

Outstanding employees



Stage Manager Mark Owsley steps out from behind the scenes to accept a service award at Opening Day.

Opening Day on Sept. 12 marked several celebrations of employee contributions to the college. Employees were recognized for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service to the college. Three employees—Facilities Services Maintenance Mechanic Daniel Simonson, Engineering professor Christina Barsotti, and Mathematics professor Tracy Nehnevaj—earned recognition for 25 years of service to the college, while Stage Manager Mark Owsley stepped out from behind the backdrop to accept a plaque for 30 years of service. And, in a surprise gesture, Board of Trustees chair Jada Rupley presented President Bob Knight with a Clark basketball jersey commemorating his 10th anniversary as college president.



President Knight holds a basketball jersey given to mark his 10th anniversary as college president.

“Currently the average tenure of a community college president is three and a half years,” noted Rupley. “We’re lucky to have someone who’s remained dedicated to our college for 10 years.”

Additionally, the recipients of the annual Exceptional Faculty Awards and quarterly Classified Staff Excellence Awards were recognized. The faculty awards are announced at Commencement and the quarterly Classified staff awards are announced each quarter. Additionally, two Classified Excellence Award nominees were announced to be recipients of the annual Exceptional Classified Staff Awards: Aleksandr Anisimov and Tia Schmidt.

Five Clark College employees received Presidential Coins during Opening Day. Introduced in 2007 by President Bob Knight, the coin is given to faculty and staff members who provide exemplary service to Clark students, the college and the community. The honorees are decided by the president and are kept secret until the names are announced—generally on Opening Day in the fall or during the annual State of the College address in January. The newest coin recipients are:

Sean Janson

Sean Janson started at Clark as an assistant men’s soccer

coach in 2007. He became head coach of the women's soccer team in 2014, and has led the Penguins to be one of the most dominant forces in their league. In 2017, they won the Northwest Athletic Conference South Region Title for the first time in college history. Additionally, the team held a 2.94 cumulative GPA, and eight out of nine sophomores on the team signed letters of intent at four-year institutions.



Roberta Roche, who has worked at Clark for more than 40 years, accepts a Presidential Coin at the 2017 Opening Day employee recognition.

Roberta Roche

Roberta Roche first joined Clark in 1973 as a part-time Clerk-Typist. She has served in several positions and departments over her four decades at Clark; currently, she is a Program Specialist 2 in the Office of Financial Aid, where she serves as the central point of contact for outside agencies who provide funding for students. During the 2016-2017 year, she processed more than \$1.2 million in outside agency funding. Knight remarked, "One outside agency representative recently commented that he has worked with numerous colleges, and the support and direction that she provided far outweighed any other help that he had received."

Sherry Smith

Sherry Smith serves as the STEM Administrative Services Manager. She was commended for her role in moving departments into the new STEM Building with few problems. “She works quietly but she is very effective in supporting the STEM unit,” said Knight.

Toccara Stark

Toccara Stark has served as Director of Marketing at Clark since August 2015 and, Knight said, “It is hard to think of anyone who has had such a great effect in such a short amount of time.” Stark has led the college’s rebranding effort and has been instrumental in many college initiatives. She also works regularly with Clark College Foundation and community stakeholders on behalf of the college.

Kristy Taylor

Faculty member Kristy Taylor was recently named the director of Clark’s Dental Hygiene program after serving as interim director for two years. She oversaw the program’s recent and successful accreditation review. Taylor also serves on several college committees, including Academic Planning. Knight called her “a strong advocate for Clark students.”

To see more photos from Opening Day, visit the college’s Flickr album.

Read more about Opening Day on our news site.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Summer 2017 Classified Excellence Award: Rebecca Udwary



Rebecca Udwary

Congratulations to **Rebecca (Becky) Udwary**, recipient of the 2017 Summer Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Udwary is Secretary Senior for the Art & Theatre department and is described as someone who “demonstrates her commitment to the College Community in a number of ways.” Whether Udwary is serving on Clark College’s Safety Committee, assisting someone in need, coordinating usher coverage for all Clark College Theatre productions, applying data analysis techniques to find equitable practices that better accommodate the needs of students and her department, or greeting folks with a warm, friendly smile – she is seen as a “valued member of the Penguin Nation.”

Other comments about Udwary include:

Udwary is described as someone who treats those she meets with respect and understanding. One nominator wrote, "Becky maintains a welcoming, upbeat, 'can-do' attitude within our whole department. No problem is too small or big for Becky. I've seen her greet lost people tumbling in off the street with the same graciousness as she would the president of the college. Becky does a particularly good job of meeting the needs of both faculty and students in the Art department, and does an excellent job of communicating back and forth across that spectrum. Students and faculty all appreciate how welcoming, informative and helpful Becky is."

Udwary is not only described as welcoming and supportive, but as someone with many diverse talents and interest areas. In fact, one nominator wrote, "Her talents know no bounds." With a former career in information technology (IT), Udwary applies her skills in graphic design, social media promotion, and troubleshooting to assist the needs of her department. Outside of her interest in technology, "Becky has enthusiastically taken classes in photography and ceramics, as evidence of her comfort in being in the 'learner's seat' at Clark – a good role model for us all!"

Directly related to her job, Udwary models excellent work performance and outstanding customer service to the college and broader community. A nominator mentioned, "Becky operates as a highly skilled professional, assisting the Art department with advanced administrative techniques and acumen. Each quarter, Becky compiles a spreadsheet that outlines all of the Art classes, class times, instructors, and class locations. This spreadsheet enables students and faculty to quickly determine the most efficient means of addressing their needs. It is an invaluable resource."

Udwary not only provides great assistance to her department, but also does so for Clark College's Safety Committee. One nominator wrote, "In addition to being pleasant, helpful, and willing to help others on campus, Becky also directly

contributed to making Clark College a safer place to work and study.” An example of this is when Udvary volunteered “to expand her role as an Emergency Building Coordinator to serve as a member of the Emergency Communications Team and acting as the South Campus Lead. In that role she helped to restructure the radio communications protocols for the Emergency Building Coordinators (EBC’s), took a lead role in reprogramming all EBC radios, found time to help the Emergency Manager conduct comprehensive testing of two separate radio systems, provided training to her fellow EBCs on the new radio protocols, and took on a lead role in coordinating communications during the evacuation drills that were conducted on main campus in May.”

Congratulations, as well, to all nominees for the 2017 Summer Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award:

Jessica Beach is Secretary Senior for Transitional Studies. She is described as an excellent employee who displays a “can-do” attitude, is tenacious when faced with problems, knowledgeable, thorough and efficient, and provides outstanding customer service. She is also commended for attending trainings to “increase her skills as a supervisor and understanding of labor law.”

Additionally, nominators say, Beach goes above and beyond by offering to take on additional tasks, contributing creative solutions, and extending her great customer service to other departments. One nominator said, “Jessica is thorough and efficient in the way that she supports 65 employees in the Transitional Studies Division (50 faculty and 15 staff). She is quick to respond to emails, phone calls, and in-person inquiries. When there are problems, she is an excellent researcher and digs into the details and stays with it until everything is sorted out.”

Below are comments from Beach’s colleagues:

- “I sincerely appreciate Jessica and her top-notch

organizational skills. I know that I couldn't do any part of my job— whether it's teaching or working as division chair— without stellar staff like her."

- "Jessica is very supportive and assisting; she responds to needs quickly, and is always there to either assist with things directly or to help identify the right person if a request is outside of her role. I know that if I have a question or request Jessica will take care of it in a timely and thorough manner. I really appreciate this about her."
- "Jessica is always willing to help me navigate the paperwork involved with attending conferences [and] ordering supplies. She is very professional and timely and knows what she is doing."
- "Jessica is very knowledgeable! She is patient in her training and shows appreciation for a job well done."
- "Jessica does a great job of keeping the team moving toward our goals, maintaining a productive work environment."
- "Jessica is an optimistic and enthusiastic team member, and she's not only good at collaborating, but she also makes it fun. The work environment is made better by Jessica's presence: She creates a welcoming and productive work space here, and this helps everyone else do their job more easily."

Roslyn Leon Guerrero is Administrative Assistant 4 for the Office of Diversity and Equity. Colleagues praised her support of the Office of Diversity and Equity as a safe space on campus for anyone who needs it. They also noted her "strong commitment and advocacy for students and coworker of color" and that she "is devoted to supporting those in the community who have been most vulnerable." Always providing a welcoming atmosphere with a "warm and friendly face," Leon Guerrero "helps to break down barriers, eliminates fears and helps students be successful while still honoring their authentic selves." Recently, she received a full scholarship for the

National Pacific American Leadership Institute (NAPALI) – Hawaiian word for “the cliffs” – to continue training as a Pacific American Emerging Leader. Additionally, in 2016, Leon Guerrero was appointed by Governor Jay Inslee to be a Commissioner for the Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs. As a Commissioner, she is one of the 12 advisory board members appointed to be a voice for Washington’s Asian Pacific American communities.

Below are comments from Leon Guerrero’s colleagues:

- “One way she provides support is by serving as one of the Advisors for APIC (Asian Pacific Islander Club). Roslyn has worked with students to help organize culturally specific events and activities on campus, created and maintained relationships with community organizations servicing the API community, which in turn creates resources and opportunities for our students. Roslyn’s advocacy for students stretches beyond our campus and will have a lasting impact on our community.”
- “She is a trusted resource who will advocate for what is equitable and fair.”

Gayla Shanahan is a Grounds and Nursery Specialist 3 in the Grounds Department. She is said to go above and beyond in working to keep the main campus in such great shape. The campus is often described as beautiful and lush, and Shanahan plays an important role in making that happen.

Below are comments from Gayla’s colleagues:

- “I always see Gayla going above and beyond at work.”
- “She does an amazing job and deserves to be recognized for it.”
- “The areas of campus that she tends to are always so lush and beautiful.”
- “She really puts passion into her job and we all benefit from how hard she works.”

Spring Classified Staff Excellence Award: Aleksandr Anisimov



Aleksandr Anisimov

Congratulations to **Aleksandr Anisimov**, recipient of the 2017 Spring Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Anisimov is an eLearning Systems Specialist for the eLearning department and is described as someone who is “admired, respected, and appreciated by his peers and those he works with.”

Other comments about Anisimov include:

Anisimov is described as being someone who displays and exemplary work performance and “demonstrates what any

institution of higher learning should represent: professionalism, academic excellence, and commitment to education.” One individual commented, “Alex is dedicated, resilient, creative, patient and kind. I know if I have an issue, Alex will solve the problem and explain what he’s done to improve the system. He is so very humble, never demanding, yet firm in his convictions.”

Anisimov has much enthusiasm for what he does and goes out of his way to assist faculty and students alike. One person commented, “Numerous times per quarter, I have seen Alex run out of the office and over to the TechHub in the library to help a student with a particularly difficult laptop, tablet or phone issue. He wants to personally see the problem, gather the facts and propose a solution. Often the student is under deadline pressure and Alex is outstanding at bringing a calming presence and logic to the situation. He will also reach out and call students who have requested phone assistance with Canvas issues they are having.”

Anisimov is responsible for providing support for a variety of services and systems to a very diverse group (students, faculty, and staff). One nominator wrote, “Operating complex enterprise scale technology systems requires dedicated individual initiative delivered in a team environment. For example, when rolling out the new Canvas User Interface, Alex applied extra individual effort to maintain user confidence and support, while at the same time moved forward with the team to successfully achieve the implementation we had to complete.”

Described as someone who delivers a “high level of service,” Anisimov’s nominators say that he is “a highly valued member of the eLearning department and CLASS unit. He has a genuine enthusiasm for helping faculty and students. I often receive compliments from faculty and staff about the consistently high level of service that they receive from Alex. Courteous, polite, thorough, effective—are all terms that I have heard

frequently.”

Members of Anisimov’s team said, “As a co-worker, as a person, Alex is so worthy of this award!”

Congratulations, as well, to other nominees for the 2017 Spring Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award:

Kay Martinez is at Custodian 1 for the Custodial Services department. Kay is described as someone who is a hard worker and follows through on her assignments. One nominator said, “Almost every Monday and Wednesday when I arrive at the STEM building at 6:30 a.m., I see Kay Martinez hard at work. She is wiping down table tops and tidying classrooms or using her backpack vacuum cleaner on the ‘miles’ of carpet in the building.” Though working hard, she is described as always taking time to be welcoming towards faculty, staff, and students. One nominator said, “I look forward to saying, “Hello,” and exchanging a few words with her in the morning ... Kay’s excellent work ethic and affability have come up in conversations I have had with other STEM faculty and staff.” Other comments about Martinez include:

- “She is always willing to help. If she sees something needs doing, she just does it with a very positive attitude.”
- “Kay is thorough, conscientious and a pleasure to be around.”
- “You can just tell she is a very dedicated worker and she is very much appreciated.”
- “She and her staff have been amazing in keeping our areas clean, our classrooms clean, our boards cleaned, etc. It is wonderful.”
- “She is very focused on doing her work right the first time and completing each task with expediency. In all my encounters with Kay she has always showed a smile and a work ethic...”

Reesa McAllister is a Secretary Senior for the Computer Technology (CTEC) Division and is described as someone who has an “exemplary” work performance. McAllister brings a “balance to our chaotic and hectic high-tech CTEC division,” wrote one nominator. “She provides faculty with the peace of mind and assurance that whatever support our students or departments need will get done in a timely, efficient, and thorough process.” A faculty member from McAllister’s division recently shared that “Reesa should be noted for her flexibility ... She continues to expand her knowledge of our department and is an excellent resource for inquiring students and the public at large.” McAllister is someone who is confident and well organized, providing “excellent support for her division.” When challenges arise, McAllister not only provides support for her division, but will also offer support to other units. For instance, “Reesa has reached beyond her division by helping with activities necessary for the Culinary Arts remodel project (packing boxes and cleaning offices).” Overall, McAllister “demonstrates a cooperative spirit and does her part to make Clark College a positive environment for faculty, staff, students and all constituent groups.”

Other comments about McAllister include:

- “I appreciate her graceful diligence, her proactive approach, clear communication and delightful demeanor. Her positive attitude and warm/personal presence diffuses our stress.”
- “Reesa keeps us moving forward, keeps us honest, and keeps us super-organized and informed!”
- “Reesa demonstrates a cooperative spirit and does her part to make Clark College a positive environment for faculty, staff, students and all constituent groups.”

Amy Tam works as a Program Specialist 2 for Enrollment Services. Tam is described as an “exceptional employee” who “always has a welcoming smile and a positive attitude.” Working in the Welcome Center, Tam’s work “touches both new

and continuing students, as well as coworkers across multiple departments. Each person she encounters feels special and receives the highest excellence in service." Serving as an inspiration for her coworkers to "go above and beyond," Tam's commitment is described as "admirable."

Tam oversees the Student Ambassador Program, a leadership opportunity for students who are dedicated to serving Clark College. In this role, Tam is committed to not only supervising Student Ambassadors, but also assisting them in overcoming obstacles they may encounter while trying to finish their degree program. A nominator said, "A student was feeling defeated and needed someone to help them find perspective. Amy was that person, she listened and encouraged the student."

Another nominator said, "Amy is the employee and steward of higher education that the Clark College community deserves. She whole-heartedly devotes her time and energy as an advocate and mentor to both student and college staff."

Other comments about Tam include:

- "Amy is a people person who see the strengths in others, looks for opportunities to involve them, then allows them to lead."
- "I have appreciated her professionalism and consistent commitment towards student success for some of our most vulnerable populations."
- "Amy's dedication to helping others succeed is [a] great gift to Clark College and our community."
- "I have worked with Amy Tam since 2010 in some capacity and have never worked with a more consistently positive, upbeat, competent and helpful colleague!"
- Tam is overall described as someone who is "always doing what is best for the students and her co-workers. I could not ask for a better colleague than her."

Tia Schmidt is an Administrative Assistant 3 in the Nursing

Department and is described as someone who “consistently demonstrates excellence in her work.” Schmidt has “excellent attention to detail” and uses her experience in project management to assist in complex projects. A nominator said this about Schmidt: “During our implementation of new software for tracking student clinical requirements, Tia pitched in and helped team members with various aspects of onboarding students. This was a large-scale project, and Tia recognized that extra help was needed in order to make the project successful. Tia made phone calls to students and met with individual students to help them access the system when needed.”

Schmidt is described as a leader who takes initiative and as someone who is creative, helpful, and respectful. Schmidt’s nominator said, “Tia considers the team and department in everything that she does. She is inclusive and collaborative in her work, and takes actions based on the best interests of the department, unit and college. Tia is respectful of others and is sensitive to their needs. She goes out of her way to make sure people feel noticed and recognized for their efforts.”

Other comments about Schmidt include:

- “Tia takes a creative approach and finds ways to make our projects fun. She has a knack for identifying opportunities to enhance teamwork and build positive relationships.”
- “She is highly organized and solves problems with a systems focus.”
- “She has helped our department build positive relationships with community partners through work on the WSUV/Clark College Preceptor Event, Hilma Speights Foundation events, and others.”

Winter 2017 Classified Staff Award: David Sims



David Sims

Congratulations to **David Sims**, recipient of the 2017 Winter Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award.

Sims is an Information Tech Specialist 4 for the IT Service Center and has 35 years with Clark College. He is described as someone who goes "far beyond the call of duty, giving our customers one on one personal attention when they have high severity issues with technology."

Sims is described as being someone who embraces goals and assists in transitions to improve ITS and the larger college community. His nominator wrote, "David in the past year has stepped up as the technical lead of the service center group, taking on vastly different responsibilities than he has had over the past 35 years and he has absolutely flourished and become a vital leader of the group. His performance and dedication to the college is absolutely the foundation of his worth ethic; he is deeply rooted in making sure the campus faculty and staff have the tools they need to support our students."

Being "extremely skilled in process and procedure," Sims is able to provide solutions be the "rock" of his team, especially over the past year. Sims takes on the tough tasks and creatively produces unique solutions to challenges. For instance, "the service center was tasked with bringing in over 200 mobile devices for Windpws 10 upgrades, and David took this task and planned it out, created documentation, and ran scenarios before we went live. He came up with unique ways to make the Win 10 transition for our mobile laptop customers as easy and with the least impact as possible. David also trained all of the other technicians. This made our piece of the Windows 10 upgrade go extremely smooth, and his work ethic to get over 200 devices migrated to Win 10 was nothing short of amazing."

Congratulations as well to this winter quarter's other nominees:

Lorraine Browne Leedy is the Faculty Development Program Specialist at the Teaching and Learning Center. In her role,

Leedy organizes many training opportunities for the faculty and staff. She is described as someone who is “very efficient in executing her responsibilities” and is “an excellent customer-service ambassador who is willing to listen to someone in need and help.” She is respectful to the faculty, staff and anyone who needs her services. Leedy’s nominator describes her as a good communicator, someone who pays close attention to detail, a leader, respectful and someone who maintains a pleasing personality.

Reesa McAllister is a Secretary Senior for the Computer Technology (CTEC) Division and is described as someone who has an “exemplary” work performance. McAllister is “precise, thorough and efficient in her work” and will not only learn new skills, but goes “above and beyond by teaching her colleagues” in these areas as well. McAllister’s nominator states, “Faculty count on her and she goes out of her way to assist everyone coming into the unit office, calling on the phone, or emailing with questions and concerns. If Reesa does not know how to answer a question, she seeks out that answer. She does not stop there, however! She then shares that information with others’ in the unit who will benefit from having that information as well.” McAllister is someone who is honest, organized, and “should be noted for her flexibility and willingness to contribute to the transition with a secretary retiring and being replaced in the past couple of quarters.” She is “confident to take on tasks and responsibilities,” provides “excellent support,” and “engages throughout the campus and across units for the betterment of her division, unit and the college.”

Kate Poffenroth works as a Program Coordinator for Disability Support Services (DSS). Poffenroth’s nominator describes her as “an excellent, long-term employee who stands out in terms of her superb reliability and efficiency.” Poffenroth is said to be someone who is “extraordinary in terms of her ability to multi-task” and “arrives at the office with energy,

enthusiasm, and a great sense of humor that she shares with every person that she sees that day." Poffenroth often tracks "hundreds of details that require high-level processing" and understands the importance of being accurate in her reporting. DSS is in the process of implementing a new software and "Kate ... has been a quick, sharp learner, as she easily adopts new software processes and encourages others to make necessary changes." Poffenroth's nominator overall describes her as someone who is grounded in student-entered principles, concise, encourages others, and "builds collegial cohesion and teamwork."

Tia Schmidt is an Administrative Assistant in the Nursing Department and "has been providing excellent service for many years" and "is the glue that keeps the nursing program going." Schmidt is described as "smart and efficient" and "demonstrates her commitment to the college and to students by attending every pinning ceremony to cheer the student's success and to support the staff who present." Schmidt is quick to offer "assistance, suggestions, ideas, and empathy, all of which serve to facilitate problem resolution and encourage collaboration. She is respectful and models professional behavior and demeanor." Through challenges, Schmidt approaches her work with a "realistic, yet optimistic viewpoint" and "is a believer in pro-action versus reaction." Schmidt assists her group and helps them "deal with many new changes in both ACEN criteria and state regulations." In assisting, "Tia created resource notebooks for each of us so we would have these references at our fingertips as we moved forward with the adjustment process." Each day Schmidt "arrives at work she is cheerful, positive and ready to 'tackle' whatever task or responsibility we will face throughout the day." Nominators said, "I see her as very positive about the college and committed to doing all she can to be part of its successful future" and that "her work demonstrates the highest quality both in terms of quality, but also integrity. Tia is an excellent communicator both verbally

and in writing. She coordinates several monthly team meetings, stays accurate and timely with minutes and remains calm when meetings become stressful or chaotic. She consistently exhibits calmness and respect for fellow workers and students.”

Fall 2016 Classified Staff Award: Carmen Roman

Congratulations to **Carmen Roman**, recipient of the 2016 Fall Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!



Carmen Roman

Roman is a Program Specialist 2 for the Advising Services department. She is someone who is described by her nominators as “giving a consistent high-level of service to the students, the public, the community and to co-workers.”

Nominators had the following to say about Roman:

“Carmen’s unique ability to adjust to all modes and levels of communication is unmatched ... It is quite common for students from all walks of life and experiences to applaud this extra attention Carmen gives them during advising sessions. A recent example was relayed from the BMED department on how a student who met with Carmen spoke highly of her to the BMED department head and said that if it wasn’t for the encouragement she received from Carmen, she may have given up on her aspirations to work in the medical field.”

“Carmen is a consummate professional who combines her advising expertise with genuine care and concern for the best interests of students and of the college. She works actively and diligently to learn about and to provide information about all corners of the campus (important dates, instructional departments, program requirements, pre-reqs, assessment, financial aid, etc., etc.). She exemplifies the team approach that is necessary for effective delivery of student services. Knowing that students often “don’t know what they don’t know,” Carmen seeks to provide the most relevant pieces of information with the understanding that students’ needs change and evolve as they progress through their programs of study. She is outstanding at giving the right service, in the right manner, at the right time – all with seemingly limitless patience and kindness.”

Congratulations as well to this quarter’s other nominees:

Lorraine Browne Leedy is the Faculty Development Program Specialist at the Teaching and Learning Center. Many in the college community are aware of Lorraine’s “high-quality work”

and she “seems to always be able to lend a hand when called upon—she consistently finds time to help her coworkers.” Browne Leedy displays creativity and superior communication skills that are invaluable when planning and delivering many professional development activities each year. Her ability to plan, organize and manage events is why she is considered a key member of any new training initiative. Browne Leedy is described as a “valued college employee, excellent team member, subject matter expert, superior communicator, and terrific example of a high-performing employee.”

Kay Martinez works as a Custodian in the Custodial Services Department. Nominators describe Martinez as someone who works hard and always maintains a positive attitude. Though Martinez works tremendously hard to keep the STEM building looking its best, she always takes a moment to be courteous and to greet faculty, staff and students. Many view her as someone who is excellent at her job, has a strong work ethic, and will go out of her way to assist others. In fact, “Kay’s excellent work ethic and affability” come up in conversations with STEM faculty and staff. A nominator stated that Kay’s “dedication to Clark College should serve as a model for others.”

Hanna Maxwell is a Student Recruitment Specialist for the Enrollment Services Department and is described as an “essential” on the team. Maxwell is seen as someone who provides the best in customer service to students, parents, college partners, and community members while keeping a smile and positive attitude. A nominator stated, “no matter what the issue, she brings a determination to answer questions and find solutions in an accessible way.” Another wrote that she “brings a supreme level of care to her presentation and style. She has explained to hundreds, if not thousands, of students over her six months at Clark the benefits of a college education, and has helped many take the first step to changing their lives.”

Hannah Erickson is a Communications Specialist in the Communications and Marketing Department, but many know her as “the voice of Clark.” Being a steward of the voice requires masterful storytelling, openness, honesty, a caring nature, and the ability to be real and informative—all of which a nominator says Erickson represents. Erickson’s role can be challenging at times, but she always goes above and beyond and brings a “high level of integrity and dedication to her work.” One of her colleagues describes her as the “go-to for all things problem-solving. She is my sounding board from interpersonal work relationships, to navigating a project, to just finding the right word to make an email sound the way I want. She takes my ideas and makes them real with her great writing. I am happy to have her as my collaborator on all the things I do here at Clark.”

Tia Schmidt is an Administrative Assistant in the Nursing Department and sees things from an optimistic viewpoint. Her nominators describe her as “professional, respectful, thoughtful, mindful, and intentional in the way she approaches her job and her coworkers.” Unfailingly polite is how many view Schmidt’s interactions with faculty, staff and students, and she always seems to keep her eye on “the big picture.” A nominator wrote, “I have called on Tia repeatedly for assistance with a wide variety of needs/problems/challenges, and each time she has come through with information, guidance, resources, clarification, and direct help. She doesn’t complain or ask for any special acknowledgement—she just does her job to the best of her ability every day.”

