

# Penguins Fly



Graduates from Clark College's welding program wait to enter the Sunlight Supply Amphitheater before the college's 2016 commencement ceremony.

"Mommy did it!" read the message on Ashley Ellis's mortarboard cap, the glittery writing sparkling in the sun as she waited outside the Sunlight Supply Amphitheater before Clark College's 80th Commencement ceremony on June 16.



Ashley Ellis

Ellis wrote the message for her 2-year-old son, Paul, who would be in the stands watching his mother receive her Associate in Applied Technology degree in pharmacy technician—making her the first generation of her family to earn a college degree.

“I just wanted to show my family that I could do more,” Ellis explained. “I dropped out of high school at 16, and now here I am graduating with honors.”

As was the case for many of the approximately 720 Clark graduates waiting to process, Ellis’s achievement did not come without sacrifice. “I didn’t sleep a lot,” she said with a laugh. “I got up at 3:30 a.m. to study sometimes.”

While many graduates, like Ellis, came to Clark after time away from school, others had attended Clark before they’d even graduated from high school. This year’s graduating class included 346 members of Running Start, the Washington State program that allows high school students to attend college tuition-free. This was a record number of Running Start graduates for the college; 170 of them graduated with honors.

“I really felt like the experience I had at Clark prepared me so much—not just for college, but for life,” said Running

Start graduate Anita Bejan; the three fellow Running Start graduates standing with her nodded in agreement.



Bachelor of Applied Science  
in Dental Hygiene graduates

Another large group of graduates stood together, chatting and playing with the oversized paper teeth necklaces hung around their necks. These women were some of the 23 graduates from the college's new Bachelor of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene program. This is the first cohort of students to earn their BAS since the program launched in fall 2014, making it the college's first baccalaureate degree. The college is in the process of getting a second BAS program, in Applied Management, accredited and able to enroll students in the 2017 winter quarter.



## Bruce Becker

Graduate Bruce Becker, who was waiting to receive his Associate of Arts in Business Administration, said he hoped to enroll in the new BAS. Becker came to Clark after a traffic accident left him unable to do his old job. “It had been 47 years for me since I’d last been in school, so it was a little challenging at first,” Becker said. “But it’s been really fun. I’ve had a blast.”

Jessica Sanchez was also ready for more school. Sanchez was one of about 20 Transitional Studies graduates waiting to receive their High School Diploma or GED recognition. This is the second year that Transitional Studies graduates have been recognized at Commencement.

For Sanchez, this moment had been four years in the making—two spent learning English through Clark’s English as a Second Language program, followed by two of basic education. “I already had a high school diploma,” said the 26-year-old native of Mexico, who plans to continue in Clark’s for-credit classes. “And then I had to do it all over again, but in another language. I really liked doing it at Clark College, because you can get one-on-one tutoring and there’s great support.”



Jessica Sanchez, *third from left*, stands with some of her fellow 2016 Transitional



## Studies graduates.

Another high school diploma recipient, Esmeralda “Vita” Blanco, addressed the audience inside the amphitheater as one of two student speakers included in the ceremony. Blanco, a single mother of two who dropped out of high school after becoming pregnant, spoke movingly about the ways pursuing her education has changed her and her family’s life. “I strongly believe I’m taking away more than a diploma,” she said. “What I’m really getting is a world of new opportunities, one I can share with the two most important people in my life: my daughters.”

Associate of Arts degree recipient Megan Cook, who attended Clark through Running Start, spoke about the wide range of students she’s encountered at the college. “There are graduates here who are the first in their family to go to college, and those who are learning right alongside their parents,” she said. “I’ve met people of all ethnicities, ages, and genders, and that isn’t necessarily something you find at every college or university.”



*Left to right:* Washington All-Academic Team member Tammy Senior, ASCC president Sarah Swift, student speaker Megan Cook, Washington All-Academic Team member Qi Wu, Clark College President Bob

Knight, keynote speaker Jessica Lynch, and student speaker Vita Blanco smile with Oswald before going onstage for the 2016 Commencement ceremony.

This year's keynote speaker was former prisoner of war Jessica Lynch. "Each one of us has some type of obstacle, some type of struggle that wants to hold us down," she said. "Do not let it."

The ceremony was occasion for Clark College President Robert K. Knight to announce the names of the recipients of the 2016 Exceptional Faculty Awards. The 2016 awardees are history instructor Joseph Cavalli; business technology instructor Dr. Kathleen Chatfield; geography professor Heather McAfee; and French professor Doug Mrazek, who is retiring after 38 years at the college.

President Knight also announced the recipient of the 2016-2017 Community College Presidents' Scholarship in Honor of Val Ogden, which 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 Washington State University Vancouver (WSUV) and is renewable for one additional year, essentially providing full tuition to complete a bachelor's degree. This year's recipient was Holly Varner. Two other nominees, Abigail Bambilla and Adeena Rose Wade, received \$1,000 each.

President Knight concluded the evening by saying, "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. Remember: Once a member of the Penguin Nation, always a member of the Penguin Nation!"

Approximately 2,000 degrees and certificates were conferred in total on the Class of 2016.

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

*See more photos from Commencement in our Flickr album.*

*See full video coverage of the ceremony online from CVTV.*

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## Exceptional Faculty



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

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

The awards are made possible through an endowed trust fund

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

This year's Exceptional Faculty members are:

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

### **Joe Cavalli, History**

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

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

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

### **Dr. Kathleen Chatfield, Business Technology and Management**



Over the course of her 21 years at Clark, Dr. Kathleen Chatfield has taught a variety of courses, including keyboarding, microcomputer applications, Microsoft Excel, e-commerce, and project management. In truth, however, her influence goes far beyond those subjects. In fact, she has been a part of every online class offered at Clark College through her work as the senior instructional designer for the college's eLearning Department, where she helps Clark faculty learn how to develop online classes.

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

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

### **Heather McAfee, Geography**

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

McAfee serves as chair of the Geography Department at Clark; she also serves on the college's AA Transfer Committee, the Library of the Future Taskforce, and the Learning Communities Taskforce. Additionally, McAfee has worked to create

connections between Clark and community organizations, including the Water Resources Education Center and the Vanport Mosaic.

“She made her classroom a comfortable area where every person’s opinion and outlook was highly valued,” wrote one student. “Her teachings went much deeper than the textbook material. She wanted us to dig deep and relate every lesson to our personal lives and experiences, and it taught all of us so much about the world around us.”

### **Doug Mrazek, French**

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

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

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

*Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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# After 20 years, a dream realized



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

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

During the 2016 Clark College Commencement ceremony, that determination paid off when Varner heard Clark College

President Robert K. Knight announce that she was the recipient of the 2016-2017 Community College Presidents' Award in Honor of Val Ogden. The scholarship award provides full-time tuition at Washington State University Vancouver (WSUV) and is renewable for one additional year, essentially providing full tuition to complete a bachelor's degree.



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

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

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

Varner's own growth at Clark has been exceptional. She graduated with a 3.98 Grade Point Average ("I was so upset about that A-minus!") while managing multiple volunteer and extracurricular activities. Varner served as Vice President of Service for Alpha Sigma Phi, Clark College's chapter of the international honor society Phi Theta Kappa. In that role,

Varner helped organize a Thanksgiving basket drive that provided holiday dinner supplies to more than 100 Clark College students and their families—negotiating an agreement with a new vendor that brought down the price of each basket that in turn allowed Alpha Sigma Phi to serve more students. She also coordinated drives to provide books and art supplies to families in local homeless shelters. She interviewed more than 60 homeless individuals to learn what they needed most; based on those interviews, she developed a shoe and sock drive to help them.

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

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

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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## **New culinary center gets name**





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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

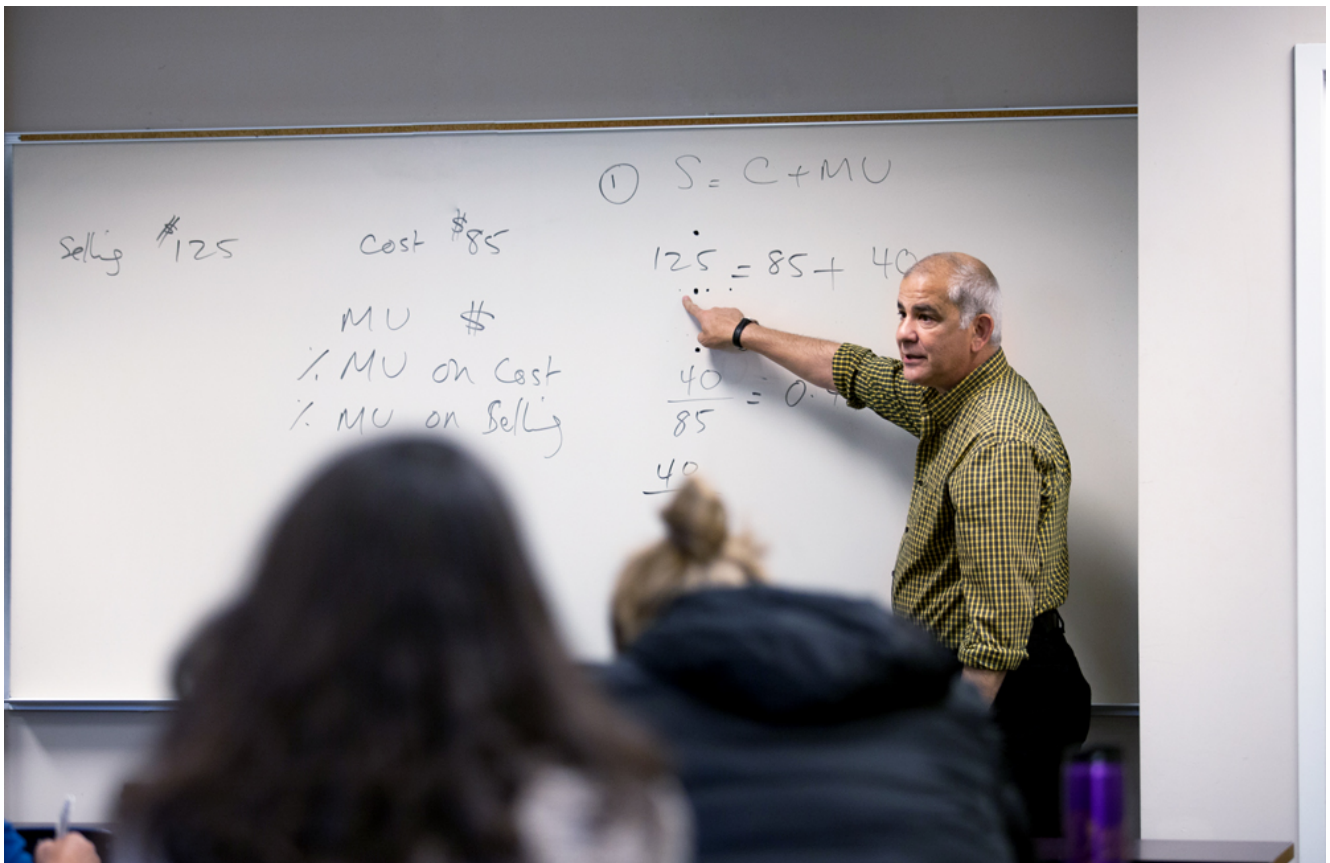
Clark College Foundation is accepting donations for the culinary project, which is expected to cost \$10.5 million. For more information, contact Joel B. Munson, vice president of development at (360) 992-2428.

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

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## **Clark prepares to offer its second bachelor's degree**





Prof. Adnan Hamideh, who chairs Clark's Division of Business Administration, teaching Clark business students. Pending accreditation, Clark College could begin offering a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Applied Management in 2017. *Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

Clark College received approval last week from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (WSBCTC) to offer a new Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree in Applied Management. Next, Clark is seeking approval from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), the college's regional accrediting body, to offer and begin the Applied Management program in January 2017.

"This is an exciting and important step towards being able to give more students access to a bachelor's degree program that is relevant, affordable, and available where they live and work," said Dr. Tim Cook, Vice President of Instruction at Clark College. "Students who earn this degree increase their opportunities to advance in their careers, earn higher wages and salaries, and to start and own businesses. These are all



vital to the health and economic stability of our region.”

The BAS in Applied Management is designed for students who have completed an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) or Associate in Applied Technology (AAT) degree. The program combines technical, academic, and professional courses to help students earn a bachelor’s degree that provides the applied managerial knowledge and expertise employers are seeking. The program structure includes in-person, online, and hybrid evening classes that allows students to earn a bachelor’s degree in as little as two years.

This would be the college’s second applied baccalaureate degree program. Last year, Clark began offering a BAS in Dental Hygiene to provide additional job opportunities to students while adding few additional courses to their degree plan. The Bachelor of Applied Science degree program availability at community and technical colleges is the result of legislative efforts that began in 2005 with the passage of House Bill 1794. In 2010, the Legislature moved the program out of pilot status as part of SSB 6355, the System Design Plan bill, and removed the limitation on the number of colleges that could offer the programs. New BAS degree programs must address the following areas: regional student and employer demand with an emphasis on serving place-bound students; alignment with existing programs offered by the college; a rigorous curriculum; qualified faculty; appropriate student services; and capacity to make a long-term commitment of resources.

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# Clark Jazz never skips a beat



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

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

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



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

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

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

members.”



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

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

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

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

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

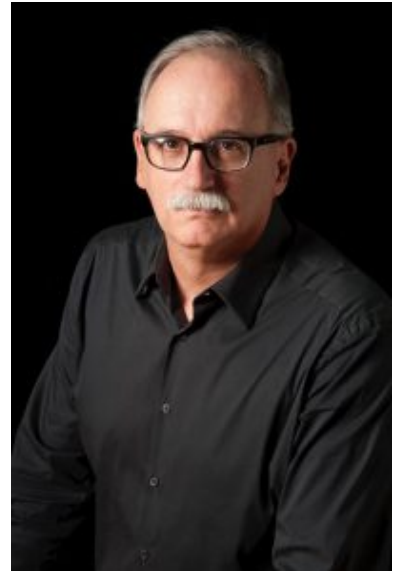
*Photos: Richard Inouye*

*This story was contributed by the Music Department.*

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## **Subtext returns to Clark**





Author Jim Shepard will appear at Clark's 2016 Subtext festival. *Photo courtesy of Jim Shepard.*

The Clark College Columbia Writers Series is offering a full week of writers, readings, and events on the college's main campus. From May 9 – 12, the college will host well-known authors, as well as readings by Clark students and a poetry workshop with incarcerated individuals. (See full schedule below.)

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](http://www.clark.edu/cc/cws).

## Schedule

### **May 9, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., PUB 161: *Free Minds Prison Poetry Workshop***

Part of an *On The Same Page UNITED* pilot project, Free Minds poetry workshops use writing to connect inmates with members of their communities on the outside. During the event, participants will read through poetry submissions from about a dozen inmates, and comment directly on the page. The poems with feedback will then be returned to the writers. This project, which has been conducted elsewhere around the country, fosters creativity and literacy in and outside prison walls.

### **May 10, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., PUB 161: *Phoenix Unveiling***

Clark College's national award-winning art and literary journal, *Phoenix*, will unveil its 2015-2016 edition with readings from student authors and free copies available for guests.

### **May 11, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., PUB 161: *Washington State Poet Laureate Tod Marshall***

Washington State Poet Laureate Tod Marshall will read from and discuss his work. His books of poetry include *Bugle*, *The Tangled Line*, and *Dare Say*. He has also published a collection of his interviews with contemporary poets, *Range of the Possible* and an attendant anthology of work by the interviewed poets, *Range of Voices*. He lives in Spokane, Washington, and teaches at Gonzaga University.

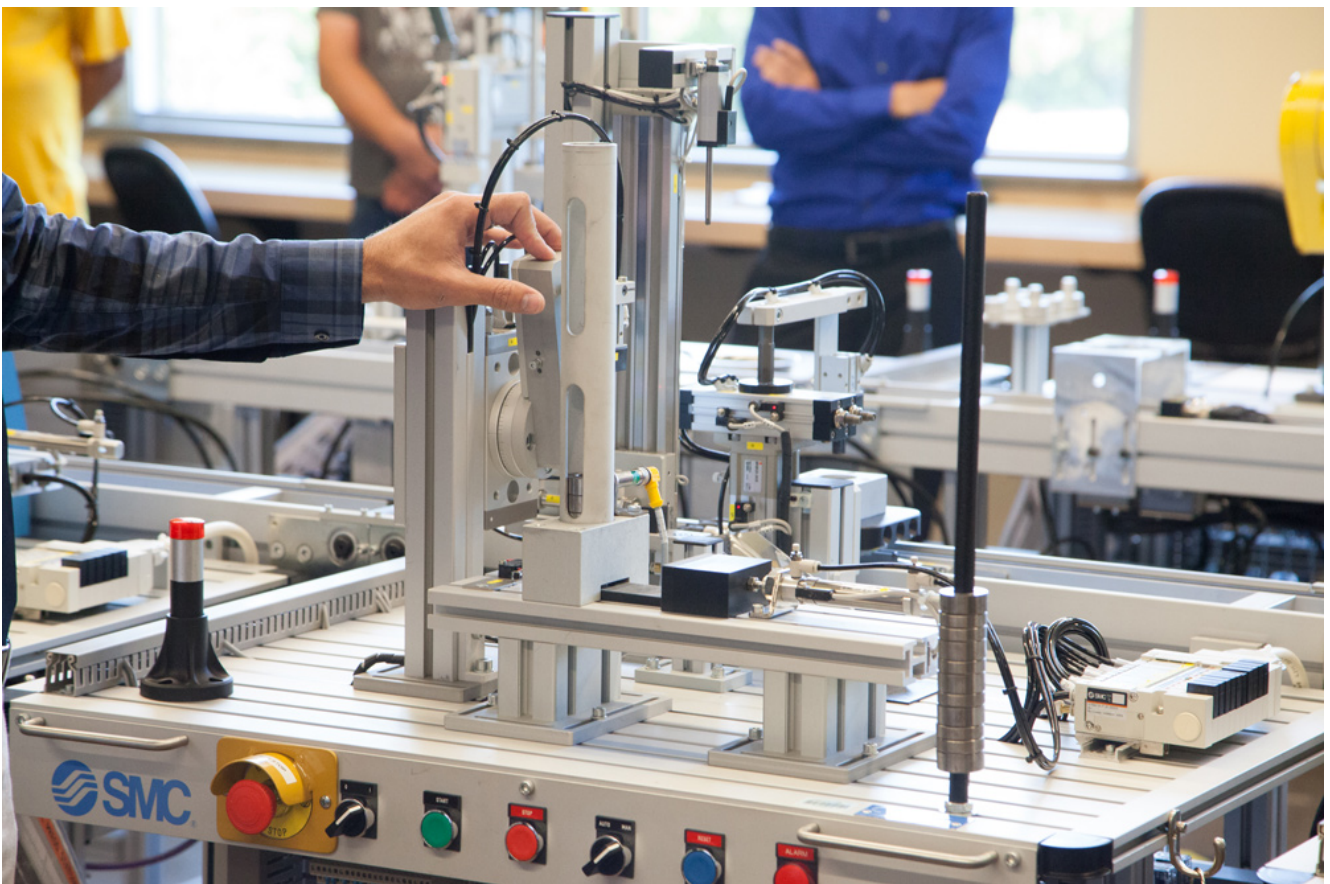
### **May 12, 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m., PUB 258A: *Fiction writer Jim Shepard***

Jim Shepard is the author of seven novels, including most recently *The Book of Aron*, which won the Sophie Brody Medal for Achievement in Jewish Literature from the American

Library Association and the PEN/New England Award for fiction, and four story collections, including *Like You'd Understand, Anyway*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award and won The Story Prize. Five of his short stories have been chosen for the Best American Short Stories, two for the PEN/O. Henry Prize Stories, and one for a Pushcart Prize. He teaches at Williams College.

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## A RAMP to tech jobs



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

Clark College has received a \$200,000 grant from the National

Science Foundation to create a new Rural Access Mechatronics Program (RAMP) that will help students in rural areas become skilled technicians in the high-demand field of advanced manufacturing.

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

During the grant’s first year, Clark College faculty will develop a curriculum of seven “hybrid” classes that compose a Certificate of Completion in Mechatronics Fundamentals. Hybrid classes are taught partially in a face-to-face classroom, and partially online, allowing students in remote locations to attend classes without commuting long distances each day to a college campus.

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

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



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

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

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

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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# Real help from the “real world”



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

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



This year's breakfast featured guest speaker Don Brunell, a partner at the Vancouver communications firm Brunell Creative. He is the retired president of the Association of Washington Business (AWB). Nationally, he has served as chair of the National Industrial Council for the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the Conference of State Manufacturing Associations (COSMA), and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board under Governors Lowry, Locke and Gregoire. He currently serves on the boards of AAA-Washington, Forterra, *Washington Business Week*, Identity Clark County and WGU-Washington.

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

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

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



Clark graduate  
April Gapsch.

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

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



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

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

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

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

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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## **Stating the case for trees**



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

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

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

Starts of several more state trees were present at the

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



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

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

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

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

*Photos: Clark College/Hannah Erickson*