

Presidential Coins



President Bob Knight introduces the Presidential Coin recipients on Opening Day 2014.

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 Opening Day 2014 on September 10. They were:

Kael Godwin



As a Research and Analytics Professional working within the college's Office of Planning & Effectiveness, Kael Godwin "transforms the way we use data so that we can make better decisions," said President Knight. In his seven years at Clark, Godwin has earned a reputation as someone who's "approachable and responsible ... and will do anything to help the college, even if it is outside his job description."

Knight also cited Godwin's key role in supporting the implementation of the college's new customer relations management software, and noted that many people at the college have remarked upon his strong work ethic and commitment to the college.



Ron Hirt

Fiscal Analyst Ron Hirt began working at Clark College in 1983. In more than 30 years of service, he has become known not just for his daily runs around campus—no matter what the weather—but also for his expertise in finding any kind of information located in the college’s financial management system, regardless of how buried, obscure or complex it is. He has been a key player in many of the financial audits that the college has undergone – and passed, always helping to ensure there are no findings.

“The guy is meticulous,” President Knight said. “You can ask him for any kind of file and he knows right where it is. When I first came to Clark as a vice president, he was one of the people I knew I could go to for help.”

Susan Muir



Student Affairs Administrative Assistant Susan Muir began working at Clark in 2007; through the years, her service to Clark has spanned many areas pertaining to her department, including retention programs, student conduct, behavioral intervention team, and the Veterans Resource Center. “In every situation, she follows through to make sure the students and programs are well-served,” said President Knight. “Her knowledge, skills, and abilities are known across the college because of her willingness to provide a helping hand.”

Knight added that Muir is known for creating a calm and welcoming environment in her office that helps support students who arrive there in crisis, as well as for being willing to share her time and energy (not to mention her impressive stash of chocolate) with visitors to Student Affairs.



Vicki Cheng

Vicki Cheng, an Administrative Assistant in the Workforce, Career & Technical Education department, has been a Clark employee for 32 years. Her depth of experience is a great asset to her department and allows her to prioritize day-to-day issues effectively.

“She is always willing to step up and assist anyone who walks through the office door with impeccable customer service and a genuine desire to help,” said Knight. “She always makes a point to know and understand the projects across the unit so that she is capable of answering questions that may arise, and often offers suggestions that improve the end product.”

Patti Serrano



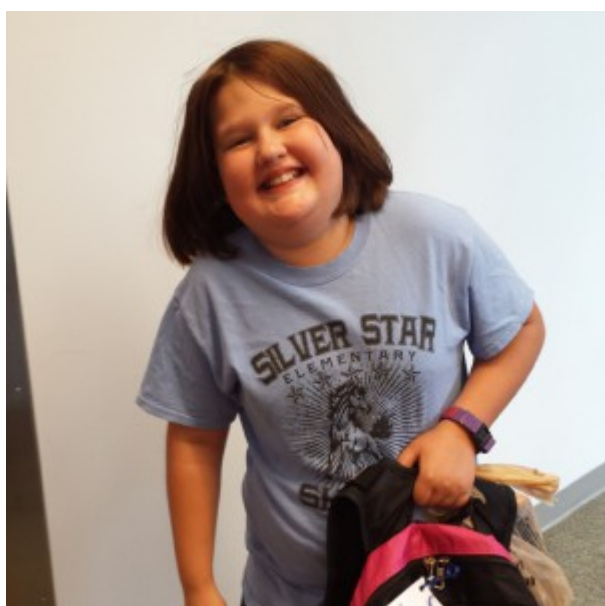
Business Administration professor Patti Serrano is no stranger to honors at Clark: She was named one of the college's 2012-2013 Exceptional Faculty Award recipients. "She has been a rock in her division for 33 years and counting," said President Knight. "Through her leadership, she has formally and informally mentored faculty, staff and administrators."

Serrano has been a key participant in such important collegewide efforts as strategic planning, accreditation, and course development. Currently, she is leading her department's efforts to develop a new Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Management. "She is admired and respected by students, faculty, and staff alike," said President Knight.

Helping little Penguins start the school year right



Eleven years—that is how long Clark employees have been generously donating backpacks and supplies to school-aged children of Clark College students through the Annual Backpack Project. This year, employees sponsored 76 backpacks, adding to a cumulative total of well over 600 backpacks collected so far.



Once again, the Office of Planning and Effectiveness oversaw the donation process. Student parents were identified by staff members from Financial Aid, Child & Family Studies, Eligibility Programs, and Veteran Affairs. In August, employees from across the college volunteered to purchase and fill backpacks. Each donor was given a shopping list that

included basic information about the child—age, gender, favorite colors and themes—as well as specific items that child would need at school. The backpacks were presented to their recipients before the beginning of the school year.

Through emails and thank-you notes, students expressed their gratitude at receiving the backpacks. One parent's response expressed the realities faced by many families with both children and parents in school: "I received the backpacks for the kids today and I am overwhelmed with gratitude," she wrote. "I didn't realize that supplies would be included. ... I



appreciate the support. It was a difficult decision to come back and finish my degree. There is a lot of family sacrifice involved, [and] gestures like these make a big difference. Thank you."

Another student wrote, "As a single working mother, this is a great stress relief." Yet another card read, "I'm currently homeless, so this helps so much."

The children also expressed delight as they picked up backpacks stuffed full of supplies. As one child put it: "I really like it, and can't wait to use it for school."

Story and photos submitted by Susan Maxwell

Exceptional Faculty, Exceptional Stories



Clockwise from top left: Kelly Fielding, Chris Martins, Sarah Theberge, and Jim Wilkins-Luton.

A professor who never planned on going to college, A Web-savvy wiz who stays in touch with students on Twitter, an aspiring academic who turned his back on the ivory tower in favor of more hands-on teaching, and an experienced clinician who takes the mystery out of a much-misunderstood subject—these are the recipients of the 2013-2014 Clark College Exceptional Faculty Awards, which were announced during the college's 2014 Commencement ceremony and officially presented to their recipients during Opening Day activities on Sept. 10.

The Clark College Exceptional Faculty Awards are presented annually to full-time and part-time faculty members. This year

the award recipients include two full-time tenured professors and two part-time adjunct instructors, whose detailed biographies can be accessed through the links below:

- Kelly Fielding: The voice of experience
- Chris Martin: The technophile with human feeling
- Sarah Theberge: The accidental professor
- Jim Wilkins-Luton: The book-lover gone digital

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. Nominations can be submitted by Clark College students, faculty, classified employees, administrators, alumni, Board members, and Foundation directors.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Exceptional Faculty Award spotlight: The technophile with human feeling



Chris Martin has gathered the students from his Web Video Production class in the hallway outside their classroom to demonstrate how to set up an interview shot. One student—a burly guy with a baseball cap and gray beard—has affably agreed to stand in front of the camera as the “interviewee.”

“Now let’s think about camera height, because you can change things a lot depending on the angle you shoot your subject at,” Martin says, adjusting the camera’s tripod. “Do we want to set it lower and look up at him to give him that godlike angle? Because we all know Steve has a bit of a god complex—just kidding! Just kidding!”

The whole class, Steve included, cracks up, and then Martin continues, raising the tripod as he speaks. “You can do stuff like that,” he says. “You can look down on them, too. But typically, we want to meet the subject at their own level, to give them that human feeling.”



In many ways, that last line is an apt summation of Martin’s teaching philosophy—and the secret to his popularity with students, who nominated him in droves for Clark’s prestigious 2013-14 Exceptional Faculty Award.

“His patience and approach in bringing out the abilities in all his students, from the novice to the advanced, encourages respect for all,” wrote one nominator. “His emotional integrity allows him to act as a mentor and to also mirror the importance to students that he is also learning the ever-changing aspects of technology.”