Mitch Sott works in WPTE as a Maintenance Mechanic and is described as “indispensable” to the department—someone who “goes above and beyond the call of duty” to accomplish tasks. Students know Sott and the question isn’t, “What has Mitch fixed for us?” but rather, “What *hasn’t* he fixed for us?” Sott is described as positive role model, friendly, and a valuable asset to Clark College. Nominators said his

incredible work ethic is something for them to aspire to. "When we need something done, Mitch spends the time discussing it with us so that he knows exactly what we want and is able to accommodate our needs."

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Outstanding Employees



President Knight congratulates Linda Healy, left, and Vanessa Meyer on receiving the 2016 Exceptional Classified Staff Award.

Opening Day on Sept. 12 marked several celebrations of

employee contributions to the college. Employees were recognized for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service to the college. Four employees—Facilities Services Maintenance Mechanic Michael Conder, ITS Specialist David Sims, Business Professor Patti Serrano, and eLearning ITS Specialist Scott Coffie—earned recognition for 35 years of service to the college.

Additionally, the recipients of the annual Exceptional Faculty Awards and quarterly Classified Staff Excellence Awards were recognized. The faculty awards are announced at Commencement and the quarterly Classified staff awards are announced each quarter. Additionally, two Classified Excellence Award recipients were announced to be recipients of the annual Exceptional Classified Staff Awards: Linda Healy and Vanessa Meyer.

Six Clark College employees received Presidential Coins during Opening Day. Introduced in 2007 by President Bob Knight, the coin is given to faculty and staff members who provide exemplary service to Clark students, the college and the community. The honorees are decided by the president and are kept secret until the names are announced—generally on Opening Day in the fall or during the annual State of the College address. The newest coin recipients are:



Prof. Adnan Hamideh at Opening Day.

Adnan Hamideh

Originally joining Clark College in 2001 as a temporary business instructor, Dr. Hamideh received tenure in 2005 and now serves as the division chair of the Business Department. He holds a Doctorate of Education from Portland State University. President Knight called Dr. Hamideh a “tireless proponent” of the new Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Management degree that Clark will begin offering this academic year. In addition, Dr. Hamideh has led the development of the Business Core classes that help students prepare for business majors.



Rebecca Kleiva
receives a
Presidential
Coin.

Rebecca Kleiva

After graduating from Clark College in 2010, Kleiva was hired as a program coordinator in Eligibility Programs (now Workforce Education). She was promoted to her current position of program specialist in 2011. In this position, she has managed the Worker Retraining Financial Aid program, which helps support students as they transition into new career paths, and developed partnerships and strategies that have helped the program exceed its target enrollment every year.

“She has consistently performed her job duties with the highest degree of integrity and professionalism,” said President Knight. “She is an innovative thinker who continues to evaluate how she can improve processes and procedures to better serve her students. ... Her knowledge and eagerness to learn things that are outside of her normal job responsibilities help to ensure that the customer service that she provides to the public, community partners, co-workers and students is exemplary.”



Felisciana Peralta
receives a Presidential
Coin.

Felisciana Peralta

Felisciana “Felis” Peralta joined Clark College in 2008 as a Multicultural Retention Manager and was recently promoted to Director of the Office of Diversity and Equity.

“In her eight years at the college, she has been a strong advocate and partner on issues related to diversity and social justice, helping to create and support a supportive learning environment for our students,” said President Knight. “She is a champion of equity and inclusion and has played a vital role in the development of the college’s Diversity Plan, Social Equity Plan, and Diversity Center.”

Peralta sits on the Cultural Pluralism Committee, Academic Early Warning Committee, and the Incident Response Team at

Clark. On the state level, she has been a leader of the Multicultural Student Services Directors' Council and its annual Students of Color Conference. In June, she received the 2016 Val Joshua Award, recognizing her leadership in working towards eliminating racism and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all people.



Brenda Shular receives a Presidential Coin.

Brenda Shular

Brenda Shular graduated from Clark College in 1996 and was hired the following year as a purchasing assistant. She currently serves as a procurement and supply specialist in the college's Office of Purchasing and Central Services.

"She is a rock-solid employee who manages an enormous amount of orders in Purchasing in a timely way and with great customer service," said President Knight. "She's played a key role in getting the STEM Building orders processed in time to ensure furniture and equipment is ready for the building's opening."



Mike Silva receives a
Presidential Coin.

Mike Silva

Mike Silva graduated from Clark College in 2001 and was hired as a computer maintenance technician later that same year. He was promoted to an Information Technology Systems Specialist in 2002 and now serves as the supervisor of the Multimedia Department.

Last year, Silva led a collegewide effort to redesign the college's standard classroom technology configuration. Working with faculty and staff, he developed a new design that not only provides additional teaching tools for faculty, but saves nearly \$10,000 per classroom in equipment costs. He has also been part of the effort to make the college's new STEM Building ready for students and faculty.

"Over the past 14 years, he has been in a variety of technical roles providing outstanding customer service and a calm, reassuring voice able to solve the thorniest technical problems," President Knight said. "As the labs supervisor, he hired and mentored hundreds of student workers, preparing many for jobs and life after their graduation from Clark College. In mentoring these students, he clearly demonstrates that we all have a role to play in student success. ... He is an outstanding supervisor, technician, and friend to many on campus."



