

P O R T L A N D C O M M U N I T Y C O L L E G E

# COMMUNITIES

SPRING 2022



## The Final Chapter

**Retiring President Mark Mitsui  
closes the book on his PCC tenure  
with a long list of accomplishments.**

see page 4

### PCC Community Ed

**Classes held remotely  
and in person**

March – June (see pages 7 – 52)

**Registration opens**

March 9



**Portland  
Community  
College**

# In-person options are back!

Find personal enrichment Community Ed classes in your neighborhood and across the Portland metro area. Dozens of classes will be held in person this spring, in addition to the hundreds of online classes we offer.



Learn more on pages 7–52 and online at  
**PCC.EDU/COMMUNITYED**



**PCC Community Ed**

# Beam Us Up

On a brisk and sunny February afternoon in 2015, Portland Community College and partners came together for a most unusual event – a beam signing.

The unique community event at the Rock Creek Campus celebrated the start of Building 5's construction, which was part of the 2008 voter-approved bond measure. Today, even though the pandemic has restricted activity, the facility houses the PCC Bookstore, food services, study areas, student resource spaces, multipurpose physical education and dance classrooms, modern office space for faculty, and labs for health and wellness programs. ♦



# Alum Makes History in Scappoose



The Scappoose Fire District appointed PCC alum Miguel Bautista as its first Latinx chief officer. The new division chief earned an associate degree from the college's Fire Protection Technology program and is a 16-year veteran in firefighting. Chief Bautista credits the flexibility of the program and the variety of instruction by the faculty for his success.

"It was the inclusive nature of the program," Chief Bautista said. "PCC made it clear,

if you have the desire to learn, we will help you obtain your goal of a college degree. This is something I appreciated as a student.” ♦

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PCC is a member of Tree Campus USA, a national program created by the Arbor Day Foundation to recognize colleges and universities for effective campus forest management.

# Driving Sustainability

## PCC stays on course toward sustainability goals due to bond-funded improvements

It takes many people and departments to drive sustainability at Portland Community College.

Recycling bins and water bottle refilling stations implemented by staff and students are just a few of the initiatives that illustrate PCC's commitment to sustainability. These efforts underscore the important work led by the college's established Sustainability Program, and that has contributed to PCC's high national ranking in the Sustainable Campus Index, from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

Collectively, these enterprises and honors complement the "show pieces" – the

development of energy efficient buildings and features like solar panels and electric vehicle charging stations.

But as valuable as those additions are, it's the less-visible capital improvements at PCC's many facilities, which were funded by the 2008 and 2017 voter-approved bond measures, that have had a big impact on reducing greenhouse gases that create climate change. Sustainability Manager Briar Schoon said that since 2006, the college has achieved a 45% decrease in energy use per square foot. This accomplishment helped PCC earn its third silver rating from AASHE's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System.

"We've made significant progress toward our 2021 Climate Action Plan, which establishes a new carbon neutrality goal for 2040," Schoon said. "Our achievements have resulted in big greenhouse gas savings. The built environment has a big impact on our carbon footprint, and much of these savings can be attributed to a focus on sustainability and energy conservation in our bond improvements."

One of the many projects with significant energy-efficient features is the construction of the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Training Center in Columbia County. Known as the OMIC Training Center, this new facility received LEED silver certification and was designed to achieve approximately 22% energy savings over the average for these types of facilities. The project also included the use of low-carbon materials, diversion of construction waste from landfills, and installation of water-efficient fixtures.

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**Our achievements have resulted in big greenhouse gas savings. The built environment has a big impact on our carbon footprint, and much of these savings can be attributed to a focus on sustainability and energy conservation in our bond improvements.**

— Briar Schoon, PCC sustainability manager

99

The college recently completed the \$6 million remodel of the weld shop for the Welding Technology Program at the Rock Creek Campus. The 50-year-old building was transformed into a state-of-the-art, 10,000-square-foot facility with new welding booths and energy-efficient mechanical and electrical systems. The project's final flourish was the campus' Parking Lot E, which integrated a stream spray irrigation system to save water.

At the Portland Metropolitan Workforce Training Center in Northeast Portland, the college is building its first project with cross-laminated timber (CLT), a type of "mass timber" that creates large panels and beams by gluing smaller boards of wood together and alternating the direction of the grain so that the end product is stronger than standard wood construction. Trees and their lumber sequester carbon throughout their life span — making CLT an environmentally friendly material. This differs from concrete, which releases carbon into the environment.

Speaking of trees, PCC hired Bartlett Tree Experts to conduct a survey of the college's woodlands at every location. The survey established the identity, location, condition and monetary value of the college's trees and shared data with academic programs that also informed

conservation efforts being integrated with PCC's Climate Action Plan. The college is a member of Tree Campus USA, a national program created by the Arbor Day Foundation to recognize colleges and universities for effective campus forest management.

These and many other energy efficiency-related projects are not only reducing greenhouse gases and utility costs, they are also extending the life of buildings and improving their utility, said Krista Phillips, PCC's former planning and capital construction managing architect.

"Having sustainability goals as a guiding principle for deferred maintenance projects, remodels and new construction enables PCC to offer healthy, safely built environments to our students and staff," she said. "These improvements impact the college operations and the communities we serve, in alignment with PCC's goals for equity and sustainability." ♦



The new 10,000-square-foot weld shop at Rock Creek sports cutting-edge welding booths and energy-efficient mechanical and electrical systems.



At its new training center in Northeast Portland, the college is using cross-laminated timber (CLT), which is a type of "mass timber" that creates large panels and beams by gluing smaller boards of wood together.

## Did You Know?

Even though the college has grown in square footage, it uses less electricity. Plus, PCC's natural gas consumption has dropped by 45% since 2006 thanks to capital improvements, such as the new central boiler plant at the Rock Creek Campus. [Learn more: pcc.edu/bond](http://pcc.edu/bond)



# Crossing the Finish Line

His commitment to opportunity and equitable student success are hallmarks of President Mark Mitsui's career

Portland Community College President Mark Mitsui is hanging up his trademark turquoise necktie and retiring in June, wrapping up an impressive term as the college's seventh leader.

In 2016, Mitsui came to PCC from Washington, D.C., having served in the Obama Administration as the deputy assistant secretary for community colleges within the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. He was quick to share a deeply rooted, genuine commitment to the values of opportunity and equitable student success soon after arriving at the college.

This became the foundation of his work plan, whereby the college's policies, practices and behaviors were assessed and reformed to improve the experience and outcomes for the diverse student body it serves.

"PCC is a bridge to opportunity, a bridge to a better life, for countless members of our communities regardless of what zip code a student is born in," Mitsui said. "According to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, nearly a quarter of all students who face 'equity barriers' to public higher education attend PCC. And the college is helping them pursue upward mobility and overcome obstacles that may have held them back previously."

"It has been a true privilege and honor to serve as the president of PCC, a college with a heart for justice, dedicated to student success and learning, and willing to constantly improve itself to meet the future, today," he said.

## Mitsui's accomplishments include:

**Community.** Mitsui led the college to successful passage of its 2017 bond measure, which modernized workforce training programs, expanded health professions and science programs, and upgraded safety, security, building longevity and access to those experiencing a disability.

**Student success.** PCC joined Achieving the Dream, a network of more than 300 community colleges across the country that encourages collective learning and the sharing of data and best practices to better serve students and improve student outcomes. Soon after joining, PCC developed and implemented major institutional changes to dismantle barriers and build inclusive systems of education and support.

**Providing opportunity.** Mitsui championed Pathways to Opportunity, a state-wide partnership made up of Oregon's 17 community colleges and the state's Department of Human Services. It aims to close opportunity gaps and increase economic mobility for low-income students by expanding federal, state and local resources available to help them complete college.

**Workforce training.** He ensured the opening of PCC's new dental sciences facility in downtown Portland and the advanced manufacturing training center in Columbia County. The training center fosters economic mobility and growth within a field offering career advancement and potential.



Mitsui congratulates a new college graduate.



PCC President Mark Mitsui with Oregon Gov. Kate Brown.

**Sustainability.** Mitsui participated in the United Nations Climate Conferences in 2017 and 2019. These bookended PCC earning the Second Nature Climate Leadership Award and being named the number one community college by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education for its sustainability efforts. Last year, Mitsui co-signed Second Nature's higher education letter to President Biden in support of a strong 2030 U.S. climate goal.

**Leadership.** Among his local leadership roles, Mitsui has served on Gov. Kate Brown's Workforce and Talent Development Board, co-chairing the Artificial Intelligence Task Force and the Equitable Prosperity Task Force, as well as sitting on its Executive Council. Additionally, he is a member of the Workforce Workgroup of the Governor's Racial Justice Council.

**Equity.** He helped guide PCC's "Sanctuary College" designation to support undocumented and documented immigrant students. Plus, the college was the first Oregon institution to provide a resource center for undocumented students.

**Fundraising.** During his tenure, PCC launched its first comprehensive campaign, exceeding its original goal, ending with nearly \$46 million.

**Honors.** For his comprehensive work, influence and partnership within the business community, Mitsui received Executive of the Year honors from the Portland Business Journal in 2018. In November 2021, the Portland Business Alliance celebrated Mitsui at its Business Leadership Evening, an annual celebration of business community leaders. He was presented with the William S. Naito Outstanding Service Award in recognition of his inspiring philanthropy and exemplary community leadership. ♦



Mitsui, with wife Melanie, was named Portland Business Journal's Executive of the Year in 2018.

## PCC's New President

Learn more about the college's search for its next president. [pcc.edu/president-search](http://pcc.edu/president-search)

# Taking Non-Credit

## PCC's Community Ed Program is expanding in Columbia County

The opening of Portland Community College's Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Training Center, known as the OMIC Training Center, offers expansion potential for the college's Community Education Program – and it's ready.

This spring, Community Ed is enlarging its footprint, with an array of courses in Columbia County ranging from welding to woodworking. Staff are working to bring back kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding and new offerings centered on the maker movement.

"We're excited to be in the area because of our mission to serve the district, as well

as take advantage of the beauty of the region's outdoor recreation areas," said Leslie Mestman, director of PCC's Continuing Education Program. "And, of course, the opportunity to bring community education classes to the OMIC Training Center in Scappoose."

Computer instructor Windy Wahlke taught an in-person Google applications class within the building's state-of-the-art computing lab last fall. The course focused on teaching students the main features of the platform.

"These courses are typically for those who aren't as familiar with using these tools, but some seasoned users may learn new tips and tricks as well," said Wahlke, who also teaches an online Mac computer class (page 19). "This definitely gives a great introduction to several applications, and gets students comfortable with trying new apps."

This past winter, Gary Martin rebooted his PCC woodworking classes out of his large Columbia County woodshop in

Scappoose (page 32). Trained at Oregon State University as an industrial arts teacher, he has taught woodworking for PCC for the past 20 years. Martin teaches proper use, safety and clever techniques associated with common woodworking equipment and machinery.

"I have found that my classes are for anyone who wishes to improve their woodworking skills," he said. "Some students start not knowing anything, and others have some experience, but all enjoy learning the craft."

Helping students discover the natural beauty offered in Columbia County has been a goal of Community Ed. Naturalist instructor Rebecca Lexa is leading a two-hour Scappoose bird-watching excursion along the Crown-Zellerbach Trail in May (page 28).

"My goal is to make the topics we discuss accessible regardless of a student's background," Lexa said. "I have always been a huge nature nerd, and teaching allows me to share my enthusiasm for the natural world with other curious people." ♦



### Explore Community Ed

PCC's Community Ed Program offers hundreds of non-credit personal enrichment classes each term and enrolls more than 20,000 students each year. Classes are held virtually and in-person across the district, including Columbia County. [Learn more: pcc.edu/communityed](http://pcc.edu/communityed)

(Left) PCC Community Ed woodworking instructor Gary Martin in his workshop.

# YES!

## I can go to college



### And stay close to home

#### GET STARTED TODAY AT PCC!

- Choose from 90+ programs to give you endless opportunities
- Save on a quality education by paying **up to 87% less** than four-year universities
- Find your community through clubs, sports, resource centers, and other activities
- Get one-on-one help during the admissions and enrollment process

#### WHAT WILL YOU SAY YES TO?

[PCC.EDU/YES-TO-PCC →](http://PCC.EDU/YES-TO-PCC)



# A Big Result

**Big Give Day has allowed students like Anya DeCarlo to succeed**

**A** 24-year-old biology major with a minor in math, Anya DeCarlo was used to success at Portland Community College. She started a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Club at the Cascade Campus, earned a prestigious Oregon NASA Space grant, and then found a love for research. And she juggled all this while going to school full time and working part time.

Then, like with so many other things, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and derailed her journey. DeCarlo lost her work-study job, which coincided with her apartment rental lease ending. She needed to find a new place to live and look for stable employment.

"Without a job and the state shut down, I didn't know how I was going to be able to afford to move," DeCarlo said.

DeCarlo was going to drop out of school, but she turned to the PCC Foundation for financial help and received an emergency grant. Such grants are made



Having my basic needs met allowed me to spend my time and energy on things that mattered to me in the future, like school. — Anya DeCarlo, PCC alum

possible by donors at key events, like Big Give Day. With this kind of support, the foundation is able to help students like DeCarlo when they need it most.

In 2021, the PCC Foundation raised a total of \$199,560 during Big Give Day from 790 donors for scholarships and college programs. The funds were used for laptops, emergency grants, support services and scholarships. All of these efforts by the PCC Foundation translate to critical assistance for students like DeCarlo.

"When the pandemic continued to be a long-term event, I didn't have a job," DeCarlo explained. "I wasn't able to get employment. I needed money for basic needs. Having my basic needs met allowed

me to spend my time and energy on things that mattered to me in the future, like school."

DeCarlo benefitted from the foundation's emergency grant and was able to complete her classes and transfer to Portland State University last fall.

"I feel like I lucked out," DeCarlo said when talking about her emergency grant. "I used the money to buy groceries and take care of my basic needs. Giving to the PCC Foundation is a generous and kind thing to do. Students, such as myself, are in circumstances outside of their control, and we don't have the financial resources to stay focused on school. Donations can make a huge difference in students' lives." ♦

## Foundation Gala

This spring, the Portland Community College Foundation is hosting its annual fundraising gala on Saturday, April 23. Join us virtually for an evening of support for student scholarships and emergency needs.

**Learn more:** [pcc.edu/beginagain](http://pcc.edu/beginagain)



Student Dana Crosby receives guidance from instructor Han Vo. She is practicing X-ray positioning in the new medical imaging lab.

## Delivering for the Community

Work from the 2017 bond is transforming PCC for students and the community

The difference is night and day. The basement of the Health Technology (HT) Building on the Sylvania Campus, which housed an old weight room and dance studio, is now a technological marvel that will change the way students learn.

In their place is a state-of-the-art medical imaging lab. This new training space is augmented by improved wayfinding signage and single user restrooms in the building's vast basement. Gayle Wright, radiology instructor, said the 7,500-square-foot facility is an upgrade from its previous cramped space on the third floor.

"The upgrades in the lab are just monumental," Wright said. "We have four stations instead of the previous three, the space's footprint has quadrupled, and the equipment is all brand new."

The new open layout in the centralized suite provides students the space needed to learn and practice their skills, while also allowing for future expansion of the program. Additional walls within the open lab area were equipped with lead lining to allow for use of existing mobile energized equipment, as well as new equipment that may be purchased in the future.

For the Sylvania Campus, the changes in the HT Building are a key component from the 2017 bond and a testament to PCC's ongoing investments in hands-on training for future health care workers. Currently, the health care industry is experiencing a shortage of trained technicians and staff.

The new medical imaging suite will be on the forefront of training the next generation of employees. It features four new non-energized X-ray stations, a computer lab with new, interactive touch screens, and a seminar room.

"No matter which station students practice and learn on, it will be consistent across them and is more updated and similar to equipment they work with at their hospital clinic rotations," Wright said.

Another change is a shared control area for the lab's two energized stations – digital X-ray spaces that actually shoot ionizing radiation. The lab features twin rooms with the same equipment, creating a shared area that is used to shoot the exposure, review images and teach concepts.

"This way, smaller groups can learn from each other's mistakes and successes, and the instructor can teach the topic once before splitting them up to work in the twin rooms," Wright said.

The new medical imaging lab is located on the basement level away from the common spaces in the building. Because medical imaging students spend the majority of their time on campus together, construction planning thoughtfully included a group study area, kitchenette and break area within the new suite. A computer classroom used to debrief after physics labs and image critique sessions is also part of the new space.

New study spaces have wall-mounted backlit view boxes with tables and seating for students to view and analyze images together. And since the labs have doubled in size, there is also more storage space.

"The storage spaces we planned are fabulous for us," Wright said. "We have a lot of ancillary equipment and medical

supplies that formerly had no proper home, and now we have two large storage rooms. We call one of them the 'equipment garage' because it's large enough for us to roll in our portable X-ray machine, a fluoroscopy machine on wheels (C-arm), as well as a Chromebook cart that we can roll in and charge up." ♦



Radiography Chair Jennifer Bringhurst (left) and faculty Gayle Wright review X-ray images using one of several backlit view boxes.

## Getting Results – 2017 Bond

The 2017 voter-approved bond measure has helped transform PCC in recent years. The PCC bond measure was charged with:

- ◆ Improving workforce training programs.
- ◆ Expanding health professions and science, technology, engineering, arts and math facilities.
- ◆ Providing safety, security, building longevity and disability access.

**Learn more: [pcc.edu/bond/bond-2017](http://pcc.edu/bond/bond-2017)**

# Kelley Bids PCC a Fond Farewell

Sylvia Kelley, PCC's executive vice president since 2014 and former interim college president, retired last October.

Kelley provided high-level direction of many of the college's operational service lines, including human resources, grants, planning and capital construction, college advancement and legal counsel. She led development of the college's new five-year strategic plan, guided the PCC Foundation to reaching its comprehensive fundraising campaign goal of \$47 million, and helped position the college to successfully pass the 2017 bond campaign thanks to voter support.

"PCC is a resource for and of the community, and it has been an honor for me personally to be part of this college, which serves students and the community in deeply meaningful, life-changing ways," Kelley said. ◆



## Free Laptops for Students in Need

In partnership with Comcast, the PCC Foundation provided 250 free Dell Chromebooks to college students in need. Along with picking up a Dell computer, these PCC students were also provided free food by the student-led food store – the Panther Pantry.

In addition, PCC partnered with Comcast's Internet Essentials program to help connect low-income students to internet services, and the foundation helped cover the cost of affordable internet service for students. ◆



## A Triumphant Return for Panthers

The Panthers are back on the prowl. Last fall, the PCC women's soccer team earned a 7-4-2 record and secured second place in the South Region of the NWAC Women's Soccer Championships. After not playing the previous season due to COVID-19, the Panthers were looking to build on the success

they enjoyed during the 2019 season when they also hosted a first-round playoff game.

In the end, the Panthers bowed out of the playoffs with a dramatic 2-1 loss to Pierce College in double overtime. ♦



## Taking the Lead in Cybersecurity

The United States faces a large shortfall in the cybersecurity workforce – and PCC is working on a national stage to address it.

The college, which is designated as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense by the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security, is co-leading a task force to analyze cyber curricula, identify high-need areas to create a cyber-ready workforce, and develop publicly available cybersecurity curricula.

"This project will help us at PCC, as well as any academic cybersecurity program, by offering cybersecurity curriculum materials that can be freely used, and in particular, by aligning the materials to workforce needs," said Cara Tang, computer information systems instructor. ♦

# Keeping the Promise

Tamir Yizhaki found the financial support he needed through Oregon Promise



Portland Community College has many options for financial aid and scholarships to help students pay for college.

Three years ago, Tamir Yizhaki experienced firsthand how PCC can help students find the funding they need to succeed. Yizhaki moved with his family to Oregon from Israel as part of his father's job transfer to Intel. His parents told him that going to school in the United States was more expensive. As a 16-year-old moving to a new country, securing finances for college in a few years wasn't at the top of Yizhaki's mind when he decided to enroll at PCC.

"College in Israel is way cheaper," Yizhaki explained. "It's only about \$2,000 to \$3,000 a year."

During his time at Westview High School in Beaverton, he applied for federal and state financial aid, but was denied due to his immigration status. Then Yizhaki enrolled at Portland Community College,

where he reached out to Financial Aid Coordinator Rachael Smith, PCC's Oregon Promise grant administrator.

Oregon Promise is a state grant that helps to cover tuition costs at any Oregon community college for recent high school graduates and GED test graduates. Students must apply during their senior year or immediately after test completion.

Smith helped Yizhaki gather the correct paperwork to become eligible for the statewide grant. She reports quarterly to the state about the Oregon Promise grant and helps students who need waivers or assistance, like Yizhaki.

"He had a complicated case," Smith said. "His immigration status was in the process of changing, and he was having trouble getting documentation that was acceptable to make him an Oregon Promise student."

While in between resident statuses, Yizhaki worked with Smith for more than a month to see if he was eligible for any

66 Ever since I can remember, I always had an interest in computer science. When I moved here, I didn't know English at all, so the only class I was able to understand and enjoy was computer science. The Oregon Promise allowed me to go to college and start my career in this field. 99

— Tamir Yizhaki, PCC computer science student

other type of aid. But ultimately, he had to wait until his immigration status (permanent residency) was updated to be approved.

"Working with Oregon Promise students like Tamir is especially rewarding because they're brand new to college and often in need of extra support to get started," she said. "It's not always easy to ask for help, and I hope my work shows students that we're really invested in helping them work through the often complicated financial aid process."

Once someone is awarded the Oregon Promise grant, they can renew it for a second year by completing these steps: file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA) by June 1, maintain at least half-time continuous enrollment, possess satisfactory academic progress, and complete the First-Year Experience, which is the college's new student retention program.

According to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's website, approximately nine out of 10 eligible applicants were awarded the Oregon Promise grant. Yizhaki was not initially eligible, but with some help from Smith and a change in his immigration status, he was able to receive it.

Yizhaki is now in his second year at PCC as a computer science student, following



**66** Working with Oregon Promise students like Tamir is especially rewarding because they're brand new to college and often in need of extra support to get started. — Rachael Smith, PCC financial aid coordinator **99**

in his dad's footsteps. He said he had no problem renewing his Oregon Promise grant this past summer, and after this school year, he hopes to continue his education at a four-year university. He ultimately would like to work at a technology company.

"Ever since I can remember, I always had an interest in computer science," Yizhaki said. "When I moved here, I didn't know English at all, so the only class I was able to understand and enjoy was computer science. The Oregon Promise allowed me to go to college and start my career in this field." ♦

## Admissions Made Easy

PCC helps students reach their goals by connecting them with a comprehensive admissions team in person or virtually. From one-on-one appointments and group info sessions to recorded sessions and steps for new students, the admissions team can help. [Learn more: pcc.edu/admissions](http://pcc.edu/admissions)



P.O. Box 19000 Portland, Oregon 97280-0990

Residential Customer  
ECRWSS

PCC mails this schedule of classes to households four times each year to let you know about upcoming Community Ed classes and share what's happening at PCC. It is printed and mailed for about 31¢ per copy and can be recycled. Because it is addressed "Residential Customer," we are not able to remove individuals from our distribution route. We hope you find it informative and enjoy the stories inside.

# project: **YOU**

## MY PROJECT:

"To teach a variety of curious students about foraging, ecology and natural history, regardless of their background. There's no need for a formal training in biology to become a nature enthusiast."

- Rebecca Lexa, Nature, Yard and Garden instructor (page 27 – 28)

## MAKE YOU THE PROJECT!

If you can dream it, PCC Community Ed's hundreds of remote, online and in-person classes can help you achieve it.

Visit [pcc.edu/communityed](http://pcc.edu/communityed) to get started on your own Project: YOU this spring.



PCC Community Ed

