Enroll now!
Classes starting January - March
I would like to go into the sports field as an agent or sports administrator... and I know the education I'm getting at PCC will give me more opportunities to get there.

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Welcome to the winter issue of PCC Communities.

This has been a year of dramatic changes at Portland Community College. The first big change was the implementation in September of a new tobacco policy.

We now are the largest institution of higher education in the state of Oregon to be completely tobacco-free at all campuses and centers. That means indoors and out.

It wasn’t the easiest of transitions for some of our PCC family and visitors, but it was the right thing to do. The request to become tobacco-free came from students. It came from the faculty and staff. I took it to the elected Board of Directors and they approved the policy last March.

We’re hardly the only public place going this way. All Oregon restaurants and bars went smoke-free in January. Oregon Health & Science University and the Oregon College of Oriental Medicine did, too. Now other institutions of higher education are making plans to follow suit.

You can find out more about our policy at www.pcc.edu/tobaccorefree. That site also contains information on services to help those who smoke but are trying to quit. You can find numbers for cessation help lines in English and Spanish.

The other huge change this year is our enrollment, which has skyrocketed. Since 2007, our enrollment figures have climbed every term, but this year, in the heights of the recession, the growth was amazing. PCC was up 18 percent this last spring (compared to spring 2008) and fall enrollment is at 15.4 percent over fall 2008. Winter shows no sign of slowing down.

It has been difficult meeting that enrollment challenge after the 2009 Legislature cut our funding by 10 percent. But the staff and faculty have rallied to make it happen. We also hired 10 more people to serve in the areas of financial aid and enrollment this summer, just to help serve the students.

These aren’t our only challenges nor our last ones. PCC will find a way to meet them head on, as we always do.

Sincerely,

Preston Pulliams
District President
Mara Windstar is fulfilling her lifelong dream to help individuals with disabilities lead more independent lives.

Challenged with health issues from an early age, Windstar graduated from St. Mary's Academy in 1975 and delved into various jobs – retail, child care and administrative work – in order to survive. She thought about starting a non-profit that offered support to those with health challenges. What she longed for was work with a deeper meaning.

By the early 1990s she attended PCC, earned a degree and began assisting children with autism and other developmental disabilities. Her latest passion is teaching people with disabilities to train their own service dogs. The inspiration for such a venture came from within as she trained her service dog, a golden retriever named Freely. Windstar, who overcame her own fear of dogs, works with individuals who suffer from such illnesses as diabetes and post traumatic stress disorder and depend on their dogs to build more independent lives.

Q) What did you like about PCC?
Most all of us were entering into a new field of study and building a career at an age in our lives when we had either already had a different career, a family and/or were building new lives for ourselves. A majority of us had health and learning challenges and struggled and persevered. We cheered each other on through health challenges, life traumas and family and personal pain all because we knew how important success was for our goals, and even greater for our development as a person.

Our classes were definitely community. From our classmates to the teachers and students we worked with, it was all about community. For me a community college says “whole and complete.” Community is fundamental for me and a community college fits the essence of my being.

Q) What is your job like?
Five years ago I started Paws to Freedom where I teach people with disabilities to train their own service dog to assist them. I also do presentations within the community about service dogs, write articles, keep a Web site and I’m a resource person for people around the country who are owner-training their own service dogs.

Q) What’s your favorite part of the job?
Without a doubt, the favorite parts of my job are the person and the dog having “ah-ha” moments.

For the dog, it’s seeing them think. We teach dogs to learn so that they have skills to keep learning. We keep punishment away from learning, as it fosters fear and apprehension and learning can and should be fun. Next we help them work on tasks such as retrieving an item, checking a person’s home for safety, leading a person who is disoriented out of a building and much more.

For the person, it’s seeing them smile and open their mouth in amazement as their dog performs what they have been teaching and training. Seeing the joy of a child achieve and seeing their parent rejoice that there is hope for more independence for their child.

I feel especially honored that people choose and trust to walk their service dog journey with me. This is a very personal event for most people and having someone walk through this with us is fundamental.

Somewhere along my wounded path in life, people believed in me … and because of that I refer to what I do as “believing and serving in community because every person matters.”
I n the last decade PCC faculty and administrators have been working to bring more federal dollars to the campus by applying for, and ultimately winning, National Science Foundation grants. The decision to rev up the application process for NSF grants has been a well-planned effort that gives faculty members the time and money to conduct research in their disciplines. And in the end, it’s students who benefit the most as they are taught cutting-edge lessons by faculty members who have researched their disciplines and worked with industry leaders.

Since 1997 PCC has been awarded $4.3 million from the NSF, thanks to the concentrated efforts by the Board of Directors, faculty, staff and administrators. The grants run the spectrum.

One of the college’s largest NSF grants – nearly $800,000 – is the Sustainability Training for Technical Educators, which pays release time for nine faculty members to participate in professional internships. The grant also funds a Summer Sustainability Institute where high school, community college and university faculty learn about sustainability and ways to infuse it into their curriculum.

The National Science Foundation is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 to, among other things, promote the progress of science. With an annual budget of about $6 billion, the NSF is the funding source for about 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America’s colleges and universities.

A growing number of PCC faculty take the time and effort to apply for grants, which is a long process in itself. Many applications are funded; some are not. Here we highlight some faculty members who have won NSF grants and find out how the funding changed their classes.

**Engineering**

**Todd Sanders**

Secured about $1.6 million in NSF grants in recent years. He is the principal investigator for the Sustainability Training for Technical Educators grant. He also is the principal investigator for a second grant, which aims to increase access and diversity of students in technology programs.

**Working Together:** “The success of the last year is a team effort. Interested and eager faculty, strong support from administration, and most importantly, a responsive Grants Office which deserves the majority of the credit for the success. They are outstanding and I’m deeply appreciative of all their support.”

**Classes he teaches:** Engineering

**Highest Academic Degrees:** Master’s degree and Ph.D in physical oceanography; master’s in civil engineering and fluid dynamics

**Years with PCC:** 5 years; teaching a total of 10 years

**Sociology**

**Kim Smith**

Training coordinator for the Summer Sustainability Institute, a training opportunity for high school, community college and university faculty to learn about sustainability and infuse it into their curriculum. Last summer 30 faculty members from the Pacific Northwest took part. She also assisted in developing the institute’s Web site www.pcc.edu/stte.

**Engaged students:** “PCC is perfectly situated to support sustainability efforts in the community. We are able to respond quickly to the demands of industries and students and recognize the responsibilities we have to create a sustainable community and future. I believe that our mission and efforts around service have been well demonstrated by our service-learning program. Thousands of students have participated in community service with the support of their faculty and the college. Through civic engagement, they not only learn course material, but they also learn how to be better citizens.”

**Classes she teaches:** Environmental Sociology

**Highest Academic Degree:** Ph.D in sociology

**Years with PCC:** 14; teaching a total of 18
Architectural Drafting
Denise Roy

Became involved when Noelle Studer, PCC’s former sustainability coordinator, brought together faculty from a wide range of disciplines all focused on the environment. The results indicated that areas of sustainable practices for residential applications (such as energy-efficient homes, rainwater harvesting, sustainable materials, on-site storm water management and solar systems) were changing and the latest information needed to be taught to students. That sprung the idea of the “train-the-trainer” model – getting college instructors who teach in residential design, management and construction programs updated in sustainable practices in their field.

On the Job: “My grant-funded training was extremely beneficial, as I observed construction sites, spoke with builders, designers, developers and Realtors, about their knowledge and practices in sustainability. I gathered a huge amount of new information that I began implementing into my curriculum last spring, and will continue this academic year.”

Classes she teaches: Architectural Design and Drafting, Building Systems and Architectural and Residential Design.

Highest Academic Degree: Master’s degree in architecture

Years with PCC: 8 years; teaching for a total of 20

Interior Design
Amanda Ferroggiaro

Part of the Sustainability Training for Technical Educators grant

Future projects: Working on a new certificate called Aging in Place that bridges the interior design and gerontology programs.


Highest Academic Degree: Master’s degree in interior architecture. Worked as an interior designer for 6 years.

Years with PCC: 2 1/2; teaching for a total of 6

Geology
Frank Granshaw

Served as a principal investigator in a partnership with three other universities designed to introduce K-12 teachers and students to geology and geophysics. The other grant is to help college faculty to attend the Geological Science of America conference held in Portland in October.

Future projects: The development of an introductory earth science curriculum that emphasizes geoscience literacy and provides students with more authentic lab and field experience.

Classes he teaches: Physical and Historical Geology, Volcanoes, Geology of the Pacific Northwest, and more.

Highest Academic Degree: Master’s degrees in teaching (science education) and geology. Current doctoral candidate in geology.

Years with PCC: 19; teaching for a total of 30

Winter 2010 PCC Communities
It was a desire to get her hands dirty that brought Deborah Davis back to Portland Community College after earning an associate’s degree in 2000. Recently, she was taking an environmental sciences class when this perfect “dirty” opportunity arose – a weekend invasive species pull. As she helped to remove ground cover, Davis chatted with the other volunteers who gave up a Saturday morning in April to help the environment.

“Everybody seemed really glad to be doing what they were doing, to be participating and creating this sweet little park,” she said. “It’s a darling spot.”

As a result, Davis now plans to major in environmental science or communications at Portland State University.

Her first contact with PCC came in the late 1990s when she took classes. She was a non-traditional student who went to college after her son was grown.

Davis then went on to work as a chiropractor for five years but felt unfulfilled. Earlier this year she reconnected with PCC. It’s not uncommon for former students to return to their alma mater for a mid-career change or to brush up on their current skill set.

“Our alumni are still a part of the PCC family — in fact, they’re one of the best resources for our current students as alumni serve as mentors,” said Jennifer Sonntag, alumni and annual fund officer for the PCC Foundation.

There are more than 60,000 PCC alumni and the college is retooling its efforts on how best to get in touch with former students. Sonntag has been making strides in the online social networking realm, asking alumni to share their stories and reach out to each other through vehicles such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

For the second consecutive year the college is raising funds for the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation challenge grant. PCC has been tasked with raising record levels of money for scholarships to receive a match from the Miller Foundation. Last year the match was $320,000, which PCC successfully raised.

The second year of the Miller Foundation grant comes at a critical time as the economic climate has led to record unemployment in Oregon. During such times, people turn to community colleges to retrain, search for new careers and brush up on skills in their current field. PCC has seen skyrocketing growth during the last two years. Between fall 2008 and fall 2009, enrollment shot up 15.4 percent.

The need for student scholarships also continues to increase, which is why the Miller grant comes at a fortuitous time. Money raised for the grant is directed to students in need.

This year community colleges will qualify for the match if they raise more scholarship dollars than last year. The Miller Foundation will match only new and increased scholarship gifts from donors.

Last year the PCC Foundation awarded 352 scholarships.

Visit the Foundation’s Web site: www.pcc.edu/foundation or update your information directly at: www.pcc.edu/foundation/what-we-do/alumni

To register for events or to get involved e-mail: jennifer.sonntag@pcc.edu or call (503) 977-4607.
New leadership for PCC
The winds of change are blowing through the Portland Community College Board of Directors.

By James Hill

For the 2009-10 year, David Squire was sworn in as vice chair of the Board and Deanna Palm was appointed to be the new member from Zone 7, replacing Marilyn McGlasson. Harold Williams was sworn in as the Chair in July and Gene Pitts as a new member representing Zone 6, replacing Jaime Lim.

Pitts was elected to the board in May and will oversee east Washington County. He has been with Intel Corp. since 1988, and is a senior leader as Technical Marketing Director in Hillsboro. Prior to that, Pitts worked at Westinghouse Electric in Asheville, N.C., and Milliken and Co. in Spartanburg, S.C. Pitts graduated from Clemson University with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Electrical and Computer Engineering. He has more than 30 years of experience in the high-tech sector working with some of Intel’s largest server and workstation customers across the globe.

“I value our education system and the value that it brings to the community, and I want to see technology help bolster what PCC brings to the education pipeline,” Pitts said.

A former PCC student in the early 1980s, Deanna Palm assumes the role of Zone 7 representative, which covers western Washington County. The lifetime Washington County resident has been president of the Greater Hillsboro Area Chamber of Commerce since 2001. Palm leads the chamber in establishing relationships with the businesses, community and local governments as well as implements all of the chamber board’s policies, administering the budget and participates and promotes the chamber.

“As a PCC alum, I know first hand what a positive impact an education at PCC can have on your career and in my position at the Hillsboro Chamber I have seen how responsive and adaptable PCC can be to rapidly changing workforce development requirements,” Palm said. “I appreciate the confidence that the other Board members have placed in me and look forward to working with them and the dedicated staff at Portland Community College.”

Williams, who was first appointed in 1990 and re-elected to the board five times, is president of CH2A Associates, a contracting firm. He represents Zone 2, which includes parts of north Multnomah and Columbia counties.

Squire, who was appointed to the board in 2007, is president of the Entrepreneurs Foundation of the Northwest and the managing partner for the Tygh Valley Group LLC, a business development consulting firm. He represents Zone 5, which encompasses southwest and part of southeast Portland.

The PCC Board of Directors consists of seven members elected by zones to four-year terms. The board members govern the college, which includes selecting the president, approving the hiring of other staff and faculty, approving the college budget and establishing policies that govern the operation of the college.

For more information, visit www.pcc.edu/about/administration/board

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Boomer News

Life By Design NW, a program of Portland Community College, announces the launch of a new and expanded Web site, www.lifebydesignnw.org, to serve boomers age 50 and older in all areas related to life planning, volunteering, learning, active living, community and employment. Find out the latest news and resources to support adults in transition and Discover, Design and Engage your future. Life By Design: The go-to resource for life planning.
When Alisa Roe enrolled in an oxyacetylene welding class at Rock Creek in 2005, she was instantly humbled. “I wasn’t very good at it,” she says with a laugh. What the 1979 art history graduate lacked in skill, however, she made up for in determination. She retook the non-credit class that fall with an eye on metal arts, and she immersed herself in a form of gas metal arc welding. “I loved it. There was no turning back.” And although, by her own admission, her ideas were beyond her original skill level, she began to design large metal art pieces.

“I originally had no idea what was involved in welding,” she said. But she proved herself a quick study. “Each weld requires the metal shape being cut, then the edge prepared to a bevel, tacked into place, welded and finally ground flush.”

Bell hangers, gates and deck panels were among the early pieces Roe made. Under the direction of PCC instructors Danny Merrick and Kevin Longueil, she created a circular fire-pit of powder-coated mild steel. Titled “Interconnected,” the piece featured five ethnic faces from around the world tentatively woven together, with the implication that we are all part of the same world. Once she completed that project Roe, with Longueil’s help, redesigned the underlying framework so that each structure consisted of eight individually decorated flat panels. This resulted in two more fire pits, “Evolution” and “Irony.” Though Roe believes she could have sold fire pits as a career, she opted to explore new ideas.

Roe had long been fascinated by the African elephant and, as her 50th birthday approached, she booked a trip to Tanzania, which included a two-week safari. During the trip, her group spent time with an elephant herd, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that became the inspiration for her most recent sculpture, “August Trunk,” a life-sized elephant of mild steel, its one flank solid, the other one skeletal. While on safari, Roe approached her subjects first as an artist and then as a humanitarian. “An elephant herd, (from) the very young to (the) very old, is a scaled repetition of shapes and textures,” she says. But, as she also suggests in her artist’s bio, “If the elephant is allowed to represent the continent of Africa, then … ‘August Trunk,’ perhaps asks the viewer to consider, and respond to, the immense environmental, political and health issues facing many of the countries there.”

“August Trunk” evolved over 18 months in the Rock Creek welding shop.

When the elephant piece was completed, another PCC instructor, Jim Jeffery of the Rock Creek auto-body department, clear-coated it as part of a growing collaboration between the welding, art, and auto-collision departments at PCC.

Before the final clear-coating, however, Roe submitted the sculpture for juried selection by the prestigious Lake Oswego Gallery Without Walls. The sculpture was selected, one of two metal sculptures fabricated by PCC students. The second sculpture, made of steel and titled “Billy Chinook,” features basalt columns lit from the bottom by a hidden solar light; it was made by established sculptor and jeweler Nicky Falkenhayn, who also takes non-credit welding classes at PCC. Both pieces will be on display in downtown Lake Oswego.

Meanwhile Roe resumed classes at PCC this fall, where she will concentrate on gas tungsten arc welding. This will allow her to work in steel, and to try smaller scale projects, which she admits will be a new challenge for her. Roe, who poured all her passion into home and family for 26 years after college, says she is now interested in a career as a metal artist, weaving her social conscience in with her art. However, she says the ultimate goal is that “welding remains fun.”

Winter 2010 PCC Communities 65
The owner and baker of Sweetpea Baking Co. shares her vegan recipes with PCC students.

There was a time not long ago when Lisa Higgins had a stormy relationship with her alarm clock.

The 20-something-year-old was working full time as a bulk foods buyer for Whole Foods Market during the day while also getting her baking business off the ground. Most days she would get off work, sleep for a few hours and then rise in the middle of the night and head to a commercial kitchen she rented in Northwest Portland to bake vegan muffins, scones and cakes.

“I was young and healthy and I had a lot of energy,” she recalled. “Plus I have a stubborn streak and I was unwilling to stop.”

But the exhaustion did get to her. “Oh yeah, there were times when I would be crying as I decorated a cake,” she said.

That madness ended in 2006 when she left her day job and opened Sweetpea Baking Co., which has become one of Portland’s hottest vegan bakeries.

Higgins, who was inspired by her baker great-grandfather, brings her love of veganism and baking to PCC as she offers classes through Community Education. Her fall courses filled quickly, featuring cake decorating, cookies, pies and savory seitan (a gluten substitute made from wheat). This winter, she is teaching the Vegan Baking Series (see page 24).

She graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in film and video and then traveled the country, playing bass for an all-women pop punk band. After she tired of touring she sat down with her boyfriend and figured out where she wanted to live. Portland topped the list.

She found work with Whole Foods and baked treats for friends on the side. A vegetarian since her teens and a vegan since her mid-20s, she found creative ways to replicate her mother’s legendary baked goods without using any dairy, eggs or animal products.

At the urging of friends she decided to turn her hobby into a business. She sold her music equipment to buy the commercial kitchen equipment she would need to bake goods on a larger scale. Friends and her parents also offered financial support.

She sold her products to New Seasons Market, coffee houses and other stores that would stock her scones, cookies, doughnuts, brownies and muffins. Her popularity quickly soared and before long she was making wedding cakes, cheesecakes and other special-order treats.

Still operating by herself, she would bake several mornings a week from 4 to 8 a.m. On the other days she would deliver the products to more than two dozen wholesale retailers.

As more specialty orders came from customers from across the metropolitan area and deliveries became overwhelming, it became clear that she needed to open a retail store (where she also added coffee, soups, sandwiches and an all-you-can-eat Sunday brunch to her menu), hire employees and grow her business. Sweetpea was the first all-vegan retail bakery in Portland.

“Our focus is on making quality vegan baked goods that will rival any counterpart,” she said. “We have set out to prove that no animals need to be harmed to make a delicious moist cake, a soft doughnut, or a flaky scone.”

To register for the Vegan Baking Series, visit www.pcc.edu/community.
African film fest turns 20

The always-at-capacity event runs through February and will feature guest artists

By Dana Haynes

A wildly popular film festival that has become synonymous with the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College turns 20 years old this February.

The Cascade Festival of African Films honors the art and craft of filmmaking from that continent. The movies imported for the festival draw capacity crowds each February.

"The 20th festival will showcase 22 outstanding feature and documentary films from every region of the African continent," said Mary Holmström, one of the event's organizers.

Longtime PCC 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. "We were shocked when we drew 400 viewers to our first festival back in 1991, and never dreamed that we would still be going strong 19 years later, with 5,500 people attending last year. 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!"

This year's guests include:

Haile Gerima opens the festival on Feb. 5. He will present his latest film, "Teza," which won the Grand Prize at the 2009 Panfrican Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou, which often is described as the Oscars of Africa. Gerima also opened the fifth Cascade Festival of African Films.

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.

"Approximately 5,500 people attend the festival annually," Holmström said.

Since its inception in 1991, the festival has been organized and run by volunteers and offered to the public free of charge.

Past guests to the Cascade Festival of African Films have included, from top, directors Haile Gerima, Jean-Marie Teno, Charles Burnett and Norman Maake. Photos courtesy of the film festival.
Firefighting is an enormously popular and competitive occupation according to Ed Lindsey, instructor and chair of the Fire Protection Technology program at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus.

Don’t believe him? Of the roughly 3,000 people who apply each year for openings with the Portland Fire Bureau, he said, only about 250 score well enough on preliminary written and agility tests to sit for the final examination, and only a handful of these are hired each year. 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. With four recruit classes every year, the program is the biggest and most diverse in the Northwest, Lindsey said. He added that as many as 96 students each year earn the opportunity to complete state and national certification requirements for firefighting. 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.

“It’s not about the adrenaline,” he added. “If you’re here for the danger or the paycheck, you’re here for the wrong reason. It’s about community service.”

During their first year in the program, Fire Protection Technology students learn the basics of fire suppression. Lindsey said that he’s increasing instruction on wildland firefighting techniques and offers a good slate of urban interface firefighting training – 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 settings. 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.
that is on fire

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,” Lindsey said.

Physical training remains an integral part of instruction 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 students running to the top of Cascade Campus’ four-story emergency training tower, and back down again, 15 times – the equivalent of a 60-story building.

During their second year, 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, Lindsey said, students are serving with fire districts in places like Banks, McMinnville, Newberg, Forest Grove, Estacada, Sandy, Vancouver, Hazel Dell, Ridgefield and Battle Ground, among others.

But to really maximize their competitive advantage, Lindsey said would-be firefighters should round out their résumés 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.

“’It’s an active job – definitely not another day at the office,” said Fire Protection Technology student Lacy 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.”

Richardson is working toward obtaining her associate’s degree in the program, and plans to start her paramedic studies this winter. She anticipates finishing her studies and being ready to work by December of 2010.

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

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, it’s 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.”

For more information about the Fire Protection Technology program, visit www.pcc.edu/programs/fire-protection/ or call (503) 978-5580.
Kate Richardson pulls out all the stops to bring her love of science to students

By Christina Holmes

Kate Richardson doesn’t stay still for long. There are classes to teach, students to meet and science labs to set up.

All that energy has benefited the students who have passed through her classes during her 13 years with PCC, where she’s earned the reputation as a demanding and attentive biology, microbiology and cell biology instructor.

“Though her classes are often challenging she is definitely one of those teachers who will go out of her way to assist her students in mastering the material,” said former student Anisa Jones, who is now applying to medical schools. “In class she tells stories about particular microbes or pathogens and it makes what we’re learning not only relevant but interesting. As students we all felt challenged by the material and her high expectations of us, but we all left feeling that our lab technique was unrivaled and our knowledge of the subject matter was enriched with her passion.”

Richardson, humbled by any praise or recognition, simply refers to herself as someone who developed a love for science at a young age. “Plus I get to tell stories,” she said.

She grew up in Los Angeles and later studied at the University of California at Los Angeles, where she eventually earned her doctorate in microbiology. She conducted research at the University of Missouri and the University of Maryland in Baltimore at the Center for Vaccine Development. She later worked at Oregon Health & Science University and also taught at Portland State University. Aside from PCC, she currently teaches at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine.

“Just the care alone she insists that each student take in their treatment of the equipment gives them an overall respect for all their work in the lab,” said Jones. “You can always tell a lab room that has just had Dr. Kate’s class in it because it’s immaculate.”

Richardson worked closely with administrators to build an efficient and well-planned science lab at the Southeast Center and thanks her colleagues at Sylvania, Brett Schroeder and Cathie Cookus, for carrying a bigger load as she set up the new space.

An avid cyclist, she logs about 100 miles per week on her bike and takes part in the annual Cycle Oregon event. Outside of work she enjoys music (she sings in a choir and plays saxophone) and sports.
Progress is happening at the first two new facilities being paid for by the voter-approved 2008 bond measure.

In Washington County, there’s the Willow Creek Center, a one-stop shop for the unemployed and underemployed. And in the heart of downtown Portland there’s a new PCC presence at the corner of Southwest Yamhill and Second, the building formerly known as the Willamette Building and home of the University of Oregon’s “Duck Store.”

And stretched between them? TriMet’s Blue line for the MAX rapid transit system.

The downtown building will become the home for PCC operations such as Human Resources, Community Education and Affirmative Action, among others. PCC purchased the building from the Oregon University System last year in hopes of moving these programs off of campuses, thus freeing up space for more badly needed classrooms and labs.

“It’s basically on schedule and moving along. It’s taking form rather nicely,” said Grant Bennett, PCC managing architect.

Downtown project manager Gary Sutton agreed. “This project is going real well. We have a good, cohesive team out there. It’s on time and on budget.”

Linda Degman, associate director of the bond program, said both centers are on track to open this school year. Willow Creek, at 185th Avenue and Baseline Road, is scheduled to open this winter. The downtown building, at Southwest 2nd and Yamhill, is slated to open by the end of December with staff moving there in January.

Both sites were selected due to their proximity to light rail. It’s all part of the college’s commitment to sustainability. Both the new building in Washington County and the remodeled building in downtown Portland are meeting the highest standards for sustainability and energy efficiency.

These two buildings are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to PCC and bond-related projects. Land is being sought in Newberg for an education center. And all three main campuses, plus the Southeast Center, will see construction projects eventually.

“When will construction start (on campuses)? Not for a while,” Degman said. “It’ll probably be a good 12, 18 or 24 months on some of our campuses.”

The state Legislature also provided funds for Willow Creek.

Kristin Watkins, associate vice president for college advancement, said there’s good reason not to rush these projects. “We need to be sure that we’ve taken the time to thoughtfully plan for the academic and student needs of each campus,” she said. “We also need to provide opportunity for community involvement before moving to construction.”

The college also has hired a bond public involvement manager whose job it is to, well, keep the public involved. Gina Whitehall-Baziuk started the job in September and is spending the next few months getting to know the stakeholders so that she can assure them the chance to make meaningful contributions to the projects. Whitehall-Baziuk formerly served as the manager of public involvement for the Metro Regional Council.

Plans are being finalized for grand openings for both Willow Creek and the downtown building in 2010.
Make YOU the project!

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