

Supporting Social Justice Leadership at Clark



Chippi Bello, *far right top*, with the cohort of Social Justice Leaders from Washington State.



Left to right:
Hanan Al-Zubaidy,

Kayla Escott, and
Chippi Bello

Congratulations to Hanan Al-Zubaidy, Chippi Bello, and Kayla Escott, Clark College's three representatives at the Social Justice Leadership Institute this year. They have demonstrated a commitment to making our college a more inclusive and social justice-minded place.

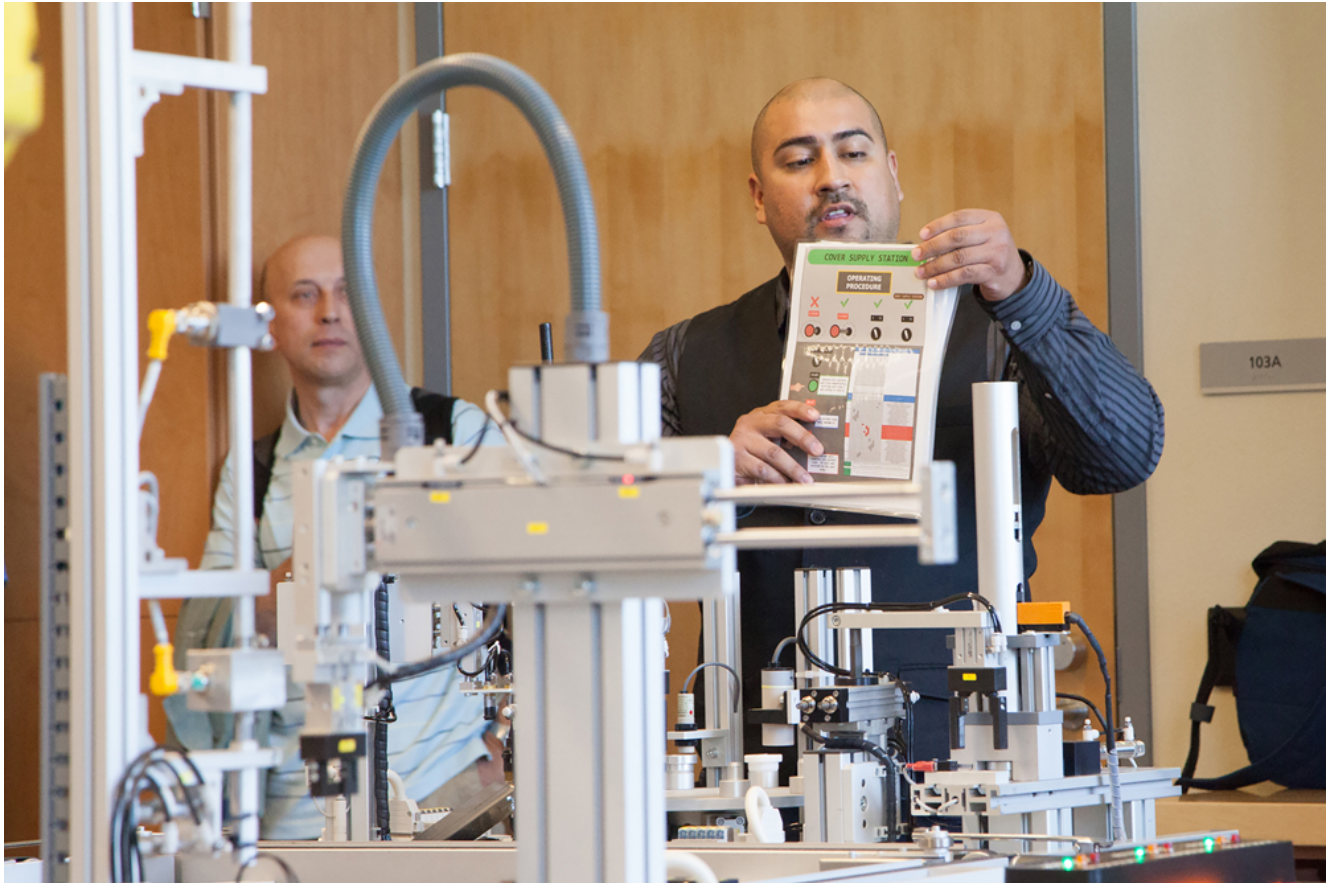
This is a yearlong program to foster leadership identity among historically underrepresented groups. It allows leaders to develop a network of colleagues system wide. It also helps develop a pipeline of employees able to move into higher leadership positions.

Clark's representatives attended at three-day retreat in August to kick off the program. They'll attend five workshops during the academic year and will graduate from the program in June. As part of the curriculum, they'll attend the Faculty and Staff of Color Conference (FSOCC) to be held in Spokane next month.

Clark College Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion supports this program. It helps to develop and implement comprehensive professional development to improve employee intercultural and multicultural competencies as part of the college's strategic goals.

Images provided by Chippi Bello.

Making a match: Clark students and manufacturers



Mechatronics lab at Clark College

Clark College and ESD 112 are now hosting Washington's newest Center of Excellence, a hub for connecting the region's students and employers through job training and coordination. The local office is known as the Center of Excellence for Semiconductors & Electronic Manufacturing.

It's the 11th office of its type in the state. The centers were created by the state Board for Community and Technical Colleges in 2004. They're intended to serve as liaisons between local schools and industries, providing career opportunities for students and helping industries maintain skilled workforces.

"This is a great opportunity for students at Clark College," says Dr. Sandra Fowler-Hill, Interim President of Clark

College. "Working strategically with our industry partners, we can help develop the talent pipeline within advanced manufacturing that will allow local manufacturers to grow and will provide outstanding opportunities for our students to succeed."

Each center is built around an industry that plays a major role in the local economy, such as a clean energy center at Centralia College and a marine manufacturing and technology center at Skagit Valley College.

The new Clark County center focuses on semiconductors and electronics, due to the presence of several big electronics companies in the area, including silicon-wafer manufacturer SEH America, a subsidiary of Tokyo-based Shin-Etsu Handotai Ltd.

"We have an electronic and semiconductor hub here in Southwest Washington that we'd like to support," said Mohammed Maraee, the new center's associate director. Maraee lives in Vancouver and previously worked for the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center and has taught business administration at Portland Community College.

The Clark County center operates under the leadership of an existing center at Everett Community College that focuses on aerospace and advanced manufacturing. It has a primary office at the main Educational Service District 112 building and a satellite office at Clark College, Maraee said.

Clark College is well positioned to support the new center, with programs like computer technology, welding, and mechatronics that provide graduates with the skills needed for today's jobs in advanced manufacturing. The college has also announced that the first building in its future satellite location in Ridgefield, Clark College at Boschma Farms, will be dedicated to advanced manufacturing.

The new center is funded by \$300,000 allocated by the state

legislature in the 2019-21 budget. Its partners include Clark College, local K-12 schools, and the Southwest Washington High Technology Council.

The council is made up of representatives from several high-tech companies that are either headquartered or have a significant presence in Clark County, including SEH America, nLIGHT, WaferTech, and Silicon Forest Electronics. The group was at the center of the legislative effort to secure funding for the new center.

The group is chaired by Ben Bagherpour, vice president of site services and government affairs at SEH America, who also serves as a member of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

“The [High Technology Council] is pleased to now have a single point of contact that we can reach out to,” Bagherpour said in a statement. “The associate director will be our point person to understand high-tech manufacturing companies’ workforce and education needs and to work with the K-12 and higher education systems to develop and align programs to meet these needs.”

SEH America has been involved in previous local pipeline efforts aimed at addressing concerns about attracting and retaining a skilled technical workforce. Last year, the company launched a pilot program called Career Launch, offering participants paid part-time apprenticeships at SEH paired with tuition assistance for students at Clark College.

The program is expanding for the 2019-2020 school year, Bagherpour said, and will now include similar opportunities at some of the other council companies. It will also be incorporated into the new center and further developed along with future programs as the center continues to grow.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

New year, new traditions



Amanda Brown, a 2019 Exceptional Classified Award recipient, receives her award from Interim President Dr. Sandra Fowler-Hill.

On September 16, Clark College employees gathered in the O'Connell Sports Center gymnasium for the traditional Opening Day ceremonies. While much of the program was familiar to longtime employees, this year's event brought a few new elements.

The first and most noticeable was the college's new leader: Interim President Dr. Sandra Fowler-Hill, who is serving a one-year term as interim president while the college seeks a permanent replacement for retired president Bob Knight. Fowler-Hill joked that, while she has attended many such celebrations during her decades-long career in higher

education, here at Clark, “this is my first Opening Day—and my last Opening Day.”



“We’re eager to serve Clark’s students and make this college a welcoming place for all.”

– *ASCC President Evans Kaame*

Board of Trustees chair Jane Jacobsen thanked Dr. Fowler-Hill for coming out of her retirement as the president of Portland Community College’s Rock Creek campus to step into the interim role.

Trustee Paul Speer outlined the process for hiring a new president, reiterating that the Board of Trustees was “transparent, equitable and inclusive.” The college has posted updated information about the presidential search on its website.



Trustee Jane Jacobsen

Opening Day was also the occasion to announce two new employee awards. The first was the Exceptional Administrative-Exempt Award, recognizing a class of employees that fall neither into Classified staff nor faculty categories. Administrative-exempt

staff include many administrators, managers, directors, executive assistants, and other employees who are not eligible for overtime compensation.

“We realized there’s a group of employees who haven’t had an opportunity to have their excellence recognized,” said Dr. Fowler-Hill.

The second new award was announced by Associate Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Rashida Willard. The Lora Whitfield Social Equity Award will be awarded to a member of the Clark College community who has demonstrated a sustained commitment to advancing equity, Willard said. It is named in honor of early childhood education professor Lora Whitfield, who died in July. Dr. Debi Jenkins read a poem to honor Whitfield’s memory.

Social equity was a significant theme in a presentation on the college’s progress toward Guided Pathways from Willard, Vice President of Instruction Sachi Horback, and Vice President of Student Affairs Bill Belden.

“It is on us to make sure all our students complete and persist,” said Willard. “We can’t put it on our students to succeed in a broken system. We need to fix the system in order for everyone to succeed.”



Professor Mike Arnold

Old traditions were also honored at Opening Day, including the recognition of employees for their years of service. Four employees—Mike Arnold, Lynn Boydston, Lisa Hasart, and Vicki Weese—were recognized for having worked at the college for 30 years. Vice President of Human Resources and Compliance Stefani Coverson also announced the recipients of the 2019 Exceptional Classified Award: Amanda Brown and Ian Beckett.

The recipients of the 2018-2019 Exceptional Faculty Award, who were announced at Commencement, were recognized again and provided with plaques honoring their achievement.

Dr. Fowler-Hill concluded the event by saying, “It’s an honor to be your interim President this year. You are dedicated, passionate and steadfast in your work to support our students. I have rolled up my sleeves to join you in this work and support you every way I can.”



Employees gather in the O'Connell Sports Center gym for Opening Day.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

More photos can be found on Flickr.

CTC location is “open for business” this fall



Business students at Clark College have opportunities to participate in career-oriented activities like the college's Entrepreneur Club.

As Clark County's demographics and economics change, Clark College is ready to adapt to serve its community's needs. Responding to feedback from employers and residents in East Vancouver, the college is transforming its facility at Columbia Tech Center into a hub for business and technical education.



The college has worked to create a series of course offerings

this fall that will allow students to pursue career-oriented higher education in subjects that include business, information technology, computer support, and supervisory management—all without having to travel to the college's main campus near downtown Vancouver. Most classes are scheduled to run just two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday), allowing students to plan their studies around work and/or life obligations.

Additionally, Clark College Economic and Community Development, which provides non-credit continuing education and customized training, is relocating to the CTC location. CTC is already the home of the college's popular mechatronics program, which teaches students the skills they need to work in automated manufacturing.

"As more and more employers establish facilities in East Vancouver, they've expressed a need for additional training for their employees," said Associate Vice President of Instruction Genevieve Howard. "We want Clark College at Columbia Tech Center to be the hub for career-oriented education in East Vancouver, while also opening opportunities for students on the eastern side of Clark County to take advantage of the state's Running Start program."

Clark College at CTC is located at 18700 SE Mill Plain Blvd. in Vancouver. Opened in 2009, the location will be celebrating its 10th anniversary on October 14 with an official ribbon-cutting.



Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

**College partially closed Aug.
13 – 14**



Many offices and student services at Clark College will be largely closed to the public for a collegewide staff training on Tuesday, August 13 and Wednesday, August 14. Classes will continue as normally scheduled. Additionally, Child & Family Studies (child care), the Clark College Bookstore, all libraries (including Cannell and the iCommons at CTC), and Tutoring Services will remain open. The McClaskey Culinary Institute will remain open with a limited menu. However, most other business offices (including Cashier's Office, Human Resources, Facilities Services, etc.) and student services (including Advising, Financial Aid, Student Life, etc.) will be closed all day for both days.

All smiles



Every member of Clark College's 2019 dental hygiene graduating class passed all six of their board exams. *Photo courtesy of Kristi Taylor.*

Clark College's dental hygiene program has long had plenty to smile about: its high-quality teaching facilities, its status as the college's first bachelor's degree program, and its important work providing dental hygiene care in the community.

Recently, the program's faculty received news to make their smiles even brighter: Every student in their 2019 graduating class passed all six of their board exams.

The exams are extremely rigorous, and a 100 percent pass rate is remarkable. The exams include:

- The National Board Exam (an 8-hour written exam)
- The Restorative Exam (placement and finishing of amalgam [silver] and composite [white]) fillings
- The Anesthesia Written Exam

- The Anesthesia Clinical Exam (accurately administer the 2 most difficult injections on a patient)
- Hygiene Clinical Exam (thoroughly remove tenacious calculus [tartar] from a patient's teeth with severe periodontitis [gum disease])
- The Ethical Board exam

"These are six different high-stakes exams that test the students' knowledge and skills," wrote Dean of Business and Health Sciences Brenda Walstead in an email to the college community. "Thank you to an extremely dedicated and talented group of faculty and staff for working endless hours to prepare the students to pass each of these exams, obtain their licenses, and go to work."

College mourns loss



Lora Whitfield, *second from left*, celebrates receiving tenure in 2017 with her Early Childhood Education colleagues Debi Jenkins, Michelle Mallory, and Sarah Theberge. Whitfield passed away in July 2019.

Clark College lost a beloved member of their community on July 9, when early childhood education professor Lora Whitfield passed away.

“She was kind, warm, and supportive of those around her,” said Vice President of Instruction Sachi Horback.

Whitfield’s connection to Clark went back to her own days as a student, when she attended the college to earn her associate degree in early childhood education in 2002. Whitfield went on to have a successful career in the field, working for both the Southwest Washington Child Care Consortium and Albina Early Head Start. She earned her master’s degree in human development with a specialization in early childhood education and bicultural development from Pacific Oaks College in Seattle.



Lora Whitfield, *second from right*, stands with students and colleagues at this year's Commencement. *Photo courtesy of Rashida Willard.*

In 2014, Whitfield returned to Clark College to teach. She received tenure in 2017. At the time, she offered this statement on her teaching philosophy: "As an educator, I am committed to treating each individual with respect. I believe respect is paramount in creating environments that promote students' ideas, passions, and interest in a meaningful and organically wholesome way. I strive to provide settings where everyone can share their ideas without bias and be included in all aspects of learning."



Lora Whitfield, right, celebrates at Commencement with Interim Associate Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Rashida Willard. *Photo courtesy of Rashida Willard.*

Whitfield, who identified as Afro-Caribbean, was the second Black woman to receive tenure at Clark College. She actively worked to create networks of support for colleagues and students of color, participating in both the statewide Cross-Institution Faculty of Color Mentorship Program and Clark's Black Employees United Employee Resource Group. "She was an absolute joy to be around," recalled Interim Associate Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Rashida Willard. "She had a hilarious sense of humor and always made her work family laugh."

In addition to her work fostering inclusion, she was an active leader in her field, participating in the Clark College Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Council, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

On his last day as president of Clark College before his retirement, Bob Knight recalled his memories of Whitfield. "Because Lora began as a student at Clark College, she could relate very closely to the student experience," he wrote in a July 15 email to all college employees. "This made her a gifted instructor. She made Clark College a better place."

Services for Professor Whitfield have been scheduled for Saturday, July 20, with a viewing between 9:30 am and 10:00 am. The service will be from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The location will be at City Harvest Church at 8100 NW 9th Street, Vancouver, WA 98665. Funeral information will be on the Terry Family Funeral Home website.

Clark College student works her dream job



Jeni Banceu now reporting for the *Columbian Newspaper* (*photo courtesy of Annika Larman*)

If you read the *Columbian*, you may see a familiar byline: that of Clark College student Jeni Banceu. As reported in that newspaper, she is the first Clark College student to work at the *Columbian* as a paid news intern.

The newly endowed Dee Anne Finken internship is a partnership between the *Columbian*, Clark College, and Clark College Foundation. It is named for Clark's former journalism professor, who served as academic advisor to the college's student news publication, *The Independent*, before retiring in 2018. Her successor, Beth Slovic, organized the campaign and raised money to create the paid internship for the summer.

"We liked Jeni's can-do attitude and maturity, and her story about the homeless person living in the RV [published in *The Independent* in June 2018] was in my opinion a great read for a beginning journalist," *Columbian* Editor Craig Brown wrote in an email.

Banceu's stories are regularly appearing in the *Columbian*. "I feel so lucky to have been chosen for the Dee Ann Finken Internship," she said. "I look forward to writing as much as I can and gaining new skills. I also look forward to getting to know our amazing local journalists."

Banceu will return to Clark College in fall quarter serving as editor-in-chief of *The Independent* (nicknamed "The Indy").

Donations to the Finken Internship fund can be made by going to foundation's website at www.clarkcollegefoundation.org.

Also kudos to *The Independent* for its most recent journalism award.

The news magazine and website won first place in the "sweeps" category of the annual contest hosted by the Pacific Northwest Association of Journalism Educators. That means individual Indy journalists won first, second, and third place more than did students from any other Oregon or Washington college that entered.

The Indy is recognized as a top community college news publication in the nation, having received numerous regional and national awards.

A night of triumphs



A record 835 students participated in Clark College's 83rd Commencement Ceremony. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

"Hola, soy Denisse, hoy sere su enfemera," read the elaborate script on the top of Denisse

Zuniga-Ibarra's graduation cap, below a cluster of silk flowers. Or, in

English: *"Hello, I'm Denisse, today I'll be your nurse."*

Zuniga-Ibarra was one of 835 graduates waiting in line to enter Sleep Country Amphitheater for Clark College's 2019

commencement ceremony—and each one, it seemed, had their own story to tell of perseverance and triumph.



Dennise Zuniga-Ibarra, *far left*, with Estefania Tran and Osmara Robles, all nursing graduates. *Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

"Graduation, to me, means a new job, a new beginning, making my parents proud and giving back to my community," said Zuniga-Ibarra, who was receiving her Associate in Arts degree in Nursing.

Almost 2,500 degrees and certificates were conferred on graduates in the 2018-2019 academic year—a record number for the college. It included the first graduates of the Clark's new Cuisine Management program, as well as of the college's Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Management (BASAM) degree program.



Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Management graduates holding a photo collage of their classmate Debbie Terry. *Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

For the BASAM graduates, the event was bittersweet—one member of their cohort, Debbie Terry, died before she could receive her degree. Her classmates held a poster with pictures of her as they waited in the white robes reserved for bachelor's-degree graduates. During the ceremony, Terry's daughter, Melanie Carter, would be the first person to cross the stage, receiving her mother's degree post-humously.



Amanda Rath was one of 126 students earning their high school diploma or GED this year. *Clark College/Hannah Erickson*

Family featured strongly in many graduates' stories. For Amanda Rath, this night wasn't about making her parents proud, but rather, her own four children, aged 3 to 13. All of them would be watching their mother walk across the stage to receive her high school diploma, which she earned through the college's Transitional Studies department.

"I want to provide something more for my children to see in the future—something more than just working at a call center," said the single mother, who works full-time and is already enrolled to begin the pre-nursing program at Clark. "I knew that started with pursuing an education."



Brian Ford Jr. graduated with an Applied Technology degree in Diesel Technology. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

Like Rath, Brian Ford Jr. had balanced work, life, and school responsibilities. He was graduating with an Associate in Applied Technology degree in Diesel Technology. "It's been a long journey—three years," he said. "I had two kids while I was in school. I worked full-time. But I made it. It's the biggest accomplishment of my life and I'm so happy to get to this day."



Board of Trustees Chair Jane Jacobsen addresses the class of 2019. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

Once the bagpipes started and the lines of robed figures filed into the amphitheater, the moments of triumph continued.

"Keep going," Trustee

Chair Jane Jacobsen told the graduates in her remarks during the ceremony. "This world needs you."

Jacobsen also pointed out that this ceremony would be the last one to be presided over by Clark College President Bob Knight, who

announced in January announce that he would be retiring after 13 years as the college's president. She thanked him for his service.



Student speaker Soukaina Ouahhabi. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

Student speaker Soukaina Ouahhabi spoke of the challenges she had faced as a non-native English speaker studying computer science who also worked full-time. “Sometimes, I would have to choose which I needed to do most: eat, sleep or do homework,” she said. “Because I only had time to do one of them. I’m sure many of you can relate.”

Still, Ouahhabi said, she kept her focus on achieving her goals. “My desire to reach my goals was stronger than the struggles I faced and has pushed me to be the strong, smart woman I am today,” she said, to a roar of applause from her classmates.



Vita Blanco learns she is the 2019 recipient of the Community College Presidents' Scholarship. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

There was also applause for the award recipients announced during the ceremony. This included the 2018-2019 Exceptional Faculty Award winners, as well as the 2019-2020 Community College Presidents' Scholarship, which was given to Esmeralda "Vita" Blanco. Another finalist for the scholarship, Anastasiya Kozlovska, received a \$1,000 scholarship as well.



Keynote speaker Julianna Marler with President Bob Knight.
Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Keynote speaker Julianna Marler, who is a Clark College alumna, spoke of her journey from being the daughter of Hungarian immigrants to the first female CEO of the Port of Vancouver USA. "Clark College was a foundation of my business knowledge," she said, adding that even some of her electives, like psychology, wound up being unexpectedly useful in management. "I wouldn't have guessed it at the time, but those lessons would turn out to serve me well."

As Knight concluded the ceremony, he told the graduates, "We are excited to think of the ways in which you will change the world. And we are glad to know that Clark College will always hold a special place in your

hearts.”

More photos can be viewed on our Flickr page.

Clark College announces new Interim President



Dr. Sandra Fowler-Hill

The Clark College Board of Trustees voted unanimously tonight to offer the interim college presidency to Dr. Sandra A. Fowler-Hill.

She

has accepted, pending completion of contract negotiations. The decision was made at a special board meeting Tuesday June 25 following a two-month process led by the Board of Trustees with support from a national search firm.

The successful candidate was selected after a series of interviews with

faculty, staff, students, and trustees, as well as a collegewide open forum. "We received many comments through the process, which were all taken into consideration as we made our deliberations," said Trustee Paul Speer. "We had three excellent candidates and we think Dr. Fowler-Hill will be a tremendous asset to our college during this year of transition."

Dr. Sandra A. Fowler-Hill is an experienced leader in higher education, having served as President of Portland Community College's Rock Creek Campus from 2014 to 2018. She has also served as Vice President of Instruction at Everett Community College and Dean for Student Learning at Cascadia Community College. She began her career at Olympic College, where she worked for 19 years, beginning as program manager of Women's Programs, then moving into a tenured faculty position before being named to the position of Dean for Social Science and Humanities. Since retiring from PCC Rock Creek, she has served as a consultant for the Association of Community College Trustees. She earned her bachelor's degree in Applied Behavioral Science from George Williams College in Downers Grove, Illinois; her master's degree in Human Development Counseling from the University of Illinois at Springfield; and her doctorate degree in Community College Leadership from Oregon State University.

Retiring

President Bob Knight will meet with the incoming President to help with the transition, both before and after his planned retirement date of July 15, 2019.

“We are grateful to Bob Knight for his leadership. This marks a major milestone in Clark’s history. By appointing an interim president for the year, the college and the community will have ample time to recruit, screen, interview and interact with candidates for the permanent position,” said Speer. “We want this to be a robust, inclusive and transparent process.”

To

read more about the presidential search process and next steps go to www.clark.edu/presidential-search.

About Clark College

Located

in Vancouver’s Central Park and serving up to 12,000 students per quarter,

Clark College is Southwest Washington’s largest public institution of higher

education. The college currently offers classes at two satellite locations: one

on the Washington State University Vancouver campus and one in the Columbia

Tech Center in East Vancouver. Additionally, its Economic & Community

Development program is housed in the Columbia Bank building in downtown

Vancouver.