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Back to Class

● Winter term begins January 8
  Register now! There are thousands of credit and non-credit classes available at hundreds of sites across the Portland metro area. For information about registration, visit pcc.edu.

Upcoming Events

● Winter Powwow January 20
  Join PCC for WACIP, a free community celebration of Native American culture and tradition, featuring drumming, dancing, food and craft vendors, and family fun! Visit pcc.edu/powwow for details.

● Cascade African Film Festival. Feb 2 – March 3, 2018
  Save the date for the 27th anniversary of the Cascade Festival of African Films, Thursday-Sundays. Visit africanfilmfestival.org for complete schedule and list of films.

Shared on Social Media

@pccselearninggarden
  “Wow! You saw the amazing beautiful paper flower installation in the Mt Scott building?! #pccSEblooms”

@jasTeramcbire
  “Great running into you on campus @ PrezMitsui! Our @PortlandCC Southeast Student Leadership team is excited to work with you this year!”

@portlandcc
  “Welcome new students to campus this week! Whether you’re new to PCC or back for another term, we’re glad you’re here!!”

@pccselearninggarden
  “Did you know Calendula is an edible flower that you can put in salads for a pop of summer color? Come to the farmstand to find it, and more!”

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The comics drawing classroom experience through the mind of instructor Ryan Alexander-Tanner.

and Community Education Program teacher Ryan Alexander-Tanner wants people to know that comics aren’t a style, they’re a medium.

“There’s no such thing as a ‘comic book style.’ Comics can be presented in any style you can imagine. You can draw comics with a pencil or do comics on the web,” he said. “That’s interesting to me, and I think what’s kept me in it.”

In his decade-long professional career, Alexander-Tanner has drawn everything from an adaptation of activist Bill Ayers’ “To Teach” book on progressive education to author bios for the Portland Mercury to perhaps his most widely recognizable art comes up, to me the question is does it feel important? I’ve done well with projects with a social justice bent because those are the projects I want to do.”

With the women’s issues comics, he especially appreciates how they’re creating a space for others to share their experiences. It’s this accessibility that comics offer that Alexander-Tanner finds appealing.

“Comics are sort of an old-school medium now. They were the hip new storytelling fad in the 1930’s,” he said. “But it’s also true that the visual vocabulary of comics has been woven into our everyday intake of media. Sound bites presented with images are ubiquitous, so there are opportunities for comics now that were never before possible.”

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Ian Williams with the 2017 Diamond Alumni Award

IAN WILLIAMS.
founder and self-proclaimed “hypobarista”
at the sneaker-themed Deadstock Coffee,
doesn’t like coffee.

“I’m more about connecting the people than I am about the coffee or the shoes,” he said. “Those just happen to be the vehicles that bring the people in.”

Located in Chinatown in downtown Portland, Deadstock Coffee is the only coffee shop of its kind that exists in the world. From sneaker lattes art to occasional sketchbooks where people can draw sneaker designs, Deadstock is a haven for footwear fans and those who work in the industry. The name means “unworn,” a term any sneakerhead will know.

“Deadstock is a pulse in the sneaker community,” Williams said. “Out here in Portland we’re actually the ones creating the products. I wanted to create a place where those people could get together, hang out, talk, chill, learn.”

For his commitment to building community, PCC selected Ian Williams as a winner of the 2017 Diamond Alumni Awards. The annual awards program recognizes exceptional PCC alumni who give back through their leadership, service and creative excellence.

Even if you aren’t aware that Nike only releases Jordans on Saturdays, Williams still wants you to come in and be a part of what’s going on. It’s a tiny space, but always full of people that Williams is making feel welcome as he’s making signature “Lullamond Palmers” – whether it be for a vendor from Street Roots or his friend Dwayne Edwards, founder of the sneaker design academy Penske.

While at PCC, Williams worked as a car lot attendant. Every paycheck would go to shoes. After a while it didn’t make any sense: Why didn’t he just find an opportunity where he was getting paid to work around shoes? He got a job at the Nike employee store, and then at Nike-ML where they manufacture shoes.

At Nike, he realized that he needed to be more deeply embedded in the company if he wanted to move forward. So he took a janitor position. His plan was to make friends first, and maybe one day somebody would do him a favor.

“I was in everybody’s face every single day, hoping somebody would discover me. I thought it would only take a couple of months,” he said. “But it ended up taking three years.”

Eventually he met the right people, and Williams got to design his own low top: the ‘Wet Floor’ Dunk. He transitioned to footwear development. It was a perfect fit; as a kid, he was the one opening the box trying to find the shoes without the glue stains. Now he was the developer making sure it didn’t happen.

Life was good at Nike, but Williams wanted more. The sneaker industry had changed; everything was digital. Instead of lining up on the sneaker hunt. When his family moved to Oregon in 1996, his obsession continued, and he was always buying shoes with whatever odd jobs he had.

When he wanted to open Deadstock, Williams knew about shoes, but needed to learn about coffee. Dapper & Wise helped him get started. Stephen Green, one of Portland’s most influential small business advocates whom Williams met while playing basketball at Nike, was also instrumental. Williams makes sure his gratitude for community is on display.

“ ‘If you don’t have people,’ he said, ‘you can’t do anything.”

GAINING TRACTION
After graduating high school in Hillsboro, Williams detailed and sold cars for a few months before enrolling at PCC.

“I was doing these odd jobs and thought, ‘Why am I doing this when I should be setting myself up for the future?’ People always say, ‘If you’re going to invest in something, invest in yourself,’” he said. “That’s why I went to PCC, so I could begin to invest in me.”

For his tuition out of pocket, Williams wrote his first business plan at PCC for a skate shop. The class was also his first real experience with business conflict resolution, a skill he still utilizes.

“I left Nike because I wanted my community back,” he said. “And the best way to bring the community back was to create a community space.”

NOT JUST A SOLE PURPOSE
Williams’ life story is written on the wall in the bathroom at Deadstock. Thick graphic symbols detail his journey so far: a heart for Virginia, Oregon trees, a snowboard because he loves the mountains, his favorite Jordan 16, his mother’s initials, the number three in honor of Iverson, coffee beans, and more.

“Your boy’s a dreamer. I don’t know what I want to do next,” he said. “But I know I want to do everything.”

What he also knows is that he’s big on education. Right now Williams is a mentor at Penske, where he gives engineering advice to student designers. With Deadstock, he’s still trying to figure out how they can be more involved in educational initiatives.

He talks about wanting to start a charity for kids, combining access to footwear and education. Currently, he supports the homeless community. For Deadstock’s one year anniversary last year, they hosted a shoe drive for the people who walk past the shop each day.

Williams will be the first to tell you that he doesn’t think he’s anyone special. In his opinion, he’s a “regular dude” who likes ice cream and sometimes playing mini-golf with friends. One thing’s for sure: for him, community is everything.

“I just like doing stuff with my friends. My friends happen to being doing cool stuff. And if you want to come in and do some cool stuff, too, come on in,” he said. “I welcome everybody.”

To learn more about PCC’s Diamond Alumni Awards, visit pcc.edu/diamond.
This fall, through the Oregon Immigrant and Refugee Funders Collaborative, Meyer Memorial Trust awarded Portland Community College Foundation a $50,000 grant to help launch the DREAM Center within the Multicultural Center at the Rock Creek Campus.

The new center, the first of its kind at any Oregon community college or university, will provide outreach, education, advocacy and community resources, bilingual materials, and funding for urgent and emergency services for undocumented and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA) students and their families.

For five years, DACA has given nearly 800,000 young Americans called “DREAMers,” who were brought to the United States as children, the legal protections they need to work and study in the United States despite the immigration status of their parents. The new center, which the students have been asking for the past few years, will be instrumental in serving greater Washington County.

But recent policy changes imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump that threatened DACA have accelerated the need for the DREAM Center and the services it would provide.

“The Administration’s actions have triggered unprecedented challenges for our undocumented students,” said Liliana Luna, Rock Creek Campus Multicultural Center coordinator who led the effort. “At PCC, we recognize that DREAMer students face unique barriers that require additional mental, emotional and financial support. The new DREAM Center will focus on the empowerment, support and retention of DREAMers and their families.”

Last December, the college’s Board of Directors declared PCC a “sanctuary college,” to aid and protect undocumented students. In announcing the designation, President Mark Mitsui emphasized concerns about the impact of potential changes in federal immigration policy on PCC’s undocumented students. To address such urgent concerns, the Rock Creek Multicultural Center worked with college leadership to develop a DREAM Center and base it on successful models and best practices from the U.S. Department of Education’s “Resource Guide on Supporting Undocumented Youth in Postsecondary Settings.”

“The PCC Board of Directors believes in our DREAMers,” said PCC Board Chair Kali Thorne Ladd. “Community colleges are open-access institutions whose mission is to educate and empower students to achieve their academic and career goals. DACA is an important asset that facilitates this mission, providing stability and economic opportunity.”

The new PCC DREAM Center plans to serve 20 families and 20 students per academic term through the college’s community resource hub. It will have legal services, assist in facilitating and processing initial DACA applications and renewal applications, provide workshops on student support and college navigation resources, and conduct academic/career advising sessions. In addition, the center will partner with local community organizations Adelante Mujeres, the Hillsboro School District, Momentum Alliance, Centro Cultural, and the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.

“Many of these organizations are well established within the community as sources of support and empowerment for DACA and undocumented youth,” said Luna, a 26-year-old DACA recipient herself and part-time graduate student at Portland State University. “Partnering with these organizations on outreach and promotion will help students and their families become aware of the proposed DREAM Center services more quickly and effectively.”

To find out more about PCC’s resources for undocumented and DACA students, please visit: https://www.pcc.edu/resources/undocumented-students.
A big “thank you” goes out to everyone who dedicated their time to educate the public on the PCC Bond Measure. The effort was huge.

To inform the community that PCC had a bond measure, college staff posted 15 informational billboards, created radio and television ads, printed a special information section in Pamplin Media newspapers, sent an information mailer to 521,000 homes in the college’s district, arranged for PCC leaders to speak at six neighborhood organizations, hosted more than 10 internal and external community forums, performed hours of phone banking and registered more than 2,300 students for the November election.

The media was also on board with PCC’s bond. The Oregonian endorsed the measure on October 18, along with Willamette Week and the NW Labor Council. College leadership joined the effort too, writing op-eds that appeared in local publications such as the Lake Oswego Review (Board Director Denise Frisbee), The Portland Observer (Board Chair Kali Thorne Ladd) and the Portland Business Journal (PCC President Mark Mitsui and former Board Director Ken Madden).

In addition, news coverage about PCC’s campaign included highlights about how board members, such as Deanna Palm, got out into the community to talk about the measure. The Skanner showcased the expansiveness of the work that would be done; The Tigard Tualatin Times connected the bond to student success; and others showcased how bond work could open more doors for students in the community.

All of the efforts worked in concert to help engage the public and increase understanding of the critical importance of having a strong Portland Community College.

“Our community has worked hard to achieve stabilization and lasting inclusion,” said Michael DiMarco, the district manager for the Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative with Prosper Portland. “Employment and education are fundamental to those goals. The opportunity to grow the resources available and to expand PCC’s programming through this bond is invaluable to our community.”

The bond information campaign also gave PCC leadership an opportunity to discuss future college priorities. Throughout October, PCC President Mark Mitsui and Executive Vice President Sylvia Kelley visited each campus and many of the college’s centers to highlight initiatives and listen to feedback about PCC’s most important issues. They talked about how the college can foster greater accessibility and equitable student success, through long-term visioning for PCC’s facilities and the 2017 bond measure.

Mitsui described how the bond would improve workforce training programs, like modernizing the college’s workforce training center in Northeast Portland and providing updated equipment and technology for programs; expand Health Professions & STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) by renovating the existing Health Technology building and developing new interactive training spaces for healthcare professions programs; meet needs for safety, security, building longevity and disability access; and extend the lifespan of PCC facilities through upgrades and repairs.

“The 2017 bond is about workforce development, current space utilization and investing in needed upgrades,” said Linda Degman, PCC’s Bond Program director. “The college both supports and belongs to the community. We have a responsibility to maintain PCC’s health and longevity so that we’re able to deliver equitable student success, educate our future workforce, and contribute to Oregon’s economic vigor and long term prosperity.”

PCC is grateful to community members at all vantages who took part in getting the word out.

“I just believe that the atmosphere and the environment where you work in and learn in is just as important as the tools that you’re receiving,” said Tyree Montgomery, an employee and former student at the Portland Metro Workforce Training Center. “So I see that the bond could totally bring a new face to the buildings, the community, and the students.”
A new report by Education Northwest shows that PCC’s comprehensive scholarship program called “Future Connect” is having a positive impact on completion rates for first-generation and low-income college students. In particular, this evaluation demonstrates how Future Connect improves first-year grade-point averages and credits earned, improves persistence to the second year of college, as well as increases three-year completion and transfer rates by 11 percent.

And, students in the program love it — approximately 90 percent said the program helps them accomplish their career goals, and has changed their lives.

Launched in 2011, Future Connect targets low-income and first-generation high school students within school districts located in Multnomah County, Hillsboro, and Beaverton. The program focuses on eliminating barriers to attending college by way of ongoing support throughout a student’s time at PCC. Future Connect uses scholarships, career guidance and personal advising to help students complete their degree and move on to four-year universities and colleges.

“At first, I thought going to PCC was not a good idea because I wanted to go straight to a four-year university like other students I know,” said Beaverton resident Leslie Gonzalez Vasquez, who is studying to be a nurse. “Looking back now, I am thankful to have come to PCC because of the guidance and support of Future Connect. It has helped throughout my transition to college by having a coach to help me with the obstacles I encountered.”

Future Connect addresses a critical need. First-generation and low-income college students face financial, social, informational and academic barriers to college completion because of the high cost of postsecondary education, the complexity of navigating college life, misalignment between high school and college academic expectations, and a general lack of guidance and information. The program, which has served 1,631 students between fall 2011 and fall 2016, aims to build a sense of community through peer mentors and coaches who provide advice and goals.

“Future Connect works hard to provide a sense of belonging for students at our institution,” said Josh Laurie, Future Connect manager. “We do this through our coaches’ connection to students and through our ability to adapt, as a program, to student needs. Student feedback, gained from this evaluation, highlights the importance of these two approaches.”

The college’s proven track record of bolstering equitable student success is getting a boost in other areas, as well. PCC has joined Achieving the Dream, a comprehensive, national reform movement focused on student success. The network of higher ed institutions, coaches and advisors, state policy teams, investors and partners are helping more than four million community college students across the country to better their chances of greater economic opportunity through education and to experience equitable success as part of that journey.

For PCC President Mark Mitsui, Future Connect ties nicely into this effort.

“We want to help our students not only get here, but to succeed once they’ve arrived,” Mitsui said. “We have rededicated ourselves to creating opportunity and equitable student success to change the trajectory of our students’ lives.”

Future Connect has been shown to speed up that trajectory. The program has increased the number of first-year credits students earn by 12, which represents an additional whole term of credits for a full-time student. Early credit momentum is one of the key predictors for increasing the likelihood of graduation.

The Education Northwest evaluation concluded that: “Providing long-term financial and advising support that addresses multiple barriers to college access and success may be the key to substantially improving completion rates for low-income, first-generation, and other underrepresented college students…Continued funding and research are both essential to supporting the improvement, sustainability, growth, and replication of Future Connect and similar programs across the country.”

You can support Future Connect scholarships through the PCC Foundation. Visit pcc.edu/future-connect to learn more. 

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

91% of Future Connect students returned for a second term after their first term at PCC, and among students who started in fall term, 76% persisted to the following fall term.

On average, Future Connect students have earned a 2.5 GPA and 27 credits in their first year.

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Sadé Mitchell is a former foster youth and aspiring social worker. This past year, she received a PCC scholarship with the help of Anne Frey, program director of PCC’s Education Abroad Program, to study in Lima, Peru, as part of an Intercultural Communication class. Sadé has completed her coursework at PCC and has now transferred to Portland State University where she will continue her studies in pursuit of her dream.

Students in PCC’s Education Abroad Program visited Machu Picchu in Peru this summer as part of their studies. The college is proud to offer a variety of travel options to low-income and first-generation college students, many of whom would not otherwise have the opportunity to travel if not for a study abroad program.

PCC dental hygienists prepared for the 2017 Total Solar Eclipse by posing for a photo in their scrubs and protective eyewear!

Scholarships through the PCC Foundation open pathways to the world

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown visited the Southeast Campus to ceremonially sign House Bill 2017—a $5.3 billion transportation funding legislation that will start a 10-year investment in roads, rail, bridges, and ports. Future mass transit building work along 82nd Avenue will increase access to the campus, located on 82nd Ave and SE Division.

The US Green Buildings Council and Second Nature have named Portland Community College winner of the 2017 Climate Leadership Award! This national award is the highest honor for sustainability leadership in higher education among two-year colleges.

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Oregon Gov. Kate Brown (far right) with, (left to right) PCC Board member Michael Sonnleitner, Southeast Campus President Jessica Howard, and President Mark Mitsui.
PCC Welcomes New Panthers to College

This fall, as hundreds of new students began their journeys as PCC Panthers, the college community came together to make the first week of class something to remember. At each of PCC’s four campuses, faculty and staff rolled out the “turquoise carpet” and greeted students with new stringed backpacks, student success guides, panther-paw cookies – and lots of encouragement.

To prepare for the big day, instructors and staff wrote more than 2,000 personal letters to students to offer words of congratulations in beginning a college degree, and to share their commitments to help offer support along the way.

Students were asked to make a commitment too. As new students visited welcome stations, they were invited to sign a pledge to commit to completing their degrees or certificates. Adding their mark was an opportunity to make a promise to themselves to attend class, strive for good grades, check in with instructors and their communities, and to make education a priority.

“Research shows that helping to set intentions from day one increases the likelihood of persevering in college,” said Jennifer Boehmer, PCC Strategic Communications Director. “Welcome Week is a way for the college community as a whole to set intentions – it’s a symbolic time of the year for students and staff to pledge to work together to overcome barriers and pave the way for equitable student success.”

Connect with PCC on social media and share your #PCCPride memories and experiences of being a college student with today’s PCC Panthers! ☺
My Project:
“Open an art gallery that highlights marginalized voices.”
— Mercedes Orozco, owner of UNA Gallery and a student in the PCC Community Education class, “Exploring Contemporary Art in Portland Galleries” (Page 18).

Make YOU the project!
If you can dream it PCC Community Ed’s hundreds of classes can help you achieve it. Go online to pcc.edu/communityed and get started on your own Project: YOU this winter.