

# Presidential Coins



Prof. Kathleen Perillo receives a Presidential Coin from President Knight at the 2016 State of the College address.

In 2007, Clark College President Bob Knight introduced a new honor at Clark College: the presidential coin.

The coin is given to faculty and staff members who provide exemplary service to Clark students, the college and the community. The honorees are decided by the president and are kept secret until the names are announced—generally on Opening Day in the fall or during the annual State of the College address.

Five Clark College employees received Presidential Coins during his 2016 State of the College address on January 21. They were:



Karen Driscoll, *left*, was congratulated by her colleagues from Economic & Community Development, Tracy Reilly Kelly and Bonnie Peterson. President Knight praised Driscoll as “a great mentor to so many people both inside and outside the Financial Aid Office.”

### **Karen Driscoll**

President Knight characterized Financial Aid Director Karen Driscoll as “the best financial aid director in the state of Washington.”

Driscoll has earned praised as a leader not only at Clark College, but in the state. She has served as the president, vice president, treasurer, and legislative representative of the Washington Financial Aid Association; represented the state of Washington as the Western Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators board president; served as president and treasurer of the state’s Financial Aid Council; and is an active member of the State Need Grant Legislative Group representing community colleges.

“She is an approachable and genuine leader and probably the only person I know who likes to read federal financial aid updates over her morning cup of coffee,” said Knight.

Driscoll, who has led Clark's Financial Aid Department for eight years, is retiring later this year.



Maria Masson receives a round of applause with her Presidential Coin.

## **Maria Masson**

Maria Masson joined Clark College in 2014 as Assistant Director of Human Resources and, in the words of President Knight, "hit the ground running."

Masson's role has included providing human resources services to the college community and leading the college's benefits team's efforts to comply with complex and ever-changing regulations. Recently, she was also named the college's Title IX Coordinator. She has also served the college as an adjunct instructor teaching Spanish.

"She is always willing to help where she is needed and approaches her work with a problem-solving attitude," said Knight.



Ken Pachico, *right*, has served as Director of Security & Safety for 12 years.

### **Ken Pacheco**

After a distinguished career in law enforcement in Portland, Ken Pacheco was hired in 2004 as Director of Security & Safety. Pacheco also serves on Clark's Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment Team, its Emergency Management and Planning Committee, as a Title IX investigator, and as the college's representative on the statewide Safety, Security and Emergency Management Council.

"He can always be counted on to respond quickly to any incident, day or night, and even on weekends," said Knight. "He is known for his calm, 'just the facts ma'am' approach to his job, as well as for being fair-minded in enforcing the College's policies and regulations."



Prof. Kathleen Perillo, center, with STEM Coordinator and biology professor Erin Harwood and Dean of STEM Dr. Peter Williams.

## **Kathleen Perillo**

Biology professor Kathleen Perillo began teaching at Clark in 1999 and was awarded tenure in 2002. She presented on biodiversity in 2008 as part of the college's respected Faculty Speaker Series. She has worked with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife in support of western pond turtle recovery activities in the Columbia River Gorge and she is the co-founder and president of the Center for Eco-dynamic Agriculture, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting biodiversity in agriculture.

More recently, Perillo has been leading efforts on native-plant restoration on the main campus, as well as the development of a new environmental science degree.

"Most importantly, with members of the college and Ridgefield communities, she is leading the visioning for sustainability efforts at the North County site," said Knight.

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# Clark College among nation's best



Highlighting the critical importance of improving student success in America's community colleges, the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program today named Clark College as one of the nation's top 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the 2017 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and \$1 million dollars in prize funds, as well as Siemens Technical Scholars Program student scholarships.

The Prize, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges and recognizes institutions for exceptional student outcomes in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and access and success for minority and low-income students.

“We are excited and honored to be selected as one of the top 150 community colleges in the country,” said Robert K. Knight, president of Clark College. “Students and student success is at the heart of everything we do, and it is wonderful to have the hard work of our exceptional faculty and staff recognized in this way. Our new strategic plan and program initiatives are all aimed at increasing student success, and being selected as one of top community colleges is proof we are moving towards this goal.”

Nearly half of America’s college students attend community college, with more than 7 million students – youth and adult learners – working towards certificates and degrees in these institutions across the country.

“Community colleges have tremendous power to change lives, and their success will increasingly define our nation’s economic strength and the potential for social mobility in our country,” said Josh Wyner, executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. “This competition is designed to spotlight the excellent work being done in the most effective community colleges, those that best help students obtain meaningful, high-quality education and training for competitive-wage jobs after college. We hope it will raise the bar and provide a roadmap to better student outcomes for community colleges nationwide.”

A full list of the selected colleges and details on the selection process are available at [www.aspenprize.org](http://www.aspenprize.org).

Clark College and 149 other community colleges were selected from a national pool of over 1,000 public two-year colleges using publicly available data on student outcomes in three areas:

- **Performance** (retention, graduation rates including transfers, and degrees and certificates per 100 full-time equivalent students)

- **Improvement** (awarded for steady improvement in each performance metric over time)
- **Equity** (evidence of strong completion outcomes for minority and low-income students)

Clark College has been invited to submit an application to the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence containing detailed data on degree and certificate completion (including progress and transfer rates), labor market outcomes (employment and earnings), and student learning outcomes.

Ten finalists will be named in fall 2016. The Aspen Institute will then conduct site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data. A distinguished Prize Jury will select a grand prize winner and a few finalists with distinction in early 2017.

The Aspen Prize is funded by the Joyce Foundation, the Siemens Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation.

### **Scholarship Opportunities**

For the first time, the 150 Prize-eligible institutions are also invited to nominate exceptional students enrolled in their best middle-skill STEM programs for scholarships. Up to 50 Siemens Technical Scholars will be selected from programs that provide outstanding preparation for high-demand jobs in manufacturing, energy, health care, and information technology. A partnership between the Siemens Foundation and the Aspen Institute, the Siemens Technical Scholars Program intends to help our nation's community colleges and their business partners bridge the gap between projected shortages of skilled workers and the millions of high-demand jobs in these STEM industries. Scholarship winners and the programs that deliver rigorous training enabling their success will be announced in fall 2016. For more information and to view video profiles of 2015 Siemens Technical Scholars, go to: <http://as.pn/stscholars>.



## **About the Aspen College Excellence Program**

The Aspen College Excellence Program aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership that significantly improve student outcomes. Through the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the New College Leadership Project, and other initiatives, the College Excellence Program works to improve colleges' understanding and capacity to teach and graduate students, especially the growing population of low-income and minority students on American campuses. For more information, visit [www.aspeninstitute.org/college-excellence](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/college-excellence).

## **About the Aspen Institute**

The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit [www.aspeninstitute.org](http://www.aspeninstitute.org).

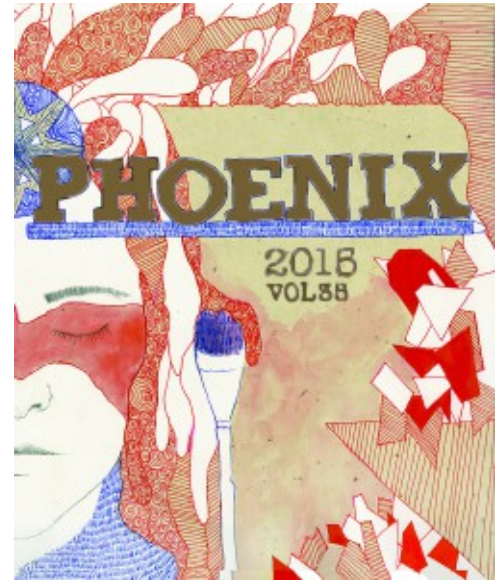
## **About Clark College**

Located in Vancouver's Central Park and serving up to 14,000 students per quarter, Clark College is Washington State's largest single-campus, for-credit community college. The college currently offers classes at three satellite locations: one on the Washington State University Vancouver campus; one in the Columbia Tech Center in East Vancouver; and one in the Columbia River Gorge in Bingen, Washington. Additionally, its Economic & Community Development program is housed in the Columbia Bank Building in downtown Vancouver.

*Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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# The Best in the West



The theme of the 2015 *Phoenix* was “the artist’s sketchbook.”

The 2015 issue of *Phoenix*, Clark College’s student-run arts and literary journal, was recently awarded first place in the Community College Humanities Association (CCHA) Literary Magazine Competition for the Pacific-Western Division.

“This is a first for us,” said Clark English professor and *Phoenix* faculty advisor Elizabeth Donley. “In 2013, we placed third as a magazine in the same division, and were delighted to do so. In the past, *Phoenix* has regularly been honored for the art and design of the magazine more than anything else. But the CCHA competition really focuses on the literary aspects of the journal. In many ways, this is the first significant award that honors the literary components of *Phoenix*.”

Several individual Clark students received recognition for

their entries in Phoenix as well:

- David Powers, second place in Short Stories for “Gouge Away”
- W.R. Soasey, third place in Creative Nonfiction for “Not the Favorite”
- Trenelle Doyle, second place in Artwork for “The Perception Project”
- Matthew Harmon, third place in Artwork for “Empirical Being”
- Alan Logston, first place in Song for “Shades of Steel”
- Jeffrey Points, first place in Performance for “Project Spielberg”

The CCHA’s Pacific-Western Division includes community colleges in California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming.

Over the course of its 34-year history, Phoenix has won many regional and national awards. Many students who work on it go on to pursue careers in writing or the arts. Jennie Avens, a former Phoenix editor who graduated from Clark with her Associate of Fine Arts in spring 2015, said working on the journal helped prepare her for a position as volunteer director for a nonprofit serving budding artists. “Working on Phoenix was an amazing experience that has opened me up to other career possibilities and taught me an abundance of things I use in my life as an artist,” she said.

Phoenix is available in an online format at [clarkphoenix.com](http://clarkphoenix.com).

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## Great News



The spring 2015 staff of *The Independent*, Clark's student newspaper.

Clark College student journalists captured all three top awards in a competition for the best in news reporting, editing and production by teams at 13 community colleges in Oregon and Washington, according to results made public Sunday.

It was the third year in a row that the news staff of *The Independent* captured the Publications Sweeps, a tally of the most first-, second- and third-place finishes for a school in 21 categories of the competition. The *Independent* staff also took first in the General Excellence category of the contest, which, this year was sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Association of Journalism Educators.

Former Clark student journalist Emma Fletcher, who is now studying in Dunedin, New Zealand, captured first in the Individual Sweeps, picking up top awards in feature reporting and feature photography, two second-place awards in news

reporting and multimedia story-telling and an honorable mention in portrait photography.

“This is such a terrific testimony to the hard work, determination and skill of some fine students and young people,” adviser Dee Anne Finken said. “The Independent staff demonstrated once again that they can achieve great outcomes by way of great effort and dedication.”

Finken said the results were also satisfying because the competition this year was broader than in years past. Washington Community College Journalism Association media advisers opened the contest to two-year schools in Oregon, Montana and Idaho this year and conducted the contest under the banner of the Pacific Northwest Association of Journalism Educators.

“The competition was tougher and larger in number, but Clark students again prevailed,” she said.

The Independent staff finished in front of Mt. Hood Community College students in Gresham, Oregon, who took second in the Publications Sweeps and Shoreline Community College student journalists from Shoreline, Washington, who finished third.

In the General Excellence category, Clark student journalists finished in front of the Pierce College student news staff, from Lakewood, Washington, who took second, and the Shoreline staff, who took third.

Finken acknowledged the success was also due to the support of other faculty and staff at Clark, as well as professionals in the community, especially those who serve on the college’s Student Media Advisory Committee. “The Independent’s success is also because we’ve had thoughtful people supporting a fine co-curricular program that blends an extra-curricular activity with academics. It’s been a great partnership.”

Tra Friesen, The Independent’s editor-in-chief, who won third

place in the news photography category, said his work for the publication has been highly rewarding.

“Joining the Independent is hands-down the best decision I ever made for my education,” Friesen said. “Not only did I improve as a critical thinker and writer, I also learned real world skills like leadership, teamwork, and communication.”

As for the team’s success, Friesen credited a dedication to constant improvement. “We are never satisfied and we always try to make each issue better than the last.”

Sports editor/managing editor Tyler Urke won first place in sports feature reporting and an honorable mention in feature writing.

Multimedia editor Scott Unverzagt, chief photographer Kameron Johnson and design manager Kyle Bliquez also won first-place awards; and sports reporter Becca Robbins captured a second-place in sports news reporting.

Other college news staff who competed were from Everett Community College in Everett, Washington; Linn-Benton Community College in Albany, Oregon; Green River Community College in Auburn, Washington; Edmonds Community College in Lynnwood, Washington; Seattle Central College; Portland Community College; Peninsula College in Port Angeles, Washington; and Whatcom College in Bellingham.

Entries consisted of work students completed during the Spring 2014, Fall 2014 and Winter 2015 terms.

Eighteen judges—professional and former staff members from *The Seattle Times*, *The (Tacoma) News Tribune*, the *Tacoma Weekly*, the *Wenatchee World* and the (Longview) *Daily News*; and faculty and advisers from non-participating colleges—evaluated and scored the submissions, Finken said.

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# Two Global Journeys Reach Success



Martin Parrao, *left*, and Lidiya Nikolayev, *right*, are Clark's 2015 representatives to the All-Washington Academic Team.

Two students whose stories began on almost opposite sides of the earth have found success in the face of adversity at Clark College. Martin Parrao and Lidiya Nikolayev represented Clark College at the 2015 All-Washington Academic Team Recognition Ceremony, held on March 26 at South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia, Washington.