Prof. Caleb White receives a Presidential Coin.

Caleb White

Caleb White joined Clark College as a tenure-track welding instructor in 2013 and received tenure in 2016. He holds an associate degree in automotive and diesel technology from Universal Technical Institute and previously worked at Christensen Yachts, where he helped build some of the biggest luxury yachts in the world.

“He has not been at the college for a long time, but he has already made an impact,” said President Knight.

White has worked to redesign the welding curriculum to include more hands-on learning that can be translated directly into the workplace. Each quarter, his students use their skills to create a project. Projects have included aluminum stools for students to use in the welding lab, a large pressure vessel that can be used on job sites, and an aluminum fishing boat that was a star attraction of the college’s display at the 2016 Clark County Fair.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Summer 2016 Classified Staff Excellence Award: Joanne Emel



Joanne Emel

Congratulations to **Joanne Emel**, recipient of the 2016 Summer Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

First hired at Clark in 1997, Emel is the Program Specialist 2 for the Office of Instruction (OOI). She is known for her positive demeanor and her outstanding knowledge of Clark. In addition to her regular duties, Emel is an active member of the Emergency Response and Safety Team as well as part of the team preparing the college for the ctcLink transition. In addition, she recently assisted with the R25 conversion to 25Live.

Some of the following comments submitted on Emel's behalf by her colleagues reflect her positive spirit and team mentality:

"Joanne takes a moment to greet each and every person who comes through the door, helping to ensure that the OOI is a

welcoming space for the entire Clark community.”

“New staff members are enormously grateful for the way in which Joanne is always ready and able to assist when something is unknown or unfamiliar—she has been a huge help in the transition to Clark for new department members. We know we are able to approach her with questions, no matter how seemingly trivial, and she is consistently able to help even if the question falls outside of her work.”

“[She] is a cheerleader for Clark: She has encouraged new staff members to get involved with campus activities and is always able to provide positive anecdotes about the College.”

“Joanne’s long commitment to Clark, stellar work ethic and excellent level of service are inspiring to her colleagues, and this award is an ideal opportunity for these strengths to be recognized.”

Exceptional Faculty



The 2016 Exceptional Faculty Award recipients are, *left to*

right, Joseph Cavalli, Dr. Kathleen Chatfield, Heather McAfee, and Doug Mrazek.

During the 2016 Commencement ceremony, President Robert K. Knight announced the names of the recipients of the 2016 Clark College Exceptional Faculty Awards. The awards are presented annually to full-time and part-time faculty members. Nominations can be submitted by Clark College students, faculty, classified employees, administrators, alumni, Board members, and Foundation directors.

The awards are made possible through an endowed trust fund established by the Washington State Legislature and the Clark College Exceptional Faculty Endowment Fund, which was established in 1993. That fund provides recognition of exemplary work performance, positive impact on students, professional commitment, and other contributions to the college.

This year's Exceptional Faculty members are:

- Joseph Cavalli, instructor of history
- Dr. Kathleen Chatfield, instructor of business technology
- Heather McAfee, professor of geography
- Doug Mrazek, professor of French

Joe Cavalli, History

Joseph Cavalli has taught history at schools in Croatia, Italy, and Bahrain. He began teaching at Clark shortly after returning to the Pacific Northwest in 2006. For the past five years, he has also served as the director of Clark's award-winning Model United Nations program. He also teaches history through Clark College's non-credit Mature Learning program and at Mt. Hood Community College.

Cavalli says he sees history more as a context for understanding the world than as a rote memorization of names

and dates. "It's not about me giving students information," he says. "What I want to impart is the love of learning and the need to be curious."

Students appreciate Cavalli's efforts to make history relevant to their current lives. "I had no interest in history whatsoever until I took his class," wrote one student. "After my first class with him, I was enthralled. Now, history is my favorite subject and my current major."

Dr. Kathleen Chatfield, Business Technology and Management

Over the course of her 21 years at Clark, Dr. Kathleen Chatfield has taught a variety of courses, including keyboarding, microcomputer applications, Microsoft Excel, e-commerce, and project management. In truth, however, her influence goes far beyond those subjects. In fact, she has been a part of every online class offered at Clark College through her work as the senior instructional designer for the college's eLearning Department, where she helps Clark faculty learn how to develop online classes.

"It is a daunting task to guide so many full-time and part-time instructors through all the different learning systems, while also helping them to maintain their unique styles and philosophies of teaching," wrote one nominator. "Yet Dr. Chatfield manages to accomplish this task."

Dr. Chatfield continues to teach classes to students as well, saying that this experience helps her better understand the needs and challenges of faculty. This adds up to more than a full-time workload, but Dr. Chatfield says, "I'm doing what I love. I've never woken up in the morning and said, 'Oh no, I have to go to work.'"

Heather McAfee, Geography

Heather McAfee first became interested in geography while working for the U.S. Department of Defense, doing cultural

analysis of Iraq that included mapping the civilian population there. “I love geography because it is the most interdisciplinary subject you can study,” she says. “It touches everything, even health—we have medical geography. Recently in my classes, we’ve looked at and mapped the spread of the Zika virus.”

