

# Why Mentors Matter



Clark paralegal student Letisia Ford, *left*, introduced Professor Debi Jenkins at the 2014 winter quarter Faculty Speaker Series presentation.

Most large workplaces today have made some efforts toward encouraging diversity: a training session here, an “awareness day” there. But, as Early Childhood Education and Psychology professor Debi Jenkins argued passionately in her winter quarter Faculty Speaker Series presentation, truly fostering diversity requires a daily commitment by all members of the workforce, not just a once-a-year activity attended by a few.

“The question to ask is: How does the workplace nurture the souls of its diverse employees?” Jenkins said during her lecture, which was held February 13 in the Ellis Dunn Community Room on Clark College’s main campus. More than 40 people were in attendance, including college administration,

faculty, staff, and students, as well as members of the larger community.

Appropriately enough, given Jenkins's topic, she was introduced by a student who came to Jenkins for mentorship at a moment of crisis. Clark College paralegal student Letisia Ford said she first met Jenkins when Ford was referred to her by another professor after experiencing prejudice from her classmates. "I was called certain names, I've been singled out and called 'ghetto,' and I've been told I need to learn how to 'speak like an American,'" said Ford, who is fluent in both English and Spanish.

Ford said Jenkins was able to offer her empathy, advice—and courage. "She challenged me to not give up," said Ford. "She gave me the tools to be able to be positive."



Prof. Jenkins brought in items from her own family's Kwanzaa altar to help illustrate her presentation.

It was a fit introduction for Jenkins's own presentation. Titled "*Habari gani?: Support for a diverse workforce through communities of practice,*" it synthesized research Jenkins is conducting on diverse employees' experiences in the workplace.

*Habari gani* is Swahili for 'What's happening?,' a question posed by village elders to younger community members as a way to gauge how they were feeling. "They had the responsibility for the soul of the community," Jenkins said of these elders, who were called the *habari gani menta* ("people who ask what's happening") but today would probably be called mentors.

*Habari gani* is also the call that begins each day of the African-American holiday Kwanzaa, and Jenkins used the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa to organize her findings and recommendations. She presented both research on academic literature about challenges experienced by diverse employees as well as direct quotes from anonymous employees of diverse population groups whom she'd interviewed. The results were sobering: employees who felt their employers were constantly watching them, waiting for them to fail—or, as one interviewee put it, to "steal staples." Others complained of feeling like their abilities and contributions were minimized by their supervisors, or of feeling completely isolated at their workplace.

The remedy, Jenkins said, was to use the *habari gani menta* mindset at work, reaching out to diverse employees to ensure they felt both understood and valued. As Jenkins explained, this approach makes everyone responsible for creating a workplace that welcomes diversity—but also lets those diverse employees have an active role in how that happens.

Jenkins cautioned members of dominant groups against the urge to try to position themselves as the "expert" when talking with diverse employees. "'Oh, my cousin dates a black person,'" she said by way of example. "'Oh, my cousin dates a lesbian.' That's great. [But] we members of diverse groups don't know what our response is supposed to be to that."

Better to accept the position of listener, Jenkins counseled, and to ask questions about those diverse employees' own experiences and viewpoints—and really listen to the answers

provided.

Jenkins also urged her listeners to ask themselves questions about what their own individual role was in fostering diversity in their workplace, and what they were doing currently to help foster diversity. "If you have to think about, 'Hmm, what do I do?' then you're probably not doing enough," she said.

Jenkins, who serves as division chair of Behavioral Sciences and head of the Early Childhood Education Department at Clark College, was presenting research that was part of her doctoral thesis in Higher Education Administration, which she plans to complete next year at Phoenix University in Arizona. Jenkins already holds a Master of Science degree in Psychology from that institution, as well as an Associate in Applied Science degree in Early Childhood Education from Clark College and both bachelor's and master's degrees in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, California. In addition, she is founder of Share the Flame, an organization that offers strategies for personal growth and change through one-on-one coaching, workshops and presentations. In 2009, she received the YWCA Woman of Achievement Award for Clark County.

Established by Clark College with support from the Clark College Foundation, the Clark College Faculty Speaker Series honors individual faculty members and celebrates academic excellence. The series showcases recent experiences that have enriched both the life and teaching of a Clark faculty member. Faculty members share their developmental experiences with the college community—and with members of the community at large—while addressing some of today's most intriguing issues. Visit Clark's website for more information about both past and upcoming Faculty Speaker Series presentations.

*Photos: Clark College/Hannah Erickson*



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# Clark Theatre presents “Spring Awakening”



Nikolas Hoback as Melchior, *center*, in rehearsal for the winter musical, *Spring Awakening*.

Clark College Theatre is proud to present as its 2014 winter quarter musical production the award-winning exploration of repressed youth, *Spring Awakening*. The production is directed by Rusty Tennant and runs February 28 – March 15.

Winner of eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical, *Spring Awakening* is a rock musical adaptation of Frank Wedekind’s 1891 expressionist play about the trials and tribulations—as well as the exhilaration—of the teen years. It features music

by Duncan Sheik and a book and lyrics by Steven Sater. *Spring Awakening* celebrates the unforgettable journey from youth to adulthood with power, poignancy, and passion.



A stinging indictment of 19th-century repression, Wedekind's original play was banned after its release. Even today and translated into musical form, *Spring Awakening's* themes of sexuality, abuse, rape, incest, suicide, and abortion are still highly controversial and emotionally charged. "Clark College Theatre is taking a conscious path toward developing the student as a performing artist," says Rusty Tennant, who is also the Artistic Director of Fuse Theatre Ensemble. "Our

goal is to provide ample opportunity for students to participate in work that is relevant to the current trends and movements in the world of theatre. *Spring Awakening* is a critically acclaimed show based on a revolutionary play, with young adults composing the majority of the cast. In so many ways, this is the perfect play for us to present."

Tennant adds that *Spring Awakening* isn't just controversial: It is also a terrific musical filled with haunting melodies. "I find myself singing the songs all the time," he says. "That is not just a testimony to this revolutionary score, but also to the amazing singers I have been able to bring together for this production. This cast is singing from the deepest corners of their souls, and that makes for some exciting theatre."

Cast includes Nikolas Hoback (Melchior), Gina Fuerte-Stone (Moritz), and Petya Grozevna (Wendla). Production includes partial nudity, strong language, and adult themes.

Show Dates: February 28, March 1, 7, 8, 13, 14, and 15. March 8, there will be a 2:00 p.m. matinee. All show times are at

7:30 p.m.

Ticket Information: Students (with ID) \$11; Alumni (with membership) \$11; Senior Citizens \$13; General Admission \$15. Tickets may be purchased in person at the Clark College Bookstore in Gaiser Hall, online, or call 360-992-2815.

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

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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# **Summer Jobs, Lifelong Success**





Clark College hosts numerous job fairs at its main campus each year, all of them open to the public.

Clark College hosts its second annual Summer Job and Internship Fair from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, in the Gaiser Student Center. The event is designed to help job-seekers find summer internship and employment opportunities with Portland- and Vancouver-area employers.

New this year, the college is partnering with the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) to co-sponsor the fair. According to VHA Community Involvement and Employment Manager Bridgette Farnbulleh, the VHA has organized its own summer job fair for the past two years, but was eager to join forces with the Clark College.



Clark College's job fairs draw dozens of employers and hundreds of job-seekers.

"We wanted to connect with Clark College because of the educational aspect," Farnbulleh said. "We wanted our youth to be on a college campus, and to understand that the kind of job you get is closely connected to the education you get. We're trying to break the cycle, to make sure that just because they may have grown up in poverty doesn't mean they have to live in second-generation poverty themselves."

"I'm looking forward to this year's job fair," said Sarah Weinberger, Employer Relations and Job Developer at Clark College. "We have already doubled the number of registered employers from last year, and the collaboration with the VHA will make our event even stronger. Previously, the Summer Job and Internship Fair was held in May, but many employers had already hired for a June start date by that point. We are now holding the event in March because it's when students need to start planning for summer employment."

Positions offered at the fair may be full-time, part-time and in the case of internships, they may be paid or unpaid. There will also be a mock interview room set up to help job seekers prepare for real-life interviews.

The Summer Job & Internship Fair is sponsored by Clark College Career Services and the Vancouver Housing Authority. The event's Gold Level sponsor is LaborWorks. Some of the



employers who will be at the event are Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Washington, Entercom Portland, Firestone Pacific Foods, LOWE'S, Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, Trackers Earth, and YWCA Clark County. There are over 30 registered employers currently, with room for more. The event is open to any company or organization offering internships or summer employment, but space is limited so interested employers should act quickly to register.

A list of participating employers is available on the Career Center's Pinterest page.

The event is free and open to the public. Clark College is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver, Wash. Driving directions and parking maps are available at [www.clark.edu/maps](http://www.clark.edu/maps).

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

*Elizabeth Christopher contributed to this article.*

*Photos: Clark College archives/Jenny Shadley*

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## **Welcome Advice**



Vice President of Instruction Dr. Tim Cook welcomes members of the college's advisory committees.

On January 21, 2014, nearly 40 people attended Clark College's Advisory Committee Chairperson Training. Clark College has 25 advisory committees, 15 of which were represented by a chair and/or vice-chair at this training session. Others who attended the training included faculty and administrators.

Vice President of Instruction Dr. Tim Cook opened up the session by welcoming the attendees and discussing the importance of advisory committees to the college and the role they will play in the future. Advisory committees are groups of industry and business experts who help ensure that the college's career and technical programs are aligned correctly with the region's workforce needs.



Dedra Daehn, Director of Academic Services, conducted the training. Topics of the session included ways to engage advisory committee members, work plan development, basic parliamentary procedure and effectively leading committees. A time of

questions and discussion followed the training session.

This training, which was first offered last year, is an ongoing commitment of the college to support and enhance advisory committees.

*Dedra Daehn contributed this article.*

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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## **Iris Awards Announced**





The 2014 Iris Award honorees: Kris M. Henriksen, Program Coordinator at the Clark County Department of Community Services; Kristy Weaver, Senior Vice President/Team Leader at Pacific Continental Bank; and Sherri McMillan, owner of Northwest Personal Training.

Three women who are leaders in youth advocacy; health and wellness; and business and banking are the winners of the 2014 Iris Awards, honoring women of achievement in Southwest Washington.

The awards will be presented to Kris M. Henriksen, Program Coordinator at the Clark County Department of Community Services; Sherri McMillan, owner of Northwest Personal Training; and Kristy Weaver, Senior Vice President/Team Leader at Pacific Continental Bank.

Henriksen, McMillan, and Weaver will be honored on March 13 (five days after International Women's Day), in Clark College's Gaiser Student Center. Following a 5 p.m. reception, the awards ceremony will begin at 6 p.m.

Tickets are on sale through the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce. Tickets are \$35.00 per person. Seating is limited.

The Iris Awards are supported by Clark College, the Clark College Foundation, Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce and the *Vancouver Business Journal*, which publishes the “Women in Business” directory, the only Portland/Vancouver metro area directory of businesses that are owned, directed or managed by women. The Iris Award winners will be featured in the 2014 “Women in Business” directory.

### **The 2014 Iris Award Recipients**

#### **Kris M. Henriksen**

Kris M. Henriksen is the Program Coordinator at the Clark County Department of Community Services. For the past 10 years, Henriksen has been the driving force behind creating, developing, and sustaining TeenTalk, a peer-to-peer support line that is youth-led and continually evolving. The program has received national recognition for its innovative, youth-driven marketing plan.

For her work, Henriksen received the Anne Turner Excellence in Volunteer Management Award in 2011. She has recruited and trained more than 170 youth volunteers.

Henriksen holds a Bachelor of Science degree in behavioral sciences from Concordia University and has put in more than 350 training hours in Building on Developmental Assets, Mental Illness Awareness, Crisis Response, Wraparound Team Facilitation, Community Networking, Cultural Competency, Building on Natural Supports, Mediation Skills, Motivational Interviewing, Developing Family Strengths, Youth Advocacy, Interpersonal Communication, and Humanizing the Workplace.

Outside of her day-to-day work, Henriksen is certified to teach Youth Mental Health First Aid classes in the community. She has helped to coordinate Challenge Day programs in two



local high schools each year for the last four years, and volunteers as part of the City of Camas Board of Adjustments, Children's Sharing Project.

### **Sherri McMillan**

Sherri McMillan is the owner of Northwest Personal Training, celebrating its 14th anniversary in downtown Vancouver. Her company has been recognized as the BBB Business of the Year, Chamber of Commerce Community Builder Award winner and voted No. 1 Fitness & Training studio by the *Columbian* and the *Vancouver Business Journal*.

McMillan holds a master's degree in Exercise Physiology and has been inspiring the world to adopt a fitness lifestyle for nearly 25 years. She has received numerous industry awards including 2010 CanFitPro International Fitness Presenter of the Year, 2006 IDEA Fitness Director of the Year, 1998 IDEA Personal Trainer of the Year, and 1998 CanFitPro Fitness Presenter of the Year.

In addition to being a fitness trainer, McMillan is a fitness columnist for various magazines and newspapers (including the *Columbian*); author of five books and manuals including *Go For Fit – the Winning Way to Fat Loss*, and *Fit over Forty*; featured presenter in various fitness DVDs; international fitness presenter; and a spokesperson for Nike, Schwinn and PowerBar.

She is also the Event Director for a number of very successful local events including the Girlfriends Run for a Cure, the Girlfriends & Dudes Triathlon, the Summer Solstice and March Muddy Madness. She has participated in numerous community fundraising events including Dancing with the Stars and Glamorous Gams and has raised nearly \$500,000 for local charities over the years. She can be found running, biking or hiking with her daughter, Brianna, and her son, Jackson.

### **Kristy Weaver**

Kristy Weaver is the Senior Vice President and Southwest Washington Team Leader at Pacific Continental Bank, focusing her efforts on developing commercial and non-profit relationships. With nearly 25 years of experience in the banking industry, Weaver's professional and action-oriented style complements the overall management of Pacific Continental Bank.

Weaver serves on the board of directors at the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, the Children's Center, and the Legacy Health Salmon Creek Hospital Foundation. Weaver also actively participates in a variety of community and civic organizations including the Community Foundation Professional Advisory Council and Vancouver's Downtown Association's First Friday Artwalk.

She graduated from Northwest Intermediate Commercial Lending School and the Western Banking School of Bank Management. She is currently enrolled in Pacific Coast Banking School, a national graduate school for banking, and will complete her program this summer.

Weaver is a native of Washougal who calls Vancouver her home. She has been married to her husband, Kevin, for nine years. They are devoted to their dog, Jackson, who was adopted from the Humane Society of Southwest Washington. Avid golfers, they love to retreat to Manzanita, Oregon whenever time allows. The most valued things to Weaver are family, friends and community.

*Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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# Habari Gani? (What's Happening?)



Professor Debi  
Jenkins

In Swahili, the phrase “*Habari gani?*” means “What’s happening?” It was a question asked by village elders to younger members of the community as a way to gauge how they were doing. The *habari gani menta* (literally, “the person who asks, ‘What’s happening?’” but often translated as “mentor”) was charged with providing mentees with support to keep them from feeling disconnected.

In her presentation during the winter quarter installment of Clark College’s renowned Faculty Speaker Series, Professor Debi Jenkins describes how many employees from historically disadvantaged communities feel disconnected from their workplaces, leading to challenges in employee retention—and how we each can become a *habari gani menta* to our coworkers to help overcome those feelings of disconnection, thereby fostering a workplace environment that truly honors and supports diversity.

Using current research and her own scholarship, Professor Jenkins creates a framework for supporting workplace diversity based on the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), Imani (Faith).

“My research focuses on higher education, but really these are practices that could be incorporated into any workplace interested in fostering diversity,” says Jenkins. “I want people to ask themselves, ‘What is their role as an individual to support a diverse workforce?’”

The event, which is free and open to the public, will be held from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. in the Ellis Dunn Community Room (Gaiser Hall room 213) on Clark’s main campus. Driving directions and parking maps are available at [www.clark.edu/maps](http://www.clark.edu/maps).

Individuals who need accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should contact Clark College’s Disability Support Services (DSS) Office at (360) 992-2314 or (360) 991-0901 (VP) two weeks prior to the event. The DSS office is located in room 137 in Clark’s Gaiser Hall.

### **About Professor Debi Jenkins**

Since 2011, Professor Debra (Debi) Jenkins has served as division chair of Behavioral Sciences in addition to her role as head of the Early Childhood Education Department at Clark College. Her range of teaching experience includes topics in psychology and sociology, power-privilege-inequity, and early childhood development. She has designed courses for both face-to-face and online classrooms, including Race and Ethnicity; Parent Education; Family Dynamics and Culture; and Bicultural Development and Education. In addition, she is founder of Share the Flame, an organization that offers strategies for personal growth and change through one-on-one coaching, workshops and presentations. In 2009, she received the YWCA

Woman of Achievement Award for Clark County.

Jenkins began her higher education at Clark College, earning an Associate in Applied Science degree in Early Childhood Education. She holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, Calif., and a Master of Science degree in Psychology from the University of Phoenix in Arizona. She expects to graduate from that same institution next year with a doctorate in Higher Education Administration.

Jenkins's research focus for the last seven years has been on the influence of power-privilege-inequity on bicultural development of underrepresented communities in the United States and tri-cultural literacy development among Maroons children in Jamaica. Her doctoral dissertation is about the role of allies and communities of practice in supporting a diverse workforce. Jenkins believes that teaching and learning are reciprocal activities. As such, she continually refines her message and approach while focusing on desired student learning outcomes, not the least of which is to "foster a connection between course content and real world experiences." Jenkins quotes bell hooks, American author and social activist, when she talks about establishing a supportive learning environment that "respects and cares for the soul of students ... to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin."

### **About the Clark College Faculty Speaker Series**

Established by Clark College with support from the Clark College Foundation, the Clark College Faculty Speaker Series honors individual faculty members and celebrates academic excellence. The series showcases recent experiences that have enriched both the life and teaching of a Clark faculty member. Faculty members share their developmental experiences with the college community—and with members of the community at large—while addressing some of today's most intriguing issues.

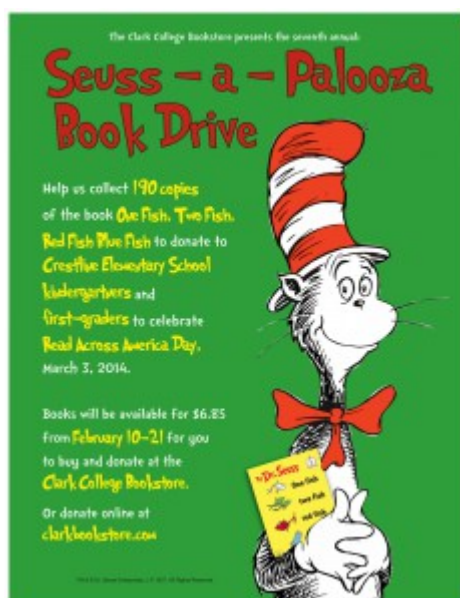


Visit

[http://www.clark.edu/news\\_center/events/facultyspeakerseries.php](http://www.clark.edu/news_center/events/facultyspeakerseries.php) for more information about this and upcoming Faculty Speaker Series presentations.

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## One Book, Two Books



As Theodor Geisel (aka “Dr. Seuss”) once wrote, “Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” Heeding those words, Clark College has chosen to make the beneficiary of its sixth annual “Seuss-a-Palooza” book drive and literacy event Vancouver’s Crestline Elementary School, which was destroyed by fire in February 2013.

The Clark College Bookstore is hoping that Seuss-a-Palooza supporters will purchase 190 copies the Dr. Seuss classic, *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*. The books will be given to kindergarteners and first-graders at Crestline’s temporary location on Read Across America Day (held on March 3, the day after Geisel’s birthday). Books will be read aloud to students by volunteers from Clark College Bookstore.

Copies of the selected Dr. Seuss books will be available for purchase and donation Feb. 10-21 for \$6.85 each (plus tax). Each book will have a nameplate for the donor’s name. Donors will be able to purchase books at the Bookstore or online via the Bookstore’s website at [www.clarkbookstore.com](http://www.clarkbookstore.com), making it quick and convenient to participate in the book

drive.

“Last year’s book drive had already begun when we learned about the fire at Crestline, so it was unfortunate that we couldn’t collect donated books for them then,” said Clark College Bookstore buyer Marti Earhart, who helps organize the event. “However, the Crestline students are still in temporary facilities and are sacrificing a lot while they wait for their school to be rebuilt. We chose Crestline students as the book recipients of this year’s book drive because we want the children, parents, and staff to know we think of them and care.”

The Clark College Bookstore is located in Gaiser Hall on the northern end of Clark’s main campus. Clark College is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver. Driving directions and parking maps are available at [www.clark.edu/maps](http://www.clark.edu/maps). Information about the bookstore is available at [www.clarkbookstore.com](http://www.clarkbookstore.com). For additional information, contact Marti Earhart at the Clark College Bookstore at 360-992-2261.

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## **Notes from the Fest**



Clark College Band Director Rich Inouye leads the Clark College Jazz Ensemble at the college's 52nd annual Jazz Festival.

From January 30 through February 1, Gaiser Student Center was swinging with the sounds of big-band jazz during Clark College's renowned Jazz Festival. The event brought 60 jazz bands from middle and high schools around the region to compete in multiple divisions.

But while the sounds were big, some of the musicians were still quite small: The first day of this annual tradition was devoted entirely to middle school performers. Festival director and Clark College music professor Rich Inouye explained the importance of including these young performers in the competition.



Aspire Middle School participates in the Jazz Festival.

“Encouraging jazz performance at the middle-school level is very important to ensuring young people realize how important jazz music is to our culture,” he said. “The style and characteristics of the music promote independence of thought, self-discipline, responsibility, communication, and teamwork, and the festival environment not only allows them to strive for excellence in their performance, but also allows them to listen to the excellence their peers from the other schools represent.”

On Friday night, before the A and AA awards were announced, Inouye gave the gathered competitors another source of inspiration: Before he led the Clark College Jazz Ensemble through their own performance, he introduced his students by name and said which high school each had attended, illustrating how many had come from A and AA schools. The crowd cheered loudly as the names of their schools were mentioned.



This year's Jazz Festival poster and program were designed by Clark College student Luke Acevedo, who is nearing the completion of his Associate of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design at Clark College.

"I have been fortunate to have all the high school directors in the area encourage their students to perform in my bands at Clark," Inouye said later. "I appreciate all the students who have chosen to come to Clark to play in our bands, but in the last couple years I have had the privilege of getting the top musicians from smaller schools in the outlying areas. The Greater Vancouver-area high schools have some of the strongest band programs in the country ... but having been the product of a small, rural school myself, I do have affinity for the smaller, outlying schools. I believe the mix of these students with some of the students from the larger schools is what provides the excitement and distinction for what we do here."



Now in its 52nd year, the Clark College Jazz Festival is one of Southwest Washington's largest jazz festivals. Trophies are presented in all divisions, and individual outstanding musician awards are presented at the end of each day's preliminary competitions. On Saturday evening, the the Dale Beacock Memorial Sweepstakes Award is presented to one outstanding band selected from the entire festival.

**For 2014, the Dale Beacock Memorial Sweepstakes trophy was awarded to Garfield High School from Seattle, Washington.**

**Thursday, January 30, 2014 middle school jazz ensemble finals results:**

1<sup>st</sup> place – Eckstein Middle School from Seattle, Washington

2<sup>nd</sup> place – Beaumont Middle School from Portland, Oregon

3<sup>rd</sup> place – Hamilton International Middle School from Seattle, Washington

Special recognition went to Washington Middle School from Seattle, Washington, for being asked to perform in the evening finals.

*Outstanding Middle School Jazz Musician certificates were presented to:*

Hannah Wells and Joseph Gardner from Aspire Middle School, Lacey, Washington

Milli McFall, Misae Nguyen from Hamilton International Middle School, Seattle, Washington

Brayton Sobolewski and Daniel Conway from Vancouver School of Arts and Academics Middle School, Vancouver, Washington

Eltan Davis and Sammie Wiegand from Beaumont Middle School,

Portland, Oregon

Marco Thompson from Washington Middle School, Seattle, Washington

Kai Despain, Sean Bowman, Julia Tanner, Austin Isgrig, and David Maltby from Eckstein Middle School, Seattle, Washington

Katriana Armstrong and Vanessa Gress from Chief Umtuch Middle School, Battle Ground, Washington

Jerich Embleton from Creswell Middle School, Creswell, Oregon

Shermon Mattson from Pleasant Valley Middle School, Vancouver, WA

Shane Walz, Morgan Kennedy, and Ainsle Cromer from Tukes Valley Middle School, Battle Ground, Washington

Skyler Verity from Laurin Middle School, Vancouver, Washington

**Friday, January 31, 2014 A and AA division high school jazz ensemble finals results:**

A Division:

1<sup>st</sup> place – Ridgefield High School Jazz I, Ridgefield, Washington

2<sup>nd</sup> place – Woodland High School, Woodland, Washington

3<sup>rd</sup> place – Astoria High School, Astoria, Oregon

AA Division:

1<sup>st</sup> place – Hockinson High School, Brush Prairie, Washington

2<sup>nd</sup> place – Fife High School from Tacoma, Washington

3<sup>rd</sup> place – Washougal High School from Washougal, Washington

*Outstanding high school musician awards for the A Division were presented to:*

John Mcgee from Philomath High School, Philomath, Oregon

Devin Van Laar from Trout Lake High School, Trout Lake, Washington

Nick Bischoff from Ridgefield High School II, Ridgefield, Washington

Nathan Mitchell and Gabrielle Allegri from Ridgefield High School I, Ridgefield, Washington

*Outstanding AA high school musician awards for the AA Division were presented to:*

T Anderson from Washougal High School, Washougal, Washington

Erin Jones from Fife High School, Tacoma, Washington

Nathan Nyseth and Lillian Quintana from Hockinson High School, Brush Prairie, Washington

Jack Tietjen from R.A. Long High School, Longview, Washington

Daniel Kransuler and Jenny Kim from Sammamish High School, Bellevue, Washington

**Saturday February 1, 2014 AAA and AAAA division high school jazz ensemble finals results:**

AAA Division:

1<sup>st</sup> place – Meadowdale High School from Lynnwood, Washington

2<sup>nd</sup> place – Mt. Spokane High School from Spokane, Washington

3<sup>rd</sup> place – Mead High School Jazz I, Spokane, Washington

AAAA Division:

1<sup>st</sup> place – Garfield High School from Seattle, Washington

2<sup>nd</sup> place – Battleground High School from Battleground, Washington

3<sup>rd</sup> place – Union High School from Camas, Washington

*Outstanding high school musician awards for the AAA Division were presented to:*

Cormac Liotta Sharma from Roosevelt High School II, Seattle, Washington

Ori Levari from Meadowdale High School, Lynnwood, Washington

Andrew Sauage and Travis Widmer from Mt. Spokane High School, Spokane, Washington

Lanie Pham from Battle Ground High School, Battle Ground, Washington

Jorge Marcia from Vancouver School for the Arts and Academics, Vancouver, Washington

*Outstanding high school musician awards for the AAAA Division were presented to:*

Kaleb Armstrong, Steve Mantecuccio, and Nickolas Schell from Battle Ground High School, Battle Ground, Washington

Devin Perez from West Salem High School, Salem, Oregon

Isak Washuburn-Gaines, Alice Mar-Abe, and Jack Swigget from Garfield High School, Seattle, Washington

Stephen Reid from Union High School Jazz I, Camas, Washington

Jimmy Root from Lake Stevens High School, Lake Stevens, Washington

*Shelly Williams contributed to this article.*

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

See more photos on Flickr.

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# A Crucial Conversation



Lee Mun Wah gives his keynote speech during “The Unfinished Conversation.”

A young, African-American student who feels like he doesn't fit in at college. A professor who spent years feeling isolated because of her race. A quiet young man constantly bullied for being different. A mother struggling to learn how to teach her sons how to deal with racism she never encountered in her home country. An Indian man who regularly faces ignorance about his culture. These were just some of the stories that became part of “The Unfinished Conversation,” a daylong series of events led by diversity educator Lee Mun Wah during Clark College's celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, held on January 22.





Peer Mentor and Clark student Ezekiel Wells participating in “The Unfinished Conversation.”

“The Unfinished Conversation” comprised an employee diversity training in the morning; a lunchtime keynote speech followed by an open dialog with students; and an evening screening of *If These Halls Could Talk*, Lee’s documentary film about college students tackling race and racism. True to the day’s theme, Lee—a nationally recognized poet, documentary filmmaker, and diversity trainer—spent much of his time encouraging conversation between different members of the college community. The discussion was at times both revealing and emotional—more than once, participants broke into tears as they related personal experiences of prejudice and isolation.

Lee said this sense of alienation can keep students of color from achieving their educational goals. “When I was filming *If These Halls Could Talk*, three-quarters of the students of color in the group were thinking about dropping out,” he said. “And I picked those students randomly!”

Lee urged his listeners to make a regular practice of seeking out and socializing with people different from themselves. “Walk into your lunch room and see who is eating in groups, who is eating alone,” he said. “Dr. King was wrong when he said that the most segregated hour of the week is 11:00 on Sunday—it’s lunchtime.”

Ezekiel Wells, a Clark student who works as a Peer Mentor at the college, said he appreciated that Lee invited him to tell the more than 80 Clark College employees who gathered for the morning session about what it was like to attend Clark as a young African-American male. "He was fearless," Wells said. "He was willing to dig deep and talk about things people don't want to talk about."



Professor Debi Jenkins, *right*, assists Lee Mun Wah in some role playing during his keynote speech.

Psychology and Early Childhood Education professor Debi Jenkins agreed. "I found his activities helpful in encouraging critical thought and action regarding power, privilege, and inequity with a goal of building a sense of community," she said, noting that colleagues later told her they were moved by her emotional description of the loneliness she felt during the time when she was the only African-American female tenured faculty member at Clark.

For nineteen-year-old Jacob Lein, the day proved unexpectedly affecting. He happened to be walking through Gaiser Student Center when Lee began his keynote speech and stayed to listen. But when Lee asked him to tell his story to the group, he found himself describing the pain of being bullied in high school for being tall, skinny, and affected by Attention

Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder—and then amazed when the room burst into supportive applause. The surprises weren't over for Lein: When Lee broke the audience into pairs to more intimately discuss their experiences with being different, Lein found himself sharing stories with Clark College President Bob Knight.



Lee Mun Wah encourages a student during the open dialog that followed his keynote speech. He urged the group to really listen and ask questions.

“I had no idea he was the president,” said Lein, who is in his first quarter at Clark with the goal of becoming an American Sign Language interpreter. “It was a great experience.”

President Knight said he appreciated the chance to get to know Lein. “I thought the session was very good and made me reflect back on a time in my life where I was harassed and how I dealt with it,” he said. “It also allowed me to get to know a student that I had never met before and to learn more about him and the obstacles he has faced in life and at Clark College. It made me want to know the student better. We have exchanged phone numbers and plan to get together for lunch in the very near future.”

Because the conversation still isn't finished—but, as Lee Mun Wah clearly demonstrated, it helps to keep talking.

**Interested in continuing the conversation? The Teaching and Learning Center is hosting two employee trainings by the Office of Diversity and Equity in February: “Cultural Competency” (February 6, 12 pm – 1 pm, GHL 213) and “Power, Privilege and Inequality at Clark College” (February 26, 10 am – 11 am, GHL 205). Additionally, Professor Debi Jenkins discusses “Support for a Diverse Workforce through Communities of Practice” during her Faculty Speaker Series presentation, which is open to the public (February 13, 4 pm – 5 pm, GHL 213). Or visit the *Clark 24/7* calendar and search for events tagged with the keyword “diversity.”**

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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

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## **After Haiyan**





*Enrico “Rico” Selga is a well-known figure to many at Clark College. Either they recognize him from his time as a nursing student here during the 1990s, or they saw him receive the Clark College Foundation’s Outstanding Alumni Award in 2010, or they’ve ordered a latte from him at one of the two coffee kiosks he and his wife, Jennifer, run on Clark’s main campus. However, not everyone knows what he does with his “off” hours: For years, Selga has volunteered with the church-based nonprofit Medical Teams International in areas stricken by disaster or conflict. He’s done so much of this work that MTI now sends him as a “First in Team” member, tasked with scouting the area and organizing resources before the rest of the medical team arrives. When the Philippines were hit by Super Typhoon Haiyan on November 8, 2013—demolishing buildings and killing thousands of people—Selga, who is originally from the Philippines, was one of the first volunteers to land in the hard-hit town of Guiuan. We wrote about Selga’s trip to treat earthquake victims in Haiti in a previous issue of Clark 24/7; here, Selga describes his latest experience in his own*



words.

Looking from the small window of the Australian Air Force C-130 airplane one week after Super Typhoon Haiyan, the community of Guiuan looked like it had been bombed. Houses were flattened; trees were uprooted or snapped in half. Once I was on the ground, I could also see that all the vehicles were damaged and that the people were wet and dirty. Locals told me that some people had resorted to eating dogs for food, while others had looted stores for food or items to trade for food. Survivors created shelters from scraps of wood or tin. Others used tarpaulins or plastic bags. During the nights, the wind would blow so hard that the rain went sideways. It was impossible to stay dry, and the combination of wetness, hunger, and thirst made it close to impossible to sleep.



Guiuan residents line up to use the phone.

Under normal conditions, Guiuan is a tropical paradise, filled with picturesque white sand beaches perfect for surfing and diving. But Haiyan left nothing standing. Houses were demolished beyond repair. Hotels and resorts were reduced to sticks and rubble. Wells that normally provide safe drinking water were contaminated. Fallen trees and power lines made the

streets unpassable by car.

The children walked around the community with their parents, checking on their neighbors. I could hear the children telling their parents that they were hungry and thirsty. I tried my best to hold back my tears because I too have a child. I knew that children ages 6 months to 2 years would be particularly vulnerable because there was no milk or safe water to drink. Inevitably, many of them would get sick or die from the conditions. I cannot imagine how helpless their parents must feel. I know that if the roles were reversed, I too would be looting and stealing.

Yet these same people who looted were the first ones to share their food. Food rations were scarce, but people still shared them with their neighbors. Despite the catastrophe people found ways to smile and laugh. It was beautiful to observe the people banding together to help each other. And then one of them helped me.

On my first day in Guiuan, I met Klaus Engesvoll, the man who became my savior and best friend. I was sitting on the bench at Viva grocery, which had become the relief center of the town. There was a long line outside the looted grocery for the only functional satellite phone available to call the outside world. People were given 60 seconds to talk to someone. Each person was given three chances to dial a phone number. If nobody answered on the other side, the person lost his turn. The free telephone service was available from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., but lines started forming at 5 a.m. and the last calls were made after 9 p.m. Listening to the conversations was heart-breaking. One woman narrated the story of how she lost her husband and children. Another woman kept on repeating, "Food is so hard." For 60 seconds all she could muster up to say was, "Food is so hard." It was painful to hear their 60-second stories of tragedy, but the ability to share their stories gave them hope that soon help would arrive. The last caller of the day was Klaus. He called his sister in Norway.

After his call, he invited me and my colleague to stay in his house.



Klaus Engesvoll and Rico Selga

Klaus came to the Philippines from Norway on a vacation many years ago. He never left. Eventually, he married Amy, with whom he has two children who speak four languages fluently. Klaus told me how his family and 60 other people were saved by hiding in the laundry room and garage of his house. He said that if the wind had blown for another hour, they too might not have survived—and that when they came out after the storm had passed, they did not know if anyone else had.

The day after the storm, Amy cooked all their food and shared it with their neighbors, a move typical of her and Klaus's generosity. After knowing me for only a day, Klaus invited me to stay in his house, where he and his family shared their scant amount of relief goods, water, and food with me. This

was uncomfortable for me because I was supposed to be there providing help to them. In the end, our team would not have been able to function without his hospitality and willingness to share everything with us.

Klaus and I spent 24 hours a day together, brainstorming and helping the people of Guiuan. We would go to bed at midnight and stare at the ceiling, waiting for daylight so we could start working again. I would get up from my cot at 5:30 in the morning to go to his room, where I would see him crammed in his bed with Amy and their children—his eyes open. He would turn to me, nod, and get up without waking his family.

Around us, everything was sopping wet. In the living room at least six of his neighbors slept on wet sofas. Some nights, there were three inches of water all over the house. His stairs looked like a waterfall with the rain coming down hard from the second floor, where the roof had been torn off by the storm. Debris filled his house. Mud and grass peppered the walls and ceiling.

The first priority of each day was to find water, food, medications, and gasoline. Without gas, we could not send Doctor Alan out to see the patients. Without water and food, we were finished. In a disaster-hit community it is difficult to find the most basic necessities. Klaus and I had to go around town scavenging from other international aid agencies and the local market. We also needed to find a tarpaulin to cover Klaus's blown-off roof—with more volunteers arriving soon, we needed a place for them to stay.

Once, we spent the whole day just begging for one liter of gas—and got none. We spent countless hours networking at United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to procure gas and diesel. The diesel was important to keep our van moving. The van was by no means comfortable—it was missing a windshield and the engine had issues—but it was moving. I borrowed it from a neighbor on a

handshake promise to pay him at a later date. This neighbor had three vans that at one point became shelter for 23 people.



*Dr. Alan, far right yellow shirt.*

On that same day, the first baby was born in a tent hospital run by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF). The crowd in the OCHA meeting clapped in jubilation. We had also scored enough tarpaulin to cover our house and one clinic. The tarpaulin was a gift from International Organization for Migration (IOM) and MSF. On this same day we also received a water filter from Guiuan Disaster Relief Coordination (GDRC). We could now filter enough water for 100 people daily for five years. It was a happy day for the community and for our organization. Klaus and I celebrated with a drink of rum, but neither Klaus nor I slept well because we both knew there was more work to be done.

The next day the carpenters worked at a feverish pace to finish putting tarpaulin on Klaus's house. It was a dangerous job because the tarpaulin was slippery and any mistake would send them falling from a two-story house. Meanwhile, thanks to neighbors, the inside of his house was miraculously cleaned of wood, metal, and glass debris in five days.



There were other signs of hope that day—and new challenges. For the first week after the storm, there was no food for sale in the market. Almost two weeks later, on the Thursday that Klaus's house got covered, the markets began selling more varied food again. Disappointingly, the prices for that food skyrocketed as more international aid workers (aka "rich foreigners") arrived. The day before, we had bought a kilo of potatoes for \$1.50; now a kilo cost \$3.50. This is an unintended side effect of the arrival of the relief agencies, one felt most keenly by the locals. The average salary of an unskilled laborer is about \$5 per day. I paid the men fixing the roof about \$5 per day. I paid the foreman about \$9 per day. These people cannot afford a 300-percent increase in food costs.

By Friday morning, we had welcomed 12 volunteer doctors, nurses, and paramedics. We were in full capacity to treat patients. Doctor Alan now had a complete team with him when he went out to the villages. Our team immediately went to work treating patients in Guiuan, Mercedes, and Salcedo. In one day, we were able to see more than 200 patients and provided them with essential medications.

My job with the 'First In Team' was finished. We had shelter, food, water, volunteers and clinics. This was good news, but my heart sank because it also meant that soon I would be sent back home. Klaus felt it too. He kept saying, "It will be strange without you, Rico." For nearly two weeks, I had spent my days and nights with Klaus. He had an uncanny ability to make friends and get things done. I admired his strength and perseverance, growing to love him like a brother. I knew that he would give his life for me—as I would for him.

Before departing I asked Klaus, "What are you going to do after all of this is done?" He told me that he was not leaving, that Guiuan is forever his home. But then he added, "I do not know, Rico. For the first time in my life, I care

only about others. I do not care what happens to me. I have never felt this way before. I will only leave if my children cannot go to school. If the schools are not rebuilt, I must return to Norway for my children." I could see in his eyes that he is deeply worried. I felt guilty for leaving him and going home.

I believe in the power of dreams. It will triumph over adversity. Dreams have the power to transform despair into hope. Dreams keep us taking the next step forward. Dreams turn the impossible into reality. Today I dream of rebuilding a school. I have never rebuilt a school. This is a dream I cannot accomplish without help. I need a small miracle. Twenty-three years after evacuating my home in a US Air Force C-130 plane due to an earthquake, and after 13 years of volunteering in disaster-stricken and war-torn areas like Kosovo, Liberia, Uganda, and Haiti, I am needed now in the land of my bones, Philippines.

*Photos: Rico and Jennifer Selga*