

# Clark's Career Launch putting students to work



An open house for Clark College's Automotive Technologies in 2019 showcased the college's partnership with Dick Hannah Automotive.

The State of Washington has recognized Clark College for its outstanding work in Career Launch programs that support student learning and employment. Two Clark College automotive programs have been endorsed by the state's Career Launch Initiative. That good news was announced April 1.

The **Hannah initiative for Technician Education (HiTECC)** supporting area Honda/Acura, Audi, and the Dick Hannah dealerships and the **Toyota Technician & Education Network (T-TEN)** supporting area Toyota/Lexus have been accepted into the state network of Career Launch programs.

“We have forged dealer partnerships that have helped make our programs successful. Our ‘Earn and Learn’ model really complements those dealers who have a desire to ‘grow their own’ technician,” said Tonia Haney, head of Clark College Automotive Technologies. “Students completing these programs will have the experience and certifications to start their career. Most importantly, our graduates will have a job in a dealership that is invested in helping them grow into a successful technician.”

## Opportunities to expand



Kristin Kepner completed the automotive program in 2017 and is currently working at Toyota of Portland.

This endorsement allows Clark College to apply for additional state grants to invest in equipment and technology. It also helps the programs expand to increase the number of the students and automotive dealership partners.

Both programs train technicians to work in the automotive industry. Clark's students enrolled in a Dealer

Ready program participate in paid internships, receive factory certified training, and graduate with credentials from highly respected automotive industry organizations including the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE).

Students learn current automotive technology by working in a 14,000-square-foot facility on state-of-the-art simulators and late-model vehicles donated by local industry.

“Because of our collaboration with Clark College and the T-TEN program, we are able to strengthen our dealership’s core, position our company for the future, and put our people in a position to win,” said Dan Morton, Shop Manager and Diagnostic Specialist at Kuni Lexus of Portland.

## High-Demand Jobs



Governor Jay Inslee meets Clark College Mechatronics students February 20, 2020 at a meeting at SEH America with Career

Launch and community partners in Southwest Washington. Clark's graduates are in high demand by dealerships and experience an accelerated path to better pay and benefits. Clark College is certified by the Automotive Service Excellence Education Foundation and has been training automotive technicians for more than 40 years.

Clark now has three programs that are Career Launch endorsed. Clark's Mechatronics program was certified last fall, working with business partner SEH-America. With Career Launch support, additional high-tech companies in Clark County plan to launch similar partnerships this fall.

In February, Governor Jay Inslee visited SEH-America to meet with Clark students and the Career Launch partners to learn more about the program and hear from students.

Students have the benefit of working a part-time job in the automotive industry. The company pays the student's tuition while they attend Clark to earn their certificate or degree. The partnership relies on the college's ability to work with employers ensuring curriculum is relevant to the local industry. It's a partnership that maximizes student success.

"This is a great opportunity for Clark students," said Dr. Sandra Fowler-Hill, Interim President of Clark College. "Working strategically with our industry partners, we can help develop the talent pipeline that will allow local companies to grow and will provide outstanding opportunities for our students to succeed."

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# Clark College Automotive Technology holds Open House



## Clark College Automotive Technology Open House

The Clark College Automotive Technology department welcomes prospective students and their families to its annual Open House on Wednesday, February 20, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

This

event is free and open to the public, though organizers ask guests to RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/clark-college-automotive-open-house-tickets-55283786293>.

It takes place in the college's automotive shop in Building AA-1 on Clark's main campus at 1933 Ft. Vancouver Way. The closest parking is in Orange Lot 1.

For maps and directions visit [www.clark.edu/maps](http://www.clark.edu/maps). Light refreshments will be served.

Guests will be able to tour the program's 14,000 square-foot facility, meet with faculty and staff, connect with local dealership managers, and speak with professional technicians about career opportunities. They will also be able to learn about the college's Dealer Ready programs, which allow students to earn income and work experience through internships during the course of their degree program.

### **About the Clark College Automotive Technology Department**

With a program history that spans more than 40 years, Clark College's Automotive Technology department has received community recognition for producing top-tier automotive technicians and for its focus on hands-on learning and partnerships with dealerships that include Toyota, Honda, Dick Hannah, and Audi.

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## **Focusing on the Future**



President Robert K. Knight pauses for a moment in his 2014 State of the College address.

At 80 years old, Clark College still has plenty to learn—that was the message Clark College President Robert K. Knight conveyed in his annual State of the College address.

Knight took a moment to acknowledge that the college was in the midst of celebrating its 80th anniversary, but then said that, rather than focusing on the past, “I have been ... thinking about what steps we can continue to take to ensure that Clark College at 100 is the vibrant and important place that it is today.”

Knight said that he thought the college was “on the right path” in that respect, pointing to recent accomplishments such as a very successful accreditation visit by representatives of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, during which the commission acknowledged the improvements Clark has made in the area of shared governance.



Presidential Coin recipient and Automotive Technology professor Mike Godson, *right*, with Dick Hannah representative Gary Schuler. Godson and Schuler worked together to help create a partnership that allows aspiring automotive technicians to take classes at Clark College and work at Dick Hannah simultaneously.

Other recent accomplishments Knight noted included:

- Receiving funding for a new building on the main campus dedicated to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), scheduled to break ground in summer 2014;
- Recent state approval for a \$35 million satellite location in northern Clark County at a site still to be determined;
- The success of the Clark College Foundation's "Ensuring a Bright Future" fundraising campaign, which is predicted to reach its goal of \$20 million in spring 2014;
- The introduction of a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Dental Hygiene, the first bachelor's degree to be offered by the college;
- A statewide record in the number of online courses



- certified by Quality Matters;
- The opening of a Veterans Resource Center on the main campus to help the college's estimated 800 student veterans;
- The continued development of a new Strategic Plan for the years 2015-2020;
- Clark's leadership role in transitioning to ctcLink;
- New programs and opportunities for students to participate in cutting-edge learning in the automotive, aeronautics, and bioscience fields;
- National awards won by *Phoenix*, Clark's journal of arts and literature;
- Increased enrollment in Clark's Honors Program.

Knight acknowledged that Clark's enrollment has decreased for the first time in recent years. "We expected that," he said. "It's a good thing, because it means that people are finding jobs. We expect enrollment to continue to go down a little bit."



President Knight with Che'yna Shotwell. Shotwell, a junior at Mountain View High School, is part of the Penguin Promise partnership between Clark College and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southwest Washington, which provides Clark College

scholarships to those students who fulfill the program's stringent academic requirements. She is on track to become the first student to receive such a scholarship from the program, which was announced at the 2013 State of the College address.

Knight explained that administration and staff were already discussing how to manage the college's enrollment. "We have to determine what is the right size for Clark College," he said. Then he added, "As we continue to be the most over-enrolled community college in Washington, we haven't turned away students yet."

Knight stressed that any decisions about the college's future would need to be based on whether or not they helped students learn. "As long as I am president, we will never forget that the student comes first and is the only reason we have a job and the only reason we're here," he said.

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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View the entire speech on [CVTV](#).