

Vision Quest



Associate Vice President of
Planning and Effectiveness
Shanda Diehl

On Opening Day 2013, Associate Vice President for Planning and Effectiveness Shanda Diehl explained the college's approach to creating its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. "Since we will use the strategic plan as a tool to make decisions, we need all of your feedback during its development," she said, mapping out how that would take place.

The process began on Opening Day with employees being randomly assigned to groups of 12. These groups met for an hour to discuss how each individual member helped support student learning, which the college has identified as the common purpose that unites all departments and programs.

These groups will meet again in October, November, January, and February to discuss different aspects of student learning.

After the small-group meetings, employees gathered near Andersen Fountain for a complimentary lunch, where some of them discussed the previous activity.



New Career Services employee
Alex Martin

“You tend to stick with the people you know, so it was a good way to meet new people at the college,” said Facilities Services Office Assistant Ramona Sott. “And it’s important to be talking about this: How do we help the students here get a better education, and get them to stay?”

“I thought it was fun,” said Career Services employee (and Clark ’09 graduate) Alex Martin, who found herself providing feedback for the college’s future on her first day of work. “We had custodians in our group, people in Admissions, all kinds of employees—it was great. I learned a lot.”

Clark’s Foodie Future



Arriving in late August, The Mighty Bowl was the first food cart to move onto campus, opening September 13.

This past fall, the Culinary Arts Taskforce was formed to work on two things: revamping the Culinary Arts, Food program and improving food-service options on the main campus. Recently the Taskforce released its findings, and they could indicate dramatic changes not just in the program and the college's dining options, but in the look and shape of the campus as well.

The Taskforce quickly recognized one major challenge facing the current Culinary Arts program: In order to stay up-to-date with modern culinary trends, students needed instructional time to develop skills and learn about new tools and technology, theories, dietary restrictions, and global cuisine. However, the program was also responsible for most of the food production at the college, which left little time for purely instructional lab activities and skill development.

At the same time, because Culinary Arts students were responsible for producing most of the food at campus, food service was limited to their class hours—and both students and employees often need to eat at times outside those hours.

Looking at these challenges, it became clear to the Taskforce

that the Culinary Arts program needed to stop being the sole source of food on campus. The solution: Bring in local vendors, in a limited capacity, to augment food service for the campus community. Meanwhile, Culinary Arts students would take part in more-rigorous academics and updated lab activities—while still gaining hands-on experience by providing some food service to the college. The program would also move to a cohort model and be designed to qualify for accreditation by the American Culinary Federation.

In order to accomplish all this, however, something else needed to change: the facility itself. Students would need access to SMART classrooms and a demonstration kitchen (currently the program has neither) to learn the new curriculum, and outside vendors would want a larger, more inviting space in which to set up shop. So the Taskforce also recommended adding a second story to the northwest corner of Gaiser Hall and remodeling the first-floor section to house a modern food court with different cook-to-order kiosks, a new bakery area, and a modern dining room. The second floor would include the SMART classrooms, offices, and other facilities required for a modern Culinary Arts program.

“[A] renovation, while costly, is an investment in the program, an investment in student retention, and an investment in the goals of the Strategic Plan,” the Taskforce’s final proposal concludes. “The creation of an inviting space for students, faculty, and staff to congregate as members of a community will serve Clark College for decades to come.”

The next step will be a predesign study to accurately budget for these renovations—after that, the fundraising process to make these proposals reality can begin. Meanwhile, the Culinary Arts, Food program is not taking new students. Learn more about the proposed changes online at http://www.clark.edu/academics/programs/culinary_arts/Taskforce_Proposal.pdf.

Meet Your (Lunch) Makers

So where will students and employees eat while the Culinary Arts, Food program goes through its transformation? In addition to currently existing food kiosks around campus and the Bakery (which will continue service during the revamp), three new food carts will set up shop on the walkway on the east side of Gaiser Hall. Here they are, with links to their websites and expected beginning month of service:

- Foody Blues BBQ
- Mighty Bowl
- Chewy's Really Big Burritos

Photo: Clark College/Hannah Erickson

A Regional Resource



Left to right, Associate Vice President of Corporate & Continuing Education Kevin Kussman, Vice President of Student Affairs Bill Belden and Vice President of Instruction Dr. Tim Cook meet with the residents of White Salmon to discuss potential course offerings in a satellite location.

As the economy of the Columbia River Gorge has developed, so have its needs for a more highly trained workforce. Recently members of two Gorge school districts reached out to Clark College to help meet those needs.

Representatives from Clark College recently attended two public meetings in the Columbia River Gorge to hear public input and gauge interest in offering college-level classes to the communities of Klickitat and Skamania counties. The public meetings were hosted by the Stevenson-Carson School District and the White Salmon Valley School District. Held at the Wind River Education Center in Carson and at the Columbia High School Library in White Salmon during February and March, the meetings were well attended by a cross-section of prospective

students, business leaders, educators and economic development advocates.

More than 200 people attended the meeting in Carson, indicating the interest was there for college-level classes. Although there was a smaller number in attendance in White Salmon, the participants there clearly stated the need for educational programming to train for workforce needs, particularly for the growing high-tech sector in the Gorge. What Clark College officials still need to determine is how many and what types of classes to offer.

“Clark has explored the option of offering for-credit classes in the Gorge before, but we know that demands change with changing economic times,” said Clark College President Bob Knight. “We really needed to hear that the interest was there for a model that we could fiscally maintain and one that would be sustainable for the workforce needs of these communities.”



Columbia High School principal Troy Whittle gives Clark College insight into the high school population in White Salmon.

Clark College is already offering adult basic education and ESL classes through the WorkSource offices in Stevenson and White Salmon and will continue those classes. The proposed expansion would bring general education offerings to the

region—classes that would have broad appeal and that also could be taken by Running Start students.

“White Salmon Valley School District is excited about developing partnerships with Clark College and Stevenson-Carson School District for expanding college-level course opportunities that will better meet the growing needs of our students, adult learners, and communities,” said Dr. Jerry A. Lewis, Superintendent of White Salmon Valley School District.

Clark College may begin offering a limited number of classes this summer; the formal kickoff is scheduled for fall quarter in September. Classes in Skamania County will be offered at the Wind River Education Center, formerly the middle school for the Stevenson-Carson school district. A location for White Salmon classes is being discussed.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley