

An Equalizing Force

The Carmen Sylvester Scholarship opens doors to criminal justice training for students of color

see page 4



pancakes or waffles?



cats or dogs?



coffee or tea?



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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the spring edition of Portland Community College's Communities magazine! At this time last year, a pandemic had begun to unfold around the globe whose ramifications were unknown. A year later, and PCC remains, for the most part, in remote operations/online instruction. It's truly remarkable that we've not only sustained but have innovated and succeeded in this COVID-19 environment for more than three consecutive quarters.

I am proud of and amazed by the myriad ways our faculty and staff have created enriching learning experiences and thoughtful support systems for PCC students. Given the social and public health challenges that we continue to face, their ongoing creative work is the backbone of the college, enabling us to deliver on our mission no matter the obstacles that have appeared in our path.

While I get to "see" (via Zoom) this creativity every day, you'll have the opportunity to read about it in this issue of Communities – from the Art of Online Teaching, to a newly established yoga certificate course, to BLM protests around the globe, to resources for our students related to basic needs insecurity and domestic violence. And I think you'll enjoy the cover story on Carmen Sylvester, Portland Police Bureau's first Black female officer who earned her associate degree at PCC, and for whom the PCC Foundation has created a scholarship for students studying criminal justice.

As you'll read about in this issue, higher education is the bridge to opportunity for our students, and one that contributes to making our greater community strong.

Sincerely,

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Table of Contents

- 2 An Upward Career
- 4 Carmen's Cause
- 6 Reimagining the World
- 63 Stepping Up
- 64 The Art of Online Teaching
- 66 History Corner & Spotlights
- 68 Crucial Support

Schedule (pages 7 – 61)

- 8 Register and Pay
- 9 Remote and Online Class Information

Arts

- 10 Dance
- 11 Music and Theater
- 13 Photography
- 14 Visual Arts
- 17 Writing

Home and Garden

- 20 Do It Yourself (DIY)
- 20 Food and Drink
- 23 Garden, Nature and Yards
- 25 Hobbies and Crafts
- 27 Home Improvement
- 27 Pets
- 27 Style and Beauty

Language and Culture

- 28 Cultural Exploration
- 29 Languages

Recreation and Wellness

- 35 Adult 55+ Fitness
- 36 Health
- 38 Mind-Body Wellness
- 41 Work Out

Teen (page 44)

Work and Life Balance

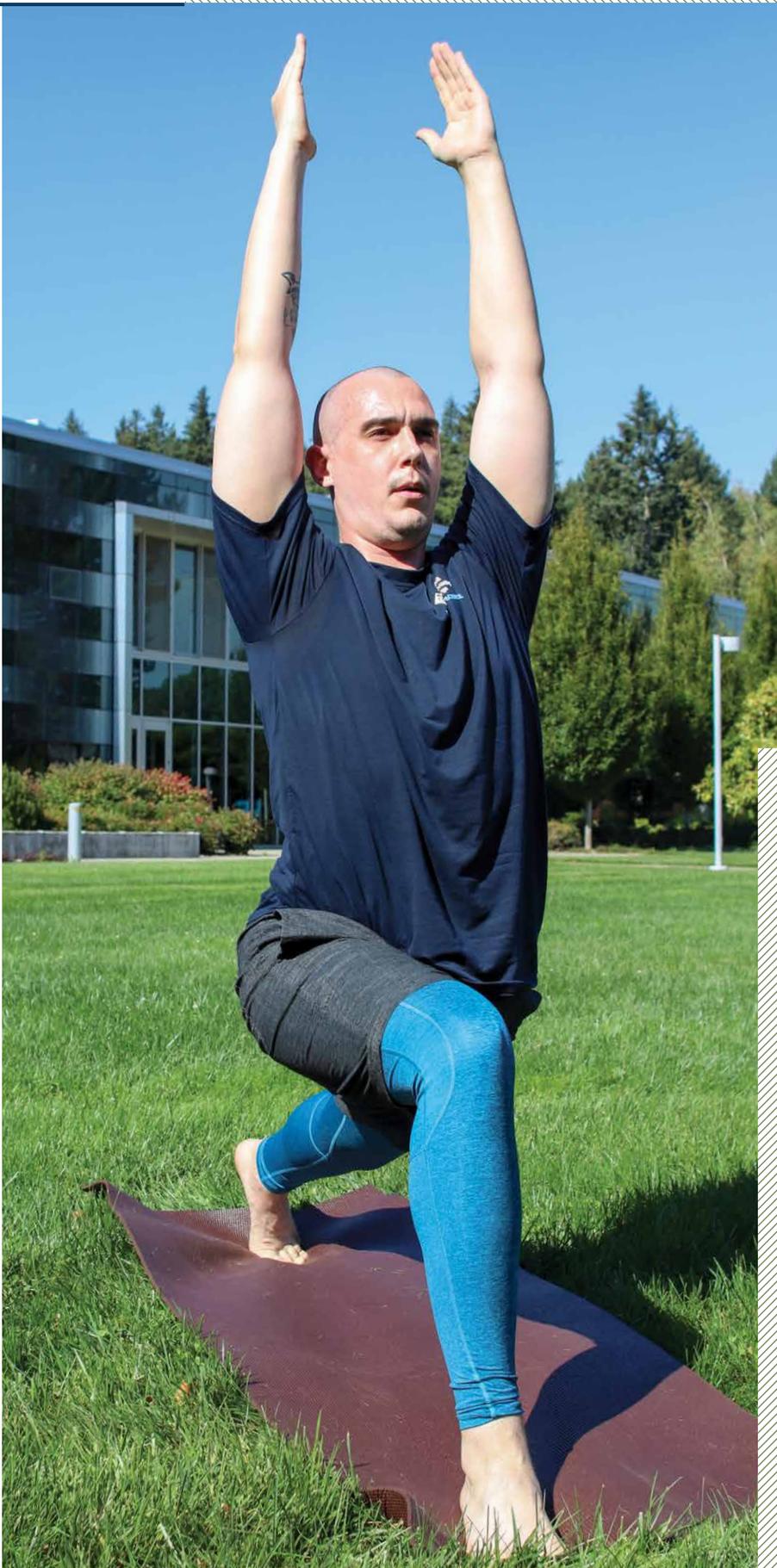
- 46 Careers
- 47 Career Skills
- 49 Computer Skills and Technology
- 51 Personal Development
- 54 Personal Finance
- 55 Test Preparation

