

Iris Awards Nominations Open



Nominations are now open for the 2014 Iris Awards. The winners will be announced in January, and the recipients will be honored at a reception and ceremony on Monday, March 13, 2014, from 5-7 p.m. in Clark's Gaiser Student Center. Tickets will go on sale in late January.

Following in the tradition of the Southwest Washington Women of Achievement Awards, this event's legacy began at Clark College as a photography exhibit during Women's History Week 1985. In 2012, the Iris Awards were introduced with the same focus: celebrating the lasting and far-reaching contributions of women in Southwest Washington and beyond. As in the past, the awards will be presented in observation of International Women's Day (March 8).

Three Iris Awards may be presented annually. One recipient may be selected in each of three areas: service in the public sector, service in the private sector, and philanthropic leadership. Anyone may submit a nomination. Additionally, more

than one person can fill out a nomination form for the same nominee or provide letters of recommendation.

The awards are sponsored by Clark College, the Vancouver Business Journal, the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce and the Clark College Foundation.

Award criteria and nomination forms are available online. Nominations must be received by Friday, December 13, 2013.

As the World Turned



Spanish instructor Felipe Montoya, *third from left*, with members of the Spanish Club at the International Students Exhibit.

Clark College hosted a wide range of public events—including films, music, speakers, and panel discussions—during its observance of International Education Week, November 18-21. This year's theme was "The Language of Learning: Creating a Sense of Place."

International Education Week (IEW) is a joint initiative of the U.S. Departments of State and Education to highlight the importance of international education and cultural exchange. This is the fifth year that Clark has participated in IEW. According to committee member and International Student Recruitment & Outreach Manager Jody Shulnak, planning the week of activities took more than three months, and the committee is already looking forward to next year, possibly building on the success of this year's International Photography Contest by working with the Archer Gallery to create an international art exhibit. "Stay tuned!" she said. "IEW gets bigger and better each year."

Some highlights from this year's IEW:



Ismet Prcic talks about writing his novel *Shards*.

Columbia Writers Series

The college hosted a reading on November 18 by two highly respected writers as part of its Columbia Writers Series. Ismet Prcic and Zachary Schomburg, winners of the 2013 Oregon

Book Awards for Fiction and Poetry, respectively, read from their work and discussed their writing processes. Prcic, who teaches Drama at Clark, described how writing his novel, *Shards*, served as a way to process his experiences growing up in war-torn Bosnia. The book—Prcic's first—is semi-autobiographical (the central character is named "Ismet Prcic") and told through a fractured composite of diary entries, recollections, and speculative imaginings of what might have been.



Former student Marisa Petry, *left*, introduced Spanish professor Erika Nava at the fall 2013 installment of Clark's Faculty Speaker Series.

Faculty Speaker Series

On November 19, Spanish professor Erika Nava gave the fall presentation of Clark's Faculty Speaker Series. Nava spoke about her experiences building online classes to teach Spanish. She acknowledged that many people are skeptical that languages can be taught online—including students. Indeed, she was introduced by a former student, Marisa Petry, who said she was concerned about getting enough support in an online environment. Instead, Petry found that Nava's use of tools like embedded video and Skype allowed her to learn Spanish just as well as she would have in a face-to-face classroom.

“Even today, I use it at the bedside,” said Petry, who is now working as a nurse. “And because of her course, I had the confidence to take other online courses.”

Nava said that she herself initially resisted the idea of teaching Spanish online. “My initial reaction was like many people’s: ‘No way, I’m not going to do that. How will I have the personal connection with students?’”

However, she found herself reconsidering that attitude after her first few years teaching at Clark. “I saw that I had a lot of nontraditional students in my classes who were working full-time jobs and were coming in late to class, really struggling to be there,” she said.

Nava showed some of the ways she makes her online classes feel more interactive and personal. Where many online modules include written instructions, she instead inserts video of herself speaking the instructions “so I can be more present in the class.” She has also connected to students while taking live video in Mexico, providing them with a sort of virtual study-abroad opportunity. Using technology in innovative and thoughtful ways like this, she said, can keep that personal connection between students and instructor strong, even in an online environment.

See video of Erika Nava discussing her approach to online learning.



German professor Julian Nelson, *right*, translates the German children's poem his student is reading.

International Read-In

On November 20, poetry filled the air of PUB 161 as students and staff read favorite pieces in different tongues. Sociology professor Carlos Castro read "Pueblo Tropical" by Nicaraguan poet Salomón de la Selva. English professor Jill Darley-Vanis read "La Beauté" from Charles Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*, and provided a handout showing the dramatic variations between three English translations of the poem. Student Joy Robertson-Maciél, meanwhile, read a prose passage in Portuguese from Brazilian writer Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis.

The prize for most gruesome readings, however, had to go to the students in Professor Julian Nelson's German classes, who read from classic German children's poems. One passage, from the classic collection *Der Struwwelpeter*, told the tale of a naughty child who sucks his thumbs—until a tailor chops them off. Another told the tale of a friendship between a cat and a dog, which ends with one of them getting shot. "There are no happy endings in German, sorry," said Nelson with a laugh.



Saudi students Majed Alhumaidani, Saleh Almaki, and Faisal Aljubaylah talk about their country and culture.

Saudi Student Panel

Also on November 20, three international students from Saudi Arabia spoke about their country, its culture, and their experiences living in the United States. It was clear that life for a young person in America is very different from that of a young person in Saudi Arabia. For one thing, it's lonelier; all three students spoke wistfully about their closely knit families and about the comfort of having lots of relatives living together. "When I was home, all my day was scheduled to be about my family," said Saleh Almaki, the eldest of 11 children by his father's two wives. "But here, every day is scheduled to be about myself."

The students, all three of whom are Muslim, also expressed hope that they could help dispel American misconceptions about Islam. Faisal Aljubaylah said he wanted Americans to understand that "the first letter of Islam is 'learn'—not just 'learn about Islam,' but 'learn about other cultures and religions.'"



Students provided music during the International Student Exhibition.

International Student Exhibition

On November 21, students gathered in Gaiser Student Center to enjoy art and music with an international flair. Many students from instructor Felipe Montoya's Spanish classes wore skeletal Day of the Dead face paint as they stood before the traditional Day of the Dead altars they'd created as extra-credit projects. In Mexico, these altars often honor deceased relatives—here, students created altars to celebrities passed. One was devoted to Michael Jackson, complete with framed fingerless glove; another, honoring Elvis Presley, included a guitar.



Christian Fairchild and

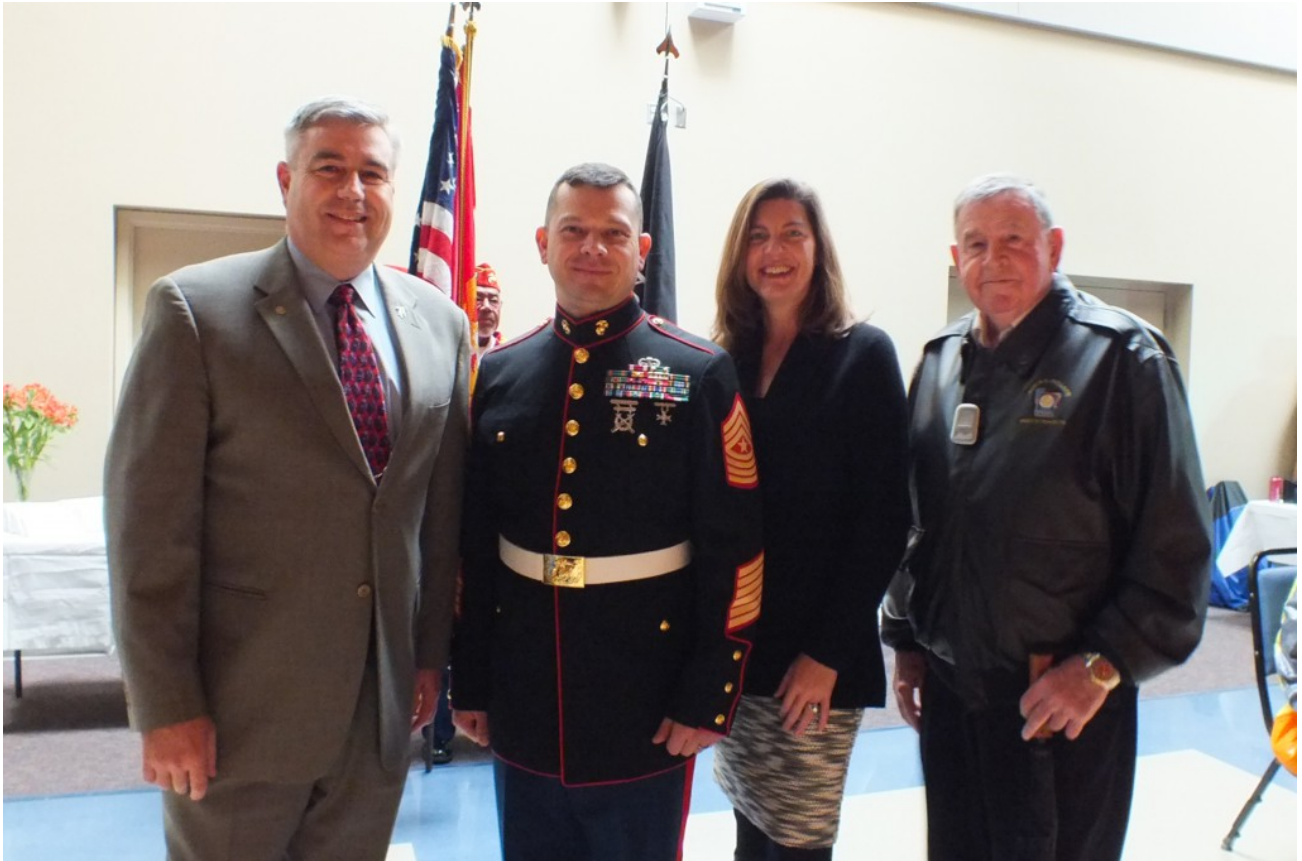
Amanda Murphy show off their
Day of the Dead altar to
Pancho Villa.

Students Amanda Murphy and Christian Fairchild sat next their altar honoring the spirit of Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa. "We were going to go with a painter, but one student in our group is blind and wanted something she could enjoy, too," explained Murphy, who is co-enrolled at Clark and at Portland State University. "We settled on a revolutionary. That's a theme everyone can get behind: rebellion and revolution. We can all identify with that."

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley. Erika Nava Photo: Clark College/Hannah Erickson

More photos on Flickr.

Gratitude for Those Who Served



Clark College President Bob Knight, U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Eric Sheline, Community Foundation for Southwest Washington President Jennifer Rhoads, and Clark College Trustee Royce Pollard attended the college's Veterans Celebration.

This November, Clark College began a new tradition: a college-sponsored celebration honoring veterans. The event was held the Thursday before Veterans Day in Gaiser Student Center.

"We need to make sure that our veterans are taken care of," said Clark College President Bob Knight in his welcoming address to the event participants. "We're going to have an annual Veterans Day celebration and, one day soon, a Veterans Resource Center here at the college."



Veterans salute the flag during the Posting of the Colors.

That center could become a reality sooner than expected, thanks to an announcement made during the celebration by Community Foundation for Southwest Washington President Jennifer Rhoads. Rhoads announced that, in honor of CFSWW's 30th anniversary, the foundation would be donating six grants of \$30,000 each to different organizations in the region helping to alleviate poverty, and that the first grant would be going to Clark College to create its new Veterans Resource Center. She offered a quote by the writer Cynthia Ozicks: "'We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude.'

"Our veterans most deserve our gratitude, today and every day," Rhoads concluded.

Once complete, the center will support veteran students with quality academic and career advising, resource referrals and information regarding military tuition benefits. The center will help expand the services already provided by Clark's Veterans Programs office—services that have led to Clark being named a Military-Friendly School by Victory Media for three years in a row. About 700 veterans enroll at Clark College every quarter; about 500 of them use GI Bill benefits to help pay for tuition, fees, housing, books and supplies.



Clark's Veterans Celebration was a community event, honoring members of every branch of service.

The event was originally planned to begin with a Changing of the Colors at the flagpole outside the Penguin Union Building. However, bad weather canceled that portion of the program. Instead, it began with a Posting of the Colors ceremony inside Gaiser Student Center, after which Clark student Petya Grozeva sang the National Anthem. Guests were also invited to write and sign cards thanking veterans for their service; the cards were delivered to retired and disabled veterans at the Vancouver Veterans Administration Medical Center by members of the Clark College Veterans Club.

Sgt. Maj. Eric Sheline, U.S. Marine Corps, 6th Engineer Support Battalion, gave the keynote speech. Since joining the Marines in 1987, Sheline has participated in operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield; was squad leader of an anti-terrorism team in Mogadishu, Somalia; and was deployed twice to Kuwait in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Sheline noted that as the U.S. military continues to draw down forces, more and more veterans will be entering higher education in the coming years. He urged all veterans to continue to be role models, even after they leave the service.

"When we leave [to serve overseas], we do great things," he said. "When we come back, we continue to do great things."

Student Success & Retention Administrative Assistant Susan Muir, who served on the committee that helped organize the event, said the college plans to make the Veterans Celebration an annual tradition. She added that there will be another event on May 22 in recognition of Memorial Day.

Photos: Clark College/Elizabeth Christopher

Green Penguins with Wet Feathers



Environmental Biology students take a break before planting a Chinese Pistache in Scarpelli Circle to smile with Instructional and Classroom Support Technician Tim Carper, who organizes the annual tree planting at Clark.

As Kermit the Frog once sang, it's not easy being green. Admittedly, Kermit probably wasn't talking about shoveling dirt in a cold, quintessentially Pacific Northwest drizzle. But members of the Clark College and greater Vancouver community banded together on November 6 to do just that during the college's annual tree planting. These plantings help maintain the main campus's arboretum, as well as its status as a Tree Campus USA.

The group that gathered under rainy skies to plant trees included students from Clark's Environmental Biology class; members of the Clark College Environmental Club; participants in the Washington Conservation Corps; members of the college's Tree Advisory Committee; and representatives from Vancouver's Urban Forestry. Staff from Clark College Facilities Services also assisted in the project.



Volunteers clear Scarpelli Circle of non-native plants and prepare it for having a new tree planted in its center.

The group planted four trees. Two of them—an American

Yellowwood and a Chinese Pistache—were donated by Urban Forestry and are new species to the arboretum. The group also planted a Knobcone Pine; this tree was actually an offshoot from an older tree on campus that died and was removed. “So technically, it is a new tree to campus as well, because the parent tree had died and been removed from the inventory,” said Instructional and Classroom Support Technician Tim Carper, who has organized the tree planting and Tree Campus USA activities at Clark for the past four years.

Carper noted that the Yellowwood and Pistache weren’t just new species to the campus—they were entirely new genera. “We are very close to having trees representing every genus that will reasonably grow in our climate and is available to us,” he said. “That has been kind of the guideline for adding to the arboretum.”

The fourth tree, a Snake-Bark Maple with colorful leaves and bark, was appropriately enough planted near Frost Arts Center.

Photos: Clark College/Hannah Erickson

Curse of the Starving Class



"See, I always figured on the future. I banked on it. I was banking on it getting better. ... I figured that's why everyone wants you to buy things. Buy refrigerators. Buy cars, house, lots, invest. They wouldn't be so generous if they didn't figure you had it comin' in. At some point it had to be comin' in." –Weston, *Curse of the Starving Class*

Clark College Theatre opens its 2013-14 season with a mordant examination of American aspiration, *Curse of the Starving Class* by Sam Shepard. Winner of the 1976-77 Obie Award for best new American play, this is a major work by one of theatre's most respected and celebrated writers. The production is directed by Mark Owsley and runs Nov. 8 – 23.



At once dark and absurdist, comic and challenging, *Curse of*

the Starving Class focuses on the dysfunctional Tate clan—the drunken dreamer of a father, burned-out mother, rebellious teenage daughter, and idealistic son—as they struggle for control of the rundown family farm in a futile search for freedom, security, and ultimately meaning in their lives. Clark College Theatre Program Director Gene Biby says, “Given the recent economic crisis, the issues raised in this drama are as relevant today as they were 35 years ago.”



Cast includes Derek J. Neiman (Weston), Emily Wells (Ella), Katie Lindstrom (Emma), Nicholas Detering (Wesley), and Andy Houseman (Taylor). Production includes nudity, strong language, and adult themes.

Show Dates: November 8, 9, 15, 16, 21, 22, and 23. All show times are at 7:30 p.m. November 16, there will also be a 2:00 p.m. matinee.

Ticket Information: Students (with ID) \$9; Alumni (with membership) \$9; Senior Citizens \$11; General Admission \$13. Tickets may be purchased in person at the Clark College Bookstore in Gaiser Hall, online, or by calling 360-992-2815. All shows held in the Decker Theatre in Frost Arts Center.

If you need accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event, contact Clark College's Disability Support Services Office at 360-992-2314 or 360-991-0901 (VP), or visit Gaiser Hall room 137, two weeks before the event.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

See more photos on Flickr.

Educating for the Seventh Generation

On Friday, November 1, the aroma of fry bread wafted through Gaiser Student Center as Clark College hosted its annual "Educating for the Seventh Generation," a celebration of Native American cultures and mini-powwow. The event included food, music, dancing, and socializing among the estimated 275 guests.

Native American flautist Isaac Trimble provided music as guests arrived. Then emcee Sande Allman and arena director Ed Goodell got the event started. Clark College President Bob Knight and Clark College Trustee Jack Burkman welcomed the assembled guests on behalf of the college and its trustees; Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt also offered a welcome from the city. Native American military veterans led the grand entry, after which there was an invocation and then an honoring of the recently passed. Clark College Facilities Services fiscal specialist Lori Jimerson spoke in memory of longtime Clark employee and supporter Bob Moser, who died in December 2012. Moser was a strong supporter of Clark's Native American student group when it was first receiving charter in the early 1990s.

Much of the rest of the evening was given to dancing, including a "Tiny Tots" dance hosted by Child and Family Services and a series of exhibitions of the powwow dance styles of all the tribes in attendance. Guests also enjoyed

“Indian Tacos” served in the adjoining cafeteria, while drummers provided music for the occasion. The dancing continued late into the evening, with a diverse range of dancers—from grandchildren to grandparents, some dressed in full regalia and others in jeans and T-shirts.

This is the fifth year that Clark College has coordinated and hosted an event in honor of Native American Heritage Month. It is one of four signature events hosted by the college annually to celebrate diverse cultures. According to organizers, the title references “a responsibility to pass on and teach the future seven generations to protect our resources, culture and heritage.”

A selection of photos are below. [Click here](#) to view the full Flickr album.

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Choppers, Gunk, Bugs and Barges

On Saturday, November 2, Clark College’s main campus was fizzing like a lab beaker as hundreds of students participated in the Southwest Washington Elementary Science Olympiad. Almost 300 third-through-fifth grade students from 19 local

elementary schools participated in the half-day event, which included five competitions: Green Eggs Go Bam!, Chopper Challenge, Tug-o-War Gunk, Benthic Bugs, and Buoyant Barges. (See complete results from the contest.) In addition to hosting the event, Clark provided more than 60 volunteers, most of them students. This was Clark's sixth year of hosting the event, which helps promote STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) among young learners.

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Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

View photos from this event on Flickr.

Striking Developments

On October 3, the Clark College community came together for an annual tradition, the Students vs. Staff softball game. One change to the tradition: After years of being held during spring quarter, this event was moved to fall quarter. (Expect another competition, possibly kickball, to take its place during spring quarter.) Another change: After many years as the underdogs, Team Staff (which also includes faculty) came away with the victory, trouncing Team Student 13-4. Team Staff owed some of their success to new softball coach Mandy Hill's able leadership, as well as Health and Physical Education instructor Alan Wiest's impressive tally of four home runs.

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Everyone's Involved



Phi Theta Kappa advisor Melissa Sinclair, *far right in yellow shirt*, gives students information about the program.

Gaiser Student Center was bustling with activity on October 2 as students attended the college's first-ever Involvement Fair. In previous years, the college has hosted a quarterly Student Club Fair, but this year the event expanded to include tables for not just clubs, but also departments and programs like Financial Aid, CollegeFish.org, and the Bookstore.

"We wanted to expand on the engagement opportunities we were highlighting for students," explained Director of Student Life

Sarah Gruhler.



Brandon Nimmo

Clark student Brandon Nimmo was manning a table representing the college's Penguin Help Desk, a free service staffed by Computer Support Specialist students that provides computer assistance and repair to students, faculty, and anyone in the community. Nimmo said he'd received a lot of visitors at his table interested in the Help Desk's services—though, he added, they might have to wait a bit to access them. "We have a lot of computers there waiting to be fixed right now," he said. "We stay very busy."

Nimmo wasn't interested in signing up for any clubs himself. "I honestly don't have time," he said. The Air Force veteran is currently juggling working 30-to-40 hours per week at the Veterans Administration with a full-time class load and helping to care for his daughter, 2, and stepdaughter, 13.



Chess fans get a game in at the Chess Club table.

This is the challenge facing many Clark students—they're too busy balancing jobs and family and homework to participate in extracurricular activities. But, Gruhler said, it can be helpful to their long-term success if they do.

"In Student Life we emphasize out-of-class learning opportunities," she said. "Clubs are a great way for students to pursue their interests and try new things while gaining experience, learning new skills and connecting with other students. Future schools and employers are not just interested in your degree, but in all the other experiences that set students apart as individuals. Clubs help students connect, network and ultimately provide support to help them achieve their goals."



Saudi Students Club members Majed Alhumaidani and Ahmed Biladi share dates and culture with their fellow students.

For first-year student Ahmed Biladi, a student club is also a way to promote understanding about his culture. Biladi, 18, is one of a growing number of Clark international students from Saudi Arabia—in fact, fall 2013 marks the first quarter that Saudi Arabia is the most common country of origin for Clark international students, the result of new partnerships between Clark College International Programs and educational organizations in the Middle East including the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission.

When Biladi first came to the United States, he encountered some disheartening preconceptions about his homeland. “Some of the most bizarre questions I’ve gotten have been: ‘Do you guys still ride camels? Is the country covered in sand? Do you still live in tents?’” he said with a laugh. “There’s a lot of misinformation about Saudis, so we decided to start a club to share our culture with the Clark community.”

The newly formed Saudi Students Club hopes to combat myths and promote understanding between American and Saudi cultures.

“There’s an ignorance of culture on both ends that leads to a lack of communication,” Biladi said, offering a plate of imported dates to passersby.

According to the Office of Student Life, more than 400 people attended the Involvement Fair.



A total of 59 clubs, programs, services, and departments had tables at the Involvement Fair, which was attended by more than 400 people.

Photos: Jenny Shadley/Clark College

A New Prescription for Success



Clark College President Robert K. Knight and Columbia Credit Union President Steve Kenny cut the ribbon signifying the official opening of the simulation pharmacy.

More than 40 people gathered at Clark College at the Washington State University campus in Vancouver on September 30 for a ribbon-cutting event for the Columbia Credit Union Simulation Pharmacy. The celebration honored the community credit union for its \$65,000 gift that led to remodeling the 500-square-foot pharmacy and purchasing new lab equipment and supplies.



The crowd cheered as the ribbon was cut on Clark's new Columbia Credit Union Simulation Pharmacy.

Clark's Pharmacy Technician program relocated to Clark College's building on the WSUV campus last year, in the process expanding the program's footprint and enhancing the college's quest to be the premier Pharmacy Technician program in the region. The new lab allows students to practice skills and simulate activities they will encounter on the job in pharmacy settings, such as setting up sterile IV bags and packaging medications.

Clark College President Robert K. Knight and Columbia Credit Union President Steve Kenny cut the ribbon signifying the official opening of the simulation pharmacy.

"We appreciate our community partners that bring that margin of excellence to Clark College," said Knight, adding, "Columbia Credit Union is a partner we can always count on."

Kenny said the bank has served the community since 1952. "We are proud to support higher education," he said.

Kenny added a personal story about his son, a Clark alumnus, who began as a Running Start student, enrolled in a medical program at Clark, and is now a licensed X-ray technician "who, at 26, just purchased his first home," he said. "Education truly makes a difference."



Pharmacy Technician student Dixie Fisher gave a tour of the simulation pharmacy following the ribbon cutting.

Pharmacy Technician student Dixie Fisher is excited about the way education is reshaping her life. Fisher, who was on hand to give tours of the new simulation pharmacy, shared her own story with visitors. A year ago, she was a stay-at-home mom with six children when a storm flooded her home and forced her family to take shelter in a hotel for eight months. With time on her hands and her job prospects bleak, Fisher visited Clark College; she'd heard about its Pharmacy Technician program and wanted to learn more. Now Fisher, 36, is in the last quarter of the program and hopes to get a job at Kaiser Permanente, where she's been interning, and perhaps return to Clark one day to teach in the program.

Pharmacy technicians are in high demand because of the large number of locations that employ technicians and an aging population who require care. In the state of Washington, more than 1.2 million residents will be age 65 or older by 2020, according to a panel convened by the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council.



Pharmacy Tech instructor Heidi Fey and department head Dawn Shults attend the opening of the new Columbia Credit Union simulation pharmacy.

Sixteen states in the nation require certification for pharmacy technicians, and only six require licenses. Washington is one of the six that mandates a license, says Dawn Shults, Pharmacy Technician Department head.

Clark students can earn a certificate and be workforce-ready in a year or go on to earn an Associate in Applied Technology degree that prepares them for leadership roles within a pharmacy setting. They can transfer to Central Washington University for a Bachelor of Applied Technology degree in business management.

To see more photos from the event visit our Flickr site.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley