In recent months, the national political debate has revolved around the issue of health care. It is not my purpose to delve into the nuances of that debate -- if you've been paying attention, you probably have a decent grasp of the ideas driving the discussion.

Rather, my purpose is to cast light on two inescapable facts underlying the health care debate. First, the Baby Boom generation is on the cusp of retirement. As this estimable group of Americans gets older, their age -- and their numbers -- will cause a spike in demand for all manner of health care services.

Second -- and far more pertinent from my perspective as a community college campus president -- the marketplace needs people to fill this demand. According to the State of Oregon, health services is one of the fastest-growing fields in the Portland area, and will account for thousands of jobs in the years to come. We will need traditional positions like doctors, nurses, and medical assistants, but we'll also need growing numbers of technicians and specialists, like medical lab techs, phlebotomists, radiographers, MRI techs, ophthalmic lab techs, and many more.

And when people seek the training they need to find careers in these fields, a great many of them will turn to community colleges. It's not just that the cost of a typical community college education is low in comparison to four-year colleges and universities. It's not just that community colleges offer scheduling choices that mesh with the lives of working people. It's also that community colleges have become the primary resource for the development of our nation's workforce.

It's also true that, historically, community colleges have been viewed as a "second choice" in terms of higher education, a younger sibling to four-year colleges and universities. During an appearance last year at Hudson Valley Community College in New York, President Obama called community colleges "the most underappreciated asset in the country."

The president is right. Community colleges have been undervalued as educational resources for many years. But judging from the booming enrollment at community colleges across the nation, they are finally being afforded the respect they deserve -- a perspective that is only underscored by Obama's proposal to invest $12 billion in America's community colleges over the next 10 years. He has expressed a desire to make the United States the nation with the highest proportion of college-educated citizens -- a distinction that was once ours, but which we have since lost.

So community colleges, it seems, are fortunate now to occupy the nexus between the demands of the marketplace -- particularly in the health care industry -- and the plans of a visionary president. And the thing that makes a community college education attractive is the same as it has always been: There is no more convenient, speedy, or economical place to learn the skills you need to find a living-wage job.

For example, at Portland Community College, students can earn a certificate in Medical Assisting in as little as 12 months.

Algie C. Gatewood, Ed.D.
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Or, if you’re after a more comprehensive certification – such as a degree in Medical Laboratory Technology, for instance – in about two years. The same goes for a whole host of other health care specialties, from Biomedical Engineering Technology to Paramedic to Health Information Management.

Of course, the opportunities I have described here go far beyond the health care industry. Community colleges remain the best available resource for people who need to quickly acquire a new skill set, whether they’re out of work or looking to make a change of career. Financial aid, too, is available to many who are feeling the crunch of these tight economic times.

But don’t take my word for it – visit your local community college campus and talk to an academic advisor about the best way to get started on the road to a well-paying career.

Algie C. Gatewood, Ed.D., is president of Portland Community College’s Cascade Campus.

Film Festival Reaches a Milestone

The Cascade Festival of African Films turns 20 years old this year, when it makes its annual return in February. The wildly popular festival, which has become synonymous with Cascade Campus, honors the art and craft of filmmaking from Africa. The movies imported for the festival draw capacity crowds every year and are shown Thursdays through Sundays at various North Portland locations through February and early March.

“The 20th festival will showcase 22 outstanding feature and documentary films from every region of the African continent,” said Mary Holmstrom, one of the event’s organizers.

The festival – owner of one of the largest collections of African films in the Northwest – is set to celebrate its 20th year by bringing acclaimed Ethiopian film director Haile Gerima to Portland.

Gerima will open the festival – which attracted more than 5,000 filmgoers in 2009 – with the showing of his Toronto Film Festival-selected film, “Teza,” at the Hollywood Theatre on Friday, Feb. 5. The film chronicles the return of an African intellectual to his country of birth during a repressive Marxist regime.

The festival honoring Black History Month runs from Feb. 5 through March 6 in the campus’ Moriarty Auditorium (705 N. Killingsworth St.), McMenamins Kennedy School Theatre (5736 N.E. 33rd Ave.) and the Hollywood Theatre (4122 N.E. Sandy Blvd.). The festival is free and open to the public, and features a wide range of films and special matinee days and feature nights. They include StudentFest Matinee on Feb. 18, Family Film Day on Feb. 20 and ends with Women’s Filmmakers Week. For details on the schedule, visit www.africanfilmfestival.org

The film festival was founded in 1991 by four Portland Community College faculty. Approximately 400 people attended the first annual Cascade Festival of African Films – today, more than 5,000 people attend the festival annually. Since its inception, the festival has been offered to the public free of charge and organized and run entirely by volunteers.

Longtime Cascade Campus English instructor Michael Dembrow (you might also know him as a member of the Oregon Legislature) said few could have predicted the all-volunteer-driven festival would hit its emerald anniversary.

“When you’re putting on a high-quality film festival entirely with volunteers, every year is a miracle,” said Dembrow, who has been with the festival since the beginning. “The response from community members has been so strong, so many people have stepped forward to help out, and PCC’s support has been so solid, that we just keep on chugging along. This year’s program is shaping up to be our strongest yet – the miracle continues.”

Additional guests this year include:

- John Kani, a South African actor, playwright and director, will present his film, “Nothing But the Truth” on Feb. 12. The film is an adaptation of Kani’s stage play and took second place at the film festival in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

- George Amponsah, a director, will present his latest documentary, “The Fighting Spirit,” on Feb. 25. The film focuses on boxing in Accra, Ghana.

- Joséphine Ndagnou, also a director, comes to town with her first feature-length film, “Paris or Nothing,” on March 5. She not only directed the film, but wrote the screenplay and has a role in the film, as a woman from Cameroon who moves to Paris.
Like aspiring artists everywhere, Cascade Campus art student Jean Hodges has dreamed for years of translating her creative energies into a steady income. Although she’s managed to sell a few pieces in recent months, she hasn’t yet reached the point where she’s earning a living as an artist. However, her budding career received a boost recently from an unexpected quarter – her campus president.

Early in Fall Term, the Thai Food Café on North Killingsworth Street, just down the street from the campus, offered Hodges the opportunity to hang some of her works on the walls of their dining room, where patrons could admire them and – hopefully – purchase them.

“I’m a regular customer of theirs,” Hodges said. “They overheard me talking about painting, and offered me their walls to hang some of my work. I was really surprised.”

Proud and excited about this unexpected opportunity, she mentioned it during a conversation with Campus President Algie Gatewood, and invited him to the opening night of her exhibition at the restaurant. The two spent awhile chatting about Hodges’ paintings – which are a unique blend of clay and acrylic on canvas – and Gatewood remarked on one that he admired in particular.

“I decided right then that I was going to give it to him as a gift,” Hodges said. “He was really supportive of me and my work, and I appreciated that he came to my opening.”

So, when her exhibition came to a close – she managed to sell five pieces in the meantime – Hodges took the painting to President Gatewood’s office and presented it as a gift.

“I was really blown away,” said Gatewood. “I was touched. It was the last thing I expected.”

But Gatewood decided he couldn’t leave things there.

“I was a student once myself,” he said. “I remember how tough things can be sometimes.”

So, he decided to compensate Hodges for the privilege of owning a piece of her artwork. The painting now sits in Gatewood’s office, where, he said, it may end up staying.

“I don’t know yet where it will end up,” he said, smiling. “I’m just happy that I was able to buy a Jean Hodges painting before she becomes famous!”

Fall Term 2009 once again saw robust growth at Cascade Campus. In terms of headcount, the Campus eclipsed a milestone, with more than 10,000 unduplicated students for the term – 10,064 to be exact, an increase of 17.7 percent over the Fall 2008 mark of 8,549. The Campus’ FTE growth was even stronger. For Fall 2009, the Campus grew by 301.77 FTE compared to the previous Fall Term — from 1,646.85 to 1,948.62 — a growth rate of 18.3 percent.