Professional Development and Training

- 55 Contact Tracer
- 55 Continuing Education and License Renewal
- 56 Educator Professional Development
- 57 Electrical License Renewal
- 57 Professional Development
- 57 Real Estate

Student Information

- 58 Policies and Student Information
- 61 Class Subject Index



An Upward Career

A national champion turned to PCC to change sports and careers

Phillip Brooks has always been an athlete. Growing up, he was a fencer and a member of the 2008 national champion Arizona State University Club Team.

After 10 years of training and competing, the Hillsboro native retired from the sport – and felt the residual wear and tear on his body. Fencing had taken a toll.

“It’s a great sport, but it’s really one-sided,” Brooks mentioned. “It puts a lot of strain on your wrists, your knees and hips, and you get a lot of really imbalanced, muscular development.”

Searching for what to do next, the 31-year-old decided to go to Portland Community College. One of his courses was yoga, which fed his athletic spirit and helped him regain overall fitness, but with balance.

“After taking one yoga class, I fell in love,” Brooks admitted. “It sort of became something that I just replaced fencing with. Yoga was this wonderful, physical, mental practice that I could do and challenge myself. I was competing against myself, and I just felt so wonderful every time I finished a yoga practice.”

Brooks left the college to pursue other opportunities, but his passion for yoga and his education met up again last year. PCC’s Exercise Science Program began offering a two-term certificate in yoga

“The program took me completely by surprise, both at being offered and the depth and quality of it. It’s been a really transformative experience.”

— Phillip Brooks

teaching, and he jumped at the chance to add it to his associate degree in exercise science. Exercise science is a certificate and degree program offered at the Sylvania Campus in Southwest Portland that focuses on preparing fitness and wellness professionals for jobs in the industry.

The Yoga Teacher Certificate is 12 credits and can be completed in two consecutive terms. Instructor Alma Eaton estimates the cost to be roughly \$1,000 per term; to pursue similar training in the private sector is likely to cost between \$3,000 and \$4,500.

“Yoga is a very popular movement right now,” Eaton said. “For our industry partners, if we’re able to graduate students with an associate in exercise science, but also have the specialized skills from a yoga teacher training certificate, this is a significant benefit for them.”

Exercise science instructors Eaton and Jill Tuleya worked on the curriculum together so that it mirrored Yoga Alliance, known as the gold standard in yoga instruction. The result was a 200-hour Registered Yoga School open to PCC students.

“Our program is aligned with Yoga Alliance because it’s widely accepted by employers,” Eaton added. “It’s a really great benefit for the students who are graduating from the program because when they finish, they can register as a 200-hour Registered Yoga Teacher through Yoga Alliance, which is recognized internationally.”

After two years of planning, the first classes for the certificate were offered last year, and then the pandemic moved all classes online. Both instructors have set up their homes as teaching spaces until the college reopens its physical campuses.

“Jill and Alma went above and beyond preparing for distance learning that was thrown at them last minute,” Brooks remarked. “I remember the first yoga teaching class, and Alma put together this huge series of YouTube videos, detailing the muscle and anatomical skeletal movements, breaking it all down systematically for us and then giving us live demos.”

For Brooks, he is hoping the internship he recently secured will lead to a full-time job. If it doesn’t, the Portland area yoga teaching industry has plenty of opportunities for him.

“The program took me completely by surprise, both at being offered and the depth and quality of it,” Brooks explained. “It’s been a really transformative experience.” ♦



Yoga Teacher Certificate

The Yoga Teacher Certificate is aligned with the Yoga Alliance as a 200-hour Registered Yoga School, known as the gold standard of teaching in the industry. The certificate is 12 credits and can be completed in two consecutive terms.

Learn more by emailing alma.eaton@pcc.edu.

Carmen's Cause

Carmen Sylvester's new scholarship aims to transform the criminal justice field

When she first started patrol for the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) in 1974, Carmen Sylvester remembers a seasoned male detective confronting her at the police club, telling her that he didn't hate her because she was black, but "because you're a woman who took a man's job."

In another incident, an officer refused to ride in a patrol car with her because he feared he could not control his own bigoted language. Her response is a hallmark of Sylvester – calm, direct and with purpose.

"I just told them I wasn't going anywhere," Sylvester remembered. "I had babies to take care of, and I made clear to them that they couldn't embarrass me or force me out. Back then, men were not accustomed to working alongside a woman for eight hours. As a woman, you had to prove yourself even more and get the job done."

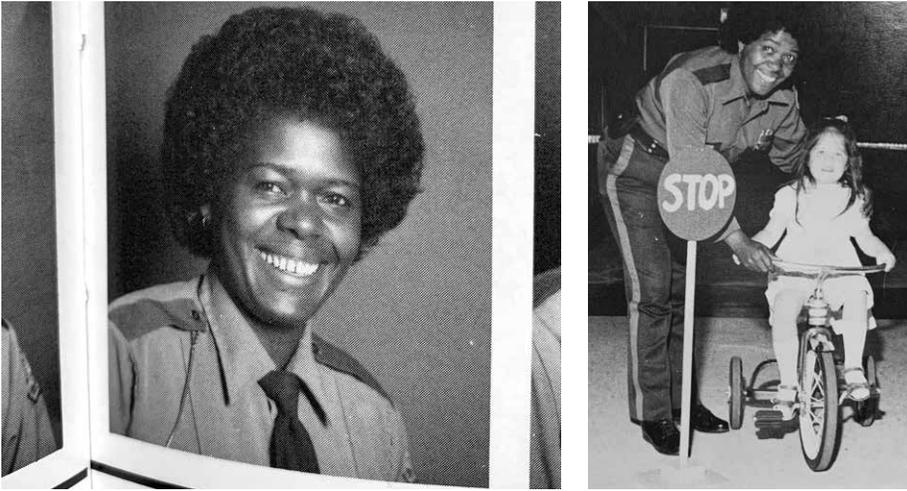
The mother of four made history as the first Black female officer in Portland and was one of the first five women hired as full-fledged patrol officers. Despite the pushback to her history-making hire, she did have friends like Stan Harmon, a white officer who was assigned as Sylvester's training supervisor.

"If I had an issue and was struggling to resolve it, I knew I could call Stan and he'd help me," she said. "His support was extremely important."

Part of her law enforcement training was attending classes at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus in North Portland. Sylvester earned her associate degree by taking criminal justice classes along with related sociology and psychology courses to build her skill set.

“Being a police officer is not just about investigating crime. It's about being a civil servant and helping people, often during their darkest hours.”

— Carmen Sylvester



Sylvester's time as a PPB officer in the Traffic Safety Patrol Program.

"I think the sociology and psychology classes really gave me insight into the different scenarios and people I'd encounter," said Sylvester. "My high school counselor said I was not college material, but I think I was very much college material. I got higher education experience at PCC, which helped me put those tools I needed into my toolbox when I finished up."

For the next 40-plus years, Sylvester used that toolbox for PPB and later, at the Mark O. Hatfield U.S. District and Pioneer courthouses as a court security officer (CSO). Today, at age 75, she continues to serve as a CSO for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. A few years ago, PPB asked her to return and swear in Portland's first Black female police chief, Danielle Outlaw.

In light of today's fight for racial justice in law enforcement, Sylvester sees the need for further change within the system, so that officers and law enforcement staff better understand the recent protests and unresolved injustices in U.S. history. They must also have a genuine desire to help people.

As such, admirers of Sylvester partnered with the PCC Foundation to establish a new scholarship fund for qualified criminal justice students to train in community policing and social justice techniques.

"Being a police officer is not just about investigating crime," Sylvester cautioned. "It's about being a civil servant and helping people, often during their darkest hours. The best police officers are people who have had actual life experiences. It helps, when dealing with members of the public, to know what it feels like to have a past-due utility bill."

Forty-five percent of PCC's Criminal Justice Program students are people of color who take courses that center on crisis intervention, cultural diversity, victim assistance, social change and more.

"Employers want an educated, diverse workforce composed of personnel with critical thinking and problem-solving competencies," said Faculty Chair Jim Parks. "I hope to see the Carmen Sylvester Scholarship awarded to a deserving student." ♦

PCC Foundation Gifts Make History

In addition to the Carmen Sylvester Scholarship, the foundation has earned numerous large donations to help students.

→ Shattering records, the PCC Foundation received its largest-ever gift – worth nearly \$6 million – from the estate of late poet Carolyn Moore. The gift includes a 2,500-square-foot log cabin on an 8-acre urban oasis. "The site will offer students inspiration in their writing endeavors and create a sanctuary for authors, aspiring authors, faculty and students to develop their work and foster community."

→ The Foundation was named a Bank of America Neighborhood Builders award recipient and granted \$200,000 to establish an Opportunity Center at the PCC Willow Creek Center. Prospective students and job seekers will find a one-stop-shop location for workforce development and reskilling courses, support services, and opportunities to network with potential employers.

→ In response to the economic crisis brought on by COVID-19, Portland civic leader and philanthropist Anne Naito-Campbell donated \$1 million to support PCC job training and education. The gift marks the first-ever million-dollar cash charitable donation received by the PCC Foundation.

Learn more:
pcc.edu/foundation

Reimagining the World

Non-credit class explores the power of music in Latin American politics

Social movements like Black Lives Matter make new Portland Community College instructor Gisela Rodriguez optimistic.



In previous courses she's taught at Portland State University (PSU), Rodriguez has examined power and hierarchy, as well as the imagination required to envision a more just society. Now she's bringing an opportunity to discuss the power of music and social movements to the Community Education Program class "The Power of Music in Latin American History and Politics (page 28)."

In her spring non-credit class, Rodriguez will analyze the role of music in contemporary social movements in Latin America, from Victor Jara's "Nueva Canción" to feminist and indigenous hip-hop. The instructor enjoys facilitating a discussion-based class, because she can learn about different perspectives from her students.

"They bring so many ideas," Rodriguez said. "It's fascinating to me, because it is such an exchange of knowledge. It allows the students to bring to the table what they want to bring to the table."

The class fits her overall goal of social justice by analyzing how communities around the globe have challenged the status quo to build a more equitable world. As a result, Rodriguez teaches her students critical thinking skills and wants them to be able to search for root causes, instead of focusing on outcomes. These skills enable her students to tackle big issues and inspire them to organize, imagine and build something different.

"It's a long route to change things in society, but it's not impossible," she said. "We need to start having these conversations."

As with the past classes she's taught at PSU, Rodriguez wants to inspire students to organize, imagine and build something different as a result of the content she presents and the discussions that follow.

"Sometimes we don't take action, because we don't think we have the power," Rodriguez said. "If we can't imagine what change might look like, it can't become reality. Not all of the social movements lead to revolution or profound changes, but however small, they do change communities around the world and they do change what we think is possible. Black Lives Matter, for example, has challenged and changed the understanding of structural racism, what it means to be Black in America, and how we approach police accountability." ♦

“Sometimes we don't take action, because we don't think we have the power. If we can't imagine what change might look like, it can't become reality.”

— Gisela Rodriguez



Explore Community Ed

PCC's Community Ed Program offers hundreds of non-credit and personal enrichment classes each term and enrolls more than 25,000 non-credit students each year.

Learn more: pcc.edu/communityed



Create your career in less than a year

Portland Community College's Career Pathways program gives you a faster path to advance your career and income. Choose from 50+ short-term certificates, get personalized support to complete your education, and connect with in-demand jobs and internships.

See the list of career options and learn how to get started:
pcc.edu/career-pathways



Before the pandemic, the college had donations roll into its Panther Pantries to help combat student hunger.



“We have to remove the stigma, because students are better able to complete their education when they have enough food to eat and housing stability.”

— Kate Kinder, Career Pathways and Skills Training Director

Stepping Up

Oregon community colleges address basic needs insecurity

According to recent surveys, 63% of Oregon community college students reported some basic needs insecurity in the past year, meaning they were food and housing insecure, or even homeless.

Portland Community College’s SNAP Training and Employment Program (STEP) is addressing these issues by providing holistic coaching and advising, and direct resources for students receiving SNAP benefits. It enables individuals to enroll, build skills and complete college credentials that lead to careers offering economic mobility.

“Every student that gets referred to me, in one way or another, could use help,” said Talina Villao, a PCC Career Pathways coach. “When we show them where to go next, the response is usually a sigh of relief. They just don’t know where to start.”

Career Pathways Coordinator Rene Bussiere shared, “The best way to help students

who want out of that situation is to get them an education and into a job that has a living wage.”

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic and historic summer wildfires, many students were struggling. College credentials, the most proven pathway out of poverty, remain out of reach for far too many students due to staggering unmet financial needs and basic needs insecurity.

Working together to address these issues, a coalition of anti-poverty organizations including Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon, public colleges and universities, and state agencies, such as the Oregon Department of Human Services, are championing a solution. Before the Oregon Legislature this session is a bill that will establish a benefits navigator on every public college and university campus in Oregon. The navigators will help students access federal aid, like SNAP, child care, housing and other existing resources.

According to Kate Kinder, director of Career Pathways and Skills Training at PCC, students are leaving thousands of dollars in federal benefits and resources on the table. She added that, for students, a benefits navigator would ensure they access all the benefits they qualify for. For Oregon, it would leverage existing resources more effectively, while generating new federal and philanthropic dollars. A \$3 million dollar annual investment in Pathways to Opportunity could generate an additional \$7.5 million by 2025.

Establishing benefits navigators will allow colleges to scale up the successes of the STEP Program, she stated.

“We have to remove the stigma, because students are better able to complete their education when they have enough food to eat and housing stability,” Kinder said. ♦

The Art of Online Teaching

Art faculty engage their students creatively during remote learning

Like all art faculty at Portland Community College, printmaking instructor Tatiana Simonova had a huge challenge in front of her when the college shifted to remote learning last year: How were art instructors going to reimagine their hands-on classes for the virtual world? It turns out they had a plan, and the biggest beneficiaries have been the students.

“Oftentimes, we have to make something out of nothing in terms of ideas, materials and physical resources,” Simonova said. “Art naturally breeds innovation and solutions, but I have been impressed by how creatively rich the remote environment has been.”

Her biggest obstacle was recreating the energy of the printmaking studio classroom and supporting its sense of community. As a result, she planned in-class drawing or print work for remote courses so students could collaborate from their respective homes. The Bulgarian native also incorporated open virtual labs where students focused on their projects and received live feedback.

“Art naturally breeds innovation and solutions. I have been impressed by how creatively rich the remote environment has been.”

— Tatiana Simonova

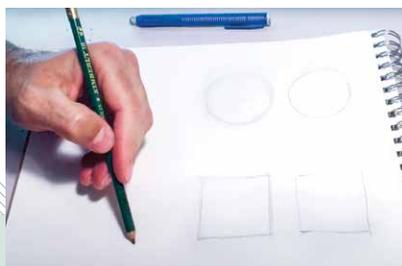
“Students can work on homework projects together and support one another in the making, much like students do in the communal studio space at PCC,” said Simonova, who had to delay a month-long artist residency program in Japan last summer due to the virus. “PCC students have been such troopers during this remote instruction.”

DRAWING UP A PLAN

Instructor Ben Buswell has been creative in the virtual teaching environment by reducing the amount of supplies that

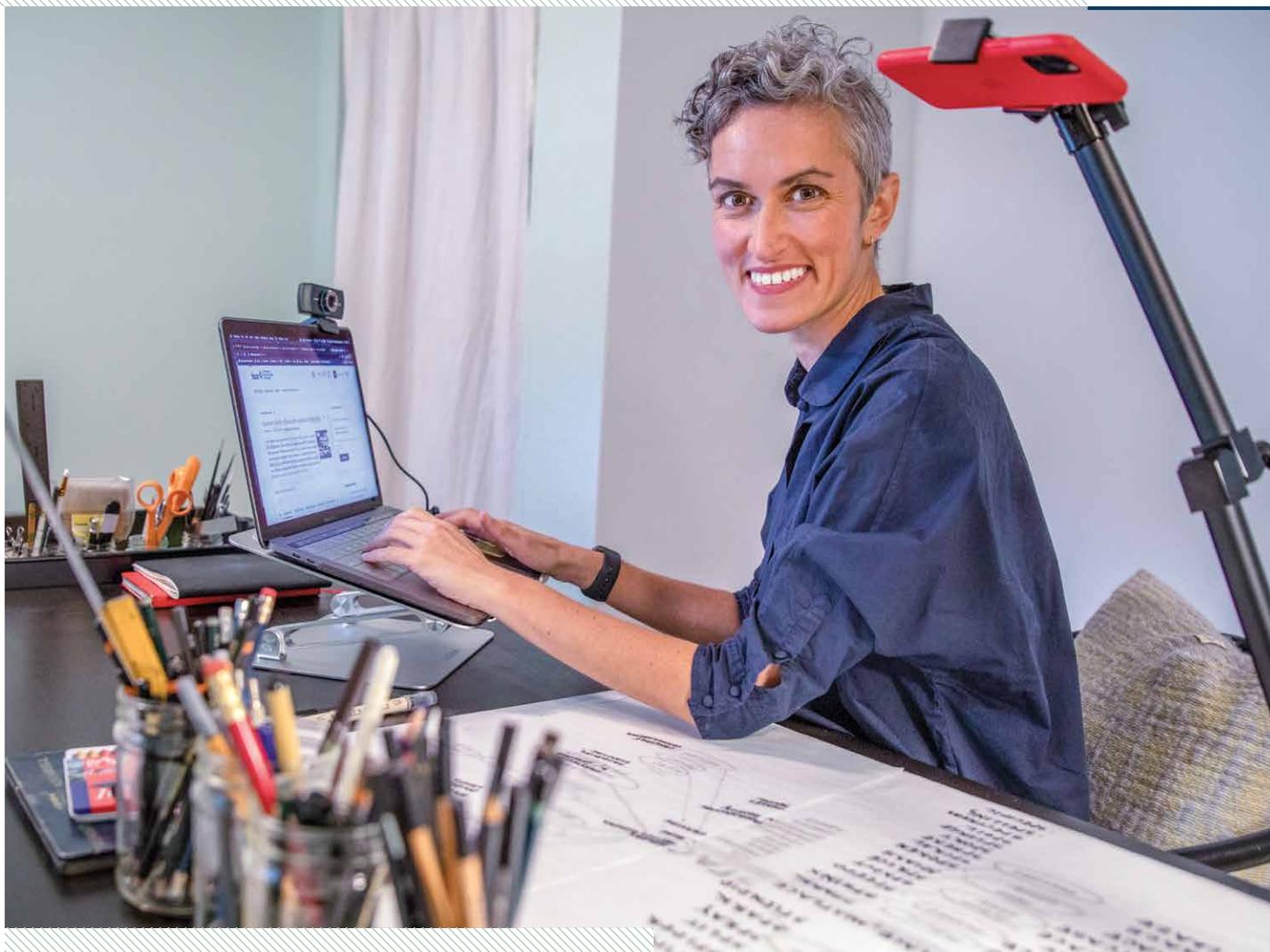
students need for his classes and making sure they can use financial aid for class materials. In addition, he has adapted assignments so that they can be done with limited resources, like showing students how to measure without a ruler.

“It’s easier than you think,” laughed Buswell. “We all really wanted to make sure that we found ways to give students the one-on-one help and sense of community that we have in our face-to-face classes. The art faculty have been sharing resources and talking about successes and things we can improve on.”



Art at PCC

The college’s Art Program provides quality studio and art history classes, which play a vital role in a general liberal arts education, as well as training to become a working artist. Faculty are committed educators, working artists and art historians, active in personal, professional and community development. [Learn more: pcc.edu/programs/art](https://pcc.edu/programs/art)



Printmaking instructor Tatiana Simonova has created a better process to teach her online courses.

The other major shift, he said, is subject matter. Buswell's assignments cover certain skills and concepts, and within an in-person class, these usually take the form of drawing a communal subject, like still life or a model. Because his students aren't in a shared space, they cannot draw the same things.

"Students now have a lot more influence over the subject matter of their drawings," he added. "This has been great because through their choices they are getting extra experience with personal expression. It has been really exciting to hear their thoughts and watch ideas grow."

CERAMICS FIRED UP

The once vibrant campus studio labs where students mold clay into works of art and fire them in state-of-the-art kilns are now quiet. But PCC's ceramics faculty are innovating as students have been shown how to create at-home art studios so they can participate in online classes and work on projects during virtual lab hours – receiving input from fellow students and instructors.

"The nice part about these courses is that it's bringing people together to talk about a subject they all want to learn about," said Charlie Washburn, longtime ceramics instructor. "We're having class time where

we are experiencing ceramics together, and open lab time where people get together to talk about what they are doing, and discuss tips and techniques."

In an unfired clay class, students create their home studio and go through the processes of making clay. Staff will fire pieces that students keep when PCC reopens its physical campuses.

"They appreciate the opportunity to connect with others and help them be inspired and keep making," said Kowkie Durst, ceramics faculty. "Ceramics is all about touch and can be a great way to reconnect by taking a ceramics course with clay." ♦

Cascade's 50 Years of Opportunity

In the fall of 1970, the new Cascade Center in North Portland opened with an enrollment of 400 students. Fifty years later, the center has grown into the Cascade Campus, serving 17,300 students annually.

When Cascade opened as a center, it helped ease overcrowding at Portland Community College's Shattuck Hall (now part of Portland State University) and the Sylvania Campus. The multi-purpose branch center finally gave North Portland residents, many historically underserved, a chance to attend college classes and access important resources closer to their homes.

"I think Cascade has brought pride to the community here, and by being a member of the community, I can appreciate this," said retired Cascade Librarian Yvonne Williams.

One of its core services when it opened was literacy tutoring for the large number of Cambodian and Vietnamese refugees



A typewriter class taught at the Cascade Center in the early 1970s.

that came to Portland after being displaced by war. In addition, the center was a model of partnering with area organizations to provide cultural enrichment, adult education, career selection and training, community activities and extensive job entry training.

Its educational services and offerings have grown mightily since those early days.

This is mainly thanks to several voter-approved bond measures that have expanded the campus and built state-of-the-art educational facilities. This has allowed PCC to develop a network of support and educational services, like Middle College, TRIO Student Support Services Program, jobs skills training and a plethora of career-technical health and public service programs. ♦

Did You Know?

Over the years, PCC graduates have entered or reentered the workforce with newly-acquired knowledge and skills. Today, hundreds of thousands of these alumni are employed in the region, earning money and contributing to Oregon's economic well-being. The net impact of these graduates currently employed in the regional workforce amounts to \$1.7 billion in added income (2018-19). ♦

1 out of every **58** jobs in the region served by PCC are supported by the education and training activities of the college.

\$1.7 billion Income added to the region as a result of PCC alumni and the businesses they work for. This economic boost is ...

Similar to hosting the World Series
289 times

– OR –

Equivalent to supporting
18,390 jobs



♀ = 250 jobs

COVID Testing for Community



A Multnomah County health official administers a COVID-19 test during the drive-thru clinic.

The Multnomah County Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) Program, in partnership with the Multnomah County Communicable Disease Services and PCC, are hosting a free, weekly flu vaccine and COVID-19 testing drive-thru clinic at the college's Cascade Campus in North Portland. Flu vaccines and COVID-19 testing will be offered every Wednesday through March 31, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the campus (705 N. Killingsworth St.). Residents are invited to drive through, bike or walk up to receive a free flu vaccination.

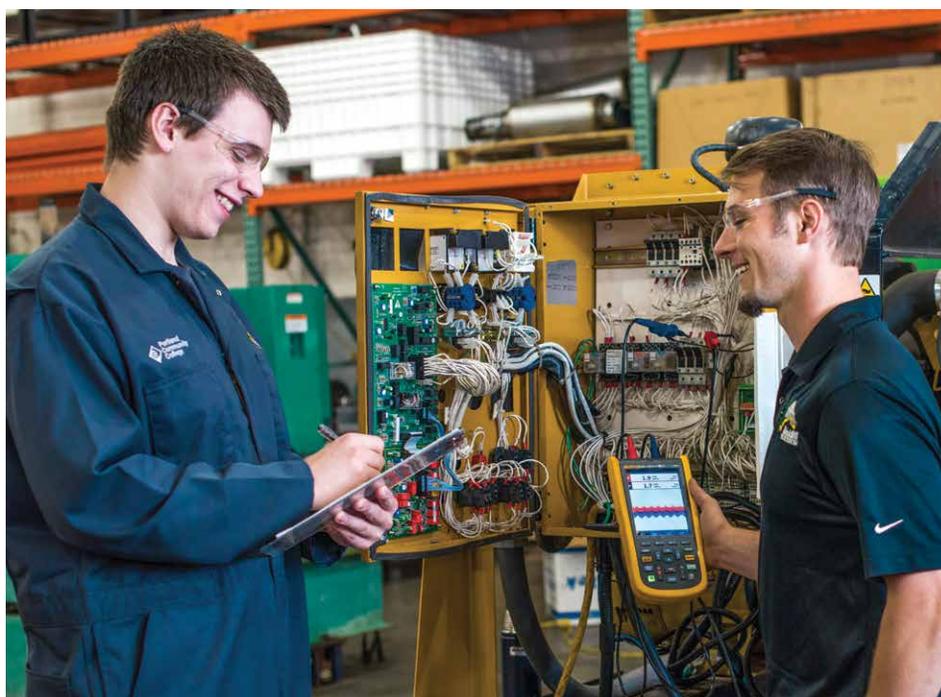
COVID-19 testing is also available at no cost for anyone with symptoms or anyone who has had recent close contact with a person with COVID-19. Black and African American residents, other people of color, and people without health insurance or a regular health care provider will be prioritized. The clinic has capacity to serve about 200 people each week. The clinic is located in Parking Lot 1 with the entrance on Albina Street. ♦

Call to schedule your appointment at 503-988-8939.

'On Ramps' to Careers

An industry-focused, skills-based slate of courses is giving would-be students pathways into career opportunities available to them through PCC's career-technical education (CTE) programs.

Through the college's Community Workforce Development (CWD) office, the On-Ramps to Trades series features introductory courses in manufacturing, health care and more. Future On-Ramps are under development and will be focused on the largest industry sectors that offer economically resilient and essential jobs, like information technology. In addition, the classes offer the opportunity to serve students who are in the most need through community and affordable housing partners, high schools and employers. ♦



For more information, email wccopportunities-group@pcc.edu or call 971-722-2688.

Crucial Support

PCC's Outreach and Advocacy Project helps victims of abuse heal

As people quarantine at home, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused an increase in the number of those seeking help to flee from an abusive partner. While one in four women in the U.S. experience relationship or intimate partner violence, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) are even more impacted (according to the Centers for Disease Control).

“Because of our commitment to equitable opportunity for all, community colleges serve a higher number of individuals with

marginalized identities than do private higher education institutions,” said Portland Community College President Mark Mitsui.

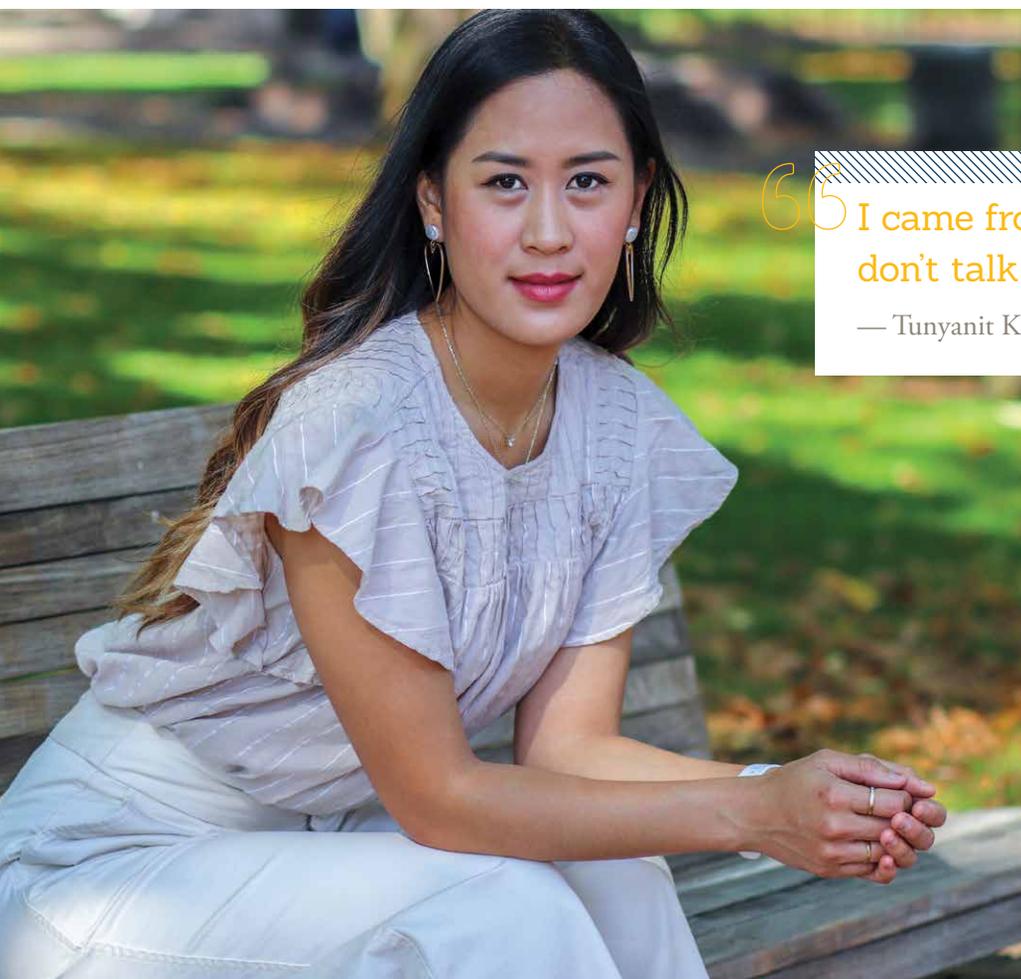
This is why PCC has created a robust infrastructure for reporting, support and awareness around issues of domestic violence and abuse.

Years ago, PCC's Outreach and Advocacy Project was initiated by the college's Women's Resource Center and Office of Equity and Inclusion, and it has grown

into a greater collaboration with PCC's other resource entities – Multicultural, Queer, Veterans and DREAMers centers – as well as with key student support offices, like Disability Services, Student Conduct & Retention and Counseling.

IMPORTANT COLLABORATION

Through the U.S. Department of Justice's Victim of Crime Act grants, PCC's Outreach and Advocacy Project was created to enhance confidential support services and resources to students. In addition, it develops best-practice protocols that are implemented across PCC and hosts training opportunities for employees to improve college culture and their response to students in need.



“I came from a culture where people don't talk about domestic violence.”

— Tunyanit Khuankhruea

Since 2018, the Women's and Queer resource centers, as well as the Outreach and Advocacy Project, report approximately 270 students have received services and, since 2019, more than 250 events, meetings and activities have taken place that have raised awareness and provided information.

“Experiences of gender-based violence are not uncommon and can take many forms,” said Caroline Bartlett, the project's coordinator. “I am so excited that through strong partnerships, students are experi-



The Outreach and Advocacy Project is a collaboration between the Queer, Multicultural, Women's and Veterans resource centers, as well as key departments across PCC.

encing new ways to receive support across PCC, and in ways that are culturally relevant to their identities.”

TITLE IX COMPONENT

Title IX is another way that the college helps victims of domestic violence, abuse and harassment, and complements the project's efforts. It is a federal civil rights law passed in 1972 that prohibits sex-based discrimination (sexual harassment, domestic violence, sexual misconduct and stalking) in most education programs in the United States.

In addition, Oregon laws also protect PCC students, faculty and staff from sex- and gender-based discrimination and misconduct. The college's Office of Equity and Inclusion is responsible for administering

policies that implement these laws, including providing support, remedies and procedures to respond.

STUDENT ADVOCATES

For more than 20 years, the PCC Women's Resource Center (WRC) has supported students affected by gender-based violence. All staff are trained and certified confidential advocates who support students affected by relationship and/or sexual violence, harassment or stalking. The center, along with the Multicultural and Queer resource centers, helped secure the project's funding.

In addition, the WRC Leadership Programs are staffed by students who complete year-long internships focusing on social justice issues, such as gender-

based violence, providing peer support and assisting with prevention. One of those advocates is Tunyanit Khuankhrua, who said the issue of domestic violence and abuse is something that is rarely addressed in her home country of Thailand.

“I came from a culture where people don't talk about domestic violence,” Khuankhrua said. “When victims report it, police don't take it seriously, and there is no legal process that can help investigate. When the victim has no rights, they stop talking about it and they give up.”

“I want to raise awareness of domestic violence, and I want people to know what to do if it occurs to them,” she added. “Domestic violence is a complex issue and it not only impacts the victim physically, but also impacts them mentally in the long term.” ♦

Outreach and Advocacy Project

Connect with PCC's resources and support network to find out more about support for those affected by intimate partner/dating violence, sexual violence, harassment or stalking.

Learn more: pcc.edu/advocacy

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 30¢ 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:

"Share my passion and knowledge of fitness to motivate people to live a healthier and active lifestyle."

- Yair Macedo Gallegos, Cardio Bootcamp (page 41) and Strength Training for Women (page 42) instructor



MAKE YOU THE PROJECT!

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

Visit pcc.edu/communityed to get started on your own Project: YOU this spring.

