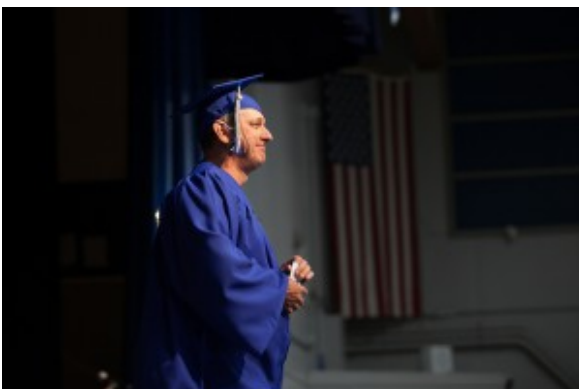


Changing Their Futures



Tyrene Weitz receives the Pat Fencil Scholarship during the 2014 GED/High School completion ceremony

Clark College celebrated its GED and High School Completion Ceremony on Saturday, June 21, capping off graduation week 2014 with a heartfelt ceremony featuring two student speakers and the conferring of certificates for GED or high school completion on more than 60 graduates.



Peter Smith

After a welcome from President Bob Knight and a greeting from Board of Trustees Chair Royce Pollard, the microphone was handed over to two student speakers, Peter Smith and Tyrene Weitz. High school equivalency recipient Peter Smith started his comments by noting that the day had special meaning for him, as he was celebrating not only his degree, but also one year of sobriety.

Smith explained that a year ago, after finding himself in jail for a DUI, he decided the time had come to change his life. Earning his high school degree was the first step toward that; he plans to begin earning a certificate from Clark's welding program this summer as he continues his path toward a better life. "Hopefully, someday soon, someone like me will be standing here and my tax dollars will have helped him or her accomplish their goals," Smith said.

Smith thanked his girlfriend for her role in getting him to come to Clark, and noted that one of the things that many attending the ceremony had in common was support of family and loved ones. The O'Connell Sports Complex gymnasium was filled with balloons, flowers and the occasional noise-maker—proof of that support.

GED recipient Tyrene Weitz spoke next, saying that she had "given up" on school by the sixth grade and dropped out by the ninth grade. She added that while she had always wanted to get more education, she kept putting it off after beginning a family at a young age. A year ago, she too took the first step. "I know college is not easy, but nothing worth doing is, and to succeed you need to do the best you can, right where you are, with what you have," she said.

Weitz has not only completed her GED, but she has also completed English 101 and is on her way to achieving her goal of becoming a registered nurse.

Weitz got a surprise boost toward that goal after she left the stage, when Dean of Basic Education, English, Communications & Humanities Deena Godwin announced that Weitz was the recipient of this year's Pat Fencil scholarship.



Named after a longtime Adult Basic Education instructor, the scholarship provides \$1,500 toward tuition to an ABE student transitioning to college-level classes at Clark.

The day was capped by Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Tim Cook presenting the class to President Knight, who conferred the degrees on the graduates. After each student crossed the stage to receive their degrees, President Knight sent them out in the sunny day with words of encouragement: "Your time at Clark has provided you with new skills, new perspectives, and new confidence. These are powerful tools. As you take your next step, use those tools to build a bright future for yourselves and for our community."

See more photos from the ceremony on our [Flickr page](#).

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Making the Most of her Opportunity



2014-2015 Presidential Scholarship recipient Natasha Hambrook

Early in Natasha Hambrook's high school career, things weren't looking so great. She felt frustrated by the lack of academic challenge in her classes; at the same time, she was having trouble accessing help in subjects where she was having difficulty, like math. She could have become discouraged. She could have checked out, or gotten into trouble, the way some bright but bored young students do.

Instead, she came to Clark.

Hambrook enrolled in Washington State's Running Start program, which allows students to take college classes while still enrolled in high school. That decision paid off on June 19, when Hambrook not only earned her associate degree at age 17, but was also named recipient of the 2014-2015 Community College President's Award. The annual scholarship is given to a Clark College graduate who is transferring to a WSU Vancouver degree program and who has demonstrated leadership potential, a commitment to community service, and academic

achievement. The scholarship award provides full-time tuition and is renewable for one additional year, essentially providing full tuition to complete a bachelor's degree.

Hambrook, who lives in Vancouver with her family and will turn 18 in July, has thrived at Clark, earning a 3.98 grade point average—yes, even in math, a subject she came to love. “Coming to Clark College has been the best experience,” she says. “I’ve met so many amazing instructors and classmates who really believed in me.”

Hambrook took classes in Clark’s challenging biology and chemistry sequences as preparation for her chosen career path of becoming a pediatric surgeon. She says one highlight of her time at Clark was getting to visit the college’s cadaver lab during a biology class.

“We got to reach inside the body,” recalls Hambrook. “I think a lot of people were surprised by how I reacted, because I’m kind of a ‘girly girl,’ and I think they thought I’d be turned off by that. But I loved it.”

Hambrook was able to get a different kind of hands-on experience at Clark with another one of her interests: volunteerism. In winter quarter 2014, she became the Student Volunteer Coordinator for Clark’s Service and Leadership in the Community (SLIC) program. In that role, she organized groups of students on volunteer trips to organizations like Habitat for Humanity and Clark County Food Bank, as well as a beach-cleaning trip to Cape Disappointment State Park.

On top of the 10 hours per week spent working for SLIC, Hambrook spent another six or more hours volunteering at the Southwest Washington Humane Society, where she helps care for cats and trains other teen volunteers.

Hambrook says her commitment to community service comes both from a love of helping others and from her own family’s experiences. “My family has received help from the food bank

in the past, so I know there's a need for community service," she says.



Natasha Hambrook receives her degree from President Knight at Clark's 2014 commencement ceremony.

Like 73 percent of Clark's student body, Natasha Hambrook is a first-generation college graduate. Her parents describe her as a very driven, self-motivated young woman. "She did it all on her own," says her father, Matt Hambrook, of Natasha's decision to enter Running Start and pursue a degree at Clark. "We just ferried her around."

"I am so proud of her accomplishments," added Natasha's mother, Denise Hollar-Hambrook, who has been working two jobs to help support the family, which also includes Natasha's younger brother, Matthew. "She will be a compassionate doctor—she will make a difference."

Clark College President Robert K. Knight announced Hambrook's scholarship during the college's 2014 commencement ceremony at Sleep Country Amphitheater. During the announcement, he said that a nominator had described Hambrook as "a rare type of goal-oriented student who combines exceptional natural ability with a willingness and eagerness to learn."

Hambrook plans to spend the summer continuing her volunteer work at the Humane Society, and possibly at the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington as well. She's already investigating on-campus volunteer opportunities at WSU Vancouver, where she will begin taking classes in the fall of 2014.

"It feels so amazing to have won this scholarship," Hambrook says. "I am so grateful I had the opportunity to participate in Running Start, because Clark helped shape me into the woman I am today."

Under the Caps



Jaime Taylor and Susan Baker

Susan Baker and Jaime Taylor had to arrive at the Sleep

Country Amphitheater before 6 p.m. to get their spots near the head of the line of graduates waiting for the Clark College commencement ceremony's 7 p.m. start. But for both women, the wait for this moment was much longer than an hour.

"I started this journey in 1995," said Baker, who works as a teacher in the college's Child & Family Studies department. "And then I had children, and I had to put things on hold for a while, but now here I am!"

Taylor—who, like Baker, was graduating with honors with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE)—told a similar story. "It was kind of my time," she explained about her choice to enroll at Clark, where she worked in Baker's classroom as part of her studies. "My kids had gone to school and it was time for me to do something for myself."



Judith Gomez

All along the line, there were tales of dreams deferred.

Judith Gomez—also among the ECE contingent at the head of the line—first began taking classes in Clark’s non-credit English as a Second Language program 16 years ago, soon after she moved to Vancouver from her native Mexico. At the time, she spoke no English, but she was determined to go to college. She had to drop out twice when she had children, but eventually she was able to improve her English skills to the point that she could take for-credit classes.

“English isn’t my first language, so for me, doing papers was double the work,” she said, beaming under her blue mortarboard cap, from which dangled the golden tassel and insignia of Phi Theta Kappa, the honor society for two-year colleges. “But I was determined, and my teachers were amazing, so supportive.”

Gomez, who also works in Child & Family Studies as an early-intervention specialist, said she hoped her children—ages 19, 14, and 10—would follow in her footsteps to pursue college educations. “In ECE, we call it ‘modeling,’” she said. “You model the right behavior, and the children see it and learn. My children are so excited already. They’re all talking about going to college.”

Kevin Ross was also hoping to being role model. “I am the first one from my whole family to graduate from college,” he said as he waited to receive his Associate in Applied Technology in degree in Supervisory Management. “We’re talking parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins. It feels good—it feels *great*. It gives my family members something to see. ... I have a little brother. I want to set an example for him, to show him that you can succeed, no matter where you come from or what’s happened in your life.”



Juliab Dutkel, Carlos Cervantes, Gregory Michael, and Kevin Ross

For Ross, life has not always been peaceful. He first started thinking about attending Clark when he was incarcerated at Larch Corrections Center. He got to know Clark College President Bob Knight, who regularly visits the center to play basketball with inmates. "As I approached my time to come out [of Larch], Bob started asking me, 'What are you going to do next? You should come to Clark,'" Ross recalled. "So I went to Clark. It's offered me an alternate route toward success."

Ross said he plans to transfer to WSU Vancouver to pursue a bachelor's degree in business. He will not be the first former inmate to do so—in fact, Clark College has long run an educational program within Larch, and on the Friday following commencement, a ceremony within the correctional facility's walls would celebrate the 34 inmates who earned their High School Equivalencies during this academic year.

Standing next to Kevin Ross was Carlos Cervantes, whose cap sat atop a long mane of curly gray hair. Cervantes came to Clark when the housing-market crash put an end to his career as a Realtor. He was graduating with a degree in Paralegal, despite having suffered financial hardships after losing his job.

“I was really struggling, but I got scholarships,” Cervantes said. “The Clark College Foundation made my education possible.”



Katie Brilz and Lacey Mac-Rhyann

For other graduates, this commencement wasn't a dream deferred—rather, it was a dream accelerated. Lacey Mac-Rhyann had decorated her cap with the slogan “17 with my AST.” Mac-Rhyann was one of the 235 graduates who participated in Running Start, a Washington State program that allows students to take college classes while still enrolled in high school. “It was the most phenomenal thing,” she said of the program. “It didn't just give me college credit—it gave me college experience.”

Ana Lai, who had decorated her cap with pictures of scientific equipment and the logo of University of Washington, also appreciated being part of Running Start. “It gave me a head start,” said the Ft. Vancouver High student, who plans to become a mechanical engineer. “I did the calculus and physics sequences, and I loved it.”



Ana Lai

Alecsander Thompson, who attended Evergreen High School, said he appreciated the serious atmosphere he experienced at Clark through Running Start. "In high school, you don't pay to get an education," he said. "In college, people are there because they want to learn."

Thompson was standing next to his friend Mark Hamilton, also a Running Start student from Evergreen, and who like Thompson plans on transferring to Portland State University's criminal justice program. Another thing the two young men had in common was that they originally chose Running Start in part because Clark's schedule offered them the flexibility to work full-time while attending school.

"You kind of cut out sleeping after a while," laughed Hamilton.



Timothy Witcher, Alecsander Thompson, Mark Hamilton, and English instructor Kate Scrivener.

As the bagpipes began to sound, the graduates quickly adjusted caps and gowns in preparation for their procession. This was the moment that would make all of it—the sleeplessness, the studying, the doubts and fears—worthwhile. Near the front of the line, Susan Baker got ready to complete the journey she’d begun almost 20 years earlier.

“You know, when you’re a mom, you spend so much time telling your kids that you’re proud of them,” she said. “It’s pretty cool to be hearing my kids tell me they’re proud of me.”

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley. More photos of graduates are available in the college’s Flickr album.

Congratulations, Class of 2014!



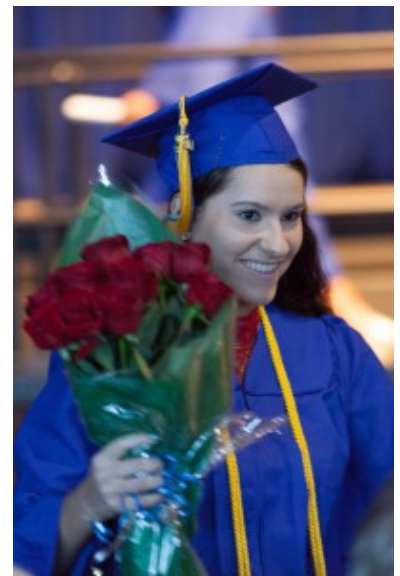
Student speaker Michelle Brincefield addresses her fellow graduates during the 2014 commencement ceremony.

Clark College honored its 78th graduating class—the largest in the college’s 80-year history—at the 2014 Clark College Commencement ceremony held Thursday evening, June 19, at the Sleep Country Amphitheater.

Approximately 2,100 degrees and certificates were conferred on the next generation of our community’s workers, leaders, and scholars—up from 1,900 the year before. Approximately 715 graduates participated in the commencement ceremony, including 235 Running Start graduates—again, a new record for the college, which has the largest Running Start program in the state.

"Tonight we are here to celebrate your individual accomplishment, and more than that, we are here to celebrate a community of accomplishment," said Clark College President Robert K. Knight in his opening remarks to the Class of 2014. "Our community needs each and every one of you with your individual skills and talents."

Clark College Board of Trustees Chair Royce Pollard echoed that thought in his own remarks, saying "We know our future is in good hands with you, just as our community has been in good hands with Clark College alumni for eight decades now." The former Vancouver mayor then asked the graduates to raise their right hands and repeat the following pledge: "I will never forget that I am a member of the Penguin Nation."



Presidential
Scholarship
recipient Natasha
Hambrook takes her
seat after
receiving her
diploma.

For the second year in a row, the ceremony's student speaker was chosen through an essay contest open to all 2014

graduates. Outgoing ASCC president Dena Brill introduced Michelle Brincefield, who entered Clark through Running Start and is planning on attending New Mexico Highlands University on a full athletic scholarship.

"Wherever life takes you after today, you can always take pride in knowing that you have a college degree," Brincefield said. "No one can take that accomplishment away from you."

During the ceremony, Clark College President Robert K. Knight announced the names of the recipients of the 2014 Exceptional Faculty Awards. The 2014 awardees are Kelly Fielding, instructor of psychology; Chris Martin, instructor of computer technology and computer graphics technology; Sarah Theberge, professor of early childhood education; and Jim Wilkins-Luton, professor of English.

Knight also announced the recipient of the 2014-2015 Community College President's Award, which is given to a Clark College graduate who is transferring to a WSU Vancouver degree program and who demonstrated leadership potential, a commitment to community service, and academic achievement. Natasha Hambrook will receive full-time tuition that is renewable for one additional year.

This year's commencement speaker was *ABC Evening News* anchor Byron Pitts, who delivered an inspiring speech about the importance of helping others. Pitts began by explaining his own difficult beginnings with education: Until age 12, he was functionally illiterate, and it took the unflagging support of his single mother to help push him toward academic success.



2014 commencement
keynote speaker
Byron Pitts

Pitts said that while some of that night's graduating class may have had an easy time earning their degrees, he suspected many had had rough roads to travel. "I imagine there are some graduates here tonight who heard too often, 'Not you, now now, not yet. You're not good enough. You're not ready,'" he said, adding that he called such graduates "Children of the Storm."

"To you, the Children of the Storm—to you for whom this night was not guaranteed—you especially have a responsibility, I think, to allow somebody else to live their dream," he said. "Whether it's in nursing or as a machinist or going on to continue your education—whatever it is, in that space where you stand, make life better for someone else."

Pitts received a standing ovation, and it was clear that many attendees found his message inspiring, as posts on social media soon showed.

Photos and Video: Clark College/Jenny Shadley.

Watch the entire ceremony on CVTV.

A Supreme Opportunity



Washington State Supreme Court Justice Susan Owens, *standing*, answers questions from students in Clark's Business Law class, which she visited with Chief Justice Barbara Madsen and Associate Chief Justice Charles Johnson.

In 2012, the Clark College Law Club took a field trip to Olympia, where they visited both the State Legislature and the State Supreme Court. While there, paralegal student Richard Thomas got the chance to chat with then-Justice James Johnson, who retired from the court last month.

“Justice Johnson and I were talking, and I asked him, ‘Does the court ever go out and visit places around the state?’” recalled Thomas. “And he said, ‘Yes! We love going on the road. The problem is, we have to be invited.’ So I came back here the next day and started trying to get this going.”



Clark Law Club member Richard Thomas helped make the Washington Supreme Court’s visit a reality.

Two years later, Thomas’s efforts—along with those of the rest of the Law Club and the college itself—resulted in the Washington State Supreme Court spending two days at Clark College. The nine justices visited classrooms, met with members of the community, and heard three cases during their time at the college. Justice Mary Yu, who had been appointed by Gov. Jay Inslee but not yet sworn in at the time of the visit, also attended many of the events, including an open forum.

Many students from Clark’s highly regarded Paralegal program attended the open forum, gaining career advice from the member of the highest court in the state. The justices were emphatic about the importance of paralegals in their work.

“A paralegal really is part of the team,” said Justice Mary Fairhurst, who spent 16 years working in the Washington Attorney General’s Office before becoming a judge. “We

couldn't do our job without them."

"A good paralegal is a little bit like a fortune teller," added Justice Yu. "Somebody who knows which deadlines are coming and makes sure everything's taken care of to meet them. That is so helpful to the lawyers."

The court heard three cases in Gaiser Student Center on the second day of their visit: one on whether or not drug court staffing should be presumptively open to the public; the disciplinary case of a lawyer; and a case questioning whether or not past acts of domestic violence were admissible evidence in assessing the credibility of an alleged victim. Joining the court to hear these cases was Justice Pro Tem Joel Penoyar, who was temporarily filling Justice James Johnson's seat until Justice Yu was sworn in.



Clark paralegal student Becky Pomaville listens as Washington State Supreme Court justices answer her question about appellate law.

The justices took questions from the courtroom audience after two of the hearings. "There are hardly any lawyers in this area who practice appellate law," said Clark paralegal student Becky Pomaville. "What is it that makes it so difficult?"

"That's true, though of course there are some," replied

Justice Debra Stephens, who practiced appellate law for many years. “The beauty of being an appellate lawyer is that you don’t often have to go to court very often. You can do it from your deck chair, so to speak. ... What makes an excellent appellate lawyer is a study of where the court is headed. If you’re interested in that, I hope you do pursue it.”

Afterward, Pomaville said she was heartened by Justice Stephens’ words. She hopes to continue on to law school after graduating from Clark, hopefully in spring 2015, and to specialize in appellate law. Surprisingly, just six months previously, Pomaville hadn’t even considered going to college. “When I graduated from high school, I got a bunch of scholarships, but I didn’t complete college,” she said. “I joke that I got my ‘MRS’ degree instead.”

But when the recently single mother of eight stopped by Clark’s Career Center for some job-hunting help, she noticed a poster for the college’s Eligibility Programs that mentioned tuition assistance for displaced homemakers.

“I hadn’t even thought of the possibility of coming here,” she said, but stopped by Eligibility Programs and quickly found herself enrolled for winter quarter. Now she is thriving in the Paralegal program. “I am learning a lot. Last term I took a criminal law course and it was really tough—and I enjoyed every minute of it.”



The justices heard three

real cases during their visit to Clark.

For paralegal student Richard Thomas, whose offhand question during a field trip resulted in this visit, the event was a fitting way to end his time at Clark; he anticipates graduating this quarter and is hopeful that his current internship may turn into a full-time job. Looking every inch the professional in his suit and tie, he said he valued the opportunity to not only witness the justices hearing cases, but also to spend time socializing with them during private receptions organized by the college during the visit.

“When you have a chance to rub elbows with those who are at the pinnacle of your profession, I think it’s incumbent on you to absorb their experience and their wisdom,” he said. “But then at the same time, once you get to talk with them one-on-one, you realize they’re real people, too.”

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley. For more photos from this event, visit our Flickr album.

Honoring Those Who Fell, Supporting Those Who Served



Members of the 142nd Wing of the Portland Air National Guard formed the color guard that opened the Veterans Resource Center ribbon-cutting event on May 22.

On May 22, the Thursday before Memorial Day, Clark College hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its recently opened Veterans Resource Center (VRC). The event began with a color guard and the singing of the National Anthem by student Petya Grozeva. VRC Coordinator Kurt Kolch introduced the event by reminding guests that unlike Veterans Day, which honors those among us who have served in the military, Memorial Day is a day to remember those men and women who died while serving.

Physics professor Dick Shamrell, a 25-year Air Force veteran, spoke about how veterans resource centers like Clark's helped him and his wife to succeed at second careers outside of the military. He also described how his military experience enriches his teaching—when asked by a student what the speed of sound was, for example, he can accurately describe what it is like to go *twice* that speed.



A ceremonial ribbon to the VRC's doorway was cut by Clark College President Bob Knight, student veteran Alex Peraza, VRC donor Jane Hagelstein and Jennifer Rhoads, president of the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington, which

contributed \$30,000 toward the VRC in November. The Vancouver Barracks Historical Society provided military uniforms and maps relevant to the region for guests to view.

Peraza, a veteran of the U.S. Army who served as an infantryman in Iraq, is in his second year at Clark pursuing a Associate of Applied Technology degree in electrical engineering; after graduating from Clark, he plans to pursue his bachelor's degree at Washington State University Vancouver. A single father of three children, he said he is motivated to continue his studies "not only by my children's needs, but by my nation's needs," citing President Obama's 2011 State of the Union address that connected the country's success to an increase in graduates from fields related to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

"The people at the Veteran Resource Center at Clark College are the reason why I have been so successful in the past and moving forward," Peraza added. "From [Veterans Affairs Program Specialist] Mike Gibson to [VetCorps Navigator] Tim McPharlin, as well as supporting staff, all have helped me navigate the hurdles and obstacles of being a student veteran."

Approximately 700 veterans enroll at Clark College every quarter, about 500 of whom use GI Bill benefits to help pay for tuition, fees, housing, books and supplies.

More photos from the event at our [Flickr page](#).

Video: Clark College/Nick Bremer Korb

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

The Personal Connection



“It’s a really great, interactive relationship where you’re able to talk to someone about what you’re going through,” says Clark student Kassidy Quade, *left*, about her experience with First Year Experience mentor Cindy Magallanes.

When Princeton McBride started classes at Clark College in fall 2013, he knew he could use some help getting adjusted. Not only was he new to college, but he was new to the area, having moved to Vancouver from his native South Carolina shortly after graduating from high school. The move itself was

a major adjustment, the 18-year-old says: "I didn't even own a rain jacket."

So when McBride saw a message in his student email about the opportunity to be connected with a mentor through Clark's First Year Experience program, he jumped at the chance. "I immediately knew that I needed someone who would guide me throughout my first year of college," he said.

As luck would have it, McBride didn't wind up with just any mentor—he was paired with Matt Rygg, Clark's Dean of Student Success and Retention. The two began meeting regularly, sharing doughnuts and coffee as they discussed the challenges of moving across country and tackling new coursework, as well as McBride's newly discovered passion for helping the homeless. Rygg shared his encouragement and his knowledge of the college's systems and services with McBride, helping him navigate the challenges of his first year—a time when many students become overwhelmed and wind up dropping out. It worked: Today McBride is well on his way to completing his prerequisites to enter Clark's highly competitive nursing program, and is also starting a new student club called Through the Eyes of Poverty that aims to create a stronger connection between the Clark community and the homeless community. He hopes to eventually earn a bachelor's degree in nursing and to then transition to medical school to become a doctor of emergency medicine.



Princeton McBride, *right*, says his First Year Experience mentor, Matt Rygg, helped him “find the right path” during his first year at Clark.

“I have been really proud of the ways Princeton has invested himself on campus,” Rygg says. “He is doing well in his classes and has made good friends here. I recently walked by the fountain outside Gaiser Hall on the way to a meeting, and I saw Princeton sitting with a group of friends enjoying the sunshine and each other’s company. It made my heart glad to see him integrating so well into the Clark community.”

This is the goal of the FYE Mentor Program: Students get one-on-one support and advice from someone at the college, and college employees get the personal connection to students’ success that can sometimes get lost in day-to-day administrative work. It’s a win-win situation—one that research is showing can help keep students in school. Janette Clay, First Year Experience & Outcomes Assessment Support Specialist, says FYE has surveyed the students who have been part of the mentor program. This research found that the fall 2012 cohort of mentees (the program’s first cohort) fared significantly better than their peers. They earned a C or

higher in 90.7 percent of their first-term courses, compared to 76 percent for first-term, degree-seeking students without mentors. And while 20 percent of all first-term, degree-seeking students didn't return to Clark for winter quarter, 100 percent of the mentees did.

"Although the mentee cohorts have been relatively small so far, they do fare better in their courses and retain at higher rates than those students without a mentor," says Clay. "As the program grows, we hope to see the effects of the positive relationships and the support that is provided by the mentors spread even further across the college."

Kassidy Quade is immensely grateful to have met her FYE mentor, baking instructional technician Cindy Magallanes. "I'd been out of school for three years, I'd gotten my GED in January," she says, sitting next to Magallanes in Gaiser Student Center, where the two met at least weekly during Quade's first quarter. "With Cindy, I can talk to someone who's a part of the school and who knows the school—which I don't. And she's always encouraging me. When I was writing my essays for English class—I'm horrible at writing—"

"But you *aren't* horrible at writing," interrupts Magallanes, laughing. "You did fine, right?"

"I try to encourage her and give her that boost: 'You can do it! I know you can!'," Magallanes adds. "I remember being a student here and not knowing anyone at the college, and how scary that was."

Magallanes enrolled at Clark in 2000 because she wanted to start her own bakery. At the time, one of her nieces was working at Lower Columbia College. "She called me the first night after classes and asked, 'How'd it go?' She called me the second night, too, and she just kept calling. She really wanted to make sure I kept going. I remember how important that was for me, how helpful. For me, the FYE mentoring

program is a great way to pay that forward.”

Even after Quade’s and Magallanes’s mentoring partnership officially ended at the end of winter quarter, the pair continue to keep in touch. Quade, who is now in her second quarter of Clark’s paralegal program, says she would recommend the mentoring program to any student new to Clark.

“I think it’s a great program,” she says. “I say, get involved.”

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Trees and Technology



President Bob Knight receives Clark’s Tree Campus USA award from Ben Thompson of the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

On April 9, Clark College celebrated both the natural and digital worlds at its annual Arbor Day event, as it added two new trees to the campus’s beautiful arboretum and unveiled a new, student-designed website that uses digital technology to

catalog that arboretum. The new online map allows visitors to instantly access descriptions of most trees on campus through their mobile devices.

“This website is a great testament to the value of service learning here at Clark,” said Computer Technology Department Chair Robert Hughes at the ceremony, which took place under sunny skies just south of the Chimes Tower. “It showcases the talent of our students, the value of our instruction, and a great part of Clark’s visual landscape.”

The mobile-friendly online map is the product of work done by students in instructor Gus Torres’s spring 2013 Web Design II class. The students worked with the college’s Campus Tree Advisory Committee to identify trees in the campus’s extensive arboretum, which includes such notable trees as a six-decade-old Scarlet Oak and 100 Shirofugen blossoming cherry trees donated to the campus by Japanese businessman John Kageyama in 1990. Students then GPS-tagged each listed tree and added it to the map with information about its genus and species. Additional students contributed to the project in subsequent quarters. Hughes was one of the faculty members who helped support the project, along with Torres, Computer Graphics Technology professor Kristl Plinz, and Computer Technology instructor Bruce Elgort.



The online map documents Clark’s extensive arboretum.

The event also featured the official bestowing on Clark of

Tree Campus USA designation by the Arbor Day Foundation for the fourth year in a row. Tree Campus USA colleges must meet rigorous standards in five separate areas to earn this designation. The award was presented by a Washington State Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry Specialist Ben Thompson and received by Clark College President Robert K. Knight.

“It’s very exciting that Clark College has such enthusiasm for urban forestry,” said Thompson, who noted that Clark was helping Vancouver earn a “trifecta” by being a Tree City USA with both a Tree Line USA and a Tree Campus USA. He also noted that Clark’s arboretum might benefit students in unsuspected ways.

“I don’t think it’s a coincidence that so many colleges are located on beautiful campuses filled with trees,” he said. “It puts us at ease, at rest. It makes us ready for learning.”

Clark College Bob Knight agreed. “If our students feel comfortable and our faculty feel comfortable, then it opens up their minds and creativity more,” he said, adding that the new arboretum map was a perfect example of that. “It’s exactly what we want to encourage here at Clark College.”



Children from Clark’s Child & Family Studies program get help on their tree-themed scavenger hunt from, *left to*

right, Dean of STEM Dr. Peter Williams, President Bob Knight, and Campus Tree Committee members Tim Carper and Melissa Favara.

Other speakers at the event included Dean of STEM Dr. Peter Williams and Zahid Chaudry, GIS Program Manager of the U.S. Forest Service Region 6. Additionally, two trees were added to the campus arboretum: an Eastern Hemlock and an Eastern White Pine. These are the official state trees of Pennsylvania and Maine, respectively, and are part of an effort by the college to include all 50 state trees in the campus arboretum; with these two additions, the arboretum contains 39 state trees.

Also present were two classrooms of children from Clark's Child & Family Studies program, who participated in a tree-themed scavenger hunt and received "seed bombs" filled with seeds of indigenous plants.

Photo: Clark College/Hannah Erickson

Trees and Technology



The new mobile-friendly arboretum map pinpoints and

identifies trees all over
Clark's main campus.

On April 9, Clark College will celebrate both the natural and digital worlds at its annual Arbor Day event, as it adds two new trees to the campus's beautiful arboretum and unveils a new, student-designed website that uses digital technology to catalog that arboretum. The new online map will allow visitors to instantly access descriptions of most trees on campus through their mobile devices.

The mobile-friendly online map is the product of work done by students in instructor Gus Torres's spring 2013 Web Design II class. The students worked with the college's Campus Tree Advisory Committee to identify trees in the campus's extensive arboretum, which includes such notable trees as a six-decade-old Scarlet Oak and 100 Shirofugen blossoming cherry trees donated to the campus by Japanese businessman John Kageyama in 1990. Students then GPS-tagged each tree and added it to the map with information about its genus and species. Additional students contributed to the project in subsequent quarters, with faculty from both the Computer Graphics Technology and the Computer Technology departments providing guidance and support.

"I look forward to the sight of Clark College denizens and those in the community at large walking across campus consulting their phones and tablets to find the answer to 'What kind of tree is this?'" said Computer Technology Department Head Robert Hughes, who also teaches in the Computer Graphics Technology program. "Project-based client work has been a component of our graphics and web-related curriculum for a long time. These types of experiences are helpful as our students move into the workforce."

Hughes was one of the faculty members who helped support the project, along with Torres, Computer Graphics Technology professor Kristl Plinz, and Computer Technology instructor

Bruce Elgort.



Members of Facilities Services proudly display Clark College's Tree Campus USA award during the college's 2013 Arbor Day event.

In keeping with this year's Arbor Day theme, "Trees and Technology," the event's keynote speech will be presented by Zahid Chaudry, GIS Program Manager of the U.S. Forest Service Region 6. Additionally, two trees are being added to the campus arboretum: an Eastern Hemlock and an Eastern White Pine. These are the official state trees of Pennsylvania and Maine, respectively, and are part of an effort by the college to include all 50 state trees in the campus arboretum; with these two additions, the arboretum will contain 39 state trees.

The event, which will take place at 11:00 a.m. just south of Cannell Library, will also feature the official bestowing on Clark of Tree Campus USA designation by the Arbor Day Foundation for the fourth year in a row. Tree Campus USA colleges must meet rigorous standards in five separate areas to earn this designation. The award will be presented by a staff member from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and received by Clark College President Robert K. Knight.

The event is free and open to the public.

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Student Spotlight: Amelia Longbons and Christopher Beh



Amelia Longbons and Christopher Beh are Clark College's 2014 All-Washington Academic Team members.

Two Clark College students who serve their college and their community were named to the 2014 All-Washington Academic Team.

Amelia Longbons of Kelso and Christopher Beh of Vancouver were among 68 students from Washington's 34 community and technical

colleges who were recognized on March 27 in a ceremony at South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia. Washington Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen was the keynote speaker.

According to organizers, each member of the All-Washington Academic team received a scholarship from KeyBank of Washington. In addition, many of Washington's public and private four-year colleges are offering scholarship opportunities to members of the team.



About Amelia Longbons

Amelia Longbons can vouch for the value of community colleges: She earned her Associate of Arts at Lower Columbia College while still in high school through the Running Start Program and then enrolled at Clark College to enter its highly regarded Dental Hygiene program. Now she is busy on a project to provide dental hygiene care and education to homeless people in Southwest Washington, all while maintaining a 4.0 GPA.

This is not Longbons's first academic honor. She is also a recipient of the American Dental Association Foundation Allied

Dental Student Scholarship, awarded to just 15 students nationwide each year and the 2012 Scholastic Achievement Award, granted by Lower Columbia College to the student with the highest grade point average in the graduating class. Additionally, she was valedictorian of her graduating class at Kelso High School.

Longbons's academic achievements are all the more impressive considering how many hours she devotes to volunteer activities. She has a long history of volunteering, but currently concentrates most of her efforts toward her chosen career. She assisted at the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington's Children's Dental Day and is in the process of organizing a free dental day for local homeless and veterans in the community. She is a member of the Student American Dental Hygienists Association and regularly participates in outreach efforts to promote dental hygiene among underserved communities.

Longbons, 20, plans to graduate with her Associate of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene in June, after which she will enroll in the Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene program at Eastern Washington University. She says she hopes to one day use her education to travel to other countries and provide dental hygiene care to the poor and underserved.

"For me, winning this scholarship has been a great honor and made me understand that community colleges are an amazing opportunity to allow me to grow and reach my academic potential," says Longbons. "It's been an inspiration and a motivation to keep going and to work my hardest and to continue my education and give everything I have to becoming a successful student and becoming a successful dental hygienist."



About Christopher Beh

At age 17, Christopher Beh has already experienced a lot of changes and challenges. Beh was 8 years old when his father left the family, and Beh's mother had to work two jobs to keep them afloat.

"At the time, I didn't realize the amount of work that she was putting in so that I could have a future," says Beh. "I thought that she didn't care; of myself as inept. I truly believed that I wasn't capable of becoming anything worthwhile."

But eventually Beh realized that he had both the drive and the ability to succeed academically. He enrolled at Clark College while still in high school through the Running Start Program, and anticipates earning his transfer associate degree in June. At Clark he has joined Alpha Sigma Phi, the college's chapter of the national two-year college honor society Phi Theta Kappa, and has sought out opportunities to challenge himself academically through Clark's rigorous Honors Program. He says these experiences have given him a newfound respect for community colleges.

"What community colleges do for students from all walks of life is absolutely incredible," says Beh. "It's an amazing

stepping stone for people who maybe aren't ready for a four-year university, or are looking for a closer-knit environment where students can work together, stay closer to home, and maybe juggle other things that they have going on."

Beh's own juggling act has become even more demanding: He has been helping his mother recover since she underwent neck surgery last year. Additionally, he helps support their household by working part-time at the college's computer help desk. Fortunately, he has been able to take advantage of some of Clark's online course offerings, allowing him more flexibility to assist his mother at home.

"Looking back, I know that I made the right choice," Beh says of his decision to attend Clark. "I've been able to help my mom through her recovery, and I'm not bogged down by student loans. I've also been able to be part of an amazing community. I feel that my professors truly care about my success, and I've found a home with Alpha Sigma Phi. At first I chose a community college for the cost and convenience, but I have found so much more at Clark College."

Beh, who is studying computer science and business at Clark, has accepted admission to the University of Washington, where he plans to major in computer science. His work at Clark has made him interested in a job in Information Technology and he hopes to one day work in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's cybercrime division.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Video: Clark College/Nick Bremer Korb