Congresswoman Gluesenkamp Perez visits Clark

Left to right: Dean Gluesenkamp, Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, Professor Mike Godson, and Dannie Nordsiden examine an electric car motor. *Photo: Clark College/Susan Parrish*

When Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp Perez and her husband, Dean Gluesenkamp, stepped into Clark's Automotive Technology lab, it was familiar territory. The couple owns Dean's Car Care in Portland and have spent their careers working in the business.

Don Gonser shows the congresswoman the Diesel Lab. *Photo: Clark College/Kevin Damore*

Automotive professors Dannie Nordside and Mike Godson showed the congresswoman

and her husband around the shop, where students trouble shooting engines and their

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ents an opportunity to work on real cars, trucks and electric vehicles donated by lo

cal dealerships and industry workers. With a program history that spans more th

an 40 years, Clark's automotive program are producing top-tier automotive techni

cians with a strong focus on hands-on learning and partnerships with dealerships

that include Toyota, Honda, Dick Hannah, and Audi.

The visit included a visit to the welding shop to see the aluminum boat that the students are making. *Photo: Clark College/Kevin Damore*

Throughout the two-year-

program, all automotive students also get real-world experience working at paid

apprenticeships in Vancouver auto shops. In their own repair shop, the congress

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After seeing gasoline-powered cars in the shop bays, the group gathered around a dismounted electric motor from a Toyota hybrid that students had been working on. Clark’s programs have kept pace with new technology and market demands.

Next, the group toured the Welding Technology lab with professor Chad Laughlin and the Diesel Technology lab, where professor Don Gonser led the way to a red Peterbilt semitruck with the engine exposed. Gluesenkamp Perez stopped to peer into the engine before posing for a group photo in front of the enormous rig.

Left to right: Interim Vice President of Instruction, Automotive Professor Mike Godson, Dean Gluesenkamp, Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, Diesel Professor Don Gonzer, and Automotive Professor Dannie Nordsiden. *Photo: Clark College/Maureen Chan-Hefflin*

Background

Photo: Clark College/Maureen Chan-Hefflin

During her 2022 campaign for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, Gluesenk

amp Perez, D-Skamania spoke often about her working-class roots, emphasizing

support for small businesses, job training and local concerns, like the timb

er industry. Her family lives in rural Skamania County in the unincorporated comm

unity of Skamania, about 35 miles from Clark’s campus.

A graduate of Reed College with a degree in economics, she is a businesswoman and a politician. Gluesenkamp Perez has served on the Washington State Democratic Party executive committee since 2020. She has been a member of the Underwood Soil and Water District Conservation board of supervisors since 2018.

Her new role as the U.S. representative for Washington’s 3rd congressional district began in January 2023.

If you are interested to learn more about the Clark’s

Automotive program contact Hernán Garzón, Automotive Student Recruiter at automotive@clark.edu or 360-600-2098.