

Students Talk, Lawmakers Listen



Clark College student Darryl Ramsey addressed guests at the Legislative Breakfast.

Clark College held its first Legislative Breakfast on December 6, inviting legislative leaders in the districts that the college serves to hear more about the college's achievements and challenges.

The event got off to a late start due to an unexpected snowfall that had begun the night before. Nevertheless, six legislators were in attendance: Washington State Representatives Paul Harris, Jim Moeller, Liz Pike, Monica Stonier, Brandon Vick, and Sharon Wylie. Clark College Board of Trustees members Jada Rupley, Sherry Parker, and Chair Royce Pollard also attended, as did many staff, faculty and

students.

As guests enjoyed breakfast fare (including pastries provided by the college's Culinary Arts-Bakery program), they were welcomed by Associated Students of Clark College (ASCC) President Dena Brill. President Bob Knight and Trustee Pollard also greeted attendees.

As a member of the Washington Community and Technical College system, Clark does not lobby the legislature directly, but Pollard laid out some of the key issues that Clark will be watching during the upcoming legislative session, including the continuing funding challenges created both by statewide budget problems and by underfunding of community colleges in particular. Also, Clark College's north county project will be back before legislators this winter, as the project has been approved but funding has not yet been allocated. The project, which will provide a new Clark College facility in the northern portion of the Clark College service area, is likely at least 10 years away.



Dr. Peter Williams,
Dean of STEM

President Knight spoke about the strong local support for the college, including some recent partnerships with business and

industry, and about student success. Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Dr. Peter Williams provided legislators with a preview of many things happening in STEM and thanked them for their support of capital funding for two-year colleges. Clark College will break ground on a new STEM building in 2014.

Some of the biggest impact in the program came from Brill and another student, Darryl Ramsey, who is transitioning from military service to a career in network technology. Both students spoke to the legislators about the importance of the college in the community and in their own lives. They thanked the legislators for their support, and encouraged them to continue to keep Clark College in their minds as they went to Olympia.

Photos: Clark College/Jennifer Kirby

History Lesson



Readers of the Gettysburg Address were, *left to right*, Tracy Fortmann, Rowena

Tchao, Claire Bauer, Rosalba Pitkin, Bill Charles, Tim Leavitt, Julie Eddings, Bill Ritchie, Pat Jollota, Lisa Gibert, and Sirius Bonner.

Four score and five people attended a recitation of the Gettysburg Address on November 19, the 150th anniversary of that famous speech's delivery by President Abraham Lincoln. The event, which was organized jointly by Clark College Mature Learning and the National Park Service's Fort Vancouver National Historic Site (FVNHS), took place in Foster Auditorium.

The event was part of the Learn the Address project, an effort by documentarian Ken Burns, along with numerous partners, to encourage Americans to video record themselves reading or reciting the address.

Eleven different presenters recited lines of the speech: Vancouver Mayor and Clark alumnus Tim Leavitt, Clark College Foundation President and CEO Lisa Gibert, Clark College Assistant Vice President of Corporate & Continuing Education Kevin Kussman, Fort Vancouver Superintendent Tracy Fortmann, Clark College Special Advisor for Diversity & Equity Sirius Bonner, Skyridge Middle School student Claire Bauer, Mature Learning student Bill Charles, Northwest Indian Veterans Association Color Guard member Julie Eddings, Crossroads Community Church pastor Bill Ritchie, Clark College Diversity Outreach Specialist Rosalba Pitkin, Clark College Foundation Annual Fund Specialist Rowena Tchao, and Clark College Mature Learning instructor and Clark County Freeholder Pat Jollota.

The program also included period Civil War music by "Illinois" Doug Tracy; a presentation of the colors by the Northwest Indian Veterans Association Color Guard; lecture on Lincoln by Mature Learning instructor Dr. Elliott Trommald; a lecture on Fort Vancouver's role in the Civil War by Tracy Fortmann; a

welcome by Clark College Vice President of Administration Bob Williamson; and the reading of a Walt Whitman poem by Clark College Trustee Royce Pollard.

“This program is one of several this year that we are doing in a partnership we have inaugurated with the National Park Service and Fort Vancouver National Historic Site,” said Mature Learning Manager Tracy Reilly Kelly, who emceed the event. “Our co-programming will focus on history and archaeology.”

Reilly Kelly added that FVNHS staff had told her that they appreciated that Clark College President Bob Knight made it back from China just in time to attend that evening’s launch of the Fort’s new exhibit, “The Civil War in the West: A New Birth of Freedom.”

Story submitted by Tracy Reilly Kelly

Photo: Clark College Mature Learning/Don Gardener