

CLARK COLLEGE •

Connections

Vol. 25, No. 2 ■ WINTER 2012

Schedule of classes ■ Winter quarter classes begin January 9, 2012

ClarkCollege *The Next Step*

FAST FORWARD

HOW CLARK STAYS AHEAD IN THE TECHNOLOGY RACE





President Robert K. Knight, center, stands with former Vancouver Mayor (and current Clark College trustee) Royce Pollard and former America Kotobuki President John Kageyama at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Royce Pollard Japanese Friendship Garden.

AT CLARK COLLEGE, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE STUDENT. We listen to our students' concerns, and one that we heard mentioned again and again was...parking.

This didn't come as a surprise to us. If you Google the words "college" and "parking," you'll discover that parking is a challenge at most colleges and universities across the country, and Clark is no exception.

For the past few years, Clark College has welcomed record numbers of students. That has led to challenges

for students who drive to the main campus—especially in the mornings since many of our students take classes before going to work.

Last summer, we added new parking spots in the Silver Lot. By the end of the year, the "Star" building on the west side of Fort Vancouver Way will be torn down. Eventually, that will be the site of our new science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) building. Until then, we're going to use that space to provide almost 90 additional parking spots for our students. For more on parking and travel options, visit www.clark.edu/cc/parking.

As you've walked across the main campus near the music building, you've probably noticed that work is underway on a Japanese garden. It's a generous gift from Dr. Chihiro Kanagawa, CEO of Shin-Etsu Chemical Company, to the city of Vancouver. The garden will be dedicated during our 2012 Sakura Festival on April 19.

It will be a beautiful spot to meet, relax and welcome spring—after an exciting winter quarter.

Robert K. Knight
President

President

Robert K. Knight

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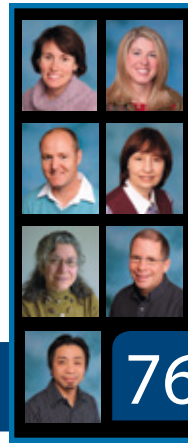
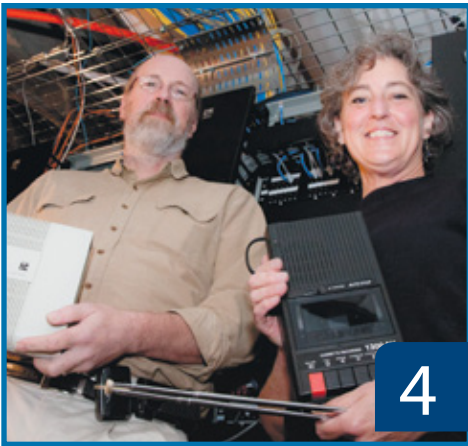
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Clark College Mission Statement:

Clark College provides opportunities for diverse learners to achieve their educational and professional goals, thereby enriching the social, cultural, and economic environment of our region and the global community.

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The 2011-2013 Clark College academic catalog is available online at www.clark.edu/catalog.

Cover: Student Braden Jasper works on an assignment in his Typography class, part of Clark’s newly redesigned Computer Graphics Technology program. *Story on page 4.*

FAST FORWARD

How Clark keeps ahead of the technology curve



PROFESSOR KRISTL PLINZ STANDS IN A WINDOWLESS ROOM TUCKED BEHIND ANOTHER CLASSROOM, staring at a row of mid-sized printing presses, their rollers still stained with the ink of bygone print runs. For years, these machines have taught Clark College students the nuts and bolts—literally—of printing technology. Once they were high-tech tools for gaining valuable job skills.

Now they're dinosaurs.

"All this is going," says Plinz, waving at the printing presses. "We'll probably put a dividing wall right here, and then fill this whole section with computers."

Plinz has been immersed in the sea change affecting her department as it switches from its old name of Graphic Communications and Printing to its new title: Computer Graphics Technology.

"The printing industry wasn't hiring, it had become automated," explains Plinz, leaving the print shop to return to a large classroom filled with two long banks of large-screen Macintosh computers. "Basically, we just modernized our program."

Sounds simple enough, but the change is more than just a few words. It's meant discontinuing a lot of the old printing classes to make way for more classes on graphic design, multimedia production, and website development. It's also meant revamping the department's two Associate in Applied Technology (AAT) degrees to include more advanced classes in design software. It's prompted the department to create a new Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) degree in Graphic Design—the first AFA ever offered at Clark—to accommodate the growing number of people pursuing bachelor's or master's degrees in that field. And it's meant that the program has had to invest in more computers and software, as well as hire new instructors familiar with these rapidly changing technologies.

Response to the changes has been almost overwhelming, Plinz says: Without any advertising at all, the department's introductory classes were enrolled at or near capacity by the first day of fall quarter. At the same time, she acknowledges that her work is hardly done. "We just launched this, and already we're feeling like we're behind the curve, because now the new thing

is creating applications for mobile devices, and we need to find someone to teach that.”

The (re-)making of the Computer Graphics Technology department is just one example of the challenges Clark College faces as it strives to keep up with ever-changing technology. Whether it's improving the wireless internet service on the main campus, expanding the number of courses taught online, or overhauling the library's website to make it more user-friendly for students, everyone across the college is constantly adapting to the needs and opportunities presented by our modern world.

“I'm spending a lot of time at professional development meetings and seminars,” says Professor Robert Hughes, head of the Computer Technology department. “I did three last week alone.”

It's not just faculty who have to stay ahead of the technology curve; Clark's Information Technology staff members spend hours on training and development to make sure they can provide the college with the most up-to-date IT services and products. “It's a never-ending process,” says Director of Information Technology Services Phil Sheehan.

Sheehan should know: When he arrived at Clark 35 years ago as an electronics instructor, the college didn't have a single personal computer. But as computers entered the mainstream in the 1980s, Sheehan help create a computer lab at the college. He witnessed (and helped institute) many other changes over the years: the laying of the first fiber optic cables at the college, the establishment of an internet node (Clark was one of the first community colleges in the nation to have one), the creation of “smart classrooms.” Today, he oversees a department of 21 professionals who are constantly working to keep Clark ahead of the technology curve.

One such professional is Information Technology Specialist Jennifer Wheeler, who came to Clark three decades ago as an audio-visual technician. “Back then it was record players, reel-to-reel tape recorders, and film projectors,” she recalls. “Now it's digital video and USB ports. Every two years the technology has changed, so it's really forced us to stay at the top of our game.”

When Network Systems Manager Patrick Taylor and Information Technology Specialist Jennifer Wheeler began their careers, they worked with telephone jacks and cassette tapes. Today, it's cloud computing and USB ports.



Wheeler credits Sheehan with creating an environment that encourages rapid adaptation. “Here at Clark we're very innovative and experimental,” she says. “We're always encouraged to test new things and explore new ideas.

For example, we're starting to use Skype. We've pulled in instructors from other countries to do guest lectures for our classes via Skype. Not every college would be willing to try that, but here we're encouraged to experiment with things like that.”

Where will that experimentation lead next? It's hard to tell. Technology is moving at such a rapid pace that things that might have sounded crazy a few years ago—like, say, holographic teaching tools—are now a reality. But Kitty Mackey, librarian at Clark College at Columbia Tech Center's iCommons, offers a reminder that even the most high-tech gadget is really just another tool in a teacher's already well-filled toolbox.

“Thirty years ago as a librarian, I created slides—old-fashioned 35-millimeter slides that you had to use a projector to show,” says the experienced librarian, who is also one of Clark's staunchest proponents of new technologies. “These days I create Web pages, screen captures, videos. The technology is different, but the end goal is the same: being there to help students learn.”

Continued on next page

How Clark Stays Wired

Some highlights from our high-tech services

Smart Classrooms

This technology allows instructors to use a variety of teaching tools—videos, PowerPoint presentations, audio recordings, and websites—using a single, easy-to-use console. Clark was one of the first colleges in the region to standardize its smart classroom technology, meaning that once instructors are trained on one room's technology, they can walk into any smart classroom at Clark (including those at WSU Vancouver and Columbia Tech Center) and know how to operate it—no fiddling around with a new remote. Clark currently has 160 smart classrooms in use and plans to add more.

Social Media

Clark maintains active presences on both Facebook and Twitter, providing both students and the community with up-to-the-minute news about events, scholarship opportunities, and important deadlines at the college—as well as answering students' questions about everything from financial aid to parking.

Library Services

Clark College is the only community college in Washington to be part of the Orbis-Cascade Alliance, a consortium of 36 college libraries in the Pacific Northwest that have shared access to more than 28 million books, DVDs, and other library materials. Additionally, Cannell Library recently redesigned its website, working with students in Clark's Computer Technology program to ensure that it's completely user-friendly.

Emergency Notifications

Students and employees at Clark can sign up to become part of the FlashAlert system, which ensures that any time there is an emergency or weather-related closing affecting the college, they'll instantly receive a notification via text message on their cell phone. These emergency messages are also distributed in real time through Clark's Twitter feed.

Centralized Online Services

The Current Students page is a "one-stop shop" where students can access the online services they need, from registering for classes to looking up their grades.



Students today use laptops, tablets, and smart phones to connect with Clark.

e-Learning

Clark has expanded its offerings of online classes, which allow students to do coursework from home on their own schedules. Additionally, even many classes held in traditional classrooms offer some form of online learning, either through online discussion groups, online quizzes, or online homework materials that can be read or viewed at the student's convenience. As of fall 2011, 745 Clark classes were using an online learning management system for part or all of their coursework. (For more information about e-Learning, see page 21.)

Constant Updates

Years ago, Clark instituted a small technology fee that students pay per credit. That money is carefully managed to ensure that, even during these times of statewide budget cuts, Clark students are always learning the newest version of software available and that all computers at the college are replaced every four years. "We often have students come back to the college and tell us that now that they're working, they're using less-advanced software than what they trained on at Clark," says Computer Technology chair Robert Hughes. "We want them to be really prepared for what comes next."

Boosting Bandwidth

Clark is working with the state to almost double the college's internet bandwidth, which will allow faster access to the college's website and online services, as well as faster download times when using the free Wi-Fi available to students at the college.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: SUSANNA KAHN

She started with leavened expectations, but Clark made them rise

AT FIRST, SUSANNA KAHN'S PLAN WAS SIMPLE: A year out of high school and in need of a job, she would go back to school for just enough bakery classes to be able to get an entry-level position at a kitchen or bakery somewhere, and then drop out. And so, in fall 2004, she enrolled in Clark College's Culinary Arts program, fully expecting to be gone in a year.

There was just one problem: Kahn found herself fascinated by the Baking Theory courses she was taking, with their in-depth analyses of how and why ingredients interact. "I realized there was so much more to it than just a gateway to a job," Kahn says now. "The stuff they were talking about in the theory classes was essentially food science."

It just so happened that food science paralleled with a new interest of Kahn's: Having recently converted to a vegan diet, she had been struggling to find ways to make baked goods without eggs or dairy. "I started using the ideas they were giving me in that class to create plant-based proteins that would function like eggs," she recalls. "I had pretty good luck."

Her instructors in the bakery program encouraged her to pursue her experiments, lending her books and helping troubleshoot her various attempts at vegan meringue. The more she investigated, the more entranced she became with the science of food. The normal bakery curriculum runs from fall to spring quarter, taking the summer off. But Kahn—the student who had planned to drop out after her first couple quarters—instead spent the summer taking Chemistry 111.

In 2009, Kahn graduated from Clark with both an Associate of Applied Science degree in Culinary Arts and an Associate of Science degree that would allow her to transfer to the college of her choice: Cornell University, with its well-regarded food science program. Today, she is midway through a master's degree in Food Science at Cornell, and plans to pursue a doctorate. She admits the coursework is difficult, but says Clark prepared her well for her studies at Cornell—and that includes Clark's vocational classes.



"Take the research I do now in wheat rheology [texture]," she says, slipping easily into scientific language. "I use so much now the intuition I built up in my bakery classes, learning about dough."

But even more valuable, says Kahn, was the individual attention she received. "When I took Organic Chemistry, I took it in a class of 12 people," she says. "It was the same 12 people for all three quarters, and I had a great instructor. I have the best memories of Organic Chemistry. Compare that to the 300-person lecture class that Cornell students all take, and they all hate it."

Kahn may have chosen her field for personal reasons, but it turned out to be a wise decision on practical terms, as well: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there is an expected increase in demand for food scientists, in part due to growing concerns about food safety. Eventually, Kahn hopes to work in a laboratory researching how chemistry can make food better. But before that happens, she has a few more years of academia before her. Far from her original plan of dropping out after a couple of quarters, by the time Kahn finishes her studies, she will have been in school for close to a decade. Kahn doesn't mind: "I'm just so glad to have discovered something I love doing."

TOP OF THE CHARTS

Meet some of Clark's award-winning staff and faculty

Clark College is filled with dedicated and talented employees who contribute to the college's mission, either by teaching students directly or by keeping all Clark's systems working efficiently and effectively. Each year, the college singles out a few of these employees for recognition of their truly outstanding contributions to the Clark community. The Exceptional Faculty Awards are announced each June at Commencement; the Exceptional Classified Staff Awards are announced in September before the beginning of fall quarter. Together, these honorees showcase the teachers and staff that make Clark College such a great place to learn.

2010-2011 Exceptional Faculty

When **Laura Demeri** was an accountant, she says, the running joke at the office was: "What would you do if you won a million dollars?" Demeri's answer: She'd work in health education.

Demeri never won that million, but for the past five years she has been living that dream as a part-time health and physical education instructor at Clark College, specializing in healthy living and nutrition. "I love the field," she says. "You learn something new every day."

The same could be said of her students, one of whom wrote in a nomination, "My life has changed because of her instruction. Thank you, thank you for making me a better person."

Kimberly Karaman has a tough job: She has to teach math to people who have been told their whole lives that they are bad at it. They walk into her classroom ready to hate what she's about to teach them. And yet, the part-time math instructor says, "I love what I do. I love to dispel the idea that you can't do math, that you have to have a Harry Potter magic wand to do it."

Karaman blames her students' fear of math on old teaching methods that insisted there was only one correct way to solve a problem—methods she refutes. "We all see things differently and we all use math differently," she says. "But we do all use it."

Karaman's enthusiasm for both her subject and her students is contagious. As one student who said in a nomination form, "In all my years of attending school, I have never seen so many people hug the instructor and say thank you—especially after the final."

Professor Julian Nelson teaches German at Clark College and serves as advisor to the German Club and director of Clark's annual study-abroad program in Berlin. Having grown up both in the United States and in Germany, he enthusiastically teaches his students not only Germany's language, but its culture and history as well. Students listed numerous extracurricular activities Dr. Nelson organized: field trips to museums, samplings of German food, German film screenings. "When I can get students to critically reflect on culture and language, and to see themselves as global citizens, then I feel very satisfied at the end of the day," he says.

But students also repeatedly praise Dr. Nelson for going above and beyond the role of German teacher, helping them find scholarship opportunities and taking time to hear about challenges in their personal lives. "He takes the time to meet with students, even if over a cup of coffee, to discuss career possibilities or help them navigate the labyrinth of academic culture," said one student. "In short, Julian embodies everything a mentor should be."

Professor Marcia Roi was working at a domestic violence center in Oklahoma when she became interested in her current field of Addiction Counselor Education. "I would ask the women, 'Is there violence when your husbands are sober?'" she recalled. "And they'd say, 'No.'"

This observation led Dr. Roi to pursue a career in addiction counseling. Now she teaches students to be addiction counselors themselves, earning a reputation as "one of the toughest and kindest professors we have known," according to a nomination form.

Dr. Roi, who joined Clark in 2000, says she appreciates the intimate class sizes that working at a community college allows her. "We don't have classes of 100 students, so we have a lot more contact with our students," she says. "I came from a university, and sitting down with your instructor for an hour was something that just did not happen. It happens here."

Professor Ann Snyder has been widely recognized at Clark for her passion for teaching not only her students, but also her fellow faculty members. "Her example has made me a

better teacher,” said one colleague. Another described her as “a bundle of knowledge, humor, warmth, encouragement and appreciation for all persons and all nature.”

During her eight years at Clark, Snyder helped shape the Women’s Studies Department where she taught, served as Interim Dean of e-Learning, and volunteered with Clark’s recent initiative to help foster diversity. This award is well-deserved—but also bittersweet, as Snyder recently retired from Clark due to illness. Even so, as one nominator put it, “We will never know the extent of the impact of Ann’s work—it will continue to have ripples far beyond the campus.”

2011-2012 Exceptional Classified Staff

Information Technology Specialist and Lab Manager **Mike Silva** has worked at Clark College for more than 10 years, providing technical support for computer users across the college. Currently, he manages the college’s open labs, supervising approximately 50 part-time student lab assistants. He was instrumental in setting up the computer lab help desk, which can field more than 50 calls from students a day. Silva also serves as a mentor to students and provides technical support at events like Commencement, retirement parties, and student activities.

“At time the college gets rather busy with evening and weekend events, and our media staff aren’t able to cover them all,” said a nominator. “Mike never hesitates to stay late or come in on weekends to provide backup support. Due to his overtime-exempt status, Mike isn’t paid for this extra time, but does it out of his sincere dedication to, and in support of, the college.”

Senior Graphic Designer **Wei Zhuang** joined Clark College in 2005, coming from a previous post at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. He has created logos and uniform looks for such events and programs as the Clark College Jazz Festival, the K-Rod Run/Walk, and the Clark College Foundation’s capital campaign. Zhuang has won two national awards from the University and College Designers Association as well as regional and national awards from the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations.

One person who has worked with Zhuang wrote in his nomination, “Wei Zhuang has always represented the highest level of professionalism, collegial courtesy, and customer service that should be a prerequisite of any classified staff position at Clark College. ... His artwork not only embodies the professionalism we try to represent as instructors of higher education, but also represents the Clark College community to thousands of people whose only experience with Clark may be seeing his work.”



Laura Demeri



Kimberly Karaman



Dr. Julian Nelson



Dr. Marcia Roi



Ann Snyder



Mike Silva



Wei Zhuang



NATURAL PROGRESSION

The new Oliva Family Early Learning Center is just the Next Step in an ongoing educational journey

THE TODDLER ROOM at Clark College's new Oliva Family Early Learning Center feels warm and bright, despite the vaulted ceiling and broad windows that make the space seem almost open-air. And, indeed, some of the outdoor environment has found its way into the room. A few toddlers stand at a "sensory table"—a child-height table inset with a removable plastic tub. The tub can be filled with anything, from sand to snow to foam pellets, but currently it holds a shallow pool of cool water and a handful of orange-and-brown autumn leaves. The toddlers are mesmerized by the way the leaves float and swirl; they scoop water and pour it back in to make the leaves dance.

Just then, a teacher breaks into a song, sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It": *If you're ready to go outside, get your coats! Clap, clap!* All the teachers join in, and the toddlers eagerly gather to get ready for going outside, despite the chilly weather. Outdoor learning is important here—in fact, Clark's Child and Family Studies (CFS) program is one of the few preschool programs to have a dedicated outdoor teacher—and children go out in all but the most inclement of weather.

It helps make the prospect of outside play more appealing that these children are headed for the newly constructed "Little Penguins Garden," a donation from Kitty Welsh of Vancouver

in honor of her late husband, Paul. Designed by BergerABAM, this beautifully landscaped play area includes a multitude of ways for children to explore the natural world, including a sandpit, a stone spiral, and a bright red hand pump for water.

"We try to create an environment where children can be researchers and learners," explains Laurie Cornelius, director of Child and Family Services. "We don't separate work from play. That's very different from the model of 'this week is all about the letter A, so today we'll be learning about apples.'"

But it isn't just the children who are learning. Three of the adults minding the toddlers are Clark students. In fact, all the preschool classrooms here are also labs for students studying Early Childhood Education at the college, as well as for students studying nursing, psychology, and other fields related to child development. They are supervised by lab instructors who are also the children's teachers, meaning that these children are cared for by trained experts in the field of Early Childhood Education.

Meanwhile, parents whose children are enrolled in the program also attend parenting classes each quarter. So not only does the program foster inquisitive children and a regional workforce of trained child care experts, it helps provide parents with the skills to raise healthy children who enter kindergarten ready to learn.



Indeed, Jan Oliva so appreciated the experience her family had when she enrolled her daughter Lisa in Clark's child care program that, more than 30 years later, she and her husband, Steve, donated funding to help make the new Early Learning Center a reality. The 5,000 square-foot structure, which was designed by LSW Architects and built by JWC Construction, was funded through a public-private partnership. The state of Washington provided \$1 million for the project on the condition that the college raise matching funds. The Olivas' gift allowed the project to move forward.

At the dedication ceremony for the new center in September, Oliva noted that her family has personally experienced the benefits of Clark's three-pronged approach to Early Childhood Education. Lisa—whose own 3-year-old daughter, Laurel, is now enrolled in the program—received early education that prepared her for kindergarten. The elder Olivas learned valuable parenting skills. And when the Olivas' two sons enrolled in local preschools, it turned out that their teachers had been taught at Clark.

"We're doing this for the community," said Oliva. "I know that early childhood learning pays long-term results."

Early Childhood Education student Christi Barone can attest to that. After working in the child care field for years, she realized she would need a degree to achieve her goal of working with special-needs children. She says that the classes she's taken at Clark have changed not only the way she practices child care at work, but at home as well.

"I have older children, and then I have a 6-year-old daughter, and I've used the lessons I've learned at Clark with her a lot," she says. "There's a big difference. She's easier to talk to, she doesn't throw the tantrums my older ones did. And now that she's in kindergarten, she's much more involved in school."

That's the point of Clark's CFS program. "There was an old idea that education began at kindergarten, and we now know that's just not true," Cornelius says. "The major part of brain development happens from birth to 5 years, and yet we've historically had an untrained workforce taking care of that age range."

The college plans to continue improving its ability to train that workforce, but it will take a concerted effort from CFS, the Clark College Foundation, and the Southwest Washington community. Most of the CFS program is still housed in aging, outdated structures that need to be replaced, but any new construction in these times of state budget cuts will require another public-private partnership like the one that made the Oliva Center possible. Considering that it took more than a decade to turn the Oliva Center from a dream into a reality, it's a daunting task—but one that is undeniably worthwhile. For proof of that, look no farther than a group of happy toddlers being bundled into coats, as everyone—children, students, teachers—heads outside, excited to discover what they'll learn next.

- For information about the Early Learning Center, visit www.clark.edu/cc/elc.
- To learn more about public-private partnerships, visit www.clarkcollegefoundation.org or call 360-992-2301.



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