

# The joy of giving



Backpacks collected during the 2017 Backpack Project.

Earlier this year, Clark College employees donated 91 backpacks filled with school supplies to the children of Clark students—a new record for what has become known as the Backpack Project.



Approximately one quarter of Clark's students have dependent children, and back-to-school supplies can easily run to more than \$100 per child. Recipients for the backpacks are identified each year by staff in Clark College departments like Workforce Education Services, Financial Aid, Veterans Affairs, Transitional Studies, Child and Family Studies, and the Office of Diversity

and Equity.

As one family wrote, "Thank you, thank you, thank you! This is absolutely amazing and I am so taken with your generosity and thoughtfulness. Our family is so grateful to you!"

This was the 14th year that employees have participated in the Backpack Project. We want to acknowledge and thank all of you who have helped to provide more than 822 backpack over the years.

Each backpack is unique because the project's organizers ask the children what their favorite colors and characters are. Many donors go out of their way to find the perfect backpack for a child, scouring stores or the Internet for the perfect Seahawks or My Little Pony theme. Others load the backpack with extra supplies and fun items. This year, one Clark employee created a book about her own horses for a young child who liked horses.

More than 70 employees donated backpacks to the project this year, for a variety of reasons. Some do not have children at home but want to participate in the excitement of back-to-school time, while others are parents who are working to instill the value of giving in their own children. Many departments also make this a team project and take an after-work shopping trip



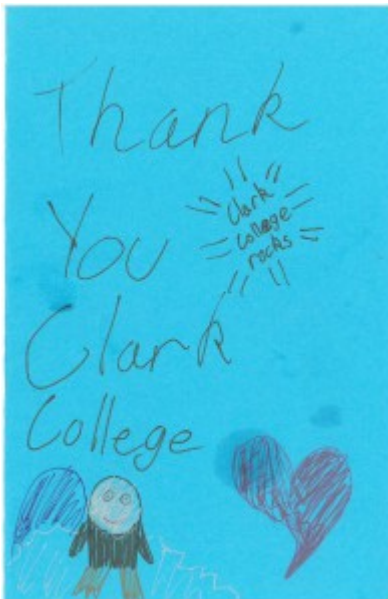
together. Whatever their reasons, the Backpack Project brings as much joy to those who give as it does to those who receive the backpacks.

If you would like to participate in the Backpack Project next year, watch for a collegewide email sent in July; backpacks are generally due by mid-August so that children can receive them before the new school year starts.

*This article was contributed by Planning & Effectiveness Administrative Assistant Cindy Heck and ctclink Manager Susan Maxwell, who co-organize the Backpack Project each year. Photos contributed by Clark College Workforce Education Services and by student parents.*

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## Clark employees' generosity is always in style



We are in the midst of change at Clark College. The STEM building is being built and people will begin moving next year. ctclink has many of us reviewing our business processes and anticipating a modern ERP (enterprise resource planning) college-wide management software. The new Academic Plan is focusing us on developing academic pathways that will lead students to gainful employment and further education.

What hasn't changed is Clark College employees' willingness to go above and beyond to help students. This year, for the 12th

annual Backpack Project, employees donated backpacks and supplies to 52 school-aged children of Clark College students. The support and generosity of employees has sustained this project through the years, and employees tell us that they always look forward to the announcement of the project.

Names of children are gathered and referred by Workforce Education Services, Financial Aid, Veterans Affairs, Child & Family Services, and the Diversity Center. Each child is asked their favorite color and characters so the donors can find a backpack that is specific to that child. The characters from the children's movie *Frozen* were the favorite this year.

This year we received some wonderful drawings and heartfelt thank-you notes we wanted to share with you.



*"Hey, thank you for the backpack, it was very helpful for me. I know you guys didn't have to do it but I'm very thankful so thank you!"*

*"Thank you so much for the backpacks, you have no idea how much this helped out our family."*

*"I ♥ my backpack!"*

No matter how things change, we know we can count on Clark

employees to keep helping our students and their families, year after year. Thank you!

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## Update on ctclink

As the new Clark ctclink Project Director, I am pleased to relay the good news we received from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges: Clark College's Go Live date for ctclink (i.e., PeopleSoft) has been deferred to August of 2016. This additional time will benefit Clark for the following reasons:

- Since most of our current student and business processes are based on our 40-year-old legacy management systems, the college now has the time to plan and implement more effective and efficient processes that will fully utilize PeopleSoft's capabilities.
- The college now has the time to correct inaccuracies and duplications within our current system. This will enable us to start anew with clean data.
- We have the time to learn from the FirstLink colleges' transition, receive appropriate training, and identify clear expectations for each employee group in how PeopleSoft will impact our work. The FirstLink colleges (Tacoma Community College and Community Colleges of Spokane) will go live in August 2015.

The Clark ctclink project timeline has been adjusted:

- April 1 through October 1: Clark is taking a break from large scale discussions about ctclink as a few teams focus on specific tasks which will prepare us for the project.
  - The Technology and Security Team will continue to

work on an overall strategy to solidify Clark College's data security plan.

- The Alignment Team will continue to work on aligning student and business processes with PeopleSoft.
- The room scheduling software (R25) will be replaced with 25Live—a component of PeopleSoft. The new software has better functionality and can be implemented independent of PeopleSoft.
- October 1, 2015: A new ClarkNet site for ctclink will be launched to keep the college informed.
- After October 1, 2015: The other teams, Communication, Training, and Go Live Weekend, will resume.

I am confident that PeopleSoft will be implemented; this will not be another Rehosting scenario. If you have questions about the project at this stage, please direct them to me and/or check out <https://connect.clark.edu/sites/ctclink>.

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## **Make Your Voice Heard: Take Clark's Climate Survey**

On January 27, all Clark College employees will receive an email from Shanda Diehl requesting that they complete the Clark College Climate Survey 2015.

The information collected from this survey will allow the College to identify the positive and negative aspects of our climate. The executive leadership is committed to make improvements to climate based on the results of this survey. We cannot do this without your feedback!

The college has a proven track record to make improvements to the climate based on past climate survey results. Based on the 2011 and 2013 climate survey results, administration has made strides to improve in the following areas:

- Shared governance,
- Diversity,
- Communication,
- Compensation, and
- Food service.

Executive leadership regularly reports the improvement activities related to the climate's strengths and weaknesses to the Board of Trustees.

The results of the survey are anonymous. No login is required. Planning and Effectiveness will not report individual responses, nor will it report aggregate responses where individuals may be identified through their responses to demographic questions. Any individual names provided in the open-ended comment section will be removed before publishing the results.

The success of the survey rests with you. Every employee here at Clark College plays a crucial role in enhancing student learning. The more satisfied employees are with the climate of their work environment and their ability to influence it, the more effective their work becomes to improve student learning.

Because each employee plays a role in student learning, each employee's perspective is equally important, including those of part-time employees, adjunct faculty members, full-time temporary and tenured/tenure-track faculty, classified staff, and administrators. We need everyone's input!

Please look for Diehl's email on January 27, 2015. The survey will be available online; a link will also be available on the ClarkNet homepage. Your time is a guaranteed investment in improving the climate of Clark College.