

# A springboard to opportunity



Three Clark College Transitional Studies students celebrate earning their high school diplomas during Clark's 2015 Commencement ceremony. Beginning in the 2015 summer quarter, students like them have a new option for earning their diploma called High School 21+.

Starting this summer quarter, adults in Southwest Washington who lack a high school diploma have a new, streamlined way to earn this valuable educational achievement. Clark College has adopted High School 21+, a new program in Washington State that is designed to help adults gain the education they need to participate in today's workforce.

"There are so many adults who are afraid of returning to school or who are worried about the GED exam and that stands in their way of defining and reaching their goals," said Monica Wilson, Transitional Studies Program Manager. "High

School 21+ gives adults a new pathway to meet their goals with additional supports from the Transitional Studies team to help make the process as easy as possible.”

High School 21+, which was launched in 2014 in 12 community and technical colleges by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, is open to all Washington residents aged 21 or older who do not have a high school degree. While students have always been able to earn high school diplomas or prepare for the GED through two-year colleges, this new program helps remove some obstacles to the process. Students can earn credit for skills gained through work or military history, helping to reduce the amount of time spent in classes that are unnecessary. Also, the program infuses basic skills classes—things like computer skills or writing that students often need to take, but that previously did not apply toward their high school credential—with rigorous academic coursework, allowing them to apply toward a diploma.

According to the U.S. Census, 10 percent of Washington State adults (defined as 25 years or older) do not have a high school degree. Meanwhile, according to recent studies, more than two-thirds of all jobs in Washington State will require postsecondary education by 2018—the sixth-highest rate in the nation.

High School 21+ is designed to make earning a high school diploma more accessible. Classes cost \$25 a quarter and books are provided for no additional charge; classes are offered at two locations, during times that fit working adults’ schedules. And, because federal regulations now require a high school diploma or equivalency to receive financial aid, High School 21+ makes college more accessible as well for thousands of Washington State residents.

Clark College’s Department of Transitional Studies launched High School 21+ in the 2015 summer quarter with 41 students

enrolled. Already, five of them are expected to earn their high school degrees in fall quarter.

To learn more about Clark College's High School 21+ program, visit [www.clark.edu/cc/hs21](http://www.clark.edu/cc/hs21).

*Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

---

## Sharing their voices



The Clark College Concert Choir visits the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music in 2015, where they performed for Dr. Christian Grasses, *center, blue shirt*, the conductor of the school's concert choir. *Photo: April Duvic.*

Traditionally, the week after spring quarter ends is a time for students to rest and recover from the academic year. But not for the members of the Clark College Concert Choir, who spent four days performing and learning during an end-of-the-year trip to Los Angeles.

The trip, whose destination changes each year, is an annual tradition—a time for choir members to show off what they've learned over the past year and to get a chance to experience performing in front of new audiences. Last year, students traveled to New York to perform near the grounds of the former World Trade Center; the year before that, they visited San Francisco together with the Clark College Concert Band. This year the choir traveled by themselves. The trip, which is funded in part through the Associated Students of Clark College and in part through private fundraising by participating students, ran from June 21 to June 24.

The choir performed three concerts while in Los Angeles, the first of which was in the afternoon on the day they arrived. It was a community service outreach at the Los Angeles Veterans Administration Hospital and Care Facility, providing a Father's Day concert for residents and their families and the staff at the hospital.

"The response from those in attendance was wonderful – the vets really appreciated having the choir perform," said choir director April Duvic. "The students made such an amazing connection after they sang by going out into the audience and talking with the residents who attended the concert. It was life-changing for our students who had never had the opportunity to reach out and connect with vets like that before."

The choir also visited the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music for a two-hour clinic with Dr. Christian Grases, the conductor of that school's concert choir and an assistant professor in its department of choral and

sacred music. They performed the Venezuelan folk song “Mata del Anima Sola” for him, in honor of Dr. Grases’ home country.

“Dr. Grases was able to impart incredible knowledge and really fire the choir up,” Duvic said. “He was amazed that the choir was from a two-year college. He enthusiastically invited the Clark College Concert Choir students to consider applying to USC and auditioning for the music department.”

The third and final official concert of the trip was hosted by All Saints’ Episcopal Church in East Los Angeles. The performance was attended by the church’s youth group and many members of the congregation and neighborhood, as well as by three Clark College alumni who live in the city. After the concert the youth group had an opportunity to talk with choir members about attending college and about the various educational plans the Clark students are pursuing.

“It was a positive experience for the Clark students to be able to talk about their college experience and encourage the church’s youth to go to college,” said Duvic. “The applause and standing ovation the choir received was a great way to end our tour.”

---

## **Emergency Drill on Main Campus**





Clark College and the Vancouver Police Department will conduct a joint training exercise around the Health Sciences Building on Clark College's main campus on August 26.

On Wednesday, August 26, from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., individuals on or near the Clark College main campus will notice a high level of police activity as Clark College partners with the Vancouver Police Department on a joint exercise.

During the exercise, the Health Sciences Building and the Brown Parking Lot will be closed. There will be a high concentration of police activity in the area as the groups work together on a daylong scenario.

This exercise builds on the college's ongoing security efforts and helps strengthen ties with the Vancouver Police Department. In preparation for the exercises, the VPD is reaching out to affected neighborhoods, and on campus the college is making sure that all groups affected are informed in advance of the event.

There will be no live weapons used in the drills, nor will there be unusual amounts of noise or simulated explosions.

Most individuals should not be affected other than seeing an unusually high number of VPD officers.

This drill is intended to help both the college and the police improve their emergency response procedures.

Clark College's main campus is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way. The Brown Lot and Health Sciences Building are located in the northeast corner of the campus, south of Water Works Park and east of E. Reserve St. at E. 18th St.

---

## Clark Adopts the Gold Standard



Clark's efforts to conserve water during a statewide drought have led to the grass looking a little more parched than usual.

This summer, visitors to the main campus may have noticed a change in its normally lush landscape. The grass, which usually blankets the campus in emerald green, has been looking a little, well, *thirsty* of late. Dry. Brown. Dead, possibly?

Far from it, assures Clark College Director of Facilities Services Tim Petta. He explains that the college is simply responding to Washington Governor Jay Inslee's May 15 declaration of a statewide drought.

"Clark College is doing its part to reduce irrigation use to the least amount of water possible during this difficult water resource time," says Petta. "We are trying different shortened watering schedules to use the least amount of water, while still keeping the grass alive."

According to the Washington Department of Ecology, almost 80 percent of the state's rivers and streams are running at below-normal levels—and 38 percent of them at record lows. Meanwhile, mountain snowpacks are down to 16 percent of their normal levels, and the Washington Department of Agriculture is projecting a \$1.2 billion crop loss this year as a result of the drought.

While the college does not rely on a municipal source for irrigation water, it does pull that water from an underground aquifer that is also used to provide municipal water locally. So the college decided to do what it could to slow its drain on a community resource, says Petta.

The irrigation changes should not affect the college's landmark arboretum, which has earned the college Tree Campus USA status from the Arbor Day Foundation for five years in a row. Trees' deep roots can withstand drought better than smaller, more delicate plants.

Nor will the changes prevent the college's beloved Andersen Fountain from flowing again in a few weeks once scheduled repairs have been made to it. The fountain operates on a



“closed loop” system that recycles the water, meaning it can continue to surprise guests and delight children without affecting the state’s limited water reserves.

---

## A Night of Celebration



Almost 740 graduates attended the 2015 Clark College Commencement ceremony, held June 18 at the Clark County Event Center.

The sun shone, the bagpipes sounded, and the members of Clark College’s 79th graduating class gathered together—more than 730 of them, making the 2015 Commencement ceremony the college’s largest yet.

The Clark County Event Center was filled with friends, family

members, and other well-wishers at the event, which took place during the evening of June 18.



First-generation college graduate David Scott '15 attended the 2015 Commencement ceremony.

Approximately 20 members of the crowd were there to cheer on David Scott, 22, who was receiving his Associate of Arts degree. "I'm the first one in my family to graduate from college," said Scott, whose neck was adorned with multiple leis, a traditional Hawaiian token of celebration. "They're pretty stoked."

Scott, who is transferring to Washington State University Vancouver in the fall and hopes to become an elementary school teacher, said he was impressed by the caring nature of his professors at Clark. "They genuinely want you to be successful," he said as he waited in line to enter the ceremony.

Scott said he also appreciated the flexibility of Clark's online courses. "I've been working fulltime as an overnight stocker at Winco Foods," he explained. "It's really good that they have online classes because I get off work at 7:30 a.m. and need to sleep."

In total, some 2,000 degrees and certificates were conferred upon the Class of 2015. This year's graduating class included 278 Running Start graduates—a new record for the college, which has the largest Running Start program in the state.



"We got here at 4:45 to line up," say these Running Start students from Woodland High School, including N.E.R.D. Girls president and Clark Aeronautics Club member Adeline Dinehart, *third from left*.

Adeline Dinehart stood with five friends at the head of the line of graduates. All six young women were Woodland High School students who had attended Clark through Running Start. Dinehart had thrived at Clark, where she became president of the popular N.E.R.D. (Not Even Remotely Dorky) Girls Club and a member of the Clark Aeronautics Club, which successfully participated in a NASA rocketry competition in Huntsville, Alabama, this spring.

"We were the only community college in the maxi competition," she said proudly. "The atmosphere there was great—really competitive, but also really encouraging of one another."

Dinehart said she appreciated the faculty's promotion of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, citing



engineering professors Carol Hsu and Tina Barsotti in particular. "Tina and Carol are amazing," she said. "They have taught me so much over the past two years."

Dinehart will be attending University of Washington in the fall. Two of her friends, Jamie Kitchen and Shianne Burhop, are also college-bound, but headed to George Fox University, where they will be roommates.

"The credits from Clark transfer really well," said Kitchen. "That's part of why I chose to come to Clark."

"Going to Woodland, you have the choice as a Running Start student between Lower Columbia College and Clark," explained Burhop, who had adorned her cap with the Bilbo Baggins quote, "I think I am quite ready for another adventure."

This year's ceremony saw an explosion in cap decoration, and as students filed into the ceremony, the westering sun glinted off of messages outlined in glitter and rhinestones.



Outgoing ASCC President Emmah Ferguson addressed the Class of 2015 at Commencement. Both her siblings also attended Clark through Running Start; Ruth graduated from the University of Washington the week before Clark's Commencement and Zachary is entering Duke Law School on a full scholarship in the fall.



The ceremony itself held many highlights. Student speaker and ASCC president Emmah Ferguson shared how Clark had developed an unrealized love of science within her.

“We have all had obstacles,” she said. “For me, my biggest obstacle was probably myself and my ideas about what I could and couldn’t do. ... It is our resilience and persistence that has gotten us this far, and it will take us where we want to go next.”



Curt Warner, *left*, thanks Clark College President Robert K. Knight before giving the 2015 Commencement keynote address.

Former Seattle Seahawks running back and businessman Curt Warner gave the keynote address. Noting that he had grown up in West Virginia’s coal mining country, where career options were limited, he urged graduates to aspire toward their goals, even if others tried to dissuade them.

“If people say you can’t succeed, you don’t have time to listen to that,” he said. “Dedicate yourselves to your goals. Never give up. People who make goals get slapped down at least once. Everyone loses sometime. It’s how you handle the losing that makes you a winner.”

The ceremony also served as the announcement of the 2015 Exceptional Faculty Awards. The 2015 awardees are Steven

Clark, professor of biology; Alison Dolder, instructor of baking; Matthew Gallaher, instructor of English; and Michiyo Okuhara, professor of Japanese. President Robert K. Knight also announced the recipient of the 2015-2016 Community College President's Award, Kathleen Fockler.



High school diploma recipient Leeann Hodge addressed the 2015 Commencement. This was the first time in many years that high school diploma and GED recipients participated in Commencement.

New this year, students who earned GEDs or High School Diplomas through the college's Transitional Studies program were invited to participate in the ceremony. Approximately 25 of these students participated in the ceremony, and High School Diploma recipient Leeann Hodge was one of two student speakers to address the crowd.



Transitional Studies graduates Chris Boots, Devon Zach, and Amanda Halbert wait in line to participate in the 2015 Commencement ceremony.

Before the ceremony began, these students had stood in a line adjacent to the line for associate degree and certificate recipients. One of them, Amanda Halbert, said she decided to pursue her GED once her youngest child was getting ready to start kindergarten. She is beginning college-level classes at Clark now, with the goal of earning a degree in graphic design.

“It’s a little nerve-wracking, looking across at the people in that line, getting their associate degrees,” she admitted. “But I’m proud of myself for being here. And I know I’ll be in that line one day.”

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

*To see more photos from Commencement, visit Clark’s Flickr album.*

---

# On Her Way



Kathleen Fockler smiles after receiving the news that she has received the 2015-2016 Community College President's Scholarship.

About a month ago, Kathleen Fockler was on the way to a Beaverton testing facility to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), the exam each nursing student must pass before officially becoming a Registered Nurse.

She was ready. It had taken her 20 years to reach this point, but she felt confident that the rigorous coursework of the Clark College Nursing Program had prepared her for the exam. Finally, after years of struggle, she was going to achieve her long-held dream of becoming a nurse.

And then her car broke down.

In the middle of the Route 26 tunnel.



During morning rush hour.

It could have been a disaster. But Kathleen Fockler, age 47, is not someone to submit to defeat. When the tow truck arrived, she persuaded the driver to take both her car and herself to the testing site. She had driven there the week before just to be sure of the route—"I didn't want to get lost," she explains—so she was able to direct him there swiftly.

"I got there just a couple minutes after the exam began, and when I explained my situation, they let me go ahead and take the test," Fockler recalls.

From the beginning, Fockler's road to becoming a nurse has been beset by unexpected detours and daunting challenges. And each time, Fockler has been able to overcome these roadblocks with a combination of preparation, persistence, and support from those around her. During the 2015 Commencement ceremony, her persistence was rewarded when Clark College President Robert K. Knight announced that she was the recipient of this year's Community College President's Award in honor of Val Ogden. This scholarship provides full tuition and fees for two years to a Clark graduate completing their bachelor's degree at Washington State University Vancouver.

"I still can't believe it," Fockler says. "This is an incredible opportunity. A door has just been opened right up for me."

Fockler began taking pre-nursing courses at Clark in 1994. However, her plans were derailed when her then-newborn son, Gabe, began experiencing seizures and developmental delays. "The timing was not right," Fockler says. She decided to leave school and concentrate on supporting her son and her daughter, MaKenzie, who was born three years after Gabe.

Fockler held onto her dream even while spending many years working as a paraprofessional assistant in the Evergreen

School District Early Childhood Center, helping support children with developmental delays. It was only when Gabe entered Clark through the Running Start program that Fockler felt the time was right for her to return to school as well.

At first, the experience of returning to school after 20 years was intimidating. Courses required online registration—Fockler didn't even own a computer. But she quickly found the support she needed at Clark.

"The resources that Clark has are tremendous," she says. "There's a math lab, there are computer labs, there's a retention specialist in the nursing department. There's just so much in place to help the student."

Fockler is quick to point out another resource that helped her on her journey: the college's scholarships office. "When I applied to nursing school, I thought, 'How am I going to do this?'" she recalls. "At the time, I was working two jobs, and I'd heard how demanding the nursing curriculum was."

But Clark's scholarship specialists quickly went into action, finding Fockler potential scholarship opportunities and encouraging her to apply. "[Outreach/Scholarship Coordinator] Lizette Drennan was like my cheerleader," she recalls. "There was a postcard of the scholarship staff that I found, and I stuck it in my binder to remind me about the people who were supporting me. I had a picture of my family, and Lizette's smiling face."



2015-2016 Community College Presidential Scholarship recipient Kathleen Fockler takes a moment to hug and thank her nursing professors at commencement.

Fockler also found support from the nursing faculty, who encouraged her to keep going. Fockler gained confidence after working in the program's state-of-the-art simulation lab, which helped her develop clinical skills before she even began her internship.

That internship proved to be another challenge. From the beginning, Fockler had set her sights on becoming a pediatric nurse working with medically fragile children, a goal formed through her experiences sitting in hospitals with Gabe early on. But Clark's nursing program had only one pediatric internship opening per cohort.

A faculty member suggested Fockler volunteer at the Center for Medically Fragile Children (CMFC) at Providence in Portland to gain experience. Clark didn't have an internship partnership set up with the CMFC; these agreements are labor-intensive and highly competitive. But Fockler so impressed the CMFC staff as a volunteer that they decided to create an internship partnership for her. Now, Clark has a regular internship opening at the center.

Throughout her studies, Fockler has shown a tireless work ethic. She went over notes while waiting in her children's doctor offices. She reviewed cranial nerves while sitting beside her mother's hospital bed after a surgery. And when Fockler herself had to undergo thyroid surgery, she didn't skip a class, deciding to simply attend the evening lecture rather than her standard morning one.

"Each day, I try to learn everything I can," she says.

On top of all that, Fockler found time to regularly volunteer with the Evergreen School District, the CFMC, SHARE House, and the Student Nurse Association of Clark College.

Despite her talent and perseverance, however, Fockler knew there was another huge hurdle standing between herself and her goal. In order to work in a specialized hospital setting like the CMFC, Fockler would need to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. Fockler—who lives in Vancouver with her children; husband, Bunnell; and mother-in-law, Beth LaViolette—has begun working with an in-home nursing care service for medically fragile children. Even so, she couldn't see how she could afford university tuition for both herself and MaKenzie, who is entering the University of Washington in the fall. Receiving the Community College President's Scholarship means her way is now clear to continue her education.

Fockler is effusive in her thanks to all the organizations who have provided scholarships to her, including the Clark College Foundation, Vancouver Rotary, and 40 et 8.

"I guess it really does take a village to raise a nurse," says Fockler, who hopes one day to be able to fund her own nursing scholarship. "The community supported me tremendously, and working hard is my way of paying them back."

### **Additional Scholarships**



Through the support of the Clark College Foundation, two other finalists for the Community College President's Scholarship were awarded \$3,000 scholarships to continue their education. President Knight announced the scholarships to **Julie Mercado** and **Melanie Brawley** during the Commencement ceremony as well.

*Photos: Clark College/Hannah Erickson (top) and Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

---

## Clark employee part of social justice pilot project



Roslyn “Roz” Leon Guerrero, *third from right*, attends a retreat in 2014 with her fellow members of the Social Justice Leadership Institute’s pilot cohort. *Photo courtesy of Roslyn Leon Guerrero.*

Clark College employee Roslyn “Roz” Leon Guerrero was invited to be part of a new cohort project designed to develop leadership skills in community college employees from historically disenfranchised or underrepresented populations.

Leon Guerrero, who identifies as a Chamorro from the Northern Mariana Islands, was one of 20 members of the pilot cohort of the Social Justice Leadership Institute. Members met five times over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year to participate in activities designed to help them grow their leadership skills, develop a systemwide network of colleagues, and learn new tools for supporting diversity at their respective institutions.

“There is so much to share about the growth and development I received from being a part of the SJLI first cohort group,” says Leon Guerrero. “There was a lot of reflection on me personally and professionally. Being able to come together with a group of awesome and inspiring individuals, sharing the same struggles and challenges, and mentoring and empowering each other is uplifting, inspiring, and heartening. If there was one word I could use to describe this experience, it would be ‘blessed.’”

Leon Guerrero, who has worked at Clark College for more than five years both in the Office of Instruction and now in the Office of Diversity and Equity, first heard about the SJLI from psychology professor and early childhood education division chair Debi Jenkins. Moments after Jenkins’s email, she received another from the Office of Instruction asking if she was interested in participating. Just a few weeks later, she was walking into the Whidbey Island Institute to attend a three-day retreat with the rest of her cohort.

The remaining four meetings took place at Bellevue College, which houses the SJLI. Leon Guerrero says that over the course of the year, she learned how to identify and use her personal strengths—a valuable experience. “Being able to focus on myself and understanding myself is important especially in my work in the Office of Diversity and Equity,” says Leon Guerrero, who currently serves as that office’s Administrative Support.

Leon Guerrero says she hopes to create a similar program here at Clark, and hopes other Clark employees will apply for the 2015-2016 cohort of SJLI, applications for which are due August 1. She offers this advice to anyone interested in participating: “Remember to do self-care before SJLI. Always reflect on yourself, and have an open mind . SJLI is not an avenue for you to find someone to take in your stuff; rather, it’s a safe place for historically underrepresented individuals to learn, grow, develop, and reflect on themselves so they can grow and succeed in their position in higher education. Be your authentic self in everything you do. ”

---

## **Curt Warner to Speak at Commencement**



Former football star Curt Warner is Clark College's 2015 Commencement keynote speaker.

*Photo courtesy of Curt Warner.*

Legendary football star and local businessman Curt Warner will be sharing his inspiring message with the Clark College Class of 2015 as the college's Commencement keynote speaker.

This year's ceremony is scheduled to take place at 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 18, at the Clark County Event Center. The event is open to the public and tickets are not required.

### **About Curt Warner**

In the course of his life, Curt Warner has used his talent and drive to succeed as both an athlete and a businessman.

Warner grew up in rural West Virginia, graduating from a high school class of just 90 students. A talented running back even then, he earned a football athletic scholarship to Penn State University, where he was named an All-American in both 1981 and 1982. In 1983, he helped the Nittany Lions capture their first national championship. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in



speech communication from Penn State.

After college, Warner was drafted by the Seattle Seahawks in the first round. He led the American Football Conference in rushing yards his rookie season, helping his team get to the AFC's first conference championship game. Warner was named to the NFL's Pro Bowl in 1983, 1986, and 1987. He was inducted into the Seattle Seahawks Ring of Honor in 1994, and into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2009.

Warner retired from football in 1990 and opened his own car dealership, Curt Warner Chevrolet, in 1999. He closed the business in 2010. Beyond his current professional activities Warner serves as a motivational speaker for companies and institutions.

Warner lives in Camas with his wife, Ana; their twins, Austin and Christian; and daughter, Isabella. Their oldest son, Jonathan, is currently a wide receiver at Penn State.

---

## **Clark College Honors Memorial Day**



C

Clark College's Veterans Resource Center is honoring Memorial Day by commemorating veterans who have given their lives in service to their country on Tuesday, May 19 at 2:00 p.m. in the Penguin Union Building room 161 on the college's main campus. (The college is closed on Memorial Day.) Dr. Samantha Powers will be the featured guest speaker at the event, which is free and open to the public. The colors will be presented and light refreshments will be served.

Dr. Powers is the Project Director and a trainer for the Veterans Training Support Center of the Center for Learning Connections, Edmonds Community College. She is a veteran of the United States Air Force Special Operations. A combat veteran who served in Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Iraq during Operation Enduring Freedom, Dr. Powers volunteers for a number of veterans organizations in Washington State as a member and officer. She is an adjunct instructor at various higher education institutions in Organizational Leadership and Emergency Management programs. Dr. Powers holds a B.A. in Military History from Virginia Tech, an M.A. in International Relations from University of Oklahoma, and a Ph.D. in

Educational Leadership from Old Dominion University.

Clark College serves more than 400 veterans each year. The Veterans Resource Center provides services to those students, helping them navigate everything from their G.I. Bill benefits to helping them find textbook and other resources.

Clark College's main campus is located at 1933 Ft. Vancouver Way in Vancouver, Wash. Directions and maps are available at [www.clark.edu/maps](http://www.clark.edu/maps). Individuals who need accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should contact Clark College's Disability Support Services (DSS) Office at 360-992-2314 or 360-991-0901 (VP). The DSS office is located in room 013 in Clark's Penguin Union Building.

---

## **Congratulations, Professors!**



Left to right: Kristi Taylor (dental hygiene), Helen Martin (business technology), Joan Zoellner (mathematics), Linda Valenzuela (nursing), Ruth Trejo (chemistry), Alan Wiest (health and physical education), Bevyn Rowland (counseling), Shayna Collins (counseling), Ethel Reeves (nursing), Susan Nieman (nursing), and Sunnie Elhart-Johnson (business technology medical office).

Eleven outstanding educators are the newest members of the tenured faculty at Clark College. Shayna Collins (counseling), Sunnie Elhart-Johnson (business technology medical office), Helen Martin (business technology), Susan Nieman (nursing), Ethel Reeves (nursing), Bevyn Rowland (counseling), Kristi Taylor (dental hygiene), Ruth Trejo (chemistry), Linda Valenzuela (nursing), Alan Wiest (health and physical education, and Joan Zoellner (mathematics) were all honored at a reception on April 8 in Clark's Gaiser Student Center.

"This is an important moment, both for these faculty members and for the college," said Clark College President Robert K.

Knight. "These talented and dedicated professionals have made a commitment to our college, and will help shape the college's programs and community for many years to come."

Tenure is awarded by the college's Board of Trustees based on professional excellence and outstanding abilities in their disciplines. The granting of tenure is based on the recommendations of tenure review committees to the vice president of instruction, which are then forwarded to the president, who presents a final recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Recommendations are based on self-evaluations, tenure review committee evaluations, student evaluations, supervisory evaluations, and peer evaluations. The final decision to award or withhold tenure rests with the Board of Trustees.

The professors receiving tenure are:

**Shayna Collins, Counseling**

Shayna Collins earned her Bachelors in Women's Studies and Psychology in 2006 and a Masters in Mental Health Counseling from Minnesota State University in 2009. She then moved to Portland and worked at the Center for Family Success and LifeWorks before joining Clark in 2012.

Shayna currently serves on the Advising Steering Committee and the campus CERT team. Other activities include Teaching Squares, FYE Mentorship program, several search committees, and planning for the annual Stress Awareness Day at Clark.

Collins believes in providing greater access to education for all, encouraging life-long learning, and creating a classroom environment that accommodates diverse learning styles. "It is my pleasure and honor to serve as a faculty counselor at Clark!" she says.

**Sunnie Elhart-Johnson, Business Technology Medical Office**



After attending a number of colleges as part of her undergraduate degree, including UCLA and The Evergreen State College, Sunnie Elhart-Johnson graduated with honors from Humboldt State University. Elhart-Johnson earned her Masters of Management and Organizational Leadership (MMOL) in 2009. Additionally, she has a current certification from AHIMA in Training ICD-10-CM/PCS and earned a certification in Patient Navigation and Advocacy this past fall.

Over the past 30 years, Elhart-Johnson has worked primarily in the medical field including previous experience as a unit secretary, EMT, medical transcriptionist, AHT, medical biller and coder. Non-medical experience includes corporate trainer, computer tech support, and a number of managerial positions. She has taught Medical Administrative courses throughout the past 14 years, earning the 2011-2012 Clark College Exceptional Faculty Award.

Elhart-Johnson has served as the Department Head for the BMED programs for over three years, working extensively in the curricular development needed to graduate students with the ability to successfully work in almost any healthcare environment, including billing and coding. The BMED Department is currently placing students in several local hospitals and outpatient settings as ICD-10 experts ready for the implementation this October. She currently sits on the Evergreen School Advisory Committee and the Skills Center Advisory Committee, and volunteers at a local free clinic.

"I'm excited about the HIIM degree beginning this summer, allowing students to sit for the highly sought for RHIT certification," Elhart-Johnson says. "I look forward to leading changes in the healthcare industry through Clark's programs and graduates, and to supplying our community partners with the ideal employees who have mastery in their field."

**Helen Martin, Business Technology**

Helen Martin studied history at Leiden University in the Netherlands, and graduated with a doctorandus degree. She also earned an MBA with a concentration in marketing from Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia. She has previous work experience with Clark College, PTIGlobal, MindLink, Miami University of Ohio, and Websense.

“As a teacher, I see it as my job to help Clark Students acquire the skills to succeed in life, the confidence to apply those skills in a real world setting, and to make their learning experience effective and enjoyable,” she says.

Martin is a member of the Clark College CERT team, and has been involved as a mentor in the First Year Experience program.

### **Susan Nieman, Nursing**

Susan Nieman is a graduate of the Clark College Nursing Program. She completed her BSN and MN at WSU Vancouver before joining Clark College as an adjunct instructor in 2005. Nieman has worked in psychiatric and emergency room settings and currently serves in the United States Army Reserve as a nurse with the 396th Combat Support hospital.

“My goal is to create additional volunteer opportunities for Clark College students to enrich not only their nursing experiences, but the lives of community members touched by our service,” she said.

Nieman serves as a board member and volunteer at the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington. She enjoys spending time with her family and doing outdoor activities on the water, especially outrigger canoeing.

### **Ethel Reeves, Nursing**

Ethel Reeves earned her associate degree in nursing at Clark College in 1992, her BSN at WSU Vancouver in 2009, and her MSN

at WSU Vancouver in 2013. Prior to coming to Clark College, she worked at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital from 1987 to 2011 and at Columbia Gorge Community College from 2008 to 2012. She began teaching at Clark College as a Clinical Adjunct Faculty in fall 2011.

“As a first-generation college graduate, I encourage and support the joy of life-long learning,” Reeves says. “My approach is to help reduce student anxiety so that their learning is maximized in any given educational setting.”

Reeves is a member of the Nursing Standard 1 Committee, Scholarship Committee, Speights Faculty Development Committee, and the Emergency Management Preparation Committee.

### **Dr. Bevyn Rowland, Counseling**

Dr. Rowland earned her undergraduate degree in English from University of Portland, her Master of Arts degree (Counseling) and her Doctor of Psychology (Clinical PsyD) degree from Pacific University. She completed her APA-accredited internship at University of Idaho, and a postdoctoral residency at Cornell University. Dr. Rowland currently maintains a private practice in Salmon Creek at Evergreen Behavioral Health, where she is also working to create a nonprofit mental health center.

“Students arrive to college and counseling at varying levels of readiness, motivation, investment, and health,” said Dr. Rowland. “I adore helping students move toward change to support their success at Clark, as well as capitalize on strengths they already have, to create the life they want.”

In addition to Dr. Rowland’s work as a licensed clinical psychologist and her counseling and teaching roles on campus (teaching in HDEV and COLL departments), she is an active member of the Behavior Intervention and Threat Assessment (BITA) Team and the Cultural Pluralism Committee (CPC). She presents on mental health topics to student classes across

divisions, and often provides training to staff and faculty through the Teaching and Learning Center.

### **Kristi Taylor, Dental Hygiene**

Kristi Taylor earned her associate degree in Dental Hygiene from Clark College and her Bachelor of Science degree in Dental Hygiene through the degree-completion program of Eastern Washington University at Clark College. She began teaching at Clark in 2010, first as an adjunct instructor and then as a full-time temporary instructor. When she began her position as a tenure-track first-year lead instructor in dental hygiene, one of Taylor's tenure goals was to complete her master's degree in Post-Secondary and Continuing Education degree from Portland State University. She earned that degree in summer 2013.

"I have lived in Vancouver for the majority of my life and feel it a privilege to work for Clark College," says Taylor. "Because I attended and graduated from Clark, I can use these experiences to mentor and facilitate dental hygiene students to fulfill their dreams.

"Creating an environment that is learner-centered, free from fear, and limited in stress, is ideal," she continued. "A learner-centered environment allows students the opportunity to grow and retain information in a way that allows for optimal patient and community care."

Throughout the past three years, Taylor has been an active leader of the dental hygiene students in the ASCC club and Students of the American Dental Hygiene Association (SADHA) by leading changes that have allowed students more access to serve their patients, college, and community. In her current teaching role, she is responsible for planning all clinical courses and many didactic courses throughout the first year of the students' dental hygiene education.

### **Ruth Trejo, Chemistry**



Ruth Trejo received her master's degree in organic chemistry from the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). She taught at Miramar Community College and Southwestern Community College before coming to Clark College in 2011.

"I love to watch students conquer difficult subjects with assistance from me and their peers," says Trejo. "I believe in the power of self-sufficiency and peer group work to learn chemistry."

While in San Diego, Trejo was involved in community-outreach projects working with Green Chemistry and most recently Science Fun for Kids 9 to 99, where anyone could come to Miramar and learn science by enjoying physics or chemistry projects. Now that she is at Clark, Trejo volunteers as a coordinator for the annual Science Olympiad. She is currently working as the general chemistry lab coordinator for the Chemistry Department.

### **Linda Valenzuela, Nursing**

Linda Valenzuela earned her associate degree in nursing from the College of the Sequoias in Visalia, California; her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from California State University, Dominguez Hills; and her Master of Public Health degree from Portland State University. She anticipates completing her Master of Science in Nursing degree from Western Governors University in August 2015.

Valenzuela's previous employment includes Asotin County Public Health and Clark County Public Health. She currently is a relief staff member at PeaceHealth Southwest, a position she has maintained since 2005. She joined the nursing program at Clark as a full-time, tenure-track faculty member in 2009.

"I've worked as an registered nurse for over 30 years," she says. "I'm also active in my community in home health and hospice activities."

Valenzuela currently serves as the sixth-quarter lead for the nursing program. Her hobbies include gardening and quilting.

### **Alan Wiest, Health and Physical Education**

Alan Wiest completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Exercise and Movement Science from the University of Oregon. He has taught Health, Physical Education, and Exercise Science for more than 14 years in Oregon, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Washington. He teaches in the Health, Physical Education, and Fitness Trainer programs at Clark College. Wiesty holds certifications as an Aquatic Fitness Professional, Certified Personal Trainer, Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, and USA Weightlifting Sports and Performance Coach.

“I believe I learn as much from his students as they learn from me,” Wiest says. “I cherish my job, and I know I’m incredibly fortunate to be in a position of helping others pursue a lifetime full of health and happiness.”

Wiestserves on many Clark College committees; volunteers both at the college and in his community; commits to continuing education; and loves taking part in the faculty/staff-vs.-students intramural events at the college.

Wiest resides in Vancouver and can often be found hiking the trails carved into the Columbia River Gorge, Vancouver Lake, and the Coastal Trails. When time permits, he travels the U.S. in an attempt to climb the highest peak in all 50 states.

### **Joan Zoellner, Mathematics**

Joan Zoellner earned her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Humboldt State University and her Master of Arts in Mathematics from Indiana University. She has previous teaching experience at Portland Community College and began teaching at Clark College in 2010.

"I strongly believe that students in a math class should be doing math, not just watching the instructor work problems," she says. "Deep, lasting learning occurs when students work together to solve challenging conceptual problems in class, and practice the procedural aspects of math outside of class. All of our students have the ability to succeed in math, and my job is to facilitate their growth as learners."

Zoellner is involved in developmental mathematics education reform, and is in the process of developing a Math Review Boot Camp course for students who place low after taking the COMPASS test. You can also find Joan tutoring in the Math Help Center, and serving on several math department assessment committees.

*Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*