

Native Voices come to Clark



Chinook tribal elder Sam Robinson and Clark student Channa Smith perform a blessing song to welcome the Native Voices exhibition to Clark College.

On February 9, Cannell Library was briefly filled with the sound of drumming and singing during the opening ceremony for “Native Voices,” a traveling exhibition examining Native American concepts of health and medicine that will be on display in the library through March 16.

“It’s an honor to be here today,” said Chinook tribal elder and Clark alumnus Sam Robinson before he began a blessing ceremony for the event. “There are a lot different kinds of healing among our people, and there’s a lot of healing needed in our community.”



Librarian Laura Nagel, Dean of Libraries and Academic Success Services Michelle Bagley, Enrollment Services Program Coordinator Anna Schmasow, Chinook tribal elder and Clark alumnus Sam Robinson, and Interim Director of the Office of Diversity and Equity Felis Peralta.

"Native Voices" is produced by the National Library of Medicine in conjunction with the American Library Association. Clark College Libraries were selected as one of about 100 sites to host the exhibition during 2016-2020, and is the first to do so in the Pacific Northwest.

The exhibition examines concepts of health and medicine among contemporary American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. It features interviews and works from Native people living on reservations, in tribal villages, and in cities. Topics include: Native views of land, food, community, earth/nature, and spirituality as they relate to Native health; the relationship between traditional healing and Western medicine in Native communities; economic and cultural issues that affect the health of Native communities; efforts by Native communities to improve health conditions; and the role of Native Americans in military service and healing

support for returning Native veterans.

Host sites are encouraged to incorporate additional materials and events into the exhibition, and Clark College Libraries has connected with several other departments and organizations—including the Chinook Nation, Clark County Historical Museum, the Clark College Office of Diversity and Equity, Archer Gallery, and Clark College Student Life—to create an impressive roster of events supporting the exhibition. These include:

- **Tuesday, February 9, noon:** Opening Ceremony featuring a blessing with drummers. *Cannell Library*
- **Tuesday, February 16, 11:30 a.m.:** Student of Color Luncheon with the artists of *One November Morning*, an exhibit about the Sand Creek Massacre hosted by the Clark County Historical Museum. Also featuring the awarding of the first Dreamcatcher Scholarship for Native American students at Clark College. *PUB 161*
- **Thursday, February 17, 2:00 p.m.:** “Earth-Based Mentoring through Grief,” a presentation from Tony Ten Fingers of the Oglala Lakota. *GHL 213*
- **Friday, February 19, 2:00 p.m.:** Documentary on *One November Morning* sponsored by the Native American Culture Club of Clark College. *Foster Auditorium*
- **Wednesday, February 24, 12:15 p.m.:** This week’s half-hour “30 Clicks” presentation covers the connections between wellness, illness, and cultural life. *LIB 103*
- **Friday, March 4, 5:00 p.m.:** Art Walk between Cannell Library, Archer Gallery, and Clark County Historical Museum
- **Wednesday, March 9, noon:** Closing ceremonies. *Cannell Library*

“We’ve mentioned over and over how well it fits together having all these events happening at the same time,” said librarian Laura Nagel, who helped to organize Clark’s hosting of Native Voices. “The stars really aligned for this.”

See more photos from the opening ceremony [here](#).

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Natalie Diaz opens Columbia Writers Series



Natalie Diaz. *Photo credit: Rachel Eliza Griffiths*

*Angels don't come to the reservation.
Bats, maybe, or owls, boxy mottled things.
Coyotes, too. They all mean the same thing—
death. And death
eats angels, I guess, because I haven't seen an angel
fly through this valley ever.*

*—excerpt from "Abecedarian Requiring Further Examination
of Anglikan Seraphym Subjugation of a Wild Indian
Rezervation," by Natalie Diaz*

This year's Columbia Writers Series kicks off with Natalie Diaz, the award-winning author of *When My Brother Was an Aztec*, a book of poetry which *New York Times* reviewer Eric McHenry described as an "ambitious ... beautiful book." Diaz will be reading from her book at 1 p.m. on November 10 in PUB 161 on Clark's main campus. This event is free and open to the public.

Diaz's honors and awards include the Nimrod/Hardman Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry, the Louis Untermeyer Scholarship in Poetry from Bread Loaf, the Narrative Poetry Prize, and a Lannan Literary Fellowship.

Natalie Diaz was born in the Fort Mojave Indian Village in Needles, California. She is Mojave and an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian community. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Old Dominion University, where she received a full athletic scholarship. Diaz played professional basketball in Europe and Asia before returning to Old Dominion to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree.

Diaz now lives in Mohave Valley, Arizona, where she works with the last speakers of Mojave and directs a language revitalization program. In a PBS interview, she spoke of the connection between writing and experience: "For me writing is kind of a way for me to explore why I want things and why I'm afraid of things and why I worry about things. And for me, all of those things represent a kind of hunger that comes with being raised in a place like this."

Directions and maps to Clark are available online. Individuals who need accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should contact Clark College's Disability Support Services (DSS) Office at or (VP). The DSS office is located in room 013 in Clark's Penguin Union Building.

The Columbia Writers Series was launched at Clark College in

1988, bringing local, national and international authors to the college and the region. Information about the Columbia Writers Series is available at www.clark.edu/cc/cws.

England appointed to commission



Dolly England

Clark College is pleased to announce that Dolly England, Diversity Outreach Manager, was recently appointed to the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs by Gov. Jay Inslee. As a commissioner for Southwest Washington, England will help shape policy and understanding regarding African-Americans in Washington State.

“Dolly England’s appointment to this important commission is a wonderful example of the important roles Clark College employees play in serving our community,” said Clark College President Robert K. Knight. “I am sure she will bring a wealth of insight and energy to the commission, just as she has done here at Clark.”

England, who has more than 15 years of experience working in community health and is the former vice president of the Vancouver NAACP, joined Clark College in January to help guide the college's efforts to attract and retain diverse employees. Creating the Diversity Outreach Manager position is just one step in Clark's effort to ensure the college continues to attract the best and brightest employee candidates. As part of this role, England is leading several efforts to expand and modernize the college's outreach to potential new candidates. Some highlights of these new outreach efforts include:

- Members of the Clark's Human Resources staff have begun attending regional community events and career fairs—totaling more than 15 by the end of 2015.
- Human Resources staff will attend national career fairs during the key faculty recruitment period of November – January.
- The college has recently contracted with social recruitment vendor CareerArc to strategically expand its job postings into the realm of social media.
- The college has set an ambitious new goal of ensuring the candidate pool for each new job opening is at least 25 percent diverse, a description which includes race, color, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, creed, and veteran status.
- Clark College is a participant in the newly formed Southwest Washington Community Human Resources Group, which was developed by local employers to share and develop strategies to diversify recruitment both within their respective organizations and in the region as a whole.

“This is an exciting time for Clark College,” says England. “By expanding our reach and using some of the same tools Fortune 500 companies use to recruit the best and brightest candidates from across the country, we can ensure that Clark

is building a workforce that will maintain its high reputation for decades to come.”

Clark College employs 1,600 employees. As a nonprofit Washington State institution, Clark College offers faculty and staff the opportunity to serve the community by guiding individuals to achieve their educational and professional goals. The college also offers many attractive benefits for potential employees, including its location in the heart of the Pacific Northwest; its beautiful, 101-acre campus; access to discounted classes; fitness center membership; on-site child care; ample opportunities for professional development; high-quality teaching facilities; and teaching-focused faculty.

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Clark employee part of social justice pilot project



Roslyn “Roz” Leon Guerrero, *third from right*, attends a retreat in 2014 with her fellow members of the Social Justice Leadership Institute’s pilot cohort. *Photo courtesy of Roslyn Leon Guerrero.*

Clark College employee Roslyn “Roz” Leon Guerrero was invited to be part of a new cohort project designed to develop leadership skills in community college employees from historically disenfranchised or underrepresented populations.

Leon Guerrero, who identifies as a Chamorro from the Northern Mariana Islands, was one of 20 members of the pilot cohort of the Social Justice Leadership Institute. Members met five times over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year to participate in activities designed to help them grow their leadership skills, develop a systemwide network of colleagues, and learn new tools for supporting diversity at their respective institutions.

“There is so much to share about the growth and development I received from being a part of the SJLI first cohort group,” says Leon Guerrero. “There was a lot of reflection on me personally and professionally. Being able to come together with a group of awesome and inspiring individuals, sharing the same struggles and challenges, and mentoring and empowering each other is uplifting, inspiring, and heartening. If there was one word I could use to describe this experience, it would be ‘blessed.’”

Leon Guerrero, who has worked at Clark College for more than five years both in the Office of Instruction and now in the Office of Diversity and Equity, first heard about the SJLI from psychology professor and early childhood education division chair Debi Jenkins. Moments after Jenkins’s email, she received another from the Office of Instruction asking if she was interested in participating. Just a few weeks later, she was walking into the Whidbey Island Institute to attend a three-day retreat with the rest of her cohort.

The remaining four meetings took place at Bellevue College, which houses the SJLI. Leon Guerrero says that over the course of the year, she learned how to identify and use her personal strengths—a valuable experience. “Being able to focus on myself and understanding myself is important especially in my work in the Office of Diversity and Equity,” says Leon Guerrero, who currently serves as that office’s Administrative Support.

Leon Guerrero says she hopes to create a similar program here at Clark, and hopes other Clark employees will apply for the 2015-2016 cohort of SJLI, applications for which are due August 1. She offers this advice to anyone interested in participating: “Remember to do self-care before SJLI. Always reflect on yourself, and have an open mind . SJLI is not an avenue for you to find someone to take in your stuff; rather, it’s a safe place for historically underrepresented individuals to learn, grow, develop, and reflect on themselves

so they can grow and succeed in their position in higher education. Be your authentic self in everything you do. ”

Fun for the Whole Familia



Members of the Olincalli Ballet Folklórico perform at the 2014 Latino Festival.

On Friday, May 1, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., Clark College invites the community to participate in an evening of free, family-friendly activities that celebrate both Latino culture and the value of literacy.

“Celebración de Mi Gente: El Día del Niño/El Día del Libro” (“Celebration of My People: Day of the Child/Day of the Book”) is an annual event hosted by the college. It is free and open

to the public. It is always held on or near the Mexican holiday of Día del Niño (April 30), which is also celebrated as Día del Libro by the American Library Association. The festival will feature a bilingual puppet show, bilingual storytelling and book-reading, dancing, crafts, face-painting, bilingual games, crafts, and delicious snacks. Clark College's mascot, Oswald the Penguin, will be on hand for photos with visiting children.

The event will be held in the Gaiser Student Center on Clark College's main campus. Clark College is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver. Driving directions and parking maps are available at www.clark.edu/maps. Anyone needing accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should contact Clark College's Disability Support Services Office at (360) 992-2314 or (360) 991-0901 (VP), prior to the event.

See video about the puppet show and last year's festival:

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Video: Clark College/Nick Bremer-Korb

Weaving a Stronger Safety Net



Clark College has received a major grant toward the college's efforts to help low-income students complete their education. Work is already underway on the three-year Working Families Success Network (WFSN) grant, which provides \$100,000 per year to hire staff and equip them to work with students.

WFSN is a program of Achieving the Dream, a partnership of seven nonprofit organizations that has grown to become the largest non-governmental reform movement working in higher education today. Achieving the Dream works at 200 higher education institutions in 34 states and the District of Columbia helping nearly 4 million college students realize greater economic opportunity.

Through the WFSN grant, Clark College will have an opportunity to provide more support to students in the areas of financial literacy, career services and gaining access to public benefits. "One of our goals is to remove the stigma and mystery surrounding some of the public benefits that students may be eligible for," Armetta Burney, Associate Director of Workforce Education Services, said. She explained that the grant allows the college to hire four part-time coaches to work one-on-one with students, helping them to access resources and manage their finances as they reach for their educational goals.

"We also have an effort underway to help faculty and staff

understand how to direct and encourage low-income students,” Burney added. “This is a large issue for the college as a whole, as 47 percent of Clark College students are classified as low-income.” Burney added that there are many ways for faculty and staff to encourage students, but one of the easiest is to share the website www.washingtonconnection.org, which helps students quickly and easily determine their eligibility for public benefits.

The grant parameters state a goal of reaching 25 percent of low-income students with both high- and low-touch services by the end of the three-year grant. High-touch services include one-on-one interactions like financial coaching, career coaching, or assistance with access to public benefits. Low-touch services include workshops, classes and general information on resources and services provided by the college.

“We know that far too many of our students are just one financial crisis away from dropping out of school, and that once they drop out it can be incredibly difficult for them to return,” said Edie Blakley, Director of Career Services. “With this grant, Clark College will be able to help more of these students weave a safety net for themselves that can allow them to stay focused on their long-term goals and create a plan for their financial wellness during and after college”

The Poetry of Social Justice



"Poetry is about being able to speak the truth," said Aaron Reader in his keynote address during Clark's 2015 Martin Luther King observance. "And Dr. King not only spoke the truth, he acted on it."

"Dr. King started the battle, but the war has not been won."

That was one line from "Sleepwalking," the poem spoken-word artist Aaron Reader chose to begin his presentation honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., held January 21 in Gaiser Student Center. Reader had come to Clark as the keynote speaker for the college's annual Martin Luther King Day observance.

"It's because of Dr. King that I am able to speak to you today," Reader told his audience. "It's because of Dr. King that I was able to get a master's degree. At one point, people like me didn't even go to college."

Reader grew up in Oakland, California. In his teens, he began using poetry as an outlet to express the ups and downs of

being a young African-American male in inner-city America. Today, in addition to his spoken-word performances and his work as a motivational speaker and workshop facilitator around issues of diversity and equity, he also serves as the director of multicultural services at Bellevue College.

It was in his capacity at the college that he was invited to participate in a seven-day bus tour of significant sites from the 1960s civil rights movement, and much of his presentation focused on that experience.

"I went to the south and I realized that I have been sheltered living here in the Pacific Northwest," he said. "We went to a spot where we got off the bus, and the guide said, 'We don't let students go down that road there because that's where the Ku Klux Klan are.'"



Aaron Reader with MLK Celebration Committee members, *left to right*, Felisciana Peralta, Rosalba Pitkin, Michelle Golder, Rosalyn Guerrero, and Dolly England.

Reader said that the experience not only gave him a deeper connection to the history of civil rights in this country, but also some uncomfortable insight into disparities that remain today. He recounted one moment when the 30 members of his tour

group—a combination of college students, employees, and alumni—arrived at the Lorraine Motel, where Dr. King was shot and killed in 1968 on the second-floor balcony.

“I’m looking up at this thing and I’m starting to lose it,” recalled Reader. “I’m getting choked up. Some of the students were starting to cry. And then one of the [white] faculty said, ‘How many of you are up for Starbucks?’”

Reader said that afterward, he had private conversations with some of his colleagues to explain how that moment had been hurtful to the students of color on the tour. He told the audience to be ready to have such conversations themselves. “As social-justice activists, as warriors, you’re going to have to be comfortable with being uncomfortable,” he said.

Afterward, during a question-and-answer period following Reader’s presentation, a white faculty member asked how she and her white colleagues at Clark could help support diverse students at the college.

“Number One is to listen,” Reader advised. “Oftentimes, I think that when we think we get it, we shut our ears off. Don’t be so quick to say, ‘I understand.’ Before you say you understand, take a moment to really listen.”

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Video: Nick Bremer-Korb

Educating for the Seventh

Generation



“Educating for the Seventh Generation” is a night of sharing music, dance, and traditions.

On Friday, November 7, Clark College will welcome the community as it hosts “Educating for the Seventh Generation,” a celebration of indigenous cultures.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will be held in the Gaiser Student Center on Clark College’s main campus. The event will begin at 5 p.m., with free food and refreshments served. A performance by Native American flutist and flute-maker Isaac Trimble will begin at 5:45 p.m. The Welcome Address and opening ceremonies for a powwow will begin at 6 p.m. Closing ceremonies will take place at 10 p.m. Vendors and informational booths will be present 5:00 – 10:00 p.m.

This is the sixth year that Clark College has coordinated and hosted an event in honor of Native American Heritage Month. It is one of four signature events hosted by the college annually to celebrate diverse cultures.

This year, the celebration will include the announcement of an effort to create a new scholarship. Entitled the Dream Catcher Scholarship, this fund would go toward the tuition of a Native American student studying at Clark.

"Studies show that Native Americans experience some of the highest poverty rates of all racial groups in the U.S.," said Anna Schmasow (Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Oyate Tribal Member), an office assistant at Clark College who has been integral to the organization of Educating for the Seventh Generation. "I believe that education is the most effective tool in escaping poverty. A scholarship fund can help students who are in need attain a successful career."

Longtime community organizer and celebration committee member Becky Archibald (Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Member) said she hoped the Dream Catcher Scholarship would make college more accessible to Native American youth, many of whom have historical and cultural reasons to distrust educational institutions. "It helps to soften that step, to create that sense of inclusion," she said. "The scholarship fund would promote the idea that college is possible for the Native American youth in today's world. It would assist students in bringing their dreams and goals together through higher education."

According to organizers, "Educating for the Seventh Generation" references "our responsibility to teach the future Seventh Generation to maintain our resources, traditions and customs. It is the way of caring and preserving for the Seventh Generation, which is a true sustainable practice."

See images from last year's celebration in Clark's Flickr

album or watch the following video to learn more about this annual event.

Photo Album: Fun for the Whole Familia

Not even an accidental fire alarm could stop the festivities at this year's Día del Niño/Día del Libro celebration, held in Gaiser Student Center on May 9. Approximately 225 guests enjoyed the evening-long celebration of Latino culture and literature, which included a bilingual puppet show performed by Clark Spanish language students, dance performances by Olincalli Ballet Folklórico, free food from Panadería Cinco de Mayo, and hands-on activities for children. Oswald the Penguin was on hand to greet children and pose for pictures—even when the party moved outdoors temporarily after an inquisitive toddler managed to pull a fire alarm. The celebration quickly moved back inside to continue the festivities, which are held each year around April 30, the date of Mexico's Día del Niño ("Day of the Child") and the American Library Association's Día del Libro ("Day of the Book").

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Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

A Spanish Lesson with Strings Attached



Professor Betsy Ubiergo takes a moment from putting the finishing touches on some of the puppets she helped create at the Olde World Puppet Theatre studios during her sabbatical.

In a strange way, Spanish professor Betsy Ubiergo has the cruelty of children to thank for inspiring her sabbatical project, which will be unveiled at Clark College's Día del Niño/Día del Libro festival, held May 9 in Gaiser Student Center.

Ubiergo and her Spanish-born husband are raising their daughter, Mar, to be bilingual in both English and Spanish. But Mar began refusing to speak Spanish at home after classmates at her elementary school told her she was "too blonde to speak Spanish."

“She’d come home from school and say, ‘Mom, I can’t speak Spanish,’” Ubiergo recalled. “But then she’d grab a doll and make the doll speak in Spanish. She’d relax once it wasn’t her on the spot. The doll would speak *great* Spanish.”

Ubiergo began wondering if this same technique could be used to help her students at Clark, who often seemed to forget their language skills as soon as they had to use them in front of other people. “There’s a lot of research going on right now regarding performance-based language learning,” said Ubiergo. “I thought, maybe if my students had something to hide behind, they could relax and get more from the experience.”



Steven Overton and Martin Richmond of the Olde World Puppet Theatre Studios said they designed the puppets to be both easy for students to use and respectful of the source material’s cultural aesthetics.

Ubiergo applied for and received a two-quarter sabbatical to spend creating a series of large puppets based on works of Spanish literature, as well as the training to be able to help her students use them. To help craft the puppets, she turned to Steve Overton and Marty Richmond of Portland’s Olde World Puppet Theatre Studios, who spent hundreds of hours working to design, craft, and coordinate the 33 puppets.

"We just really loved what Betsy was doing," said Overton. "It's promoting literacy, and language, and the classics. We were really happy to be part of it."

The puppets are based on three different children's stories, each by a major figure in Spanish-language literature: *El Elefante y Su Secreto* (*The Elephant and his Secret*) by Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral; *Platero y Yo*, by Spanish poet and writer Juan Ramón Jiménez; and *Jaco* by André Dahan, a French writer and illustrator whose children's books have been translated into numerous languages. Ubiergo has created scripts from each story; students in her spring quarter Spanish 123 class are currently learning the plays and will be performing them at Clark's annual Día del Nino/Día del Libro festival, an evening celebration of Latino culture that always includes food, music, dance and a host of other family-friendly activities.



Jaco the Bird is the star of one of the bilingual puppet skits created by Spanish professor Betsy Ubiergo.

“It will be nice because everyone can get something different from this,” said Ubiergo. “For my students, they’ll have a chance to learn Spanish in a new and non-threatening way, and to interact with native Spanish speakers. For the children there who speak Spanish, this may introduce them to some important examples of Spanish-language literature that they may not have been familiar with—and because they’ll be able to help my students out if they forget a word, it validates their experiences as Spanish speakers. And for English-speaking children, the plays are bilingual, and the puppets make it engaging even when they don’t recognize the language.”

Ubiergo added that since the puppets were part of her sabbatical project, they are now Clark College property and will be available for future productions and lessons. In fact, she made sure to request that Overton and Richmond make the puppets easy to disassemble and pack for traveling, because she already has plans to use them in a service learning project during the college’s next study abroad trip to Mexico during Spring Break 2015.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley