

Honoring she-roes



On March 7, while people around the world prepared to celebrate International Women's Day the next day, members of the local community gathered in Gaiser Student Center to honor five women's contributions to Southwest Washington at the 2019 Iris Awards.

Guests enjoyed refreshments and light fare provided by Beaches Restaurant as they celebrated the honorees. Ceremonies began with a greeting from Clark College President Bob Knight, after which the evening was turned over to emcee Colleen Boccia, chief marketing officer of Columbia Credit Union. Boccia introduced speeches by both the honorees and their nominators.

This year's Iris Award recipients were:

- Ann Fischer, founder of the Healthy Equitable Living Project
- Stacey Graham, president of the Humane Society for Southwest Washington
- Maureen Montague, executive director of Columbia Springs
- Rekah Strong, executive director of Educational Opportunities for Children and Families
- Lynn Valenter, vice chancellor for finance and operations at Washington State University Vancouver

This annual ceremony has a long tradition in this community. The event began in 1985 as a photography exhibit during Women's History Week, which later developed into a larger awards program and ceremony known as the Southwest Washington Women of Achievement Awards. In 2012, the event was reintroduced as the Iris Awards with the same core mission: honoring the women of Southwest Washington for their outstanding contributions in the categories of public, private, philanthropic, and civic service.

Ann Fischer



Ann Fischer and Diane Irby

The evening got off to an emotional start when Diane Irby took to the podium to describe her experience being a client of the Healthy Equitable Living Project, which Ann Fischer runs and founded.

“The pantry has fed my body quite well,” she said. “But the pure unselfish love [Ann] provided me has fed my soul and my heart and was something I didn’t even know I was starving for.

“The pantry keeps me alive,” Irby continued, facing Fischer directly, “but you make me want to *stay* alive.”

Fischer embraced Irby before beginning her own remarks, which centered on the work that HELP does providing food to families in need at 14 different schools. She spoke about the importance of not just providing people with food and assistance, but doing so in a way that allows them choice and dignity, mentioning how HELP sets up its food pantry so that clients can “shop”

for the groceries they prefer instead of receiving a pre-made box. Fischer also thanked the many volunteers and partners that support HELP, including Clark College nursing students who volunteered to provide clients with education on hygiene and first aid.

Fischer also made clear that it was not just the clients who benefited from HELP, but she herself found inspiration and motivation from the work. "The biggest gift you can give yourself is helping other people," she said.

Stacey Graham



Stacey Graham and Debra Hentz

The next honoree of the evening was Stacey Graham, president of the Humane Society for Southwest Washington. Before coming to HSSW, Graham had a long career that encompassed work in the Oregon State Legislature,

national public relations and advertising agencies, the United Way of Columbia-Willamette, and First Independent Bank. When she joined HSSW in 2013, she was charged with raising the level of awareness and visibility of the Humane Society in the local community and animal welfare industry; and dramatically increasing the save rate of the animals in care. Under her leadership, HSSW launched a five-year, \$6 million capital campaign. In 2018, HSSW was named the Best Nonprofit in Clark County.

“I’ve been a volunteer with HSSW for 20 years,” said nominator Debra Hentz. “One thing you see with people at humane societies is they say, ‘We want to focus on the animals.’ Stacey really focused on the people and building them up.”

Graham admitted that she wasn’t a born animal-lover. “I didn’t grow up with animals,” she said. “The first time I walked into the kennels, I was scared to death—that’s how I learned I was afraid of dogs. But I walked those kennels every day, and I learned to love dogs.”

Graham noted that caring about animals is part of caring about humanity, and noted that HSSW donated pet food to pantries like Ann Fischer’s. “We know how much animals mean to people,” she said. “We know they will give food to their animals before they feed themselves. So we’re hanging in there with you.”

Maureen Montague



Maureen Montague and Heidi Johnson Bixby

The next award presented was the H-RoC Iris Award, a special category created in 2017 to honor women in the community who have promoted civil discourse, teamwork, collaboration, and cooperation. H-RoC, a non-partisan political action committee dedicated to the advancement of elected and appointed female leaders in Southwest Washington, sponsors this annual award.

H-RoC member (and 2016 Iris Award recipient) Heidi Johnson Bixby introduced honoree Maureen Montague. Montague currently serves as the executive director of Columbia Springs, an environmental education nonprofit and protected urban natural area on the Old Evergreen Highway in Vancouver. Previous to this position, she was the co-founder and eventual executive director of

North Bank Artists.

Johnson Bixby described Montague as “the first to raise her hand to volunteer” and someone with a gift for collaboration and community-building.

Like most of the night’s honorees, Montague said she learned the value of community service from her family. She recalled watching her grandmother sewing a quilt with fellow church members to donate to a recently widowed woman to keep her warm during the winter, and feeling “the kindness of that good deed in my heart.”

“Community service, to me, means collective kindness,” she said. “These things add up. ... I’m blessed to live in Clark County, where so many people seem to understand this.”

Rekah Strong



Jada Rupley and Rekah Strong

The next honoree of the night was also nominated by a former honoree. Jada Rupley, 2004 Women of Achievement Award recipient, introduced Rekah Strong by noting that they currently served together on the Clark College Board of Trustees. She praised Strong for her dedication to the community, saying, "Thank you for being a gentle teacher, thank you for being a fierce advocate, and thank you for changing our community."

Strong is executive director of Educational Opportunities for Children and Families. Prior to that position, she served in leadership roles at the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette and at Clark County. Along with her work on the Clark College Board of Trustees, she serves on Clark County's Developmental Disability Advisory Board and is a former board member of We Reign Youth Foundation and Southwest Washington Chapter Red Cross.

Strong spoke about her experiences as a young child attending political events with her grandmother and mother, drawing with crayons and not entirely understanding why she was there, but even so learning the importance of public engagement. "What my grandmother was doing for me was pouring into me, and creating a template for me that would come full circle in my life," she said.

Strong also noted a theme that arose from her experiences: "Small yesses can have huge outcomes." As examples, she offered the time she said yes

to an employee who needed to bring her baby to work, which led to a program that served a dozen employees and became a model for other workplaces. Another “small yes” was agreeing to speak at an open forum about Clark County’s system of governance, which in turn led to her becoming part of the work group that changed the county’s Freeholder process and expanded the Clark County Council.

Strong also recounted providing her own children with crayons as she took them to public meetings—and how, years later, her daughter would volunteer to visit the State Capitol to advocate for others.

“You never know the ultimate outcome of modeling for others, of pouring into other people, and all those small yesses,” she said.

Lynn Valenter



Lynn Valenter and Renee Bartocci

The final honoree of the night was Lynn Valenter, vice chancellor for finance and operations at Washington State University Vancouver.

Valenter, who began her career at WSUV more than 20 years ago, now leads a range of functions including budget and accounting, capital planning, facilities operations, human resources, public safety, and dining services.

Valenter was introduced by WSUV Chief of Staff Renee Bartocci, who expressed her appreciation for her colleague's work ethic and enthusiasm. "She's there to be a partner, to bounce ideas off of, and to ask the hard questions," Bartocci said. "And she's really good at it."

Valenter thanked her family for supporting her work—both in her career and as a volunteer—acknowledging the difficulty women face when they try to manage the obligations of their families with those of their workplaces and communities. "For many, many years, the daily prayer was for balance," she said. Even so, she said the balancing act was worth it.

"I believe each of us finds satisfaction when we make a difference," she said. "That can be in your family, in your work, and in your community."

To view more photos from the event visit our [Flickr page](#).

How to stay safe during the measles outbreak



Health experts say that even one dose of vaccine could prevent the contraction of measles. *Photo courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control*

Clark County is experiencing an outbreak of measles. While the college has not identified any confirmed cases on campus at this time, we want to prepare our community members in the most proactive manner possible, and let you know about the steps you can take to protect yourself, your loved ones, and the Clark College community.

As of today, the current number of confirmed cases in Clark County is reported to be 63. On January 25, Gov. Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency in all counties.

- Recommendations from the Clark County Department of Public Health
- What would happen if a confirmed case of measles was discovered at Clark College
- If you are exposed to measles elsewhere
- How to stay informed

Recommendations

Here are recommendations from the Clark County Department of Public Health:

- Locate your vaccination records – specifically for MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
 - This may include documentation of blood titer tests (proving immunity)
 - If you are unsure of your vaccination status, contact your health provider
- If you are not protected, **get the MMR vaccination as soon as possible**. While not perfect, a single dose of the vaccine is 93 percent effective in protecting against measles; two doses are 97 percent effective. Importantly, getting even just the first dose of the vaccine now will prevent you from being excluded from the college, should a measles case be discovered here.
 - Those with health insurance should check with their health care provider to learn if your plan covers the cost of vaccines.
 - Students can get the vaccine at cost (\$70 per dose) at our Counseling and Health Center in the Health Sciences Building (HSC) room 124. If cost is a concern, please contact the Counseling and Health Center to discuss available options.
- Stay home if you are sick; pay attention to fevers
 - Symptoms of measles are:
 - Runny nose
 - Coughing
 - Conjunctivitis (red, itchy eyes)
 - Fever
 - Rash
 - Most of these symptoms may begin before the rash, and you are contagious as soon as any of these symptoms begin
- If you believe you may have measles symptoms, or develop

symptoms:

- Stay home
- Avoid public spaces if possible
- Call your doctor (do not sit in waiting rooms)
- If you have questions about vaccine efficacy or your own personal health risks, please contact your health care provider for advice.

If measles is discovered at Clark College

While there are still no confirmed cases at Clark College at this time, the outbreak's spread does bring up the question of what would happen if a case was discovered here.

If a case of measles was confirmed at a college location, Clark County Public Health could determine that any individual who was exposed and could not prove immunity would be excluded from the college for up to 21 days. (This process is called an "exclusion.") The college is working on details regarding how to keep students subject to an exclusion in class remotely (where appropriate) and how employees would report leave. However, the most effective way to prevent being part of an exclusion is **to proactively find your record of immunity and, if you do not have immunity, to get vaccinated as soon as possible.** (See Recommendations section above for more information.)

If you are exposed to measles outside of Clark College

Any individual who has been notified that they are part of a measles-exposure exclusion and who does not have documented proof of immunity to measles should consult with their health care provider for guidance. Students who do not have a health care provider may contact the college's Counseling and Health Center.

If a measles-exposure exclusion prevents someone from visiting Clark College locations, they should alert their instructor and/or supervisor. The college is examining options to allow excluded individuals to continue their studies and/or employment during an exclusion.

How to stay informed

If Clark College is notified of a confirmed case of measles at a college location, further communication will be shared via your Clark College email account. Depending on advice from Clark County Public Health, the college may also send alerts via our RAVE Alert system, the college's home page, and our Alerts web page.

Anyone

with questions about measles infection or the measles vaccine should call their

primary care provider or their local county health department:

- Clark County Public Health, 360.397.8021
- Skamania County Public Health, 509.427.3850
- Klickitat County Public Health, 509.773.4565
- Multnomah County Public Health, 503.988.3406
- Washington County Public Health, 503.846.3594
- Clackamas County Public Health, 503.655.8411

Some helpful links with more information

Clark County Public Health Latest Measles Updates:

<https://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/measles-investigation>

Measles Basic Info Sheet

(available in multiple languages):

https://www.clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/dept/files/public-health/CD/Resources/Measles_Basic_Info_english.pdf

CDC Measles FAQs:

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/faqs.html#am>

This article will continue to be updated as the college receives new information. It was last updated on Feb. 21, 2019.

Get a Running Start at Clark



The 2018 graduating class included 476 Running Start graduates—a new record for the college, which has the largest Running Start program in the state.

High

school students and their families have an opportunity to attend a free Running

Start Information Night at Clark College on Wednesday, March

13, from 7:00-8:00

p.m. in the O'Connell Sports Center gymnasium on Clark's main campus.

The

information session, which outlines the process for entering the Running Start

program in fall 2019, is open to the public with no registration required.

Attendance is optional but encouraged as attendees will hear from Running Start

participants and learn about the program's eligibility criteria, benefits, and

more.

Running

Start allows eligible juniors and seniors to earn college credit while

fulfilling their high school graduation requirements.

Participants in the

Running Start program attend Clark classes alongside the general college

population. They can choose from a full range of academic and professional and

technical courses, as

long as the students meet the criteria

and the classes are college-level.

The

program, which can significantly reduce the cost of a four-year college degree,

has proven popular in Southwest Washington. In addition to the potential cost

savings offered through participating in the program, Running Start also

provides an opportunity for students to challenge themselves academically.

According

to Christina Smith, an instructor in Clark's Department of English, there are a number of qualities that Running Start students can

foster in order to successfully navigate the college environment. "Curiosity, deep desire to learn, and willingness to

ask questions in and out of class—these are the traits and skills that lead to

success in college," said Smith.

Reid Brown, a current Running Start student, emphasized that frequent communication with professors can be helpful, along with utilizing

services such as tutoring and meeting with advisors. "The environment at Clark

is very inviting to young students and there are many resources available to

help them with the transition into the college community," said Brown.

With

careful planning and dedication, some Running Start students earn their

associate degree from Clark by the time they complete high school. One such

student is Maria DeBartolo, who will graduate this

June with her high school diploma and an associate degree in Nursing from

Clark. "I will be ready to enter a nursing program, which is something that I

never thought I would be able to do at 17 years old," she said.

Running

Start students pay for books, transportation, and some fees, but do not pay

full Clark College tuition. Students can be part-time or full-

time in Running

Start. Fees are subject to change by the Washington State Legislature. A fee waiver is available for those demonstrating financial need.

Clark

College is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way in Vancouver, Wash. Parking will

be available in the college's Red lots on the east side of Fort Vancouver Way

and in the Purple Lot on the west side of Fort Vancouver Way.

Driving

directions and parking maps are available at www.clark.edu/maps.

Individuals

who need 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 360-991-0901 (VP), or visit Penguin Union Building (PUB) room 013, as soon as possible.

For more information on Running Start, visit the Clark College website at www.clark.edu/runningstart. For information about Running Start Information Nights, call 360-992-2366.

Recipients of the 2019 Iris Awards Announced



Iris Awards will be presented to (left to right) Ann Fischer, Stacey Graham, Rekah Strong, Lynn Valenter, and Maureen Montague (H-ROC Iris Award).

Five women representing exceptional leadership, philanthropy and community service are the winners of the 2019 Iris Awards, honoring women of achievement in Southwest Washington. They will be recognized at an awards reception on Thursday, March 7.

Awards

will be presented to Ann Fischer, founder of the Healthy Equitable Living Project; Stacey Graham, president of the Humane Society for Southwest Washington; Rekah Strong, executive director of Educational Opportunities for Children and Families; and Lynn Valenter, vice chancellor for finance and operations at Washington State University Vancouver. H-RoC, a non-partisan political action committee dedicated to the advancement of elected and appointed female leaders in Southwest Washington, has chosen Columbia Springs Executive

Director Maureen Montague for the Iris Award they sponsor.

The award ceremony takes place in Gaiser Student Center on Clark College's main campus. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the ceremony begins at 6:00 p.m. The event is open to the public and tickets are on sale through the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce at <https://www.vancouverusa.com/events/details/2019-iris-awards-reception-18904>. The cost is \$35 per person. A table sponsorship, which includes eight tickets, can be purchased for \$310. 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 (360) 991-0901 (VP), or visit Penguin Union Building room 013, by February 26.

About the Iris Awards

The Iris Awards follow in the tradition of the Southwest Washington Women of Achievement Awards, which began in 1985 at Clark College. In 2012, the event was reintroduced as the Iris Awards, still celebrated on or around International Women's Day (March 8) and with the same core

mission: honoring
the lasting and far-reaching contributions of women in
Southwest Washington and
beyond.

This
year's awards are sponsored by Clark College, the Clark
College Foundation,
the *Vancouver Business Journal*, the Greater Vancouver Chamber
of Commerce,
and H-RoC.

The 2019 Iris Award Honorees

Ann Fischer



Ann Fischer

Ann Fischer is the founder of
the Healthy Equitable Living Project (HELP), a food pantry
located at the First
Presbyterian Church in Vancouver. HELP was launched in 2013,
when the Vancouver
Health Department asked if the church could assist local
schools in serving
families who were experiencing food insecurity. Fischer began
by soliciting
donations from neighborhood grocery stores to help five

families. Over the past six years, HELP has expanded to serve between 50 and 60 families from 14 different schools.

Through the food pantry, Fischer makes sure people are not only fed, but fed well. Fischer hand-selects many of the products that the pantry offers, with a focus on high-quality, nutritious, and organic foods. It is not unusual for Fischer to remember individual patrons' specific dietary needs, from vegan to gluten-free. She also created the pantry's Breakfast Club, where families are served a hot breakfast while they wait to shop, giving them a chance to build community and friendships.

Fischer has a long record of service in the community, ranging from supporting her local church to organizing fundraisers for children's organizations. For 25 years, she ran an antique shop called Turnabout that offered assistance to people who were transitioning their living situations.

Stacey Graham



Stacey Graham

Stacey Graham has served as president of the Humane Society for Southwest Washington (HSSW) since 2013. Graham's career spans 40 years leading for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Her wide-ranging work experience includes positions in the Oregon Legislature and Oregon Governor's Office, as well as key roles in public relations and advertising agencies, the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, and the Vancouver-based First Independent Bank.

Graham joined the HSSW team charged with creating a sustainable and effective business model; raising the level of awareness and visibility of the Humane Society in the local community and animal welfare industry; and dramatically increasing the save rate of the animals in care. Under her leadership, HSSW launched a five-year, \$6 million capital campaign. In 2018, HSSW was named the Best Nonprofit in Clark County.

Graham's community service includes serving as city council president in her hometown of Stayton, Oregon; on the boards of the Clark County YWCA, The Historic Trust, the Lighthouse Community Credit Union, Nonprofit Network of Southwest Washington, Metropolitan Family Service, Northwest Pilot Project, Portland Radio Project and H-RoC; and on the Empower Women + Girls steering committee. Graham has helped develop strategic plans for many local nonprofits, including North

County Community Food Bank, Vancouver Symphony, Partners in Careers, Clark County Arts Commission and Pink Lemonade.

Rekah Strong



Rekah Strong

Rekah Strong is a highly accomplished public and non-profit executive. She currently serves as the executive director for Educational Opportunities for Children and Families (EOCF), the largest early learning organization in Southwest Washington.

Prior to this position, Strong served as chief of operations and equity officer for the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette and chief diversity and inclusion officer for Clark County.

Earlier in her career, Strong spent more than a decade working for the State of Oregon to improve outcomes for children and families in Oregon's child welfare system.

Strong has a long record of public service and community involvement in Southwest Washington. During her tenure with Clark County, she helped lay the initial framework and push

for the Clark County Freeholder process and expansion of the Clark County Council. More recently, she was reappointed by Governor Jay Inslee to serve as a Clark College trustee and actively advocates for education. She was also recently selected as the newest board member of Clark County's Developmental Disability Advisory Board, and has served on the boards of We Reign Youth Foundation and Southwest Washington Chapter Red Cross.

A Clark College alumna, Strong earned her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and master's degree in Social Work from Portland State University. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Social Work Research.

Lynn Valenter



Lynn Valenter

As the vice chancellor for finance and operations at Washington State University Vancouver, Lynn Valenter leads a range of functions including budget and accounting, capital planning, dining services, facilities operations, human resources and public safety. She began her career at WSU Vancouver more than 20 years ago, holding roles as facilities and auxiliary services manager and director of finance and

operations before being named as vice chancellor in 2015. Valenter has been instrumental in increasing WSU Vancouver's public engagement and service during an important period in the campus's growth.

Valenter's engaged, enthusiastic, and equitable leadership style has been of service to both the university and the local community. As an active member of Empower, she supports initiatives that help local girls and women, and she is a frequent volunteer with Winter Hospitality Overflow, an organization that helps people in need during the winter months. Her board service includes Camas Civil Service, Institute for Metropolitan Studies at Portland State University, Columbia Credit Union, H-RoC, Greater Portland Inc., and the Columbia River Economic Development Council. In 2016, Valenter was honored by the *Portland Business Journal* as a part of their Women of Influence in the nonprofit category.

Maureen Montague



Maureen Montague

It is no exaggeration to say that Maureen Montague has been involved in the Southwest Washington region her entire life. A graduate of Hudson's Bay High School, she returned to Vancouver after earning her bachelor's degree from Lewis and Clark College in Portland and began working for Janus Youth Programs, serving at-risk youth in a shelter setting.

After leaving her job to become a stay-at-home mother, Montague remained deeply involved in her community. A visual artist and a published writer, she volunteered at local arts nonprofits and was a founding member of North Bank Artists. These activities gave her experience with grant-writing and collaborating with partner organizations on events, skills that would become useful in her developing career. Additionally, her writing skills led her to be recruited to serve on the digital team for President Barack Obama's 2012 re-election campaign.

In 2013, Montague was hired as the executive director of North Bank Artists, where she organized the Vancouver Arts District with community partners. In 2016, she was named the executive director of Columbia Springs, an environmental education nonprofit and protected urban natural area on the Old Evergreen Highway

in Vancouver. Her work is focused on financial sustainability, program development, and improvement of all community services.

Clark College Theatre presents "Godspell 2012"



Clark College Theatre continues its 2018-2019 season with the 2012 revamped version of the musical *Godspell*.

Godspell 2012 is a masterful retelling of the original musical sensation, injected with contemporary references and dazzling new arrangements. It was the first major musical theatre offering from three-time Grammy and Academy Award winner

Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked, Pippin, Children of Eden*), and it took the world by storm. A small group of people help Jesus Christ tell different parables by using a wide variety of games, storytelling techniques, and a hefty dose of comic timing. An eclectic blend of songs, ranging in style from pop to vaudeville, is employed as the story of Jesus' life dances across the stage.

The cast includes: Jacqueline Baxter, Andrew Hallas, Sammy Williams*, Breanna Kurth, Christina Taft**, Moe Lewis, Danielle Neblock*, Michelle Eussen **, Colin Smith* and Janoah Stegall*. The director is H. Gene Biby and April Brookins Duvic provides vocal direction. *Note: Cast member names marked with a single asterisk are current Clark College students; double asterisks indicate Clark College alumni.*

Show Dates: Feb. 22 and 23, March 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9. All show times are at 7:30 p.m. in the Decker Theatre, Frost Arts Center, on Clark College's main campus.

Ticket Information: Students (with ID) \$10; Alumni (with membership) \$10; Senior Citizens \$16; General Admission \$20. Tickets may be purchased online at http://www.clarkbookstore.com/site_theatre.asp, or call 360-992-2815. View the entire Clark College Theatre season at www.clark.edu/cc/theatre.

For more photos of the show, visit Clark's Flickr album.

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, as soon as possible.

Clark College Automotive Technology holds Open House



Clark College Automotive Technology Open House

The Clark College Automotive Technology department welcomes prospective students and their families to its annual Open House on Wednesday, February 20, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

This

event is free and open to the public, though organizers ask guests to RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/clark-college-automotive-open-house-tickets-55283786293>.

It takes place in the college's automotive shop in Building AA-1 on Clark's main campus at 1933 Ft. Vancouver Way. The closest parking is in Orange Lot 1.

For maps and directs visit www.clark.edu/maps. Light refreshments will be served.

Guests will be able to tour the program's 14,000 square-foot facility, meet with faculty and staff, connect with local dealership managers, and speak with professional technicians about career opportunities. They will also be able to learn about the college's Dealer Ready programs, which allow students to earn income and work experience through internships during the course of their degree program.

About the Clark College Automotive Technology Department

With a program history that spans more than 40 years, Clark College's Automotive Technology department has received community recognition for producing top-tier automotive technicians and for its focus on hands-on learning and partnerships with dealerships that include Toyota, Honda, Dick Hannah, and Audi.

Presidential Coins



Employee Development Manager Vanessa Neal shows off her Presidential Coin.

Since 2007, Clark College President Bob Knight has presented Presidential Coins to faculty, staff, and community members to honor their

exemplary service to the college and the community. In 2016, President Knight

expanded the coins' recipients to include exemplary supporters of the college.

The honorees are decided by the president and are kept secret until the names

are announced—generally on Opening Day in the fall or during the annual State

of the College address in January.

Six Clark College employees received Presidential Coins during the 2019 State of the College address on January 17.

Eben Ayers



Left to right: Damon Grady, *Campus Security Officer*, Mike See, *Director of Security and Safety*, Eben Ayers, *Campus Security Officer*, and Chris Layfield, *Security and Safety Secretary Senior*.

Eben Ayers first began working for Clark College as an intern in the Security department while he was in high school. Starting in 2004, he worked in part-time positions at the college until becoming a full-time security officer in 2012. Since then, Ayers has developed into the Security department's primary training officer for all new-hire parking enforcement and security personnel.

"He is well-known throughout the college for being approachable, responsive, and caring," said Knight.

Ayers's professionalism and compassion has been recognized by the local community. In October 2017, he was featured in an article published jointly by *The Independent* and *The Columbian*

that illustrated his strong work ethic and commitment to serving the Clark community.

Randy Broberg



For the past four years, Randy Broberg has been a volunteer tutor in the Veterans Resource Center. As a veteran himself, having served in the Navy in the late 1960s, Broberg is known for being willing to offer whatever help and support the student veterans need to be successful.

“He drives from Portland to volunteer four or five days a week, for seven hours a day, sometimes coming in as early as 6 a.m. to help students prepare for exams or go over troublesome homework,” said Knight.

His students describe him as patient, supportive, encouraging, and having a great sense of humor while being able to lend a sympathetic ear when needed.

Karen Hagen



Foundation CEO Lisa Gibert and Board Members cheer on Karen Hagen.

Karen Hagen has been a Clark College employee since 1994. Beginning

as a receptionist, she has worked her way through several positions including database management, facilities maintenance, IT oversight, and departmental

historian. Hagen currently works as the Accounting & IT Manager for the Clark College Foundation, where she is the longest-tenured employee.

“Her attention to detail, her pleasant personality, and her overwhelming commitment to Clark College and its mission make Karen a dedicated and exemplary employee,” said Knight.

Vanessa Neal

Vanessa Neal, *pictured above*, has been an employee of Clark College since 2016 and has made many positive contributions in that time. As an Employee Development Manager, Neal focuses on providing meaningful, engaging employee development opportunities for staff and enhancing the employee experience. She also co-chairs the Teaching and Learning Days Workgroup.

“She cares deeply about the college community and has a genuine interest in the well-being of those around her,” said Knight. “Not one for surface interactions, she is known for pausing folks to ask, ‘No, how are you *really* doing?’”

Janice Taylor



Since 2006, Janice Taylor has held nearly every staff position in Tutoring Services. She began as a part-time work-study student before becoming a full-time Program Assistant and then Program Manager. For the past 18 months, Taylor has served as Interim Associate

Director. She supports college-wide initiatives by serving on committees and work groups, including co-leading the Guided Pathways Pillar 3 group.

Taylor is known for brainstorming creative ways to improve services and provide equitable access to resources to improve student outcomes.

In the words of President Knight, she tracks data “like a bloodhound,” searching out bits of information so Tutoring Services can make informed decisions about how to use resources effectively to support student success.

Bill Raedy



As an adjunct math instructor at Clark College for 20 years, Bill Raedy has helped countless students, but Knight shared one recent story that exemplified Raedy’s willingness to go the extra mile for students.

When a student had missed several days of class, Raedy reached

out in concern. He learned that this student was a veteran and had been the last living member of his combat team, and he confided that he was contemplating ending his life. Raedy immediately reached out to the Veterans Resource Center. Together they were able to get the student connected to resources and convince him he was safe and welcome at Clark.

“It took a whole team to get this student up on his feet again,” said Knight before presenting Raedy with a coin. “But it all started with this one instructor caring enough to reach out to the student and knowing enough to connect him to the right resources on campus.”

Poet Laureate visits Clark



Claudia Castro Luna

The Clark College Columbia Writers Series continues its 2018-2019 season with noted poet Claudia Castro Luna. This event, which is free and open to the public, will be held on Thursday, January 31, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in Gaiser Hall room 213 on Clark College's main campus.

Claudia Castro Lunais the **Washington State Poet Laureate**. She served as **Seattle's Civic**

Poet from 2015-2017 and is the author of the Pushcart-nominated *Killing Mariás* (Two Sylvias Press) and *This City*, (Floating Bridge Press) and the creator of the acclaimed Seattle Poetic Grid. Born in El Salvador, she came to the United States in 1981. She has a Master of Arts degree in Urban Planning, a teaching certificate, and a Master of Fine Arts in poetry. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry Northwest*, *La Bloga*, *Dialogo* and *Psychological Perspectives*, among others. Her non-fiction work can be read in several anthologies, among them *This Is The Place: Women Writing About Home*, (Seal Press). Castro Luna is currently working on a memoir, *Like Water to Drink*, about her experience escaping the civil war in El Salvador. Living in English and Spanish, she writes and teaches in Seattle. Since 2009, she maintains **Cipota bajo la Luna**, a blog with reflections, writing, and reviews.

The Columbia Writers Series was launched at Clark College in 1988, bringing local, national and international authors to the college and the region. This year's lineup of authors will continue with:

Winter

- February 2019 (date TBA): Elizabeth McCracken, award-winning fiction writer.

Spring

- May 20, 2019: Alexis Madrigal, author, journalist, and staff

writer at *The Atlantic*.

- May 21, 2019: Gina Oschner, award-winning author and Clark alumna
- May 22, 2019: Release of *Phoenix*, Clark College's award-winning arts and literary journal

Information

about the Columbia Writers Series is available at www.clark.edu/cc/cws.

This

event is held on Clark College's main campus at 1933 Ft. Vancouver Way. Directions

and maps are available online. Individuals

who need accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in

this event should contact Clark College's Disability Support Services (DSS) Office

at 360-992-2314 or 360-991-0901 (VP). The DSS office is located in room 013 in

Clark's Penguin Union Building.

2019 Clark College Athletics Hall of Fame class announced



The Clark College athletic department recently announced the 2019 Athletic Hall of Fame class. On Saturday, February 2, the 2019 Class will be recognized during halftime of the men's basketball game vs. Linn-Benton (approximately 4:45 p.m.). Following the basketball game, a Hall of Fame Ceremony will be held in the Gaiser Student Center at 6:00 p.m. Tickets may be purchased online at <https://www.clarkcollegefoundation.org/athletics-hall-of-fame-2019>.

This year's honorees are:

Brenda Bessner – Women's Track and Field (1989-90)

- 1989
NWAACC Shotput Champion – 42'8 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
- 1989
NWAACC Javelin Champion – 166'1"
- 1990
NWAACC Javelin Champion – 160'2"
- Currently
still holds the record for shotput (45-05) and Javelin (178-00)

- Competed in the Deaflympics in 1985/89 for both Shotput and Javelin and place 2nd in each event

Janie Hogan-Corbett – Women's Basketball (1991-93)

- 1st team all-league
- 1st team all-tournament
- Led league in scoring and rebounding
- Compiled 33 rebounds in one game
- Was part of the first undefeated team in NWAACC history (33-0)
- 1993 NWAACC Champions

1981 Men's Golf Team

- Team members:
 - Kevin Antolock, Greg Brown, Jeff Coad, Eric Degerman, Ian Harper, and Glen Hueser
- Head Coach
 - Skeet O'Connell

1982 Men's Golf Team

- Team members:
 - Kevin Antolock, Mike Burch, Jeff Coad, Eric Degerman, Tim Gilberg*, and Todd Quigley *honor awarded posthumously
- Head Coach
 - Skeet O'Connell

About Clark College Athletics

Penguin Athletics has a proud tradition of competitive success within the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC). The department offers 11 intercollegiate sports programs: Baseball; Men's and Women's Basketball; Men's and Women's Cross Country; Men's and Women's Soccer; Softball; Men's and Women's Track & Field; and Women's Volleyball.

Penguin Athletics places great emphasis on academic performance as well as athletic achievement. The program offers student athletes the opportunity to reach their educational goals, as well to pursue meaningful athletic accomplishments. For more information, visit Clark Athletics' website, Twitter and Facebook pages.

President Knight announces retirement



President Robert K. Knight

President Robert K. Knight has announced that he plans to retire at the end of the 2018-2019 contract year on August 31.

“On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, I want to thank President Knight for his exemplary service during his 13 years leading Clark College,” said Royce Pollard, chair of the Clark College Board of Trustees. “For more than a decade, he has provided stability and vision that has allowed the college to grow, adapt, and serve its community.”

Knight joined Clark in 2004 as Vice President of Administrative Services. In 2006, he was named acting president, and a year later was named president. During his tenure, he has overseen many changes at the college, including the opening of its Columbia Tech Center location in 2009, a

new STEM Building in 2016, and the development of the college's first three Bachelor of Applied Science degree programs.

Knight publicly announced his retirement on January 18, the day after delivering his annual State of the College address, in which he shared the news of the college's recent successful accreditation process.

President Knight will continue to serve as president until his retirement date.

"While this is a decision that my wife and I have been weighing for some time, I wanted to see the college through its accreditation process before informing trustees and Executive Cabinet," Knight wrote in an email to college employees this morning. "Now that our review is complete and the college has received commendations in six areas, I feel comfortable that I am leaving this institution on firm footing."

Pollard said that the Board of Trustees will begin the work of selecting a replacement for President Knight at a special board meeting to be announced soon.

Read the full text of President Knight's email below:

Dear college community,

As many of you know, I have spent 15 years working at Clark. It has been a privilege and an honor to lead the college for more than a decade, and I am proud of the work we have done together to serve our students and our community.

So it is with mixed emotions that I announce that I will be retiring at the end of my contract year on August 31.

While this is a decision that my wife and I have been weighing for some time, I wanted to see the college through its accreditation process before informing trustees and

Executive Cabinet. Now that our review is complete and the college has received commendations in six areas, I feel comfortable that I am leaving this institution on firm footing.

The Board of Trustees will be holding a special meeting, to be announced soon, to begin the process of seeking new leadership for the college. I have the utmost faith in their ability to steward the college safely through this period of transition and to find the right leadership to guide Clark into the future. In the meantime, I am committed to spending the next seven months ensuring that the college continues to work toward fulfilling its mission.

Please know that I will continue to support Clark and be a part of its community, even after I retire. After all, once a member of the Penguin Nation, always a member of the Penguin Nation.

Thank you,

*Bob Knight
President*