

Clark kicks off a new year



Monday, September 19 marked the start of the 2016 fall quarter at Clark College. A highlight of opening day was seeing progress on the college's initiative to encourage more students to attend full-time (12 credits or more). Forty-eight percent of non-Running Start, and 74% of Running Start students, attended Clark full-time. These statistics are important because studies show that students who are enrolled full-time are more likely to graduate and to do so in a shorter amount of time.

While official numbers are not available until after the 10th day of class, the day began with 12,099 students enrolled, statistically even with last year's enrollment numbers.

While enrollment was flat overall, some specific segments saw increases. Running Start, which allows high school students to earn college credits tuition-free, saw its enrollment rise by

11 percent from its fall 2015 numbers to 2,445 students. Clark College's Office of Planning & Effectiveness estimates that families of Clark Running Start students saved a combined \$7.1 million in college tuition during the previous academic year. Elearning (or online) courses grew this year by 15 percent, with more than 4,400 students taking advantage of those courses.

Other highlights for the quarter:

- This is the first quarter that classes are offered in Clark's new, state-of-the-art STEM Building, which will have its ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 3.
- This quarter sees a 67% increase from fall 2015 in students enrolled in apprentice programs. Additionally, Clark's Transitional Studies is offering a new pre-apprenticeship program designed to help adults enter the trades. The one-quarter class costs just \$25, making it an accessible entry point for people seeking a new career.
- Students have begun enrolling for prerequisites to prepare for entry into Clark's new Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Management This will be the second bachelor's degree offered by Clark.

About Clark College

Located in Vancouver's Central Park and serving up to 12,500 students per quarter, Clark College is Washington State's second-largest single-campus, for-credit community college. The college currently offers classes at two satellite locations: one on the Washington State University Vancouver campus and one in the Columbia Tech Center in East Vancouver. Additionally, its Economic & Community Development program is housed in the Columbia Bank building in downtown Vancouver.

An investment in students' financial futures



Judy Starr, director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at Clark College Foundation, center, receives a check from David Reiter, senior vice president and private client manager for Bank of America, and Jessica Hewitt, vice president of Enterprise Business & Community Engagement for Bank of America.

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation recently awarded Clark College a \$20,000 grant to support a full-time financial literacy coach at Clark College. The coach works directly with students to help them stabilize their finances and increase the likelihood of students meeting their economic, educational, and career goals.

The grant, delivered to Clark College Foundation, provides ongoing support within Clark College's Career Services department for students. Assuring that a full-time financial coach remains on staff allows the college to continue providing workshops, classroom presentations, and individual sessions focusing on how to budget, balance a checkbook, set long-term financial goals, and understand credit cards, credit scores and loan repayments.

"The full-time coach has been highly valuable for our students," said Lisa Gibert, president and CEO of Clark College Foundation. "The coach assisted 64 students in one-on-one sessions over a seven-month period, held 27 different budgeting workshops for scores of other students and conducted specialty workshops for the Veterans Resource Center and the Pathways Center."

Jamie Madison was one of those students. She was ready to graduate from Clark's nursing program in 2015 when unforeseen circumstances led her to withdraw. When she was contemplating a return, she was unsure if she had the resources to do so. She met with Clark's financial literacy coach, Craig Ebersole, who helped her outline her personal finances and discover ways to limit her spending and create a budget.

"I am now confident with my finances and proactively use the resources I have learned about," said Madison, who returned to Clark to finish her degree. "These resources help me through college and prepare me for my career after graduation."

Approximately 54 percent of Clark students come from families

living below the poverty level, and 60 percent are unemployed or receive public assistance. Moreover, nearly three-quarters of Clark students are the first generation in their families to attend college.

“Bank of America understands that financial fluency and empowerment are key drivers for future financial mobility and success,” said David K. Reiter, senior vice president at U.S. Trust Bank of America Private Wealth Management in Vancouver. “That is why we are proud to support Clark College Foundation on this important decision to retain a financial coach. When individuals feel financially secure and are able to achieve their financial goals, communities are made stronger and we all benefit.”

A budgeting course delivered by the financial literacy coach was added to the College 101: College Essentials course last year. All students working toward an Associate of Arts degree are required to complete the course, which introduces students to campus resources, such as campus navigation, technology, tutoring support, and financial aid.

Text and photo provided by the Clark College Foundation.

**Penguin flies high among
Cougars**



Clark alumnus and employee Narek Daniyelyan was named to the WSU Board of Regents. *Photo courtesy of WSU.*

Clark College alumnus and employee Narek Daniyelyan has been appointed by Governor Jay Inslee as the student member of the Washington State University Board of Regents for the 2016-2017 academic year.

“I am excited to have Daniyelyan as our student representative on the regents,” said WSU President Kirk Schulz. “He has an impressive background and will bring a strong student voice to board deliberations. I look forward to working closely with Daniyelyan during my first year as WSU President”

Daniyelyan has a long history of service to institutions of higher learning. During his time at Clark, he was a Student Ambassador, helping to guide new students around the college and supporting Clark events. He graduated from Clark with his Associate of Arts transfer degree from Clark in 2009, but soon returned to the college to work as a recruitment specialist. He currently works in the college’s Office of Instruction as

its Education Partnership Manager, engaging with local schools, businesses and other higher education institutions to create and maintain mutually beneficial student partnership agreements. His other past work includes serving as a recreation leader for the City of Vancouver and as an intern with the Clark County Juvenile Court system.

Daniyelyan continued his education after Clark, graduating from WSU Vancouver in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in Human Development. In 2013 he began his master's degree studies in public affairs at WSUV.

"Upon graduation, I plan to continue working in higher education and serving students in our community," said Daniyelyan. "Education has given me an opportunity for social mobility, so I want to help others see their potential and become the best versions of themselves."

"I am ecstatic to be serving as the Student Regent and am looking forward to representing all WSU students," Daniyelyan said of his appointment. "During my time as student regent I hope to learn about some of the amazing things that past Student Regents have accomplished, work with current board members on some of the pressing initiatives for the year, and serve as a liaison between students and the board."

Daniyelyan was elected vice president of the Associated Students of WSU Vancouver and has held a variety of other student leadership positions, including serving as a student ambassador and as director of Leadership Development for ASWSU-Vancouver.

Effective July 1, Daniyelyan's appointment will run through June 30, 2017. He succeeds current Student Regent Jansen VanderMeulen, of Burlington, Wash.

This article adapted from the Washington State University news site.

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.

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 payed 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

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.

Battling stereotypes, they found success



Qi Wu and Tammy Senior are Clark College's representatives to the 2016 All-Washington Academic Team.

Two outstanding Clark College students were selected to attend the 2016 All-Washington Academic Team Recognition Ceremony, held on March 24 at South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia, Washington. Tammy Senior and Qi Wu are two of just 66 students from community and technical colleges across the state to receive this honor, which recognizes students for their academic excellence and service to the community.

At first glance, Senior and Wu don't seem terribly similar. One is young even by the standards of Running Start, a program that allows high schoolers to take college courses; the other is coming back to college after serving four years in the military. One has spent her whole life in Vancouver; the other has lived in more countries than she can count on one hand.

But on closer inspection, certain parallels become clear between the two young women: They're both fascinated by science and technology. They both are driven students who make

time in their busy schedules to serve their communities. Both have had to challenge others' assumptions and figuring out creative ways to get around obstacles in their educational journeys. And so far, both are succeeding impressively.



Clark student Qi Wu stands before the college's new STEM Building, slated to open in fall 2016.

Wu's obstacles began surfacing when she and her mother emigrated from China to the United States. Wu, then a sophomore in high school, struggled to maintain her grades while learning a new language in a new culture. She also found herself confronting gender stereotypes, as classmates and teachers assumed she would be more interested in subjects like art and the humanities instead of math and science.

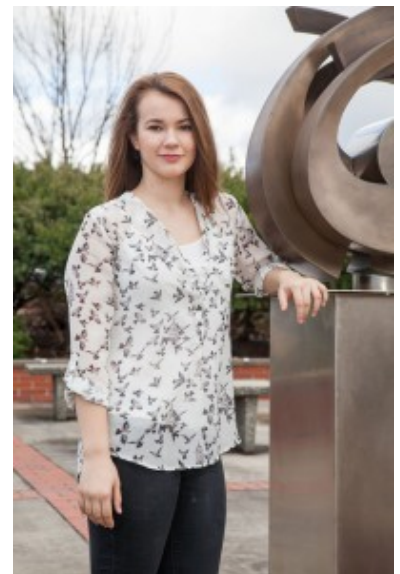
"When I was growing up, I was always better in physics and chemistry," she said. "I like numbers, I like logic. When I came to Clark and took my first engineering course, it was like, 'Wow, this is where I belong!'"

However, soon a new hurdle appeared. Wu, whose mother had remarried and had another child, realized her family could not afford to pay for her college education. Hoping to support herself, she enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 2010 as an aviation mechanic, and took every opportunity to earn educational credits and develop new skills—despite the doubts some had of

the petite young woman's abilities.

"When I got transferred to Japan, my supervisor told me, 'Well, you can do the desk job here, because you're a girl,'" Wu recalled. "And I said, 'No. I want to do the job I trained for.'"

Wu said that overall, she's grateful for the opportunities the military provided her to travel and learn skills that will help in her electrical engineering career. She's currently receiving scholarships from Clark, which allows her to save her military education benefits for the more-expensive, four-year institutions she hopes to attend one day to earn her master's degree. She also works in Clark's scholarship office herself, and spends weekends training as a Naval Reservist.



Clark student Tammy Senior says she's been impressed by how welcoming the college was to her, even when she took her first class at age 14.

Like Wu, Senior's challenges also began in high school, but

they were of a different nature: She felt stifled. “I wasn’t being challenged enough,” she recalls. “I took a class at Clark and found it so much better.”

Senior’s family couldn’t afford to pay for a full load of college classes out of pocket, and when the 14-year-old visited Clark’s scholarship office, she discovered she was too young to qualify for financial aid or scholarship opportunities. Then, the scholarship staff offered a new possibility: Perhaps Senior could enroll in Running Start, the Washington State program that allows eligible high school juniors and seniors to take college classes tuition-free. The only problem was that Senior was still a freshman. She wound up skipping the 10th grade in order to qualify, enrolling at Clark as a full-time student at age 15.

“It was definitely interesting,” Senior, now 16 and set to graduate in the spring, said with a grin. “But Clark’s pretty welcoming, and I really thrived in the community here.”

Senior has maintained a 4.0 GPA while taking classes in Clark’s challenging Honors Program, volunteering with her church, teaching private music lessons, and serving as the vice president of leadership for Clark’s chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges. She’ll be 17 when she enters a university—potentially with junior standing, depending on where she attends.

“People ask me, ‘Why don’t you enjoy your high school years?’” Senior said. “But I’m a planner. I think ahead. My mother wasn’t able to finish school because she started a family. I know I have a lot of school ahead of me, and this is a way to speed things up.”

Senior hopes to become a neurologist, a goal developed when her beloved grandmother suffered a series of debilitating strokes in 2014. Like Wu, Senior faced some skepticism about her ambitions.

“When I tell people I want to pursue a career in neurology, sometimes they look at me strangely and say, ‘Oh, why don’t you go into nursing, so you have time for a family?’” she said. “But I know I can do it. I can have a family. I can have the career of my choice. I just have to work hard. And you know, they would never tell a male student that.”

Both students say they appreciate the support they’ve found at Clark. “I like the diversity here,” says Wu, a first-generation college student. “Engineering professor Izad [Khormae] is from Iran. My physics teacher is from Russia. I think half the STEM faculty are women. And then in my classes I’ve met a few other veterans. You get so many different experiences here, different cultures.”

Wu and Senior were honored for their achievements at the All-Washington Academic Team induction ceremony on March 24, 2016, in Olympia, where Gov. Jay Inslee was the keynote speaker. The All-Washington Academic Team is a program of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges. Team members are eligible for numerous scholarships, including transfer scholarships at most four-year universities in the state.

“It is such an honor,” said Senior, sitting with Wu during a break between classes.

“It’s nice for your hard work to be recognized,” adds Wu.

“Yes, you feel like your hard work is finally paying off,” said Senior.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Catching dreams, sharing history



Brent Learned talks about George Curtis Levi's traditional "ledger art" with attendees of the 2016 Student of Color Luncheon.

The winter 2016 Student of Color Luncheon was filled with history—some of it long in the past, and some of it being made right then. The event featured artists Brent Learned and George Curtis Levi, whose work is currently being featured at the Clark County Historical Museum, speaking about atrocities committed against their ancestors in the 19th century. It also marked the bestowal of Clark's first scholarship designated specifically for a Native American student.



Dream Catcher
Scholarship
recipient Channa
Smith

The Clark College Dream Catcher Scholarship was first announced at the college's annual Native American celebration in 2014. Clark student Channa Smith said she was honored to be its inaugural recipient. "When I first applied for the scholarship, I didn't think much about it beyond, 'Oh, it would be nice to have some money,'" she said at the reception. "But it's been really transformative. I didn't think how much it would mean to me to be recognized for my hard work."

Smith has been very active in the community, both at the college and in Southwest Washington. A Coast Salish tribe member, she helped start Clark's new Native American Cultural Club and has participated in local Chinook tribal activities since moving to the area.



Channa Smith was named the inaugural recipient of the Dream Catcher Scholarship at the 2016 Student of Color Luncheon. Multicultural Retention Manager Felisciana Peralta, *right*, presented the scholarship.

After the scholarship was presented to Smith, Learned and Levi spoke about creating the art that makes up “One November Morning.” This exhibit depicts the Sand Creek Massacre of November 29, 1864, when more than 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho people were killed in Sand Creek, Colorado, by U.S. Army soldiers.

“You have to know where you come from to know where you’re going, and that’s what we’re trying to do,” said Levi during the presentation. He urged students at the luncheon to remember their own history and communities as they progressed in life. “Go back to your communities after you graduate and give back,” he said.

“One November Morning” will be on display at the Clark County Historical Museum through May 28. As part of its “Native Voices” exhibit, the Clark College Libraries is hosting a free art walk on Friday, March 4, that begins at Cannell Library with a reception, then visits the Native American basketry currently on display at Archer Gallery, and ends at the Clark County Historical Museum.

The spring 2016 Student of Color Luncheon will be held in May. It will feature the announcement of the recipient of Clark's 2016 Constance Baker Motley Scholarship, which is given each year to a Clark College student of color.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Turning students into scientists



Clark College is providing an unprecedented opportunity for eligible students to start their research careers while

still in community college—getting hands-on research opportunities, paid internships, and special educational support to help them succeed in the exciting career of scientific researcher.

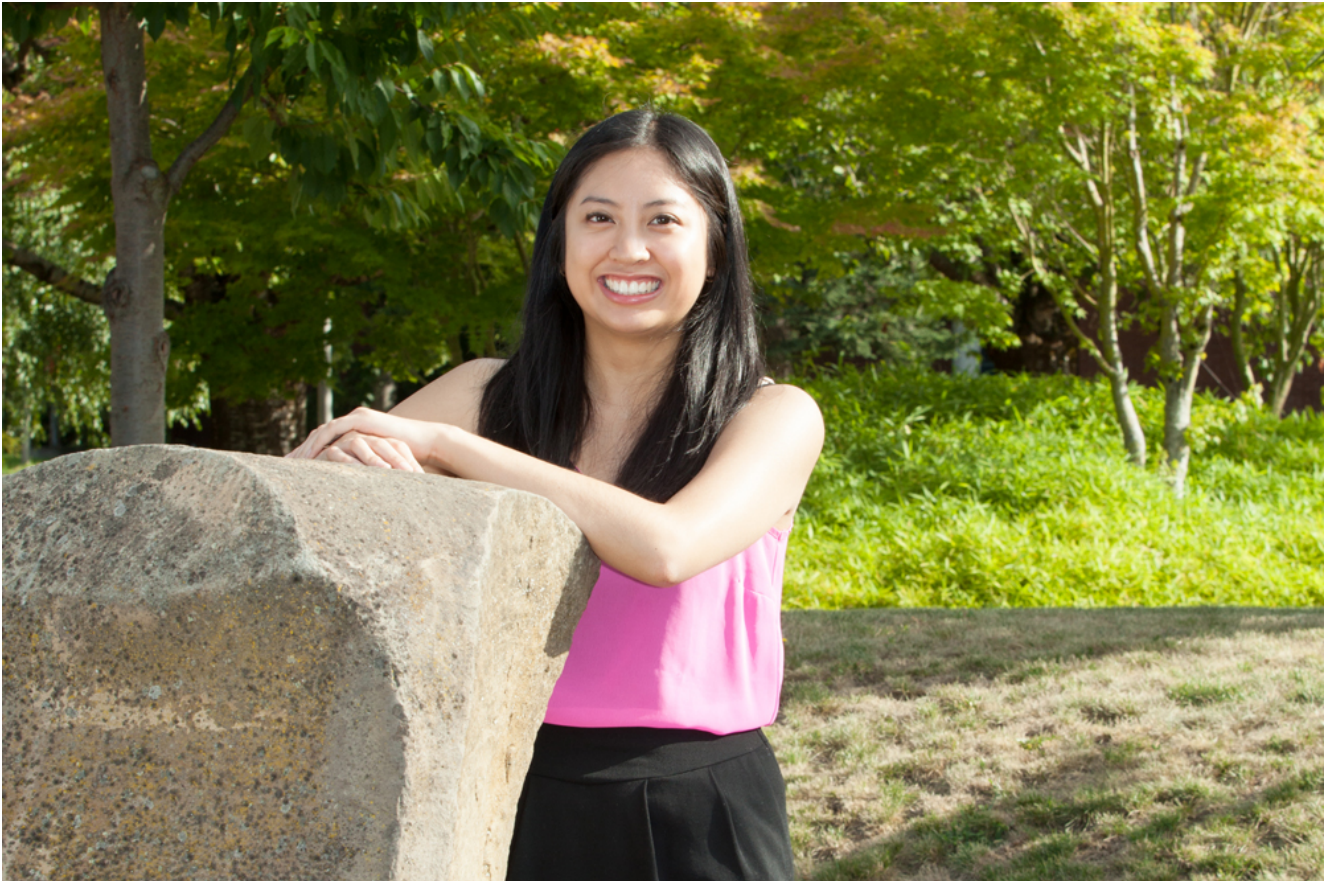
This opportunity comes through a recently developed program called BUILD-EXIT0. Introduced in 2015, BUILD-EXIT0 is a program designed to support undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing research careers in the biomedical, behavioral, clinical, health, and social sciences. Scholars receive a broad range of support and opportunities. Over the course of their three years in the program (one here at Clark, the other two at Portland State University, the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, the University of Alaska in Anchorage, or the University of Guam), scholars will enroll in specific courses and will participate in workshops designed to enhance their skills and knowledge in science and research. In addition to summer research training, scholars will be placed in research labs and will receive paid research internships, as well as some tuition benefits. And scholars will have access to dedicated advisors and mentors to help them navigate their educational pathway.

This a great opportunity for students interested in solving pressing medical problems, discovering new scientific breakthroughs, or simply satisfying their curiosity about the world around them. Interested students can visit The first step to applying is to visit the BUILD-EXIT0 website—but they should do so quickly, as the application deadline before noon on Friday, March 4.

Clark students interested in participating in the program may direct questions to Professor Travis Kibota (tkibota@clark.edu, 992-2282). Dr. Kibota can put interested students in contact with one of Clark's current 2015 BUILD-EXIT0 scholars to get some first-hand information about the program.

This article was contributed by Prof. Roberto Anitori

A smart investment



Clark College student Cindy Nguyen hopes to become an ultrasound technician.

“I’ve always wanted to go to college,” says Clark student Cindy Nguyen. Even so—and despite her excellent grades—Nguyen acknowledges that college has its challenges.

“When you come to college, you need to learn to study more efficiently than you did in high school,” says the 19-year-old. “And there’s the money thing: tuition, and then textbooks are really expensive, like \$200 a quarter.”

Like almost three-quarters of Clark's student body, Nguyen is a first-generation college student. Her mother, a nail technician, and her father, who installs hardwood flooring, never had the chance to attend college in their native Vietnam. Paying for college for their children (Nguyen's older sister, who also attended Clark, is now a social worker, and her younger sister is still in middle school) is a financial challenge for them—but one they have decided is worth the sacrifice.

"They're really supportive," says Nguyen. "They're willing to do anything for me to pursue my education, because they never had that opportunity."

Being able to attend Clark has helped significantly in reducing the cost of college for the Nguyen family, who have lived in Vancouver since the 1990s. Nguyen is able to save on housing by staying with her parents while completing her prerequisites at Clark before transferring to a farther-away institution to complete her degree in ultrasound technology. Furthermore, she has received support from scholarships made possible by generous donors to the Clark College Foundation.

"That's been really helpful," she says. "It's relieved the financial burden. Without the scholarships, I would have to get a job to support myself in college. This way, I can just concentrate on my studies. I'm so focused on what I'm doing."

Every year, Clark College Foundation supports the college's students with tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships, many of which are funded by Clark alumni who remember being struggling students themselves.

Nguyen says having total strangers investing in her education gives her a sense of responsibility to make that investment worthwhile. "It's really motivating," she says. "Their way of helping me has allowed me to enable myself, achieve an education, and hopefully support other people one day. I see

myself working at a hospital and helping people as an ultrasound technician. That's my dream. So what I'm learning right now, I'm going to give back to them—and I'm going to help support my parents, too.”

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley