

New tenured professors



Professor Olga Lyubar, center, earned tenure in March 2022. Clark College/Jenny Shadley.

Four outstanding educators are the newest members of the tenured faculty at Clark College. Darcy Kennedy (chemistry), Nick Luisi (nursing), Olga Lyubar (health information management), and Richa Sharma (communication studies) were all granted tenure during the Clark College Board of Trustees meeting on March 9. They will be honored at a college reception later in the spring.

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.

About the faculty members

Darcy Kennedy, chemistry

Darcy Kennedy earned her Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from Claremont McKenna College (Claremont, California) and her Master of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Washington. Before entering the teaching profession, she worked as a chemist and research technician at companies like Coffey Laboratories, TCI America, and Xerox. She has experience teaching at both Portland Community College and Clark College.

Kennedy began teaching at Clark College in 2012 as an adjunct, moving into a full-time position in 2014. She currently serves as representative for the college's faculty union and on the college's Social Equity Advisory Committee. Additionally, she was part of the first cohort of the college's BUILD program, a yearlong employee development program providing intensive training in power, privilege, and inequity.

Kennedy described her teaching philosophy in the following terms: "Each student brings a different level of ability to the classroom community. Each student must then be provided with the level of support they require to be successful and accountable to themselves and the community."

Nick Luisi, nursing

Nick Luisi earned his Associate of Applied Science degree in nursing from Raritan Valley College in North Branch, New Jersey. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and his Master of Science in Nursing online from Capella University; both

these degrees were focused on nursing leadership. He achieved the rank of Captain in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, from which he retired in 2015. Additionally, he has more than 15 years of work experience as a nurse in private hospital settings.

Luisi has teaching experience at Raritan Valley Community College and at Clark College. Since coming to Clark in 2018, he has participated in the Instructional Planning Team, the Nursing Scholarship Committee, the Outcomes Assessment Committee, and the college's Queer Employee Resource Group.

"My teaching philosophy is to offer a challenging and inclusive classroom setting to support the values, beliefs, and individual differences of our students to become compassionate and progressive advocates within nursing," Luisi said. "I strive to appreciate and embrace the experiences, talent, and gifts of each student as they are guided along their journey to enter the field of nursing, through creating a safe environment free from judgment while helping them explore different views and beliefs to support personal and professional growth."

Olga Lyubar, health information management

Olga Lyubar is a Clark College alumna who attended the college as a Running Start student. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Health Informatics and Health Information Management (HIHIM) from the University of Washington. After graduating, she worked for a company focused on sharing health information online. Later, she worked in multiple roles in a skilled nursing facility, serving as manager of the medical records department, responsible for staff development, and responsible for the podiatry and dental clinic, as well as the outpatient clinic.

In 2016, Lyubar returned to Vancouver and to Clark College, where she began teaching in what was then called the Business

Medical program (now called Allied Health). She also has teaching experience at Portland Community College. At Clark, she currently serves as the director of the Health Information Management (HIM) program. She also serves on Evergreen Public Schools' Medical Services Advisory Committee and on Washougal School District's Health Sciences Advisory Committee.

Lyubar describes her teaching style as learner-centered and teaching-focused. "In my classroom, both the instructor and students are constantly learning from each other," she said. "I believe that the best way to learn is by active learning."

Richa Sharma, communication studies

Richa Sharma earned her Master of Business Administration degree from Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management in New Delhi, India. She earned her master's degree in communication studies from Portland State University. She has teaching experience at both Portland State University and Clark College and has worked as a senior associate intercultural trainer for the Portland-based consultant agency TsaiComms.

Since joining Clark College in 2008, Sharma has worked to develop intercultural competence both within the Communication Studies Department and in the college. This work included a yearlong Intercultural Capacity Building Program that collaborated with speakers from across Clark College to support her department's faculty, as well as work to build culturally responsive teaching models as part of the college's move to a Guided Pathways model of higher education.

Sharma said that she strives to "provide all my students with a learning environment that not only opens their minds to new knowledge and skills in a particular field of study for economic vitality, but also encompasses a broader worldview to raise their awareness toward responsible global citizenship."

Nursing professor receives tenure



Professor Dianne Lucia

Nursing professor Dianne Lucia was granted tenure during the Clark College Board of Trustees meeting on December 8.

Tenure is awarded by the college's Board of Trustees to faculty 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.

Lucia will be honored at the 2022 tenure reception on May 25.

About Dianne Lucia

Dianne Lucia earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Portland State University and her Master of Science in Nursing degree from Western Governors University. Additionally, she earned a Certification in Healthcare simulation from Boise State University in 2021. She has work experience in orthopedics, pediatric, and labor and delivery nursing at many local healthcare facilities including Providence Medical Center, Doernbecher Children's Hospital, Southwest Washington Medical Center, PeaceHealth Southwest Washington, and Legacy Salmon Creek.

A resident of Vancouver, Lucia first joined the faculty of Clark College as an adjunct professor in 2005. She began teaching full-time in 2015. At the college, she oversees the program's state-of-the-art simulation lab, a teaching tool that has had even greater importance during the COVID-19 pandemic when students had difficulty getting hands-on practice in clinical settings.

"I believe the most important role I have as a teacher is to promote a safe learning environment," said Lucia. "I believe that experiential active learning is the most effective teaching approach. Simulation remains one of my favorite teaching strategies because it improves critical thinking through reflective learning."

New VPs named



Vice President of Student Affairs Michele Cruse and Vice President of Instruction Paul Wickline

After a nationwide search, Clark College has announced the hiring of two new members of its Executive Cabinet. Dr. Michele Cruse was named Vice President of Student Affairs and Paul Wickline was named Vice President of Instruction. Dr. Cruse is starting in the position in November and Paul Wickline will begin on January 3, 2022.

“These are two crucial roles at the college, overseeing the two units with the most direct contact with our students—either in class settings or through student services,” said Clark College President Karin Edwards. “Michele and Paul are both highly qualified professionals who will be able to provide leadership and stability to the college.”

Both positions were filled after nationwide job searches and extensive interviews with hiring committees, college leadership, and open forums with the college community.

About Dr. Michele Cruse

Dr. Michele Cruse has been serving as Interim Vice President of Student Affairs at Clark College since October 2020. Prior to coming to Clark, she served as Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs and Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Experiential Education at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford in Pennsylvania. A native Pittsburgher, Dr. Cruse earned her associate degree from the Community College of Allegheny County, her bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Pittsburgh, her master's degree in public administration and nonprofit management from Portland State University, and her doctorate in community college leadership from the Oregon State University.

Dr. Cruse's work experience includes both faculty and staff positions at Portland Community College, including dean of student development. She has owned her own business and served as co-founder of an organization focused on workshops and education for community members, women, disenfranchised youth, and those in alternative education.

At Clark College, Dr. Cruse leads Student Affairs, a unit that includes a wide range of services and programs including enrollment services, athletics, career services, international programs, financial aid, disability support, the Veterans Resource Center, and the Counseling and Health Center, among others.

Dr. Cruse lives in Vancouver with her husband, Michael. They have three adult children.

"I am very excited and feel very honored to work alongside dedicated Clark College leaders as the Vice President of Student Affairs," said Dr. Cruse. "It's my ultimate goal to ensure that we provide students with a campus environment where every student feels valued, respected, and included while pursuing their academic goals."

About Paul Wickline

Paul Wickline brings with him many years of experience in both teaching and leading in a variety of educational settings. He began his educational journey at Edmonds Community College studying vocal music. From there, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Education degree from Western Washington University and his Master of Education degree from Central Washington University. He is currently working on his doctoral dissertation in the Higher Education Leadership program at Portland State University.

Wickline began his teaching career as a high school English and drama teacher in Walla Walla, Washington. He then began teaching theatre at Walla Walla Community College. In 2008, he moved to the College of the Canyons in Southern California, where he served in a series of roles that brought increased leadership: faculty member, department chair, faculty outcomes and assessment coordinator, Academic Senate President, dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Assistant Vice President of Educational Pathways, and finally Associate Vice President of Instruction. He is a past faculty fellow of the Association of American Colleges and Universities Collaborative Project and a mentor in the Association of California Community Colleges Association mentorship program.

Wickline and his wife, Karol Matson, are relocating to the Vancouver area this winter.

“I am humbled and honored to serve alongside the exceptional faculty, staff, and administrators as the next Vice President of Instruction at Clark College,” Wickline said. “Clark College has an outstanding reputation for providing students with quality career and academic preparation to meet the evolving needs of community, business, and industry. I look forward to collaborating with Clark colleagues to best support our students.”

This article originally misidentified the institution where Dr. Cruse earned her doctorate. It was corrected on Nov. 22.

2021 Annual Employee Awards



Five employees received annual awards in three categories at Clark College's 2021 Opening Day event, held virtually on September 13.

Awards announced included:

- Exceptional Administrative Exempt Award
- Exceptional Classified Staff Award
- Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award

Additionally, the Exceptional Faculty Awards, which were announced during Commencement, were recognized a second time.

Employees were also recognized for their years of service, with one employee, David Sims of IT Services, honored for 40 years of service to the college.

Exceptional Administrative Exempt Award

Mike See, *Director of Safety and Security*



Michael See

Mike See joined Clark College in November 2016 as its emergency manager. He was named Interim Director of Safety and Security in September 2017 and was named permanently to the position in December of that year. A retired captain with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, See brings to Clark College extensive experience in law enforcement, institutional safety, and emergency management.

See's nominators said, "His approach helps to build bridges around campus, and helps to break down silos. It makes people feel like their work and department matter to more than just their little piece of the pie. That helps to breed pride in work and helps people to take ownership of their work product.

"Mike is open to doing whatever he needs to do to make the college work better. I have rarely met an employee at any

level of the college in my 24 years who is more dedicated to making this a better place to be for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.”

Congratulations to all the other nominees for the 2021 Exceptional Administrative Exempt Award:

- Wendé Fisher, *Advising*
- Renee Schiffhauer, *Advising*
- Brenda Walstead, *Dean of Business and Health Sciences*
- Nicole Rogers Marcum, *Office of Instruction*
- Julie Robertson, *Grant Development*
- Abby Thompson, *Enrollment Services*
- Cindi Olson, *Student Affairs*
- Jennifer Lea, *Business Division*
- Katlyn Viers, *Advising*
- Angela Ford, *IT Services*

Exceptional Classified Staff Award

Jordan De Van, *Program Specialist, Enrollment Services*



Jordan De Van

Jordan De Van is a Program Specialist in Enrollment Services. Comments from her nomination include:

- “Jordan has one of the strongest senses of customer service and how it should be demonstrated. She not only responds quickly to inquiries from students and other departments, she responds happily despite her busy workload.”
- “Jordan is always helpful and understanding when assisting others outside of her department. Instead of rushing through issues that arise with tracking student grades in the database system, she takes the time to investigate, and assists instructors to better prepare them if the issue were to arise again in the future.”
- “Jordan’s knowledge, expertise and sense of humor always makes working with her a pleasure.”
- “She assists each individual in a way that they can understand the steps of the process and provides them with direction that helps them along further in the process—all with a smile on her face.”

Damon Grady, *Campus Security Sergeant, Security and Safety Services*



Damon Grady

Damon Grady has been with Clark College’s Security and Safety Department since 1997. He served as a Campus Security Officer for 20 years before being promoted to the sergeant’s rank in January of 2018. Comments about Grady include:

- “He frequently takes after-hours calls and adjusts his

shifts so that his people get the support they need. Managing the schedule for 17 people, half of whom are part-time, to provide 24-hour coverage is a difficult and complicated endeavor.”