McAfee serves as chair of the Geography Department at Clark; she also serves on the college’s AA Transfer Committee, the Library of the Future Taskforce, and the Learning Communities Taskforce. Additionally, McAfee has worked to create connections between Clark and community organizations, including the Water Resources Education Center and the Vanport Mosaic.

“She made her classroom a comfortable area where every person’s opinion and outlook was highly valued,” wrote one student. “Her teachings went much deeper than the textbook material. She wanted us to dig deep and relate every lesson to our personal lives and experiences, and it taught all of us so much about the world around us.”

Doug Mrazek, French

When Doug Mrazek was job-hunting after receiving his master’s degree in French from the University of Illinois in 1978, one of his professors told him that the Pacific Northwest was so beautiful that if he took a job there, “you’ll never want to leave.”

Those words turned out to be prophetic; Mrazek has devoted 38 years to teaching French at Clark. He has taught generations of Clark students how to conjugate *être*, led dozens of them on trips through France and Quebec, and helped the French Club put on countless events as its academic advisor.

Small surprise, then, that Mrazek received more than 30 nominations for this award this year. “I’m in amazement,” he says. “It’s a tremendous sense of closure. After a career of

40 years, it's a nice way to move on."

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Spring 2016 Classified Staff Award: Linda Healy



Linda Healy

Congratulations to **Linda Healy**, recipient of the 2016 Spring Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Nominated with input from seven Clark employees, the Advising Program Support Supervisor is described as someone who exhibits an exceptional work ethic and flexibility, as well as the willingness to do whatever needs to be done. She has worked in the Advising Services Department for 10 years, and is commended for bringing a student-centered approach to the front-desk team, as well as a powerful combination of "clear personal investment, professionalism, and heart." She actively engages in campus-wide events, leadership meetings and

discussions, and Advising Services and Student Affairs activities – demonstrating excellence in her own performance and inspiring it in others. She is regarded for her responsiveness and follow through, and is known for her ability to make people feel noticed, valued, and welcomed. As one nominator explains it, “Linda is truly an ambassador for the Penguin Nation, demonstrating consistent, tireless commitment to the success of students, positive communication, collaboration, and personal investment in Clark College.”

Congratulations as well to this quarter’s other nominees:

Haley Gordon works as the Program Coordinator for the Event Services Department, juggling thousands of reservation requests every year with “ease and precision,” according to her nominator. Gordon is very involved in college activities, works closely with other areas of the college, and has been a key contributor in implementing several process improvements that have benefited the department and increased services to meet the needs of faculty and staff. Her nominator explains that Gordon “continues to impress students, staff and faculty” with her knowledge of campus space and features, allowing her to assist others in finding the right space for their needs. She is described as “gracious and kind,” with a driven and motivated work ethic that is unwavering. Gordon is praised by her nominator for going above and beyond the call of duty, and for her “hands-on” approach, tackling every challenge with a “positive, can-do attitude.”

Manda Levie provides the sole staff support for the Communications and Humanities Division, which comprises nine separate departments. In addition, she supports the College Essentials Department, which serves faculty and students campuswide. Levie is commended for being a “strong and dependable addition to our staff team, who has made great contributions to process improvement and overall team workflow.” Described as a problem-solver, Levie is known for her collaboration, creativity, friendliness and efficiency.

According to one nominator, "Manda deals with issues promptly, professionally and with a spirit that can only be described as positive. She is keenly aware of what's going on and repeatedly demonstrates her commitment to a good educational environment." Another nominator sums it up like this: "Manda's amazing!"

Winter 2016 Classified Staff Award: Rebecca Kleiva



Rebecca Kleiva

Congratulations to **Rebecca Kleiva**, recipient of the 2016 Winter Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Kleiva has provided outstanding services to the college community for the past seven years. She manages the Worker Retraining Financial Aid program, positively impacting the lives of students, and has been a superb contributor to the Workforce Education Services team. She is regarded by her

nominators as an “innovative thinker who always goes above and beyond the call of duty to support students.”

Nominators added that, due to Kleiva’s efforts and excellent work performance, Clark College has exceeded its Worker Retraining FTE target, which has resulted in the State Board allocating additional Worker Retraining funding to support the college and students. It has been Kleiva’s knowledge and eagerness to learn things outside her normal job responsibilities that have ensured the customer service she provides to the public, community and her co-workers is exemplary. One of her Worker Retraining students said, “Rebecca is an amazing agent who goes above and beyond. She made enrolling in your program a piece of cake. She is very professional and has incredible patience and understanding. We are all very fortunate to have her.”

Congratulations as well to this quarter’s other nominees:

Sherry Smith has been an employee at Clark College for 13 years. She is described as thorough, patient and understanding; working hard behind the scenes to go above and beyond in order to fulfill faculty requests or tasks that at times can seem unattainable. While fostering a welcoming atmosphere, Sherry shows a genuine interest and ability in helping with a multitude of issues. Not only do the students look to her as a mentor, but staff do also. As one nominator explains it, “The STEM unit would not function without Sherry Smith. She is the heart of the unit. She is professional, collegial, and above all always ready and willing to assist. She knows the answer to any question, and keeps track of a plethora of information. I am so very thankful for Sherry Smith, and I know no one more deserving of this honor.”

Manda Levie provides the sole staff support for the Communications and Humanities Division, which comprises nine separate departments. In addition, she supports the College Essentials Department, which serves faculty and students

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