

# A remarkable journey



Evans Kaame

This year's recipient of the Community College President's Award in Honor of Val Ogden is Evans Kaame, a student who has been through much and traveled far to pursue his educational dreams.

## About Evans Kaame

Evans Kaame was born and raised in a small community in northwestern Kenya. After his father died, the family was thrown into hardship and poverty. "I watched my younger siblings crying as my mom left early in the morning and came home at 9 p.m.," he recalled. "We didn't know if we were going to eat at night or not."

When Kaame was in his early teens, he decided to leave home and live on the streets to ease the burden on his mother and siblings. "The street was a new life with so many barriers ... but because tragedies happen in life, I had to do this," he said. "I had no other option. I fought cold nights in the street ... being on drugs and breaking into people's homes. I had to survive. I had no choice."

In 2009, the course of Kaame's life changed once again, when a charity called New Hope Children entered him into its program providing housing and education to street children. At New Hope, Kaame's academic potential became realized. He graduated from high school in 2016 at the top of his class. However, his challenges were not yet over: He could not afford to enroll in college in Kenya.

New Hope's founder, Rachael Swanson, lives in Vancouver and graduated from Clark College. She encouraged Kaame to apply to Clark, and in 2018, after securing a student visa and scholarship funding from Clark College Foundation, Kaame enrolled at Clark as an international student.

Kaame has thrived at Clark College. This past academic year, he has served as student government president. He has run on the college's track-and-field and cross-country teams. He has volunteered with multiple local organizations, as well as at Clark College's Penguin Pantry and as a Peer Mentor for international students. And he has earned a Grade Point Average of more than 3.9 while doing so.

After graduating from Clark College with his transfer Associate in Arts degree, Kaame intends to continue his studies, focusing on business administration, political science, and comparative religious studies. He hopes to one day create a global initiative focused on leadership and management.

## **About the Community College President's Award**

The Community College President's Award in honor of Val Ogden is given each year to a student who has completed their studies at Clark College and is transferring to Washington State University Vancouver. They receive full tuition and fees

for two years while they finish their bachelor's degree at WSU Vancouver. The award is traditionally announced during that year's Commencement ceremony.

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**When your internship is in  
the middle of a pandemic**



Sofiya Saakyan wears safety gear during her internship at Eurobake. *Photo courtesy of Sofiya Saakyan.*

When Sofiya Saakyan, a student in Clark College's Professional Baking and Pastry Arts program, called Baron Patisserie in

early April to check on her planned spring quarter internship there, the bakery was closed indefinitely due to COVID-19. The owner told her he wasn't sure when the bakery could open again—or when Saakyan could fulfill her internship.

Saakyan is one of nine students graduating in June with an Associate in Applied Technology degree in Clark's Professional Baking and Pastry Arts program. The program's final requirement is to complete a five-week industry internship during spring term. Students work 24 hours a week gaining real-world experience before they graduate. Students cannot graduate without completing an internship.

Department Head Alison Dolder had arranged student internships in bakeries, patisseries, and chocolatiers in Vancouver and Portland. When COVID-19 restrictions shut down most food operations, Dolder had to act quickly to secure new internships for Saakyan and the other students. Because of the COVID-19 shutdown, all internships were pushed to the second half of the quarter while the department figured things out.

That's when Dolder called Josh Svenhard, co-owner and Vice President Operations at Eurobake.

## **Coming up with a Plan B, in a hurry**

Eurobake, a Portland wholesale baker, remained operating as an essential business during the COVID-19 shutdown. Svenhard is a member of Clark's Professional Baking & Pastry Arts Advisory Committee. This is the first quarter Eurobake has provided internship opportunities for Clark students.

"I think we're a perfect fit," Svenhard said. "We can bring in students during COVID-19 because we're not a retail bakery with customers, so students aren't being exposed to the public. It's important for a business to give back to its own

industry, as well as the community.”

Dolder offered all nine of the students the option of an internship at Eurobake, which is near Portland International Airport.

“We left it up to the students to do what’s best for their families,” Dolder said.

Six of the nine Clark students chose to complete an internship at Eurobake spring quarter. One student chose not to do the internship at this time due to family reasons. Two other students had been laid off from their jobs and couldn’t afford to travel to Portland for the internship. Those three students are waiting for an opportunity to do an internship in Vancouver during summer term, when COVID-19 rules allow more bakeries to open.

Two students per week are scheduled to work at Eurobake. The bakery operates from 3:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., providing ample opportunity to work around the students’ schedules. It allows students to maintain their other jobs.

Dolder said, “Eurobake is rotating our students through their bakery for their internship and is providing hands-on learning following proper social-distancing protocol. It’s a great opportunity for our students. Some want to finish the program and be available to be hired when everything opens up.”

To accommodate students, Dolder said the baking program is not taking its standard break between spring and summer term to allow students to finish their internships, even if they started later in the quarter.

## **Safety first**

Working in a wholesale bakery during a global pandemic is no different from working in a bakery pre-COVID-19, Svenhard said. Eurobake’s follows strict safety

protocol. "The baking industry has become one of the most careful," he said. "Food safety starts with washing your hands and ends when the product gets into the packing in an unadulterated form. The industry has evolved to require handwashing, not touching your face, wearing hairnets and gloves. These things are common practice every day in a bakery. We can show student interns how these safety measures can be used to safely operate a business."

Svenhard said, "We want to ensure the Clark students aren't just working at Eurobake, but also learning. We're working with only two Clark students at a time so we can give them individual attention."

Dolder said, "It takes time to train students. Bakeries that accept students for internships are training students for the way their business operates, their product line."

Svenhard explained the importance of students getting hands-on experience: "They're learning to use their skills. Learning the repetition and how to become efficient with your movement is a key part in baking, or any manufacturing business. To make hundreds of uniform products. To develop a rhythm."

He added, "The real-world bakery experience is production at speed, keeping up with line and the crew. Teaching students about food safety, R & D [research & development] projects we're working on. We have a cake department, a bread department, and a pastry line. Students are operating different kinds of machinery in each department."

Eurobake staff also talks with interns about the business side of operating a bakery. They work with their interns to do a cost analysis on what to charge for each product in order to make a profit.

# There's always summer

Dolder told her students who chose to intern at Eurobake that she would contact the other shops where they had planned internships before COVID-19 shut everything down, to see if they will allow Clark students to do internships in the summer after more businesses can open.

Dolder and the program's other instructors have worked to build relationships with local bakeries. In previous years, Clark baking students have completed internships at highly respected Portland restaurants and retail bakeries including Papa Haydn, St. Honore Patisserie, and Fleur de Lis Bakery and Cafe.

Dolder said, "The best outcome is if we get a student interning at a bakery or shop where they want to be, and then they get hired. It happens quite a bit."

## Sofiya's Story

During a class Zoom meeting after COVID-19 pushed the pause button on baking internships, Dolder told students about the new internship opportunities at Eurobake. Sofiya Saakyan chose to start the internship as soon as possible so she could graduate from Clark and start working in her chosen field. She works three eight-hour days at Eurobake. One of her favorite tasks is at Eurobake is braiding sweet raisin bread.

"You get to practice it a lot," Saakyan said. "We make hundreds of loaves. There are multiple people making it on the same bench."

She said her classes at Clark prepared her for her internship.

"I built confidence in my classes at Clark," Saakyan said.



“You learn good skills and get to practice so you can be confident that you know how to do certain things and not be afraid of many challenges.”

Saakyan grew up in Ukraine, where she learned home baking from her mother. Her family immigrated to Vancouver five years ago when she was 15. She graduated from Fort Vancouver High School, where she spent three years in that school’s baking program.

Saakyan said she hopes to land a baking job that allows her to stay in Vancouver.

“I’m very thankful for the internship,” she said. “I thank my advisor and Eurobake, who took me in. The opportunities—and the internship opportunities—at Clark College are awesome.”

Those opportunities haven’t ended: With Dolder’s help, Saakyan has landed a summer internship at the Vancouver-based Baron Patisserie, where she had originally planned to intern during spring term.

Saakyan offered advice to future baking students: “Make sure you love what you do. When you’re a baker and you love baking, I think people can taste that.”

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## **Let your Voice be Heard**



ASCC President Evans Kaame

## **LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**

We the people of this college, community, and the nation have been impacted by the wave of horrific events of unrest sweeping across the nation, beginning with the COVID-19 global pandemic and now the tragic death of George Floyd in the hands of police officers—those who have sworn to protect and serve the community. As student leaders, we share your grief and uncertainties. Some of us are wondering, why are thousands of people protesting and expressing their concerns in different cities across the nation?

Therefore, **LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD** is the theme to explain the reasons for the protests and unpack the long history of injustices that the minorities have been experiencing.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that our political system has been less functioning to meet the demands of creating a just justice system which has resulted in an exponential increase in incarceration that restoration.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that the justice department needs absolute change and complete reformation to serve our society equitably.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that our history has been distorted to reflect the reality of our justice department.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that there has some reluctance in changing the policies that drive the police department's priorities when they issue stops, searches, and arrests.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that injustices have been prone to the minorities due to unconscious biases, economic status, disproportionate representation, lack of adequate legal assistance, and the reinforcement of one race is superior and just than the other.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that a significant population of the minorities have been incarcerated.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that the Private Prison System in America is detrimentally impacting the lives of the minorities and those with less economic status.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**, that we all as a society has been reluctant to acknowledge the existence of these impacts and take the responsibility to address them and be willing to create change from ourselves, to our families, communities, and the nation.

## **RACISM IS ALIVE**

All Lives Matter Vs Black Lives Matter is not the issue but the reactions that are evidenced when injustices are done in the limelight over the Black people due to racism.

**RACISM IS ALIVE** when citizens who exercise their First Amendment protesting that BLACK LIVES MATTER are labeled as domestic terrorists.

**RACISM IS ALIVE** when it takes protestors to initiate the arrest of those who killed **Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor**, and other Black people.

**RACISM IS ALIVE** when BLACK LIVES MATTER Protestors are threatened by the head of state to invoke the Insurrection Act because they don't matter to the system.

**RACISM IS ALIVE** when minorities are perceived as a threat in the stores, streets, cities, etc.

**RACISM IS ALIVE** when people of color call for change and are perceived as radicals and troublemakers in our institutions.

**RACISM IS ALIVE** when one race is perceived as wrongdoers.

The roots of racism are historic and systemic; woven into the fabric of our country. As people of color, we experience racism in all its many forms. We want people to acknowledge it and be willing to talk about it, willing to make changes, so we, as one nation, can move forward.

**AS SOMEONE WHO LEANS TOWARD HOPE**, I strongly believe in humanity and in the conviction that racism is solvable. Our generation has seen the racial inequalities experienced in our society today—and now those who believe in change are stepping up to voice their quest for reformation. No single instrument can measure our progress toward ending racism. However, I assure you that you have the power and capability to influence others by doing what is just, right, and good for others. We have a long way to go, but we will get there.

We all possess the virtues of love, respect, and compassion—the determinants of our behavior in treating others. It is through love, respect, and compassion that people from different backgrounds are taking to the streets en masse across the country to demand justice for those who cannot. I believe in these virtues. Together, we can address these challenges. Together, we can create a society in which

every individual feels they belong and have a place to exercise their inalienable rights and privileges enshrined in the Constitution.

**Let your voice be heard.**

Sincerely,

Evans Kaame, ASCC President

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## A Quick Study



Supplies for students taking a ceramics class are bagged up in Frost Arts Center, ready for contactless pickup. *Photo: Lucy Winslow*

When Gov. Jay Inslee announced his Stay Home, Stay Healthy order in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Clark College professors had less than a month to adapt about 2,000 classes' curriculum to be taught online. Now, as spring term is more than halfway over—and the ongoing pandemic has led to most summer and fall classes being offered remotely as well—it's clear that they were more than up for the challenge.

“Our faculty are resilient and dedicated to student success,” said Vice President of Instruction Sachi Horback. “Though there were many reasons to settle for being ‘good enough,’ amidst this pandemic, our faculty pushed ahead, ensuring that our students had equitable opportunities for student learning. As educators, we were made for this, readily adaptable and willing to do whatever is needed in service to our community.”



Professional baking professor Melanie Hendry gets ready for a “Pop and Drop,” where students pop the backs of their cars for her to load lab supplies in. *Photo: Alison Dolder*

“Our motto is ‘we make it work,’” said Baking Professor Alison Dolder of her department’s faculty. “All of us jumped right in to record baking videos, to learn Zoom and Canvas. We are not technology-savvy people. But we are dedicated.”

Faculty and staff worked to create take-home boxes of baking supplies for each student to use, filled with the ingredients and tools of their trade—rolling pins, measuring spoons, etc. They also worked to learn how to produce useful

instructional videos, no small feat: It requires a certain amount of choreography to capture the best camera angle for a stand mixer.

## **“Hands-on,” but online**

Indeed, it was a challenge experienced across the college: How does an institution that prides itself on its “hands-on learning” adapt to a virtual educational experience? But over and over, faculty stepped up.

In professional technical and allied health fields, faculty quickly re-organized curriculum so that students’ lecture classes took place during spring term and lab classes could be delayed until summer, providing additional time to set up safe social-distancing protocols for in-person lab work.

Mathematics professors collaborated with the college’s Tutoring Services to place tutors right in Zoom classrooms so that students got the one-on-one help they needed to understand material. Tutors also worked to create a Zoom version of their regular English practice chats held for English as a Second Language students. Art professors arranged virtual tours of galleries and museums for their students.

Ceramics professor Lisa Conway drafted her husband, a professional video editor, into helping her create a series of instructional videos for her students. As with baking students, Conway’s classes received boxes of supplies and equipment to complete class projects at home.

“For the month before spring classes started, I was working hard and was busier than I’ve ever been in my 30 years of teaching college,” Conway said. “We’re all making videos. We’re all dealing with how students get their supplies and materials. We’re all completely changing how we function in this universe. We’re all reinventing our classes from scratch.”



# Learning from each other



Bruce Elgort

Professors have been sharing best practices and tips with one another as they develop their skills to deliver education online.

Computer Technology Professor Bruce Elgort has become something of a go-to source for many of his colleagues during this shift. Elgort, a two-time Exceptional Faculty Award winner, has a long professional history in the tech field and already used many online tools, including Slack and videos, in his teaching.

This spring, Elgort taught his classes using the synchronous modality, which means the classes meet the same time online as they would in the classroom. (“Asynchronous” refers to online classes that have no set time.)

“The most difficult part of going online is learning new software and learning to shoot video,” said Elgort, who has provided tips and tricks to faculty on this subject and others.

Faculty also have had a great resource in the college’s eLearning department, which oversees the college’s many online learning offerings. Even before COVID-19, more than a third of Clark College students were taking at least one class with



online components.

In fact, several programs are taught entirely online in Business Administration, Network Technology, and Psychology. They provide students the flexibility they need in balancing college, work and family. More eLearning programs come online each year.

“Offering our business programs entirely online will allow our students to successfully complete their desired degrees regardless where they live,” says **Business Administration Professor Adnan Hamideh**. “It will also attract working people who did not think about going to school because their work hours conflict with a school schedule.”

## **A More Flexible Future**

Clark College has already announced that summer and fall classes will be offered primarily online, with some in-person labs conducted in career technical classes that require hands-on learning, using social distancing and safety precautions. But even when it becomes safe to congregate in large groups again, the current move to remote education may leave lasting changes on higher education.

“Moving past COVID-19, I think more programs will go online as professors and students gain confidence,” said Bruce Elgort. “Professors and students enjoy personal interactions with one another. Most would not have chosen this sudden shift to remote learning. But through the process, many have acquired a taste for eLearning. It is a powerful tool. In the future, professors will have opportunities to blend different teaching modalities to include face-to-face and online instruction.”

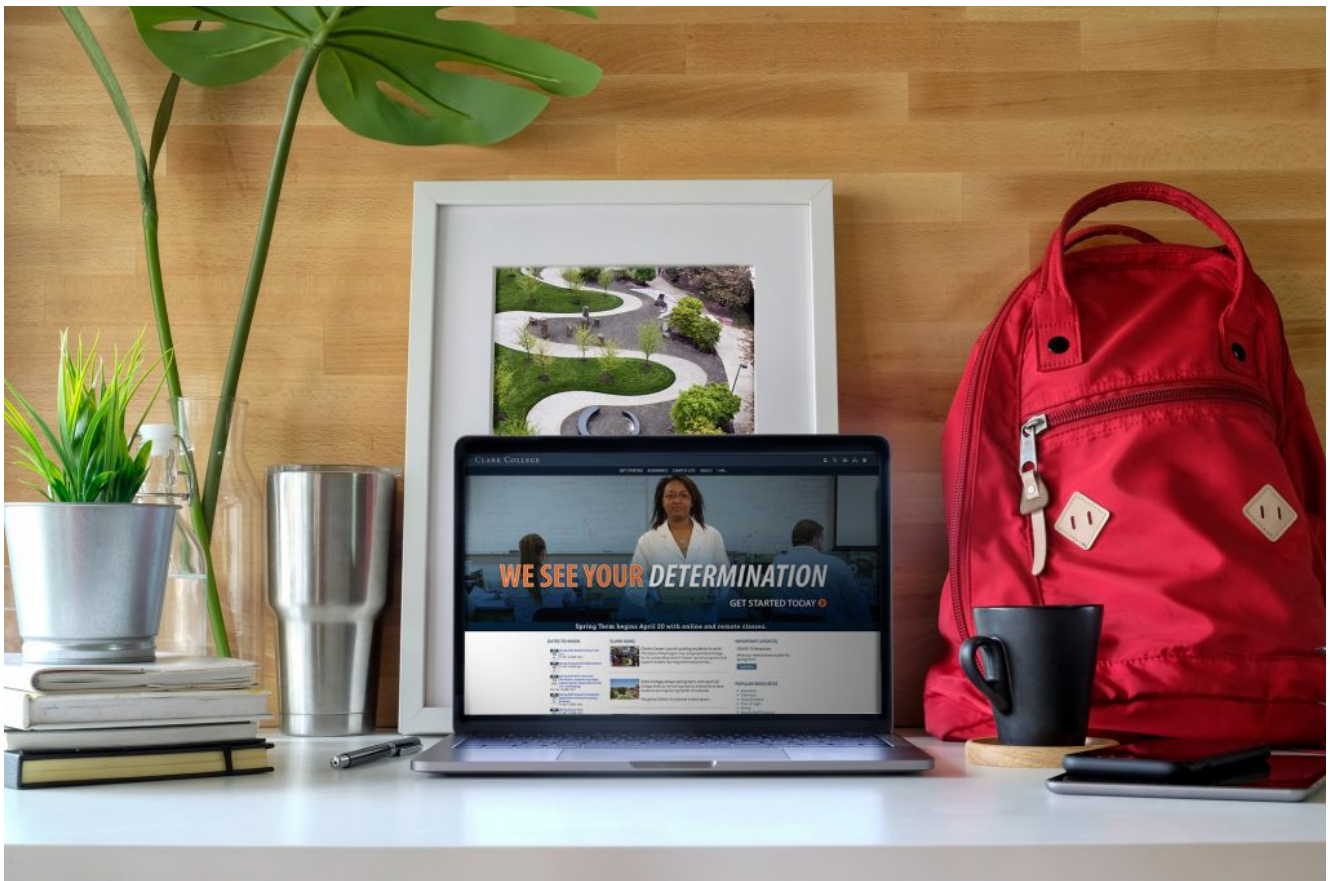
“No one really know what will happen in this next six months and how it impacts what we do at Clark College,” said Alison Dolder. “This experience has taught us that we are highly adaptable and that we can learn new technology.

With each adjustment, we decide how to move forward—with our students' success in mind.”

*Learn more: Watch this YouTube video for more stories about Clark College art faculty adapting to remote teaching.*

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## Clark makes sure all students are ready to learn online



Approximately 10 percent of Clark College students need assistance with technology to be able to take their classes spring quarter. Because of the state “stay home” orders, all classes have been moved to online formats.

Students were encouraged to fill out a Technology Loan Program Request Form to help them get connected with the resources

they need to navigate this transition—whether that’s a loaner laptop, a wifi hotspot, or other technical needs.

Laptops are being purchased through the college’s technology fee, which is managed by a committee composed of faculty, staff, and students. The funding will allow for 500 new laptops and 100 internet hotspots for students, in addition to loaner devices the college already had on hand.

To practice safe social distancing, the college is calling each student on the list setting up appointments to come onto campus to the O’Connell Sports Center to pick up the loaner laptop.

Because of high demand nationwide, the wi-fi hotspots that have been ordered for students are not yet available. The college has set up a wi-fi hotspot in the college parking lot “Orange #2” on the east side of the main campus. Buildings are not open to the public so students will not be able to use restrooms.

## **A different kind of spring term**

Clark continues remote operations to comply with Governor Inslee’s “Stay Home Stay Healthy” order. Even so, college staff remain available by email and/or phone to enroll, advise, support, and answer students’ questions.

Dates and deadlines for tuition and drops have been pushed further out onto the calendar to provide students more flexibility.

“Despite the multiple challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has created, our dedicated Clark community is finding a way to overcome roadblock after roadblock on behalf of our students,” said Dr. Sandra Fowler-Hill. “We will walk with them working through issues and challenges every step of the way.”

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# Making business ideas a reality



Alison Warlitner works to create a custom order for the business she and her husband created with support from Clark Entrepreneurs' Pitch Fest contest.

As the entry deadline approaches for Pitch Fest 2020 at Clark College, last year's winners say participating in the *Shark Tank*-like competition sponsored by Clark Entrepreneurs made an enormous difference in moving their business to the next level.

Teams of Clark College students are invited to apply for an opportunity to pitch their entrepreneurial business ideas at Pitch Fest 2020. The competition is open to any Clark College students enrolled full time from fall 2019 through spring 2020 and who maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA. The deadline to apply is 8:00 p.m. on Friday, January 31. See details and apply online at [clarkpitchfest.com/](http://clarkpitchfest.com/).

Last year, when Clark College students Alison Warlitner and her husband, Scott Warlitner, entered the 2019 Pitch Fest competition, they hoped to glean expert advice from the business-owner judges. The couple recently had begun making CBD-infused bath bombs in their home, marketing them under the business name Cherry River CBD. Ali and Scott advanced to the competition's final round of top three student businesses—and they won.



Scott and Alison Warlitner met actor Jim Belushi when they were a sponsor at the 2019 Portland Waterfront Blues Festival.

Fast-forward one year after its Pitch Fest success. Cherry River CBD has tripled its gross sales, connected with capital investors, and hired their first employee, who markets their products at vendor trade shows. Emboldened by their Pitch Fest success, Ali pitched their business to a *Shark Tank* producer hearing pitches in Portland. Although they weren't invited to pitch on camera on the TV show, the experience pushed the Warlitners to keep going. Last summer they were invited to be a sponsor of Portland's Waterfront Blues Festival. Actor Jim Belushi, who owns a cannabis farm in southern Oregon's Rogue Valley, hung out in their booth.

Scott, a fine arts student at Clark, will graduate at the end of winter quarter. Ali, a Clark graduate, is pursuing an

accounting degree at Washington State University Vancouver and plans to graduate in spring 2021. They live in The Dalles, Oregon, 90 miles from Vancouver. Four days a week, they drive to their classes—90 minutes, each way. Their sons, ages 3 and 5, attend the college's Child and Family Studies program.

The couple met when both were enlisted in the U.S. Navy in Virginia. After completing active-duty service, they moved to the Pacific Northwest, where Ali grew up. But one thing hampered their new life: Scott suffered from chronic pain due to injuries he sustained while in the military. Originally a nonbeliever in CBD, he was treating it with narcotics prescribed by the VA. But after Scott began taking CBD daily to relieve his pain, he realized the cannabinoids worked, and he stopped taking the narcotics.

This experience led the couple to begin thinking about creating their own CBD business. And, as luck would have it, this is when Ali walked by a poster advertising Pitch Fest outside her math class at Clark College. Enrolling in the contest forced the Warlitners to clearly articulate their business plan, refine their marketing materials, and answer tough questions posed by judges. It also provided them with mentorship from successful entrepreneurs that helped them take the next steps in their business.

"We're absolutely a success story," says Ali. "While we would have made those steps eventually, Pitch Fest is the reason we were able to move so quickly in establishing ourselves as a viable business. We wouldn't be where we were today if not for the help we received from Pitch Fest, Clark College and the Clark Entrepreneurs."

The Warlitners produce their CBD-infused bath, beauty and wellness products in their home. The hemp oil is grown on Ali's cousin's farm in Woodburn, Oregon.

Cherry River has been featured twice in *Broccoli*, a Portland-



based magazine created by and for women who use cannabis. Ali has spoken on a couple of podcasts about being a veteran, a business owner, a full-time college student and a mother of young children.

“I’ve become a sought-after formulator in the cannabis world,” Ali says. “I like to bake. It’s just with different ingredients.”

So far, Ali and Scott have invested all profits back into their company. In 2020, they hope to start paying themselves a salary. They also are considering opening a production facility in Hawaii. Learn more at <https://www.cherryriver.net/>

## **About Pitch Fest**

*January 31 at 8 p.m.:* Deadline for Clark College student teams to apply

*February 21 from 9 a.m. to noon:* Top 24 teams participate in Clark Entrepreneurs trade show at Gaiser Hall Student Center. The free event is open to the public. In the afternoon, the top 12 teams pitch their business ideas to the judges in a format similar to the TV show “Shark Tank.”

*March 6 final round:* Top 3 teams polish their pitches and present to judges; closed to the public.

## **About Clark Entrepreneurs**

Founded in 2016, Clark Entrepreneurs is a student program under the Associated Students of Clark College. The club welcomes any student interested in starting a business. Its purpose is to encourage and support students with their entrepreneurial ideas and expose them to the resources to help grow ideas, support real student business ventures, and scale businesses. Program Director is Nathan Webster. Student

Rebekah Sharp-Regnier recently became marketing event director. Learn more at <https://clarkpitchfest.com/about-us/>

*Read more about the Warlitners and other student veterans in Clark College Foundation's Partners magazine article.*

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## All smiles



Every member of Clark College's 2019 dental hygiene graduating class passed all six of their board exams. *Photo courtesy of Kristi Taylor.*

Clark College's dental hygiene program has long had plenty to smile about: its high-quality teaching facilities, its status as the college's first bachelor's degree program, and its important work providing dental hygiene care in the community.

Recently, the program's faculty received news to make their



smiles even brighter: Every student in their 2019 graduating class passed all six of their board exams.

The exams are extremely rigorous, and a 100 percent pass rate is remarkable. The exams include:

- The National Board Exam (an 8-hour written exam)
- The Restorative Exam (placement and finishing of amalgam [silver] and composite [white]) fillings
- The Anesthesia Written Exam
- The Anesthesia Clinical Exam (accurately administer the 2 most difficult injections on a patient)
- Hygiene Clinical Exam (thoroughly remove tenacious calculus [tartar] from a patient's teeth with severe periodontitis [gum disease])
- The Ethical Board exam

“These are six different high-stakes exams that test the students’ knowledge and skills,” wrote Dean of Business and Health Sciences Brenda Walstead in an email to the college community. “Thank you to an extremely dedicated and talented group of faculty and staff for working endless hours to prepare the students to pass each of these exams, obtain their licenses, and go to work.”

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## **Clark College student works her dream job**



Jeni Banceu now reporting for the *Columbian* Newspaper (*photo courtesy of Annika Larman*)

If you read the *Columbian*, you may see a familiar byline: that of Clark College student Jeni Banceu. As reported in that newspaper, she is the first Clark College student to work at the *Columbian* as a paid news intern.

The newly endowed Dee Anne Finken internship is a partnership between the *Columbian*, Clark College, and Clark College Foundation. It is named for Clark's former journalism professor, who served as academic advisor to the college's student news publication, *The Independent*, before retiring in 2018. Her successor, Beth Slovic, organized the campaign and raised money to create the paid internship for the summer.

"We liked Jeni's can-do attitude and maturity, and her story about the homeless person living in the RV [published in *The Independent* in June 2018] was in my opinion a great read for a beginning journalist," *Columbian* Editor Craig Brown wrote in an email.

Banceu's stories are regularly appearing in the *Columbian*. "I

feel so lucky to have been chosen for the Dee Ann Finken Internship," she said. "I look forward to writing as much as I can and gaining new skills. I also look forward to getting to know our amazing local journalists."

Banceu will return to Clark College in fall quarter serving as editor-in-chief of *The Independent* (nicknamed "The Indy").

Donations to the Finken Internship fund can be made by going to foundation's website at [www.clarkcollegefoundation.org](http://www.clarkcollegefoundation.org).

**Also kudos** to *The Independent* for its most recent journalism award.

The news magazine and website won first place in the "sweeps" category of the annual contest hosted by the Pacific Northwest Association of Journalism Educators. That means individual Indy journalists won first, second, and third place more than did students from any other Oregon or Washington college that entered.

The Indy is recognized as a top community college news publication in the nation, having received numerous regional and national awards.

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## **A night of triumphs**



A record 835 students participated in Clark College's 83rd Commencement Ceremony. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

*"Hola, soy Denisse, hoy sere su enfermera,"* read the elaborate script on the top of Denisse

Zuniga-Ibarra's graduation cap, below a cluster of silk flowers. Or, in

English: *"Hello, I'm Denisse, today I'll be your nurse."*

Zuniga-Ibarra was one of 835 graduates waiting in line to enter Sleep Country Amphitheater for Clark College's 2019 commencement ceremony—and each one, it seemed, had their own story to tell of perseverance and triumph.





Dennise Zuniga-Ibarra, far left, with Estefania Tran and Osmara Robles, all nursing graduates. Clark College/Jenny Shadley

"Graduation, to me, means a new job, a new beginning, making my parents proud and giving back to my community," said Zuniga-Ibarra, who was receiving her Associate in Arts degree in Nursing.

Almost 2,500 degrees and certificates were conferred on graduates in the 2018-2019 academic year—a record number for the college. It included the first graduates of the Clark's new Cuisine Management program, as well as of the college's Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Management (BASAM) degree program.



Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Management graduates holding a photo collage of their classmate Debbie Terry. *Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

For the BASAM graduates, the event was bittersweet—one member of their cohort, Debbie Terry, died before she could receive her degree. Her classmates held a poster with pictures of her as they waited in the white robes reserved for bachelor's-degree graduates. During the ceremony, Terry's daughter, Melanie Carter, would be the first person to cross the stage, receiving her mother's degree post-humously.





Amanda Rath was one of 126 students earning their high school diploma or GED this year. *Clark College/Hannah Erickson*

Family featured strongly in many graduates' stories. For Amanda Rath, this night wasn't about making her parents proud, but rather, her own four children, aged 3 to 13. All of them would be watching their mother walk across the stage to receive her high school diploma, which she earned through the college's Transitional Studies department.

"I want to provide something more for my children to see in the future—something more than just working at a call center," said the single mother, who works full-time and is already enrolled to begin the pre-nursing program at Clark. "I knew that started with pursuing an education."



Brian Ford Jr. graduated with an Applied Technology degree in Diesel Technology. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

Like Rath, Brian Ford Jr. had balanced work, life, and school responsibilities. He was graduating with an Associate in Applied Technology degree in Diesel Technology. “It’s been a long journey—three years,” he said. “I had two kids while I was in school. I worked full-time. But I made it. It’s the biggest accomplishment of my life and I’m so happy to get to this day.”





Board of Trustees Chair Jane Jacobsen addresses the class of 2019. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

Once the bagpipes started and the lines of robed figures filed into the amphitheater, the moments of triumph continued.

“Keep going,” Trustee

Chair Jane Jacobsen told the graduates in her remarks during the ceremony. “This world needs you.”

Jacobsen also pointed out that this ceremony would be the last one to be presided over by Clark College President Bob Knight, who

announced in January announce that he would be retiring after 13 years as the college’s president. She thanked him for his service.



Student speaker Soukaina Ouahhabi. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

Student speaker Soukaina Ouahhabi spoke of the challenges she had faced as a non-native English speaker studying computer science who also worked full-time. “Sometimes, I would have to choose which I needed to do most: eat, sleep or do homework,” she said. “Because I only had time to do one of them. I’m sure many of you can relate.”

Still, Ouahhabi said, she kept her focus on achieving her goals. “My desire to reach my goals was stronger than the struggles I faced and has pushed me to be the strong, smart woman I am today,” she said, to a roar of applause from her classmates.



Vita Blanco learns she is the 2019 recipient of the Community College Presidents' Scholarship. *Clark College/Nick Bremer*

There was also applause for the award recipients announced during the ceremony. This included the 2018-2019 Exceptional Faculty Award winners, as well as the 2019-2020 Community College Presidents' Scholarship, which was given to Esmeralda "Vita" Blanco. Another finalist for the scholarship, Anastasiya Kozlovska, received a \$1,000 scholarship as well.





Keynote speaker Julianna Marler with President Bob Knight.  
*Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

Keynote speaker Julianna Marler, who is a Clark College alumna, spoke of her journey from being the daughter of Hungarian immigrants to the first female CEO of the Port of Vancouver USA. “Clark College was a foundation of my business knowledge,” she said, adding that even some of her electives, like psychology, wound up being unexpectedly useful in management. “I wouldn’t have guessed it at the time, but those lessons would turn out to serve me well.”

As Knight concluded the ceremony, he told the graduates, “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.”

More photos can be viewed on our Flickr page.

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## Showcasing student creativity



On May 22, Archer Gallery was filled with visitors for the opening of the 2019 Art Student Annual Exhibition. This event showcases the best artwork produced by Clark art students in the past academic year. Students compete not only for a spot in the show, but also for awards sponsored by local businesses and organizations.

The exhibition is on display through June 15. Archer Gallery is open 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays, and noon to 5:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. The gallery is located in the lower level of the Penguin Union Building on

Clark College's main campus.

Additional photos of the show are available on our Flickr page.

## **2019 Art Student Annual Award Recipients**

### **Best in Show and Most Ambitious**

**Stevie Hale**, *"New Mythology"*

Sponsored by the Clark College Bookstore and the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art

### **Best Drawing**

**John Gasaway**, *"Bling"*

Sponsored by the Clark College Bookstore and Collage Art Supply

### **Best Ceramics**

**Shirley Morgan**, *"Boh, Of Course"*

Sponsored by Georgie's Ceramics

### **Ceramics, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place**

**Jessica Joner**, *"Peonies"*

Sponsored by Clay Art Center

### **Ceramics, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place**

**Stephanie Bowen**, *"Enlightened"*

Sponsored by Georgie's Ceramics

### **Best Graphic Design**

**Michael Fulgaro**, *"Visit Northwest"*

Sponsored by Artist and Craftsman Art Supply

### **Best Metal Art**

**Channa Smith**, *"Ready to Potlatch"*

Sponsored by MESA at Clark

### **Best Painting**

**Danielle Truckey, "Portrait of a Girl"**

Sponsored by Gamblin Paints

**Painting, 2<sup>nd</sup> place**

**Jewel Indino, "Abstract Figure"**

Sponsored by Liquitext Paint Company

**Painting, 3<sup>rd</sup> place**

**Katie Hyland, "Listening In"**

Sponsored by Golden Paint Company

**Best Photography**

**Keyanna Owen, "Untitled"**

Sponsored by ProPhoto

**Best Photography, Darkroom**

**Michelle Berg, "Big Picture"**

Sponsored by Blue Moon Camera

**Best Photography, Digital**

**Avalon Guerra, "Window Pane"**

Sponsored by ProPhoto

**Photography Award of Distinction**

**T.J. West, "Homeowrk"**

Sponsored by Blue Sky Gallery

**Best Video**

**Hayley Estep, "Woman Not Product"**

Sponsored by Northwest Film Center

**Merit Award**

**Sage Makela, "Album Covers"**

Sponsored by the Clark College Bookstore

**Award of Distinction**

**Don Anderson, "A Man Has Many Moods"**

Sponsored by the Clark College Bookstore

*Photo: Nick Bremer/Clark College*