

A Quick Study



Supplies for students taking a ceramics class are bagged up in Frost Arts Center, ready for contactless pickup. *Photo: Lucy Winslow*

When Gov. Jay Inslee announced his Stay Home, Stay Healthy order in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Clark College professors had less than a month to adapt about 2,000 classes' curriculum to be taught online. Now, as spring term is more than halfway over—and the ongoing pandemic has led to most summer and fall classes being offered remotely as well—it's clear that they were more than up for the challenge.

“Our faculty are resilient and dedicated to student success,” said Vice President of Instruction Sachi Horback. “Though there were many reasons to settle for being ‘good enough,’ amidst this pandemic, our faculty pushed ahead, ensuring that

our students had equitable opportunities for student learning. As educators, we were made for this, readily adaptable and willing to do whatever is needed in service to our community.”



Professional baking professor Melanie Hendry gets ready for a “Pop and Drop,” where students pop the backs of their cars for her to load lab supplies in. *Photo: Alison Dolder*

“Our motto is ‘we make it work,’” said Baking Professor Alison Dolder of her department’s faculty. “All of us jumped right in to record baking videos, to learn Zoom and Canvas. We are not technology-savvy people. But we are dedicated.”

Faculty and staff worked to create take-home boxes of baking supplies for each student to use, filled with the ingredients and tools of their trade—rolling pins, measuring spoons, etc. They also worked to learn how to produce useful instructional videos, no small feat: It requires a certain amount of choreography to capture the best camera angle for a stand mixer.

“Hands-on,” but online

Indeed, it was a challenge experienced across the college: How does an institution that prides itself on its “hands-on learning” adapt to a virtual educational experience? But over and over, faculty stepped up.

In professional technical and allied health fields, faculty quickly re-organized curriculum so that students’ lecture

classes took place during spring term and lab classes could be delayed until summer, providing additional time to set up safe social-distancing protocols for in-person lab work.

Mathematics professors collaborated with the college's Tutoring Services to place tutors right in Zoom classrooms so that students got the one-on-one help they needed to understand material. Tutors also worked to create a Zoom version of their regular English practice chats held for English as a Second Language students. Art professors arranged virtual tours of galleries and museums for their students.

Ceramics professor Lisa Conway drafted her husband, a professional video editor, into helping her create a series of instructional videos for her students. As with baking students, Conway's classes received boxes of supplies and equipment to complete class projects at home.

"For the month before spring classes started, I was working hard and was busier than I've ever been in my 30 years of teaching college," Conway said. "We're all making videos. We're all dealing with how students get their supplies and materials. We're all completely changing how we function in this universe. We're all reinventing our classes from scratch."

Learning from each other



Bruce Elgort

Professors have been sharing best practices and tips with one another as they develop their skills to deliver education online.

Computer Technology Professor Bruce Elgort has become something of a go-to source for many of his colleagues during this shift. Elgort, a two-time Exceptional Faculty Award winner, has a long professional history in the tech field and already used many online tools, including Slack and videos, in his teaching.

This spring, Elgort taught his classes using the synchronous modality, which means the classes meet the same time online as they would in the classroom. (“Asynchronous” refers to online classes that have no set time.)

“The most difficult part of going online is learning new software and learning to shoot video,” said Elgort, who has provided tips and tricks to faculty on this subject and others.

Faculty also have had a great resource in the college’s eLearning department, which oversees the college’s many online learning offerings. Even before COVID-19, more than a third of Clark College students were taking at least one class with online components.

In fact, several programs are taught entirely online in Business Administration, Network Technology, and Psychology. They provide students the flexibility they need in balancing college, work and family. More eLearning programs come online each year.

“Offering our business programs entirely online will allow our students to successfully complete their desired degrees regardless where they live,” says **Business Administration Professor Adnan Hamideh**. “It will also attract working people who did not think about going to school because

their work hours conflict with a school schedule.”

A More Flexible Future

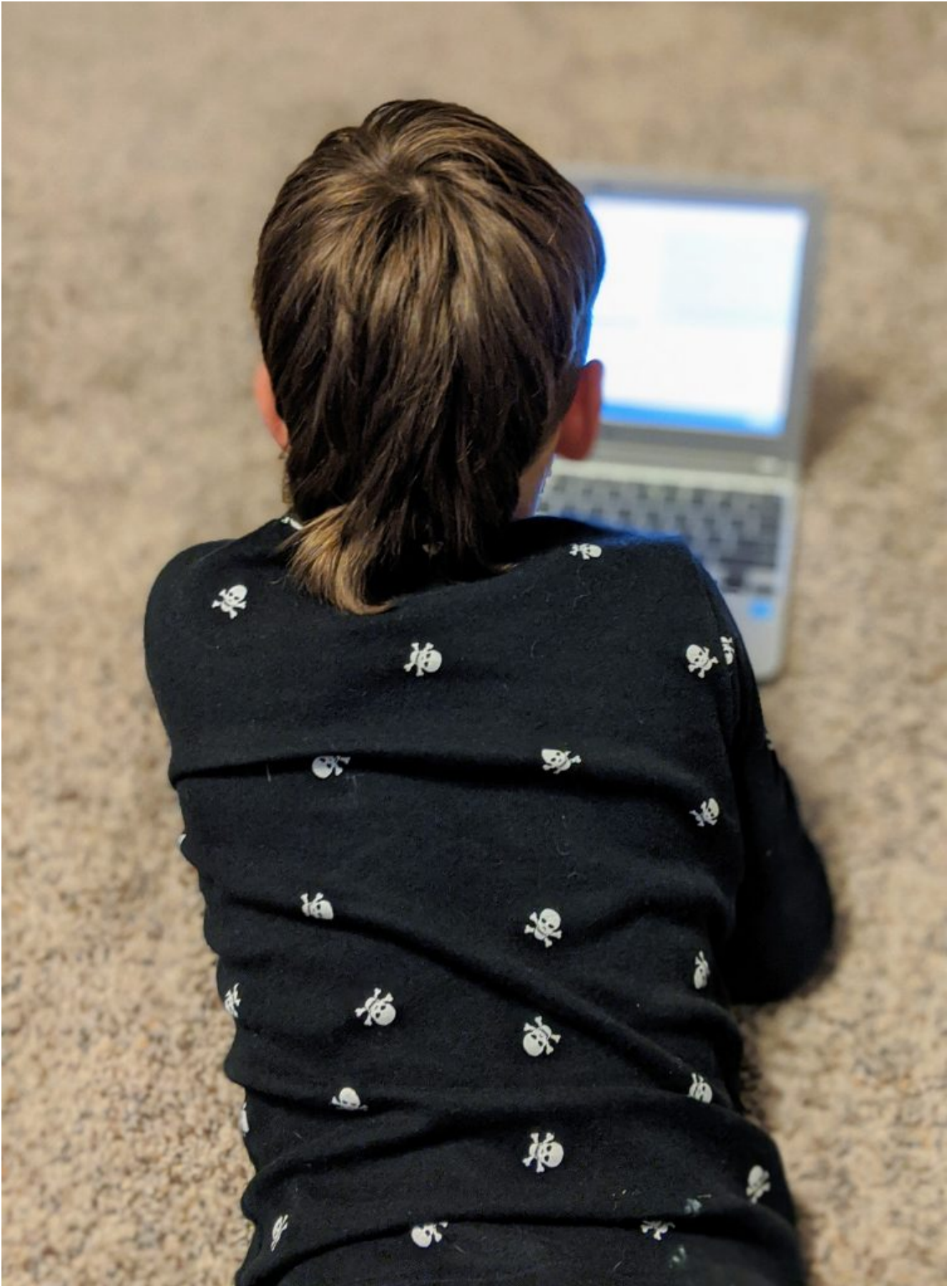
Clark College has already announced that summer and fall classes will be offered primarily online, with some in-person labs conducted in career technical classes that require hands-on learning, using social distancing and safety precautions. But even when it becomes safe to congregate in large groups again, the current move to remote education may leave lasting changes on higher education.

“Moving past COVID-19, I think more programs will go online as professors and students gain confidence,” said Bruce Elgort. “Professors and students enjoy personal interactions with one another. Most would not have chosen this sudden shift to remote learning. But through the process, many have acquired a taste for eLearning. It is a powerful tool. In the future, professors will have opportunities to blend different teaching modalities to include face-to-face and online instruction.”

“No one really know what will happen in this next six months and how it impacts what we do at Clark College,” said Alison Dolder. “This experience has taught us that we are highly adaptable and that we can learn new technology. With each adjustment, we decide how to move forward—with our students’ success in mind.”

Learn more: Watch this YouTube video for more stories about Clark College art faculty adapting to remote teaching.

A Little Penguin's view of quarantine



Clark 24/7 has been reaching out to members of the college community to learn how they're coping with, and adapting to, life during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, we share an interview

conducted by Dean of Student Affairs Cath Busha and Counseling and Health Center Professor Dr. Bevyn Rowland with Busha's 7-year-old son, Oliver. Busha and Rowland are both still working remotely from home, while Oliver is now completing second grade online.

"We appreciated this chance to talk with him about these issues as a check-in," Busha said. Their conversation reflects many of the emotions and logistics being experienced by members of the Clark College family—not just staff and faculty, but also the 25 percent of Clark students who have dependent children.

Busha & Rowland: Why have we been working from home and why have you been learning from home?

Oliver: Because of the COVID-19 going on. If we went to work and school, we could get sick and get other people sick, especially older people. and they could die.

B&R: How do you feel about COVID-19?

O: I feel 'hassed'—like happy and sad together. I'm happy because I get to have more time with my parents, and I'm sad because I don't get time with my friends. I only get time with my friends on Google Hangouts.

B&R: How has it been to be home with us?

O: Great! Because I get more time with my parents, which is great because my parents are some of the best parents you could ask for, and I get to watch *Star Wars* movies.

B&R: What are some things you've done since we've all been working and learning from home together?

O: I've put on magic shows, I created an alarm system with a safe that I've turned into a time capsule and buried; I will open it in one month. I also camped on the trampoline and read *Mr. Wolf's Class* and *New Kid*. I've made apple hand pies, caramel corn, and soft pretzels. Also, some nights at 8

p.m. we howl to show support for first responders.

B&R: What are some frustrating things about being home?

O: That I don't get to see my friends. I also miss Pizza Day at school. Seesaw [an online learning tool used by elementary schools] can be hard. My teacher posts a bunch of things. I finish one, and then I have like six more to do. It can be tiring.

B&R: What advice do you have for other kids who are at home?

O: Stay home, stay safe, have fun.

B&R: What advice do you have for parents?

O: Stay home, stay safe, and spend as much time with your kids as you can.

Making business ideas a reality



Alison Warlitner works to create a custom order for the business she and her husband created with support from Clark Entrepreneurs' Pitch Fest contest.

As the entry deadline approaches for Pitch Fest 2020 at Clark College, last year's winners say participating in the *Shark Tank*-like competition sponsored by Clark Entrepreneurs made an enormous difference in moving their business to the next level.

Teams of Clark College students are invited to apply for an opportunity to pitch their entrepreneurial business ideas at Pitch Fest 2020. The competition is open to any Clark College students enrolled full time from fall 2019 through spring 2020 and who maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA. The deadline to apply is 8:00 p.m. on Friday, January 31. See details and apply online at clarkpitchfest.com/.

Last year, when Clark College students Alison Warlitner and her husband, Scott Warlitner, entered the 2019 Pitch Fest competition, they hoped to glean expert advice from the business-owner judges. The couple recently had begun making CBD-infused bath bombs in their home, marketing them under the business name Cherry River CBD. Ali and Scott

advanced to the competition's final round of top three student businesses—and they won.



Scott and Alison Warlitner met actor Jim Belushi when they were a sponsor at the 2019 Portland Waterfront Blues Festival.

Fast-forward one year after its Pitch Fest success. Cherry River CBD has tripled its gross sales, connected with capital investors, and hired their first employee, who markets their products at vendor trade shows. Emboldened by their Pitch Fest success, Ali pitched their business to a *Shark Tank* producer hearing pitches in Portland. Although they weren't invited to pitch on camera on the TV show, the experience pushed the Warlitners to keep going. Last summer they were invited to be a sponsor of Portland's Waterfront Blues Festival. Actor Jim Belushi, who owns a cannabis farm in southern Oregon's Rogue Valley, hung out in their booth.

Scott, a fine arts student at Clark, will graduate at the end of winter quarter. Ali, a Clark graduate, is pursuing an accounting degree at Washington State University Vancouver and plans to graduate in spring 2021. They live in The Dalles, Oregon, 90 miles from Vancouver. Four days a week, they drive to their classes—90 minutes, each way. Their sons, ages 3 and 5, attend the college's Child and Family Studies program.

The couple met when both were enlisted in the U.S. Navy in Virginia. After completing active-duty service, they moved to the Pacific Northwest, where Ali grew up. But one thing hampered their new life: Scott suffered from chronic pain due to injuries he sustained while in the military. Originally a nonbeliever in CBD, he was treating it with narcotics prescribed by the VA. But after Scott began taking CBD daily to relieve his pain, he realized the cannabinoids worked, and he stopped taking the narcotics.

This experience led the couple to begin thinking about creating their own CBD business. And, as luck would have it, this is when Ali walked by a poster advertising Pitch Fest outside her math class at Clark College. Enrolling in the contest forced the Warlitners to clearly articulate their business plan, refine their marketing materials, and answer tough questions posed by judges. It also provided them with mentorship from successful entrepreneurs that helped them take the next steps in their business.

“We’re absolutely a success story,” says Ali. “While we would have made those steps eventually, Pitch Fest is the reason we were able to move so quickly in establishing ourselves as a viable business. We wouldn’t be where we were today if not for the help we received from Pitch Fest, Clark College and the Clark Entrepreneurs.”

The Warlitners produce their CBD-infused bath, beauty and wellness products in their home. The hemp oil is grown on Ali’s cousin’s farm in Woodburn, Oregon.

Cherry River has been featured twice in *Broccoli*, a Portland-based magazine created by and for women who use cannabis. Ali has spoken on a couple of podcasts about being a veteran, a business owner, a full-time college student and a mother of young children.

“I’ve become a sought-after formulator in the cannabis world,”

Ali says. "I like to bake. It's just with different ingredients."

So far, Ali and Scott have invested all profits back into their company. In 2020, they hope to start paying themselves a salary. They also are considering opening a production facility in Hawaii. Learn more at <https://www.cherryriver.net/>

About Pitch Fest

January 31 at 8 p.m.: Deadline for Clark College student teams to apply

February 21 from 9 a.m. to noon: Top 24 teams participate in Clark Entrepreneurs trade show at Gaiser Hall Student Center. The free event is open to the public. In the afternoon, the top 12 teams pitch their business ideas to the judges in a format similar to the TV show "Shark Tank."

March 6 final round: Top 3 teams polish their pitches and present to judges; closed to the public.

About Clark Entrepreneurs

Founded in 2016, Clark Entrepreneurs is a student program under the Associated Students of Clark College. The club welcomes any student interested in starting a business. Its purpose is to encourage and support students with their entrepreneurial ideas and expose them to the resources to help grow ideas, support real student business ventures, and scale businesses. Program Director is Nathan Webster. Student Rebekah Sharp-Regnier recently became marketing event director. Learn more at <https://clarkpitchfest.com/about-us/>

Read more about the Warlitners and other student veterans in Clark College Foundation's Partners magazine article.