



50,000

PCC supporters will be out in force this coming year as they work in schools, collect nonperishable food, clean children's books and improve local parks.

All of this volunteerism is to honor PCC's 50th anniversary.

Over the last year, as dozens and dozens of ideas rolled in on how best to recognize this major milestone, one theme was constant: community service.

Oregonians know how to work hard and give time to organizations that help keep their cities safe and clean. So it's only fitting for a college that serves the local community in an educational capacity to observe its anniversary by giving back to community groups that helped shape PCC into what it is today.

"Deciding to focus on community service and service-learning more broadly during the 50th year is a fulfillment of our mission," said Sarah Tillery, hired last year as PCC's Service-Learning Program coordinator just in time for the anniversary. "Our hope is that by focusing efforts on community service, we're able to raise the level of awareness about the needs in our community and work to meet some of those needs.

"I also hope that we, as a college, are able to be good stewards in our local communities and build new and stronger partnerships with area nonprofits so that the efforts this year can be sustained moving forward."

Just about everyone affiliated with the college will be talking about service and donating their time this coming year. And the college hopes its supporters will do more than simply listen. The college wants its supporters to act.

HERE TO SERVE!

To fulfill PCC's pledge to donate 50,000 hours of service to the community, PCC students, faculty, staff and supporters will spend this year volunteering across the district.



HOURS OF SERVICE

PCC raises the bar on community service and sets an ambitious goal for volunteerism during its 50th anniversary celebration

By Christina Holmes

50,000 hours of service during one academic year

The college has set an ambitious goal for the academic year. Between student groups on campus, service-learning for credit and non-credit classes, and volunteering from the college's supporters during PCC's monthly community service days, at least 50,000 hours will be spent working with local nonprofit groups that need time from talented individuals.

"We intend to track and collect all the hours of service and volunteer work that PCC contributes through its Service-Learning Program. In addition, we hope to collect the individual hours of service that so many members of our PCC community contribute as part of their own personal ethic," Tillery said. "It will be a stretch to hit 50,000 hours, but we're hopeful that our PCC community can come together to challenge each other and ourselves to make our goal."

The kickoff for the 50,000-hour community service challenge is at In-Service for faculty and staff on Monday, Sept. 19. During that day college personnel will have the opportunity to take part in a community service project for the Children's Book Bank.

One of PCC's strengths as a college is the Service-Learning Program. Service-learning opportunities in the classroom have been offered since 1994, just as the movement to expose college students to service was marching through Oregon. Because service and civic engagement have long been part of Portland's makeup it's natural that PCC students rank volunteerism as a high priority and they take their service seriously.

PCC students share their talents

PCC makes an impact locally by assisting culturally diverse populations such as those focused on immigrants, refugees, seasonal

workers and people experiencing homelessness; cleaning up beaches or roadsides and removing hazardous materials from illegal dump sites; preserving and restoring the natural environments at campuses and centers; tutoring at nearby elementary schools; helping students who are learning English as a second language; supporting homeless veterans; establishing community gardens; assisting with a Spanish-language program to promote AIDS and HIV information; and collecting food for residents in need.

Between Sylvania, Rock Creek and Cascade campuses and the Southeast Center, students and faculty serve dozens of organizations each year. This year's challenge promises to encourage even more involvement.

"By June 2012 I hope that the Portland community and our nonprofit partners feel more connected to and supported by PCC and I hope that those of us who work at and attend PCC know better the broad range of civic engagement and how to tap into it," Tillery added.

PCC works closely with many local nonprofits on a variety of projects and will continue to do so during the coming year. Those groups include Children's Book Bank, Portland Public Schools, Oregon Food Bank, Neighborhood House, Friends of Tryon Creek State Park, and Friends of Mount Tabor Park.

The 50,000-hour challenge is a huge undertaking, but students and staff agree: there is no better way to say thank you. ■



Keep up on opportunities to serve your community by visiting www.pcc.edu/servicelearning



Sarah Tillery (right) and Samantha Lee (left) of PCC's Service-Learning Program prepare for a year of community service.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Here's what PCC is hoping its supporters will do to meet the challenge.

Visit the Service-Learning website at www.pcc.edu/servicelearning to find out about the many local nonprofits in need of help — everything from groups dedicated to education, eradicating homelessness, sustainability and environmental protection. Each month during the coming academic year the college will sponsor a large service project at an organization's site. Participants must register on the Service-Learning website and everyone who attends and works on the project will help PCC get closer to its 50,000-hour goal. The first service project day is Saturday, Oct. 15, at Mount Tabor Park. The college and its supporters will work with Friends of Mount Tabor Park on an invasive species removal project.

Also at the website is an easy, do-it-yourself system to report community service hours. The college would love to hear stories about your volunteer experience.

Finally, keep tabs on how quickly the college community is moving toward its goal by regularly visiting the website. Hopefully the challenge will motivate PCC supporters to continue volunteering and maybe even encourage more individuals to perform service. ■