

Clark College to expand in the Gorge



Bingen, Wash., is the site of a new Clark College facility offering educational opportunity to the residents of the Columbia River Gorge.

Less than a year after establishing a location in the Columbia River Gorge, Clark College is expanding its academic and technical offerings and moving into a new, larger facility.

The new location in Bingen, Wash., which is still being negotiated, would house both new classes designed for the needs of local employers as well as existing classes currently run out of Clark's facility at the Wind River Education Center in nearby Carson. That facility was opened in fall 2013 in response to widespread interest from Columbia Gorge residents and school districts in having access to affordable, college-level classes; it will close when the Bingen facility opens in order to house all Clark programs in one convenient location.

The expansion is made possible in part by a \$315,000 grant received by the college from the State of Washington to increase enrollment in aerospace education, approximately half of which is going to provide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education at the Bingen facility. The grant is part of an \$8 million, statewide program to help two-

year and technical colleges prepare future employees in the aerospace field.

The new Bingen location will include a computer lab and classroom space for classes in Computer Aided Design and Drafting (CADD), a skill that many regional employers cited as in high demand. The college will also be hiring a full-time employee in the Columbia River Gorge. The college is on an aggressive timeline, and will be ready to offer classes in the fall of 2014.

The college is also moving its Transitional Studies (basic education, GED preparation, and ESL) programs and other academic offerings previously provided at Wind River to the new Bingen facility. These other offerings include classes taken by area high school students through Washington State's Running Start program, which allows students to take college-level classes while still enrolled in high school for little or no tuition—potentially earning their associate degree while still in high school.

Additionally, Clark College Corporate and Continuing Education (CCE) will use the new facility to continue and expand its specialized training for local employers. Beginning in fall 2014, CCE will also begin providing professional-development courses to the public, including LEAN, blueprint reading, Excel, Word, Outlook, Business Writing, email etiquette and communication, and essentials of supervision.

A full list of courses and activities in the Columbia River Gorge will be available on the Clark College website later this summer.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Launching a New Appreciation for STEM



Pam Peiper, a member of U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's staff, gets some hands-on practice with DNA testing.

Flanked by a pair of three-story-high yachts, more than 150 people gathered inside the Christensen Shipyards warehouse in Vancouver to have their DNA tested and taste hot ice cream during an interactive event that demonstrated how Clark College is preparing students for jobs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Clark College Foundation, in partnership with Christensen Shipyards, held the special event on the evening of March 15. The gathering showed local businesspeople how Clark matches the community's workforce needs with training, education and internships in STEM.



Biology instructor Ryan Kustus describes Clark's participation in Yale University's Small World Initiative, in which students do research that could help discover new antibiotics.

Jim and Kelly Maul, from the Vancouver environmental engineering firm Maul, Foster & Alongi Inc., stood transfixed as Clark engineering student Jesse Bosdell described how a water clock worked and that the clocks were part of a campus-wide competition.

"You've got to put the fun into science and engineering first, and then the passion will come later," said Jim Maul. His wife, Kelly, said she was "fired up to go back to school" after seeing the student demonstrations.

The couple has two daughters whom they hope to steer toward a STEM education. Clark is on their list of higher education options.

Guest Tim Kraft, a civil engineer and principal at the water resources company Otak Inc., said Clark College offers critical programs that aren't available at other community colleges. "I see what Clark does, and it's impressive," said Kraft, who mentors youth with interests in science and engineering in the Southwest Washington area.

Clark College President Robert K. Knight addressed the guests by acknowledging the regional businesses present and how in partnership, they drive the region's economic prosperity. "It's vitally important that the community and Clark College work together to provide an educated workforce to meet the 17,000 jobs that regional economists predict will require education in STEM by 2015," he said.



The event was part of the Ensuring a Bright Future: Campaign for Clark College. Funds raised during the campaign are aimed at enhancing scholarships, faculty professional development, technology infrastructure, STEM, and dental hygiene education.

Lisa Gibert, president and CEO of Clark College Foundation, said it was exciting to see guests clearly fascinated with the student achievements. "This evening brings me so much pride to showcase the great work Clark is doing and how that education translates to jobs in our region and beyond," she said.



Engineering professor Carol Hsu and Clark student Jessica Molner explain to guests how water clocks work. Molner is a member of Clark's NERD (Not Even Remotely Dorky) Girls, a student club devoted to promoting STEM among women and girls.

Guests had the opportunity to learn about water clocks built with coconuts and bamboo; a rocket that is part of a national NASA competition; software for mass-identifying license plates; the weight distribution of a package of Chips-Ahoy! chocolate chip cookies; DNA sampling; and more.

Some of the business community members represented included Portland Plastics, Corwin Beverage, Wells Fargo Advisors, Columbia Credit Union, Legacy Salmon Creek Hospital, Sterling Bank, Mekos Corporation, Silicon Forest Electronics, and SEH America Inc.

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Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

This article originally appeared in a slightly different form on the Clark College Foundation news site.

Choppers, Gunk, Bugs and Barges

On Saturday, November 2, Clark College's main campus was fizzing like a lab beaker as hundreds of students participated in the Southwest Washington Elementary Science Olympiad. Almost 300 third-through-fifth grade students from 19 local elementary schools participated in the half-day event, which included five competitions: Green Eggs Go Bam!, Chopper Challenge, Tug-o-War Gunk, Benthic Bugs, and Buoyant Barges. (See complete results from the contest.) In addition to hosting the event, Clark provided more than 60 volunteers, most of them students. This was Clark's sixth year of hosting the event, which helps promote STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) among young learners.

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Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

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