A Word From the Campus President

Let’s not mince words. The economy is still in shambles. While certain indicators seem to suggest that a recovery is imminent – rising stock prices, for example – too many Americans are either out of a job or live in constant fear of losing the one they have. For most people, the recovery won’t start until the economy begins to consistently add jobs rather than lose them.

While we’re being brutally honest, let’s face one basic fact: the vast majority of people determine their economic health by one factor alone – gainful employment. If someone has a job, then he or she has a measure of economic health. If not, then very little stands between dislocation or all-out economic ruin.

And lest you think I’m simply trying to scare you, let me be perfectly clear: the current downturn will end. While not all old jobs will return – perhaps more importantly – new jobs will be created, many in professions that didn’t exist even a few years ago.

The question is – will you be ready?

Before I dig into this topic, a little background. First, while our present economic slump is the worst since the Great Depression, there is a reason – several, actually – for my optimism. Like President Franklin Roosevelt did in the 1930s, President Obama is marshalling the power of the federal government to put people to work expanding and restoring our national infrastructure.

Roosevelt’s New Deal was responsible for the creation of hundreds of roads, bridges, dams, schools, community centers and other landmarks in communities all over the country, many of which are still in use today. President Obama’s stimulus legislation calls for many of these same kinds of projects, but also extends to a whole range of communications, transportation and energy infrastructure projects the likes of which Roosevelt could scarcely have imagined.

Fiber-optic networks. Solar and wind farms. Rail and streetcar lines. Weatherization and energy-efficiency enhancement projects. Projects like these, and many more, are already under way or slated to begin here in our state, including the construction of what will be the world’s largest wind farm in eastern Oregon. All told, according to recovery.gov, President Obama’s stimulus plan has funneled nearly $2.8 billion in contracts, grants and loans to Oregon, all of it aimed at getting Oregonians back to work.
So where are the jobs, you may be tempted to ask? Many have already been created, and many more are to come. For example, the MEMC Inc. (formerly Solaicx Inc.) solar-panel fabrication plant in North Portland, is expected to triple its capacity and more than double its workforce in the next year, thanks in large part to the federal stimulus program. This trend will only increase as more and more stimulus projects get under way and the need for workers increases.

Which brings us back to my earlier question – will you be ready?

The answer could depend on the choices you make right now. Let’s say you want to land a job making solar panels or components for wind generators, or maybe you want to go to work installing or maintaining those products once they’re manufactured. How do you take steps to ensure you’re ready to answer the call when the time comes? Where do you acquire the necessary skills?

At a community college campus near you, of course.

There are simply no other educational options that offer as much bang for the buck as community colleges. I challenge anyone to name another institution that offers such a comprehensive combination of high-quality instruction and facilities, student support services and range of subject areas at such a reasonable price. For example, at Portland Community College, a student can take a full-time load for approximately $3,500 per year – a little less or a little more, depending on which courses he or she elects to take. In the world of higher education, believe me when I say this is a bargain.

However, times are tough, and I realize that any price tag – however reasonable – can be intimidating for someone who is out of work. But don’t let that stop you. There is plenty of financial aid available, enough to defray the cost of attending community college significantly.

So will you be ready? You can be, if you make the right choices now. Visit a community college campus near you to learn more.

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

For several years now, the ROOTS program at the Sylvania Campus has helped at-risk students to succeed. Now, thanks to a federal TRIO grant, students at Cascade Campus will have the opportunity to participate in the program as well.

The ROOTS program support students with a smorgasbord of wraparound services, such as individual academic and financial aid advising, dedicated tutoring sessions and peer mentoring. ROOTS students also receive training on how to sharpen their time management, organizational and study skills.

“We know that this type of wraparound approach to at-risk students is really effective,” said Dr. Linda Reisser, Dean of Student Development at Cascade. “ROOTS students say they really appreciate the dedicated advising and financial aid staff support.”

The $1.1 million grant will support 140 students per year for the next five years, Reisser said. Part of that support includes three specially-designed, mandatory College Success classes, which are offered tuition-free to program participants. The grant will also fund three new positions: two academic advisors and a program director, all of whose services will be dedicated exclusively to ROOTS students.

Once students have participated in the program for a year, Reisser added, they then serve as peer mentors for incoming first-year ROOTS students. But getting into the program can be a competitive proposition.

“We have about 10 times as many students who are eligible than can participate,” Reisser said.

To enter the program, students must demonstrate academic need by testing into at least one of the following PCC courses: Reading 90 or 115; Writing 90 or 115; Math 20, 60, 65, 70 or 95; or ESOL 260, 262 or 264. Students must also take the majority of their credits at Cascade Campus, and be in good academic and financial standing.

In addition, prospective students must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Be low-income, according to federal TRIO program standards
- Be a first-generation college student
- Be a student with a documented disability

Reisser said that the Campus is conducting a search for personnel to fill the positions associated with the program, and that the program will be ready to accept its first cohort of students by the start of Winter Term 2011. Information on the program will be made available through a variety of channels, students can also learn more via the Sylvania ROOTS Web site, www.pcc.edu/resources/roots/.

“I’m really excited about bringing the ROOTS program to Cascade,” Reisser said. “It will help a lot of students who really need it. “It brings them a sense of pride.”

Building Bridges to College

For several years now, the Middle College, a partnership between PCC and Portland Public Schools, has served as a bridge between talented young people and the world of higher education. The program allows students from Jefferson, Roosevelt and Marshall high schools to take college classes at Cascade Campus – and earn college credit – alongside regular PCC students. And it’s free – the program covers the cost of books, tuition, and fees for its participants.

While the program provides its students with valuable exposure to the rigors of college studies, it also serves a more profound – and more subtle – purpose: it helps instill the belief that higher education is a real and attainable possibility.

“Middle College gave me a new outlook in many ways,” said Sydney Melson, a former Middle College student from Jefferson High School.

“I realized that I could go to college and do the work,” continued Melson, who is now a student at the University of Oregon. “It’s a great program. It has let me see what I’m getting into, and helped me understand what it takes to be successful.”

Many Middle College participants are the first members of their families to go to college. When someone is completely new to the world of higher education, minor hurdles – like the admissions, placement, and registration processes, for example – can seem like major obstacles. The program helps to smooth the way for its students by walking them through these
Continued from previous page

initial steps, and supporting them once they’re enrolled in classes. The benefit of this aspect of the program just can’t be overestimated, said Damon Hickok, coordinator of the Middle College.

“College can be really intimidating for people who have never been there before,” Hickok explained. “For kids who are the first in their families to go to college, it can be even tougher. We help them by explaining how to apply, showing them when and where to take the placement test, and recommending certain classes and instructors to them. We try to make them feel as comfortable as possible.”

The program also encourages its students to succeed by connecting them directly with the student support services available to them at Cascade Campus, such as tutoring services in the campus’ Learning Center. Hickok also makes sure each PCC instructor knows before the start of each academic term that he or she will have Middle College students in class. Participants also have access to computers, a lending library, and other services in the Middle College office.

For all intents and purposes, though, Middle College participants are PCC students like any others – which is very much the point.

“The Middle College showed me my ability to do high-level work,” said Eli Gilbert, a Roosevelt graduate who is now a full-time, first-generation college student. “It explained so much to me about college. I really had no idea what I was in for, but once I realized that I was sitting in class with real college students, I knew I could do the work.

“It’s the best program ever,” continued Gilbert, who intends to study computer engineering at either Oregon State University or Portland State University – a plan that received a boost recently when he was awarded a Marion Mock Memorial Fund scholarship. “Without Middle College, I wouldn’t be on track to get my degree. I owe them a lot.”

The Middle College has proven to be a tremendous success since its inception – so much so, in fact, that it has spurred the creation of a second program: Open Doors.

Targeted specifically at young men of color – consistently the highest-risk demographic in our society – Open Doors functions under the auspices of the Middle College, but with a wide range of additional support services.

Young men are recruited into the program during their freshman year of high school, and organized into a cohort comprised of fellow ninth-graders. Each cohort begins studying at Cascade Campus in the summer before they enter the 10th grade, initially taking courses through the Margaret Carter Skill Center. As they grow older and their academic abilities increase, they begin to transition into mainstream PCC credit classes.

Along the way, they are supported by group study sessions, tutoring, and individual case management from the Open Doors program coordinator, Damon Hickok, who also oversees the Middle College. Each Open Doors student commits to staying in the program until he graduates from high school. If he follows through on his commitment, there’s a payoff – two years of tuition-free study at PCC.

The first cohort of Open Doors students are now high school seniors. And so far, they’re doing pretty well at living up to their end of the bargain.

“Eight of the first 10 are still in the program,” said Hickok. “They grumbled a bit at first about spending part of their summer in class, but they eventually see the benefit. They work toward a goal, and they come to appreciate that.”

As the program has evolved since its inception, it has added more services to support its students. Open Doors students are now required to spend part of the summers prior to their sophomore and junior years in intensive tutoring sessions at the University of Portland, where they work on their language and math skills with U of P education students. The partnership has proven to be beneficial to Open Doors and U of P students alike.

The latest cohort of Open Doors students celebrates the end of their summer tutoring sessions at the University of Portland.
Emergency Telecommunicator 9-1-1 department chair Heidi Meyer, left, describes the operation of the 9-1-1 simulation center to U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley. The Senator visited the campus in August to learn more about Cascade’s workforce development programs.

Cascade Bond Update

Parking was again the focus of bond work at the Cascade Campus during the spring and summer. An analysis of existing conditions on campus was recently completed and confirms that the surge in enrollment is a big factor in the availability of parking.

Currently the campus has 798 parking spaces, but – according to the analysis – needs a total of 1,182. This spillover of 384 cars impacts the campus as well as the surrounding residential neighborhood. It also demonstrates the need for comprehensive transportation and parking strategy for the campus.

To address this need, a new, free, satellite parking lot will open at PCC’s workforce training center at the corner of Northeast 43rd Avenue and Killingsworth Street. Users can pick up the new PCC shuttle, which services both the Southeast Center and Cascade. Also, a transportation/parking management consultant will be contracted to better understand PCC’s needs and develop a full approach to parking at Cascade.

Additionally, Bond Program staff are reaching out to nearby residents, business owners, and other key players in the community to meet one-on-one and inquire about the impact Cascade has in the neighborhood and in their lives. With about half the meetings complete, people have been overwhelmingly positive about Cascade, and many are willing to be active participants in campus bond planning.

Cascade also took the innovative step of contracting with a commercial district advisor, Michele Reeves, to evaluate the role PCC plays in the commercial business mix on Killingsworth. According to Ms. Reeves, creating and maintaining an “activated” streetfront – one with many doorways and robust retail activity – is key to preserving the identity of the area and promoting a more active commercial node.

Over the summer, small remodeling projects were completed in SC 306, TH112a and one the third floor of the SSB, creating new office space and one additional classroom.

This fall, more meetings on programming will be scheduled as the bond design team learns more about the needs of Student Development and campus planning will continue.

Library continued from page 2

“While one copy of the texts will not meet all the possible demand, the project should be an aid to student success and retention,” he said.

If the trial proves successful, Greiner said he and the committee will look for a permanent funding source. Greiner said the per-term cost of the program would drop considerably because it will need to replace the texts only for those courses that have changed books.

“At the end of the fall term, and again at the end of the academic year, this project will be evaluated to see if it should be expanded, modified or discarded,” Greiner said.
Cascade Campus joined forces this year with the Humboldt Neighborhood Association to put on the 2010 National Night Out/Cascade Campus Open House celebration on August 3. A steady crowd of friends and neighbors filled the Borthwick Mall for an afternoon of food, music and fun.
Student Finds Home, Future at Cascade

When Abdi Hamid arrived in the United States from Ethiopia five years ago, his grasp of English was tenuous to say the least. After a brief sojourn in Atlanta, Ga., he found his way to Portland’s growing community of Ethiopian immigrants and, eventually, to Cascade Campus to pursue an education.

But he still needed to learn English. Like many others in his situation, he enrolled in the ESOL program at Cascade Campus. Surrounded by others who were also struggling to learn the language, he felt a camaraderie with his fellow students and quickly began to make progress. His instructor, Diedre Cain, noticed his progress and made a proposition to Abdi. Would he perhaps be interested in tutoring his fellow ESOL students?

“I was very surprised,” Abdi recalled, “but I said yes. When she introduced me to the other students as their tutor, I thought, ‘I don’t deserve this.’ ” Despite his doubts, Abdi pressed on.

“I decided that I would only help them with the things I know,” he said. “That way, I would be fine. I told them ‘I am not an ESOL instructor, but I will help you. And I will learn from you too.’ ”

The decision turned out to be a very good one. Abdi proved to be a talented tutor, and the act of helping to educate his peers made his own English better. He credits his success to his own experience as a new immigrant, which helps him to empathize with his fellow students.

“I really enjoy tutoring,” he explained. “I myself went through the same experience, I know exactly how they feel. The ESOL teachers know how to teach very well, but they don’t always know how their students feel. It makes me very happy to be able to help out other immigrants. “And they also pay you!” he added, laughing.

Seeing the way he was flourishing as a tutor, his GED instructor suggested he bolster his future college scholarship prospects by volunteering in the community.

Abdi, who aspires to a career in a medical-related field, took her advice. He now volunteers in the emergency room at Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital, where he helps patients get admitted to the ER – and soaks up the terminology and culture of American medicine.

“I have improved my English and earned my GED,” he said, “and I see a good future for myself. I am ready to step up to my career.”

Now in his first full year as a mainstream PCC student, Abdi plans to transfer to Portland State University once he earns his associate’s degree. Wherever he ends up, though, he said he’ll never forget the positive experience he has had at Cascade Campus.

“Cascade for me is like my second home,” he said. “This is the first college I have ever attended, and I live close by. I have made many friends, and I have good relationships with my instructors.

“Immigrants have many challenges, but if you focus on your education, if you are steadfast, you will achieve your goal.”

Lighting the Way

Dozens of current and former students, along with their friends and family, paid a surprise tribute to Portland Teachers Program Director Deborah Cochrane, center, this spring in the Cascade Cafeteria. The PTP is the city’s premier resource for training and educating new teachers of color.
As we do at the start of every Fall Term, please welcome the following people to the Cascade family!

**FACULTY**

- **ADULT BASIC EDUCATION**
  Molly Martin

- **ART**
  Vanessa Calvert, Wendy Red Star, Meredith Shell

- **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**
  Richard Birk, Ed Parecki, Heidi Sickert, Lisa Whedon

- **CHINESE**
  Hsiao-Yun Shotwell

- **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**
  Beth Kaufka, Leanne Wetherell

- **ECONOMICS**
  Justin Elardo

- **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
  Bob Grist, Alice Lasher, Bob Maca, James Pryde

- **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**
  Paula Wilson

- **ENGLISH**
  Salomeh Moadab, Christopher Rose

- **ESOL**
  Kim Wright

- **MATH**
  Ryan Allison, Tammy Louie, Carly Vollet

- **MULTIMEDIA**
  Sean-Paul McKee

- **PARALEGAL**
  Krystin Rose

- **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**
  Kevin Collier, Rachel Crocker, Paul Noonan

- **SPANISH**
  Greys Franke, Amanda Gerke, Dawn Stanfield

**STAFF**

- **EMERGENCY SERVICES**
  Robert Victorino

- **FACILITIES MAINTENANCE SERVICES**
  Remi Sabbe

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A crowd of new PCC faculty listen in at the recent New Faculty Institute in the Cascade Cafeteria.
President for a Day

What would you do if you were president of your college for a day? Portland Community College student and Phi Theta Kappa honor society member Adrian Thompson had just that opportunity on Tuesday, June 1 when (former for a day) Cascade Campus President Algie Gatewood stepped aside to let the young man step forward.

On the verge of obtaining his associate’s degree and transferring to Howard University to pursue a career as a dentist, Thompson held a roundtable discussion about student success and retention with faculty as part of his day on the job. With little to no money available, Thompson and others explored ways to help students and the college better achieve their goals. “The learning center is a great way to get involved,” Thompson said.

Not the typical student, Thompson got heavily involved with different aspects of the PCC college community during his freshman year. He attended a number of different social events, visited his academic advisors regularly, and spent over one hundred hours in the learning center.

Before attending PCC, Thompson attended Jefferson High School briefly before enrolling in the alternative Open Meadows High School. At Open Meadows, he excelled and eventually began taking classes at Cascade Campus as part of an optional career and education exploration class.

Penny Thompson, coordinator for the student resource center, asked Adrian Thompson how advisors and counselors might be more visible to students.

The president for a day said he liked it when counselors stopped and talked with him when he was studying. He also thought establishing an incentive system for spending time in the learning center would encourage students to study. Some faculty members asked Thompson if communication lines between the college and students were clear.

Another student who was present, Phi Theta Kappa member Danielle Dalbok, said word of mouth, as well as what instructors pass on to students in class, is more powerful than emails or televisions stationed around campus.

As Thompson moves on to Howard University, he says high school students should take advantage of PCC’s partnership with Portland Public Schools. Getting to know the way around campus and the pace of college life made him far more prepared than some of his other classmates. “Getting exposure in high school is very important,” he said.

With his staff meeting out of the way, Thompson then went to have lunch with Portland Mayor Sam Adams. After lunch, Gatewood said they’d be doing some of the more mundane aspects of the job – answering emails and going over the budget.

Ah, the life of a college president.

OPEN DOORS continued from page 4

“The kids like it because they get to work with prospective teachers who aren’t too much older than they are,” Hickok explained, “and the U of P students like it because they get to hone their skills in a really intimate setting.”

Starting in Fall Term 2010, thanks to a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation, the program will be strengthened by the addition of a mentoring component, which will pair each Open Doors student with an older male role model. Hickok said that it’s been gratifying to see the Open Doors students mature and grow in confidence. “At first they came for the summer meal tickets,” he said. “But now they’re taking it seriously. The seniors are ready for the transition to college life.

“It’s really benefited the kids a lot. Now they believe they can go to college, and they’re confident that they belong in college.”
Minority-Owned Business Remakes Cascade

A PCC bond program remodeling job is nearing completion at Cascade Campus, and one of Oregon’s largest Minority, Women, and Emerging Small Businesses firms is in the thick of it all.

In Line Commercial Construction, based in Aloha, is remodeling 4,000 square feet of the Student Services Building’s third floor at Cascade. The work will provide the campus with renovated office space for staff and faculty to help accommodate the 20 percent growth in enrollment at the North Portland campus. The space, which will help free up other rooms on campus for classrooms, will be ready in time for start of fall classes.

In this early stage of the PCC bond, the college has utilized 41 MWESB contractors, with In Line one of the latest to work on remodeling and upgrade projects around the district. Founded in 1983 by President Dave Flint, who is Japanese American, In Line today consists of about 50 employees and is rated as the largest minority-owned business in Oregon, working on 250 to 300 projects every year.

“Through the 28 years since we were founded we have brought on some great people; are continuing to grow the company and the client base we work with,” Flint said. “As a minority company, there are responsibilities that go with that. One is you want to perform at the very highest level. We are competitive with the best because we provide an outstanding service for our clients, not because we are minority-owned.”

Jeff Stanton, In Line’s Senior Vice President, added that the business, “is a family-based company that prides itself in having and building long term relationships with our clients.”

In Line Commercial Construction works with companies in the health care, commercial, financial and education fields like Portland State University, Providence Health and Services, OHSU and KeyBank to name a few. Their projects include a 21,000-square-foot Glisan Medical Office Building for Providence Health and Services; 5,600-square-foot renovation of SolarWorld Industries America’s new production facility; and a 4,137-square-foot upgrade at Oregon Health & Science University’s west campus. In addition, In Line is no stranger to PCC, building the new kennels for the Veterinary Technology Program at the Rock Creek Campus.

“It’s been a strategically controlled growth over the years,” said Todd Duwe In Line’s Vice President and senior project manager. “We have some really solid clients that have helped us get there. Those organizations really promote MWESB business participation. We are proud of our success and we use that to become more of a mentor for other small businesses, and also help them by breaking down the scope of projects into smaller sizes for MWESB subcontractors to bid on.”

Flint said he has a philosophy of staying involved in the community it serves and works in.

“When In Line was formed there were challenging times for the first 10 years, but the whole key was to bring on really experienced people,” Flint said. “It’s a real teamwork effort.”

Duwe said it’s thanks to the college’s efforts in facilitating small business participation – with a target of 20 percent of all contractors being MWESB – helps firms like his have more opportunities. Thanks to outreach by the college’s Procurement Coordinator John Persen and Associate Director of the Bond Program Linda Degman, small and medium-sized businesses will be a cornerstone to PCC’s bond construction plans.

“They are very solid in their commitment,” Duwe said. “It starts with Linda Degman, the head of bond program. She never lets anybody forget about MWESB participation. It’s at the top of her agenda. Linda has been good about taking the time to listen to all contractors, architects and designers, big or small, to get their opinions.”

For more information on the PCC bond, visit: http://www.pcc.edu/about/bond/.
Cut... and SCENE!

A film crew prepares to shoot a scene for the upcoming Independent Film Channel series “Portlandia” during August in the Cascade Library. The show, which pokes fun at the culture and foibles of Portland, is set to debut in early 2011.