Both of these figures were significantly ahead of the PCC District-wide growth rates of 16.4 percent for FTE and 9.5 percent for headcount.

Preliminary figures for Winter Term 2010 indicate even stronger enrollment growth. As of the second week of the term – the most recent figures available at press time – enrollment was up 23.6 percent over the same point in the previous year, rising by 357.87 FTE, from 1,517.68 to 1,875.55. This was significantly ahead of the District-wide growth rate of 19.6 percent. Initial headcount numbers again hit the 10,000 mark, rising by 1,800 students, from 8,508 to 10,308, an increase of 21.2 percent.

Should the upward trend in enrollment continue, the Campus is on pace to eclipse the 2008-2009 academic year’s mark of 17,899 headcount and 5,492.15 FTE.

On Nov. 18, international students from Japan show off their table of cultural items, and delicious food to fellow students and the public at the Cascade Campus dining hall. Their table was part of the International Extravaganza, which celebrates the international community of PCC and their unique culture through food, dance, and cultural tables.
Sometimes, when the dust has settled, even the most chaotic, random series of events can seem to have had a purpose. For Cascade Campus ASPCC President David King, after surviving Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath, that purpose was ending up in Portland.

“I never saw myself living in Portland, Oregon,” he said, smiling, “but I’m really glad I’m here.”

When Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast in August 2005, King was living in the small town of Bogalusa, Louisiana, about 80 miles north of New Orleans. At the time, he worked for a low-voltage wiring firm called Pride Communications. He was getting along just fine, and even considered himself ahead of the game, considering the general lack of economic opportunities in southern Louisiana at the time.

“There were only a few options,” King said. “You could work in the oil fields, or in construction, or you could work at the paper mill. Most people were struggling.”

Then the storm hit.

For whatever reason – “I guess I was just busy!” – King didn’t hear about Katrina’s imminent landfall until about a day and a half before the storm arrived.

“The storm came on a Monday,” he recalled, “and I heard about it on Saturday. I had just over a day to prepare myself and help my family as best I could.”

King used the time to stock up on emergency supplies – food, water, batteries, gasoline and a gas-powered generator. As the wind and rain picked up, he and his stepbrother made their way to where King’s father was staying in order to ensure that he was all right. This turned out to be a fortuitous decision because, as Katrina raged around them, his father – who has epilepsy – went into a seizure.

“‘I never saw myself living in Portland, Oregon,'” he said, smiling, “‘but I’m really glad I’m here.’”

The elder King’s self-diagnosis had been correct – he did indeed have a heart attack, and the symptoms persisted. Once the weather had settled somewhat, King and his stepbrother faced the task of needing to get their father to the hospital as soon as possible. The problem was that the nearest hospital was in Franklinton, La. – about 20 miles away over roads and countryside that had been ravaged by the worst storm in memory.

The trip to Franklinton was arduous, as King and his brother cleared the road with chainsaws as their father sat in the truck. They managed to make it, however, and none too soon.

“My dad had triple bypass surgery the next week,” King recalled.

With the immediate drama of the storm behind them, King – and the entire Gulf Coast region – faced the daunting prospect of a landscape and populace utterly devastated by the storm, and crippled by the slow pace of relief efforts. While King decided to stay, many opted to leave – including his mother, his sister and her children. They made their way to stay with relatives near Beaumont, Texas, where they received another shock: the home in which they were to live had just been leveled by the second great storm of 2005, Hurricane Rita.

And thus began the chain of events that led King’s mother and sister – and, eventually, himself – to Portland.

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After their would-be home in Texas was destroyed by Rita, King’s sister, Kathryn King, said that she and her mother were at a loss as to what to do. A woman from Catholic Charities in San Antonio remarked that there were resources in Portland earmarked to help people displaced by Katrina, but that they were untapped.

“We thought, ‘Portland?’” recalled Kathryn King. “At the time it seemed like someplace at the top of the world. Katrina was an experience that tested my strength as a woman, a mother and a daughter. We were just so relieved to have someplace to go.”

Kathryn King took the woman’s advice and drove to Portland, along with her mother and children.

In January of 2006, once they were somewhat settled in their new city, Kathryn enrolled in PCC. In phone calls and e-mails to her brother back in Louisiana, she related how welcoming Portland was, how beautiful was the countryside and how much she appreciated the education she was getting at PCC.

David King was convinced. He packed his things and joined his family in Portland, enrolling in the GED program at Cascade Campus in the winter of 2008, and then in regular PCC classes in the spring.

“I had a little culture shock when I first got here,” recalled King, who said he had never seen a mountain before he arrived in Oregon. “I went through a little depression. But when I saw how well my sister was doing at PCC, I thought I’d get involved too.”

Both decisions – moving to Portland and enrolling at PCC – turned out to be the right ones.
Two of the Cascade Festival of African Films’ leading lights – Mary Holmstrom and Michael Dembrow – will take their final bows when this year's edition of the festival wraps up in March. Both Holmstrom and Dembrow were part of the group that founded the festival, and have served as its co-directors for the past 20 years. This festival will be their last as co-directors, but they will continue to be involved in the future as members of the festival committee.

“I think it’s time,” Holmstrom said of her decision to step down. “It’s been a great labor of love, and in many ways, my life’s work.”

Holmstrom – a native of South Africa who came to the United States at age 10 – said the festival arose out of a collaboration between herself and Dembrow some two decades ago. She taught African Literature at the time, while Dembrow, who has since won election to the Oregon House of Representatives, taught both English courses and a film appreciation course. Holmstrom was constantly in search of African films to complement her class, and naturally turned to Dembrow for help.

The two of them eventually hatched a plan to put on an African film festival, and the idea has gathered momentum ever since.

“I’m so glad we made that decision,” Holmstrom said. “I always wanted to do something good, something that brought Africa to the United States. It’s been wonderful.”

For more information, call (503) 244-6111, ext. 3630; or e-mail info@africanfilmfestival.org.

Campus President Algie Gatewood and Poppe the PCC Panther pitch in to pick up stray cigarette butts around Campus.

Fall Term 2009 marked the beginning of PCC’s new era as a tobacco-free institution. There have been a few speed bumps as students, faculty and staff adapt to the new policy, said Marissa Johnson, coordinator of the College’s tobacco-free effort, but things are mostly going well. “I think the inconvenience really deters people,” Johnson said of the new policy. “It becomes a lot less appealing to have a cigarette if you have to trek out through the rain and go stand somewhere in a puddle and smoke by yourself.”

As Cascade Campus President Algie Gatewood is fond of saying, Portland Community College is a college of the community, not just in the community. Cascade Campus students, faculty, and staff had the chance to put those words to the test during November at PCC’s first Day of Service of the academic year.

“Giving back to the community gets to heart of what PCC is about,” said PCC Service Learning Coordinator Jennifer Alkezweeny, whose office organized the event. “I was so pleased to see such enthusiastic participation.”

Around two dozen people turned out for the November 20 event, which centered around Cascade Campus. Several nearby nonprofit organizations – the Community Energy Project, Habitat for Humanity and the ReBuilding Center -- partnered with PCC for the Day of Service, Alkezweeny said. Volunteers worked at these remote sites during the morning, and then gathered at the campus for lunch, where Campus President Algie Gatewood gave a short address on the importance of community service.

“I’m really proud to see Cascade Campus people out working in the community,” Gatewood said. “It’s part of what makes this such a great place.”
The Portland Community College Board of Directors has accepted the bid proposal from THA Architecture to plan the bond construction at its Cascade Campus location in North Portland.

The firm will provide comprehensive architectural services for the campus, such as assessing land-use requirements, design development, cost estimations and more. The college received 19 bids from architectural firms and the written proposals were reviewed and rated by PCC’s bond program and Cascade Campus evaluation committees during the fall. The design costs will come out of the $374 million bond measure, which was approved by local voters in November 2008.

At Cascade, the bond construction would add a simulation lab for first responder and allied health students; expand instruction for careers in pre-kindergarten through high school education; create classrooms; and provide a new child-care facility for students. It also will increase parking and replace boiler stacks.

“With credit enrollment up by nearly 20 percent at this pivotal campus, it’s imperative we move along in the planning process,” said PCC District President Preston Pulliams. “THA Architecture is a wonderful addition to the bond team and will help us plan the appropriate future facilities to meet the needs of the students, staff and public.”

THA Architecture, founded in 1983 by Thomas Hacker, is recognized for the design of public buildings and urban spaces. Libraries, university buildings, museums, theaters and urban design have formed the core of their work. The firm has received national, regional and local design awards, has won three national design competitions and has been published internationally in five languages.
Cascade Students Shine in Classroom, Community

Cascade Campus students were busy during Fall Term 2009, excelling both in the classroom and in the community.

Traci Parker and Adrian Thompson were each selected for two prestigious academic accolades on the basis of their scholarship, extracurricular activities, community service and essay submissions. Parker and Thompson were named as both All-USA scholars and as Oregon Student Scholars. As Oregon Student Scholar, they will each receive a $1,000 scholarship, and will be honored by Gov. Ted Kulongoski at a luncheon in Salem during April.

Cascade Campus ASPCC, Phi Theta Kappa and various clubs have continued their tradition of community service during Fall Term. In September, students spent a day in Vernonia, Oregon, with other student leaders from around the PCC District providing flood relief work.

During the holiday season, Cascade Campus students provided 40 student families with Thanksgiving dinner, and adopted 20 student families for the holidays, providing them with food and presents. Many Campus staff and faculty participated as well by donating money, food and gifts.

Phi Theta Kappa, the honor society for two-year college students, provided and cooked the food for several homes operated by Central City Concern – a local nonprofit housing organization – on New Year’s Day. This project has been a fixture for more than 10 years, and was started by Cascade’s own David Poole.

In Honor of the late Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Cascade students – along with more than 1,200 other higher education students – came together for a rally on the morning of January 18, and then participated in service projects all over Portland.

Multimedia Chief Goes Behind the Scenes

“I would like to thank the Academy …” said Beth Fitzgerald, before trailing off laughing, unable to keep a straight face.

Fitzgerald, chair of the Multimedia Department at Portland Community College’s Cascade Campus, traveled to Los Angeles in November 2009 as a guest of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences – but she didn’t go so she could win an Emmy. Fitzgerald was one of only 20 educators chosen from around the nation to attend the academy’s 2009 Faculty Seminars – and the only one selected from a community college.

The seminars offered Fitzgerald a privileged glimpse into the world of television production. She and her fellow instructors visited several studios, and observed the way in which producers, writers and technicians interact to create a television show. She was most interested in how digital elements – like those her students learn to create – are incorporated into the production process. “The seminars were designed for faculty people,” Fitzgerald said. “We were able to bring back examples of real-life production scenarios to integrate into our curriculum.” The seminars addressed a range of industry topics, including:

- Producers and Writers: How they function in the industry.
- Development: Sources and development of ideas, network pitching.
- Network and Cable Decision-Making: Program selection, scheduling, promotion, and cancellation.
- Digital Entertainment and New Media: Cutting-edge equipment and techniques
- Studio Visits: Behind the scenes.
- Production Meetings: Industry professionals in action.

Fitzgerald said her experience at the seminars will translate into a better understanding of the industry for her students.

“It’s a mystery to most people how TV works,” she said. “This was a huge opportunity to bring real-world expertise back to PCC. We’ll be able to bring what I saw and learned into the lab here at Cascade.”

But beyond the benefits the seminars will ultimately bring to her program and students, Fitzgerald had an ulterior motive behind her visit to Los Angeles. “I wanted to make sure the Young and the Restless stays on the air,” she said, laughing.

Oregon Secretary of State Kate Brown, left, talks to students in Holli Adams’ math class about the importance of student voters. Brown visited Cascade Campus as part of a voter registration effort leading up to the January special election. The Cascade Campus ASPCC got in on the action too, and managed to register 1,195 new voters.
There’s little doubt that firefighters occupy a special place in the collective imagination. For as long as humans have congregated in towns and cities, fire has been a constant danger to health and home. Firefighters are heroes, selflessly placing themselves at risk of life and limb to protect their fellow citizens.

But despite the adventure and unpredictability, even glamour, at the end of the day fighting fires is about serving the community, said Ed Lindsey, chair of the Fire Protection Technology program at Portland Community College’s Cascade Campus.

“It’s not about the adrenaline,” Lindsey said of firefighting. “If you’re here for the danger or the paycheck, you’re here for the wrong reason. It’s about community service.”

Motivations notwithstanding, firefighting is an enormously popular and competitive occupation. Lindsey said that up to 3,000 people per year request applications to apply for openings with the Portland Fire Bureau, but only the top 250 score well enough to make it to a final interview and be considered for an entry-level position. The bureau fills an average of 30 to 50 positions each year.

Those daunting odds don’t stop students from enrolling in the PCC program, however. The program is the biggest and most diverse in the Northwest, Lindsey said, with four recruit classes each year. As many as 96 students each year earn the opportunity to complete state and national certification requirements for the Firefighter Two designation. Typically, anywhere from 25 to 40 students graduate each year with a two-year Associate’s degree in Fire Protection Technology.

But in such a competitive labor market for firefighters, does the program help would-be firefighters to land a job?

“It’s very helpful,” Lindsey said. “Our program enables applicants to be more competitive for an entry-level firefighter position. There’s no guarantee – every fire district has its own requirements and its own test, but historically, our students have done very well.”

During their first year in the program, Fire Protection Technology students learn the basics of fire suppression, participating in six live-fire training exercises during the program’s six-month Fire Academy phase. Lindsey said that there is some instruction on wildland and “urban interface” firefighting – the term for those areas where homes and forested lands intermingle – but the bulk of their instruction is in structural suppression techniques for use in urban and suburban settings. The program has been expanding its wildland firefighting course offerings, however, due to a growing demand for cross-training among new firefighters and an anticipation of an increased number of wildland fire conflagrations each year. Students also acquire their basic Emergency Medical Technician certification during the first year of the program, something that is a requirement for employment at most fire districts.

From the beginning, Fire Protection Technology students get a taste of the physical demands of firefighting. An agility test is administered at the beginning of the program, so that students can “determine for themselves whether they’re ready for the program,” Lindsey said.

Physical training remains an integral part of the program as students progress. In addition to the conditioning that comes from training to be a firefighter – handling fire hoses, ladders, and other equipment – they undergo regular flexibility and strength training. This is capped each week by “running towers,” in which students run to the top of Cascade Campus’ four-story emergency training tower, and back down again, 15 times – the equivalent of 60-story building.

During their second year in the program, along with their ongoing coursework, students serve a one-year internship with a local fire district. Lindsey said the work experience gained during their internships constitutes one of the biggest advantages that PCC fire students have over other would-be firefighters. Right now, he said, students are serving in more than 20 fire districts in the area, in places like Vancouver, Hazel Dell, Ridgefield and Battle Ground, Banks, Forest Grove, Newberg, Estacada, and Sandy, among many others.

But to really maximize their competitive advantage, Lindsey said would-be firefighters should round out their resumes with additional coursework. Many stay at PCC to pick up their intermediate Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic certifications, both of which are valued by employers in a field in which as many as 80 percent of emergency calls are medical in nature.

Lindsey’s sentiments were echoed by Kal Robertson, director of the Emergency Services Division at Cascade Campus.

“We can train would-be firefighters,” Robertson said, “but because of the technology that is increasingly incorporated into firefighting, we have to educate them as well. For example, hazardous material certification requires a chemistry component. When a firefighter is responding to a situation involving hazardous materials, that time in the chemistry lab is at least as important as the firefighter training itself.”

Fire Protection Technology student Lacy Richardson is working toward obtaining her Associate’s degree in the program, and plans to start her Paramedic studies this winter.

See FIREFIGHTERS on Page 10
If you were at the Cascade Campus on the first day of fall classes the sight was unavoidable – bike racks, jam packed with, well, bicycles.

And the racks have been jammed every day since. Krystyna Solodenko is a Cascade student at who rides to school and has been a participant in these daily jams. “It was terrible finding a spot,” she said. “I had to use a tree to lock my bike. I have never seen so many bikes on campus. It made me pretty happy at the same time. It was awesome.”

Solodenko, who recently immigrated to the United States from Ukraine, just got her citizenship in the summer and is a student government outreach coordinator. The psychology major said that riding bikes is more normal back home in Ukraine than driving a car so it was second nature for her here to cycle to class.

“And it’s a lot faster than taking the bus,” she said.

Cascade is by far the most bike-oriented campus because of its inner Northeast location and proximity to TriMet bus and Max line routes. According to a PCC parking and transportation survey, 10 percent of students at the campus bike to class and 7 percent of staff and faculty bike. Overall, across the entire district, 3 percent of students and staff bike to PCC locations. The crush of bikers has been so overwhelming that the Cascade Campus installed a line of new bike racks between Terrell Hall and the Student Services Building. The new rack has increased the bike-parking capacity by 40 bicycles and alleviates the shortage of spaces.

And if it isn’t biking it’s the PCC Shuttle. According to fall term, year-over-year numbers, ridership has grown by 21 percent.

Cascade Campus Community Relations Manager Abe Proctor uses his bike and the shuttle for his transportation needs much of the time. Like Solodenko, Proctor has watched the number of bikers coming onto campus increase.

“I get here pretty early on most days, so I can usually find a place to lock up my bike,” said Proctor, who has been a regular bike commuter for nearly three years. “But the spaces fill up really fast. It seems like more and more people are biking to Cascade all the time, so the extra rack space is really helpful.”

Proctor said he appreciates bike commuting for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the amount of money he saves.

“When you burn zero gasoline during the week, it really adds up,” he said. “If you’re driving your car less, your monthly insurance bill decreases as well. And it’s much cheaper than a gym membership. I arrive at campus alert, focused and ready to work.”

A piece of Portland history will be enshrined at Cascade Campus in February. The late Rev. John H. Jackson, longtime pastor of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church in North Portland, was a prominent local leader during the Civil Rights Era. The Rev. Jackson left an inspiring and enduring legacy behind him; in fact, the Campus’ Jackson Hall is named in his honor. The Campus is in possession of a collection of the Rev. Jackson’s books, correspondence, sermon notes and personal effects, which are housed in the Campus Library and will be officially dedicated in a ceremony on Feb. 28. The space in which they reside – on the Library’s second floor – will be henceforth known as the Rev. John H. Jackson Reading Room.

“We’re very excited to officially dedicate the Rev. Jackson Collection and Reading Room,” said Campus President Algie Gatewood. “The Rev. Jackson was such an important figure in this neighborhood during the Civil Rights Era. He really carried the torch forward in terms of advancing justice and equality, and I’m so proud that his collection will be enshrined here as a permanent educational resource and a piece of Portland history.”

The dedication ceremony is set for 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 28, in the Moriarty Auditorium, followed by a ribbon-cutting and reception in the Campus Library at 3:30 p.m.

Lts. Col. William Holloman, left, and Alexander Jefferson – two of the surviving members of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen – visited Cascade Campus in early January to recall their service in the skies over Europe in World War II. The Airmen were organized in 1941 as the first fighter wing comprised of African American pilots and support personnel, and went on to distinguish themselves in the war. In more than 200 combat missions, the Airmen never lost a bomber under their protection to enemy fire.
As always, Fall Term 2009 saw the arrival of a host of new employees to Cascade Campus. Please welcome the following people to the Cascade family!

Tina Glover, Alcohol and Drug Counseling

Linda Armitage, Ethan Jackson, Susan Klein, Joe Macca, Ilya Perlingieri and Sabina Samiee – Art/Theatre Arts

Lora Crampton, Zachary Kohl, Sarah Lyon and Meghan Martin – Biological Sciences

Luciano Brito, David Demarkey, Daniel Myers, David Robinson and Ava-Maria Stevens – Business Administration

Patrick Boatman, Roger Brewer, Brennan Dawson and Michael Mackel – Chemistry

Chris Allori, Kate Lieber, Jeffrey Mori, Terry Moss, Gregory Patton and Vance Simler – Criminal Justice

Hsiao-Yun Shotwell, Chinese Language and Culture

Dolores Johnston and Rachel Wilcoxen – Education/Library Media

Alice Lasher, Emergency Management

Robert Maca and John Stewart – Emergency Medical Technician

Monique Babin and Jason Rizos – English

Linnea Spitzer – ESOL

Rhonda Diestel, Samuel Hack, Alexander Jordan, Julia Partlow, Nikolene Schulz, Shauna Ward, Zachary Wilson and Joan Zoellner – Mathematics

Carolyn Griffith – Medical Assisting

John Fitzgerald – Multimedia

Kimberley Beaudet and Elvira Bessarab – Ophthalmic Medical Technician

Melissa Boge, Lindsay Kara and Elizabeth Wright – Paralegal

Milton Adams, Lisa Bergroth, Timothy Mossman and Rachel Stern – Physical Education

Heidi Schmalz – Spanish

Jake Foster and Cara Lee – Student Learning Center

Jon Buck, Robert Freuler and Keith Whiting – Trade Extension

Sherry Hanchett – Counseling and Advising

Semhal Yendego – Testing Center Coordinator

She anticipates finishing her studies and being ready to work by December of 2010.

“It’s an active job – definitely not another day at the office,” said Richardson, who is currently serving her internship with the fire district in Cornelius. “I really love the patient interaction and the exposure to different working styles and ideas.

“My skill level has definitely increased,” she said of her time in the PCC program. “We cover all the bases, it’s really thorough. My internship has also allowed me to meet a lot of people in the business and get my face and name out there.”

Ike Ebukam, Richardson’s classmate, recently finished his internship and said it was a very positive experience.

“It was great,” he said. “We went on a lot of medical calls. It’s so helpful to be able to observe and participate in the field. It’s a lot different than when we’re in the classroom.”

Ebukam is nearly finished with his PCC studies, and will graduate from the program at the end of the current academic term. When he’s through, he’s going to look for work and continue his studies toward a bachelor’s degree.

“I’m going to look for a fire job and keep going to school,” he said. “It’s very competitive out there; they want people with lots of experience. But PCC has made me really prepared.”

When all is said and done, Lindsey said, the people who end up working as firefighters are those who want it the most.

“If you’re really serious about working as a firefighter, you have to commit to a three- to five-year process,” Lindsey said. “The people who hang in there the longest, complete the most education and training, build up the most work experience, and complete highest levels of recognized certifications have the best chance. You have to be very dedicated, very focused, very organized.”

King has flourished in college, becoming involved in student government and excelling in the classroom. He got his start in student government in early 2009, and became Cascade Campus ASPCC president later that fall. Just recently, he won the chairmanship of the PCC District Student Council.

“Cascade Campus is like my second home,” King said. “Once I got started in college, I surprised even myself.” After his time at PCC is over, King intends to continue his studies toward a bachelor’s degree in business. Oregon has grown on him, and even though he misses the South sometimes – “I miss the food!” he said – he intends to remain in the Northwest.

“I’ve kind of found my way since I came to Portland,” he said. “There are opportunities for me here that I never had in my hometown. And I won’t complain about Katrina or any of the things that happened. I’m one of the lucky ones; there are a lot of people worse off than me.

“It was one of those turning points in life.”