

Congratulations, Class of 2017!



Happy graduates prepare to walk in the 2017 Clark College Commencement ceremony.

On June 22, approximately 800 graduates gathered at Sunlight Supply Amphitheater to participate in the 2017 Clark College Commencement ceremony. A strong breeze tried to whip their carefully decorated mortarboard caps off their heads, and the summery sunshine forced many to unzip their gowns to avoid overheating, but nothing could stop them from celebrating their achievements.



Amanda Owens with her daughter, Naya, at Clark's 2017 Commencement.

This year marked the first time that graduates wore differently colored robes based on the degree/certificate they earned. Bachelor of Applied Science recipients wore white robes; associate degrees and certificates, royal blue; and GED completion and high school diploma, light blue. This is the second year that the college graduated baccalaureate degree-holders, and the third year that GED/High School Diploma graduates from Transitional Studies students participated in the ceremony.

Graduates hugged each other to celebrate the momentous day. Some held their children in their arms. Associate degree recipient Amanda Owens watched her 5-year-old daughter, Naya, play with bubbles as she waited to enter the amphitheater. The two had lots to celebrate: Not only was Owens graduating, but the single mother had recently found out she would have stable housing for the first time years, thanks, in part, to her part-time job as a program coordinator in Clark's Workforce Education department.

In line with Owens was her friend, Amanda Williams, who was also graduating with an associate transfer degree. Like Owens, Williams had enrolled at Clark straight out of high school but then dropped out—in Williams's case, because of a family crisis. By the time she returned to school, she had a family

of her own to care for. “Juggling being a mom with schoolwork was the hardest thing,” said the mother of two. “There were some late nights doing homework after the kids went to bed.”



Amy and Tom Merfeld get ready to graduate together.

Williams, who plans to continue her education at Washington State University Vancouver to become a social worker, did not have her children with her in line—they were being watched by her husband, which only seemed fair since she had watched them during last year’s Commencement ceremony, when he graduated with a welding degree. A few yards down the line, Amy and Tom Merfeld were doing the Williamses one better: The couple, who have been married for 10 years, were graduating together.

The Merfelds pursued different educational paths at Clark—Amy earning her degree in Addiction Counselor Education and Tom, one in merchandising management. As such, they were never “study buddies,” but they did support each other’s educations with some creative scheduling. “When she was at school, I was at work,” said Tom, who installs windows and runs his own entertainment company. “A lot of classes I was able to do online, which helped.”

Clearly, many graduates struggled with competing time commitments while pursuing their educations. When, during the ceremony, President Bob Knight asked all graduates who had

worked while attending Clark to rise to be recognized, the vast majority of graduates stood up.



“Remember the feeling of what it’s like to complete something you set out to complete,” said actor Ernie Hudson during his 2017 Commencement keynote address.

This year’s keynote speaker, actor Ernie Hudson, could empathize with those students. As he described during his keynote address, Hudson had grown up poor, and by the time he tried to enter college, he was working as a janitor in order to support his wife and young son. “I was at my wit’s end,” he recalled. “It was a rough time.”

Hudson went on to recount how he enrolled at Wayne State University and fell in love with acting—how he helped found what is now the oldest African-American theater company in the United States, and then drove with his wife and two sons from Michigan to Connecticut in order to personally convince the admissions staff at Yale University to allow him into its celebrated Master of Fine Arts program in drama. He also spoke about the difficulties of trying to launch his acting career while simultaneously adjusting to being a single father, balancing the duties of work and family—and the work ethic that helped him eventually find success in films

like *Ghostbusters*, *The Crow*, and *Miss Congeniality*.

"I'm not that brilliant," he said. "I know how to work hard."

But Hudson added that, along with his work ethic, he credits trusting his "spirit" to get him where he is today. "There's a part of you, and it speaks to you in the strangest ways, in the middle of the night," he said. "You have to listen to it."



Student Ambassador Abigail Volk was the 2017 Commencement student speaker.

The ceremony was also occasion to announce two major awards. Early in ceremony, President Knight announced the names of the recipients of the 2017 Exceptional Faculty Awards: economics instructor Patricia Atkinson; English instructor Dr. John Caruso; American Sign Language instructor Becky Engel; computer science and engineering instructor Dr. Nicholas Macias; and welding professor Brian McVay. Later during the ceremony, he announced that graduate Nicholas Freese was the recipient of the 2017-2018 Community College Presidents' Award in Honor of Val Ogden. This annual scholarship is given to a Clark College graduate

who demonstrates leadership potential, a commitment to community service, and academic achievement. The scholarship award provides full-time tuition at WSUV and is renewable for one additional year, essentially providing full tuition to complete a bachelor's degree.

Thanks to the Clark College Foundation, scholarship finalists Sarah Moe and José Augusto Barcelos Espindola Neto also received \$1,000 each to attend WSUV.

In all, more than 2,100 degrees and certificates were conferred upon the Class of 2017, Clark's 81st graduating class. Of those graduates, 413 were Running Start students—a record number for the college, which has the largest Running Start program in the state.

At the end of the ceremony, President Knight said, "Your time at Clark has provided you with new skills, new perspectives, and new confidence. These are powerful tools. As you take your next step, use those tools to build a bright future for yourselves and for our community."

See a video of memories from the Class of 2017:

Photos: Jenny Shadley/Clark College. To see more photos, visit our Flickr album.

Video: Nick Bremer/Clark College

To watch the Commencement ceremony in its entirety, visit CVTV's website.

Exceptional faculty



During the 2017 Commencement ceremony, President Robert K. Knight announced the names of the recipients of the 2017 Clark College Exceptional Faculty Awards. The awards are presented annually to full-time and part-time faculty members. Nominations can be submitted by Clark College students, faculty, classified employees, administrators, alumni, Board members, and Foundation directors.

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

This year's Exceptional Faculty members are:

- Patricia A. Atkinson, instructor of economics
- Dr. John Caruso, instructor of English
- Becky Engel, instructor of American Sign Language
- Dr. Nicholas Macias, instructor of computer science and engineering
- Brian McVay, professor of welding

Patricia A. Atkinson, Economics



When Patricia Atkinson was an undergraduate, she was an enthusiastic student—but not a focused one. “I loved all my studies, from history and geography to math and science,” she said.

It was only in her junior year of college, when she took her first economics course—a field that combined aspects of all those disciplines—that Atkinson found her true academic passion.

Today, Atkinson passes that passion on to her students. “She made me enjoy and understand a subject that I disliked and struggled with in the past,” wrote one nominator. “She always would go out of her way to make sure we understood the material by relating it to real-life experiences.”

Another student wrote, “She allowed me to understand and appreciate what college can be. ... Professor Atkinson showed me that college is about learning, engaging, participating, and enhancing your personal capital.”

Atkinson, who has taught at Clark since 2009, is currently a tenure-track instructor at the college. She has also taught at Portland Community College, University of Phoenix, and Portland State University, where she earned her master’s degree in economics. She is currently completing her doctorate degree in education leadership at Washington State University Vancouver.

Dr. John Caruso, English

Most kids' first jobs are something along the lines of babysitting or mowing lawns—John Caruso's, which he began at age 13, was writing book reviews for the local newspaper. So it's not all that surprising that he grew up to be an English professor.



“I love learning, and I love helping my students learn,” Caruso said. “When you have an active, alert mind, talking about ideas and language is like playing your favorite sport. I feel blessed to spend my days doing something that I enjoy, and doubly blessed that what I enjoy also improves the lives of my students.”

Students clearly count Caruso as a blessing, too. “John makes everyone want to engage in class activities and discussions,” wrote one nominator. “Even the more shy kids are raising their hands. We all felt safe and valued in his class.”

Caruso said that his own experience as a first-generation college student helps him create a welcoming environment for the diverse student body he teaches at Clark. (He also teaches at Marylhurst University.) He earned his bachelor's degree at UCLA; his master's, at California State University Chico; and his doctorate in English at the University of Washington. He has taught English for two decades, and at Clark for the past six years. A frequently published writer of short fiction, Caruso is expecting his first full-length novel, *The Lawn Job*, to be published by Cloud Lodge Books later this year.

Becky Engel, American Sign Language



When students describe Rebecca Engel, they mention her supportiveness, her individual attention, and her flexibility in presenting material in a range of teaching styles.

“I see myself as a chameleon of sorts, always adapting to the different needs and learning styles the students present,” Engel said. “I picked up this skill in my first teaching job in the K-12 system. I had deaf students of all levels, so I was constantly adapting to meet their needs and learning styles.”

Students say they appreciate Engel’s adaptability, as well as the unique perspective she is able to provide as a Deaf person herself. “Becky strives to teach her classes about Deaf culture and how to interact within the Deaf community,” wrote one nominator. “Not only does she teach ASL, but she also teaches us proper etiquette, what to expect when in a Deaf community event, and other important things that help us learn how to interact with the Deaf community.”

Engel earned her bachelor’s degree from Oregon State University and her Master of Deaf Education from Western Oregon University. She taught at the Washington School for the Deaf before becoming an instructor at Clark College. Currently she is a tenure-track instructor at the college, teaching not only standard language classes but also a course in American Deaf Culture and a special Honors Program language class. She serves on the ASL advisory boards for the Vancouver, Battle Ground, Evergreen, and Camas school districts, as well as on Clark College’s Social Equity Task Force and Emergency Building Coordinator Committee.

Dr. Nicholas Macias, Computer Science and Engineering

Dr. Nicholas Macias has had an almost life-long fascination with computers. He began playing around with programming on the computers at his high school, even though he wasn't yet old enough to take the school's computer science classes. "I'd pull people's code out of the garbage, uncrumple it, type it in, and try to figure out what it did," he recalls.



That boundless curiosity and enthusiasm is still on display now that he teaches computer science himself. "He's intensely passionate not just about teaching, but also about learning," wrote a student in nominating him. "He's dedicated so much of his life to the work that he loves, and it always shines through."

Dr. Macias earned his master's degree in computer science from George Washington University and another in mathematics from Duke University. He earned his Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Virginia Polytechnic University. He spent many years as a computer scientist in both government and private enterprise before deciding to focus full-time on teaching. He has taught at Clark since 2011 and has served as a faculty advisor for both the Computer Science and Engineering and the MARS Robotics student clubs.

"Knowing that this award is based in part on student input means so much to me," said Dr. Macias. "I like to believe that I'm helping students, even when I know I'm making them work hard and they'd rather have the weekend free! This award feels like a very big 'Thank You,' and gives me hope that what I'm doing really is making a difference."

Brian McVay, Welding



You could say welding runs in Brian McVay's blood—both his father and stepfather were welders, and his mother worked as a machinist on nuclear submarines. "In the eighth grade, I knew what I wanted to do," he said.

McVay studied welding at Clark College before being accepted into a boilermaker apprenticeship. Later, he returned to Clark for further studies to prepare for an apprenticeship as an ironworker, a job he held for 17 years. "I always came back to Clark," he said, noting that he returned to the college again for management classes later in his career. "Education has been something that I really value. I wake up in the morning looking forward to learning something new that day."

In 2014, he found himself returning to Clark again—this time, to teach. He said he enjoys being able to give back to a place that taught him so much, preparing students for today's industrial jobs.

"I tell my students on the first day of class, 'I don't *give* you a grade. You *earn* your grade,'" he said. "I run my shop like it would be run in the industry."

Students appreciate his "tough love" approach. "Mr. McVay has a very 'let's get it done now' attitude," wrote a nominator. "However, he never teaches us to prioritize the work over safety. ... He pushes us ahead in order to help us achieve more."

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

“I want to be a role model”



Nicholas Freese '17 waits in line to participate in commencement.

When Nicholas Freese heard his name announced as the recipient of the Community College Presidents' Scholarship in Honor of Val Ogden, there was one person he wanted to discuss it with, above all others: his 4-year-old daughter, Sadie.

“I really want to know what my daughter thinks about this,” he said as he stood in line to receive his degree, clearly still stunned by the news that he would be able to attend Washington State University Vancouver for two years, tuition-free, in order to complete his bachelor's degree. Clark College President Bob Knight made the announcement during the 2017

Clark College Commencement ceremony.



Nicholas Freese stands, stunned, as he learns that he has received the 2017-2018 Community College Presidents' Scholarship.

It might seem strange to want to know a toddler's opinion on your academic achievements, but for Freese, Sadie has been at the heart of his pursuit of higher education. "With her, I have the opportunity to be awesome, just from the get-go," he said during an interview prior to Commencement. "She can just think of Daddy as this great guy who's worked hard and pursued his goals."

Freese is painfully aware that many people who have known him since his own childhood might not see him in such an unambiguously positive light. Growing up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Freese began getting into trouble around the time he entered high school. Trying to escape a violent home life with an alcoholic father, Freese began staying with friends—including "some people I probably shouldn't have been hanging out with," he said.

By his junior year, Freese was struggling with his own addiction issues. He bounced between alternative schools, but didn't graduate from any; he tried rehab, but it didn't stick.

For the next few years, he wandered from city to city: Denver, Seattle, Honolulu, Saipan. By the time he landed in Vancouver, he had made the commitment to get sober, but hadn't found much direction past that.

All that changed after Sadie was born. "At first, it was like, 'Daddy's being clean,' but after a while I felt like, 'That's great, but what's Daddy going to *do*?' Freese recalled. "I don't want to be borderline poverty, like I grew up. I want to be a role model."

Freese enrolled at Clark College. At first, he found college daunting—less academically than logistically. "I didn't understand how registration worked," he said. "I had to use my resources. I had to ask for advice, and I'm not used to asking for advice. I'd be in the Financial Aid Office every day for a week, trying to figure things out."

But as Freese continued at Clark, he learned how to navigate its support systems. Advisors showed him how to plan his degree; he met friends while working out in the Fitness Center; he took advantage of other free and subsidized services like the Counseling and Health Center and the college's dental clinic. In the end, Freese graduated with honors, earning a cumulative GPA of 3.77.



Clark College President Bob Knight congratulates scholarship recipient Nicholas

Freese.

It hasn't always been easy. Freese had to balance his studies with caring for Sadie and volunteering in his community. He serves as a mentor to other recovering addicts, works on clean-up parties in his neighborhood, and participates in activities aimed at improving police-community relations. Additionally, he has worked during much of his time at Clark, though he credits his wife, Ashley, with keeping the family financially afloat while he pursues his education.

"She's paying the bills," he said. "She's working toward this just as much as I am."

Freese, now 28, plans to major in public affairs at WSUV, with the long-term goal of becoming a lawyer. "I want to be a voice for those who don't have a voice," he said. "I want to help people."

A first-generation college graduate, Freese said he hopes that sharing the story of his struggles and success will help to inspire others who might be facing their own challenges. "I want to show people in a similar case that this is possible," he said.

For Freese, earning this scholarship means that he will be able to concentrate on his studies at WSUV instead of on how to pay for them. But it also carries deeper meaning than the easing of financial burdens.

"What it means to me is that I'm there, I've reached that level," he said, raising his hand to about chest-height. "I'm not just getting an associate degree—I'm *doing well*."

And he knows just the little girl to celebrate that with.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Clark College adds to its leadership team

Clark College has recently welcomed several exceptional educational professionals to its leadership team.

New hires and appointments include Dr. Loretta Capeheart as Associate Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Judith Hernandez Chapar as the Director of the Teaching & Learning Center; Brenda Walstead as Dean of Business and Health Sciences; and Jim Wilkins-Luton as Dean of Transitional Studies, English, Communications and Humanities (BEECH).

Dr. Loretta Capeheart



Dr. Capeheart has a B.A. in psychology from the University of Texas, an M.A. in Sociology from Texas State University, and a Ph.D. in Sociology for Texas Woman's University. She has previous work experience as a faculty member at the University of Idaho and at Northeastern Illinois University, among other institutions. Most recently, she was at the Portland Police Bureau, where she served as an analyst and as Acting Equity and Diversity Manager. Dr. Capeheart has written about and taught extensively on the subjects of diversity, inclusion, and social justice. She is the author of a book called *Social Justice: Theories, Issues and Movements*.

Clark College President Bob Knight stated: "This position is important to our Strategic Plan and social equity work. As I read the feedback from across the college, it was clear that Dr. Capeheart has the necessary skills and experience to

continue the good work that has been started on the college's Social Equity Plan and lead us forward."

Dr. Judith Hernández Chapar



Dr. Hernández Chapar earned a Doctorate of Philosophy in Education from Oregon State University with a focus on Community College Leadership. She also holds degrees in Social Work, Psychology, and Women's Studies. She is currently working on a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at San Diego State University, where she is researching the student engagement patterns of underserved community college students with faculty, as well as community college pathways for underrepresented students in STEM.

Dr. Hernández Chapar is familiar with the Washington state community and technical college system, having worked at both South Puget Sound Community College and at Lower Columbia College. Her work experience includes leading, designing, delivering, and assessing First Year Experience and TRiO programs and curriculum to promote student experiences focused on retention, persistence, and degree completion.

Jim Wilkins-Luton



Jim Wilkins-Luton holds a Master of Arts degree in Literature and Composition from Gonzaga University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in British and American Literature from Whitworth University. He taught English and lived in Japan for eight years prior to settling in Clark County. Wilkins-Luton has worked for Clark College since 2000, beginning as an adjunct faculty member and earning tenure in 2006.

During his time at Clark, Wilkins-Luton has taught English as

a Second Language, pre-college English, and college-level composition and literature classes. He earned Clark's prestigious Exceptional Faculty Award for the 2013-2014 academic year; one student who nominated him for the award wrote, "[He] makes all students completely comfortable in the classroom." Wilkins-Luton has been the interim Dean of BEECH since 2015.

Dr. Brenda Walstead



Dr. Brenda Walstead has worked for Clark College for 21 years, starting as an adjunct instructor in Dental Hygiene. But her history at Clark goes beyond that: She earned her associate degree from Clark before going on to earn a B.S. from Concordia University, an M.S. at Portland State University, and an Ed.D. from Walden University.

During her tenure at Clark, Dr. Walstead has served as the Director of the Dental Hygiene program and led the creation of Clark's two bachelor's degree programs. She served as an Outcomes Assessment Liaison and on numerous collegewide committees. Most recently, she served as Interim Dean of the Business and Health Sciences, and was named to the non-interim position after a nationwide search. Feedback from the college during that hiring process consistently noted her ability to work collaboratively with faculty, staff and administration as well as her knowledge of the Business and Health Science Unit.

A mindful exploration



Math professor John Mitchell discussed the role of mindfulness in education at the Faculty Speaker Series.

On May 3, mathematics professor John Mitchell brought his message of mindfulness—the simple practice of being aware of one’s present-moment experience—to the spring installment of the Faculty Speaker Series.

Mitchell said his goal was to inspire the audience “to be part of something that I feel everyone should know about” as he described the modern history of an ancient practice, his path to discovering it, and his passion for bringing mindfulness to Clark College.

As Mitchell described it, mindfulness is simple, but not easy. It requires training and repetition to notice when one is lost in their inner dialog and to return to their present-moment experience.

Mitchell noted that mindfulness has been practiced in many cultures throughout history. "This is a universal human skill," he said, "we all have the innate ability to be mindful, as well as the tendency to get lost in thought." He explained that mindfulness does not attempt to eliminate thoughts, but simply to notice them. It also includes awareness of one's emotional state and the physical sensations of the moment.

Mitchell emphasized the importance of using mindfulness in the face of technologies that are designed to distract. According to the Neilson Total Audience Report, adults use their electronic devices more than ten hours a day on average; for teens, the average is nine hours, according to a 2015 media census by the nonprofit Common Sense Media. That being the case, said Mitchell, there is an immediate need to address the impact that technology has on our society.

Mindfulness, Mitchell said, can aid people in avoiding a combination of information overload and distraction. Mitchell said many people find themselves in what behavioral scientists call a "ludic loop," a mental zone that takes a person out of present-based awareness and into a disconnected mindless state where addictive behaviors thrive. Mitchell said that mindfulness practices, like becoming aware of the breath and body, can help one to avoid ludic loops while also encouraging better moderation in the use of technology.

Another area that Mitchell stressed in his presentation is the importance of mindfulness in education. Research on the benefits of mindfulness in education is growing, producing 700 published papers last year alone. In K-12 education and among four-year colleges and universities, mindfulness groups are becoming more and more prevalent. One mindfulness training program that is commonly used in higher education is Koru Mindfulness. Mitchell, who is a certified teacher in the method, was surprised to find out that very few community colleges were represented in the Koru community. With the

mindfulness classes that Mitchell offers through Clark's Economic and Community Development program, Clark College is one of the few exceptions.

The Clark College Mindfulness Club is another marker of Clark College's lead on mindfulness in community colleges. Mitchell thanked the two students in the audience who have contributed to that distinction, Clark Mindfulness Club co-facilitators Nova Gump and Steven Mitchell (no relation). Steven Mitchell founded the club in the spring of 2016; John Mitchell called it a "foundational ingredient of a mindful college."

Along with clubs and classes, Mitchell would like to see mindfulness introduced in College 101 classes and generally incorporated into the teaching methods of faculty. Moreover, he sees a strong connection between a mindful environment and guiding the work of the college to achieve initiatives such as Guided Pathways.

"What does a mindful community college look like?" John Mitchell asked the audience. "I want Clark to be answering that for other community colleges. That's my vision: a mindful college, a college that's seen as a leader."

If you are interested in learning more about mindfulness at Clark College, contact the Mindfulness Club at clarkmindfulness@gmail.com or John Mitchell at jmitchell@clark.edu.

About the Faculty Speaker Series

Since 2008, the Faculty Speaker Series has showcased experiences that have enriched both the lives and teaching of Clark's faculty. Speakers share their professional development accomplishments with the college community, often addressing some of today's most intriguing issues. Clark faculty members are invited to present experiences including sabbatical, research, field work, or community outreach in a variety of

formats including panel discussions, interactive workshops, and/or demonstrations.

Photos: Nick Bremer

J. Nova Gump contributed to this article.

A year of talent

On May 16, the Archer Gallery was filled with visitors to the opening of the 2017 Art Student Annual Exhibition. This yearly event showcases the best artwork produced by Clark art students in the past academic year. Students compete not only for a spot in the show, but also for awards sponsored by local businesses and organizations. This year's outside juror was Karl Burkheimer, head of the Master of Fine Arts program at the Oregon College of Art and Craft. Awards are listed below.

The exhibition is on display through June 16. The Archer Gallery is open 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays, and noon to 5:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays.

- **Best in Show**, sponsored by Blick Art Materials
Ana Stoumbos, *Figure Study*, oil on paper
- **Most Ambitious**, sponsored by Portland Institute for Contemporary Art
Meakia Blake, *Connect*, video
- **Solo Show Award**, sponsored by Niche Wine Bar
Matt Harmon, *Marsyes V. Apollo: Diana*, oil on canvas
- **Best Painting or Drawing**, sponsored by Clark Bookstore and Dengerink Art Supply
Leah Adams, *A Netherhole*, oil on canvas
- **2nd Place Award, Painting or Drawing**, sponsored by Clark Bookstore and Blick Art Materials
Ray Bennett, *Self-portrait in Ink*, ink on paper
- **3rd Place Award, Painting or Drawing** sponsored by Clark Bookstore
Julie Foley, *Zelda Series*, metal
- **Best Video or Time-based Art**, sponsored by Artist & Craftsman Supply
Ana Stoumbos, *Transit*, video
- **2nd place Video or Time-based Art**, sponsored by Collage Art and Craft Supplies

- Jonno Heyne, *Paradoxial Adventures of Grayman II*, ink marker and digital graphics
- **Best Graphic Arts**, sponsored by the Art Gym at Marylhurst University
Tricia Davis-Payne, *Do You Know*, digital illustration
 - **Best Welded Sculpture**, sponsored by Clark Welding Department
Marie Perrin Ogier, *Untitled*, metal
 - **Best Photography**, sponsored by Pro Photo Supply
Isiah Huntington, *Expansivity*, digital photograph
 - **Newspace Scholarship Award**, sponsored by Newspace Center for Photography
Jennifer Avens, *Omnia Mors Aequat*, silver gelatin print
 - **2nd Place Photography Award**, sponsored by Pro Photo Supply
Dayna Bojanowski, *Under*, digital photograph
 - **3rd Place Photography Award**, sponsored by Blue Moon Camera
Matthew Philbrook, *Forgotten*, black and white photograph
 - **Blue Sky Membership Award**, sponsored by Blue Sky, the Oregon Center for the Photographic Arts
Kelly Pearce, *Pieces of Home*, photographs
 - **Best Ceramic Art**, sponsored by Clay Art Center
Lauren Duquette, *Blue Pitcher*, ceramic
 - **2nd Place Ceramic Art**, sponsored by Georgie's Ceramics and Clay
Aleks Dernovoy, *Mechanical Tulip*, ceramic
 - **3rd place Ceramic Art**, sponsored by Georgie's Ceramics and Clay
Stephani Ueltschi, *Pressure*, ceramic
 - **4th place Ceramic Art**, sponsored by Georgie's Ceramics and Clay
Colton Rasanen, *Planter*, ceramic

Photography by Clark College/Jenny Shadley. More photos on our Flickr page.

Phoenix transformation

embraces



Student Jorin Copeland turns to his artwork featured in the 2017 Phoenix.

On May 16, Clark College's award-winning art and literary journal, *Phoenix*, unveiled its 2017 edition at a reception in PUB 161. Taking inspiration from the Clark community, the *Phoenix* staff adopted the collegewide theme of Transformation for the new journal. Through more than 70 works of poetry, fiction, interviews, photography, paintings, and more, contributors' pieces explore moments of change and growth.



At the reception, Clark student and *Phoenix* managing editor Megan Robb spoke of the personal challenges she has faced and how it inspired her to write a poem for the journal titled "Inner Reflection."

"We have the choice to transform ourselves repeatedly, shedding the dark, hurtful pieces of our soul and regaining some beauty. This is what I was doing when I wrote this piece," Robb said. "I had decided it was time to stop wallowing in the unfamiliarity I felt with myself and begin readying myself for change, for regeneration, a personal transformation that brought me to the doors of this college."

Beyond the personal, transformation is a natural part of creating *Phoenix*, says fiction editor Ashlee Nelson. She spoke at the reception about the unique perspectives that each year's students brings to the publication and the possibilities that arise when different creative minds collaborate.

"Whatever next year's edition of *Phoenix* brings, it will be its own," said Nelson. "It will represent Clark's creative student body and their interests. It will be Clark at a moment in time before it transforms again, as students become alumni, and community members become students. There is something special about *Phoenix* in this way."



The staff of the 2017 Phoenix. Faculty co-advisor Liz Donley (black jacket) stands in the center.

The Clark community is not the only one that recognizes how special *Phoenix* is—the journal recently won the National Program Directors' Prize for design for undergraduate literary magazines by the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP).

Each year, AWP honors two national undergraduate journals with a content and a design award, and past winners have included journals from Columbia University, The New School, Kansas City Art Institute, University of Washington, and other prestigious institutions. This is the first time in a decade that the award has gone to a two-year college.

The judge for this year's award, Lisa Noble, Creative Services Manager of Edelman Financial Services, wrote, "From cover to cover *Phoenix* stands out as an exemplary publication in design, quality, and concept . . . The publishers of *Phoenix* should feel very proud of what they've created. It is an important collaboration that succeeds in showcasing the diversity of talented individuals who chose Clark College to develop their craft."

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley. To see more photos from

the event, visit our Flickr album.

Exploring Subtext

COLUMBIA WRITERS SERIES PRESENTS



The Clark College Columbia Writers Series is offering a full week of writers, readings, and events on the college's main campus during its third annual Subtext Literary Festival. From May 15-18, the college will host well-known authors, as well as readings by Clark students and faculty.

All events are free and open to the public. 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.

The Columbia Writers Series was launched at Clark College in 1988, bringing local, national and international authors to the college and the region. Information about the Columbia Writers Series is available at www.clark.edu/cc/cws.

Schedule

May 15, 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., PUB 258B: *“Possible Utopias” Writing Workshop*

Arwen Spicer, an instructor in the English department, will lead this workshop, which will provide a fun opportunity to engage in guided writing and discussion about imagining bright futures for our world. Each participant will leave the workshop with a final piece of writing that outlines their vision for a better society. The workshop is free and open to the public. Although participants are encouraged to come for the full two hours, drop-ins are also welcome.

May 16, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., PUB 161: *Phoenix Unveiling*

Clark College's national award-winning art and literary journal, *Phoenix*, will unveil its 2016-2017 edition with readings from student authors and free copies available for guests. The 2015-2016 edition of *Phoenix* just earned the prize for Best Design from the Association of Writers & Writing Programs—the first time the award has gone to a two-year college in a decade.

May 17, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m., PUB 258A:

Clark Crossings Student and Faculty Reading

Students and faculty will read from their own work or from the work of their favorite writers. Each reading will relate to the college theme of "Transformation," and fiction, poetry, and memoir will all be included.

**May 18, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m., PUB 161:
*Fiction writer Peter Rock***

Peter Rock is a professor of creative writing at Reed College. His most recent book is *SPELLS*, a novel-within-photographs that is a collaboration with five photographers and concerns shadows and bodies, the living and the dead, talking animals and all manner of shape-shifting. He is also the author of the novels *Klickitat*, *The Shelter Cycle*, *My Abandonment*, *The Bewildered*, *The Ambidextrist*, *Carnival Wolves* and *This Is the Place*, and a story collection, *The Unsettling*.

Commencement keynote speaker announced



Ernie Hudson

On Thursday, June 22, Clark College will honor its 81st graduating class at the 2017 Clark College Commencement ceremony. The ceremony will take place at 7 p.m. at the Sunlight Supply Amphitheater. The keynote speaker is actor Ernie Hudson.

More than 700 students are expected to participate in the ceremony, celebrating the completion of their bachelor's degree, associate degree, certificate, and/or high school diploma or equivalency.

The ceremony also will include the announcement of 2017-2018 Community College President's Award. This annual scholarship is given to a Clark College graduate who is transferring to a degree program at Washington State University Vancouver (WSUV) and who demonstrated leadership potential, a commitment to community service, and academic achievement. The scholarship award provides full-time tuition and is renewable for one additional year, essentially providing full tuition to complete a bachelor's degree.

The Sunlight Supply Amphitheater is located at 17200 NE Delfel Road in Ridgefield, Wash. Tickets are not required to attend. 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), prior to the event. For more information visit

About Ernie Hudson

Ernie Hudson is a successful actor best known for his roles in *Ghostbusters*, *The Crow*, *Miss Congeniality*, NBC's *Law and Order*, and HBO's award-winning series *Oz*. His road to fame, however, had its share of hardships. Hudson was born in poverty and raised in the housing projects of Benton Harbor, Michigan. His mother died when he was young and he was raised primarily by his grandmother. He was already married and had a young son when he enrolled at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. He began his theatre career as the resident playwright at Detroit's Concept East, the oldest African-American theater company in the United States. Later, he founded Actors Ensemble Theater, where he and other African-American performers staged and appeared in their own original works. After attending Wayne State, Hudson accepted a full writing/acting scholarship to the prestigious Master of Fine Arts Program at Yale University. After graduation, Hudson balanced his responsibilities as a working actor with those of being a single father to two sons. His talent, hard work, and persistence eventually earned him a successful career in Hollywood. He now divides his time between his homes in Minnesota and Los Angeles, and continues to appear in many critically acclaimed productions on stage, screen, and television.

Native Plant Sale



Clark College will host its fourth annual native plant sale on May 4 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and May 5 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Natural Plant Center, the college's greenhouse. Most plants are priced at \$10.00 or less.

Students will be available to assist customers with transporting plants to their vehicles.

The event is free and open to the public. Clark College is located at 1933 Ft. Vancouver Way, Vancouver, WA, 98663. The greenhouse is located on the east side of campus off of E. Reserve St., near the Orange 2 parking lot. Directions and maps are available online at www.clark.edu/maps.

All plants were propagated by Clark College biology and environmental science students. In addition to prepping these plants for sale, students have been propagating other plants in the greenhouse for use in restoration projects at various sites in Southwest Washington including the Columbia River Gorge, Trout Lake, and Clark's future site in Ridgefield, Clark College at Boschma Farms.

This year the sale features a variety of native perennials and shrubs along with one tree species, Western Red Cedar. Shoppers will be able to choose from among 23 different plants, including Red-flowering Currant, Native Rose, Lewis' Mockorange, Blanket Flower, Showy Milkweed, and Native Strawberry. Limited supplies of Trillium and Native Iris will be available as well. Many of these plants support the region's pollinators and make for low-intensity gardening.

Proceeds from the plant sale go to support the college's Science Consortium Fund, which helps cover the costs of a greenhouse coordinator and field studies classes. Students who participate in field studies visit places such as Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Oregon and the Lava Beds National Monument in Northern California. Students pay \$210 to \$255 for four-day and ten-day trips to these locations, which would normally cost more than \$1000 if not for the help of the consortium fund.

For more information about the sale or plants available, visit www.clark.edu/cc/plantsale or contact Erin Harwood, Clark College STEM Coordinator, at eharwood@clark.edu. 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) or visit room PUB 013.