About Lidiya Nikolayev

About Martin Parrao

## About the All-Washington Academic Team

### **About Lidiya Nikolayev**

Lidiya Nikolayev, 30, came to the United States with her parents from Moldova when she was almost 6 years old. From early on, she displayed a head for business. “When I was 12, I met a nice lady who’s a real estate agent, and she taught me to read contracts,” recalls Nikolayev, who speaks English, Turkish, Russian, and Hindi. “My family had a side business buying homes and fixing them up to resell, so I started helping with that.”

Small wonder, then, that Nikolayev is now pursuing a career in finance. But there is a more personal and painful reason for her interest as well. The truth is, she began to hone her financial acumen while caring for her son, Ivan, who was born with cerebral palsy. Faced with daunting medical bills and limited income, Nikolayev became expert at managing a budget. Ivan passed away in 2011; as Nikolayev recovered from her trauma, she became determined to go to college and find a career that would not only make her self-sufficient, but allow her to create family-friendly jobs for other parents. “No parent should have to sacrifice time with their children to have a career,” she says. “More companies in the corporate world should be creating work environments with flexible schedules that allow employees better balance between work and family responsibilities.”

Nikolayev enrolled at Clark in 2013, and quickly gained notice for both her aptitude and drive. She has just finished a quarter in which she took a staggering 22 credits, divided between classes at Clark College and at a community college in Texas, where she is enrolled in online courses. This is even more challenging than it sounds—because the Texas college is on a semester system and Clark uses a quarter system, Nikolayev can be prepping for a midterm in one class while taking a final in another, and she rarely gets a vacation



since one or the other of her schools is almost always in session while the other one is on break.

Nikolayev devised this strategy to facilitate a possible transfer to the University of Texas at Dallas, whose business program she admires. “For six months I bothered the heck out of both colleges’ advising and credentials departments figuring it all out,” she says with a laugh. The plan worked: Nikolayev has been accepted at UTD, as well as at multiple other universities, though she is still weighing her options before deciding on a transfer destination.

In addition to her turbo-powered studying, Nikolayev continues to help with her family’s farm; serves as student representative on many of the college’s administrative committees; and volunteers with both Phi Theta Kappa and the Association for India’s Development. In 2014, she earned an OSWALD Award from Clark College Student Life for her volunteer activities. And she has maintained a high grade point average all the while. Her secret? Not a lot of sleep and a whole lot of personal organization, plus using the flexibility of online learning to do coursework when it fits her schedule.

Nikolayev says she learned her work ethic early on from her parents. In addition to farming and investing in real estate, her father does seasonal work at factories, while her mother worked 14-hour shifts as a housekeeper during Nikolayev’s childhood—often taking night shifts so she could spend the days taking care of the children.

“I’m going to be the first person in my family to get a bachelor’s degree,” Nikolayev says. “I’ll work as hard as it takes to get there.”

### **About Martin Parrao**

When Martin Parrao’s family moved from Chile to the Pacific Northwest in 2006, Parrao was already 15 years old. He spoke

no English. "The process of learning English has been one of the longest and most difficult challenges I have ever faced," he says. "Going through high school was very difficult for me, but I was determined to work extra-hard so that one day I could reach my goals and prove to my parents that their efforts to come to this country were not in vain."

That hard work paid off: Parrao went from taking English as a Second Language classes to graduating from Battle Ground High School with honors in 2009. He enrolled at a four-year university, but quickly encountered a new challenge. "I took one class, and it was super-expensive," he says. "I couldn't afford to keep going."

Parrao, 24, is a legal resident of this country, but he is not yet a citizen. This means that up until recently, he could qualify for in-state tuition, but not for federal or state financial aid. A 2014 Washington state law called the "Real HOPE Act" now allows students like Parrao to be eligible for state financial aid, but at the time, Parrao found himself facing thousands of dollars in tuition each quarter, even if he attended part-time, with no hope of assistance.

Parrao regrouped. He dropped out of university, realizing that his limited funds would go farther at Clark. Even so, he had to work for months to save enough money to take a single class, meaning that for his first three years at Clark, he could only afford to take one or two classes a year.

At the end of 2011, another challenge emerged: His family decided to return to Chile. Many young people might have taken that as a sign to give up, but Parrao became even more determined to pursue his dreams. "For me, just the sacrifice of having to learn a whole new language when I was 15, and working so hard to graduate high school with honors—to go back would mean all that effort was wasted," he says.

Parrao began applying for scholarships, working closely with

Clark College Outreach/Scholarship Coordinator Lizette Drennan to identify opportunities. "Lizette was a great help," Parrao says. "Every time I had a question, she was there for me." The work paid off in 2013 when Parrao received a scholarship that allowed him to begin attending Clark part-time, followed by another that allowed him to become a full-time student.

At first, Parrao wanted to get a terminal two-year business degree; he assumed he wouldn't be able to afford more than two years of college. But as he continued to excel in his coursework (he currently holds a 3.96 grade point average) and as scholarships and the Real HOPE Act began to make attending college full-time affordable, he realized that he could do more. "I realized, 'This is the moment,'" says Parrao, who is engaged. "Because if you go out and work full-time and get married, you will not be able to do everything you can do right now."

Parrao chose to return to Clark to complete a transfer Associate of Arts degree. He plans to transfer in the fall to the Washington State University Vancouver, where he will pursue a bachelor's degree in Accounting. Meanwhile, he continues to work two jobs—as a computer lab aide in Clark College's Tech Hub, and as sales support for an industrial supplies company. He hopes to one day run his own business so he can provide jobs and scholarships to those who, like him, have more potential than resources.

Parrao says he greatly appreciates the opportunities provided to him by employers, friends, scholarship donors, and Clark College. "For my situation, this is probably the only way I could ever have done it," he says. "It made me realize how important it is to have opportunities for everyone. And that was given to me at Clark. It's changed my life."

### **About the All-Washington Academic Team**

The All-Washington Academic Team is a program of Phi Theta

Kappa, the honor society for two-year colleges. The team honors students who demonstrate a commitment to success in the classroom and service in their communities, and has become the showcase of the Washington community and technical college system. This year's team consists of 65 students representing all the state's 34 community and technical colleges.

Gov. Jay Inslee was on hand to acknowledge recipients at the 20th annual ceremony, hosted by South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia, Wash. Phi Theta Kappa, the Trustees Association of Community and Technical Colleges (TACTC), the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges, and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges sponsor the event. All-Washington Academic Team members received scholarships from KeyBank and became eligible for scholarships from TACTC, the Washington State Employees Credit Union, and transfer scholarships from all four-year colleges and universities but one in Washington State.

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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## **Fall 2014 Classified Staff Excellence Award**



Heather White

Congratulations to Heather White, recipient of the 2014 Fall Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award! The following is taken from her award nomination:

**Heather White** is the Program Support Supervisor for Disability Support Services. She has been with the college since 2002.

Heather provides a tremendous service to the community by facilitating communication between hearing and deaf consumers. Heather interprets and provides accessibility for campus events professionally and holds herself to the high standards of skill that she expects from all of her interpreters. Her performance in her work is the very definition of “excellence.”

Heather always has a great attitude. She is compassionate to everyone who comes in seeking help. She takes the time to know the specific needs of the deaf students and the interpreters, and matches the student’s needs with the interpreter’s strengths. What is important to the student is important to Heather.

Heather works to improve our community in many ways. She is involved with the Sign Language Interpreter Program Advisory Committee at Portland Community College and is on the

Washington School for the Deaf Post High School Advisory Committee as well as the State Deaf Transfer Fair Local Advisory Committee. She is also on the Commencement committee and provides the interpretation at Commencement to make it accessible to deaf students, faculty, staff and audience members. She has taken on the role of placing interpreters for Washington State University Vancouver and Lower Columbia College.

Heather is a wonderful person to work with and for. Whether someone is a new or veteran interpreter, she makes sure we all feel respected and supported. She always listens actively and attentively and looks at each person as an individual.

### **Congratulations to all of the fall quarter nominees:**

**Vanessa Meyer:** Vanessa is doing a great job in the department. She pays attention to details and maintains the office and its immediate environment, including the mailroom, elegantly. Vanessa is cheerful, polite and shows courtesy to the faculty. When help is needed, she takes prompt action. Her messages are clear and precise. Everything she does is orderly.

**Susan Taylor:** Susan is in charge of all admissions at Clark International Programs and she always manages to get everything in order to perfection. She wants to help every person she comes in contact with. Whether it is a student or a co-worker or someone outside of our campus, she is willing to take all the time needed to make you feel comfortable and confident. Susan respects everyone. She is always the bigger person and is always polite, no matter what the situation.

**Thor Tesdale:** Thor works tirelessly to maintain the interior and exterior appearance of the college. He takes great pride in his work and makes sure the job is completed to satisfaction and on time. Thor prioritizes jobs so that the most pressing deadlines are met first. He is very personable and is willing to "bend" his schedule as much as possible to accommodate the needs of other individuals. Thor's calm and respectful personality is a beneficial addition to Facilities

Services. The personal thank-you notes he has received are additional evidence of his high level of service.

The College Community will celebrate all 2014-2015 nominees and recipients at the Annual Ice Cream Social.

The Classified Staff Excellence Award was established in 2005 and recognizes classified staff who have demonstrated exemplary work performance, outstanding customer service, a positive and cooperative spirit, and special achievements or contributions to the college community. Thanks to the support of the Clark College Foundation, each quarter's recipient receives a \$400 cash award.

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## Applause for the Maestro



Don Appert (*Tom Seeman*)

This fall marks music professor Don Appert's 25th year teaching at Clark College, and as befits the director of the college's orchestra, he's celebrating the occasion with plenty of fanfare—winning three prestigious music awards in less than a month.

Last month, Appert received third place the American Prize in the national The American Prize in Orchestral Programming competition. He recently also earned a 2014 ASCAP Plus Award in recognition of performances in Romania, Japan, and the US of his musical compositions. And on November 18, he is receiving a the Clark County Arts Commision's Lifetime Achievement Award.

"It is a great honor to receive the 2014 Clark County Arts Commission Lifetime Achievement Award," says Appert. "In fact it is a bit overwhelming and somewhat difficult to adequately express my feelings in words. To be recognized for one's work is always deeply satisfying. Concurrently winning Third Place in The American Prize for Orchestral Programming and also another ASCAP Plus Award for my musical compositions makes this a truly significant 25th anniversary of my teaching at Clark College."

Appert, 61, chairs the college's music department and conducts its orchestra. He also serves as the music director/conductor for the Oregon Sinfonietta and Jewish Community Orchestra in Portland, as well as the Sanctuary Choir Director for First United Methodist Church of Vancouver, and has been a guest conductor for the Vancouver Symphony. Appert has bachelor's and master's degrees in trombone from the New England Conservatory of Music and a doctorate in orchestral conducting at the University of Kansas.

Clark County commissioners and the arts commission will present the Lifetime Achievement Award at 9:45 a.m. at the Clark County Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St. Appert will also be featured in a CTV "Clark County Close Up" program that will begin airing November 16 on Comcast channels 21 and 23 and online.

Clark College Director of Choirs April Duvic nominated Appert for the award, according to a news release issued Friday by the county.



“Don has always been a champion of promoting music by and for the community,” she wrote. “The Clark College Orchestra is an amazing connection for players from all walks of life. The community members serve as examples and mentors for the students as well. Don composes music for the college choirs and the students are eager and honored to perform his works. It’s rare to have a composer of his excellence and renown at a community college.”

“It has been a great pleasure to watch the ongoing growth and development in size and quality of the Music Department, the Clark College Orchestra, and my own creative efforts as educator, conductor, and composer,” says Appert. “My thanks and deep appreciation go to my colleagues in Clark College’s faculty, staff, and administration, as well as to the student and community musicians who have encouraged and supported me these past 25 years.”

*Photo courtesy of Clark College Music Department*

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## **Winter 2014 Classified Staff Excellence Award**

Congratulations to **Janice Taylor**, recipient of the 2014 Winter Quarter Classified Staff Excellence Award!



Tutoring and  
Writing Center  
Program Manager  
Janice Taylor

Janice is the Program Manager for the Tutoring and Writing Center. She started working in the center as a part-time work study student in 2006; was later hired on as a full-time Program Assistant, and recently promoted to Program Manager. Her nominators describe her as a “model of organization and efficiency, regularly doing the work of several people in a single day.”

“Janice is constantly initiating new projects to better our department,” continues her nomination. “She is widely known for the respect she shows to her fellow workers and students, and her vigilance about maintaining a positive and professional environment in the tutoring centers. She figures out solutions to complex problems and finds ways of using limited resources more effectively and efficiently.”

One employee sums it up by saying, “Janice is truly amazing and a huge asset to Clark College!”

**Congratulations to all of the winter quarter nominees:**

**Sally Demos** *“Sally has provided excellent service to the Clark College community for the past 29 years. She frequently goes above and beyond her basic job responsibilities because of her*

*work ethic and belief and support of the mission of Clark College. She is an excellent communicator and possesses a wealth of knowledge that has positioned her as the go-to person regarding campus culture and the history of the college."*

**Joanne Emel** *"Joanne is always positive and friendly. She responds with an upbeat tone and helpful attitude, and solves problems quickly and to my satisfaction. She makes my job easier by being excellent at her job."*

**Darci Feider** *"Darci is very organized and on top of her work. She resolves issues graciously, and takes care of questions and concerns right away. Darci gets along well with her co-workers and is pleasant and professional. She reflects great customer service for the Purchasing Department."*

**Vanessa Meyer** *"Vanessa is friendly and helpful. She remembers the needs of faculty members and retains a positive attitude, regardless of the request. She maintains the documents, keys and workspace well."*

**Derald Richards** *"Derald consistently performs at a level above and beyond the scope of his job. He is quick to submit ideas and solutions, and will take the lead on projects. Derald can be counted on to deliver and complete a task, no matter how difficult."*

**Sarah Thorsen** *"Sarah does anything and everything she can for our department. She goes out of her way to take care of the students and faculty, and she does so with a smile. Sarah is extremely intelligent and will gladly share advice for how to handle difficult situations, based on her extensive experience teaching special needs students."*

The College Community will celebrate all 2013-2014 nominees and recipients at the Annual Ice Cream Social held in September.

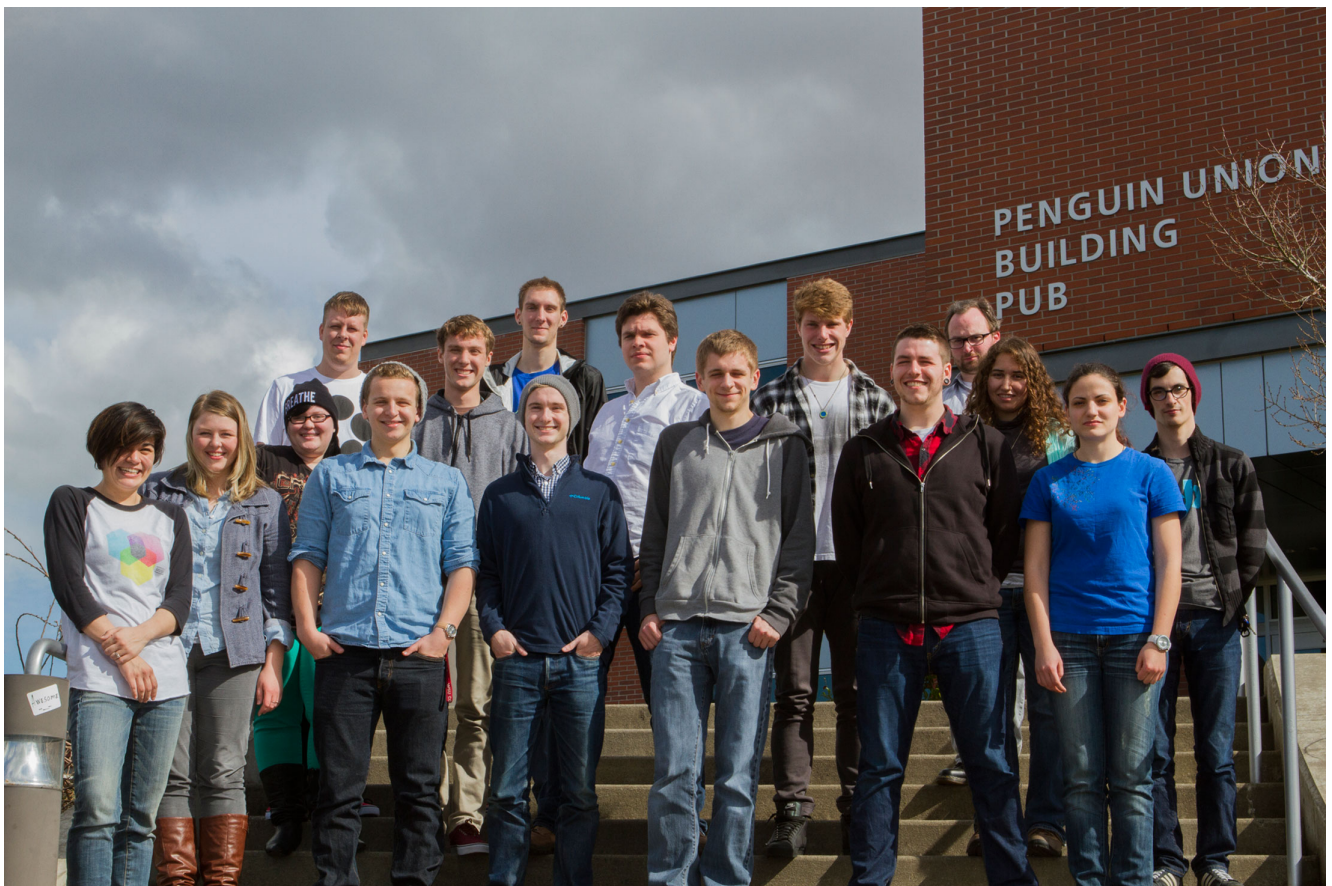
The Classified Staff Excellence Award was established in 2005 and recognizes classified staff who have demonstrated exemplary work performance, outstanding customer service, a

positive and cooperative spirit, and special achievements or contributions to the college community. Thanks to the support of the Clark College Foundation, each quarter's recipient receives a \$400 cash award.

*Karen Ferguson submitted this article. Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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## Indy Wins Awards



Clark College Independent 2014 winter quarter staff include, *left to right* Caitlin Calsbeek, Emma Fletcher, Cloe Beck, Aleksi Lepisto, Kyle Souvenir, Tra Friesen, Kenneth Zummach, Tyler Urke, Robert Berman, Ryan Rutledge, Brody Voge, Tyler

“Charle” Brown, Evan “Smiles” Jones, Alejandra Magallanes, Ester Manea and Bradley York. *Photo: The Independent/Bradley York*

Clark College students who publish the print and online editions of *The Independent* captured two national awards at the Associated Collegiate Press 30th annual National College Journalism Convention, held Feb. 27-March 2 in San Diego.

In addition to attending more than 72 workshops and training sessions while at the convention, *The Independent* staff won third place in a “Best of Show” competition among more than 30 community colleges from across the country that publish weekly newspapers. The Clark College student staff also captured 10th place among large schools – both community colleges and four-year institutions – that produce news websites.

This was the first award for *The Independent’s* online publication, said Clark journalism instructor Dee Anne Finken, who advises the student staff. She said the acknowledgement is evidence the student staff’s digital-first emphasis is working, and noted that the staff’s success in the print category was a step up from last year, when Clark students finished seventh at ACP.

Finken and adjunct instructor Jeff Bunch accompanied the 12 students who attended the three-day conference, which also included workshops on everything from the basics of newswriting to the future of journalism in the digital age, each led by experts in the field. Other workshops featured faculty from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communications at Arizona State University and the Poynter Institute along with *New York Times* Public Editor Margaret Sullivan.

Editor-in-chief Aleksi Lepisto said Clark students are committed to publishing a high-quality news product and will continue to work hard to do even better next year. “If we do

good work, people will see it," Lepisto said.

Lepisto said the issue the staff submitted in the "Best of Show" judging featured a solid representation of the quality coverage for which *The Independent* staff has become known. It included a feature story about a Clark anthropology instructor who is also a ghost hunter and archeologist; a look at some of the issues faced by the growing blind student population at Clark; a commentary about a lack of political awareness among students; and an update on the popularity of the food carts on campus.

Finken and Lepisto said they were grateful for support from the Associated Students of Clark College, which helped fund the trip.

Finken noted that student news teams are in a similar situation as professional news outlets when it comes to figuring out best practices for operating in the rapidly evolving news landscape.

"It's challenging right now," Finken said. "We have one foot in developing the fundamentals, but we also have to look ahead to develop more ways of storytelling and delivering the news. But we are up for the challenge."

In addition to Lepisto, Finken and Bunch, the following student staff members represented *The Independent* at the conference: Esther Manea, Emma Fletcher, Tyler Urke, Tyler "Charlie" Brown, Tra Friesen, Nate Nienaber, Alejandra Magallanes, Kenneth Zummach, Brody Voge, Ryan Rutledge, and Robert Berman.

Other staff members are Caitlin Calsbeek, Evan Jones, Daniel Hampton, Bradley York, Cloe Beck, Killian Bailey, Boyd Lainhart, Kyle Souvenir and Kait Terrel.

*Independent staff contributed this article.*

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# Compass Points to Sirius Bonner



Special Advisor for  
Diversity and  
Equity Sirius  
Bonner

Sirius Bonner, Clark College special advisor for diversity and equity, was presented with the Compass Award at the Urban Spark Collective's fourth annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast, held January 18 in Clark College's Gaiser Student Center.

The Compass Award is given to an individual or organization that carves a new path for diversity and inclusion in education, in the workplace, or through community engagement. As Special Advisor for Diversity and Equity, Bonner advises

and supports Clark College's Executive Cabinet, College Council, Cultural Pluralism Committee and the entire college community. Since joining Clark in 2011, Bonner has introduced new programs to the college; brought a sharper focus to issues of power, privilege and inequity; overseen the opening of a new Diversity Center on the main campus; and expanded the number of opportunities for faculty, students, and staff to build their skills.

Bonner earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Arts degree from Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Before coming to Clark, she served as the Director of Multicultural Recruitment and the Multicultural Affairs Student Program Coordinator at Reed College and later as the Assistant Director of New Student Programs for Diversity Recruitment at Portland State University.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast is sponsored by a number of community organizations. The event is the brainchild of community activist Deena Pierott, who is the founder of diversity executive search firm Mosaic Blueprint. This year, the breakfast had a surprise guest: U.S. Rep. John Lewis (D-Georgia), who worked with Dr. King in the Civil Rights movement, spoke to the assembled guests. In her remarks upon accepting the Compass Award, Bonner said she was inspired by Rep. Lewis, noting that he had inspired her to "get into trouble" in the quest for equity for all people.

Vancouver Mayor and Clark alumnus Tim Leavitt presented the award to Bonner. The event keynote speaker was Dr. Alisha Moreland-Capuia, an Oregon native and psychiatrist at Oregon Health & Science University.

*Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*