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Motivation
We’re all about that.

When I became a mother at age 16, PCC enabled me to start college early with the Early College Program. I want to be someone in life and not fall into anyone’s stereotypes.

Claudia
Future Accountant
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On the Cover:
Mark Fitzsimons shows off a prehistoric bison head, pieces of which were unearthed during Community Education’s Paleontology and Archaeology Weekend last summer. The class will be offered again this August. Story on page 63.

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Welcome to summer term!

There are some things we do every day here at Portland Community College. Assist students, hold classes, help Oregonians gain the skills they need to weather these tough economic times.

But one thing we don’t do every day — or week, or month, or year — is open a brand new building.

We are set this fall to unveil PCC’s Newberg facility. This project has been a long time coming, but well worth the wait. We will be serving up a wide array of credit classes aimed at meeting the specific needs of our Yamhill County students.

We couldn’t have done it without the help of the Newberg community, including City Hall, the school district and the business community. This is truly the perfect example of teamwork.

Some of you may be surprised to discover PCC’s district is large enough to cover Newberg. A quick reminder: At 1,500 square miles, Portland Community College takes in all or portions of five counties — Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, Washington and Yamhill. That’s 1.5 million residents and, as we like to say, it gives PCC approximately the same size footprint as the state of Rhode Island.

The Newberg site is exciting, but it wasn’t the first step following our successful 2008 bond measure. We opened the Willow Creek Center on 185th Avenue and Baseline in Hillsboro. We opened the Hillsboro Center in downtown Hillsboro. We purchased the Downtown Center at Southwest Yamhill and Second, right on the MAX line, in Portland.

And now come the big projects: Renovations and construction at the Cascade, Rock Creek and Sylvania campuses, as well as the Southeast Center on Southeast Division. Those projects will take months and even years to complete. You can find out more — and get involved — by going to www.pcc.edu/bond.

Another long-awaited project also bringing much excitement involves a building right across the street from the Cascade Campus. In the fall, every freshman who enters Jefferson High School will be part of a new era as the school transforms to become Jefferson High School: Middle College for Advanced Studies. This is a well-planned partnership between PCC and Portland Public Schools which ultimately gives students the opportunity to earn college credit and a high school diploma at the same time. As Middle College Coordinator Damon Hickok explains, this new program has the potential to change the neighborhood for generations to come.

So come out and help us celebrate the opening of the Newberg Center in October. And please don’t hesitate to get involved in the various projects. After all, it’s your college.

Sincerely,

Preston Pulliams
District President
It’s no exaggeration to say that Ken Berry knows most people around town.

That’s what happens when you spend a decades-long career as a Portland Public Schools educator and also run one of the nation’s largest Martin Luther King Jr. annual tributes.

Berry’s passion for music, students and Dr. King allowed him to create a livelihood that fits him to a tee.

For nearly 35 years, Berry worked for PPS as a teacher, music director, administrator and principal. He officially retired in 2003, yet he still takes on substitute jobs. When he’s not in school, he’s working on the MLK program through his nonprofit World Arts Foundation Inc. or updating his Facebook page with the many photos he’s taken over the years.

And if you doubt that he has some connection with just about everyone in Portland, meet him for coffee at a public place and watch how many times he’s interrupted mid-conversation to say hello to a colleague, give a hand to a friend or reminisce with one of Portland’s movers and shakers.

Q. You graduated from Jefferson High School in 1967 and worked as an intern for KGW TV/Radio. How did you get to PCC?

A. After applying for employment at KGW, I was told that typing would be required. During that era learning “typing skills” was a bit of a stigma because “only females” learned how to type. Little did I know that this was going to become one of my passions for life and PCC provided this opportunity.

I started at the Failing Elementary School building and later took classes at Sylvania. We wore boots because there were no sidewalks and when you walked from the car to the building your shoes got muddy.

Q. Do you remember any faculty?

A. E.M. Cimino was one of the first people I met at PCC. She was a counselor. Ron Schmitt, a speech communications teacher, influenced me to select speech as a major. I was at PCC from 1967 to 1971 and then I went to University of Oregon where I earned a bachelor’s degree and later a master’s degree in education from University of Portland.

Q. Why do you love teaching?

A. To help students, families and other educators make the necessary educational connections is a fulfilling enterprise. To have even a small hand in improving the quality of life for a full range of students makes me grateful. I encounter students and they remind me that I had an impact on their decisions and selected careers for life.

Q. What’s the best part of your job as the MLK Jr. tribute executive producer?

A. Creating a live television/radio production involving local performing artists and speakers coming together to commemorate the life and dreams of MLK Jr. — and directing more than 300 volunteers for over seven hours — is so gratifying. My goal is to preserve and document this program for future generations. Of course, the past 26 years has generated a reservoir of hundreds of committed friends, family and community members who share the same history and experience in the City of Roses.

Q. How do you spend free time?

A. My wife, Deborah, is the Head Start Director for PPS and she hasn’t retired yet. When we can, we go to the coast. I love photography and music and we’re active at New Hope Missionary Church.

Q. Any advice for future college students?

A. Seek out your dreams and never become discouraged by obstacles. Life has so much to offer, so much rich potential and fertile ground, we must see the cup as half full and act accordingly. I strongly believe the old adage that “service is the rent we pay for the space we take up on earth.”
Paula Barreto traveled into a war zone so she could enroll at PCC. It’s a far distance to trek but when the then 20-year-old enlisted in the U.S. Navy she did so for two reasons: She would help protect her country and in turn the federal government would help pay for her schooling.

“I wanted to serve my country and my goal was to use my time in the Navy as a way to pay for my education,” said Barreto, student government president at Cascade and Chair of the District Student Council, a job she was appointed to by her peers.

With 3,000 members of the Oregon National Guard’s infantry combat team returning from Iraq and eligible for college tuition under the GI Bill, there is pressure to provide educational services.

To handle the load of potential new students, PCC and the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs have joined efforts to assist veterans in navigating what can be a daunting system of benefits.

“We’re ready to help everyone from aging vets who have never used their GI Bills to those vets just back from the Middle East to vets whose relatives want to use the GI Bill for their education,” said Bill Seaton, the ODVA liaison at PCC.

Seaton is at each PCC campus and the Southeast Center at least twice per month to talk one-on-one with veterans and educate them about the options available to them and their families. He advises veterans on educational benefits, disability compensation, pensions, health care benefits, home loans and more.

“I hope to show my face to as many people as possible,” he said. “We want to get them
started on a healthy course and we want to keep them on that course."

Seaton, an army veteran of the Vietnam War, was drafted into the military in 1966 when he was 18, served as a machine gunner, was sent to Vietnam’s Iron Triangle and became a squad leader. He served in Vietnam for a little more than a year.

He faced challenges when he returned from battle. The country was fractured because of the war and soldiers didn’t feel appreciated for the work they performed.

Today’s vets are experiencing a different kind of homecoming.

“The new GI Bill is so generous that if an individual maximized every single benefit it would be worth $47,500,” said Seaton.

And aside from the financial commitment to get soldiers into college, there also is plenty of support. There is close supervision by college and ODVA officials to make sure a vet meets academic expectations and stays on track with his or her academic goals.

Student Dave Stratford looks forward to working with Seaton through Rock Creek’s Veteran Resource Center, which Stratford founded. He calls the center a big warehouse for veterans looking for information on everything from disability services to employment leads.

“This is a big tool box that we didn’t have before and now we can help anyone who walks through the door,” said Stratford, who served in the Army from 1984 to 1995 and later in 2007 where he spent a year in Iraq. He’s now studying aviation science and flies helicopters.

Seaton is in his new role resulting from a 2009 state initiative to place ODVA officers on college campuses to assist returning combat veterans and active duty personnel. The ODVA understands one of the biggest challenges facing veterans is dealing with benefits while trying to succeed in college.

When Seaton returned from Vietnam he used the GI Bill to go to Oregon State University, where his dad was a business professor. He studied history and politics and graduated in the early 1970s. He went on to a successful career in computers and high-tech fields where he worked at Intel and John Deere, among others.

