A look into the future

The STEM Building opened for classes at the beginning of the 2016 fall quarter. *Photo: Clark College/Wei Zhuang*

Shortly before Clark College's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Building opened for classes at the beginning of the 2016 fall quarter, Clark College Construction Project Manager Jim Watkins stood on its north plaza and pointed out a few hidden features to a group of visitors.

Watkins pointed to the lines marking the poured concrete that make up the plaza floor. "The smaller squares around the perimeter are in 1-meter increments, while the large squares are 3-by-4 meter and 4-by-4 meter blocks," he said. "That way, if a physics class is doing experiments where they need to measure the flight of a projectile or something, it's easy for them to gauge how far it's traveled."

Structural elements like heating pipes were deliberately left exposed to serve as teaching tools for engineering students. *Photo: Clark College/Wei Zhuang*

Throughout the building's 70,000 square feet, details abound that reflect and strengthen its purpose. Structural elements—including heating equipment, water pipes, and earthquake-proof concrete—have been left visible deliberately to serve as teaching tools for engineering students. Decorative touches, like the "STEM" laser-carved into the metal stair railings and the ceramic-tile periodic table inlaid into the second-story floor, remind visitors what's studied here. And that column of glass that rises from above the front entry doors to the top of the building's airy lobby? It's actually a 44-foot high, 4-foot square drop tower, where dropped objects can be filmed with a high-speed digital camera in experiments by engineering or physics students.

While the building opened to students on September 19 for fall

classes, an official ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for October 3.

“I am so excited to see students enthusiastically learning in the new STEM Building on the first day of the new academic year,” said Dean of STEM Peter Williams regarding the opening. “The STEM Building is a beautiful, technologically advanced educational facility that perfectly supports academic excellence, one of the core themes of Clark College’s strategic plan. It is ideal for students who may not know how exciting and interesting science can be, and hopefully provides a starting point for a career in a STEM field, one of the fastest growing job fields in the country.”

The new, LEED Silver-certified building—the largest ever built on Clark’s main campus—holds nine classrooms, twelve labs (including some spaces that serve as both), two conference rooms, 16 student areas of various sizes, and 41 offices. It will house much of Clark’s engineering, chemistry, biology, and physics departments. The first new instructional building to be built on the main campus since 1994, it was paid for primarily through Washington State capital funding, supplemented with generous donations to the Clark College Foundation to make up for a budget gap in the project’s $40 million cost created when the state reduced its contribution due to the economic recession.

Learning extends outside the STEM Building, with multiple

outdoor classroom/study areas set along the south wall. *Photo: Clark College/Hannah Erickson*

The building offers many new opportunities for Clark students. A six-table cadaver lab includes operating-room LED lighting and a high-definition camera that allows even those students who aren't at the dissection table to see anatomy and procedures clearly on two large plasma screens. Clark College is one of only four community colleges in Washington to have a cadaver lab, and this new lab greatly expands the number of students able to take the perpetually waitlisted Anatomy and Physiology classes that are required for a number of health-related degrees.

Additionally, a Collaboratorium sits at the heart of the building's main floor. This high-tech "makerspace" is filled with tools and machinery to allow students—and possibly community members, in the future—to create their own designs. Watkins showed visitors the large double doors facing out to the north plaza. "We designed this so you could bring a truck-size project through here if you wanted to," he said. "We didn't want our engineering students to feel limited as to the projects they could take on."

According to the Washington Student Achievement Council, Washington State has the third-highest concentration of STEM-related jobs in the United States—but up to 40,000 of those jobs may go unfilled by 2017, in large part due to a lack of qualified applicants with the appropriate training.

"I am so impressed and excited by the possibilities this new building brings to the college," said Clark College President Bob Knight. "Clearly, STEM is going to be very important to this region's economy, and we are proud to be able to offer state-of-the-art training and education in this field, continuing a legacy of excellence that stretches more than 80

years.”

Exceptional Faculty

The 2016 Exceptional Faculty Award recipients are, *left to right*, Joseph Cavalli, Dr. Kathleen Chatfield, Heather McAfee, and Doug Mrazek.

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

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

college.

This year’s Exceptional Faculty members are:

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

Joe Cavalli, History

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

Cavalli says he sees history more as a context for understanding the world than as a rote memorization of names and dates. “It’s not about me giving students information,” he says. “What I want to impart is the love of learning and the need to be curious.”

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

Dr. Kathleen Chatfield, Business Technology and Management

Over the course of her 21 years at Clark, Dr. Kathleen Chatfield has taught a variety of courses, including keyboarding, microcomputer applications, Microsoft Excel, e-commerce, and project management. In truth, however, her influence goes far beyond those subjects. In fact, she has

been a part of every online class offered at Clark College through her work as the senior instructional designer for the college's eLearning Department, where she helps Clark faculty learn how to develop online classes.

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

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

Heather McAfee, Geography

Heather McAfee first became interested in geography while working for the U.S. Department of Defense, doing cultural analysis of Iraq that included mapping the civilian population there. "I love geography because it is the most interdisciplinary subject you can study," she says. "It touches everything, even health—we have medical geography. Recently in my classes, we've looked at and mapped the spread of the Zika virus."

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

"She made her classroom a comfortable area where every person's opinion and outlook was highly valued," wrote one

student. “Her teachings went much deeper than the textbook material. She wanted us to dig deep and relate every lesson to our personal lives and experiences, and it taught all of us so much about the world around us.”

Doug Mrazek, French

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

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

Small surprise, then, that Mrazek received more than 30 nominations for this award this year. “I’m in amazement,” he says. “It’s a tremendous sense of closure. After a career of 40 years, it’s a nice way to move on.”

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

After 20 years, a dream realized

2016-2017 Community College Presidents' Scholarship in Honor of Val Ogden recipient Holly Varner

Holly Varner had always meant to go to college. She tried taking classes a couple times, but life as a Navy wife made it difficult—she was constantly having to move to follow her husband's 21-year-long career, not to mention taking care of three boys, now ages 8, 13, and 18. It was only when her husband retired and the family settled in Washougal that Varner could pursue her dream. She enrolled in Clark with just a GED and a handful of community-college classes on her transcript, determined to succeed academically.

During the 2016 Clark College Commencement ceremony, that determination payed off when Varner heard Clark College President Robert K. Knight announce that she was the recipient of the 2016-2017 Community College Presidents' Award in Honor of Val Ogden. The scholarship award provides full-time tuition at Washington State University Vancouver (WSUV) and is renewable for one additional year, essentially providing full

tuition to complete a bachelor’s degree.

Holly Varner hugs her son after hearing that she has received two years of tuition to Washington State University Vancouver.

As soon as President Knight made the announcement, Varner stood and hugged her son, Jonathan, who had attended Clark alongside his mother through Washington State’s Running Start program, which allows high school students to attend college tuition-free. The two had taken three classes together and even quizzed each other before exams.

“It was great to see him progress, to see him grow,” said Varner.

Varner’s own growth at Clark has been exceptional. She graduated with a 3.98 Grade Point Average (“I was so upset about that A-minus!”) while managing multiple volunteer and extracurricular activities. Varner served as Vice President of Service for Alpha Sigma Phi, Clark College’s chapter of the international honor society Phi Theta Kappa. In that role, Varner helped organize a Thanksgiving basket drive that provided holiday dinner supplies to more than 100 Clark College students and their families—negotiating an agreement with a new vendor that brought down the price of each basket that in turn allowed Alpha Sigma Phi to serve more students.

She also coordinated drives to provide books and art supplies to families in local homeless shelters. She interviewed more than 60 homeless individuals to learn what they needed most; based on those interviews, she developed a shoe and sock drive to help them.

“She is the go-to person if advisors, other officers, or administration have questions,” wrote Professor Ruth Trejo, who serves as Alpha Sigma Phi’s advisor. “We joke about her three-inch binder, where her sticky tabs have sticky tabs.”

Varner will begin studying at WSUV this fall. She intends to major social work and/or public health. Varner said that, while her family had educational funding available to them through the GI Bill, she needed to save that funding to help put her children through school. Receiving the Community College Presidents’ Scholarship will allow her to pursue her own education, hopefully to a master’s degree.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

New culinary center gets name

The Tod and Maxine McClaskey Culinary Institute will improve students' access to food on campus and provide a state-of-the-art training center for the culinary arts.

Clark College President Robert K. Knight announced that the Tod and Maxine McClaskey Family Foundation made a $4 million gift to the college's culinary program that will transform the learning process for students, as well as the community's on-campus dining experience.

During a celebration for donors on Wednesday evening at Royal Oaks Country Club in Vancouver, Knight revealed that the college's new dining and teaching facility, which will undergo remodeling, will be known as the Tod and Maxine McClaskey Culinary Institute at Clark College. It will showcase Clark's Cuisine and Professional Baking and Pastry Arts programs.

The lead gift from the Tod and Maxine McClaskey Family Foundation simultaneously changes the face of the college's culinary building, while dramatically enhancing the student learning experience.

The Tod & Maxine McClaskey Culinary Institute will boast an artisanal bakery, barista station, and comfortable seating.

A redesign of the building includes a glass façade, outdoor dining space, contemporary restaurant, diverse food choices and an open food court layout. A revamped academic curriculum aligns with industry standards and prepares the college to be accredited by the American Culinary Federation. This top-priority project also addresses the nutritional needs of the college community and supports student retention by providing access to food service on campus.

Knight extolled Tod and Maxine McClaskey's contribution to the business community during Savoring Excellence, Clark College Foundation's annual celebratory dinner.

"This gift will positively affect every student at Clark College whether they just stop by the Tod and Maxine McClaskey Culinary Institute for a healthy option on the way to class or graduate from the Tod and Maxine McClaskey Culinary Institute ready to go to work for one of the many great culinary options in the region," said Knight.

Tod McClaskey was one of the founders of the Red Lion Hotel Vancouver at the Quay, a popular hotel and restaurant enterprise that began in Vancouver.

Lisa Gibert, president/CEO of Clark College Foundation spoke about the McClaskeys' passionate vision and values for the

hospitality business and how naming the institute after them is a perfect fit to honor their memory.

“Tod believed in first-class service and an excellent dining experience. The Red Lion was also the launching pad for hundreds of careers in the hospitality business for this region and beyond. That light of excellence for the McClaskeys will now shine for generations,” said Gibert.

The McClaskey family expressed excitement about being an integral part of the college’s future.

“Clark’s new culinary program fits our family’s ideals for excellent food preparation and management, as well as collaborating with other state educational organizations. We are thrilled to be a part of this innovative project,” said Jillian Hagstrom, granddaughter of Tod and Maxine McClaskey.

Slated to open midway through 2017, the Tod and Maxine McClaskey Culinary Institute will improve students’ access to food on campus.

Clark College has educational partnerships with the Clark County Skills Center and Washington State University Vancouver that consolidates the steps toward achieving a college degree.

The new facility is expected to be under construction for several months with portions of it opening in spring 2017. There will a food court with several kiosks offering cooked-

to-order items, soups, sandwiches, salads, and food-sensitive choices from a variety of global cuisines. A full-service bakery will serve artisanal desserts, breads and espresso. And Clark’s popular restaurant will return, modeled after modern, open-kitchen dining establishments. All services will be open to Clark’s community as well as the general public.

Clark College Foundation is accepting donations for the culinary project, which is expected to cost $10.5 million. For more information, contact Joel B. Munson, vice president of development at (360) 992-2428.

Clark College Foundation is a nonprofit organization serving as the fundraising partner of Clark College in support of student learning. Nationally recognized for excellence in fundraising and communications, we are the 2015 gold winner for our campaign fundraising communications by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education in District VIII. We are also the recipient of the 2015 Educational Fundraising Award in overall performance and overall improvement from national CASE, based in Washington, D.C.

Clark Jazz never skips a beat

Clark College's Jazz Ensemble performing at the 2016 University of Northern Colorado/Greeley Jazz Festival.

For the third time, the Clark College Jazz Ensemble distinguished themselves among the other colleges and universities representing seven states at the 2016 University of Northern Colorado/Greeley Jazz Festival, held April 21 through 23. This year, eight Clark College Jazz Ensemble students received Special Citation for Outstanding Musicianship awards, recognized from the 8,000 festival participants. The Clark students who received awards were:

- Mattias Tyni – trumpet
- Keith Cheek – tenor saxophone
- Anna James – tenor saxophone
- James Powers – trombone
- Jenny Baird – trombone
- Hayden Lilak – bass
- Josh Gonzales – drums
- Sam Niborg – drums

Clark students James Powers and Keith Cheek with John Clayton, bassist and leader of the Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra.

In addition to performing for adjudication and clinic from internationally recognized jazz educators, Clark students also had the opportunity to listen to performances, workshops, and panel discussions presented by luminaries in the field of jazz including the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra, Houston Person, Joey DeFrancesco, and Ellis Marsalis.

“The experience of visiting the Greeley Jazz Festival this year was exhilarating,” said Clark student James Powers. “It has been said that it can be disappointing to meet one’s heroes, but I can say that that is not always the case. When speaking with some of the learned men of music, I was greeted with humility and kindness. Just as important as the uplifting musical performances, was the realization that these performers were all just regular people who have just practiced more than I have. Overall I would say that as a result of attending the festivities, I have come to several inspiring and informative conclusions about the nature of my craft, and I believe the same can said for my fellow band

members.”

Members of the Clark Jazz Ensemble saxophone pose with iconic saxophonist Houston Person.

Jazz Ensemble Director and music professor Rich Inouye said he could not have been more proud of the band’s performance at the festival. “Many times you work so hard for something like this and when you perform, little mistakes pop up here and there, but this year’s performance at the festival was pure perfection,” he said. “I hope the Clark College community recognizes the work our band students put in to help Clark achieve this distinction. People in the audience shared with me how surprised they were when they found out we were a two-year college! It’s good that the Music Department can represent Clark’s academic distinction at the national level along with programs such as STEM, Speech and Debate, and Journalism.”

UPDATE: Recently, Powers has learned that he has even more reason to be exhilarated: He has been awarded the Festival’s highest award, a tuition scholarship to attend the world-famous Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshop at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky. Powers was recognized as one out of only four recipients to receive this prestigious award from the 8,000 participants who performed at the national jazz festival. Powers is currently a resident of

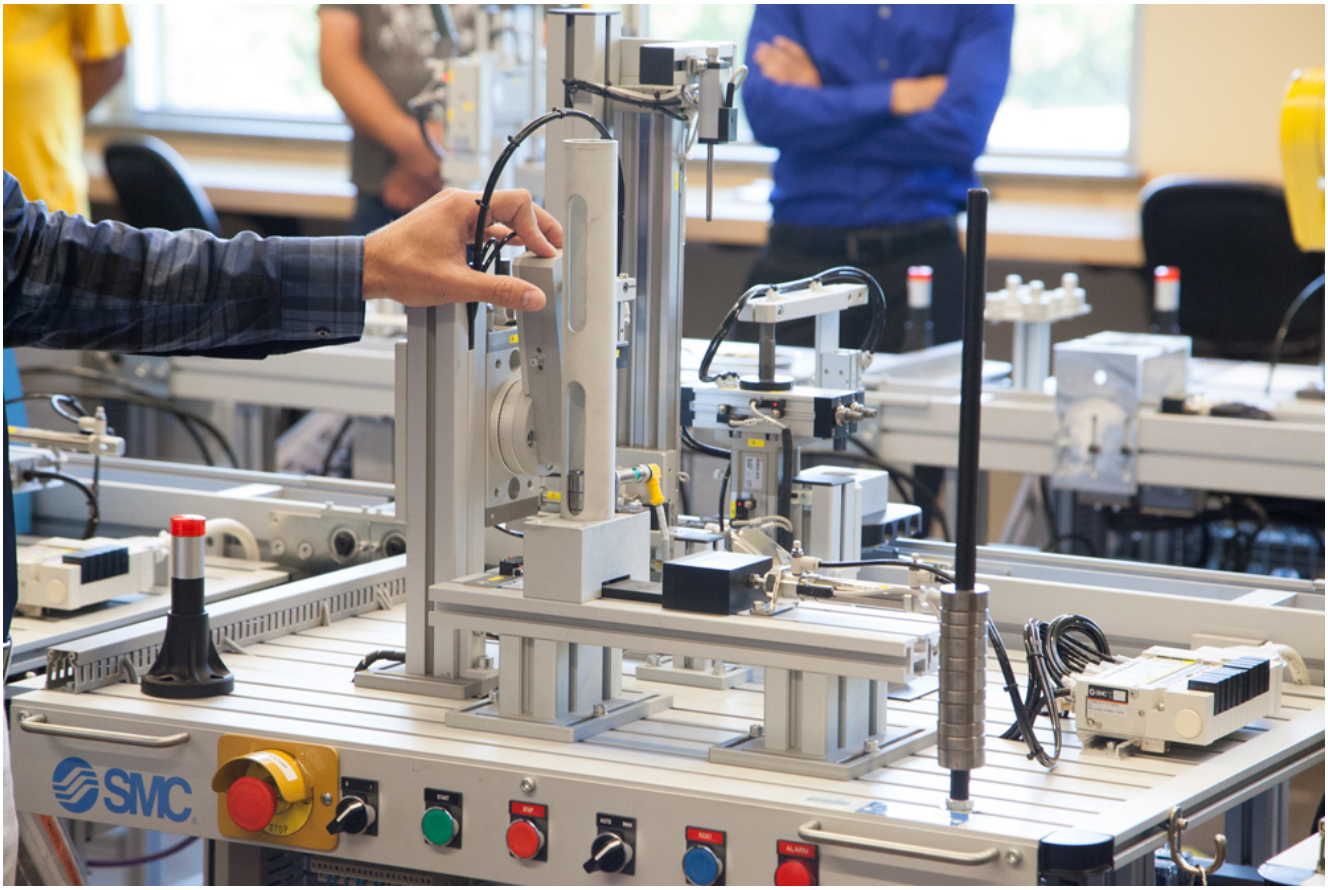
Gresham, Oregon and he graduated from Heritage High in Vancouver; he plans to complete a transfer degree with a major in music this spring. This award is a first for the Clark Music Department.

The Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshop is recognized as being one of the best intensive programs for mastering jazz improvisation. The festival features the nation's leading jazz educators and performers and is dedicated to providing an intensive learning experience for musicians of all ages and levels. Theory Classes, Ear Training, Combo Performance, and Master Class Sessions allow the opportunity for attendees to grow and develop to their fullest potential, and each evening attendees get to listen to faculty jazz recitals presented by some of the leading jazz musicians from around the world.

Photos: Richard Inouye

This story was contributed by the Music Department.

A RAMP to tech jobs



Clark College's popular mechatronics program combines electronics with mechanized processes to prepare students for jobs in today's high-tech manufacturing.

Clark College has received a $200,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to create a new Rural Access Mechatronics Program (RAMP) that will help students in rural areas become skilled technicians in the high-demand field of advanced manufacturing.

"Thanks to this funding, Clark College will be able to provide greater access to our highly regarded Mechatronics program to students living anywhere in Clark's service district," said Clark College Dean of Workforce, Career and Technical Education Genevieve Howard. Clark's service district includes Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat counties.

During the grant's first year, Clark College faculty will develop a curriculum of seven "hybrid" classes that compose a Certificate of Completion in Mechatronics Fundamentals. Hybrid classes are taught partially in a face-to-face classroom, and

partially online, allowing students in remote locations to attend classes without commuting long distances each day to a college campus.

Many regional employers have expressed a need for additional technicians trained in mechatronics, a discipline that focuses on the integration of mechanical and electronic components in modern manufacturing and utility environments. Employers who wrote letters in support of this project include Boeing, Insitu, NORPAC, Silicon Forest Electronics, Vancouver Energy, the Columbia River Economic Development Council, and the Southwest Washington STEM Network.

“The RAMP program is another example of how Clark College is addressing the workforce needs of advanced manufacturing businesses,” said Jeanne Bennett, CEO of the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council, which also supports the project. “The hybrid/online program will enable more students to receive training, and this will increase our region’s pool of skilled mechatronics technicians.”

The program will begin accepting its pilot cohort of students in the fall quarter of 2017. Given Clark’s strong focus on hands-on learning, the college is currently examining potential options for bringing lab facilities to students in remote areas of its service district. These could include anything from suitcase-sized training modules to a traveling “lab” on wheels.

Clark College received this grant through the NSF's Advanced Technical Education program, which was created to improve and expand educational programs for technicians to work in high-tech, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields. The grant proposal was developed by mechatronics professors Chris Lewis and Ken Luchini with Director of Grant Development Lori Silverman and Howard.

"The RAMP grant is exciting because it validates the ability of Clark College faculty and staff to develop a grant proposal that is competitive on a national scale in an academically rigorous process," said Howard. "Our hope is that we can replicate this hybrid model in other areas of career and technical education, potentially with further NSF assistance."

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Real help from the "real world"

During his keynote speech at Clark College's 2016 Advisory Breakfast, Vancouver businessman Don Brunell holds up a transistor radio to show how quickly technology can become obsolete.

Last Wednesday Clark College honored the more than 250 men and women from over 160 business and organizations who serve on the college's 28 advisory boards for professional and technical programs. These industry professionals provide "real-world" guidance for Clark's professional and technical programs to ensure students receive current, cutting-edge training to succeed in the workplace and enhance the regional workforce.

This year's breakfast featured guest speaker Don Brunell, a partner at the Vancouver communications firm Brunell Creative. He is the retired president of the Association of Washington Business (AWB). Nationally, he has served as chair of the National Industrial Council for the National Association of

Manufacturers (NAM), the Conference of State Manufacturing Associations (COSMA), and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board under Governors Lowry, Locke and Gregoire. He currently serves on the boards of AAA-Washington, Forterra, *Washington Business Week*, Identity Clark County and WGU-Washington.

"It's really important at the state level to have a connectivity with local community and technical colleges because this is really where the rubber meets the road," said Brunell. "There are a lot of good things happening in Washington, and it's because our community and technical colleges listen to the folks who are our customers."

Brunell also emphasized the need for the community to serve as advisors to the college by participating in these committees, as well as to be good advisors to legislators.

"The advanced manufacturing center [at Clark] is a very important project to have in this county," he added. "The [Clark College at Boschma Farms] north campus is where a lot of skills training will be. We need to have those types of investments here, or we will not be able to keep large businesses like WaferTech, SEH and Georgia Pacific here, along with the small businesses."

Clark graduate April Gapsch.

The event also included speeches from April Gapsch, a Clark graduate and chair of the Business Medical Office Advisory Committee, and from current welding students Peter Smith and Pachino Palmore. All three speakers were able to attend Clark as a result of the Worker Retraining Program. Smith and Palmore will graduate in June.

“For many years, I had a dream of going to college, but didn’t think it was possible. Then I found myself in a unique situation, without a job or prospects,” said Gapsch. “The local workforce office referred me to Clark College and the Worker Retraining Program. I was enrolled the next day, and graduated with honors last summer. I was hired by Peace Health five months after graduation.”

Welding students Pachino Palmer and Peter Smith show off some of the work they’ve produced in their classroom.

Clark College offers more than 25 professional and technical education programs. Currently, 39 percent of credit-seeking students enrolled at Clark College are pursuing a degree or certificate in professional and technical education. In 2014-2015, 80 percent of students who completed a career and technical degree or certificate, or earned 45-plus college-

level credits prior to leaving, were employed within nine months.

Clark College Advisory Committee members, who are appointed by the administration of a college, provide direction and specifications for current professional and technical education programs, and help identify emerging occupations and skills needed. For more information about the college's advisory committees, visit www.clark.edu/advisory.

More photos from the event can be found on our Flickr page.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Stating the case for trees

Members of the community help plant a Black Hills Spruce during Clark College's 2016 Arbor Day celebration. *Left to right:* Campus Tree Advisory Committee member Jim Wasden, Director of Facilities Services Tim Petta, retired groundskeeper Skip Jimerson, Vice President of Administrative Services Bob Williamson, and Washington State Forester Aaron Everett.

On April 13, Clark College celebrated nature at its annual Arbor Day event and tree planting.

The event, which was free and open to the public, featured the addition of a Black Hills Spruce to the campus's beautiful 90-acre arboretum. This was just the most recent effort by the college to include all 50 state trees in the campus arboretum: The Black Hills Spruce is the official state tree of South Dakota. With the addition of this tree, the arboretum contains trees representing 40 states.

Starts of several more state trees were present at the

ceremony; these donations are still too young to plant outdoors, but will be tended in the college's greenhouse until they are ready to take their respective places in the arboretum.

Left to right: Campus Tree Advisory Committee member Tim Carper, retired groundskeeper Skip Jimerson, and Facilities Services employee (and Skip's wife) Lori Jimerson.

The event took place at the southeast corner of the Frost Arts Center, near the north end of the Royce E. Pollard Japanese Friendship Garden. Jim Wasden, a retired member of the U.S. Forest Service and current member of the Clark College Campus Tree Advisory Committee, gave the keynote speech. Recently retired groundskeeper Skip Jimerson, who was instrumental in Clark's efforts to include all 50 state trees, returned to campus to participate in the event and ceremonially shovel dirt onto the new tree.

The event featured the presentation by Washington State Forester Aaron Everett of the college's Tree Campus USA designation by the Arbor Day Foundation for the sixth year in a row. Tree Campus USA colleges must meet rigorous standards in five separate areas to earn this designation.

The arboretum can be explored online at trees.clark.edu, which features an interactive, mobile-friendly map to view the locations of and access descriptions for most trees on campus. This includes a six-decade-old Scarlet Oak and the campus's iconic Shirofugen blossoming cherry trees, the latter of which are celebrated each year at the college's annual Sakura Festival.

Photos: Clark College/Hannah Erickson

Battling stereotypes, they found success

Qi Wu and Tammy Senior are Clark College's representatives to the 2016 All-Washington Academic Team.

Two outstanding Clark College students were selected to attend the 2016 All-Washington Academic Team Recognition Ceremony, held on March 24 at South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia, Washington. Tammy Senior and Qi Wu are two of just 66 students from community and technical colleges across the state to receive this honor, which recognizes students for their academic excellence and service to the community.

At first glance, Senior and Wu don't seem terribly similar. One is young even by the standards of Running Start, a program that allows high schoolers to take college courses; the other is coming back to college after serving four years in the military. One has spent her whole life in Vancouver; the other has lived in more countries than she can count on one hand.

But on closer inspection, certain parallels become clear between the two young women: They're both fascinated by science and technology. They both are driven students who make time in their busy schedules to serve their communities. Both have had to challenge others' assumptions and figuring out creative ways to get around obstacles in their educational journeys. And so far, both are succeeding impressively.

Clark student Qi Wu stands before the college's new STEM Building, slated to open in fall 2016.

Wu's obstacles began surfacing when she and her mother

emigrated from China to the United States. Wu, then a sophomore in high school, struggled to maintain her grades while learning a new language in a new culture. She also found herself confronting gender stereotypes, as classmates and teachers assumed she would be more interested in subjects like art and the humanities instead of math and science.

“When I was growing up, I was always better in physics and chemistry,” she said. “I like numbers, I like logic. When I came to Clark and took my first engineering course, it was like, ‘Wow, this is where I belong!’”

However, soon a new hurdle appeared. Wu, whose mother had remarried and had another child, realized her family could not afford to pay for her college education. Hoping to support herself, she enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 2010 as an aviation mechanic, and took every opportunity to earn educational credits and develop new skills—despite the doubts some had of the petite young woman’s abilities.

“When I got transferred to Japan, my supervisor told me, ‘Well, you can do the desk job here, because you’re a girl,’” Wu recalled. “And I said, ‘No. I want to do the job I trained for.’”

Wu said that overall, she’s grateful for the opportunities the military provided her to travel and learn skills that will help in her electrical engineering career. She’s currently receiving scholarships from Clark, which allows her to save her military education benefits for the more-expensive, four-year institutions she hopes to attend one day to earn her master’s degree. She also works in Clark’s scholarship office herself, and spends weekends training as a Naval Reservist.

Clark student Tammy Senior says she’s been impressed by how welcoming the college was to her, even when she took her first class at age 14.

Like Wu, Senior’s challenges also began in high school, but they were of a different nature: She felt stifled. “I wasn’t being challenged enough,” she recalls. “I took a class at Clark and found it so much better.”

Senior’s family couldn’t afford to pay for a full load of college classes out of pocket, and when the 14-year-old visited Clark’s scholarship office, she discovered she was too young to qualify for financial aid or scholarship opportunities. Then, the scholarship staff offered a new possibility: Perhaps Senior could enroll in Running Start, the Washington State program that allows eligible high school juniors and seniors to take college classes tuition-free. The only problem was that Senior was still a freshman. She wound up skipping the 10th grade in order to qualify, enrolling at Clark as a full-time student at age15.

“It was definitely interesting,” Senior, now 16 and set to graduate in the spring, said with a grin. “But Clark’s pretty welcoming, and I really thrived in the community here.”

Senior has maintained a 4.0 GPA while taking classes in Clark’s challenging Honors Program, volunteering with her church, teaching private music lessons, and serving as the vice president of leadership for Clark’s chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges. She’ll be 17 when she enters a university—potentially with junior standing, depending on where she attends.

“People ask me, ‘Why don’t you enjoy your high school years?’” Senior said. “But I’m a planner. I think ahead. My mother wasn’t able to finish school because she started a family. I know I have a lot of school ahead of me, and this is a way to speed things up.”

Senior hopes to become a neurologist, a goal developed when her beloved grandmother suffered a series of debilitating strokes in 2014. Like Wu, Senior faced some skepticism about her ambitions.

“When I tell people I want to pursue a career in neurology, sometimes they look at me strangely and say, ‘Oh, why don’t you go into nursing, so you have time for a family?’” she said. “But I know I can do it. I can have a family. I can have the career of my choice. I just have to work hard. And you know, they would never tell a male student that.”

Both students say they appreciate the support they’ve found at Clark. “I like the diversity here,” says Wu, a first-generation college student. “Engineering professor Izad [Khormae] is from Iran. My physics teacher is from Russia. I think half the STEM faculty are women. And then in my classes I’ve met a few other veterans. You get so many different experiences here, different cultures.”

Wu and Senior were honored for their achievements at the All-

Washington Academic Team induction ceremony on March 24, 2016, in Olympia, where Gov. Jay Inslee was the keynote speaker. The All-Washington Academic Team is a program of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges. Team members are eligible for numerous scholarships, including transfer scholarships at most four-year universities in the state.

“It is such an honor,” said Senior, sitting with Wu during a break between classes.

“It’s nice for your hard work to be recognized,” adds Wu.

“Yes, you feel like your hard work is finally paying off,” said Senior.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Welcome, professors!

Thirteen outstanding educators are the newest members of the tenured faculty at Clark College. Dr. Roberto Anitori (biology), Kushlani de Soyza (women’s studies), Dee Anne Finken (journalism), Grant Hottle (art), Garrett Hoyt (health

and physical education), Drew Johnson (business technology), Kenneth Luchini (mechatronics), Sarah Luther (mathematics), Dr. Mika Maruyama (psychology), Heather McAfee (geography), Natalie Miles (transitional studies language arts), Erin Schoenlein (transitional studies math), and Caleb White (welding) were all granted tenure during the Clark College Board of Trustees meeting on March 16.

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.

"Tenure is an important moment for both faculty and the college," said Dr. Tim Cook, Vice President of Instruction. "For the faculty, this shows the college's confidence in their skills and dedication; for the college, these faculty will help develop Clark's curriculum and character for many years to come. I'm happy to congratulate these talented and passionate educators and I look forward to watching them help shape our college community."

Dr. Roberto Anitori, Biology

After earning both his bachelor's and doctoral degrees in Molecular Biology and Microbiology from the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, Dr. Roberto Anitori worked in research labs at Macquarie University in Sydney and at Oregon Health and Science University. He has extensive experience researching "extremophiles," microbes that have adapted to survive in environments where most living things could not. He has researched extremophiles in Antartica, volcanoes, deep-sea vents, underground water tables, deserts, and radioactive hot springs. He has been invited to lecture by organizations including the Australian Society for Microbiology, the Geological Society of Australia, and NASA. In 2011, he received the Antarctica Service Medal from the National Science Foundation. Dr. Anitori began teaching microbiology at Clark in 2008. He is the editor of the book *Extremophiles: Microbiology and Biotechnology* (2012, Horizon Press).

At Clark, Dr. Anitori serves as the faculty co-lead for undergraduate research-based student activities, and the lead instructor for microbiology. He also participated in the college's Faculty Speaker Series.

Dr. Anitori said, "I try to relate the material I teach to the real world, and also infuse my instruction with information from my more than two decades of scientific research experience."

Kushlani de Soyza, Women’s Studies

Kushlani de Soyza earned her bachelor’s degree in journalism from Northwestern University. She has a Master of Education degree in secondary education/English from the University of Cincinnati, a Master of Arts degree from Portland State University, and a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing from Oregon State University. De Soyza has previous work experience at the *Cincinnati Post*, St. Xavier High School, University of Virginia, Oregon State University, and APA Compass Radio.

At Clark, de Soyza serves as chair of the Clark College Ann Virtu Snyder Women’s Studies Scholarship Committee.

“My goal as a teacher is to create a classroom experience where learners of all backgrounds can listen, learn, and express themselves in an atmosphere based on mutual respect,” she says. “The Women’s Studies classroom is a space where students work together to understand how systems of power, privilege and inequity apply to their own experiences and to the social, political, and cultural institutions that shape our lives.”

Dee Anne Finken, Journalism

Dee Anne Finken earned bachelor's degrees in journalism and English from California State University and Washington State University. She has a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative non-fiction from Portland State University. Prior to teaching at Clark, Finken spent more than two decades as a print journalist.

Finken serves as the faculty advisor to Clark's award-winning student news source, *The Independent.* She also leads the college's journalism program and founded the college's Student Media Advisory Committee.

"In teaching journalism, I hope to support students to become more thoughtful and engaged citizens of the wider world," said Finken.

Grant Hottle, Art

Grant Hottle attended the Utrecht School of the Arts before earning his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting from the University of Oklahoma. He then went on to earn his master's degree in painting and drawing from the University of Oregon. Hottle has previous work experience at the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, Lewis and Clark College, Marylhurst University, Anderson Ranch Arts Center in Colorado, Oregon College of Art and Craft, and Clark College.

Hottle serves as head of Clark College's painting and foundations area, coordinating adjuncts and managing department curricula in drawing, painting, design, and color theory. He is a faculty advisor for the Clark College Art Club and a member of the Outcomes Assessment Committee. He also worked with an English faculty member to design a popular Integrated Learning Community on the "Craft of Comics."

"My classes exist to empower each student's strategy of personal expression and to awaken them to the role art can play in their development as professionals and as free-thinking adults," said Hottle. "I focus on drawing and design fundamentals through a process-based understanding of materials while exposing students to the broader cultural relevance of art beyond the studio."

Dr. Garrett Hoyt, Health and Physical Education

Dr. Garrett Hoyt earned his Bachelor of Science degree in

exercise science from Brigham Young University and his Master of Science degree in exercise physiology from Colorado State University. He has a Ph.D. in exercise science/health promotion, also from Brigham Young University. He has previous work experience at Brigham Young University and the YMCA of Central Kentucky and is the founder and owner of Healthy Steps In-Home Personal Training.

Dr. Hoyt, who has taught at Clark since 2011, currently serves on its Associate of Arts Advisory Committee. He has spent significant time studying nutrition and is currently starting a small sustainable farm.

“I believe in the quote often attributed to Galileo: ‘You can’t teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself,’” said Dr. Hoyt. “Teaching is less about presenting facts and more about encouraging students to discover things for themselves.”

Drew Johnson, Business Technology

Drew Johnson earned his bachelor’s degree in marketing from George Fox University and his master’s degree in secondary education from the University of Phoenix. He has taught in Clark College’s Business Technology department since 2011.

Johnson serves on the Clark College Retention Committee and is an active member of his department, working on curriculum and

outcomes for the past five years.

Johnson described his teaching style by saying, “I attempt to deliver materials using several different methods in order to reach multiple learning styles. I also try to bring a real-world approach to the classroom by presenting assignments and materials that students can relate to, based on scenarios they may encounter in the workforce.”

Kenneth (Ken) Luchini, Mechatronics

Kenneth Luchini earned his associate degree in industrial electronics from Diablo Valley College in California. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in industrial electronics and computer technology from California State University Chico, and completed Master Studies in instructional processes in vocational education at the University of California Berkeley Extension. His work experience includes more than two decades as an electrical engineer, as well as 10 years as an electronics technician and eight years as a full-time college vocational education instructor in electronics and industrial automation.

Luchini serves as the faculty advisor for the MechNerds, Clark College’s student club devoted to mechatronics. He is also co-principal investigator for the Clark College Rural Access Mechatronics Program (RAMP), a program that would develop “hybrid” (combination online and face-to-face) curriculum to

serve rural portions of the college's service district through a proposed grant from the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education program.

Luchini summed up his teaching philosophy as "listen to others, see where they and their questions are coming from, and give or guide them to the information they want, so that they can use information right away and/or build upon it for technical skills and intellectual development."

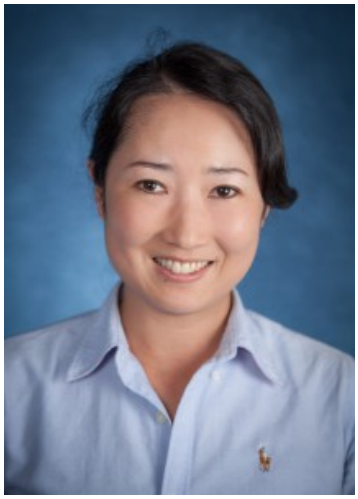
Sarah Luther, Mathematics

Sarah Luther earned her Bachelor of Arts with a major in English and a minor in mathematics from Lewis and Clark College. She also earned her Master of Arts in Teaching degree in secondary education from Lewis and Clark. She earned her Master of Science in mathematics from Texas A&M University. Luther has previous work experience as a middle-school math teacher in Portland, Oregon; a mathematics editor and textbook problem writer for IPS Publishing in Vancouver, Washington; and as a mathematics faculty member at both Umpqua Community College and Clark College.

In addition to volunteering as a tutor in Clark's Women in STEM tutoring center, Luther frequently volunteers with Mathematics Department activities and outreach. She serves on the college's International Education Committee and its Academic Standards Committee, and coordinates quarterly

advising for all pre-college math students.

“My teaching philosophy centers around the belief that all students are capable of understanding mathematics,” Luther said. “Therefore my goal is to create a supportive community in which this learning can occur. Using a dynamic, interactive approach, I want to draw my students in to the beauty of math to help inspire enjoyment of the subject. “



Dr. Mika Maruyama, Psychology

Dr. Maruyama earned her bachelor’s degree from Utah State University and both her master’s and doctorate degrees in psychology from Portland State University. She has previous work experience at Portland State University, Oregon University System, University of Phoenix, Portland Community College, Mt. Hood Community College, and Clark College.

A native of Japan, Dr. Maruyama has studied human development in both American and Japanese society as well as social issues including animal cruelty, domestic violence, child maltreatment, and juvenile delinquency. She has contributed to numerous academic journals, handbooks, and textbooks, including *Animal Abuse and Developmental Psychopathology* (2010, APA Books), *Human Development* (2008, Wadsworth Publishing), and *International Handbook of Theory and Research on Animal Abuse and Cruelty* (2008, Purdue University Press).

At Clark, Dr. Maruyama serves on the BUILD EXITO Program Committee. She is also collaborating on a research project with Portland State University on the effectiveness of using virtual reality to influence health, and she is the principal investigator in a research project on humane education programs in the U.S.

Dr. Maruyama said, “My ultimate goal as a teacher is to positively influence students in how they view themselves and society by providing them with tools for understanding psychological principles that they can use outside of the classroom.”

Heather J. McAfee, Geography

Heather McAfee earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in political science/women and gender studies from the University of Colorado. She earned her Master of Arts degree in geography from the University of Oregon. She has previous work experience at the University of Oregon, Clark College, and as a Senior Human Terrain Analyst serving in Baghdad for the U.S. Army.

Currently McAfee serves as the chair of Clark College’s Geography Department. She is also a member of the college’s Associate of Arts Transfer Committee and the Learning Communities Taskforce, as well as a volunteer with the Library

of the Future Taskforce.

“Since the purpose of schooling is to prepare students to live effectively in the world, it makes sense to put the needs of students in the spotlight,” McAfee said of her teaching philosophy. “I engage geography students though real-world examples, self-discovery, and creating a safe space to invite conversation about ‘big ideas’ and how they connect to their own experiences.”

Natalie Miles, Transitional Studies Language Arts

Natalie Miles earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education from Valley City State University in North Dakota. She has previous teaching experience at Grays Harbor College, Centralia College, Lower Columbia College, and Clark College; additionally, she has worked as a literacy specialist for the Evergreen School District.

At Clark, Miles serves as the BEECH Unit representative to the Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee and to the Tech Fee Committee. She has also been instrumental in designing curriculum for the High School 21+ English Pathways, Academic I-BEST, and the Early Childhood Education I-BEST. Miles developed quarterly tutor-training workshops for the Transitional Studies Tutor Center and volunteered as a mentor with First Year Experience.

“I believe my primary role is to encourage students to see their own potential to succeed,” said Miles. “I motivate students using a student-centered approach and differentiated instruction, whereby enabling me to guide them through content needed to meet competencies. I am thrilled to help students transition to their next steps at Clark.”

Erin Schoenlein, Transitional Studies Mathematics

Erin Schoenlein earned her bachelor’s degree in accounting from the University of Portland. She earned her Master of Arts in Teaching from that institution as well. While working on her master’s degree, she assisted in the opening of St. Andrew Nativity School in Northeast Portland. Upon graduation, she taught mathematics and science at Wy’east Middle School in Portland. Schoenlein has taught at Clark since 2008.

Schoenlein serves as lead of Clark College’s Transitional Studies Math Cohort and of its Bridge to College Higher Education. She also helped develop curriculum for its High School 21+ program.

“I strive to be student centered in my teaching and curriculum development,” Schoenlein said. “My focus is to change the lives of the students I am lucky enough to support.”

Caleb White, Welding

Caleb White earned an associate degree in automotive and diesel technology from the Universal Technical Institute and a certificate of completion in welding technology from Clark College. He is currently working on an Associate of Applied Technology in welding technology from Clark College as well. White has more than a decade of work experience as a welder and fabricator, including 10 years as a mechanic shop foreman at Christensen Shipyards.

White has taught at Clark College since 2012. He currently serves as department head of Welding and Fabrication Technology.

“My approach to teaching is to teach a wide range of skill-sets so students can handle the changes of industry throughout their careers,” said White. “My teaching style is very conversational and I challenge the students along the way. My goal is not to teach students everything they would have to know in industry, but the skill-sets and problem-solving abilities to work through any situation they might encounter.”

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley