

Secretary of State Hobbs visits Clark's campus

Washington Secretary of State Steve Hobbs made two stops at Clark's campus on June 4.

Veterans Center of Excellence



Washington Secretary of State Steve Hobbs visited Clark's Veterans Center of Excellence on June 4.

The secretary, who is an Army veteran and is an active lieutenant colonel with the Washington Army National Guard, first stopped in Clark's Veterans Center of Excellence. Secretary Hobbs met VCOE staff and current student veterans, who had gathered for a barbecue to celebrate graduating student veterans. Secretary Hobbs shared his story about his working-class roots, military service, and his work as

secretary of state.

He learned the value of hard work and education, but there was no money for college, so at age 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Army as a private and rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel with the Washington Army National Guard. He served in Kosovo and Iraq and was mobilized to command 750 service members during Washington's COVID-19 response. As state senator, he worked with service members to develop legislation ranging from help in education, finding good family-wage jobs, and protecting veterans' rights.

With help from the G.I. Bill, he was able to pay for college. He received an associate degree from Everett Community College and bachelor's and master's degrees in political science and public administration, respectively, from the University of Washington.

He is the first person of color to serve as secretary of state in Washington and only the second in state history who was born in Washington.

Donna Larson, associate director of the VCOE, said, "We were thrilled that Secretary Hobbs took time to visit our students. Being a veteran, he was able to connect with our students and offer insights into transitioning in public service."

ASCC Leadership



Next, Hobbs sat down with ASCC student leaders to talk about what the Secretary of State does, the myriad services his office provides, the responsibility of being an elected official, the important role of youth voting, and about ensuring Washington's election security.

A Running Start student who is 18 said she will be voting in her first presidential election in November.

Director of Student Life Sarah Gruhler, who had arranged the secretary's visit, said, "The visit was a great opportunity for students to learn about the role of the Secretary of State. We really appreciated him encouraging students to vote."

Learn more here: <https://www.sos.wa.gov/>.