Last year he began volunteering with some veteran groups, including myhealthyvet.com, hoping to give back to the military as a show of appreciation for the education he received after the war.

First, some history. The Colombian-born Barreto was raised in New York and wasn’t sure what she wanted to pursue post high school. She spent a year backpacking in Europe and later enlisted in the Navy.

Boot camp brought her to Illinois and later stints placed her in Virginia and Florida as an aviation electrician. She was called to duty to Balad, Iraq twice between 2007 and 2008, each time for three months.

She worked on aircraft maintenance in a compound within the city, about 80 kilometers from Baghdad.

By May 2008, her five-year tenure with the Navy was over. She made her way back to New York and then drove west, checking out liberal-minded cities along the way. When she arrived in Portland at 3 a.m. on September 1, 2008, she knew she was in the right place. The city’s welcoming attitude toward all groups of people plus its emphasis on sustainability was a draw.

While she wanted to go to college she was still nervous about the unknowns. She checked out PCC and, thanks to friendly and efficient student support staff members, she took placement exams and registered for classes in one day.

“There are some amazing people who work and go to school here and they have a very humanistic approach in how they do their jobs,” she said.

Once enrolled she got involved in student government. In June 2010 she interviewed for the presidency and got the job hands down. Several months later she got the district council position.

Now her life is a balancing act as she juggles classes and high-powered meetings involving PCC’s Board of Directors, district staff, neighborhood groups, student council members and faculty members. In between, she helps out the PCC Foundation by raising money, most recently with an old-fashioned but spirited game of kickball at Jefferson High School.

Her goals include better outreach to veterans and black and Native American student populations and advocating for students during the state budget process.

As for what’s next, Barreto, 27, has her eye on a bachelor’s degree in environmental science or landscape architecture. She’s scouting universities, determining which one meets her needs.

“I’m so pleased with the education I’ve received at PCC and I’ve learned so much from my time here both in the classroom and within my job,” she said.
The sounds of screeching brakes filled the air before metal crunched into a brick wall. Glass shattering was followed by screams.

Nearby, Nathan Peters and his friends were sitting on the porch of a house they were renting in Sardinia, an island in the Mediterranean Sea off the western coast of Italy. The vacationing Peters, who always carries an emergency kit with him, grabbed the bag and headed to the scene.

He was calm and aided the driver and two passengers, one of whom was pinned under the front wheel, until the ambulance arrived.

That horrible accident back in 2008, in which luckily no one was killed, reminded Peters that he felt alive when helping others.

He tucked that thought away when he returned from vacation and got back to work as a technician at an electronics manufacturing plant in Vancouver. He didn’t go to college after graduating high school in Washougal, Washington and found his way into the electronics industry.

About six months later he was laid off. As he applied for unemployment services he knew he needed more than a job — he wanted a career.

He thought back to Sardinia and the way he responded to the accident. Soon after, he was enrolled in emergency medical services classes at PCC.

“I know I have the right mindset to become a paramedic,” said Peters, 36, who volunteers with the Molalla Fire Department.

And the right career outlook. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of emergency medical technicians is expected to grow 9 percent between 2008 and 2018.

With family finances tight, Peters searched for scholarships and grants through the PCC Foundation. Fortunately for him, the OCF Joseph E. Weston Public Foundation, which is administered by The Oregon Community Foundation, recently awarded grants to community colleges for students in need. It’s part of the $3.4 million handed out in 2010 by the Weston Foundation to help with the struggling economy.

The PCC Foundation received Weston grants in 2009 and 2010, totaling $35,000 for PCC students. Last year 10 students, including Peters, received scholarship awards. The recipients have lost their jobs due to changes in technology and need retraining.

Among the recipients are students retraining for work in renewable energy, the semiconductor industry, biomedical engineering technology and radiology.

“It’s significant to note that the grants received helped us to achieve our Miller Challenge goals in both 2009 and 2010,” said Kim Kono, director of development for the PCC Foundation. For the past three years, the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation has matched up to $320,000 in scholarship gifts made to the PCC Foundation. Meeting the match has allowed the PCC Foundation to award hundreds of additional scholarships each year. “The PCC community has come through in a very big way,” said Kono.

Peters, who lives in Oregon City, hopes to finish school in about two years.

While his wife, Elizabeth, works as a collector and seller of trees and shrubs, Peters goes to school and attends to his five-year-old son, Leucan. “I really like PCC and I like being back in school,” said Peters.
More than 1.3 million students have passed through PCC’s doors since they opened in 1961. Without the support and hard work of our neighbors, community partners, district voters, local businesses, staff, donors, faculty and, of course, our students, PCC wouldn’t be what it is today — one of the most accessible and diverse educational institutions in the state. In the coming year, we hope you join us in celebrating where we’ve been and in looking forward to what our future holds.

Visit www.pcc.edu/50th to see every step of the anniversary planning process from the start and to find out what’s coming up next.
This fall a new era begins for PCC's Cascade Campus and Jefferson High School.

The Middle College partnership between PCC and Portland Public Schools — which enables students from Jefferson to take college credit classes at Cascade — will enroll more students than ever before. Every incoming Jefferson freshman will be a Middle College student as the high school transforms to become Jefferson High School: Middle College for Advanced Studies. Until now, the program has operated on an opt-in basis.

Freshmen in the Jefferson neighborhood will enroll in Middle College or attend another nearby comprehensive high school. Students from other PPS high schools also will be able to transfer to Jefferson.

“Expanding Middle College to every student is the kind of thing that can change this neighborhood for generations,” said Middle College Coordinator Damon Hickok.

“Expanding Middle College to every student is the kind of thing that can change this neighborhood for generations.”

— Damon Hickok

Middle College students receive support services, including tutoring, group study sessions and a twice-yearly SAT/ACT preparatory class. Hickok also maintains close communication with PCC faculty in order to track the students.

“College courses are harder and they move much faster than what the kids are used to,” he said.

Middle College students will benefit from the services of Self Enhancement Inc., a 30-year-old nonprofit organization.

“Middle College is going to save my mom $40,000,” she said, laughing.

For more information about Middle College, call Damon Hickok at (971) 722-5552 or Carol Schulman at (971) 722-5556.
After years of planning, PCC’s newest center in Newberg will open its doors in September. The facility, south of Highway 99W at Fernwood Road and Brutscher Street, is one of the first stemming from passage of the college’s $374 million bond measure in 2008. Its location in the heart of Oregon’s Chehalem Valley was chosen because of the community’s ongoing population growth.

“With the opening of the new center, students from Newberg, Dundee and nearby Sherwood will have the opportunity to complete their first two years of college locally, before transferring to a four-year university,” said Linda Gerber, Sylvania Campus president.

That’s exactly what Veronica Montoya Santana of Newberg intends to do. She takes classes at Sylvania but with a 30-minute commute each way she wastes a lot of time in the car.

“This will make it much more convenient, so I can’t wait for the center to open,” said Montoya Santana, 19, who plans to transfer to George Fox University and study criminal justice after she finishes classes at PCC. “This will be perfect.”

The center will offer a general education program focused on lower division courses that can be transferred to universities. Courses such as anthropology, economics, psychology, philosophy, history, computer systems, math, English and Spanish will comprise the roster in the fall.

PCC has been offering a similar mix of credit and non-credit classes at its interim site at the Chehalem Cultural Center this past year while construction crews work on the permanent facility.

“Faculty members teaching in Newberg this past year have had such positive feedback to share,” said Barb VanAmerongen, the director of PCC Newberg. “They’ve reported a wonderful mix of students — those just out of the military, adults returning to school, people transitioning to new careers, and new graduates from high school working on their general education courses.

“And since these students are locals, they’re delighted that they no longer have to drive all the way to the Sylvania and Rock Creek campuses for classes; they can take them right here in town,” she added.

While still at the interim site this summer, PCC will offer a “College and Career Exploration” program. The classes will run from June 20 through August 12 and will enable students to research career opportunities in such fields as health care, engineering, education, gerontology and green technology. Classes in résumé writing and interview skills will be offered along with college preparation courses in reading, writing and math.

Students are encouraged to make an appointment with Mike Meade, PCC Newberg’s student adviser. In addition to advising, Meade oversees appointments for placement testing to ensure students get access to the right resources. He can be reached at (971) 722-8603.

“PCC has made a genuine effort to become a real part of the community,” said Newberg Mayor Bob Andrews. “We appreciate that commitment and dedication, and we recognize the doors that will open because of the educational opportunities presented to us.”

The Newberg Center will be open 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday; and 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.
For some, education is a means to an end—a way to land a coveted job or secure a salary. Others find education to be an end in itself, a way to enrich oneself personally and expand one’s knowledge of the world, and thus help to nudge humanity in the direction of understanding.

James Harrison, chair of the Social Sciences and Humanities Department at PCC’s Cascade Campus, falls into the latter category. Education has been part of Harrison’s life since his youth, helping to shape his world view and, ultimately, becoming his calling.

Born in South Carolina and raised in New York City, Harrison’s first experience as an educator came after college when he spent two years in the African nation of Sierra Leone as a member of the Peace Corps. He taught in a secondary school rooted firmly in the rigid and regimented tradition of British colonial-era education.
and Racism

“I endured the British system for about a month,” Harrison recalled, “and then I decided to change it.”

Frustrated with the school’s tradition of mostly rote learning — instructors would typically lecture, then write notes for the students to copy — Harrison spent about a week teaching his students to take notes. The response was immediate and positive. His students enjoyed the more relaxed style, he said, and appreciated the opportunity to think creatively and critically.

Upon returning to New York, Harrison knew his professional destiny lay in education. After a year of teaching the seventh grade, he set his sights on higher education. He headed west, landing in Portland.

Now in his 17th year teaching at Cascade, Harrison oversees academic disciplines ranging from history to sociology to economics to geography. The subject areas describe a broad narrative of the human experience, encompassing in equal measure humanity’s triumphs and debacles.

But from Harrison’s perspective, there was something missing: racism. The problem was that no course existed that examined the root causes and characteristics of racism itself.

So as he did in Sierra Leone, Harrison changed things. He created a course called “Race and Racism” and introduced it in 2009. It quickly became one of Cascade’s most popular classes.

“The idea behind the course is for students to find out what racism is, and what it is not. The fact is that we all have racist thinking in our brains, even if we don’t know it,” said Harrison.

By way of explanation, Harrison noted that when people strike up a conversation about race, they inevitably begin to discuss people of color — which, of course, is an incomplete way to frame the topic.

“White is a race as well,” he explained. “That’s not something that people often think about. There’s also — and this is a bit controversial — something called white privilege, and most people don’t think about that as well.

“The very fact that someone has white skin means that there are things that he or she just doesn’t encounter,” Harrison continued. “I remember once when I was in New York City, I went into a store and the proprietor’s assistant followed me around everywhere I went. It’s something that happens to people of color that I think just doesn’t happen to white people.”

Another focus of the course is to help students understand that “racism came into history at a particular time,” Harrison said. While history is replete with stories of one culture proclaiming its alleged superiority over another, racism as we have come to understand it in the modern world is a comparatively new phenomenon.

“Most students who come into the course think that racism has always existed, and that’s just not true,” he explained.

According to Harrison, modern racism — broadly speaking, the philosophy that holds European peoples to be superior to non-Europeans — is a product of the Enlightenment, the intellectual, philosophic and scientific movement that began in Western Europe in the 17th century.

So why, then, in a modern democracy like the U.S., has racism not withered away? Harrison said that while we have made enormous progress toward unlearning past mistakes, racism is a long-entrenched idea that will simply take time to fade away.

“Racism is something that is deeply internalized in people, and sometimes they don’t recognize it,” Harrison said. “My belief is that education will move us forward.”

For more information about PCC’s credit programs and classes, visit www.pcc.edu/programs

About Mr. Harrison

Degrees:
Bachelor’s degree from Hunter College in New York, a master’s degree in history from The City College in New York, a master’s degree in curriculum and administration from Gonzaga University, and a master’s degree in pastoral studies from University of Portland.

Role models:
My mother who pushed me hard and also worked herself up from being a domestic servant to a waitress to a practical nurse to a business owner; Joe Brown, my great uncle who believed in my brother and me and showed me what family was all about. My historical heroes include Frederick Douglass, a self-made man who in his life and personality rebutted the negative stereotypes of people of African descent; Horace Mann, a self-educated crusader for public education and for social justice; and JoAnn Robinson, the hidden figure behind the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Passion for teaching:
This is a place where students bring a tremendous amount of knowledge and are still searching for wisdom and are in the process of formulating or re-formulating their mission in life. I like the spark that I see each day as the clouds are pushed aside and the rays shine on willing faces. Today’s college students will occupy important and powerful positions in the future and I hope to influence how they approach issues in terms of social justice for all.

Favorite quotes:
“The slave who is beaten easiest is beaten most. Resist!”
— Frederick Douglass

“Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.”
— Horace Mann
LEGAL EAGLES

Future paralegals flock to the state’s first American Bar Association-approved program

By Christina Holmes

After a solid 12-year career in human resources, Jane Kim was at a crossroads. She harbored a desire to study law because of the legal aspects of her human resources job and the occasions when she believed she received bad advice from attorneys.

She found out about PCC’s Paralegal Program and enrolled almost immediately.

“This program stretches your intellect, teaches you the language of the law and helps keep you focused,” said Kim, who interns about 12 hours per week at the Multnomah County Courthouse. “I know I’ll be a better support to lawyers because my training has been comprehensive.”

Kim joins about 350 paralegal students fascinated with the law. Many of those enrolled are changing careers or upgrading skills for their current jobs. The ages of students range from late teens, fresh out of high school, to retirees. About half of the students have college degrees.

Each year most of the 40-plus graduates find their way to jobs at private firms, in-house counsels or government agencies where they provide critical and integral assistance to lawyers, corporations, public institutions and other employers. Some eventually attend law school. Still others take their paralegal experience and use it for alternative jobs in advocacy and research.

“The students in this program are very mature learners and I’m grateful they are intelligent, driven and helpful,” said Doug Taylor, a second-year student who hopes to someday practice criminal law and reform incarceration policies. “We push each other to give our best effort.”

Started about 38 years ago, PCC’s Paralegal Program is Oregon’s largest offered through a community college and is highly regarded due to its professional standards and recent American Bar Association seal of approval. Law firms often seek out program graduates.

“The students in this program are very mature learners and I’m grateful they are intelligent, driven and helpful.”

—Doug Taylor

“PCC is recognized as very solid in the legal community,” said program chair Jerry Brask, a civil law attorney for 29 years working in legal aid and family law. “There is a push for the practical, hands-on skills because we want our students to know exactly what will be expected of them when they get a job.”

Students can choose between an associate’s degree or a one-year certificate. Classes cover everything from legal research and library use to litigation in areas like family, consumer and corporate law. All 25 faculty members are attorneys or paralegals.

Another bonus to the paralegal program is its law library. About five years ago Brask learned that local law firms were ready to donate older law books. With the support of administrators, Brask secured a room in Terrell Hall which now holds rows of legal books and journals.

The career outlook for paralegals shows faster than average growth while competition for jobs is expected to continue as many people go into the profession, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Experienced, formally trained paralegals should have the best employment opportunities.

Graduates with an associate’s degree can earn a starting salary of $30,000 which increases with experience. Many students have internships where they make connections within the paralegal community.

“Our goal is to provide the best education for our students. We solicit ongoing input from students, graduates and employers to help make our students productive for their future jobs,” said Brask.
DIGGING INTO THE PAST
PCC Community Education students spend a weekend uncovering ancient history

By Eloise Holland

When Doug Reynolds signed up for PCC Community Education’s Paleontology and Archaeology Weekend, he hoped to discover a piece of the past.

“They kept telling me, ‘If you hit bone with the trowel, you’ll know it from the sound,’” said Reynolds. Sure enough, about fifteen minutes before the end of the day, he heard the distinctive thud.

“The more I dug, the bigger the piece,” he remembered. When he finished, Reynolds had uncovered a fist-sized piece of mandible with two teeth from an ancient bison affectionately named Tatanka (the Lakota word for bison) by students at Woodburn High School, the site of the dig.

Not exactly your typical day for the engineering manager from Southwest Portland. “It was really exciting,” he said.

PCC offers the Paleontology and Archaeology Weekend in partnership with archaeologist Dr. Alison Stenger and the Institute of Archaeological Studies.

“We typically meet in the classroom and discuss the peopling of the Americas, the Ice Age animals that occupied much of Western Oregon and a bit about local site formation processes,” said Stenger. “Students then have an opportunity to work at an actual ancient site and to be involved in laboratory work.”

That’s where the real Indiana Jones stuff comes in. Mark Fitzsimons — who volunteers for IAS as a crew chief and helps instruct PCC students — says it’s discoveries like Reynolds’ that draw students to the classes.

“Ultimately students want to get dirty, and they want to get their hands in the soil. They want to find something,” Fitzsimons said.

For Lorry Christian, a human resources generalist from Tigard, the weekend class offered a rare opportunity to go on an authentic archaeological dig without traveling halfway across the world. Another bonus was getting a tour of the Woodburn High School science lab where teacher Dave Ellingson and his students have displayed the bones of the ancient bison.

“It was so cool to see what they’ve already uncovered. The back leg was at least six feet tall,” said Christian.

Ellingson has taken advantage of the site by incorporating study of the bison into his curricula. With the help of PCC students, experts at IAS, and volunteers, Woodburn students keep adding to their collection and to our knowledge of the region’s history.

At the heart of people’s fascination with the site is the past’s connection to our present. “I learned so much about understanding,” Fitzsimons added. “Archaeology is all about understanding,” Fitzsimons added. “It’s all there in these bits and pieces of things that we find or in the stains in the soil.”

Coming up in August 2011, students will once again have a chance to dig into the past on a Paleontology and Archaeology Weekend, either at the Woodburn site or a site in McMinnville where the remains of an ancient mammoth are being uncovered.

“It was so cool to see what they’ve already uncovered. The back leg was at least six feet tall,” said Christian.

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PCC offers the Paleontology and Archaeology Weekend in partnership with archaeologist Dr. Alison Stenger and the Institute of Archaeological Studies.

“We typically meet in the classroom and discuss the peopling of the Americas, the Ice Age animals that occupied much of Western Oregon and a bit about local site formation processes,” said Stenger. “Students then have an opportunity to work at an actual ancient site and to be involved in laboratory work.”

That’s where the real Indiana Jones stuff comes in. Mark Fitzsimons — who volunteers for IAS as a crew chief and helps instruct PCC students — says it’s discoveries like Reynolds’ that draw students to the classes.

“Ultimately students want to get dirty, and they want to get their hands in the soil. They want to find something,” Fitzsimons said.

For Lorry Christian, a human resources generalist from Tigard, the weekend class offered a rare opportunity to go on an authentic archaeological dig without traveling halfway across the world. Another bonus was getting a tour of the Woodburn High School science lab where teacher Dave Ellingson and his students have displayed the bones of the ancient bison.

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Make YOU the project!

If you can dream it, Community Education’s hundreds of classes can help you achieve it. Go online to pcc.edu/community and get started on your own Project:YOU this summer.

My Project:

Name: Sheryl Stewart

Occupation: Radio Personality at 105.1 The Buzz

My Project: Learn home improvement skills while spending time with my husband.

Class I Took: Hardwood Floors: Installation

And Now: The class was a great date night. When we finish tackling the hardwood floors, we plan to take more home improvement classes together!