Enroll now!
Classes starting
September – December

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non-credit class schedule
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IN THE DARKROOM
Photography class using old school
techniques draws loyal fans
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WRAPPED UP
50th Anniversary
festivities come
to a close
Page 4
At the beginning of PCC’s 50th Anniversary, the college set a goal of performing 50,000 hours of service to thank the community for 50 years of support.

We are proud to announce that we surpassed our goal and contributed 71,841 volunteer hours! Thank you to the PCC students, faculty, staff and supporters who were inspired to volunteer and help our community.

In addition to service hours, PCC-ers gave back to the community by:

- Donating more than **20,000** pounds of books (**40,000** books) to Coffee Creek Correctional Facility
- Packing more than **16,000** meals and **17,000** pounds of rice for individuals in need at the Oregon Food Bank
- Donating nearly **1,025** books and cleaning nearly **1,170** books for Children’s Book Bank
- Creating **1,871** cards and **695** placemats for Loaves & Fishes clients
- Making **222** inspirational cards for lupus patients in support of Molly’s Fund
- Raising **$1,570** for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation “Walk for a Cure” event
- Raising **$10,000** through Students4Giving. Funds were donated to the Good Neighbor Center in Tigard, Jubilee Transition Homes in Beaverton and Saint Child in Hillsboro
“PCC is renowned throughout the nation as the best community college, bar none, with multiple campuses all focused on one thing—student success.”

— Mayor Sam Adams
City of Portland

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Photography by Vern Uyetake, Jerry Hart and Russell Banks
A Historic Year for PCC

After a memorable year of service and celebrations, Portland Community College’s 50th Anniversary celebration came to a close on June 15 with its graduation ceremony at Memorial Coliseum.

When the college kicked off its 50th Anniversary in September 2011, there was a strong focus on serving the community that has supported PCC for five decades. A centerpiece of the anniversary was the 50,000-hour service challenge — the college’s commitment to perform at least 50,000 hours of community service during the school year (see more on page 8).

The theme for the year was “Opportunity — Then. Now. Always.” which celebrated the people who have gotten their start at PCC. Since the college opened in 1961, more than 1.3 million students have enrolled.

Some of the year’s highlights included a public kickoff in Pioneer Courthouse Square, author Wes Moore at the staff in-service, an exhibit at the Oregon History Museum, a commemorative theater production, and the recognition of 50 “Diamond Alumni,” former PCC students who embody the ideals of opportunity, achievement and service.

In May, the college celebrated “Founders’ Week.” May 15 was declared “PCC Day” in Oregon by Governor John Kitzhaber. Founders’ Week also featured the unveiling of the Unity Project sculptures, a rare gathering of the living past PCC presidents, a discussion with author and PCC alumna Rebecca Skloot, and a gala to raise money for student scholarships.
PCC students, alumni, faculty and staff marched with the PCC float through the streets of downtown Portland as part of the Starlight Parade in June.

Alumna Rebecca Skloot returned to PCC to discuss her book, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks.

Fifty “Diamond Alumni,” including Mary Savage (right, with Karen Tarnasky) were honored at a reception for their outstanding professional and personal achievements.

The Oregon Historical Society recognized PCC’s milestone with an exhibit depicting the college’s 50-year history and impact on the state of Oregon.

"PCC is an absolute gem," said U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley at the 50th Anniversary Kickoff in Pioneer Square.

PCC students, alumni, faculty and staff marched with the PCC float through the streets of downtown Portland as part of the Starlight Parade in June.

Alumna Rebecca Skloot returned to PCC to discuss her book, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks.

Business, community and civic leaders united to raise close to $300,000 for the PCC Foundation. The funds will directly benefit student scholarships and success initiatives, including the Future Connect Scholarship Program.

The 1960s-style event featured heartfelt speeches from Future Connect Scholarship recipients, a special performance by singer and PCC instructor Julianne Johnson, and live music from the Swingline Cubs. Kerry Tymchuk, Executive Director of the Oregon Historical Society, served as the Master of Ceremonies.

For more information about the PCC Foundation, call 971-722-4382 or visit www.pcc.edu/foundation

“An Evening for Opportunity” was successful because of the outstanding support of dozens of business and individual sponsors. We acknowledge the top sponsors for the evening:

Bank of America  Diamond Sponsor
Yoshida Family  Titanium Sponsor
Oregon Lottery  Silver Sponsor
Mentor Graphics  Silver Sponsor
NW Natural  Silver Sponsor
PGE  Silver Sponsor
Rask Family Memorial  Silver Sponsor
US Bank  Silver Sponsor
Max & Carol Lyons  Silver Sponsor
There was plenty of Pomp and Circumstance — and a lot of confetti — to celebrate graduates and wind down PCC’s 50th Anniversary.

More than 1,000 grads donned caps and gowns and walked across the stage to shake hands with college leaders during the historic 50th anniversary commencement ceremony at the Memorial Coliseum on June 15. Not everyone took part in the ceremony, and all told, more than 4,200 degrees, certificates and awards were handed out.

In honor of the 50th Anniversary, graduates received commemorative zipper pulls for their graduation gowns. Also featured was the “Diamond Pride” Flags Display with versions of the PCC Diamond — the long-standing symbol in the college logo — interpreted for many of PCC’s academic departments. The flags were designed by students in PCC’s Graphic Design Program.

Congratulations to the Class of 2012!

The graduation ceremony ended on an exciting note as a cannon shot confetti and streamers into the sea of graduates.

Each of this year’s graduates received a commemorative 50th Anniversary zipper pull, along with a confetti shower.

Graduate Ewald Estanis, the student speaker, walks across the stage to receive his diploma.

More than 4,200 degrees, certificates and awards were given to students in the class of 2012.

Congratulations to the Class of 2012!
When PCC issued a challenge of 50,000 community service hours in less than a year as part of the college’s 50th Anniversary, few people doubted it could be done. It would take work but with a vibrant and dedicated college community, the goal seemed to be within reach.

What few people expected was that by the end of the school year, 71,841 hours would be tallied, smashing the 50,000 hour challenge.

The hours came from a multitude of efforts, including large, well-organized and well-executed Days of Service — a total of 12, up from the three typically planned during a school year — which attracted up to 100 people each time. Those days included working at the Oregon Food Bank or cleaning up parks and schools, among other activities.

Many of the hours also came from individuals and on-campus groups who were inspired to serve because of the campaign and found volunteer opportunities to carry out the pledge. A conservative estimate shows that more than 3,230 people took part in the challenge during the year.

What surprised campus leaders the most were the number of people — faculty, staff and students — who frequently volunteer, even before the 50,000 hour idea came about, and who reported their hours as part of the challenge.

“More than 10,000 hours came from students and staff doing what they do for the community by volunteering on a regular basis who took the time to report it to our office,” said Sarah Tillery, head of PCC’s Service-Learning Program. “I would call these people very engaged workers who take time to work in the community.”

It’s been an exciting and busy year for the community service program. Tillery and her staff organized the 50,000-hour service challenge, including the popular service days.

“People liked these days because they knew that they could show up at the scheduled time and someone they trusted would meet them and tell them what to do,” said Tillery. “We call these service days the gateway to service for people who have never volunteered.”

PCC’s volunteerism impressed Emily Gilliland, executive director of Oregon Campus Compact, who watched as PCC administrators, faculty, staff and students stepped up and used their talents to give back.

“PCC is a role model for other public agencies and higher education institutions because it demonstrates that when service is coordinated and focused on community need, the impact not only inspires others to join in, but also moves the needle on community need,” said Gilliland, whose nonprofit promotes civic and community engagement as a core educational approach for student development as citizens, leaders and lifelong learners.

“One group that directly benefited from PCC’s dedicated volunteers was The Children’s Book Bank, which strives to improve the literacy skills of low-income children by giving them books of their own before they reach kindergarten. The organization collects, repairs and packages used books, and makes them available to families in need.

“PCC’s support has had a tremendous impact on our organization and the children that we serve. It takes one hour for us to fully prepare the books we provide to one child,” said Robin Anderson, Children’s Book Bank operations manager. “Due to PCC’s support, we’ve been able to serve classroom upon classroom full of children.”
PCC Program
Degree programs and credit classes

PCC is also your one-stop resource for the following credit programs. Go to www.pcc.edu to learn more.

Transfer Degrees
Associate of Arts, Oregon Transfer
Associate of Science
Associate of Science, Oregon Transfer, Business

Other Degrees and Areas of Study
Oregon Transfer Module
General Studies
High School Completion
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
Adult Education (ABE and GED classes) (Non-credit)

Career and Technical Education
Degrees and Certificates
Alcohol and Drug Counselor*
Apprenticeship
Architectural Design and Drafting
Auto Collision Repair Technology
Automotive Service Technology
Aviation Maintenance Technology
Aviation Science Technology
Bioscience Technology*
Building Construction Technology
Business Administration
  Accounting
  Management
  Marketing
Civil Engineering Technology*
Computer Applications and Office Systems
Computer Information Systems
Criminal Justice
Dealer Service Technology*
Dental Assisting*
Dental Hygiene*
Dental Laboratory Technology*
Diesel Service Technology
Early Education and Family Studies
Electronic Engineering Technology*
Emergency Management
Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic*
Emergency Telecommunicator/911 Dispatcher*
Facilities Maintenance Technology
Fire Protection Technology*
Fitness Technology*
Geographic Information Systems
Gerontology
Graphic Design
Health Information Management*
Interior Design
Landscape Technology
Machine Manufacturing Technology
Management and Supervisory Development
Mechanical Engineering Technology*
Medical Assisting*
Medical Imaging*
Medical Laboratory Technology*
Microelectronic Technology*
Multimedia
Nursing*
Occupational Skills Training
Ophthalmic Medical Technology*
Paralegal*
Professional Music
Radiography*
Sign Language Interpretation*
Veterinary Technology*
Welding Technology

*Program has special enrollment requirements.

Longtime PCC Board Member Harold Williams Dies

By James Hill

Harold Williams, a Portland Community College Board of Director since 1990 and noted community leader, passed away on Sunday, July 1. He was 69.

“Williams was appointed in 1990 to represent Zone 2, which encompasses North Portland and portions of Columbia County. He was elected in 1991 and re-elected in 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011. He was president of contracting firm CH2A Associates and a member of the Black Leadership Conference as well as The Urban League. A past chair of the Coalition of Black Men, Williams served on the board of the Oregon Community College Association. He lived in Northeast Portland.

Williams was a long record of service to the community and extensive background in civil rights, affirmative action, education and justice. His most significant contribution to PCC was his work in bringing community college services to all parts of the college district. When PCC’s first bond measure passed in 1992, he led the effort to expand the PCC campus in North Portland so that students in that poor area of town could enroll in courses they needed to complete an associate’s degree without traveling to other PCC locations. When the college passed another bond measure in 2000, he was the driving force behind a major expansion of college services in another under-served part of the community. And Williams was instrumental in developing a college policy that ensured college construction contracts would meet minority-contracting goals.

In addition, Williams was known for his promotion of alternative programs for at-risk students. He was successful in expanding classroom space for mentorship programs for students of all ages. He created the “Success Academy,” which brought spiritual and cultural leaders together to assist PCC students who have been involved with the juvenile justice system.

For all of his work at PCC, Williams was selected for the Association of Community College Trustees Pacific Region Trustee Leadership Award in 2010.
Randy Leonard’s moment of “this is what it means to be a grown-up” came back in September 1969 when he was in Basic Training with the Marine Corps. His next stop after sunny San Diego — the bloody battle fields of Vietnam and everything that went along with war.

He had made the decision on his own to leave high school and join the Marines. But at 17, with torn ligaments in his ankle and a medical discharge all but certain, he decided to return home to Portland and start over.

“That was such a jarring experience,” Leonard recalls.

He went back to Grant High School with a renewed effort to attend class, participate in discussions, take tests and graduate within a year. That was a far different picture from his previous school experience during which he was enrolled but didn’t exactly engage. It wasn’t that he was lazy — in fact, he ran his own janitorial and maintenance business and worked long hours cleaning toilets and doing jobs no one else wanted — but he wasn’t focused on school.

“I had such little confidence back then that I was afraid to stand in front of a class and speak,” said Leonard, who’s served as a Portland City Commissioner for the last 10 years.

He kept busy during his senior year making up lost assignments and completing homework. “I appreciated everything that I had and I viewed the world differently,” he said.

After graduating, he called Portland State University to see what he needed to apply. The answer: With his grades, don’t bother.

He quickly turned to Portland Community College. By September 1970 he was taking classes at the Sylvania Campus and loving every minute of it.

“I thought it was pretty cool,” Leonard said. “There was a brand new radio station and a café. I enjoyed all of my classes because I wanted to be there. The college and the way it was set up definitely fit my personality.”

He lived on his own in an apartment and would hop on his motorcycle and cruise up Interstate 5 in the rain to make it to his 7 a.m. class. He excelled in English, history and, not surprising, political science. He thought law school was in his future.

“It was a period of time that was the happiest of my life,” said Leonard, who turned 60 last summer. “PCC allowed me to make up for being a poor student and allowed me to be proud of myself.”

The native Portlander eventually transferred to PSU where he was involved with student government and Greek life and made the Dean’s List.

By 1976, he was managing former State Rep. Ed Lindquist’s campaign. A year later, he applied to the Portland Fire Bureau. He studied for the entrance exams for months, spending days in the library, memorizing information. “I was obsessed with getting hired,” he said.

He went on to a 25-year career with the fire bureau, both as a firefighter and union president.

In 2013, Leonard begins an unknown but hopefully happy period as he leaves his job as Portland City Commissioner. He ends a 20-year stint as an elected official, first as a state representative followed by commissioner.

As for what lies ahead, the only thing Leonard knows for sure is that his days will include plenty of time with his grandson, Cole, who lives in Southwest Washington and plays a number of sports.

His advice for college students, especially those who may be in the same situation as the younger Leonard: Go to college. Don’t make excuses about not being able to afford it because scholarships and financial aid are available.
It was a blast from the past for the PCC community during Founders' Week in May.

For the first time ever, all five living past presidents mingled with staff, faculty and students at the Presidents' Picnic at the Rock Creek Campus Event Center. The presidents gathered with host, District President Preston Pulliams, to cut the ribbon on the PCC Unity Project — four large-scale sculptures commissioned for the college’s anniversary, that will be given to PCC’s four main campuses. Each president etched his name on a plate of glass that will be inserted into the sculptures.

The only president not present was founding father Amo DeBernardis who passed away in 2010.

JOHN ANTHONY
Served 1980 – 1985
Anthony was known for involving faculty in decisions, promoting lifelong learning, developing the centers into comprehensive campuses and establishing the PCC Foundation and a nationally acclaimed literacy program. Not bad for a man who had to follow PCC’s popular and dynamic founding president.

“Trying to fill the shoes of Dr. DeBernardis was absolutely impossible and I remember Jim Van Dyke, Roy Lindsay and Ray Smith came in at the time and said to me, ‘Don’t try to fill his shoes, just go your own way,’ and that’s basically what we tried to do,” Anthony recalled. “What I enjoyed was working with the people.”

JIM VAN DYKE
Served 1985 – 1986
Van Dyke was named interim president after working as a faculty member and dean since 1965. He was instrumental in getting voters to approve a higher tax base for the college through awareness campaigns. Van Dyke remembered that Anthony tried to recruit him to become Sylvania Campus Dean but he turned him down.

“Three weeks later he came back again and said, ‘I’m on my way out of town and when I get back you are being named Dean of Sylvania,’” Van Dyke remembered. “I wasn’t smart enough at that time to realize what was happening; he resigned shortly thereafter and the board appointed me as the interim president.”
In a rare appearance, five past presidents gather and recall memories from the institution they helped lead

By James Hill

**DAN MORAIRTY**
Served 1986 – 2001
Moriarty dealt with unprecedented growth and he managed a series of bond programs that helped round off the facilities at the main campuses. He also remembered the challenges of outfitting workers with costly computers ($4,000 per staffer).

“I remember getting a note from a faculty member who asked, ‘How can I access the Internet?’” he said. “And I had this recollection there was a dedicated computer in the library. So I was able to tell that faculty member, being very responsive as a president, that he should get up from his desk in his office and walk across the campus and find that computer and he then could get into the Internet.”

**JESS CARREON**
Served 2001 – 2003
Carreon came aboard during a recession and steered PCC through tough budget decisions. He oversaw the buildout from the $144 million bond measure in 2000.

“I enjoyed the whole time here even with the fiscal situation. What wasn’t stressful was that everybody was trying to do what they possibly could to serve our students and their community,” Carreon said. “My first introduction to PCC came right after 9/11. I was extremely upset because our nation was hit directly right in the heart. And what I found out, is that members of the college community, stepped up to the plate. I was so impressed.”

**JERRY BERGER**
Served 2003 – 2004
Berger was tapped as interim president for a year in between Carreon and Pulliam. He had years of experience in the role as longtime president of Chemeketa Community College in Salem. He stepped back into college administration two years after retiring to pinch hit for PCC.

“Known for his down home humor, Berger talked about his hurried hiring after Carreon moved to Dallas.

“What we have at PCC is dedicated staff who put students first,” Berger added. “Community college people’s lifeblood is ‘How do you help students who come for something?’ PCC administration, staff and faculty had that value of putting students first.”
As her senior year at Reynolds High School came to an end in June 2011, Kristine Delos Reyes thought her future involved a plane ride back to the Philippines where she lived until four years ago. She came to Portland in 2008, her first time in the U.S., to live with her mom and stepdad and attend school.

But when a Reynolds school counselor told her about a unique program aimed at first-generation college students, she knew her future was about to change.

“I didn’t think much about going to college because I knew I would have to take out loans to pay for it,” she recalled. “Luckily my parents encouraged me to enroll at PCC. Now I’m so happy I’m here.”

Reyes is one of about 150 students who enrolled the first year of the Future Connect pilot program spearheaded by PCC, the City of Portland and the community. It targets low-income students that have shown promise for succeeding in college, but face barriers to success. Future Connect opens the door to college, offering a scholarship based on need and one-on-one support from a college success coach. Without Future Connect, many of these students wouldn’t have a shot at higher education.

Seventy-five percent of the Future Connect class are students of color and 95 percent are the first in their families to go to college.

This spring, a second cohort of 200 student scholars were welcomed, building on the success of the first year.

Portland Mayor Sam Adams stressed the importance of higher education, noting that every one percent of students who earn an associate or bachelor’s degree translates into $1.6 billion for the local economy over time.

“We continue to grow and grow this effort every year,” said Adams. “This is our second year of actually being able to award scholarships and we have a waiting list. With more local youth successfully going on and getting a college degree or advanced skills training, this city will be more successful and this county and region will be more successful as well.”

Adams, PCC District President Preston Pulliams and Portland State University President Wim Wiewel recently signed an agreement establishing a partnership between PSU and Future Connect scholars, which will allow them to continue on to earn bachelor’s degrees at Portland State.

Donations to the PCC Foundation fund Future Connect scholarships. The City of Portland doubles these gifts as part of a matching challenge, up to $380,000 each year.

In May, PCC raised nearly $300,000 at the 50th Anniversary Gala where donors united to benefit student scholarships.

“When these funds will play a critical role in opening the door to college for hundreds of students who otherwise would not have the opportunity,” said Pulliams. “There is simply no better way to celebrate the 50-year legacy of PCC than that.”

That funding will allow Reyes and other students to continue in the program that helps chart a path for their academic futures and subsequent careers. Students are given not only financial support but strong academic counseling on how to navigate obstacles — both in the classroom and outside — that challenge college coeds.

“The teachers and our coaches are always willing to help us and encourage us,” said Reyes, who lives in Gresham. “I know they will be there for me.”

When Reyes, 19, applied for other scholarships, a Future Connect college success coach offered tips on how to improve her résumé. She was thrilled that a professional took time to work with her.

With her sights set on a nursing career, Reyes is taking a heavy load of science classes in the fall.

“What I really want to do is be a pediatric nurse and travel to other countries and help kids. I’d like to travel on missions. I don’t need to make a lot of money but I do want to help others,” she said.
Portland Community College is now home to one of the largest solar arrays in the state. The site, complete with sheep to help maintain the grass around the ground-mounted panels, is the newest addition to the Rock Creek Campus in Washington County.

The college introduced the 35,000-square-foot, 2,000-panel solar array in May. The project was made possible by dollars from the 2008 bond measure and is expected to produce 10 million kilowatt hours during the next 20 years.

Margi Hoffman, Governor John Kitzhaber’s energy policy advisor, said the solar array reflects smart business by using energy efficiency, which she noted is the cheapest way to meet energy demand. She added the array will provide PCC with more stability in its energy bills and the investment will help create jobs.

“On behalf of the Governor I want to commend PCC for working diligently to transition their buildings to a clean energy future,” she said. “They are working to find ways to power their buildings through onsite renewable energy generation.”

The 500-kilowatt array is a partnership between PCC, SolarCity, the Oregon Department of Energy and The Energy Trust of Oregon. SolarWorld in Hillsboro produced the solar panels used in the array. State Representative Jules Bailey, co-chair of the Energy, Environment and Water Committee in the House, applauded the partnership.

“PCC has made an investment in our future by making an investment in clean power that meets our energy security goals, meets our national security goals and meets our job security goals,” he said.

The array will be owned, operated and maintained by SolarCity, and sheep from the school’s farm will help keep weeds away from the panels by grazing around and under it. The college will have the option to purchase the array after 20 years.

“PCC has truly walked the talk when it comes to buying local and supporting local manufacturing. We are grateful for your leadership.”

— Gordon Brinser
President, SolarWorld

Rule said Rock Creek Campus staff and faculty have given tours to school children, who can see how much carbon has been saved and how much energy is being produced at meter stations by the array.

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The Oregon Community Foundation and Intel Corp., two major benefactors to student scholarships, were recently honored as the 2012 recipients of the Portland Community College Patron Awards.

The awards, an annual college honor given by the PCC Board of Directors, go to a person or organization that has made a significant contribution to ensure student access to education. The awards were presented during the PCC Foundation’s 50th Anniversary Gala in May.

Intel Corporation
For the PCC Microelectronics Technology Program, Intel’s support is vital. Intel has contributed more than $2.5 million to the program to train the next generation of workers in Oregon’s semiconductor industry. Intel has also funded the Washington County Scholarship Program, which has awarded more than $400,000 to numerous microelectronics students and included paid work-study positions at Intel as clean room technicians.

In 2011, Intel hired nearly 100 percent of PCC graduates from the Microelectronics Program and 17 of 25 students in the Electronic Engineering and Civil Engineering Technology Programs.

“Inel invests in the community so that our workforce is strengthened, our citizens achieve family-wage jobs and everyone prospers,” said PCC District President Preston Pulliams.

In addition, Intel employees and retirees reported 285,712 volunteer hours at non-profits and schools in 2011. Intel employees also made gifts to the PCC Foundation, which Intel matched, and Intel executives and retirees have served on the PCC College and PCC Foundation Board of Directors.

Jill Eiland, Intel’s Corporate Affairs Manager for the Northwest Region, accepted the award on behalf of the company.

Oregon Community Foundation
Since 1973, The Oregon Community Foundation has pursued a mission to improve life in Oregon and promote effective philanthropy. Its commitment to working with individuals, families, businesses and organizations to create charitable funds that support community causes is powerful and has helped OCF develop a permanent endowment with more than $1 billion in assets. In 2011, more than $86 million in grants and scholarships were awarded.

Increasing access to higher education and training is one of OCF’s highest priorities. It has contributed close to $900,000 to the PCC Foundation over the years — creating scholarship and training opportunities for more than 300 students. OCF named charitable funds provide scholarship awards in such programs as Nursing, Machine Manufacturing Technology and Vocational Training, Veterinary Technology, and Alcohol and Eating Disorder Counseling.

During the past three years, the OCF Joseph E. Weston Public Foundation has provided scholarship awards to displaced older students seeking career training and new job skills who are attending PCC. The Betty Gray Early Childhood Endowment Fund has provided more than $163,000 for scholarships supporting PCC students pursuing professional careers in early childhood care and education. Statewide, the childhood endowment fund has provided $1.35 million for community college early childhood education students.

“The Oregon Community Foundation, through its longtime investments in all stages of the education continuum, exemplifies the PCC vision,” Pulliams added.

Eric Parsons, chair of the OCF Board of Directors, accepted the award on behalf of the non-profit.

For more information about the PCC Foundation or to donate, visit www.pcc.edu/foundation or call 971-722-4382.

PCC Board Chair Jim Harper (left) presents the Patron Award to Jill Eiland, NW Region Corporate Affairs Manager of Intel, and Eric Parsons, Board Chair of the Oregon Community Foundation.
Sign up for Mike Riches’ photography class and it’s a step back in time as you learn how to load 35 mm film, print images using developer and watch as pictures slowly appear on photo paper in a darkroom.

In a world dominated by digital photography, Photoshop programs and software to make anyone look good, Riches’ darkroom photography classes rely heavily on vintage techniques, offering traditional approaches to making pictures.

PCC’s Southeast Center has one of Portland’s best darkrooms, according to loyal students. And in an era where it’s hard to find a functioning darkroom, many are thrilled to see that PCC’s space is open and thriving.

“I like documenting life with black and white photography,” said Stephanie Kreutter, a longtime student who favors old school photography and whose pictures have been featured in galleries in Portland and New York. “Plus Mike is a great instructor because he’s experienced, humble and knowledgeable.”

When the Southeast Center was built, Riches, a photographer with five decades of experience, had the chance to help design the darkroom. As the son of a photographer who spent years shooting portraits, weddings, landscape, environmental scenes, head shots for professionals and just about everything in between, he was elated.

Initially Riches sat down with a legal-sized yellow pad and sketched out the 20-foot by 30-foot room, a space he knows well. Then he worked closely with the architect and engineer to make his ideas come to fruition.

“There is a group of people who pursue darkroom photography as an art form. I don’t think anything could kill off digital but there will always be film. It’s similar to why some people like vinyl records when songs now can be downloaded onto their phones,” said Riches, who’s been teaching at PCC for 25 years. “This art form takes you back in time.”

Before the Southeast Center darkroom was set up, students used a nearby high school facility that was perfect for teens but too small for adults. They had to haul in a lot of equipment each night. They managed and waited for the new room to open. Now the only darkroom in the entire PCC district is at Southeast Center.

PCC darkroom photography students show up several times a week to print photos, learn shooting techniques and critique each other’s work. It’s a tight-knit group that provides honest feedback.

Kreutter ended up with well-built but older 35 mm cameras — one of her Nikon cameras looks like a lethal weapon, Riches quips — and other equipment thanks to her dad, a photo hobbyist. Now she loves photos of people going about their normal daily routines. She’s also fond of shooting interesting architecture and constantly comes up with different angles to get offbeat images.

“This is a real craft and it takes years to learn,” said Kreutter, whose main job is teaching Spanish to adults and children but shoots photos whenever she’s not working. “This is not a hobby where there are quick fixes.”

For more information about the Darkroom Photography class or other Community Education classes, turn to page 18 or visit www.pcc.edu/community
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 fall.

Our Project:

Names: Supriya and Sameer Kapur

Occupation: High School Students

Our Project: Master the "rules of the road" and become safe drivers.

Class We Took: Driver Education: Teen

And Now: After we get our drivers licenses, we're hitting the road! That is, if our mom lets us borrow the car. 😊