- “Damon has gone beyond his role. When he noticed the decrease in on-campus staff presences, he purposefully expanded his knowledge on all the student-facing services and learned how they work to best support Clark students so he would be prepared to answer students’ questions during the COVID-19 pandemic.”
- “Damon works closely with his subordinates to ensure they have the training and guidance necessary to be successful in their respective roles.”
- “Damon responded to a medical call that involved a person with a life-threatening injury. He was quick to respond while properly assessing the situation and keeping those involved safe and calm until EMS arrived.”

Congratulations to all the other nominees for the 2020-2021 Exceptional Classified Award:

- All Classified Staff
- Dan Ellertson, *Retail Clerk Lead, Bookstore*
- Darci Feider, *Program Coordinator, Student Life*
- Jerry Horn, *Secretary Senior, WPTE + STEM UNIT*
- Jen King, *Program Specialist 2, Financial Aid*
- Christy Lewis, *Fiscal Technician 3, Information Accounting Services*
- Malissa Pierce, *Program Specialist 2, Transitional Studies Division*
- Tiffany Saari, *Secretary Senior, WPTE + STEM UNIT*
- Karina Sanchez, *Program Specialist 3, Financial Aid*
- Kayla Escott, *Program Manager, Financial Aid*
- Jenny Shadley, *Graphic Design Supervisor, Communications*

& Marketing

▪ Everett Yu, *Equipment Technician 3, Grounds*

Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award

Hanan Al-Zubaidy, *Director of Clark College at Larch*

Hanan Al-Zubaidy is Director of Clark College at Larch Corrections Center. A nominator had this to say about her: “In winter of 2021, when COVID ran rampant through Larch Corrections Center, Hanan prioritized accommodating our students through the outbreak, if faculty felt comfortable entering, and worked with Department of Corrections administration to provide learning materials to eager students, rather than making them wait. Students were able to graduate during a month-long lockdown as a direct result of Hanan going above and beyond to manage a student-centered approach in even the most challenging and stressful of circumstances. We have watched Hanan overcome the misogyny, racism and ignorance that exists within the ranks of the DOC, and she rose anyway from graduate student intern, to Reentry Navigator, to Director.”

Kushlani de Soyza, *Professor of Women’s Studies*

Kushlani de Soyza joined Clark College as a tenured professor of women’s studies in 2013. A nominator said this about her: “Kushlani is committed to ensuring her students feel safe in class and at Clark in general. For example, as the college periodically suggests changes that will impact instruction—[such as] how, what, and where we teach—Kushlani doesn’t shy away from standing up for her students by emphasizing that their needs are paramount and that changes that impact our ability to serve students from

marginalized groups should be made cautiously.”

Other nominees for the Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award:

- Cath Busha, *Dean of Student Engagement*
- Connor Cantrell, Amanda Brown and Tasha Robertson, *Clark College Libraries Access Services*
- Mike Godson, *Professor of Automotive Technologies*
- Tre Sandlin, *Teaching and Learning Center*

Learn more about Clark College’s employee awards on our Human Resources web pages.

Spring 2021 Classified Staff Excellence Award recipient: Damon Grady



Damon Grady

Congratulations to Damon Grady, Campus Security

Sergeant, Security and Safety Services, recipient of the 2021 Spring Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Damon Grady has been with Clark College's Security and Safety Department since 1997. He served as a Campus Security Officer for 20 years before being promoted to the sergeant's rank in January of 2018. Comments about Grady include:

- "He frequently takes after-hours calls and adjusts his shifts so that his people get the support they need. Managing the schedule for 17 people, half of whom are part-time, to provide 24-hour coverage is a difficult and complicated endeavor."
- "Damon has gone beyond his role. When he noticed the decrease in on-campus staff presences, he purposefully expanded his knowledge on all the student-facing services and learned how they work to best support Clark students so he would be prepared to answer students' questions during the COVID-19 pandemic."
- "Damon works closely with his subordinates to ensure they have the training and guidance necessary to be successful in their respective roles."
- "Damon responded to a medical call that involved a person with a life-threatening injury. He was quick to respond while properly assessing the situation and keeping those involved safe and calm until EMS arrived."

Congratulations as well to the other Spring 2021 nominees:

- Christy Lewis- Fiscal Technician, Accounting Services
- Jennifer King- Program Specialist, Financial Aid
- Jordan De Van- Program Specialist, Enrollment Services
- Kayla Escott- Program Manager, Financial Aid
- Malissa Pierce- Program Specialist, Transitional Studies Division

Christy Lewis

Christy Lewis is a Fiscal Technician in Accounting Services. Comments from her nomination include:

- “Christy has served on the ACE Scholarship Committee multiple times, helping to give funds to college members and their families to help make higher education possible.”
- “When Accounting converted to a new system, Christy kept a positive attitude and learned to work through the bumps and challenges of change.”
- “Christy works with customers to help them understand their accounting-related issues, no matter who they are or their level of understanding.”
- “Christy always treats all people with respect and kindness when serving them and working through their request and issues.”

Jennifer King

Jennifer King is a Program Specialist in the Office of Financial Aid. Comments from her nomination include:

- “Jen awards more than 600 students with emergency funds, each term. This spring term, Jen awarded additional funds to students, which means she made 1200 awards. Jen agreed to this overwhelming task in the midst of preparing financial aid packages for fall term—an enormous undertaking. When we have a student who has a significant emergency, Jen works quickly to award that student immediately.”
- “Jen manages multiple tasks, serves on committees, and prioritizes people first in the work that she does. She leads with kindness and a smile and is always a pleasure to work with.”
- “Weekly, she commits significant time and energy to meet

the emergent needs of students during an uncertain and stressful time.”

- “Jen’s commitment to creating an effective, efficient program has made a difference to hundreds of student emergency-grant recipients, many of whom report being homeless or at risk of homelessness.”

Jordan De Van

Jordan De Van is a Program Specialist in Enrollment Services. Comments from her nomination include:

- “Jordan has one of the strongest senses of customer service and how it should be demonstrated. She not only responds quickly to inquiries from students and other departments, she responds happily despite her busy workload.”
- “Jordan is always helpful and understanding when assisting others outside of her department. Instead of rushing through issues that arise with tracking student grades in the database system, she takes the time to investigate, and assists instructors to better prepare them if the issue were to arise again in the future.”
- “Jordan’s knowledge, expertise and sense of humor always makes working with her a pleasure.”
- “She assists each individual in a way that they can understand the steps of the process and provides them with direction that helps them along further in the process—all with a smile on her face.”

Kayla Escott

Kayla Escott is a Program Manager in the Office of Financial Aid. Comments from her nomination include:

- “Every task that Kayla approaches is done with the student’s best interest in mind. She goes above and

beyond in all aspects of her position, whether that is intentionally meeting one-on-one with the staff she oversees, taking time to schedule an in-depth appointment with a student, or leading numerous project efforts within our office. Every project she tackles is done efficiently and thoroughly in spite of tight deadlines and competing priorities.”

- “Kayla provides outstanding customer service, both directly and indirectly. She intentionally takes time to meet with students in unique and challenging situations. Beyond this, she ensures that any students who interact with the Financial Aid office receive excellent customer service by equipping front desk staff with effective tools to do so.”
- “To encourage comradery and team spirit, Kayla initiated a virtual ‘Spirit Week’ for staff to help keep team spirits and communication up while working remotely.”
- “Kayla has always shown a strong commitment to equity in all aspects of her work. One example is how she recently began working with Disability Support Services to convert all Financial Aid documents to a format that is accessible for students using reader devices.

Malissa Pierce

Malissa Pierce is a Program Specialist in Transitional Studies. Comments from her nomination include:

- “Malissa had grown the Open Doors program within one year from 10 students to almost 40. She is trying to volunteer with the Vancouver School District Truancy Board so she can understand her students’ needs better.”
- “Malissa actively engages in campus diversity strategies; supports recruitment, retention, completion efforts of students from diverse

backgrounds, participates in equitable hiring practices for Transitional Studies department, and Malissa is learning Spanish so she can better support our Spanish-speaking students.”

- “Malissa is a great communicator and works across multiple departments on campus to make sure that every department has the right information and has the opportunity to discuss with her if they need further clarification.”
- “Malissa loves working one-on-one with her students. She is constantly reaching out to other departments for assistance in making her students’ college experience as smooth as possible.”

About the Classified Staff Excellence Award

The Classified Staff Excellence Award was established in 2005 and recognizes classified staff who have demonstrated exemplary work performance, outstanding customer service, a positive and cooperative spirit and special achievements or contributions to the college community. Through the support of the Clark College Foundation, the recipient will receive a \$400 cash award.

Executive Vice President of Operations named



Galina Burley. *Photo courtesy of Galina Burley.*

Clark College has announced the hiring of Galina Burley in the role of Executive Vice President of Operations. She will begin at the college on July 8.

Burley was hired through a nationwide search. She will be entering a newly created position which oversees college operations including facilities, business, finance, security and safety, marketing, communications, and auxiliary services.

“Galina brings a breadth of experience and significant skill in leading complex organizations. Additionally, Galina demonstrated her understanding, appreciation and commitment to social equity and inclusion,” wrote Clark College President Karin Edwards in an email announcing the hire to the college community. “This position serves a crucial role at the college, especially as we recover and plan our post-Covid future.”

Burley (pronouns: she/her/hers) immigrated to Vancouver, Washington from Sochi, Russia with her parents in 1991. Her history at Clark College began soon afterward, when she began taking English as a Second Language classes and then went on to earn her associate degree. Burley also holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Concordia

University and a Master of Public Administration from Troy University. In addition, she earned certification in High Performing Organizations from the University of Virginia and is a 2012 alumna of Leadership Clark County.

Burley's previous work experience includes leadership roles at the City of Norfolk, Clackamas County, and the City of Portland. Most recently before joining Clark College, she served as Clark County Parks and Lands Manager. She has received an award for leadership from the American Association of Public Administrators of Hampton Roads; the Golden Ivan Award for her work with the Slavic refugee communities in Oregon and Southwest Washington; the President's Recognition Award from the Crime Prevention Association of Oregon; and nomination as a Woman of Achievement by Washington State University Vancouver. Burley identifies as Armenian-Russian-American. In her free time, she enjoys reading, volunteering, and spending time with her family.

"It feels very special to return to the Penguin Nation, where I began my educational journey and learned English," said Burley. "I look forward to sharing my experience and lifelong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion with our college community. I also hope that my journey will inspire others to join Clark College, where we will help you discover your greatest potential."

Exceptional Faculty Awards



Professor Michelle Mallory is all smiles before Clark College's 2021 Commencement ceremony. *Photo: Clark College/Tarek Kanso*

Six outstanding members of Clark College's faculty have been recognized for their contributions to the college with a 2021 Clark College Exceptional Faculty Award.

These 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. Traditionally, they are announced during Commencement. This year, Commencement was held on June 17 on Christensen Soccer Field.

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.

Below are this year's Exceptional Faculty members, along with quotes from their nominators:

Kayoko Barnhill, mathematics

"I have been taking Math for Elementary Education courses, and her course is very tailored not just to learning the materials, but learning how to teach each others in class. I have struggled with math my whole life, and her course gave me confidence that not only could I learn it, but I could gain deeper understanding and effectively teach it."

Tony Chennault, biology

"He believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. He encouraged me to keep going, he told me I could do it when I didn't think I could do it myself. He teaches in a way that you understand, even if it's not your strongest subject. He is so inspiring, motivating, and encouraging."

Nami Inoue, Japanese

"When I first began at Clark College, I had a very negative outlook on school based on my previous high school experiences. I decided to take some classes for fun and try out a college environment. Inoue Sensei's passion for teaching and love for her students was so warm compared to any teacher I've had before. She helped me rediscover the love I have for learning and school."

Michelle Mallory, early childhood education

"To know Michelle is to love Michelle! She is a fierce defender of the learner and believes strongly in meeting the learner where they are at and with respect, dignity and

recognition of the learner's culture and style of learning."

Joshua Patrick, English

"Professor Patrick has taught me that I should never be ashamed to voice my opinion. He made me feel smart, validated, and taught me how to communicate my thoughts and opinions to others in an effective way to make them listen. He also engraved some very useful critical-thinking skills into my brain that I think will be very helpful throughout the rest of my college experience—but most importantly, I'll be able to apply these skills to my daily life."

Kristi Taylor, dental hygiene

"Kristi has been incredibly supportive in a time of great financial uncertainty and worked on behalf of all her students to help us figure out a plan, or make contact with those who could offer us answers and help. She worked to provide all of us with an avenue for covid vaccination if we desired it. She works tirelessly on our behalf and still manages to answer emails in less than an hour. She's basically Wonder Woman!"



Professor Kristi Taylor, *top row second from left*, stands with faculty, staff and graduates from the Dental Hygiene program at Clark College's 2021 Commencement. *Photo: Clark College/Tarek Kanso*

New VP of HR named



Brad Avakian. *Photo courtesy of Brad Avakian.*

Clark College has announced the hiring of Brad Avakian in the role of Vice President of Human Resources. He will begin at

the college on June 10.

“We are excited to bring someone with Brad’s breadth and depth of knowledge into this crucial leadership position at the college,” said Clark College President Karin Edwards. “His expertise will be crucial as we begin the complex work of returning to campus after more than a year in remote operations.”

Avakian earned his bachelor’s degree from Oregon State University and his doctorate of law from Lewis & Clark University. For many years he worked as a lawyer specializing in civil rights cases. Later, he served in the Oregon House of Representatives and the Oregon Senate representing parts of northeast Washington County. Avakian also served three terms as Oregon’s Commissioner of Labor and Industries, during which time he was a strong advocate for career and technical education programs, as well as for equity for women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ individuals. Since leaving public service, Avakian has taught Politics and Public Policy for Managers in Willamette University’s MBA program and worked in private practice as a mediator and arbitrator.

“Clark College is a historic school with an exciting and bright future,” said Avakian. “I am so grateful for the chance to join the Human Resources team and broader Clark Community. It’s good to be a Penguin.”

**Winter 2021 Classified Staff
Excellence Award recipient:**

Jenny Shadley



Jenny Shadley. *Photo courtesy of Jenny Shadley.*

Congratulations to **Jenny Shadley, Graphic Designer, Communications and Marketing**, recipient of the 2021 Winter Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Jenny Shadley “is committed to serving students and demonstrates her passion through her daily work to ensure student voices are amplified.”

Other comments about Shadley:

- “Jenny worked on Guided Pathways from its inception.”
- “She is an active participant at the college in professional development and other committees and brings her holistic approach and her passion for equity to everything she does.”
- “Jenny has redesigned the Get Started landing page for prospective students with the student experience in mind, making it far more functional, user-friendly and attractive for users.”
- “When COVID-19 created scheduling concerns for some of her colleagues, Jenny was the first person to swoop in and offer to tackle projects to help.”

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the other nominees:

- Damon Grady – Security Sergeant, Safety & Security
- Darci Feider – Program Coordinator, Student Life

Damon Grady, Security Sergeant, Safety & Security

“As a long-term employee, Damon has watched Clark evolve and always lends a kind ear to those who are confused or frustrated and quite often offers calming insight based upon his experiences at the college.”

Other comments about Grady:

- “Damon has been with Clark College’s Security and Safety Department since November of 1997 and served as a Campus Security Officer for 20 years before being promoted to the Sergeant in January 2018.”
- “Damon’s supervisory position requires him to be available to his staff 24/7 and he often adjust his schedule to best support the needs of others and is recognized as a mentor across the campus.”
- “As a member of the security team, Damon has contact with the entire college community and takes the time to listen in the hopes of understanding the needs and resolution for each person he speaks with.”
- “Damon is aware that each interaction with a student or potential student is important, and he always puts his best foot forward to make sure their initial interaction at Clark College is a positive encounter.”

Darci Feider, Program Coordinator,

Student Life

“Darci led and organized the Thanksgiving dinners sent out to 170 students and their families by the Penguin Pantry in November 2020. She is passionate about helping our Clark students and community, in every way she can.”

Other comments about Feider:

- “Darci coordinates dozens of programs and clubs that would not function nearly as smoothly without her, especially during remote operations.”
- “Darci shows up every day ready to work with a smile on her face, no matter what the day may have in store for her.”
- “Darci is kind, compassionate, and takes the time to work through projects with patience and support for others.”
- “Students benefit from Darci’s contributions—whether that is through assistance with the Penguin Pantry, help with Archer Gallery and Clark Art Talks programming, or working with any number of things across campus. She is devoted to making an equitable and accessible community at Clark.”

Rosalba Pitkin receives Social Equity Award



Rosalba Pitkin

Rosalba Pitkin was named the recipient of the 2020-2021 Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award, which honors a Clark College employee who has demonstrated a sustained commitment to advancing equity.

“She creates and sustains an inclusive environment for members of the college community in several ways, including advocacy for students and education for colleagues,” said Vice President of Diversity Equity and Inclusion Rashida Willard when she presented the award to Pitkin on Opening Day. “Though she will go above and beyond her role to support any student, her heart lies with immigrants and undocumented students, a particularly vulnerable segment of our student population. Rosalba creates an environment of belonging for these learners by welcoming them to the college, explaining the U.S. education system and how Clark can help them reach their goals, walking them through admission and enrollment processes, and offering consistent academic and personal support throughout their time at the college.”

During her years of working at Clark College, Pitkin has held different job titles, but her work has always centered around serving diverse students, prospective students, and their families. She currently serves as the Diversity Outreach Manager in the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion. In

this role, she also provides employee training on topics that include how to support Dreamer (DACA) students.

Pitkin is a well-known figure for her work around equity and inclusion not just within Clark College, but in the greater Vancouver-Portland metro area. She served two terms on the Washington State Commission for Hispanic Affairs and helped to streamline Mexican Consulate services for Mexicans who live in Southwest Washington. She is also a 2016 graduate of the Social Justice Leadership Institute.

Pitkin often works closely with non-native English speakers. As someone who grew up in Mexico and had to take English as a Second Language classes before earning her bachelor's degree in international business from New Mexico State University, she can relate to the struggles these students can experience.

Pitkin often refers to some advice given to her by her grandmother, whom she credits with instilling the importance of education in her: "It's important to plant good seeds wherever you go. Just take care of them, and they will grow."

"Rosalba Pitkin puts that cherished advice from her grandmother into practice every day," said Willard during the award presentation.

About the Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award

Created in 2019, the Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award recognizes Clark College employees based on their exceptional work in removing systemic barriers for people with systemically non-dominant identities – people of color, people with disabilities and people who identify as LGBTQIA2S+ – in one or more of the following categories:

1. Creating and sustaining an inclusive environment for members of the Clark College community.

2. Improving intercultural competency for members of the Clark College community through diversity, equity and inclusion dialogue and education.
3. Exhibiting leadership in best practices for social equity.
4. Building and sustaining practices that challenge systems of power, privilege and inequity.
5. Making the larger community a more just and equitable place to reside.

Award recipients receive a plaque along with \$1,000 funded by Clark College Foundation. This award is presented at Opening Day before the beginning of fall quarter each year.

Other nominees for the 2020-2021 were **DeGundrea “Dee” Harris** in the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion and **Zach Lattin** in Disability Support Services.