also featured networking opportunities, an ACF-sanctioned student and professional

competition, and events such as the Texas Beef Council Chapter Tri Tip Challenge. Organizers said the event underscored collaboration, innovation, and camaraderie within the Texas culinary scene.

Alumni Spotlight: Jeremiah Luna



For St. Philip's College (SPC) Alumnus Jeremiah Luna, choosing SPC after high school was an easy decision. "My counselors advised me that it was the most

technical school among all the Alamo Colleges," Jeremiah said. "Since I wanted to go into anything related to computers, it was the best fit for me."

Jeremiah earned an associate degree in Computer Engineering Technology during the summer of 2024. Beyond the classroom, he participated in Project SURE, a program that supports students with career readiness. He was active in the organization from February 2023 through August 2025 and credits the program with helping him prepare for interviews, complete job applications, and plan for his future.

His biggest motivation to stay in school came from his mother. "Growing up with a brother and sister, while my single mother supported us, was definitely a challenge," he said. "Witnessing all of that inspired me to finish school and graduate

with a degree." He is now continuing his education at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. He said his time at SPC laid the groundwork for his future. "They provided me with opportunities that I am incredibly grateful for. Whether in school or my future work endeavors, I am more confident than ever that I will succeed," he said.

For those considering St. Philip's College for the next step in their higher education journey, Jeremiah advises students to take advantage of both the strong academic programs and opportunities for involvement. "If you're interested in pursuing a technical field, this school is definitely the right choice for you," he said.



ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT

St. Philip's College

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MLK NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND MARCH

Join St. Philip's College for the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service and March. The March will begin at MLK Academy – 3500 MLK Drive and end at Pittman-Sullivan Park – 1101 Iowa Street.



January 19, 2026



10:00 A.M.



3500 MLK Drive to
Pittman-Sullivan Park at
1101 Iowa Street

Scan here to sign-up!



Sign-up to volunteer
and receive a t-shirt!



St. Philip's College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award certificates, associate degrees, and a baccalaureate degree. St. Philip's College also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of St. Philip's College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

Upcoming Events

For more information on upcoming events and to receive the latest information on campus announcements follow us on social media.



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