

Exceptional Classified Staff Awards

Opening Day is traditionally the occasion for announcing the yearly Exceptional Classified Staff Awards, which recognize two classified employees for their contributions to Clark College. Recipients receive a glass plaque and \$1,000, funded through an anonymous donor's contributions to the Clark College Foundation.

For their "exemplary work performance, outstanding service to the college, a positive and cooperative spirit, and/or special achievements or contributions to the college," BEECH Unit Operations Supervisor Jeri Kemmer and Facilities Services Maintenance Mechanic Thor Tesdale were named the winners of the 2015-2016 Clark College Exceptional Classified Staff Awards.



Jeri Kemmer

Jeri Kemmer, BEECH Unit Operations Supervisor

Jeri Kemmer is the Unit Operations Supervisor for Basic

Education, English, Communication & Humanities (BEECH) at Clark.

The following comment from one of her Secretary Seniors best summarizes Kemmer's exemplary work performance: "Jeri really does go above and beyond when it comes to working at Clark College. She doesn't just do her job. She is constantly exploring ways to make everyone's job easier and she's been instrumental in many changes that have happened within our unit and across campus. She won't simply accept the status quo. If there is a problem, she wants to find a solution that benefits everybody."

In her 19 years of working at Clark, Kemmer has served on numerous committees at Clark and has attended over 300 hours of professional development training in order to benefit herself, her job, and everyone at Clark. One office assistant wrote, "Jeri's work ethics are exemplary and she always has Clark's best interest in mind. She makes all of us better employees. I love working with her."

In addition to her work here at Clark, Kemmer runs an international nonprofit called Strong Harvest International with her husband, Rick.



Thor Tesdale

Thor Tesdale, Facilities Services Maintenance Mechanic

Thor Tesdale is a Maintenance Mechanic in Facilities Services and has been with Clark College for more than 15 years.

Nominated with input from 10 Clark employees, Tesdale is described as someone who is “always smiling and willing to problem-solve.” One of his nominators remarked, “One of the things I admire most about Thor is his respect for all individuals. Thor’s personality is inclusive and he desires to work together to achieve the necessary job-related outcomes.”

Another nominator wrote, “His energy and enthusiasm are contagious. He creates a positive work climate.”

Other characteristics attributed to Tesdale’s outstanding work performance include responsiveness, collaboration, efficiency, creativity and communications skills. Nominators describe a colleague who responds promptly to all phone and email messages, is always on time for scheduled meetings, and makes sure all involved individuals understand the decisions that have been made. They say his communication skills are critical to making sure jobs are completed correctly and on time. As one nominator explains, “Even when deadlines loom and tensions mount, Thor’s calm and respectful personality is a beneficial

addition to Facilities Services.”

Other finalists for the award were:

- **Karmel Baldwin**, Secretary Senior, Life Science
- **Guisela Eberle**, Human Resource Consultant 1, Human Resources
- **Ernie Hafso**, Custodian 1, Facilities Services
- **Jeri Kemmer**, Admin Service Manager, BEECH
- **Marianne Luther**, Secretary Senior, Counseling & Health Center
- **Vanessa Meyer**, Secretary Senior, Behavioral & Social Sciences
- **Gail Robinson**, Secretary Senior, eLearning
- **Carmen Roman**, Program Specialist 2, Advising
- **Tia Schmidt**, Administrative Assistant 3, Nursing
- **Susan Taylor**, Program Manager A, International Programs
- **Thor Tesdale**, Maintenance Mechanic 2, Facilities Services
- **Lynn VanHoomissen**, Program Support Supervisor 1, Security & Safety
- **Heather White**, Program Support Supervisor 2, Disability Support Services

The Clark College Foundation instituted the yearly Exceptional Classified Staff and quarterly Classified Staff Excellence awards in 1997 to recognize exceptional staff members. Nominations may be submitted by classified, administrative and exempt staff; faculty; students; alumni; retirees; college trustees; and Foundation directors.

Join the Healthy Penguin Nation

As a member of Team Work Well, Clark College upholds Governor Inslee's statewide initiative to support healthy lifestyle behaviors for our employees. Research shows that healthier employees are happier employees. With that in mind, we are developing a comprehensive wellness program based on the feedback provided in the wellness survey sent out in May. Thank

you to those of you who participated! Your input has been a catalyst for this program as the wellness team plans activities, events and learning opportunities for the Clark College Community.



The mission of the Healthy Penguin Nation program is to engage, educate and empower our community members in adopting and maintaining healthy behaviors that will help improve their personal and professional lives. The focus of the program is the "whole-person" and encompasses more than eating and exercise habits. The Healthy Penguin Nation is a holistic program focused on the Six Dimensions of Wellness that studies show contribute to overall well-being:

- Emotional
- Environmental
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Social
- Spiritual

Here are some ways to actively participate in the Healthy Penguin Nation program:

- Visit the Healthy Penguin Nation webpage and educate yourself on the Six Dimensions of Wellness, and access tools and resources for healthier living.
- Complete a confidential, online well-being assessment and receive a customized report with action plan that will help you take steps to improve your health and well-being:
 - PEBB-subscriber employees – visit Smart Health
 - All employees – Visit MHN
- Join the Clark College Thompson Fitness Center and make your health and wellness a priority.
- Share your favorite healthy recipe and/or personal wellness testimonial with the community (send to kferguson@clark.edu).
- Participate in an upcoming wellness event:
 - **October** – Walktober (walking) Challenge (*individual prizes awarded plus a college challenge between Clark, Lower Columbia College and WSU Vancouver campuses!*)
 - **November** – Penguin Wellness Month (*Clark Benefits/Wellness Fair, Benefits Open Enrollment, NotMe Diabetes Prevention event, plus an array of educational sessions scheduled at various times and locations for your choosing*).
 - **January** – Biggest Loser Challenge through the Thompson Fitness Center
 - Monthly lunch and learn sessions – topics TBA.

We hope you will join us by participating in the Healthy Penguin Nation program! Participation is voluntary, but highly recommended for those who are interested in pursuing a healthy lifestyle, who have made some healthy changes and would like support, or those who already lead a healthy lifestyle and would like to enhance and build on their

personal wellness commitment.

All levels of health and fitness are welcome!

Summer Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award



Congratulations to **Thor Tesdale**, recipient of the 2015 Summer Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Thor Tesdale is a Maintenance Mechanic in Facilities Services and has been with Clark College for more than 15 years.

Nominated with input from 10 Clark employees, Tesdale is described as someone who is “always smiling and willing to problem-solve.” One of his nominators remarked, “One of the things I admire most about Thor is his respect for all individuals. Thor’s personality is inclusive and he desires to work together to achieve the necessary job-related outcomes.”

Another nominator wrote, “His energy and enthusiasm are contagious. He creates a positive work climate.”

Other characteristics attributed to Tesdale’s outstanding work

performance include responsiveness, collaboration, efficiency, creativity and communications skills. Nominators describe a colleague who responds promptly to all phone and email messages, is always on time for scheduled meetings, and makes sure all involved individuals understand the decisions that have been made. They say his communication skills are critical to making sure jobs are completed correctly and on time. As one nominator explains, "Even when deadlines loom and tensions mount, Thor's calm and respectful personality is a beneficial addition to Facilities Services."

Also nominated this quarter was:

Guisela Eberle

Eberle is a Human Resource Consultant at Clark College and was highly commended by her nominator for her "exceptional service."

Her nominator explains, "Guisela has met with me numerous times during this past spring and summer to help me understand, and appropriately fill out, the many complex health and retirement forms necessary for my successful retirement from Clark. She has been unfailingly patient, knowledgeable and helpful to me during these many meetings. In my experience, she is outstanding for her willingness to meet with me, sit patiently while I ask questions, and to answer all the questions until I understand. I have been very impressed with her and always leave her office with a smile on my face, which is nearly miraculous, given the complexity of the issues involved."

Spring Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award



Counseling and
Health Center
Administrative
Assistant Marianne
Luther

Congratulations to **Marianne Luther**, recipient of the 2015 Spring Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Marianne Luther is the secretary senior for the Counseling and Health Center and is on the “front line” for walk-in students in crisis.

Luther is described as “wonderfully calm, friendly, supportive, and compassionate to all students visiting the center.” She patiently speaks with students to find out what they need; researches resources and provides directions to services on campus and in the community.

Luther has independently transformed the CHC lobby, adding free herbal tea, calming posters, positive thoughts that can be torn off, puzzles, coloring books, and create-a-poem magnets. On her own initiative she created a “chill out” room where students can call crisis lines when counselors are unavailable.

Luther maintains a positive attitude and is very respectful and courteous to those around her by placing the needs of others in front of her own. One of her colleagues describe her as “by far one of the best administrative assistants I have ever had the pleasure of working with. Her warm demeanor, can-do attitude, compassionate tone, and friendly sense of humor have made her a huge asset to the Counseling and Health Center.”

Also nominated this quarter were:

Vanessa Meyer

“Vanessa Meyer was recently promoted to secretary senior in the Behavioral and Social Sciences Department, and has done everything needed to keep the place organized. She takes care of lockers, printers, and paper and ink cartridges as well as maintaining the mail room and keeping it free of clutter. She goes the extra mile to keep the break room tidy. Everything she does is orderly. When help is needed, Meyer takes prompt action and even delivers letters and books to faculty members who are less frequently physically present. The most important thing about her great customer service is her cheerful attitude. Vanessa displays a high degree of courtesy to her colleagues and others look forward to her services. Above all, this employee is polite and shows courtesy to the students, faculty and staff.”

Gail N. Robinson

“eLearning’s secretary senior, Gail N. Robinson, is a real cheerleader for success and will do anything to help all of

her coworkers be successful in their jobs. Gail takes pride in making everyone around her shine. When she sees a need she finds a way to help in any way she can. She considers each person's contributions and wisely considers all pieces for the best outcomes – she is very good at bridging gaps between biases and services. She respectfully communicates and advocates for those she supports. This is evident by the way she identifies events and opportunities for the eLearning staff, our Dean and other departments in the CLASS unit to reach out to and to support the college community. It is amazing how she organizes her time to accommodate so many staff so successfully. It is a privilege, to state the least, to have Gail as an eLearning team member.”

Thor Tesdale

“Thor Tesdale works for Facilities Services at CCW, as Maintenance Mechanic 2 and Painter. When Thor looks at a job, rather than saying it can't be done, he helps figure out ways to make it happen; and make it happen within financial limitations. He prioritizes jobs so that the most pressing deadlines are met first and schedules his work to minimize disruptions to students, faculty and staff. He also helps other co-workers complete tasks not related to his typical responsibilities. Thor is a team player! Many employees that work in facilities are not highly visible but their work impacts the college community in such a positive way. Thor is one of these people. His attention to detail is to be commended.”

Lynn VanHoomissen

“A former graduate of Clark College, Lynn VanHoomissen has worked in the Security Department as a parking checker, security officer, emergency communications operator, and currently as the program support supervisor. Lynn has always shown a dedication to the college and the Security Department. Recently Lynn assisted the Portland Police Bureau Crisis

Negotiation and Southwest Washington Regional Crisis Negotiation Teams in a joint training session. In recognition of the contributions, the negotiation teams presented the college with a framed Certificate of Appreciation. She is a member of the College Council, and a member of several committees, including On and Off Boarding and 25 Live. Lynn is also responsible for establishing the 'Bring Your Child to School Day' ID card, and participation in the initiation of the Whistle Program for students."

Winter Quarter Classified Staff Awards



Congratulations to **Jeri Kemmer**, recipient of the 2015 Winter Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!

Jeri Kemmer is the BEECH Unit Operations Supervisor and has been with Clark College for 19 years.

The following comment from one of her Secretary Seniors best summarizes Jeri's exemplary work performance: "Jeri really

does go above and beyond when it comes to working at Clark College. She doesn't just do her job. She is constantly exploring ways to make everyone's job easier and she's been instrumental in many changes that have happened within our unit and across campus. She won't simply accept the status quo. If there is a problem, she wants to find a solution that benefits everybody."

Jeri has served on numerous committees at Clark and has attended over 300 hours of professional development training in order to benefit herself, her job, and everyone at Clark. One office assistant wrote, "Jeri's work ethics are exemplary and she always has Clark's best interest in mind. She makes all of us better employees. I love working with her."

The College Community will celebrate all 2014-2015 nominees and recipients at the Annual Ice Cream Social held in September.

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. Thanks to the support of the Clark College Foundation, each quarter's recipient receives a \$400 cash award.

Other nominees for this quarter, with quotes from their nominations, were:

Karmel Baldwin, Secretary Senior, STEM

"Karmel shows excellence in work performance by staying on top of her work, completing assignments on time, and keeping paperwork organized, tracked, and moving through the system. Karmel strives to be the best at what she does, no matter where she is stationed. She has taken on significantly large workloads, supporting very large departments. She tracks budgets, paperwork, email, forms, new hires, evaluations,

faculty and an enormous number of students; all with an upbeat attitude and a smile. Karmel is always quick to offer her services, no matter what.”

Ernie Hasfo, Custodian 1, Facilities Services

“For 20 years Ernie has served as a custodian for Clark College. Over the years, he has taken on the tasks of window washer, hard floor specialist, and temp lead in addition to his regular custodial tasks. His co-workers can depend on him to be a team player and his positive and helpful attitude allow him to go the extra mile without being asked or complaining. Ernie is dedicated to outstanding service and excellence. Ernie is a good worker and supporter of the college. He cares about how his areas look and how he can improve the college.”

Carmen Roman, Program Specialist 2, Advising

“Carmen’s work performance is beyond exemplary and her work ethic is excellent. She is always prompt to meet with a student, and is mindful of their time. She provides concise and clear information that ensures students understand their pathways and goals. The information Carmen provides to students, faculty and staff is timely and accurate. She has an unmatched and unique ability to adjust to all modes and levels of communication. Carmen makes you feel comfortable with the entire student experience by her ability and manner of speaking and the respect given to her clients.”

Tia Schmidt, Administrative Assistant 3, Nursing

“When urgent and unexpected events occur, Tia has responded with creativity and unexpected solutions. She has often been the voice of reason and many times has been able to offer new perspectives, which have been invaluable when making hiring decisions. Tia is very considerate of new employees and goes out of her way to make them feel welcome. She goes above and beyond with her organization, attention to details,

explanations of college systems and in sharing her experiences. Tia leads by example, exhibiting professionalism with coworkers and is available to all her colleagues with an open door.”

Open Positions

The following positions are open at Clark College as of March 5, 2015. To apply for any of these positions or learn more about them, visit <http://www.clark.edu/jobs>.

CLASSIFIED POSITIONS (WITH CLOSING DATE):

Plumber – Maintenance Mechanic 3 (Continuous)

Fiscal Specialist 2 (3/10/15 3:00 PM)

Health Occupations Credential Evaluator (Program Specialist 2)
(3/19/15 3:00 PM)

FACULTY POSITIONS (WITH CLOSING DATE):

Tenure-Track Baking Instructor (Continuous)

TEMPORARY POSITIONS (WITH CLOSING DATE):

Part-time CADD and Engineering Instructor (Continuous)

Part-time Cisco CCNA Instructor (Continuous)

Part-time Computer Science and Engineering Instructor
(Continuous)

Part-time Fiscal Technician 1 (Continuous)

Part-time Fiscal Technician 3 (03/17/15 3:00 PM)

Part-time Information Technology Instructors (Continuous)

Part-time Mechatronics Instructor (Continuous)

Part-Time Microsoft Applications Instructor (Continuous)

Part-Time Microsoft Network Technology Instructor (Continuous)

Part-time Nursing Instructor (Continuous)

Part-Time Program Assistant (Event Services) (3/9/15 3:00 PM)

Sign Language Interpreter (part-time hourly) (Continuous)

FOUNDATION OPPORTUNITIES (CONTACT PERSON LISTED):

Reception Desk – Volunteer position (Contact Person: Kim Lee –
992-2319 or klee@clark.edu)

Foundation – Database Specialist (Contact
DBS@TJandassociates.com)

Presidential Coins



Engineering professor Izad Khormae receiving a Presidential Coin at the State of the College Address.

In 2007, Clark College President Bob Knight introduced a new honor at Clark College: the presidential coin.

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.

Five Clark College employees received Presidential Coins during his 2015 State of the College Address on January 15. They were:



Carolyn Johnson

Carolyn Johnson

Carolyn Johnson has worked at Clark College in various capacities for 10 years, the past six of them in Career Services, where she currently holds the position of Employment Specialist & Co-op Coordinator. Her main focus and interests include assisting students with their job search and doing resume critiques. "I have seen her work tirelessly to help students start from a blank page, get the words on paper, develop a thoughtful summary statement, and assist with the smallest details of formatting," President Knight said in presenting her with the coin. "She does this with patience and care for the student."

Knight also cited Johnson's work with international students, helping them to understand American employment practices and job-search strategies.

Izad Khormae

Professor Izad Khormae has taught Computer Science and Engineering at Clark College since 2002. He also has teaching experience at Oregon Institute of Technology, Washington State University, and Iowa State University, as well as more than two decades of engineering and managerial experience at prominent companies such as Hewlett-Packard. He is also the founder of e1 Solutions, a Vancouver-based online business

software solution company.

Professor Khormae also organizes a quarterly exposition where Computer Science and Engineering students can present their ideas for projects, which can range from bark-cancelling noise machines that can mute a neighbor's noisy dog to mobile apps that help students with time management. "He loves working with students and helping them complete their projects," said President Knight.



Karla Sylwester with fellow dental hygiene professor Brenda Walstead.

Karla Sylwester

Professor Karla Sylwester, who is retiring later this year, has been the lead restorative instructor in Clark's Dental Hygiene program for more than 30 years. "She is regionally and nationally known for her teaching skills," said President Knight. "People call from all over the U.S. to get help from her for their board exams."

Sylwester regularly organizes group activities to help boost morale and student success, including her annual Halloween bowling extravaganza and her Monday night "Carving with Karla" sessions to help students pass their restorative board exams. Her no-nonsense demeanor has won her fans among students and

faculty alike. "Because she cares, she's tell you like it is," President Knight said. "I really appreciate that."



Audra Rowton

Audra Rowton

Audra Rowton began working in Clark's Purchasing department 13 years ago. She is now the department's secretary senior. Her work ethic began early: She earned her associate degree in secretarial science at Rio Hondo College in Whittier, California, while also working full-time.

"I love Clark College because I work with a lot of great people," said Rowton. "I really enjoy working with the faculty and being available to help the students with their questions."



Dean of STEM, Peter Williams; Vice President of Instruction Dr. Tim Cook; Jim Watkins; and Director of Facilities Services, Tim Petta.

Jim Watkins

Project Manager Jim Watkins has been responsible for managing and seeing through to completion many of the college's large capital projects, including the Clark Center at Washington State University Vancouver and Clark College at Columbia Tech Center (both of which came in on time and under budget, Knight noted). Currently Watkins is overseeing the construction of the new STEM building on Clark's main campus, after which he will begin planning Clark's new North County campus.

"He has earned a reputation for his thorough knowledge of all aspects of facility planning, design, and construction; his attention to detail; and his problem-solving skills," said President Knight. "He has taken on our biggest capital projects with enthusiasm, perseverance, and a commitment to building the best possible facilities for our students, faculty, and staff."



Sue Williams

Sue Williams

Sue Williams began her career at Clark in 1996 as a Human Resources Assistant Senior before becoming a Recruiting Manager, then Assistant Director of Human Resources, until moving to her current position as Associate Director of Human Resources. "She is the expert in HR policy and practices for the college," said President Knight. "She heads the training, recruitment, hiring efforts and the benefits team of the college efficiently and with a true team spirit."

Knight commended Williams for her "open, honest, consistent and fair" way of handling Classified Staff and Association for Higher Education discipline and grievance issues, and that "she is a huge asset to the college, supporting the students and employees without hesitation and always with a smile."

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Notice to Employees who made Insurance Changes for 2015

Employees who made changes to their health insurance during open enrollment should receive insurance cards by the end of January. If you need medical care before receiving your card, you may have your provider call your insurance plan at the appropriate number listed below:

Medical Insurance Plans

Plan Phone No:

Kaiser Classic

1-800-813-2000

Members of Uniform can create an account in regence.com and print an ID card by visiting the Washington State Health Care Authority's Uniform Medical Plan page. You will need the group number for Uniform Medical, which is 10003948. You will also need your ID number. You can get that by calling 1-888-849-3681.

Click at the top of the page where it says "regence.com Account".

1. Create your account.
2. When you have logged in to your account, you'll be on a page that says "Member dashboard."
3. Click on "My account."
4. Click on "Member ID cards" on the left and your card should pull up.

If you enrolled in Uniform Dental, ID cards are not automatically issued. You can go to Delta Dental of Washington's PEBB services page, create an account, and print a card.

Alternatively, with any dental plan you can also have your dentist's office call the following numbers below to verify coverage.

Dental Insurance Plans	Group #	Plan Phone No:
Willamette Dental PEBB		1-855-433-6825
DeltaCare #3100		1-800-650-1583
Uniform Dental #3000		1-800-537-3406

Maximum Annual Leave Accrual

The amount of vacation leave *classified employees* are allowed to accumulate is limited. Once a year, on each employee's anniversary date, Clark College's computer system checks leave balances and automatically eliminates any hours in excess of 240. For more details refer to your WPEA contract.

The amount of vacation leave that *administrative and exempt employees* are allowed to accumulate is also limited to 240 hours. Any amount in excess of 240 is removed from the system on October 1 each year.

All employees whose vacation balances (shown on paycheck stubs) exceed, or are approaching, 240 hours, should plan ahead with their supervisors to use excess vacation hours before the cut-off date.

For further information contact Human Resources.

SICK LEAVE BUYOUT – Deadline is January 31, 2015

Under the provisions of Administrative Procedure 635.025, the AHE CBA, and the WPEA CBA, eligible employees who have balances of more than 480 hours of compensable sick leave as of December 31, 2014, may choose to convert unused sick leave hours accrued in 2014 to monetary compensation. Any sick leave hours used during 2014 are deducted from the hours that are

available to convert.

Compensation is calculated at the rate of 25 percent of the employee's current hourly rate. Employees who choose to participate in the buyout must be compensated for *all* eligible sick leave hours earned in 2014, not just a portion of them.

Employees considering buyout should be aware that the College offers a VEBA program to retirees which allows sick leave buyout dollars to be transferred to a VEBA account, tax free, to be used to pay for medical expenses during retirement. To be eligible for VEBA an employee must retire from state service and meet other requirements. For more details and eligibility requirements for VEBA contact a benefits representative in Human Resources.

Sick leave buyout application forms are available in Human Resources. The deadline for submitting completed forms is January 31, 2015. Payment will be received on February 25, 2015. Please call **Thao Schmidt, x2628**, or **Guisela Eberle, x2119**, for additional information.