

# LEGACIES

Central Oregon Community College Foundation Magazine | 2023

## A Groundbreaking Moment

Investing in careers, community  
and care for Jefferson County

Forever the Focus

Active Engagement

Impact of Giving Report

# contents

## features

### 4 Forever the Focus

Champions of the COCC Foundation, Trish and Bill Smith have prioritized education with leadership, generosity and a dash of culinary passion  
*By Mark Russell Johnson*

### 6 A Groundbreaking Moment

Investing in careers, community and care for Jefferson County  
*By Mark Russell Johnson*

### 10 Active Engagement

How sharing your time, talent — and even appetite! — contributes to student success  
*By Haley Nelson*

### 15 Impact of Giving Report

Your gifts in 2022-23 have greatly improved students' access to education



The Clothing Connection offers inspiring volunteer opportunities

10



3

COCC Foundation trustee Rodney Cook shares his thoughts on community service



CENTRAL OREGON  
community college  
FOUNDATION

## departments

2 Letter From the President

3 Where Passion Meets Purpose

12 Being the First  
A newly formed scholarship fund is designated to support COCC's first-generation students

14 The Nancy R. Chandler Lecture Series

Launching the  
"Growing Together"  
campaign for  
Jefferson County

6



Trish and Bill Smith have  
prioritized education

4



cover, left: Timothy Park  
middle bottom: Joshua Langlais  
right: Submitted photo

# LEGACIES

2023

Vol. 35

## MANAGING EDITOR

Aimee Metcalf

## ADVISORS

Zak Boone, Mark Russell Johnson, Jenn Kovitz, Brittany Nichols, Wendy Patton

## WRITERS

Mark Russell Johnson, Haley Nelson, Wendy Patton

## GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Joanna Larsen

## PHOTOGRAPHERS

John Moore, Timothy Park, Eugen Von Helmbrecht

## COCC FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Steve Callan  
Rodney Cook  
Beau Eastes  
Tim Green  
Daisy Layman  
Erin MacDonald  
Jenny Malone  
Vicki Russell  
Kathy Smith  
Chuck Yeaman  
Erin Merz (Ex-officio)

## COCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Laura Craska Cooper  
Joe Krenowicz  
Erin Merz  
Erin Foote Morgan  
Jim Porter  
Erica Skatvold  
Alan Unger

## COCC FOUNDATION

2600 NW College Way  
Bend, OR 97703  
541.383.7225  
foundation@cocc.edu

*The COCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit*

*The Central Oregon Community College Foundation Magazine is published annually. Contents may only be reprinted with permission from the Foundation. Central Oregon Community College is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer.*

## Letter From the President

The arrival of autumn is such a wonderful time of year in Central Oregon. For those of us who work in education, fall feels extra special. As our campuses bustle with students' return, the new term begins as a fresh start, full of potential and goals to achieve — as transformative as the season itself.

Transformations are happening in other areas, too. COCC will soon break ground on a new building on our Madras campus, expanding the College's offerings in Jefferson County. The 24,000-square-foot facility on land generously donated by the Bean Foundation will serve our surrounding communities. From new state-of-the-art classrooms and labs, COCC will provide full degree and certificate programs in sought-after fields like nursing and early learning — academic paths that meet critical workforce gaps in our region. The Madras campus expansion will also include a child care center that will not only serve local families — and help alleviate a regional day care strain — but also become part of the on-site learning process for students. You can read about this innovative effort, and how you can be part of it, in "A Groundbreaking Moment."

One of my favorite memories from this past year was the Meal of the Year gala in April — held in person for the first time since 2020 — which returned with incredible spirit and celebration. It was a magical night, and truly an honor to recognize the Bend Foundation for the organization's decades of commitment to the COCC Foundation, our students and our region. The evening proved transformative, too, bringing COCC scholarship fundraising levels to new heights: This year, the COCC Foundation will offer \$1.9 million in awards to students in need.

Your part in these changes is pivotal. We are grateful for your involvement in transforming both individual lives and communities. Together, we are expanding the very reach and impact of COCC.

Laurie Chesley  
COCC President



Meal of the Year 2023  
The Bend Foundation's Romy Mortensen, Mike Hollern, Becky Johnson, Conley Brooks Jr. and Kirk Schueler with Laurie Chesley.

# WHERE PASSION MEETS PURPOSE

## Meet Rodney Cook, COCC Foundation Trustee

By Wendy Patton, Charitable Giving Officer

Rodney Cook, a lifelong Oregonian, joined the COCC Foundation board in 2019 and currently serves on the finance and audit committee as well as the Chandler Lecture Series advisory committee. He is the director of financial planning at Rosell Wealth Management. An alum of Linfield College and Warner Pacific College, Cook has coached young athletes through the Central Oregon Track Club and also serves on the board of the Boys & Girls Club of Bend.



### WHERE IS HOME?

Home is Bend — the place where my heart finds solace and my soul feels at home, surrounded by breathtaking landscapes, a vibrant community and a charm that is uniquely its own. The great outdoors is an integral part of my daily life.

### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING?

Bend caters to my inner child: mountain biking, trail running, hiking, skiing, paddleboarding, often with my loyal canine companions by my side. I get my excitement by engaging in competitive sports and pushing my limits in adventure sports.

### HOW DID YOUR EDUCATION IMPACT YOU?

Education has truly been the key that unlocked doors of opportunity, broadened my horizons and enriched my life in ways that are immeasurable. It is a journey...reminding me there is always more to discover, explore and contribute to the world around me.

### CAN YOU SHARE WHAT COCC MEANS TO YOU?

COCC's mission and vision align with my values and aspirations, igniting a passion for student success and community enrichment — a place where every individual, regardless of background, is welcomed with open arms. The caliber of the exceptional faculty and staff sets a standard of excellence. As a donor, I am proud of what COCC offers. It's a place where passion meets purpose.

### WHY DO YOU SUPPORT THE COCC FOUNDATION?

I support the COCC Foundation because it is committed to creating a vibrant, accessible and transformative educational resource. By providing crucial funds for scholarships and capital improvements, cultivating relationships with stakeholders, and developing programs that foster student success, the Foundation breaks down financial barriers. It empowers the next generation of leaders, innovators and change-makers.

### WHY ARE YOU PHILANTHROPIC?

As a philanthropist, my passion lies in empowering and uplifting our youth and young adults. I believe in the tremendous potential within each individual. By investing my time, resources and expertise, I aim to create a brighter future where every young person has the chance to reach their full potential.

### WHAT DOES GIVING BACK MEAN TO YOU?

Giving back was taught to me at a young age by my parents. Yet, it goes beyond mere actions. It is a profound connection to something greater than myself. It is the understanding that my presence in this world is not measured solely by personal achievements, but by the impact I leave on others.

### PARTING THOUGHTS?

Each one of us, in our own unique way, holds the power to uplift and inspire those around us. In this bustling world, it is easy to lose sight of the profound impact we can have on one another. Our collective strength lies in the genuine connections we forge, in the moments where we lend a listening ear or offer a helping hand.

left: Karen Cammack  
right: Submitted photo



# FOREVER THE FOCUS

By Mark Russell Johnson

Champions of the COCC Foundation, Trish and Bill Smith have prioritized education with leadership, generosity and a dash of culinary passion

Amber Ballard barely knew Trish and Bill Smith when she lived in Bend — but she'll never forget them. When the 21-year-old Midwesterner moved to town in 2002, she was adrift, seeking a new direction. Prior attempts at college hadn't held, but Ballard was focused on a fresh start and enrolled in accounting and math classes at COCC, quickly discovering faculty who inspired her and tutors who cared. It began to open her eyes to her own potential — and when she received a Foundation scholarship provided by the Smiths, something sparked.

"It was the first time I had confidence in my intelligence...not just that I could get an education, but that I could excel," she recalls. Ballard went on to become an accounting tech for the city of Bend, earned a bachelor's in economics from Portland State University and an MBA from Eastern Oregon University — teaching and tutoring part time at COCC for five years along the way — and today she's the director of finance for Papa Murphy's International, a pizza juggernaut with annual sales close to \$809 million.

"I feel like a success story," Ballard, a mother of two, says proudly but moored by gratitude. While the story is certainly of her own scripting, Ballard is quick to trace its early chapters to her scholarship.

When COCC announced on Facebook earlier this year that Bill had passed away in November and the Bend Foundation was making a significant gift to COCC Foundation scholarships in his honor, Ballard quickly shared her condolences: "I'm sorry to hear of Bill's passing. I am grateful for Bill and Trish's generosity

and support that helped me develop into who I am today."

"Develop" is certainly a word synonymous with the Smith family. Bill's forever imprint on Bend was his reimagining of the city's long-gone lumberyards into the thriving Old Mill District, a hub of live music, riverside trails, restaurants and shops. For half a century, the Smiths have provided volunteer leadership to steward the cherished place they first came to in 1970, helping it develop from a spent mill town into a thriving community. An equally enduring legacy: helping others develop their own best selves.

The power of learning has always been a priority for the Smiths. A Gonzaga education graduate, Trish's first job out of college was teaching remedial math on the Yakima Indian Reservation and she later taught at Bear Creek Elementary in Bend. In 1974, after volunteering for the Pinckney Arts Center siting

committee (at the encouragement of Mike Hollern, who gave Bill his internship with the Brooks-Scanlon Lumber Company and put his trajectory in motion), Trish began serving as a trustee on the COCC Foundation board — and didn't veer from that commitment for 30 years. She held the role of chairperson from 1990-94 and was later instated as just one of seven emeritus members.

One of Trish's notable accomplishments was helping create the annual Meal of the Year fundraiser in 1979, coining the gala's name and envisioning its look and feel. "We didn't have a vigorous recruitment or scholarship program," Trish recalls. "We needed something to help people understand what the COCC Foundation did." With that charge — and being a fan of all things culinary and community — Trish co-designed a black tie-optional event that could appeal to an audience who went to formal dances in Sunriver and attended dinner parties in Bend.

Elaborate sets and murals, painstakingly painted by Trish and other volunteers, transformed a number of Central Oregon spaces (before the event permanently settled in Mazama Gym) into "A Night in Cairo" and other festive themes. The fundraiser soon became a highly anticipated, and successful, gathering. In April, the event raised more than \$400,000 for scholarships.

A consummate hostess and devotee of Julia Child, Trish brought her culinary appreciation to many facets of COCC, including teaching a Community Education course on hosting memorable meals. In 2005, she proposed a partnership between Anthony's Restaurant, an Old Mill District tenant with a history of fundraising, and the COCC Foundation: The annual "Feast at the Old Mill" was born, a benefit for the College's Culinary program. Trish and Bill were actively involved in raising money for the construction of the highly regarded Cascade Culinary Institute in 2010.



I am grateful for Bill and Trish's generosity and support that helped me develop into who I am today."

Students were forever the focus. When Trish, as board chair, saw that the student voice was missing from the trustees' yearly retreat, she began a tradition of inviting scholarship recipients so they could share their stories. Her emphasis on lifting students up led to the honor of serving as commencement speaker in 2009.

Of their myriad ways of championing COCC, making sure that deserving students could access a college education was paramount. For decades, the Smiths have donated to COCC scholarships; they set up an endowment in 1999 to solidify that practice of giving. "The conversation was always focused on scholarships," says Trish, who still reads essays that help determine scholarship awards. "This will always be important to us."

Many, many lives have benefited from that aid. Current student Rebekah Dunkle is returning to school — and an early life passion — after a 15-year career took her in a different direction. "I would love to work in oncology nursing or labor and delivery," says Dunkle, who's prepping to take her Nursing program entrance exams. "This scholarship has made a tremendous impact on my life."

This past May, on "Billy Day," a life celebration held at the Hayden Homes Amphitheater to honor Bill Smith, several thousand gathered in the sunshine. Words like "generosity" and "selfless" surfaced during the remembrances. The Smith's son, Matt, in a tribute, recalled a life lesson that ended with his father saying, "See how much fun it is to do nice things for people?" For Bill and Trish Smith, it's an essential life ingredient.



Bill Smith, 1941 - 2022



# A GROUNDBREAKING MOMENT

*Investing in careers, community and care for Jefferson County*

By Mark Russell Johnson



An iceberg emerges abruptly in the classroom. Sketched across the room's whiteboard by professor Amy Howell, Ph.D., the quick blue doodle — its broad base plunged deeply beneath a waterline, with only a small top exposed — is more than a momentary visual. For students of this “Intro to Early Childhood Education” class at COCC's Bend campus, it reiterates just how little we know of people by what's visible.

Starting to orient themselves for careers working with little ones from varied backgrounds, the class engages in a share session about

their own unobservable selves — their heritages, their home lives, their histories. The exercise quickly opens eyes to cultural and other differences. One student says that she and her family celebrate her adoption day every year. Another speaks mostly Spanish at home. One shares that outdated gender roles clouded her upbringing.

The classroom is set up like an elementary school with small worktables and brightly colored pen caddies. Children's books occupy shelves. A little stuffed hedgehog sits atop a cabinet, clinging to a spotted mushroom with glee. Mirroring the work environment, the learning space is inspiring — and essential for certificates and degrees in the Early Childhood Education program.

It's also largely based at the Bend campus. But the College is currently underway with a project, supported by the COCC Foundation's “Growing Together” campaign, to develop a new facility at the Madras campus — anticipated to be fully open by January of 2025 — that will bring a permanent training center for the Early Childhood Education program to Jefferson County.

It will serve an audience of early educators who tend to hail from beyond Bend: This year, of the 10 students who completed their early learning degree or certificate, three were from Madras, one was from Warm Springs and two were from Redmond.

With curriculum delivered in both English and Spanish, the degrees and certificates will be actively integrated into an on-site child care space, fully managed by the long-running Children's Learning Center of Madras. Care and enrichment for toddlers and infants from the community will go hand in hand with experiential learning for COCC students, a cooperative formula that will serve some 100 children and their families with a critical workforce solution (see: “Child's Play a Serious Topic.”)

The 24,000-square-foot expansion will also house degree and certificate programs for the College's well-established Nursing, Nursing Assistant and Medical Assistant disciplines, all essential occupations for a county, like much of Central

Oregon, that's hitting a new stride. A 2022 study from Portland State University estimates a “relatively robust” growth rate for Jefferson County of 0.7% to 0.8% annually, a figure that easily outpaces rural America as a whole, which only rose by 0.13% between April of 2020 and July of 2021, reveals the academic journal “Rural Sociology.” In all, across the four academic programs, as many as 88 new graduates could potentially matriculate each year.



**GROWING TOGETHER**  
*Investing in careers, community and care for Jefferson County*



**Across the four academic programs, as many as 88 new graduates could potentially matriculate from COCC Madras each year.”**



### GATHERING MOMENTUM

Looking out over an open field of verdant, wild-grown wheatgrass, with Mt. Jefferson swaddled in clouds in the distance, Daleena Green stands at the edge of COCC's Madras campus on a hot May day. A western meadowlark trills cheerily nearby. Green, the executive director of the Madras-based Bean Foundation, glances at the architectural rendering in her hands, looks around, and visualizes.

The plans depict a two-story, two-tone brick structure tucked into the slight hillside. Upstairs: science labs and simulated hospital spaces. Downstairs: The Children's Learning Center and early learning student observation rooms. The second level bridges to the existing building with an open patio, while a broad play area for toddlers and pre-kindergartners, below, fans out in the direction of the mountains.

"There's a lot of momentum for it, a lot of buzz," Green says of the project. After years of discussion and communal planning, the campus extension — on land gifted by the Bean Foundation — has taken schematic form. (Site preparation is currently underway.) The main thing that Al Bean set out to do with the nonprofit he started in 1981, Green emphasizes, was to support education for local youth by partnering with the community. "This," she says, "checks all the boxes."

For Louis "Al" Bean and his wife, Velva, putting opportunity into the hands of others was how they chose to leave their legacy of nearly 400 acres. A World War II Navy veteran who farmed in the area and became an insurance agent, Bean loved his hometown — and saw its promise. Currently, fundraising for the "Growing Together" campaign is still very much ongoing, but the 26 acres gifted to COCC (coupled with the Bean Foundation's original 23-acre donation, which first established the Madras campus in 2011) certainly set the keystone.

Just beyond the overgrown edge of the donated property, a new paved pedestrian trail, installed by the city, unspools in both directions. The seven-mile path connects many spots across the community of nearly 8,000 residents, including the high school and the College's campus. It's a literal track to higher education.

"While they're still in high school, our students will have expanded opportunities to earn college credit, saving them money and time along their educational journey," says Jay Mathisen, superintendent of the 509J School District, of the COCC expansion. "Graduates and their

families will have affordable college and career opportunities that won't require them to move away."

Classes in microbiology, chemistry and other sciences will be open to more than just health care students, just as education courses will be available to more than early learning students. And as the student base at COCC Madras grows, the College will continue to bring in added opportunities from its comprehensive catalog.

### STAYING AND SERVING

Central Oregon, like much of the country, is confronting a severe medical worker shortage. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of registered nurses across the U.S. fell by more than 100,000, reports the National Council of State Boards of Nursing — by 2027, over 600,000 more are planning to retire or leave nursing. Becker's Hospital Review, a trade publication, estimated last year that some 3.2 million new health care workers, such as medical assistants and nursing assistants, will need to join the field over the next five years to keep pace with demand.



Recruiting and retention in rural areas is especially challenging, says Shannon Edgar, BSN, chief nursing officer for St. Charles Health System's Madras and Prineville clinics. "This investment is going to help us ensure we have more resources in the community," she says of the updated campus. "It's going to create a larger resource of trained professionals who are more likely to stay and serve in the community."

For Rosario Perez, that hometown option would have helped immensely. Having gravitated to health care studies straight from Madras High, the new Medical Assistant graduate and COCC Foundation scholarship recipient spent untold hours and dollars just getting to class in Bend. "The difference it would have made for me is not having to spend so much on gas almost every day, and instead of spending almost two hours in a car every day, using that time to study, and not driving far in bad weather conditions," she says.

Perez persevered, ultimately conducting one of her rotations at St. Charles' Madras clinic (one of two places she's considering working at in her community). "It's a very rewarding field," she says, sharing that helping quash barriers for Spanish speakers is part of what appeals to her about the profession.

As the Madras campus expansion gets underway, so will meaningful careers and increased community well-being. New doors are opening — and a new day for Jefferson County is coming.

## CHILD'S PLAY A SERIOUS TOPIC

The acute lack of child care across the High Desert is a fixed roadblock for many families — options for furthering an education or continuing a career are simply beyond reach. Jefferson County is a glaring example. "We've had people on the waitlist for two years," shares Teresa Martin, executive director of The Children's Learning Center in Madras. "Our current list is around 40, from infants to age five."

When The Children's Learning Center's location opens on the Madras campus, all those little ones will immediately have a place to go. The future-built, five-classroom space will accommodate up to 100 children. By partnering with COCC, the licensed business (in operation since 1966) will provide easily accessible work experience necessary for students. "We know there is a huge demand for workers in the early childhood field," Martin adds, "and this partnership will allow us to help grow the field of providers along with providing examples of best practices for early childhood services."

The center will have other functions, too. COCC's Early Child Care Business Development Accelerator Program, a turnkey training partnership with NeighborImpact, will use the space to nurture licensed-and-ready child care owners in three months. Grant funding from NeighborImpact and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is helping set the stage for success.

Learn how you can get involved with the "Growing Together" campaign by visiting [cocc.edu/growingtogether](http://cocc.edu/growingtogether).



# ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

How sharing your time, talent — and even appetite! — contributes to student success

By Haley Nelson

Support of students can take many shapes at COCC. For community members, there are a number of ways to be part of a holistic support system — and beyond that, to make a meaningful connection with students on their journey. Here are a few tangible, personal and enjoyable examples of how you can make a difference.



By donating your clothing, time or expertise, you can help COCC and OSU-Cascades students dress for success in interviews and give them a confidence boost in class. You can also provide others with a more sustainable way to shop, keeping textiles out of landfills. Any donations deemed unsuitable for the Clothing Connection are passed on to other organizations, including Goodwill, Central Oregon Veterans Outreach, Cinderella's Closet, and even a class at OSU-Cascades that upcycles old clothing items into works of art.

## 'FITS THAT UPLIFT

The next time you're cleaning out your closet, consider bringing your gently used garments to COCC's Clothing Connection. This free clothing resource for students has grown rapidly since it officially opened its doors in 2021 (and actually traces its heritage to a long-ago COCC program that existed in the 1960s). What started with a professor in the Early Childhood Education program as a closet of strictly professional attire for interviews and internships is now a campus-wide partnership with Oregon State University-Cascades (OSU-Cascades) and a fully stocked secondhand boutique. The Clothing Connection offers everything from suits, coats and dresses to active-wear, shoes and accessories.

Students can select up to 10 items per term and can even submit request forms online for specific clothing items to be delivered

to COCC's branch campuses in Redmond, Prineville and Madras.

"There are a lot of challenges for students coming to school and pursuing their dreams through education," says Pat Fulton, a CC volunteer and COCC Foundation Trustee emeritus. "This is a natural extension of what the Foundation does — meeting the needs of students."

"Free clothes is always a good-sounding idea," says Andrew Le, a second-year student who enjoys thrift shopping at the Clothing Connection. "The people there are super nice, super helpful."

Volunteers at the Clothing Connection can do more than help shoppers find what they need and style outfits. Those with sewing skills sometimes repair or alter items as well.



Gently used and freshly washed clothing donations can be made at the main location in Ochoco Hall, Room 225, or at the Coats Campus Center on the Bend campus. New volunteers are always welcome! Clothing Connection hours are from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays, during fall, winter and spring terms (closed summers). Contact [clothingconnection@cocc.edu](mailto:clothingconnection@cocc.edu) for information.

## CREATING CONNECTION, CREATING OPPORTUNITY

Few volunteer opportunities provide a more profound connection with students than reviewing scholarship application essays. While anonymous, these short narratives give a personal look into current and prospective students' toughest challenges and most inspirational ambitions.

Each scholarship application includes three narrative questions covering financial and life circumstances, education and career goals, and personal accomplishments. These must be reviewed and scored by four different people before the average of those



ratings determines scholarship eligibility. With about 400 applications to review each biannual cycle, it takes a team to get much-needed funds for tuition and fees to students.

"We couldn't give out almost \$2 million in scholarships every year without our volunteers," says Brittany Nichols, director of Foundation programs. Fortunately, finding people eager to take on the reading assignment isn't usually a problem.

"It's been probably 10 to 15 years," says Kathie Eckman, a volunteer and long-time COCC Foundation donor, of her narrative review history. "It's enlightening about the various reasons why people need scholarships."

As someone who originally moved to Bend as a single mother working multiple jobs, Eckman knows firsthand the challenges that can stand in the way of getting an education and the difference a scholarship can make in a person's life.

"I think the more education people have, the better off they are, and the better off our community is too," she says.

To be a volunteer for narrative reviews, you don't have to be a donor. The entire process is hosted online and takes approximately two hours to complete each fall and spring cycle.

For more information, email [foundation@cocc.edu](mailto:foundation@cocc.edu).

## SHOW UP FOR THOSE WHO KNEAD IT

Follow the aroma of fresh pastries to the most delicious way to support students: Cascade Culinary Institute's (CCI) bakery kiosk.

By enjoying a scone, almond croissant or quiche, customers of the kiosk are supporting students in the culinary program's "Retail Baking Operations" course, giving them invaluable experience in production baking, management and customer service. All tips go into CCI's scholarship fund.

"I love telling the community that the students were the ones behind it from the beginning," says Laura Unverzagt, assistant professor of Baking and Pastry. "It was their idea and drive and ambition."

"It was the most valuable class for me to take away into real life, into the baking industry," says Hayley Johnson, who was a student in the 2018 class that developed the bakery

kiosk from scratch. In their practice making multiple batches of croissants and Danishes, the group of students found themselves with an excess of product. That, in addition to their desire to share their work with the campus community, led to the idea that they begin selling their pastries.

"We also had creative freedom over what we were doing and that also translated into my job as a bakery manager," says Johnson who completed her Baking and Pastry Arts associate degree in 2019 and went on to manage a bakery for several years in Belle Fourche, South Dakota.

Each student in the course gets a week out of the term to develop their own pastry to add to the typical lineup at the kiosk. Not only do they get to offer unique treats like mochi donuts, maple bacon scones and espresso ricotta cannoli to the community, they also get to work behind the scenes to manage

ingredient inventory, profit and loss, and teams.

The bakery kiosk's hours are usually Friday mornings during fall and winter terms, 7:30-10 a.m., but vary based on program enrollment and can be checked online at [cascadeculinary.com](http://cascadeculinary.com). Come by to grab a pastry and leave helpful comments on the kiosk's feedback cards at the counter — and don't forget to come early before they sell out!



Haley Nelson is a Bend-based writer, photographer and videographer.

# BEING THE FIRST

A newly formed scholarship fund is designated to support COCC's first-generation students\*

by Mark Russell Johnson

## ROYCE GREINER, AVIATION

As a U.S. Navy aircraft mechanic, Royce Greiner spent much of his four-year service on the flight deck of the nuclear-powered USS John C. Stennis, "launching and recovering" the vessel's fleet of F/A-18E Super Hornets. He was always focused on keeping others airborne. Still, amid the F-18s constantly roaring off and touching down, a budding instinct for flight began to seep in.

After his service, and while working as a ranch hand near Yosemite National Park, a chance encounter with a helicopter pilot — along with the pilot's tales of search and rescue missions and wildland fire operations — got Greiner's attention. The pilot, a fellow veteran, encouraged him to use the GI Bill for training. Before long, Greiner moved to Bend.

"I had never been to college before, and I didn't know how to apply to school. I must've sent 100 emails

back and forth in an attempt to get all my ducks in a row," he shares. "My folks never went to college either. I was very nervous to start. Heck, I still am nervous, but I'm glad to be nervous. It indicates that I am out of my comfort zone, on the road to achieving something worthwhile."

At COCC, Greiner found a supportive veterans club, making him feel welcome from the start. His helicopter schooling soon confirmed his fascination with flight. "One of the highlights of my training was flying solo for the first time," he recalls. "On that crisp morning, I had full control of the aircraft for the first time, an experience I will never forget." Without his instructor on board, the helicopter was nearly 200 pounds lighter, which took some immediate adjustments: "It climbed higher, flew faster and was all around more responsive. After I landed, Jared, my instructor, cut my shirt tail and signed it, as is the tradition of instructors and students after a first solo."

Using the GI Bill helped Greiner take a major step toward his private pilot's license, but the funding ran out near the end of his credential attainments and his COCC Foundation scholarship was crucial to pass a series of evaluations from an FAA examiner. "The money from the Foundation scholarship went to paying for those several additional flights necessary to continue on and finish. I am so thankful to have been granted it and would like to say thank you to everyone. There are various fields I can go into, like firefighting, EMS, utility work or tours, but I haven't decided yet and I'm keeping an open mind."



Royce Greiner beside an F-18 with "AMAN (Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman) Greiner" painted honorarily on the landing gear door by his squadron.

\* At COCC, a first-generation student is one whose parent(s) did not earn an associate degree or higher.

## ADRIANA ALTAMIRANO, MASSAGE THERAPY

When Adriana Altamirano's parents moved from Jalisco, Mexico, to Idaho for a better life, starting a family and seeing their kids earn college educations was a hoped-for outcome. But no one in the family had ever been — her father had left high school before finishing. Both parents modeled an incredibly strong work ethic for their five kids, which Altamirano is proud and appreciative of, and fully supported their ambitions. As the first in her family to seek a degree, though, she was ultimately on her own.

"My inspiration was my parents," says Altamirano, who made her way to Bend in 2017 and began saving money with the hope of attending COCC's Massage Therapy program. She grew up with her mother's holistic approach to medicine and had an interest in both Eastern philosophy and helping people. "The more I learned how powerful massage can be for our wellness, the deeper my interest and desire grew to share this with others."

A few years later, Altamirano enrolled as a full-time student while also working full time in the evenings as a restaurant server in downtown Bend. Despite the extremely busy schedule, she consistently maintained a 4.0 GPA and found time to help classmates along the way — a dedication to school and service which earned her a place on the 2023 All-Oregon Academic Team.

Receiving the COCC Foundation's First-Generation scholarship enabled Altamirano to finish her degree in two years and begin her career. She's currently working part-time at Cascade Massage Therapy helping patients recover from sports injuries and car accidents. She's also contemplating a bachelor's degree in exercise science or kinesiology. As an artist (whose canvases and charcoal drawings have shown in local venues), rock climber and snowboarder, Altamirano has found a perfect base in Bend as she starts her new life.

"I was so taken aback by this whole experience, the care and the support," she says of her scholarship. "It was beyond my expectations. The support from this program and my professors has helped me realize my goals as well as attain them."

# 46%

of students identify as  
**first generation**

on their COCC Foundation scholarship application.

The Foundation received its initial "First-Generation Scholarship" gift in early 2021 and started awarding the scholarship the same year.

Adriana Altamirano's dedication to school and service earned her a place on the 2023 All-Oregon Academic Team.



“The more I learned how powerful massage can be for our wellness, the deeper my interest and desire grew to share this with others.”





# The Nancy R. Chandler Lecture Series



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES

## LECTURE SERIES RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS HUMANITIES GRANT

The Chandler Lecture Series received a 2023 Spotlight on Humanities in Higher Education Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, one of only 30 awarded nationally — and the first NEH grant COCC has ever received. This \$60,000, two-year grant will allow the Chandler Lecture Series to expand programming with a focus on a variety of humanities topics taught at COCC, including journalism, social justice, literature and art.

### UPCOMING EVENTS: FALL 2023

## THE LIFE OF A WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER

with award-winning wildlife photographer, Suzi Eszterhas

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 4, 7 P.M. | Tower Theatre and livestream

Part artist, part scientist, and part sociologist, Suzi will give us a glimpse into the life of a wildlife photographer and talk about the skills needed for this unique field. She will share her passion for conservation and how her work helps to raise awareness for the issues facing wildlife today.

*This program is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication.*



For more details and to register: [cocc.edu/foundation/clc](https://cocc.edu/foundation/clc)

## BIRTH TO 100 YEARS: Embracing the Opportunities and Challenges of a Century-Long Life

TUESDAY, OCT. 24, 6:30 P.M.  
Bend campus, Wille Hall

Features a keynote by gerontologist and former dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Portland State University, Marvin Kaiser, Ph.D., followed by a panel discussion on how people at every stage of life are navigating a new and changing map of life.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN MIGRATION

TUESDAY, NOV. 14, 6:30 P.M.  
Bend campus, Wille Hall

Oregon State University's David Wrathall, Ph.D., a lead author on the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's recent international report, will present the latest findings and share how the changing climate will alter migration patterns and impact societies around the world.

# 2022-23 Impact of Giving Report

CENTRAL OREGON  
community college  
FOUNDATION



CENTRAL OREGON  
community college  
FOUNDATION  
Nancy R. Chandler Lecture Series

# TOGETHER, WE CHANGE LIVES

## Our Mission

The COCC Foundation provides funds for scholarships and capital improvements, cultivates relationships with stakeholders to support COCC and its students and develops programs that foster COCC student success.



## IMPACT OF GIVING A NOTE FROM WENDY PATTON

There is a real sense of community at Central Oregon Community College. I joined the COCC Foundation team in February and have seen firsthand what a generous community Central Oregon is. Giving opens doors to friendships as we learn and share our passions, our visions for our community and what we have in common. Knowing people who give to nonprofits can be a catalyst for giving ourselves.

I see every day how your generosity supports COCC students as they gain access to higher learning and broader opportunities. You are literally investing in the future.

Thank you for welcoming me into your community and supporting Central Oregon Community College.



Wendy Patton  
Charitable Giving Officer

# Impact of Scholarships

## SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

**\$1.82M**   
offered in scholarship support



**368**  
scholarships awarded  
to hard-working students



**29%**  
of scholarship recipients  
identify as **BILAPOC\***

 **\$90K**

provided to students for **emergency funds**  
and **child care assistance**



**3.34**  
average **GPA** of  
scholarship recipients



**2**  
**more credits** earned  
per term than the  
average COCC student

**8.2%**

of COCC credit students  
**received a Foundation scholarship**

## Degrees Pursued

**50%**

Career and Technical Education  
certificate or degree

**40%**

Transfer degree

**7%**

Exploratory degree

**3%**

Associate of General  
Studies degree



## STUDENT IMPACT

### Kasey Ziegler

Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Chemistry  
COCC Foundation Scholarship Recipient

“With the support of the COCC Foundation scholarship, I have been able to put all my focus into school, and it has made all the difference. Before enrolling at COCC, I worked many different jobs, but never found a career that I could be completely satisfied with. Getting an education is a huge deal for me and I don’t know if it’s possible to express all the gratitude I have for those who have supported me.

I take pride in my education, and I look forward to taking pride in my career. The success I have had, and that I continue to achieve means a lot to me, and I truly believe that this scholarship has been an important component of that success. In my opinion, school is stressful enough without having to worry about how the bills are going to be paid, or how I’ll be able to afford groceries each week.

The COCC Foundation scholarship has enabled me to focus on school and have a plan for the future. I am now majoring in chemistry, and I intend on pursuing a bachelor’s and master’s degree. It’s exciting to have a plan and know that it’s possible for me to achieve these goals. Thank you so much!”



Kasey Ziegler, COCC Foundation Scholarship Recipient

## COMMUNITY IMPACT

### Cascade Culinary Institute’s Danish Exchange

In May of this year, 23 culinary and hospitality students from College 360 in Silkeborg, Denmark, visited COCC. While here, they collaborated, studied and shared ideas with Cascade Culinary Institute (CCI) students and faculty. Students formed friendships while expanding their knowledge of global practices. Then, in August, COCC Culinary Arts instructor Thor Erickson accompanied five CCI students on an exchange trip to Denmark. The group started in Copenhagen and spent two days immersing in cultural activities in and around the city, led by students from College 360. The students then traveled to Silkeborg (home of College 360), where they participated in internships at local restaurants, hotels and bakeries, focusing on their disciplines.

The exchange program began in 2016. Its stated mission is to promote cross-cultural awareness and professional proficiency in international cuisines and prepare students for responsible, culturally sensitive and creative participation in a global culinary community. The program has four key objectives: develop best practices for international culinary learning and understanding; provide firsthand experiences that explain and support the history of culinary traditions; explore native food sources and production, sustainability practices and societal leadership roles; and engage instructors and students in a reciprocal exchange of ideas, traditions, techniques, products and possibilities. Students must also demonstrate competencies in proscribed learning outcomes ranging from knowledge of Danish culinary terminology to citing differences between American and Danish cuisines.

“The Danish exchange program would not be possible without support from the COCC Foundation and many community donors. And what a gift it is for our students — to share the riches of food and culture in such a profound and life-changing way,” says Erickson.



Culinary and hospitality students from College 360 in Silkeborg, Denmark, visit COCC.

A graphic featuring a grid of colorful icons representing diverse people and a dollar sign. A white call-to-action box is overlaid on the grid.

**Change a Life Today!**  
Donate to the COCC Foundation Scholarship Fund today and change a life forever.  
Learn more at [cocc.edu/give](http://cocc.edu/give)

CENTRAL OREGON  
community college  
FOUNDATION

# The Cost of Education: Your Donated Dollars Go Further

# Words of Gratitude



**\$5,000**

Annual tuition and fee cost for most in-district students attending COCC full-time.



**\$29,393**

Estimated annual cost of attending COCC for a student living on their own. This includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, personal needs, transportation, food and housing costs.



**\$8,000 +**

The increase in earnings each year the average associate degree graduate from COCC will receive compared to someone with a high school diploma working in Oregon.



# When You Invest in the COCC Foundation, You Create Lifelong Impact for Students and Our Communities

IN 2022-23



Individual and business donors contributed to our scholarship program\*



Students received donor-supported child care assistance and student emergency awards

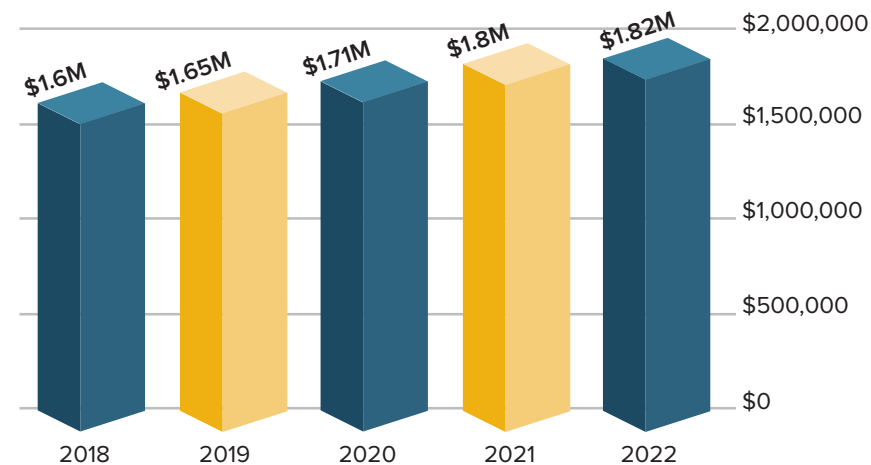


Contributed directly to COCC programs

\*For a full listing of current donors, please visit: [cocc.edu/foundation](http://cocc.edu/foundation)

## TOTAL AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED

Previous Five Years



Since 2018, the COCC Foundation has offered our students nearly \$9 million in direct scholarship support. This reflects strong endowment returns combined with annual fundraising. Historically, and again this year, the COCC Foundation's endowment ranks as one of the top endowment funds in the nation for community colleges of comparable size.





**CENTRAL OREGON**  
community college  
**FOUNDATION**

2600 NW College Way  
Bend, Oregon 97703

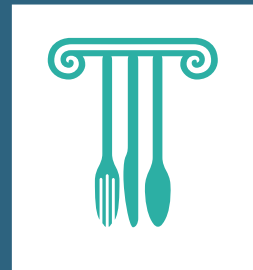
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Bend OR  
Permit No. 87

# SAVE THE DATE

## SATURDAY

# APRIL 13 2024



**MEAL**  
OF THE  
**YEAR**

