The President's Corner

We did it! The first week of Fall Quarter 2007 went smoother than anyone could have imagined or hoped with the opening of two new buildings and an addition/remodel on the Walla Walla campus and the near completion of a new Health Science building in Clarkston.

It is now time to move on and initiate steps to meet the challenges that lie ahead. This year we must help our students achieve the goals they envision for themselves. We need to carry our message to local school districts and even further into the community so enrollment targets will be met and even exceeded. We want to provide a positive learning environment so students are engaged and retention rates are increased. Come June 2008, we want to award certificates and degrees to a greater number of students and be proud we are part of their accomplishments.

While numbers may be the proof of these successes, our students, their families and the community will experience the results of these efforts because we have made the difference. Lofty goals? Yes. Impossible goals? Absolutely not.

WWCC’s sustainability comes from a successful past but requires ongoing efforts for the future to build on this reputation. Community colleges are more than just the next step out of high school. Our students, from Running Start to Quest memberships, depend on us to meet their needs and we must continue to do so. Our service district counts on us to be a leader in community and economic development and we will show them their confidence is well-placed. We will embrace environmental best practices and meet safety concerns for our students and our staff in the year ahead.

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

WWCC’s Financial Aid staff processed and notified all three rounds of applicants about fall financial aid awards prior to the start of fall quarter. The Student Development Center staff conducted testing and orientations to advise students of procedures and deadline dates for financial aid and completed advisement of students to get them enrolled for fall quarter.

Business Services processed payments and completed follow-ups on all those registered and a “drop-list” was created of students who were struggling to find the resources to pay fall tuition. Admissions staff phoned each one of the students on the “drop list” to discuss payment options and help provide solutions to student’s financial barriers to college.

The WWCC Foundation stepped up and in conjunction with some short term loans from the college, students were helped with tuition and fees. The result of all these efforts from our outstanding and dedicated team members is about half as many students were dropped this fall as were dropped Fall Quarter 06. Way to go team! You truly make a difference, not only to our FTE count, which is just symbolic of the numbers of lives in our community you enhance by your service.

Not to be outdone, just down the hall, around the corner and all over campus the Tech Services staff members were doing their thing. According to Bill Storms, Director of Technology Services, the Tech Services staff coordinated the purchase of, stored and tracked around $200,000 worth of new equipment; completed 6 new ITV rooms; installed a new open computer lab in the Basic Skills expansion; completed 20 new rooms with new technology; worked with architects and contractors to wire new facilities; worked with new tenants at the Water and Environmental Center to wire offices and did all this while still providing the daily services we all have come to expect from them, such as “can you tell me what is wrong with my computer?”

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Weight Watchers Available at Work

Weight Watchers at Work is a new program available in the workplace when a minimum of 15 people per site sign up for the 13-week session. Staff from WW will come to the college to hold weekly meetings, weigh members and provide support and assistance.

If you are interested, please contact Kathy Storms at 527.4603. She needs to know how many people are interested and what the best time would be for the majority of participants.

Choices for the meeting time are 7:00-8:00 a.m., noon-1:00 p.m. or 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Promotional materials will be available when 15 people or more sign up. Cost for the session is $156 (credit cards accepted). Payment can be made in full or three payments of $52 per month can be made.

Bragging Rights!!

... Jim Peterson, our resident grandpa with a love for all our babies, became a grandparent himself on September 9 when daughter Enga and son-in-law Eric Thompson of Spokane presented him with a granddaughter—Elena Elizabeth Thompson, 7 lbs. 11 oz.

... Deborah Kolstad, Clarkston campus Business Office, and husband Brian welcomed 29 month old Keith into their home and hearts on September 29 (also Debbie and Brian’s 6th wedding anniversary!).

... Kay Raddatz, Kay’s daughter and son-in-law, Jen and Randy Hajduk, gave birth to their first child, Matthew on September 27. Matthew weighed in at 7 pounds and was 19 1/2” long. They reside in Chicago.

... Rosa Leah Othberg Pinheiro was born on Sunday, September 30 to Alina Othberg (daughter of Susan Palmer and Kurt Othberg) and Marco Pinheiro in Seattle. Then on October 4, Kurt Esteban Mejia was born to Erin Palmer (Susan’s other daughter) and Julio Esteban. Both babies weighed 7 lbs. 4 oz. Rosa was 19” and Kurt was 21” long.

... From Professional to Personal

You know your co-workers on a professional level, but do you know anything about their personal likes and dislikes, what their marital status is, if they have children?

Here’s your chance to learn about WWCC employees’ lives on a personal level.

Keenan Failing questioned being selected for this issue’s profile, stating that he is “an extremely introspective and bland person . . . with very few interests and fewer adventures.” But when he finally decided the only way to get rid of us was to answer the questionnaire, we found him to be very interesting, modest and a man of few words!

His comment upon submitting the questionnaire—“It wasn’t as bad as dental work but it was similar to the shot of novocaine!” He has a sense of humor, too!

Hired as a Scientific Instructional Tech II, Keenan was born in Flint, Michigan. He moved with his family to the upper Michigan peninsula when he was 12 and graduated from high school in Escanaba, a town on the shore of Lake Michigan. Shortly after graduation, his family moved to Spokane. He has lived all over the west coast since 1979, living as far south as Los Angeles and as far north as the Aleutian Islands of Alaska.

Married to wife Therese for 18 years, they have three children—all boys—Kooper, Marshall and Maxwell.

When he has time to relax, Keenan doesn’t necessarily have a favorite movie but enjoys westerns and a good who-done-it. He reads biographies and/or informational text (“I’m not much for fiction”). Golf ranks high on his to do list.

A positive, optimistic attitude is reflected in his response to the most interesting place he’s visited. “Let’s just say I hope I haven’t been there yet,” he said.

Keenan’s number one priority on his list of things in life still to do is to design his own house. The final question on the questionnaire requests a favorite recipe to share (see below!)

From Keenan Failing’s Kitchen to Yours...

Microwave Milkshakes

Put a gigantic amount of ice cream in a very large plastic glass. Heat it at high heat until it is soft enough to stir with a spoon and drink.

No milk necessary.
Tastes like a Wendy’s frosty.
KUDOS TO . . .

... Theresa Degan for coming up with the idea of a Kudo candy bar to those who get “kudos” in the newsletter.

... Art instructor Elizabeth Harris who was featured in the Marquee section of the UB September 20 about her artistic talent and upcoming participation in the YWCA Auction held September 22.

... Stacy Prest who received a scholarship to attend the WA/OR ACRL (Association of College and Research Librarians) annual conference to be held at the Center for Sustainable Forestry at Pack Forest, Washington October 25-26. The theme of the conference—The Visible Librarian: Establish Your Presence on Campus.

... Amy White (thanks from the Clarkston business office)—”Amy came up one day the week before classes started and three days the first week of classes to help us with the bookstore due to an open position in the Business Office. We couldn’t have done it without you, Amy!”

... Mike Kiefel for sharing a letter to him from “a ghost from your Cincinnati past “ who said “You were my freshman English teacher at the University of Cincinnati from October 1973 to May 1974. Lots of memories of Mike Kiefel. Ya know why? You were a great teacher for me. You used to say ‘write boldly’ and now, foolish as it sounds, it’s the only way I can and actually enjoy doing it.”

... Debbie Frazier and Julie Sachs (see Students—The Reason We’re Here below).

Making the Difference

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And... according to Mr. Storms, “all I did was sit back and eat dark chocolate!” Regardless that he didn’t share the chocolate, hats off to Bill and his outstanding staff. We appreciate you.

... and then there are Facility Services folks who have been overwhelmingly busy all summer coordinating new building needs, tracking architects and contractors and basically running to meet deadlines, budgets and demands from various areas on campus. Try building two brand new buildings in Walla Walla, one new building in Clarkston and still undertake a huge new addition to an existing facility and we can only sit back, look at you and say “WOW!” However, add to that, the start of a new year, doing all this without additional workforce and meeting the demands of the rest of us. Hats off and heartfelt thanks for everything you’ve done this past summer. We’re impressed!

Students—The Reason We’re Here

Melissa Harrison, Recruitment Coordinator and Educational Advisor sent the following e-mail to Karin Hilgersom:

I just wanted to let you know that today I had a wonderful experience with two of our faculty members and I thought I’d pass on the message. One of my advisees came to me today and had decided that although he was already in day four of the Farrier program, it just wasn’t for him. He does his own horseshoeing and rides for the WWCC rodeo team but he did not want that to be his career.

So that led us to a long chat about what career options he would like to explore. He really liked the idea of Animal Science or Ag Business so we headed off to see Debbie Frazier. She explained to him very clearly what the requirements and expectations were for the degrees and was able to tell him which of the classes he could still enroll in. She was nice, inviting and VERY helpful.

After getting information on the Ag classes and enrolling in those, we had one other course to get started in—Math 65. This particular student was not excited at all about math and openly admitted that “math isn’t my thing.” There was still an 8:30 class open with Julie Sachs so off we went to see Julie. Like Debbie, she dropped everything to help this student. She said that she would be glad to have him in class, gave him the assignments he missed, let him borrow materials until he could purchase his own and even set a time to see him in the math lab in case he needed more help.

Melissa added: What great faculty members we have!! Debbie and Julie really went above and beyond for this young man today when it would have been just as easy to do otherwise. He was very happy with the experience and left with a smile and a refreshed excitement about WWCC.

Spreading the News

Things in your Marketing and Communications Department at WWCC are off and running, with many positive things happening. Melissa Harrison, Outreach Coordinator is definitely “out reaching!” When Melissa is not out in our service district, she is following up with the contacts made when she was out there.

Providing Melissa with the tools for her activities is a key part of marketing WWCC. While she is actively out there, we are working behind the scenes to design and produce materials that help us showcase our college in a positive way. Information about WWCC’S programs and services is being compiled by Cathy Nelson. Watch for her to be in touch with you soon.

Dedication Ceremony October 12
Health Science/Performing Arts—Noon
Water & Environmental Center—1 p.m.

For more information about how you can participate in outreach activities, give Melissa a call at ext 4675.