“If you don’t care about who your students are or where they come from or what they actually know—and they know a lot—then you can’t help them,” says Martin, who teaches both Computer Technology and Computer Graphics Technology classes as an adjunct at Clark, as well as general business courses at Warner Pacific College. “What I like about teaching at Clark is you really get to know the students. When they go through hard times, you know about it.”

Martin also gets strong praise for his real-life experience as a web designer and videographer. He has spent more than eight years running his own multimedia studio, creating videos and web content for businesses, nonprofits, and artists. He also produces a regular online documentary video series called *Innovators of Vancouver* that showcases leaders in Southwest Washington.

Martin, who holds a bachelor's degree in Media Arts and Animation from the Art Institute of Portland and a master's degree in Management and Organizational Leadership from Warner Pacific, regularly shares stories from his professional career to illustrate class material. A self-described "big experimenter," he often tries out new tools and methods in his teaching—including Twitter, which Martin has used to create online discussions about class material among his students.

"It's just a way of being accessible," Martins says. "I think it helps students feel connected to me a little more."

Or, to put it another way: It's Martin's way of giving his students that "human feeling" in the digital age.

Learn more about the other 2013-14 Exceptional Faculty Award recipients.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Exceptional Faculty Award spotlight: The accidental professor



We've all heard the cliché that kids say the darndest things. But people rarely point out its corollary: So do adults. As an Early Childhood Education professor, Sarah Theberge says she is often just as surprised by what her students express in the classroom as she is by what children in the college's Child & Family Studies program say on the playground.

"I'm just surprised over and over again by how many things I hadn't thought of," Theberge says as she stands on that playground surrounded by running children. "The way that students approach the things we talk about reminds me that there's no one right answer to so much of what we're studying. I really do see us as 'co-learners' who are all learning together—and I'm learning right along with them. It's one of my favorite parts of teaching."

It's also one of the things students mentioned repeatedly in nominating Theberge for Clark College's prestigious Exceptional Faculty Award, which Theberge received for the

2013-14 year. The award was announced at Clark's 2014 Commencement ceremony and officially bestowed at the college's Opening Day festivities on September 10.

"She is honest, she is real, she is not only a teacher but an inspiration and a friend to all her students," wrote one nominator. "She brings passion to her work with children and with her students, and ignites the passion in all of us."

Students also mention Theberge's empathy and her strong commitment to serving as an academic advisor to students in the ECE program. When Theberge explains how she became a professor, it becomes clear why she is able to connect so strongly with her students and empathize with the challenges they face: After all, she faced them too.

Theberge never set out to become a professor. "It was the farthest thing from my mind," she says, laughing. Rather, her initial ambition was much more basic: She needed a job.

"I was a single parent without any college background or schooling, and a friend of mine had a childcare center," Theberge says. "I just thought it was a place where I could have my kids there and still work. But from the very first day, I fell in love with it."

A friend encouraged her to enroll in Clark's ECE program. "I said, 'Oh no. We don't do college in my family,'" Theberge recalls. "She literally took me by the hand and dragged me to Clark. And I've never left."

In 1992, Theberge graduated with honors from Clark with an Associate of Applied Science degree in ECE. She went on to complete both a bachelor's and master's program from Pacific Oaks College while working in Clark's CFS program, first as a program aide and then as an adjunct faculty member. Her roles and responsibilities continued to expand over the years, and in 2000 she was granted tenure at Clark. Throughout the years, she has continued to attend conferences and workshops to keep

up-to-date on current teaching practices in her field. She also presents her own research at conferences; currently she has been delving into the complex issues surrounding children's concepts of gender identity. Additionally, she serves on the board of directors for YWCA Clark County and has been instrumental in creating a library at CFS to help promote children's literacy.

It's a long way from the young single mother who just wanted a job. "That's why I love advising," Theberge says. "I hear similar stories to mine from students—people looking for opportunity, looking for help in making their passion a reality. It's just so rewarding to sit with that and to walk alongside them on their journey."

Learn more about the other 2013-14 Exceptional Faculty Award recipients.

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

**Exceptional Faculty Award
spotlight: The book-lover
gone digital**



Exceptional Faculty Award recipient Jim Wilkins-Luton can tell you the exact moment when the course of his career changed. He was in his final year of graduate studies at Gonzaga University, listening to an English professor discuss Milton in pedantic detail.

At the time, Wilkins-Luton was well on his way to following that professor's path. He'd already been accepted to a Ph.D. program in English literature at Stony Brook University in New York, after which he would aim for a professorship at an elite university where he could happily discuss his own favorite authors in pedantic detail. "It was all lined up," Wilkins-Luton recalls. "I'd been accepted; I had my funding in place; I was going to focus on either medieval or Victorian literature. Everything was going according to plan."

But lately, Wilkins-Luton had begun having doubts about that plan. It started when he took on a part-time job teaching homeless youth to make some money during grad school. "I had

all these stereotypes about what these kids would be like,” he says. “I’m ashamed to admit it, but the night before I started the job I was worried they would give me head lice. And then that first day I went to work and came home just exhausted and devastated by these kids. And I started thinking, Maybe the world didn’t need another Shakespeare professor. Maybe the world needed people who were willing to teach—to teach the people no one wanted to teach.”

Which brings us back to that Milton seminar. Wilkins-Luton found himself staring at the lecturing professor. “I’m not even kidding: This guy actually had leather elbow patches on his tweed jacket, and he was expounding on some particular sentence Milton wrote,” he recalls. “And I remember thinking, ‘That’s my future. I don’t want any part of that. What I want to do is help.’”

As fate would have it, there was a poster advertising opportunities to teach English in Japan on the seminar room’s walls. Wilkins-Luton called his wife as soon as class let out, and soon after graduation, the two of them moved to Japan, where they spent the next seven years teaching English. Once the couple returned to the U.S. and settled in the Portland area, it was a natural progression for Wilkins-Luton to begin teaching at a private international school, and then English as a Second Language at Clark, and then pre-college and college-level English. He earned tenure in 2006.

Wilkins-Luton says he was surprised and honored to receive a 2013-14 Exceptional Faculty Award. The award was announced at Clark’s 2014 Commencement ceremony and officially bestowed at the college’s Opening Day festivities on September 10. Student nominators described a professor they called “funny” and “friendly,” who “makes all students completely comfortable in the classroom.”

“I love to teach,” says Wilkins-Luton. “I love the classroom. I love the engagement with students.” He is sitting in his

book-lined office at Clark, which amply proves that he hasn't entirely escaped the tropes of the English professor. ("I have a lot more books at home," he admits sheepishly, casting an eye at the seven shelves of volumes arranged in meticulous alphabetical order by author. "These are mostly the ones I don't want my kids reading.")

Yet despite his love of both printed books and face-to-face teaching, Wilkins-Luton recently moved to teaching entirely online. "I think you have to make transitions sometimes to stay sharp," he explains. "Also, I'd been reading some research discussing how the face-to-face classroom favors the extrovert—the person who's willing to raise their hand and speak up in class. In the online environment, the introvert and extrovert become equal. As someone with introvert tendencies of my own, I liked that idea."

Wilkins-Luton says that at first, he was concerned that the online classroom would stifle the sense of humor and personal engagement that he practices in face-to-face teaching. But in fact, he says, online teaching has allowed him to give even more personalized attention to individual students. "If they ask me a question, I send them back a two-paragraph answer," he says. "And yeah, it might have a joke in it. Because you know what? Students don't need gravitas; they need a reason to learn."

Learn more about the other 2013-14 Exceptional Faculty Award recipients.

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Exceptional Faculty Award spotlight: The voice of experience



“I believe in psychology,” says psychology instructor Kelly Fielding. “I believe it has value and purpose, and if I can affect a few students who want to make a dent in all the psychological distress in this world, then that’s a good thing.”

Fielding has seen first-hand the value of psychology: With almost 30 years of clinical experience as a psychologist, he has helped hundreds of patients cope with psychological distress. He brings this experience into the classroom at Clark College, where he has taught part-time since 1988. “I’m at the point where I’m teaching the children of former students,” he says with a laugh.

There's a reason why parents are recommending Fielding to their kids—he has developed a reputation as an excellent teacher who incorporates personal and professional stories into his teaching. These are some of the qualities that



earned him the college's prestigious Exceptional Faculty Award. The award was announced at Clark's 2014 Commencement ceremony and officially bestowed at the college's Opening Day festivities on September 10.

"I already loved psychology when I went into [Fielding's] course, but after I took his class, I gained a new love for the topic," wrote one student nominator. "He would use storytelling to weave in the actual facts [of the course material], entertaining some students and allowing those students who required a visual aid to learn the material just as well as everyone else."

Fielding, who has a Ph.D. from Brigham Young University, says he enjoys the diversity of Clark students. "I like the population mix," he says. "I like that there are young kids who are still in high school and adult students who are much older than the 'traditional' college student. I think the older students gain from the energy of the younger students, and the younger students gain from the maturity of the older students. The older students, when they come back [to school], they're very serious."

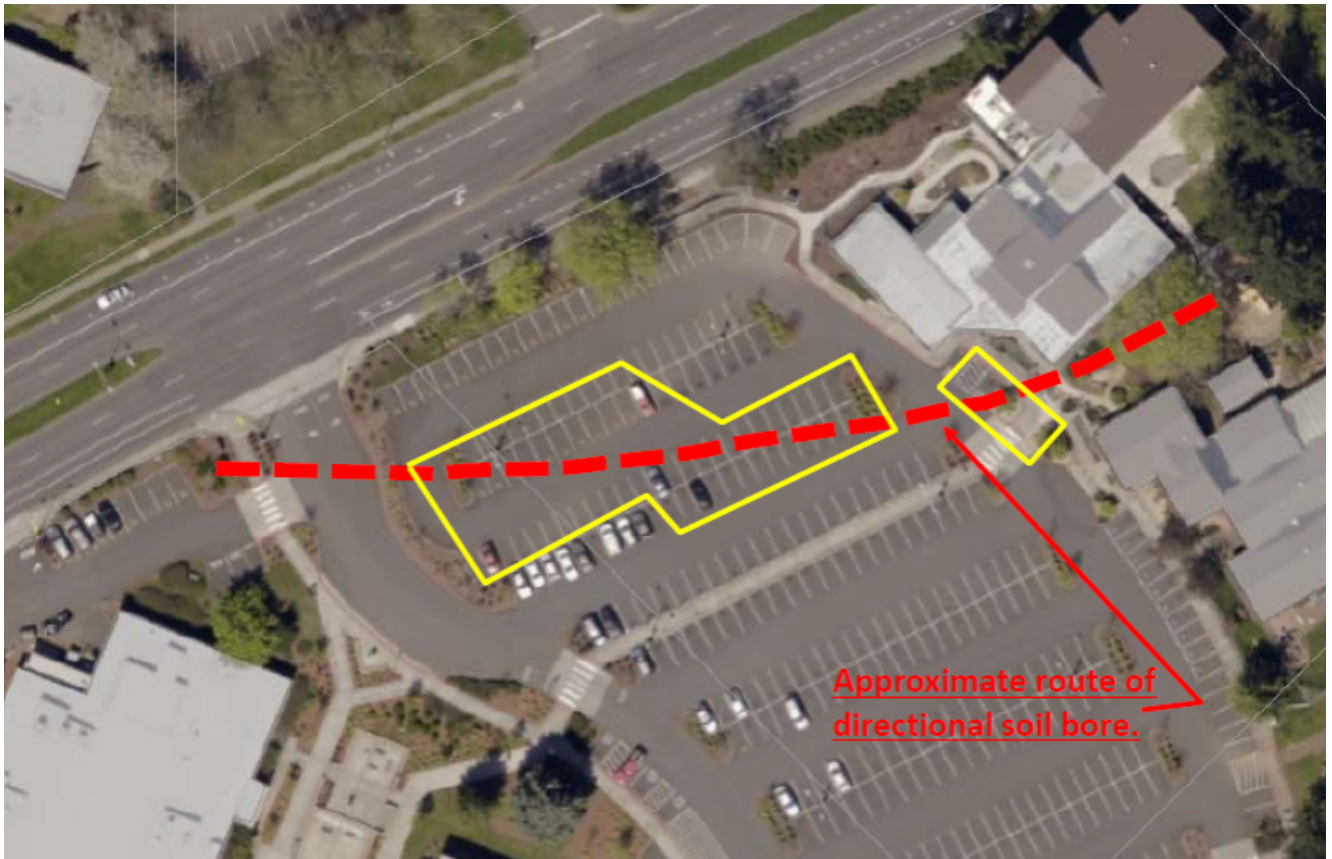
Fielding says he's felt his own teaching style develop as he's grown older—though not necessarily toward the more serious. "I find that I become more and more open," he says. "The younger you are, the more worried you are about judgment. The older I get, the less I find myself being afraid of what students will think if I share a particular idea or story."

Over the years, Fielding says, the theory and practice of psychology has changed as scientists make new discoveries about the human brain. But when it comes to teaching psychology, some things remain constant—such as students' misconceptions about the subject. "They think psychology is about manipulation," he says. "And they have little to no idea how scientific it is. I teach them the scientific method. I show them how studies are conducted. By the time we're done, I think they understand that science is more than chemistry, cells, and physics. But they also understand how those things play into psychology."

Learn more about the other 2013-14 Exceptional Faculty Award recipients.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Closures in Green Lot One



Work and closures will take place inside the areas marked by yellow lines.

Sections of Green Lot One will be closed off during the month of July as the college works to improve its fiber optic system. On July 15 and 16, the entire northwest portion of the lot will be closed to cars as workers determine the locations of existing underground utilities. Once those locations have been determined, smaller areas of the lot will be closed off as specific sites are worked on. All work should be done, and the entire lot re-opened, by the end of July.

Article and photo contributed by Facilities Services.

Save the Date: Fall Orientation



Before we say goodbye to spring quarter, make sure to put Clark's 2014 Fall Orientation on your calendar. Opening Day activities will be on Wednesday, September 10, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in O'Connell Sports Complex, followed by Fall Orientation through September 19 in various locations. Visit the Fall Orientation home page for the full lineup of events.

Opening Day is a time for us to come together as a community. To make that possible—and so that everyone from all of our locations can attend our opening day celebration—the college will be closed on the morning of Wednesday, September 10. Offices will open and services will resume at 1 p.m. that afternoon.

This year's Orientation Fair will be held Tuesday, September 16, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Gaiser Student Center.

Article contributed by the Fall Orientation Committed.

Watch Our Penguins Walk



It's that time of year again: Preparation is underway to celebrate the achievements of the Class of 2014 at this year's Commencement Ceremony, and the college needs volunteers to make the event successful for our graduates. There are a variety of opportunities for the college community to get involved, ranging from assisting with the distribution of the faculty and staff caps and gowns to helping at the graduation ceremonies. The college invites you to participate in these activities as we celebrate the excitement of our students and honor their academic success.

Anyone interested in volunteering should email Michelle Golder as soon as possible. A Commencement Volunteer training will be held Monday, June 16, 2 – 3 p.m. in GHL 213. Supervisors have been encouraged to work with employees on their schedules to allow them to participate.