

Exceptional Faculty Award spotlight: The naturalist



Biology professor Steven Clark in his office.

Steven Clark's office is full of animals. There's the "Cats Against the Bomb" calendar; the poster of the grizzly bear; the woodblock print of a turtle; the vintage Audubon Society birdwatching chart; photos of bees, rodents, spiders, his dogs. The effect is something like walking into a natural history museum that's been shoved into a filing cabinet.

"This room is reflective of my interests," says Clark, glancing over at an illustration of wildflowers above his desk. And, indeed, a conversation with Clark is likely to take you through the intricacies of parasitic wasps, the difficulties involved in attaching radio monitors to pond turtles, and a startlingly accurate imitation of a pika—a

small, rabbit-like creature whose populations in the Columbia Gorge Clark has been helping to monitor for years.

It's hard not to look around this room and assume that Clark was destined to be a biology professor. But Clark, who received his Master of Special Education for the Hearing Impaired from Lewis & Clark College in 1986, began his career teaching almost everything *but* biology at the Washington School for the Deaf.

"I was attracted to the idea of teaching an underserved population," he says. Eventually, however, Clark found himself drawn to the sciences, and in 2000 he left the School for the Deaf to pursue a master's degree in Environmental Sciences and Resources at Portland State University. For four years, he worked as a field biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife while also teaching mathematics and biology at Clark as an adjunct instructor.

For Clark, teaching at a community college still fulfills that urge to help underserved populations. "There are great teachers at all colleges, I know that, but I think the mission of the community college—to teach the rank and file of our community—I like that," he says. "My mother never got to go to college. But I used to think that if my mom *had* gone to college, she would have gone to a community college."



Professor Clark at a STEM demonstration in 2015.

Clark, who received tenure in 2014, currently teaches the biology sequence for life sciences majors, a three-quarter series that has earned a reputation as a daunting academic challenge.

“It’s funny, because I think of myself as a warm person, but I know my class is often perceived as ... rigorous,” Clark says, smiling and pausing as he searches for the right word. “I think some students get nervous at first when I explain the work load. But the reason I talk about it from the very beginning is that I want them to understand what they’re getting into. I invite students from the past year to talk about what worked in getting them to be successful. I’ll tell students to show me their notes so I can see where they’re missing something. And you know, I think by the middle of winter quarter, their [study] habits have gotten better and they’re starting to have fun.”

Clark’s theory is backed up by the many students who nominated him for a 2014-2015 Exceptional Faculty Award. “Biology may very well be the study of life, but without an enthusiastic instructor it can seem completely lifeless,” reads one nomination. “Steven Clark has somehow managed to maintain a strict and efficient authority over his classroom, while also making it incredibly fun and intriguing. I can honestly say that I have never seen those two concepts, authority and fun, incorporated into a class so well together. ... He truly cares for his students, that is abundantly apparent.”

For Clark, his classes’ rigor is one of the ways he shows that he cares. “I like my students to know that they did all their hard stuff at community college, where the focus is on teaching and the tuition is lower and there’s more room to recover from mistakes,” he says. “The best thing for me is when former students email me and say, ‘I’m at Washington State University right now, and me and the other Clark students are in the top tier.’”

Learn about other recipients of the 2014-2015 Exceptional Faculty Awards.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Sharing their voices



The Clark College Concert Choir visits the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music in 2015, where they performed for Dr. Christian Grasses, *center, blue shirt*, the conductor of the school's concert choir. *Photo: April Duvic.*

Traditionally, the week after spring quarter ends is a time for students to rest and recover from the academic year. But

not for the members of the Clark College Concert Choir, who spent four days performing and learning during an end-of-the-year trip to Los Angeles.

The trip, whose destination changes each year, is an annual tradition—a time for choir members to show off what they've learned over the past year and to get a chance to experience performing in front of new audiences. Last year, students traveled to New York to perform near the grounds of the former World Trade Center; the year before that, they visited San Francisco together with the Clark College Concert Band. This year the choir traveled by themselves. The trip, which is funded in part through the Associated Students of Clark College and in part through private fundraising by participating students, ran from June 21 to June 24.

The choir performed three concerts while in Los Angeles, the first of which was in the afternoon on the day they arrived. It was a community service outreach at the Los Angeles Veterans Administration Hospital and Care Facility, providing a Father's Day concert for residents and their families and the staff at the hospital.

"The response from those in attendance was wonderful – the vets really appreciated having the choir perform," said choir director April Duvic. "The students made such an amazing connection after they sang by going out into the audience and talking with the residents who attended the concert. It was life-changing for our students who had never had the opportunity to reach out and connect with vets like that before."

The choir also visited the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music for a two-hour clinic with Dr. Christian Grases, the conductor of that school's concert choir and an assistant professor in its department of choral and sacred music. They performed the Venezuelan folk song "Mata del Anima Sola" for him, in honor of Dr. Grases' home country.

“Dr. Grases was able to impart incredible knowledge and really fire the choir up,” Duvic said. “He was amazed that the choir was from a two-year college. He enthusiastically invited the Clark College Concert Choir students to consider applying to USC and auditioning for the music department.”

The third and final official concert of the trip was hosted by All Saints’ Episcopal Church in East Los Angeles. The performance was attended by the church’s youth group and many members of the congregation and neighborhood, as well as by three Clark College alumni who live in the city. After the concert the youth group had an opportunity to talk with choir members about attending college and about the various educational plans the Clark students are pursuing.

“It was a positive experience for the Clark students to be able to talk about their college experience and encourage the church’s youth to go to college,” said Duvic. “The applause and standing ovation the choir received was a great way to end our tour.”

Take a Bow, Maestro!



Professor Donald Appert conducts the Clark College Orchestra in 2015 at the end of his 25th year of teaching music at the college.

The award-winning Clark College Orchestra concluded its 2014-2015 season with its annual spring concert on June 14—an event that also served to celebrate Clark Orchestra Director and Conductor Donald Appert's 25th anniversary at the college. The concert was held at the Royal Durst Theatre in the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics.



Dr. Appert receives a

“memory box” full of messages from friends, colleagues, and former students at his 25th anniversary of teaching at Clark. The box was presented by Dean Miles Jackson.

Featured on the program was pianist Renato Fabbro performing the U.S. premiere of Maestro Appert’s *Piano Concerto in Mi*. In addition the orchestra performed “Buckaroo Holiday” from *Rodeo* by Aaron Copland and *Scheherazade* by Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov.



Clark College Band Director Richard Inouye, Music Department Program Coordinator Shelly Williams, Orchestra Director Donald Appert, and Vocal Music Program Director April Duvic gather to celebrate Prof. Appert’s 25th anniversary of teaching at Clark.

Dr. Appert was honored by the musicians, music department faculty, and college administration for his quarter-century of work at Clark College. Social Science and Fine Arts Dean Miles Jackson paid tribute to Appert after the concert for building the orchestra into a “fantastic program that keeps getting

better and better each season.” He also applauded Appert’s commitment to the students in the classroom and in private instruction.



Clarinetist John Gibson, who played at Prof. Appert’s first Clark concert in 1990, returned to perform with him at his 25th anniversary concert on June 14, 2015.

Following the concert, Dr. Appert was further honored by long-time orchestra supporters and friends, as well as by the orchestra’s musicians, in a reception. Among those congratulating him were Kirsten Hisatomi Norvell and John Gibson, two musicians who played in the Clark Orchestra at Dr. Appert’s first Clark concert, which was held on December 5, 1990. Both Norvell and Gibson have played concerts with Dr. Appert throughout the years and performed in the June 14 concert.

Dr. Appert’s programming, which has won national awards

through the years, is one of the artistic strengths that has built his reputation at Clark. In addition to programming standard orchestral repertoire, Appert has introduced Clark musicians to rarely performed works by lesser-known composers; premiered new works by contemporary composers; and performed a number of his own compositions. Dr. Appert also has a long history of bringing local, national, and international soloists and guest conductors to enhance the artistic experience of Clark College musicians. The 2014-2015 season featured baritone soloist David Wakeham (Australia) and guest conductor Paolo Biancalana (Italy) in addition to Fabbro, who teaches at the University of Portland.

Music Department Program Coordinator Shelly Williams contributed this article.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

A Night of Celebration



Almost 740 graduates attended the 2015 Clark College Commencement ceremony, held June 18 at the Clark County Event Center.

The sun shone, the bagpipes sounded, and the members of Clark College's 79th graduating class gathered together—more than 730 of them, making the 2015 Commencement ceremony the college's largest yet.

The Clark County Event Center was filled with friends, family members, and other well-wishers at the event, which took place during the evening of June 18.



First-generation college graduate David Scott '15 attended the 2015 Commencement ceremony.

Approximately 20 members of the crowd were there to cheer on David Scott, 22, who was receiving his Associate of Arts degree. "I'm the first one in my family to graduate from college," said Scott, whose neck was adorned with multiple leis, a traditional Hawaiian token of celebration. "They're pretty stoked."

Scott, who is transferring to Washington State University Vancouver in the fall and hopes to become an elementary school teacher, said he was impressed by the caring nature of his professors at Clark. "They genuinely want you to be successful," he said as he waited in line to enter the ceremony.

Scott said he also appreciated the flexibility of Clark's online courses. "I've been working fulltime as an overnight stocker at Winco Foods," he explained. "It's really good that they have online classes because I get off work at 7:30 a.m. and need to sleep."

In total, some 2,000 degrees and certificates were conferred upon the Class of 2015. This year's graduating class included 278 Running Start graduates—a new record for the college,

which has the largest Running Start program in the state.



“We got here at 4:45 to line up,” say these Running Start students from Woodland High School, including N.E.R.D. Girls president and Clark Aeronautics Club member Adeline Dinehart, *third from left*.

Adeline Dinehart stood with five friends at the head of the line of graduates. All six young women were Woodland High School students who had attended Clark through Running Start. Dinehart had thrived at Clark, where she became president of the popular N.E.R.D. (Not Even Remotely Dorky) Girls Club and a member of the Clark Aeronautics Club, which successfully participated in a NASA rocketry competition in Huntsville, Alabama, this spring.

“We were the only community college in the maxi competition,” she said proudly. “The atmosphere there was great—really competitive, but also really encouraging of one another.”

Dinehart said she appreciated the faculty’s promotion of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, citing engineering professors Carol Hsu and Tina Barsotti in particular. “Tina and Carol are amazing,” she said. “They have taught me so much over the past two years.”

Dinehart will be attending University of Washington in the fall. Two of her friends, Jamie Kitchen and Shianne Burhop, are also college-bound, but headed to George Fox University, where they will be roommates.

“The credits from Clark transfer really well,” said Kitchen. “That’s part of why I chose to come to Clark.”

“Going to Woodland, you have the choice as a Running Start student between Lower Columbia College and Clark,” explained Burhop, who had adorned her cap with the Bilbo Baggins quote, “I think I am quite ready for another adventure.”

This year’s ceremony saw an explosion in cap decoration, and as students filed into the ceremony, the westering sun glinted off of messages outlined in glitter and rhinestones.



Outgoing ASCC President Emmah Ferguson addressed the Class of 2015 at Commencement. Both her siblings also attended Clark through Running Start; Ruth graduated from the University of Washington the week before Clark’s Commencement and Zachary is entering Duke Law School on a full scholarship in the fall.

The ceremony itself held many highlights. Student speaker and ASCC president Emmah Ferguson shared how Clark had developed

an unrealized love of science within her.

“We have all had obstacles,” she said. “For me, my biggest obstacle was probably myself and my ideas about what I could and couldn’t do. ... It is our resilience and persistence that has gotten us this far, and it will take us where we want to go next.”



Curt Warner, *left*, thanks Clark College President Robert K. Knight before giving the 2015 Commencement keynote address.

Former Seattle Seahawks running back and businessman Curt Warner gave the keynote address. Noting that he had grown up in West Virginia’s coal mining country, where career options were limited, he urged graduates to aspire toward their goals, even if others tried to dissuade them.

“If people say you can’t succeed, you don’t have time to listen to that,” he said. “Dedicate yourselves to your goals. Never give up. People who make goals get slapped down at least once. Everyone loses sometime. It’s how you handle the losing that makes you a winner.”

The ceremony also served as the announcement of the 2015 Exceptional Faculty Awards. The 2015 awardees are Steven Clark, professor of biology; Alison Dolder, instructor of baking; Matthew Gallaher, instructor of English; and Michiyo

Okuhara, professor of Japanese. President Robert K. Knight also announced the recipient of the 2015-2016 Community College President's Award, Kathleen Fockler.



High school diploma recipient Leeann Hodge addressed the 2015 Commencement. This was the first time in many years that high school diploma and GED recipients participated in Commencement.

New this year, students who earned GEDs or High School Diplomas through the college's Transitional Studies program were invited to participate in the ceremony. Approximately 25 of these students participated in the ceremony, and High School Diploma recipient Leeann Hodge was one of two student speakers to address the crowd.



Transitional Studies

graduates Chris Boots, Devon Zach, and Amanda Halbert wait in line to participate in the 2015 Commencement ceremony.

Before the ceremony began, these students had stood in a line adjacent to the line for associate degree and certificate recipients. One of them, Amanda Halbert, said she decided to pursue her GED once her youngest child was getting ready to start kindergarten. She is beginning college-level classes at Clark now, with the goal of earning a degree in graphic design.

“It’s a little nerve-wracking, looking across at the people in that line, getting their associate degrees,” she admitted. “But I’m proud of myself for being here. And I know I’ll be in that line one day.”

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

To see more photos from Commencement, visit Clark’s Flickr album.

On Her Way



Kathleen Fockler smiles after receiving the news that she has received the 2015-2016 Community College President's Scholarship.

About a month ago, Kathleen Fockler was on the way to a Beaverton testing facility to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), the exam each nursing student must pass before officially becoming a Registered Nurse.

She was ready. It had taken her 20 years to reach this point, but she felt confident that the rigorous coursework of the Clark College Nursing Program had prepared her for the exam. Finally, after years of struggle, she was going to achieve her long-held dream of becoming a nurse.

And then her car broke down.

In the middle of the Route 26 tunnel.

During morning rush hour.

It could have been a disaster. But Kathleen Fockler, age 47,

is not someone to submit to defeat. When the tow truck arrived, she persuaded the driver to take both her car and herself to the testing site. She had driven there the week before just to be sure of the route—"I didn't want to get lost," she explains—so she was able to direct him there swiftly.

"I got there just a couple minutes after the exam began, and when I explained my situation, they let me go ahead and take the test," Fockler recalls.

From the beginning, Fockler's road to becoming a nurse has been beset by unexpected detours and daunting challenges. And each time, Fockler has been able to overcome these roadblocks with a combination of preparation, persistence, and support from those around her. During the 2015 Commencement ceremony, her persistence was rewarded when Clark College President Robert K. Knight announced that she was the recipient of this year's Community College President's Award in honor of Val Ogden. This scholarship provides full tuition and fees for two years to a Clark graduate completing their bachelor's degree at Washington State University Vancouver.

"I still can't believe it," Fockler says. "This is an incredible opportunity. A door has just been opened right up for me."

Fockler began taking pre-nursing courses at Clark in 1994. However, her plans were derailed when her then-newborn son, Gabe, began experiencing seizures and developmental delays. "The timing was not right," Fockler says. She decided to leave school and concentrate on supporting her son and her daughter, MaKenzie, who was born three years after Gabe.

Fockler held onto her dream even while spending many years working as a paraprofessional assistant in the Evergreen School District Early Childhood Center, helping support children with developmental delays. It was only when Gabe

entered Clark through the Running Start program that Fockler felt the time was right for her to return to school as well.

At first, the experience of returning to school after 20 years was intimidating. Courses required online registration—Fockler didn't even own a computer. But she quickly found the support she needed at Clark.

“The resources that Clark has are tremendous,” she says. “There's a math lab, there are computer labs, there's a retention specialist in the nursing department. There's just so much in place to help the student.”

Fockler is quick to point out another resource that helped her on her journey: the college's scholarships office. “When I applied to nursing school, I thought, ‘How am I going to do this?’” she recalls. “At the time, I was working two jobs, and I'd heard how demanding the nursing curriculum was.”

But Clark's scholarship specialists quickly went into action, finding Fockler potential scholarship opportunities and encouraging her to apply. “[Outreach/Scholarship Coordinator] Lizette Drennan was like my cheerleader,” she recalls. “There was a postcard of the scholarship staff that I found, and I stuck it in my binder to remind me about the people who were supporting me. I had a picture of my family, and Lizette's smiling face.”



Presidential Scholarship recipient Kathleen Fockler takes a moment to hug and thank her nursing professors at commencement.

Fockler also found support from the nursing faculty, who encouraged her to keep going. Fockler gained confidence after working in the program's state-of-the-art simulation lab, which helped her develop clinical skills before she even began her internship.

That internship proved to be another challenge. From the beginning, Fockler had set her sights on becoming a pediatric nurse working with medically fragile children, a goal formed through her experiences sitting in hospitals with Gabe early on. But Clark's nursing program had only one pediatric internship opening per cohort.

A faculty member suggested Fockler volunteer at the Center for Medically Fragile Children (CMFC) at Providence in Portland to gain experience. Clark didn't have an internship partnership set up with the CMFC; these agreements are labor-intensive and highly competitive. But Fockler so impressed the CMFC staff as a volunteer that they decided to create an internship partnership for her. Now, Clark has a regular internship opening at the center.

Throughout her studies, Fockler has shown a tireless work ethic. She went over notes while waiting in her children's doctor offices. She reviewed cranial nerves while sitting beside her mother's hospital bed after a surgery. And when Fockler herself had to undergo thyroid surgery, she didn't skip a class, deciding to simply attend the evening lecture rather than her standard morning one.

"Each day, I try to learn everything I can," she says.

On top of all that, Fockler found time to regularly volunteer with the Evergreen School District, the CFMC, SHARE House, and the Student Nurse Association of Clark College.

Despite her talent and perseverance, however, Fockler knew there was another huge hurdle standing between herself and her goal. In order to work in a specialized hospital setting like the CMFC, Fockler would need to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. Fockler—who lives in Vancouver with her children; husband, Bunnell; and mother-in-law, Beth LaViolette—has begun working with an in-home nursing care service for medically fragile children. Even so, she couldn't see how she could afford university tuition for both herself and MaKenzie, who is entering the University of Washington in the fall. Receiving the Community College President's Scholarship means her way is now clear to continue her education.

Fockler is effusive in her thanks to all the organizations who have provided scholarships to her, including the Clark College Foundation, Vancouver Rotary, and 40 et 8.

"I guess it really does take a village to raise a nurse," says Fockler, who hopes one day to be able to fund her own nursing scholarship. "The community supported me tremendously, and working hard is my way of paying them back."

Additional Scholarships

Through the support of the Clark College Foundation, two other finalists for the Community College President's Scholarship were awarded \$3,000 scholarships to continue their education. President Knight announced the scholarships to **Julie Mercado** and **Melanie Brawley** during the Commencement ceremony as well.

Photos: Clark College/Hannah Erickson (top) and Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Great News



The spring 2015 staff of *The Independent*, Clark's student newspaper.

Clark College student journalists captured all three top awards in a competition for the best in news reporting, editing and production by teams at 13 community colleges in Oregon and Washington, according to results made public Sunday.

It was the third year in a row that the news staff of The Independent captured the Publications Sweeps, a tally of the most first-, second- and third-place finishes for a school in 21 categories of the competition. The Independent staff also took first in the General Excellence category of the contest,

which, this year was sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Association of Journalism Educators.

Former Clark student journalist Emma Fletcher, who is now studying in Dunedin, New Zealand, captured first in the Individual Sweeps, picking up top awards in feature reporting and feature photography, two second-place awards in news reporting and multimedia story-telling and an honorable mention in portrait photography.

“This is such a terrific testimony to the hard work, determination and skill of some fine students and young people,” adviser Dee Anne Finken said. “The Independent staff demonstrated once again that they can achieve great outcomes by way of great effort and dedication.”

Finken said the results were also satisfying because the competition this year was broader than in years past. Washington Community College Journalism Association media advisers opened the contest to two-year schools in Oregon, Montana and Idaho this year and conducted the contest under the banner of the Pacific Northwest Association of Journalism Educators.

“The competition was tougher and larger in number, but Clark students again prevailed,” she said.

The Independent staff finished in front of Mt. Hood Community College students in Gresham, Oregon, who took second in the Publications Sweeps and Shoreline Community College student journalists from Shoreline, Washington, who finished third.

In the General Excellence category, Clark student journalists finished in front of the Pierce College student news staff, from Lakewood, Washington, who took second, and the Shoreline staff, who took third.

Finken acknowledged the success was also due to the support of other faculty and staff at Clark, as well as professionals in

the community, especially those who serve on the college's Student Media Advisory Committee. "The Independent's success is also because we've had thoughtful people supporting a fine co-curricular program that blends an extra-curricular activity with academics. It's been a great partnership."

Tra Friesen, The Independent's editor-in-chief, who won third place in the news photography category, said his work for the publication has been highly rewarding.

"Joining the Independent is hands-down the best decision I ever made for my education," Friesen said. "Not only did I improve as a critical thinker and writer, I also learned real world skills like leadership, teamwork, and communication."

As for the team's success, Friesen credited a dedication to constant improvement. "We are never satisfied and we always try to make each issue better than the last."

Sports editor/managing editor Tyler Urke won first place in sports feature reporting and an honorable mention in feature writing.

Multimedia editor Scott Unverzagt, chief photographer Kameron Johnson and design manager Kyle Bliquez also won first-place awards; and sports reporter Becca Robbins captured a second-place in sports news reporting.

Other college news staff who competed were from Everett Community College in Everett, Washington; Linn-Benton Community College in Albany, Oregon; Green River Community College in Auburn, Washington; Edmonds Community College in Lynnwood, Washington; Seattle Central College; Portland Community College; Peninsula College in Port Angeles, Washington; and Whatcom College in Bellingham.

Entries consisted of work students completed during the Spring 2014, Fall 2014 and Winter 2015 terms.

Eighteen judges—professional and former staff members from *The Seattle Times*, *The (Tacoma) News Tribune*, the *Tacoma Weekly*, the *Wenatchee World* and the (Longview) *Daily News*; and faculty and advisers from non-participating colleges—evaluated and scored the submissions, Finken said.

Congratulations, Professors!



Left to right: Kristi Taylor (dental hygiene), Helen Martin (business technology), Joan Zoellner (mathematics), Linda Valenzuela (nursing), Ruth Trejo (chemistry), Alan Wiest (health and physical education), Bevyn Rowland (counseling), Shayna Collins (counseling), Ethel Reeves (nursing), Susan Nieman (nursing), and Sunnie Elhart-Johnson (business technology medical office).

Eleven outstanding educators are the newest members of the tenured faculty at Clark College. Shayna Collins (counseling), Sunnie Elhart-Johnson (business technology medical office), Helen Martin (business technology), Susan Nieman (nursing), Ethel Reeves (nursing), Bevyn Rowland (counseling), Kristi Taylor (dental hygiene), Ruth Trejo (chemistry), Linda Valenzuela (nursing), Alan Wiest (health and physical education, and Joan Zoellner (mathematics) were all honored at a reception on April 8 in Clark's Gaiser Student Center.

"This is an important moment, both for these faculty members and for the college," said Clark College President Robert K. Knight. "These talented and dedicated professionals have made a commitment to our college, and will help shape the college's programs and community for many years to come."

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.

The professors receiving tenure are:

Shayna Collins, Counseling

Shayna Collins earned her Bachelors in Women's Studies and Psychology in 2006 and a Masters in Mental Health Counseling from Minnesota State University in 2009. She then moved to Portland and worked at the Center for Family Success and LifeWorks before joining Clark in 2012.

Shayna currently serves on the Advising Steering Committee and

the campus CERT team. Other activities include Teaching Squares, FYE Mentorship program, several search committees, and planning for the annual Stress Awareness Day at Clark.

Collins believes in providing greater access to education for all, encouraging life-long learning, and creating a classroom environment that accommodates diverse learning styles. "It is my pleasure and honor to serve as a faculty counselor at Clark!" she says.

Sunnie Elhart-Johnson, Business Technology Medical Office

After attending a number of colleges as part of her undergraduate degree, including UCLA and The Evergreen State College, Sunnie Elhart-Johnson graduated with honors from Humboldt State University. Elhart-Johnson earned her Masters of Management and Organizational Leadership (MMOL) in 2009. Additionally, she has a current certification from AHIMA in Training ICD-10-CM/PCS and earned a certification in Patient Navigation and Advocacy this past fall.

Over the past 30 years, Elhart-Johnson has worked primarily in the medical field including previous experience as a unit secretary, EMT, medical transcriptionist, AHT, medical biller and coder. Non-medical experience includes corporate trainer, computer tech support, and a number of managerial positions. She has taught Medical Administrative courses throughout the past 14 years, earning the 2011-2012 Clark College Exceptional Faculty Award.

Elhart-Johnson has served as the Department Head for the BMED programs for over three years, working extensively in the curricular development needed to graduate students with the ability to successfully work in almost any healthcare environment, including billing and coding. The BMED Department is currently placing students in several local hospitals and outpatient settings as ICD-10 experts ready for the implementation this October. She currently sits on the

Evergreen School Advisory Committee and the Skills Center Advisory Committee, and volunteers at a local free clinic.

“I’m excited about the HIIM degree beginning this summer, allowing students to sit for the highly sought for RHIT certification,” Elhart-Johnson says. “I look forward to leading changes in the healthcare industry through Clark’s programs and graduates, and to supplying our community partners with the ideal employees who have mastery in their field.”

Helen Martin, Business Technology

Helen Martin studied history at Leiden University in the Netherlands, and graduated with a doctorandus degree. She also earned an MBA with a concentration in marketing from Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia. She has previous work experience with Clark College, PTIGlobal, MindLink, Miami University of Ohio, and Websense.

“As a teacher, I see it as my job to help Clark Students acquire the skills to succeed in life, the confidence to apply those skills in a real world setting, and to make their learning experience effective and enjoyable,” she says.

Martin is a member of the Clark College CERT team, and has been involved as a mentor in the First Year Experience program.

Susan Nieman, Nursing

Susan Nieman is a graduate of the Clark College Nursing Program. She completed her BSN and MN at WSU Vancouver before joining Clark College as an adjunct instructor in 2005. Nieman has worked in psychiatric and emergency room settings and currently serves in the United States Army Reserve as a nurse with the 396th Combat Support hospital.

“My goal is to create additional volunteer opportunities for

Clark College students to enrich not only their nursing experiences, but the lives of community members touched by our service," she said.

Nieman serves as a board member and volunteer at the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington. She enjoys spending time with her family and doing outdoor activities on the water, especially outrigger canoeing.

Ethel Reeves, Nursing

Ethel Reeves earned her associate degree in nursing at Clark College in 1992, her BSN at WSU Vancouver in 2009, and her MSN at WSU Vancouver in 2013. Prior to coming to Clark College, she worked at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital from 1987 to 2011 and at Columbia Gorge Community College from 2008 to 2012. She began teaching at Clark College as a Clinical Adjunct Faculty in fall 2011.

"As a first-generation college graduate, I encourage and support the joy of life-long learning," Reeves says. "My approach is to help reduce student anxiety so that their learning is maximized in any given educational setting."

Reeves is a member of the Nursing Standard 1 Committee, Scholarship Committee, Speights Faculty Development Committee, and the Emergency Management Preparation Committee.

Dr. Bevyn Rowland, Counseling

Dr. Rowland earned her undergraduate degree in English from University of Portland, her Master of Arts degree (Counseling) and her Doctor of Psychology (Clinical PsyD) degree from Pacific University. She completed her APA-accredited internship at University of Idaho, and a postdoctoral residency at Cornell University. Dr. Rowland currently maintains a private practice in Salmon Creek at Evergreen Behavioral Health, where she is also working to create a nonprofit mental health center.

“Students arrive to college and counseling at varying levels of readiness, motivation, investment, and health,” said Dr. Rowland. “I adore helping students move toward change to support their success at Clark, as well as capitalize on strengths they already have, to create the life they want.”

In addition to Dr. Rowland’s work as a licensed clinical psychologist and her counseling and teaching roles on campus (teaching in HDEV and COLL departments), she is an active member of the Behavior Intervention and Threat Assessment (BITA) Team and the Cultural Pluralism Committee (CPC). She presents on mental health topics to student classes across divisions, and often provides training to staff and faculty through the Teaching and Learning Center.

Kristi Taylor, Dental Hygiene

Kristi Taylor earned her associate degree in Dental Hygiene from Clark College and her Bachelor of Science degree in Dental Hygiene through the degree-completion program of Eastern Washington University at Clark College. She began teaching at Clark in 2010, first as an adjunct instructor and then as a full-time temporary instructor. When she began her position as a tenure-track first-year lead instructor in dental hygiene, one of Taylor’s tenure goals was to complete her master’s degree in Post-Secondary and Continuing Education degree from Portland State University. She earned that degree in summer 2013.

“I have lived in Vancouver for the majority of my life and feel it a privilege to work for Clark College,” says Taylor. “Because I attended and graduated from Clark, I can use these experiences to mentor and facilitate dental hygiene students to fulfill their dreams.

“Creating an environment that is learner-centered, free from fear, and limited in stress, is ideal,” she continued. “A learner-centered environment allows students the opportunity

to grow and retain information in a way that allows for optimal patient and community care.”

Throughout the past three years, Taylor has been an active leader of the dental hygiene students in the ASCC club and Students of the American Dental Hygiene Association (SADHA) by leading changes that have allowed students more access to serve their patients, college, and community. In her current teaching role, she is responsible for planning all clinical courses and many didactic courses throughout the first year of the students’ dental hygiene education.

Ruth Trejo, Chemistry

Ruth Trejo received her master’s degree in organic chemistry from the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). She taught at Miramar Community College and Southwestern Community College before coming to Clark College in 2011.

“I love to watch students conquer difficult subjects with assistance from me and their peers,” says Trejo. “I believe in the power of self-sufficiency and peer group work to learn chemistry.”

While in San Diego, Trejo was involved in community-outreach projects working with Green Chemistry and most recently Science Fun for Kids 9 to 99, where anyone could come to Miramar and learn science by enjoying physics or chemistry projects. Now that she is at Clark, Trejo volunteers as a coordinator for the annual Science Olympiad. She is currently working as the general chemistry lab coordinator for the Chemistry Department.

Linda Valenzuela, Nursing

Linda Valenzuela earned her associate degree in nursing from the College of the Sequoias in Visalia, California; her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from California State University, Dominguez Hills; and her Master of Public Health

degree from Portland State University. She anticipates completing her Master of Science in Nursing degree from Western Governors University in August 2015.

Valenzuela's previous employment includes Asotin County Public Health and Clark County Public Health. She currently is a relief staff member at PeaceHealth Southwest, a position she has maintained since 2005. She joined the nursing program at Clark as a full-time, tenure-track faculty member in 2009.

"I've worked as an registered nurse for over 30 years," she says. "I'm also active in my community in home health and hospice activities."

Valenzuela currently serves as the sixth-quarter lead for the nursing program. Her hobbies include gardening and quilting.

Alan Wiest, Health and Physical Education

Alan Wiest completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Exercise and Movement Science from the University of Oregon. He has taught Health, Physical Education, and Exercise Science for more than 14 years in Oregon, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Washington. He teaches in the Health, Physical Education, and Fitness Trainer programs at Clark College. Wiesty holds certifications as an Aquatic Fitness Professional, Certified Personal Trainer, Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, and USA Weightlifting Sports and Performance Coach.

"I believe I learn as much from his students as they learn from me," Wiest says. "I cherish my job, and I know I'm incredibly fortunate to be in a position of helping others pursue a lifetime full of health and happiness."

Wiestserves on many Clark College committees; volunteers both at the college and in his community; commits to continuing education; and loves taking part in the faculty/staff-vs.-students intramural events at the college.

Wiest resides in Vancouver and can often be found hiking the trails carved into the Columbia River Gorge, Vancouver Lake, and the Coastal Trails. When time permits, he travels the U.S. in an attempt to climb the highest peak in all 50 states.

Joan Zoellner, Mathematics

Joan Zoellner earned her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Humboldt State University and her Master of Arts in Mathematics from Indiana University. She has previous teaching experience at Portland Community College and began teaching at Clark College in 2010.

“I strongly believe that students in a math class should be doing math, not just watching the instructor work problems,” she says. “Deep, lasting learning occurs when students work together to solve challenging conceptual problems in class, and practice the procedural aspects of math outside of class. All of our students have the ability to succeed in math, and my job is to facilitate their growth as learners.”

Zoellner is involved in developmental mathematics education reform, and is in the process of developing a Math Review Boot Camp course for students who place low after taking the COMPASS test. You can also find Joan tutoring in the Math Help Center, and serving on several math department assessment committees.

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Seussing Things Up



King Elementary students enjoy their new books, donated through the Clark College Bookstore's 2015 book drive.

Smiles dominated the scene at King Elementary School on March 2 as volunteers from the Clark College Bookstore read Dr. Seuss's classic *The Cat in The Hat* to four kindergarten classes as part of Read Across America Day. Following the book readings by volunteers Kaina Barba and Megaera Jarvis, each student received a new copy of the book to keep for their own, courtesy of the Bookstore's annual book drive. A total of 100 copies were donated by community members, students, staff, and faculty.



Clark College Bookstore volunteers Megaera Jarvis and Kaina Barba read to King Elementary students during Read Across America Day 2015.

“What better way is there to get a child excited to read than with a Dr. Seuss book?” asked Bookstore buyer Marti Earhart, who helps organize the Book Drive. “When the books were handed out, the kids were so excited to open their books to see what words they recognized.”

“The Clark College Book Drive is a wonderful opportunity for King students to hear another adult read a book to them,” King kindergarten teacher Shari Perea said afterward. “The students treasure the book that they receive from the Clark (volunteer) and it, in some cases, is the only book that they own.”

Over the last seven years, the book drive has provided over 1,100 books to local kindergarteners.

Story submitted by Marti Earhart

Photos: Marti Earhart/Clark College Bookstore

Honoring Three Women ... and Three Decades



Three outstanding women working in different fields, but with a similar commitment to improving the lives of others in Southwest Washington, are the winners of the 2015 Iris Awards, honoring women of achievement in Southwest Washington.

The awards will be presented to Lisa Schauer, Senior Vice President for Business Development at Mackay Sposito; Lori Pulliam, Director of Transition at the Washington State School for the Blind; and Victoria Bradford, owner of Comfort Interiors and a member of the Evergreen Public Schools Board of Directors.

Schauer, Pulliam, and Bradford will be honored on March 5, 2015 in Clark College's Gaiser Student Center. Following a 5 p.m. reception, the awards ceremony will begin at 6 p.m.

Tickets are on sale through the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce at www.vancouverusa.com. The cost is \$35 per person; a table sponsorship, which includes six tickets, can be purchased for \$250. Seating is limited.

Clark College is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver. Driving directions and parking maps are available at www.clark.edu/maps. Anyone needing accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should

contact Clark College's Disability Support Services Office at (360) 992-2314 or (VP), or visit Penguin Union Building room 013, by February 27.

The Iris Awards are a continuation of a tradition of honoring women in Southwest Washington that began in 1985 with a photography exhibit at Clark College. Over the years, the annual event has developed into an official awards ceremony, with a nomination process open to all members of the local community.

The Iris Awards are supported by Clark College, the Clark College Foundation, Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce and the *Vancouver Business Journal*, which publishes the "Women in Business" directory, the only Portland/Vancouver metro area directory of businesses that are owned, directed or managed by women. The Iris Award winners will be featured in the 2015 "Women in Business" directory.

The 2015 Iris Award Recipients

Lisa Schauer



Lisa Schauer, *standing*, goes over spreadsheets at MacKay Sposito.

Lisa Schauer is a Senior Vice President for Business Development at MacKay Sposito. She was the first female partner in the regional engineering consulting firm. As a

member of the firm's Board of Directors and Executive Committee, she is currently responsible for strategically positioning the firm's business development and marketing efforts. Schauer is well known throughout MacKay Sposito and in the industry for her commitment to people and mentoring, including launching the company's Veteran's Council, in 2013 to recognize and support veterans.

Schauer is equally well known through her involvement in the community. She is on the Chair of the Board of Directors for the Children's Center and was a Founding Board Director and is currently the Chair of H-RoC Political Action Committee, a non-partisan group formed to advance women leaders in Southwest Washington. She has served on many other boards and leadership positions.

Lori Pulliam



Lori Pullman working with a member of the LIFT program.

Lori Pulliam has been teaching at the Washington State School for the Blind for 32 years, and currently manages the residential department which provides residential services and education to our middle and high school students, and the LIFTT program, which teaches young adults with visual impairment skills of independent living. Throughout these 32 years she has taught students with deaf-blindness, worked with students from WSSB who were taking classes in the local public

schools, taught career education and worked with students in community based work experience placements.

Lori has helped develop programs to improve employment prospects for blind students. She was part of a team that developed the Youth Employment Solutions (YES), a summer career education and work experience program for students with visual impairment. She has been a long time staff member for a summer course for public school educators. Lori has served on boards and commissions in the state. Currently she is serving on the Disability Transition Task Force. Locally she is a member of the Fort Vancouver Lions Club and has given her time to coaching soccer and participating in efforts like the Walk and Knock Food Drive.

Victoria Bradford



Victoria in her interior design shop, Comfort Interiors.

Victoria Bradford is the owner of Comfort Interiors. She bought the interior design business in 2000, and under Bradford's ownership, the company has won awards in both the Vancouver Parade of Homes and the Portland Street of Dreams. She is also one of the founders of Pomeroy Equitable Solutions, a company created to give businesses the opportunity to partner with schools to fund needed programs.

Beyond her full-time duties as a business owner, Bradford has

served on the Evergreen Public Schools Board of Directors for the past 15 years. Bradford has served four times as Board President and Vice President, as well as the legislative representative and federal liaison for both the EPS District and the Washington State School Directors Association. The Evergreen Public School District is the fourth-largest school district in the state, and the third-largest employer in Clark County, with more than 27,000 students and an annual budget of over \$240 million. She has been a leader during highs and lows in the district, from the budget cuts of the late 2000s to the opening or remodeling of 15 schools. A signature achievement was her instrumental role in researching and establishing Henrietta Lacks (HeLa) High, a bioscience and healthcare high school, in the district. Bradford is also a founder of the Quality Schools Coalition of SW Washington.

Bradford is a member of the Vancouver Downtown Association. She is on the Development Committee at The Fort Vancouver National Trust and has parlayed her love of ballroom dancing into best dance honors at the Trust's 2012 Dancing with the Local Stars competition.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Expanding Our Future



President Knight welcomes guests to his 2015 State of the College Address.

“Over the past year, we have seen many successes and we have seen many things that seemed like a dream or a far-off vision come to fruition.” So began President Bob Knight’s 2015 State of the College Address, held January 15 in Gaiser Student Center, in a speech full of hope and celebration.

As President Knight pointed out, there was much to celebrate: the successful completion of the Clark College Foundation’s capital campaign, the beginning of the long-delayed construction of a new STEM building, the introduction of the college’s first-ever bachelor’s degree, the acquisition of land for a new North County campus, the expansion of services in the Columbia Gorge, and much more.



Left to right, Clark College Foundation CEO and President Lisa Gibert, Bernice and Hank Boschma, and Clark College President Bob Knight at the 2015 State of the College Address.

Regarding the North County campus, Knight noted that Hank and Bernice Boschma were sitting in the audience and thanked them publicly for the donation of land that made the North Campus location possible. Knight also announced that there would be a public monument on the new campus that told the story of the Boschma Family, who moved to Ridgefield from the Netherlands and began a successful dairy farm.

“As we look to North County we are inspired by what the Boschma family created and we are looking for the next opportunities that will allow people to live, be successful, and contribute to the community of Southwest Washington,” he said. “That is why we are looking at Clark College at Boschma Farms as a possible center for advanced manufacturing and medical programs.”

Knight also took the opportunity to unveil the final draft of the college’s 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, which is undergoing a final round of public feedback before being presented to the college’s Board of Trustees for approval. “A key change from our old Strategic Plan is that we don’t just want to be a place that welcomes students in,” he explained. “We want to be

a learning college where people come and complete their educational goals.”



President Knight thanks 99-year old professor emeritus and WWII veteran John Deurwaarder for his service to the college and the country.

As is his tradition during the State of the College, Knight also awarded Presidential Coins to exceptional staff and faculty members in honor of their service. Early during his address, he also presented a coin to Professor Emeritus John Deurwaarder, who celebrates his 100th birthday in May.

At the end of his address, President Knight urged guests to make sure others know about the future plans and current accomplishments at the college. “You’re here because you care about Clark College and you care about our community,” he said. “You need to help tell the story about this wonderful asset in our community.”

See more photos from the State of the College on Flickr.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley