

Central Oregon Community College

COCC

magazine

2023



TRAINED ON THE FUTURE

A statewide workforce initiative is helping COCC students realize their potential and meet business needs across the district

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COVER Heather Sauerland tests terrain-awareness software at Ochoco Point. Photo by Tyler Stewart. **FEATURES** Above top: Photo courtesy of Heather Sauerland. Middle: Photo courtesy of Matthew Novak. Lower: Timothy Park.

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Letter From the President

Greetings Central Oregon — I'm pleased to introduce you to our latest issue of *COCC Magazine*. In these pages, we're proud and excited to share with you some of what makes your community college so special.

Across our diverse district, from Gilchrist to Bend to Warm Springs, COCC strives to meet the educational and enrichment goals of our communities. We are committed to being responsive to Central Oregon's needs by providing affordable, accessible education for all, and by offering new technologies, trainings and opportunities that contribute to our region's future success.

The College's forward-looking commitments are the heart of our cover story, "Trained on the Future." The piece explores COCC's role in a statewide initiative aimed at improving individuals' lives and meeting anticipated workforce gaps, creating a future in which all Oregonians can thrive.

Part of being responsive is growing when — and where — we need to. In the coming months, COCC will break ground on our campus expansion in Madras, more than doubling its size and bringing in several community-requested education and health care degree and certificate programs, plus a vital child care center. It's a significant moment for Jefferson County, with an impact that reaches all of Central Oregon: training more health care workers and early educators, ensuring fewer cars are commuting long distances and enabling families to more easily continue careers.

Community to community, and campus to campus, COCC is here to help you build your best life. That's our commitment now — and into the future.

Best regards,

Dr. Laurie Chesley
COCC President

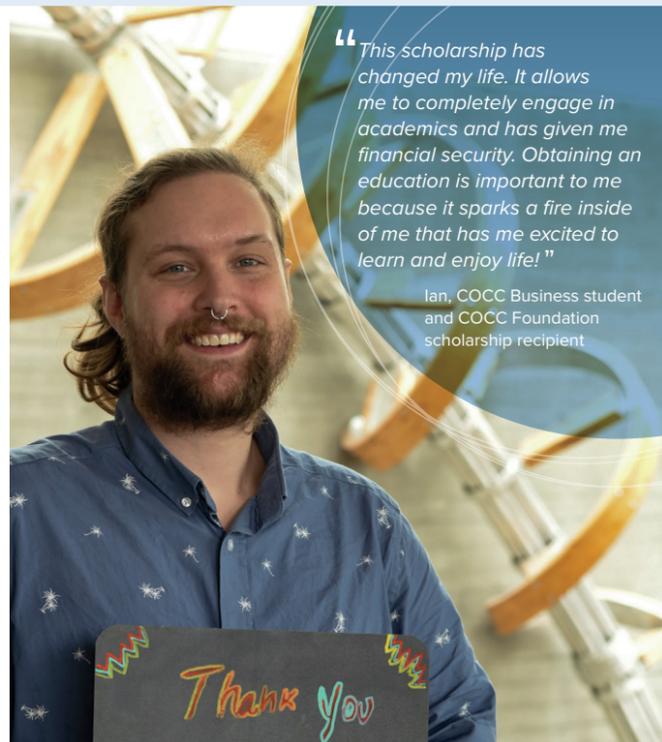


TOGETHER, WE CHANGE LIVES

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"This scholarship has changed my life. It allows me to completely engage in academics and has given me financial security. Obtaining an education is important to me because it sparks a fire inside of me that has me excited to learn and enjoy life!"

Ian, COCC Business student and COCC Foundation scholarship recipient

A MUSICAL HOMECOMING

In the opening section of Dmitri Shostakovich's "Festive Overture," there's a moment in the music when a symphony's parts begin playing louder. The violins, French horns, oboes and all other instruments lift in intensity, ascending as one. The crescendo, as such a moment is called in classical music parlance, made for an incredible beginning to the Central Oregon Symphony's concert series this past October. For those in attendance at Bend Senior High School, it seemed like the music was heralding a homecoming.

The Central Oregon Symphony, a vibrant part of COCC's Fine Arts department since 1967, is certainly experiencing a crescendo. Quieted by the pandemic for a year and a half, then holding concerts with livestream and scaled-down performances for another year, the music is rising fully once more. The "grandeur," says Michael Gesme, conductor of the symphony since 1996, has been restored.

Gesme, a music professor at COCC, recalls the joy of the concerts' complete return. "It was like being a kid in a candy store. We finally got to do big romantic pieces again." More than 1,000 people were in the audience for the Sunday afternoon performance, with another 900 attending virtually, welcoming new listeners near and far.

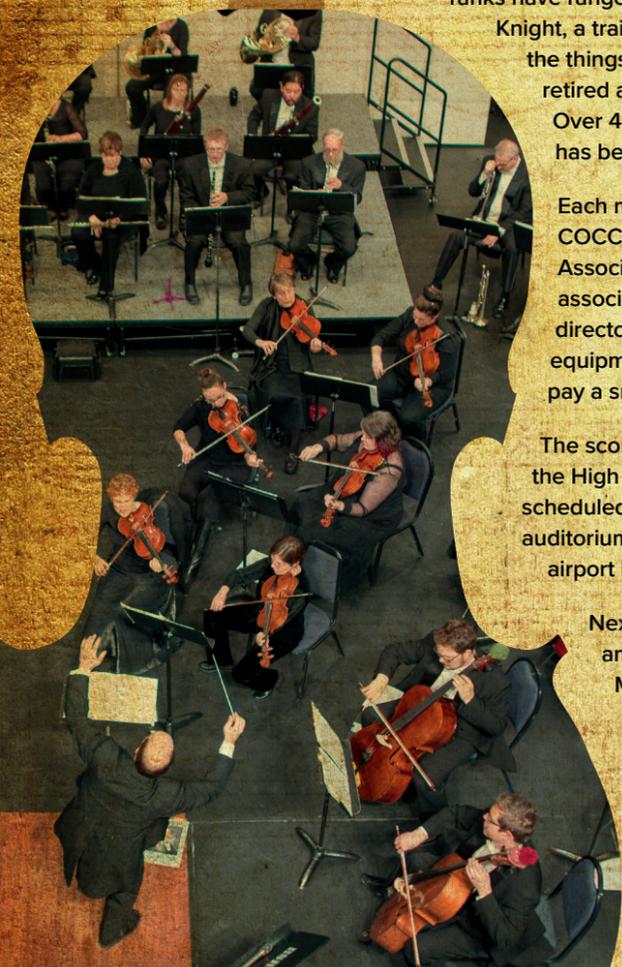
The Central Oregon Symphony is comprised of about 80 local musicians these days. Its ranks have ranged from high school students to COCC faculty to longtime residents. Leslie Knight, a trained musician, has played viola with the symphony since 1979. "It's one of the things that tethers me to happiness and fulfillment," shares Knight, who recently retired as human resources director for the Sunriver Homeowners Association. Over 44 years, she has only missed a scattering of performances. "The symphony has been my musical center."

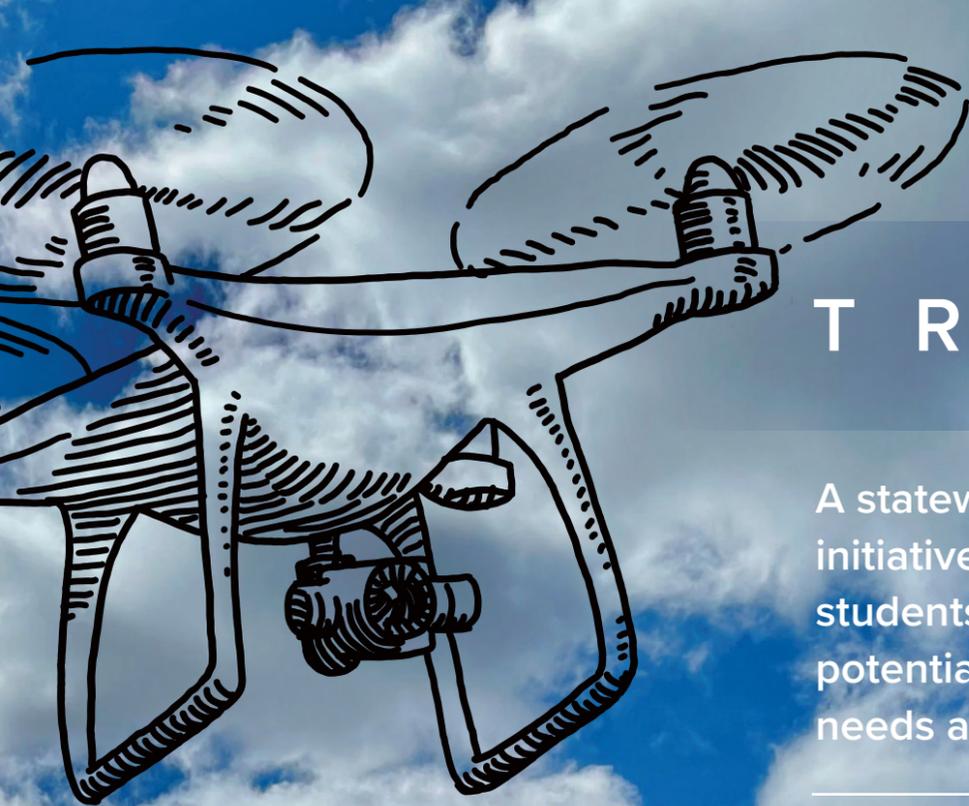
Each musician on the stage is enrolled in the one-credit symphony class at COCC. Their tuition is actually paid by the nonprofit Central Oregon Symphony Association, which also coordinates the concerts and hires guest artists. The association's financial contributions, in turn, cover the costs of the musical director's time, rehearsal space at the College, auditorium rental fees and equipment. Tickets to performances are always free, though association members pay a small annual donation to help support the beloved institution.

The scores of Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Mozart and many others have made it to the High Desert cultural scene over the years thanks to the symphony. Concerts are scheduled in the fall, winter and spring, typically held at Bend Senior High School's auditorium, though Madras High School, the Prineville library and even the Redmond airport have served as temporary concert halls for different symphony activities.

Next on the music stand: Sergei Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto, among other works, when the symphony plays at Bend Senior High School May 6 & 7. For details, visit cosymphony.com.

Do you have a Central Oregon Symphony memory to share?
Let us know: publicrelations@cocc.edu.





T R A I N E D O N T H E F U T U R E

A statewide workforce initiative is helping COCC students realize their potential and meet business needs across the district



Hovering above an astonishing patchwork of burned over and entirely unscathed homes, blackened asphalt and lime-green yards, Heather Sauerland's drone carefully swept across the neighborhood, mapping the scene with a camera. Spurred by unusually strong winds, the Echo Mountain fire of 2020 tore through Lincoln County on Oregon's coast, leaving a chaotic and haphazard trail. In Otis, an unincorporated area, Sauerland helped capture aerial imagery to quickly identify response priorities.

"Due to the relatively large area and varying terrain, I had to use terrain-following software and multiple visual observers to help ensure that I could safely monitor the drone at all times," explains the 2019 graduate of COCC's Geographic Information Systems, or GIS, program. "The intention was to provide the municipality with an overview of the damage."

Mapping wildfires is a growing niche in the West. Unmanned aerial vehicles, also known as UAVs or drones, can help with real-time decisions and post-fire analysis.

For Sauerland, a Bend-based map and technology enthusiast, being a GIS geospatial technologist offers fascinating and important assignments. Her focus might be on charting the migration path of Western monarch butterflies or using state-of-the-art

technologies to help automate farm work for a vast tree nursery.

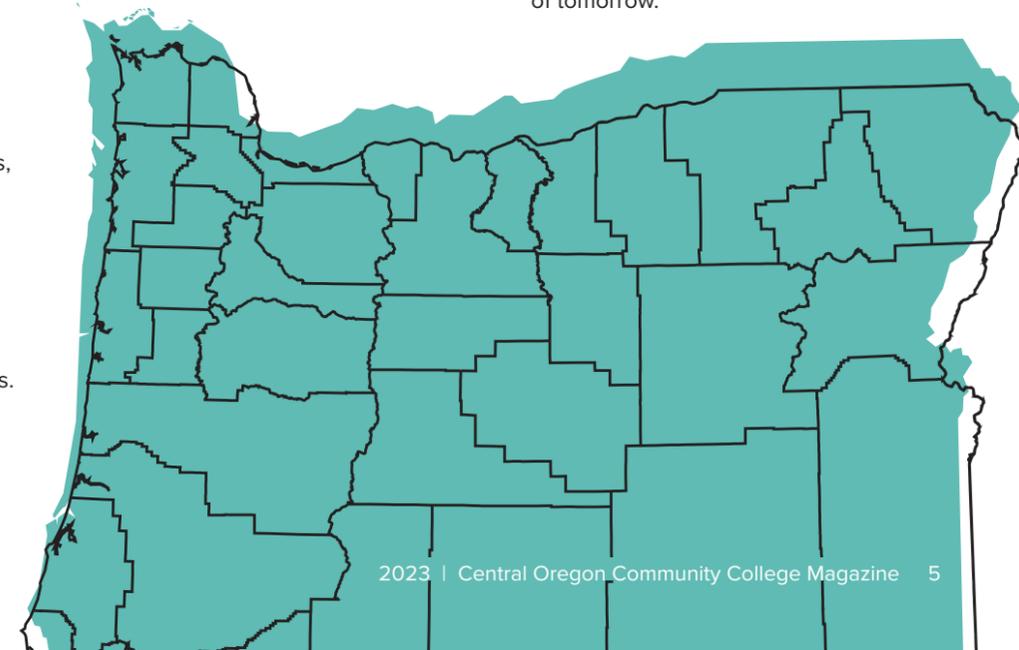
The rising field of GIS is one of a number of high-need occupations the state of Oregon has identified as part of its Future Ready Oregon initiative, a \$200 million educational investment now rolling out in grants around the state.

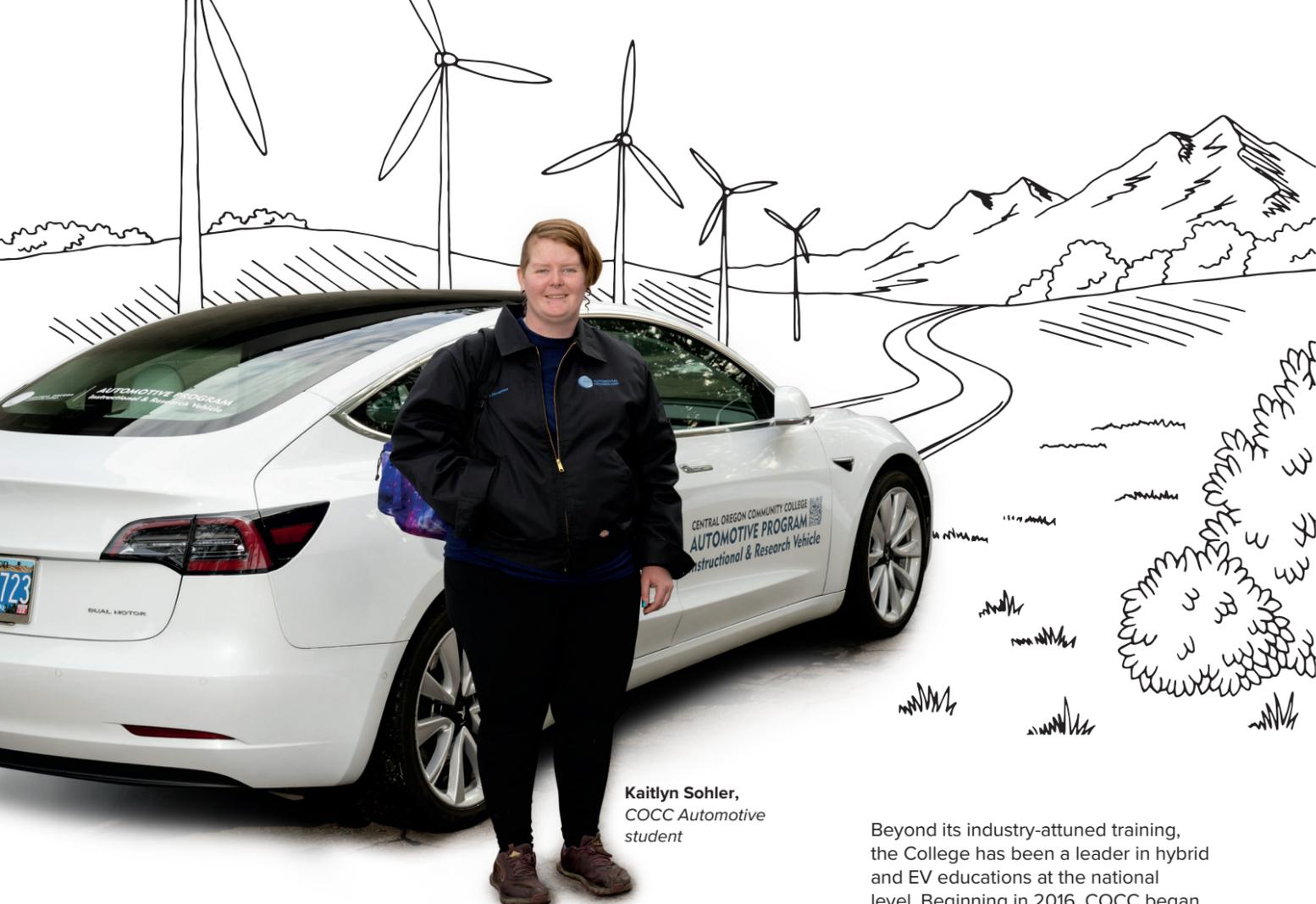
"I came to understand that a map can be even more than displaying locations," Sauerland says of her studies at COCC. "With layered data, we can attempt to understand things like how humans behave, where government assistance is most needed, and where natural disasters might hit the hardest."

Specific Future Ready Oregon grants identify vital, well-paying professional occupations — from GIS technicians and

paramedics to nurses and computer coders (see: "A Ready Blueprint") — and provide resources to support an incoming era of students, with a special focus on reaching those facing financial barriers.

Still in the early stages of implementation, COCC is using its dedicated funding to offer tuition waivers and financial support for needs like child care and internet access. The College is also developing credit-for-prior-learning efforts to evaluate experience such as military service and other outside-college learning for credit equivalency, assessments that prevent unnecessary classes and accelerate studies. Another grant-driven priority is updating workforce-ready learning tools and technology to meet Oregon industries' needs of today — and those of tomorrow.





Kaitlyn Sohler,
COCC Automotive student

A DRIVING FORCE

Approaching the Hwy. 97 intersection at Odem-Medo Way in Redmond, a compact white car quietly stops behind an idling pickup waiting for the light to change. Despite having a driver, the car's brake pedal remains untouched. No hands grip the wheel. The vehicle has ably, and incredibly, driven itself.

"These cars are the pinnacle of technology," states Jared Green, director of the College's Automotive Technology discipline, marveling at the camera-guiding functions of the program's recently acquired Tesla. The preowned car, purchased with Future Ready Oregon funds, joins several other electric and hybrid vehicles that provide hands-on experience to career and technical studies at the College.

Self-driving or not, plug-in vehicles are the future. Last year, on the heels of other states announcing plans for bans on the sale of new gas-powered vehicles beginning in 2035, Oregon signaled intentions to do the same —

and soon made it official. (New hybrids are expected to remain part of the auto market, though scaled back significantly.)

All of those electric vehicles on the road will ultimately need skilled technicians who know how to rebalance battery packs and service regenerative braking systems. COCC has already been on this electrified road for a number of years, offering two established hybrid-electric certificate tracks.

Tucker Hess was quickly hooked on electric rides. "I first developed an interest in the technology of hybrids and EVs during my first hybrid course at COCC," says the recent grad. "I loved rebuilding engines, but electric machines just hit differently." He's now a lead technician with the Bend Tesla service center.



Beyond its industry-attuned training, the College has been a leader in hybrid and EV educations at the national level. Beginning in 2016, COCC began co-designing a credentialing system for hybrid-electric vehicle technicians with Rio Hondo College in California. Up to that point, a standardized approach to skills and safety didn't exist for the fast-emerging industry. Funded by support from the National Science Foundation, the system deployed last July in auto education programs around the country.

Enrolled students in this future-focused education might bring high school shop skills or even college credits to their studies. But there are new opportunities underway at COCC for individuals with prior working or other experience — relevant to many academic areas — to potentially convert that knowledge into college credit and allow them to move more quickly toward their chosen career.

CLEAR CROSSWALK

It might be a military veteran with leadership training, an office worker versed in software, or somebody whose marketing job involved frequent public speaking in two languages. For individuals with proven skills, but without a clear-cut educational trail, there will soon be additional entry points into an academic path at COCC, a beginning that better matches college readiness.

"The credit-for-prior-learning grant will really support our region's adult learners," says Cindy Lenhart, Ph.D., instructional dean at COCC. "The grant is helping build a better 'crosswalk' to the College. We'll have people coming in who have years of different kinds of professional experience." COCC's career and technical education programs, such as Graphic Design, Manufacturing and Apprenticeship programs, in fields like construction, will be a natural fit for this clearly delineated crosswalk.

The credit-for-prior-learning program builds on an existing but limited framework at COCC, creating more capacity to guide more students forward. Funding from Future Ready Oregon enabled COCC to hire a coordinator and implement key resources. Most certified skills at the state and federal levels already translate into credit for prior certification. Even those individuals with less measurable abilities will have more options to demonstrate college-level knowledge and skills through things like challenge tests and hands-on demonstrations.

"The credit-for-prior-learning grant will really support our region's adult learners. The grant is helping build a better 'crosswalk' to the College."

Adult learners save time and money with this approach. Colleges and communities benefit as well. A recent study by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning found that students utilizing prior-learning credits — across 72 institutions — had much better completion rates than the general student population: 49% compared to 27%.

REACHING POTENTIAL

COCC is staying trained on the future, and its educational programs — and new state investment — will continue to be an important part of an equitable, empowered Oregon. Challenges ahead for Oregon, and elsewhere, include confronting wildfires, aiming for zero emissions and moving beyond a pandemic. COCC alumni will be on those front lines.



Erin Dailey

For Health Information Management student Erin Dailey, her future feels full of potential. Thanks to a Future Ready Oregon emergency assistance fund, she was able to lighten her financial burden a little and keep her concentration on her soon-to-be career.

"I never believed I could do medical coding or reimbursement. It seemed to be out of reach," says Dailey, who finishes her studies in a few months. "I'm enjoying these classes, grasping these concepts."

Graduates like Dailey will step into key workplace roles that impact the greater wellness of Oregon. They'll also step into meaningful, well-paying positions. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Central Oregon in 2021 ranked third in the nation among nonmetropolitan areas for top-paying jobs for medical records specialists, with an annual mean wage of \$54,430.

As individuals reach new potential, so does all of Oregon. It's a sustainable formula for the future.

A Ready Blueprint



Connecting priority populations of underserved Oregonians with well-paying jobs in critical sectors like technology

and health care is the focus of Future Ready Oregon, or Senate Bill 1545. Signed into law last year, the initiative establishes a set of grant programs within the state's Higher Education Coordinating Commission to focus on reinforcing an equitable, best-equipped Oregon workforce. The initiative is targeting training for the following occupational areas in Central Oregon, all of which offer wages at or above the median for the region:

- Automotive Technology
- Computer-Aided Drafting
- Computer Information Systems
- Dental Assisting
- Geographic Information Systems
- Graphic Design and Illustration
- Health Information Management
- Human Services/Addiction Studies
- Massage Therapy
- Manufacturing (Welding and Machining)
- Medical Assistant
- Networking and Cybersecurity
- Nursing
- Nursing Assistant
- Paramedic/Emergency Medical Services
- Pharmacy Technician
- Web Development



INTERNATIONAL INSIGHTS

From learning abroad to local language immersion, COCC students expand their horizons, carving professional and personal paths

by Katie Roberts



When Kimberly Hollcroft spotted a flyer advertising an international exchange through COCC's Cascade Culinary Institute (CCI), it grabbed her attention. She'd always been fascinated by European culture, especially when it came to cooking and cuisine — and here was an opportunity catering exactly to that.

Accepted into the program, Hollcroft first met up with a group of vocational college students from Denmark who'd traveled to Oregon, learning about the Pacific Northwest's food, beverage and hospitality industry. They spent time at CCI in Bend, then traveled to Denmark to experience the nation's cuisines and culture. Outside of class, Hollcroft toured Danish cities, tapping into the kitchen craft.

"I was taught by some of the industry's most talented chefs," says Hollcroft, a baking and pastry professional.

Right: Jessica Gray and Kimberly Hollcroft pose in their culinary uniforms at the culinary school in Denmark

"The high amount of trust they had in me was very humbling, giving me so much confidence with every day that passed."

Hollcroft joins a host of students who, for years, have come away from COCC transformed and inspired through a

"I was taught by some of the industry's most talented chefs."



robust menu of international study programs. While COCC has an expansive World Languages program, offering for-credit courses in French, Italian, Spanish and Chinese, it also offers a unique mix of international exchange and program experiences. Each one is diverse in its focus and studies, with all sharing the same goal: to expand students' cultural horizons and perspectives beyond Central Oregon.



Lin Hong teaching Chinese at COCC

¡HOLA! BARCELONA

COCC's study abroad in Barcelona exposes students to 10 weeks of life and language beyond U.S. borders. For each session, a different COCC professor takes the lead in Spain, teaching classes within their realm of expertise.

Just this past spring, students joined the program under the leadership of Bruce Emerson, a professor of Physics. "For most students, this was their first time overseas," says Emerson. In addition to taking intensive Spanish classes and courses in Emerson's forté, the students stepped out of the classroom, touring Barcelona and other destinations in Spain.

Emerson noted that navigating travel and living in Europe's second-densest city was a big, empowering eye-opener for most. "We definitely found out we're like the country mice, not the city mice, but that didn't mean we weren't having a really great time while we were there."

Back at COCC, Emerson hopes to gather data and track the program's impact, building insight around lessons learned and following how students use their experiences to carve professional and personal paths.

SPANISH IMMERSION IN THEIR OWN BACKYARD

Speaking of data, the sheer number of participants in COCC's Central Oregon Summer Spanish Immersion (COSSI) tells yet another story of success. Launched in 2017 with approximately 70 participants at the Bend campus, the program saw its enrollment double within two years.

This past June, after a two-year hiatus caused by



Indonesia Field Study Program

the COVID-19 pandemic, COSSI shifted to COCC's Redmond campus, opening its doors with a scaled-back, socially distanced version in a new, blended learning environment. The move to Redmond, along with some content changes, will offer a more dedicated space for the program, according to Stephanie Goetsch, COSSI's program manager.

"They come, they love it, and at the end of this intense week, they're still smiling," Goetsch says. "Now in Redmond, we have the space to expand the program."

While infusing culture into COCC, the program has also generated an incredibly supportive community response. COSSI fills up quickly. Many students are people planning to travel to Spanish-speaking countries. Having a Spanish immersion bootcamp right in their backyard isn't just a quality opportunity, it's a convenient one. The students' engagement, camaraderie and connection add to COSSI's value and popularity.

"If you come to campus and watch COSSI workshops for just 10 minutes," Goetsch says, "you're going to get sucked in — there's just that much enthusiasm. And it's fantastic!"



"In the evenings, around the bonfire, it's fascinating how the students find ways to connect."

FIELD NOTES FROM INDONESIA

Since 2012, Matthew Novak, Ph.D., an associate professor of Psychology at COCC, has taken students to Indonesia for a travel experience in global health and conservation-related behavioral research. The Indonesia Field Study Program is well established with the Pusat Studi Satwa Primata (Primate Research Center), enabling COCC students to learn alongside their Indonesian counterparts. Working and living in the field, studying primates and their habitat, participants build both their research and scholastic skills and their relationships with fellow students.

"In the evenings, around the bonfire, it's fascinating how the students find ways to connect," Novak says. "Despite how big the world is and how far from home they feel, they are all very much the same, sharing similar desires, wants, fears and hopes. Finding that common ground helps prepare them for the bigger world beyond COCC."

Katie Roberts is an award-winning editor, writer and communications specialist based in Sisters.

Design: Lora Szaraniec

Left: Timothy Park



EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES IN MADRAS

Opening new doors of hometown opportunity, the Madras campus expansion will include in-demand health and education programs and a community child care center

Looking up the road from Madras High School, early education teacher Julie Mitchell can already envision the changes taking shape on the near horizon. For Mitchell, COCC's pending campus expansion nearby — expected to open in late 2024 or early 2025 — will bring some incredible opportunities to her hometown. And her students.

"This is going to give them the opportunity to further their education and their careers in Madras and remove some of the barriers like traveling out of town," says Mitchell, who teaches dual-credit classes that prepare her high school students for entry into college and careers working with little ones. Mitchell herself earned an Early Childhood Education associate degree at COCC, driving to Bend and Redmond or going online for most of her schooling.

The addition of the new approximately 15,000-square-foot facility at COCC Madras, on 26 acres of land bestowed by the community-focused Bean Foundation, will house a dedicated program presence for Early Childhood Education — and eliminate those lengthy commutes. Students in the Education programs will be able to attain all certificates and degrees in Madras, finding options for learning in both English and Spanish. Part of the applied learning will take place at an on-site child care center, managed by a community partner, which will create 100 new child care openings for Jefferson County families.

Along with addressing imperative workforce gaps that are central to the county — and the greater region — the expansion will include a welcoming family literacy space and a community room for events. The High Desert Education Service District's early intervention initiative will also utilize

space in the five-room child care center for preschool programming focused on children with special needs.

In another area of the new building, health care education will be the focus. Classrooms and labs will be an extension of COCC's Nursing, Medical Assistant and Certified Nursing Assistant programs, with simulated clinical settings that provide top-notch training. Local students can undertake a two-year Nursing degree or a one-year Medical Assistant certificate without the added time and cost of a 50-minute trip each way to and from Bend.

"Working in rural health care is all about heart — caring for our neighbors, our friends, our families," says Shannon Edgar, St. Charles Health System's chief nursing officer for Madras and Prineville. "But recruiting and retention in rural areas is an ongoing challenge. COCC's new health care trainings being offered locally are going to create a larger resource of trained professionals who are more likely to stay and serve in the community."

Funding for the project is coming from a combination of state, federal, grant-based and private philanthropic support. Groundbreaking is expected later this summer — a much-anticipated date.

"More opportunities to learn here at home mean greater ease and convenience for students, helping people stay within their community," says Jefferson County Commissioner Kelly Simmelink.

While the expansion is geared specifically toward health careers and Early Childhood Education, the campus, as the student base grows, will continue to bring in added services and courses, says Jeremy Green, Madras campus director: "All community members in Jefferson County and Warm Springs will benefit."



BOBCATS AFIELD

Two former COCC students are making a world of difference



KELSEY HARPHAM

Kelsey Harpham is on the front lines of climate change response. As the project manager for the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, an international nongovernmental organization (NGO), she leads an initiative that helps countries self-assess and enhance

their water resilience at a time when droughts are happening worldwide.

"We're currently working with over 20 countries to review national climate plans and policies — such as those developed to meet commitments of the Paris Agreement — and to build capacity and also support development of recommendations to strengthen national climate plans," explains Harpham, who recently returned from COP27, the United Nations' climate change conference in Egypt.

The project utilizes a "Water Tracker" diagnostic guide that offers a practical, actionable tool to aid countries in strengthening their national climate plans. "I find this work fulfilling because it allows me to learn from partners all over the world who are leading in the implementation of innovative climate adaptation approaches," she adds.

"It gives me hope for the future to see such passion and collective action."

Harpham had already attained a bachelor's degree in urban and environmental policy prior to enrolling at COCC. "But after a couple of years of work I realized that I wanted to have a more technical background to better understand the intersection of policy and science and engineering," Harpham says. By taking requisite preparatory engineering coursework at COCC, she was able to enter Oregon State University's graduate program in water resources engineering.

Having gone far in a short period of time, Harpham appreciates the career recharge that COCC offered.

"The COCC faculty were not only excellent in their fields but were amazing as teachers."

From teaching in vocational schools in Brittany to working at a secondary school in the suburbs of Paris, Théo Martin has forged a gratifying career as an English teacher in France. Having grown up in Central and Eastern Oregon, Martin's interest in the French language only began to take hold toward the end of his high school experience — but it found new momentum at COCC.

"I was able to benefit from multiple independent studies with Professor (Fleur) Prade that allowed me to explore subjects within French culture and language I would otherwise have not been able to do," he shares. **"This has made all the difference in my current career...and given me a competitive advantage in the job market."**

For instance, Martin held a bilingual position in the financial sector made possible by material he learned in his "Introduction to French Business Writing" independent study. Independent studies at COCC are individualized, advanced studies that focus on a special interest not covered by another course.

After receiving his associate degree at COCC and transferring to Portland State University, Martin attended Université de Poitiers in western France as the final component for his bachelor's degree in French and applied linguistics. He is presently working toward his Master of Didactics in Language at the Université de Rennes 2.



THÉO MARTIN

"It is astounding what my degree from COCC has allowed me to do with my life, and what it will continue to permit me to accomplish."

NOTEBOOK

A quick glance at some of the latest initiatives and offerings at COCC



Chinese Language Camp

One of the only community colleges in the country to receive a National Security Agency STARTALK language-focused grant this past year, COCC is using the federal award to hold a Chinese Mandarin summer camp, "My Summer in China," for local youth. The \$354,000 in funding will underwrite a four-week immersion experience on the Bend campus in July, providing a group of local middle and high school students with an exciting learning opportunity — and potentially inspiring career paths that use language skills to participate in a global future. In partnering with Chinese language teachers from the Sisters and Bend-La Pine school districts, COCC's Chinese program is simultaneously bringing unique professional development to the region. **"By the end of My Summer in China, students will be at mid-novice to high-novice proficiency in Mandarin and will have a deeper understanding of Chinese culture,"** says Lin Hong, COCC instructor and grant overseer. Once awarded a STARTALK grant, educational organizations often stay with the program for many years. Visit cocc.edu/mysummerinchina.

NeighborImpact's Nutritional Impact

When it pulls up each month and parks near the Barber Library on the Bend campus, the NeighborImpact mobile food pantry is more than a free fresh-food resource for COCC students and the greater community. The truck also comes with helpful volunteers, printed-out recipes for easy-fix dishes and a feeling that community support is ever-present. While the College's student association maintains a stocked pantry of nonperishables for those experiencing food insecurity, the partnership with NeighborImpact provides fresh food, from strawberries to squash, and the distribution of a higher volume of canned goods. For instance, **this past November the mobile food pantry's one-hour visit to the Bend campus served 185 individuals and reached an estimated 53 households,** says Kayla Cook, mobile pantry specialist. The service is particularly vital in a time of soaring food costs. Data for 2022 released by the Oregon Hunger Task Force indicates that 10.2% of Deschutes, 13.1% of Crook and 13.8% of Jefferson County residents experienced recent food insecurity. Mobile pantry visits are the second Tuesday of each month, 3:30-4:30 p.m. **Text FRESH2BEND to 541-577-1673 for reminders.**



A New Mission

As a Marine Corps platoon sergeant, Aaron Rasheed spent a dozen years serving his country through a diverse career that included deploying to Afghanistan as an infantryman, teaching martial arts and instructing officers at Quantico. His next mission looks a little different. "I plan on being an English professor," says Rasheed, who enjoys writing for *The Broadside* student newspaper and taking Communication courses. Along with inspiring classwork, Rasheed encountered a new resource at COCC that's helping him align his options. **"The Veterans program helped me get a better understanding of how to extend my GI Bill to pursue and eventually get my master's degree,"** he says. With a grant from the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, last year COCC hired a Veterans program coordinator — a first for the College, though COCC has long offered veterans resources and a financial aid specialist — someone who can help recruit veteran students, serve as an advisor for enrolled veterans and help facilitate the student veterans club. It's an incredible resource for Rasheed and the nearly 400 other veterans presently enrolled at COCC.



Collaborative Science

Together with the University of Oregon (UO), Lane Community College and Umpqua Community College, COCC is opening access and training opportunities for talented science students facing financial obstacles. With backing from a \$4.3 million National Science Foundation STEM grant, the joint effort, called the Oregon Pathways to Industrial Research Careers, will provide 64 qualifying students around the state with scholarships, ongoing support and a guided educational arc through the community colleges and on to the UO's Knight Campus Graduate Internship Program. **Earning a degree in biochemistry, chemistry or physics, and with embedded paid internships, students will connect with careers in semiconductors, sensors and genomics.** "The first scholarships were awarded this past winter term," says Forrest Towne, associate professor of Chemistry, who coordinates the grant for COCC. "And we have funding to award scholarships to COCC students for the next five years." **Learn more at sciencepathways.uoregon.edu.**

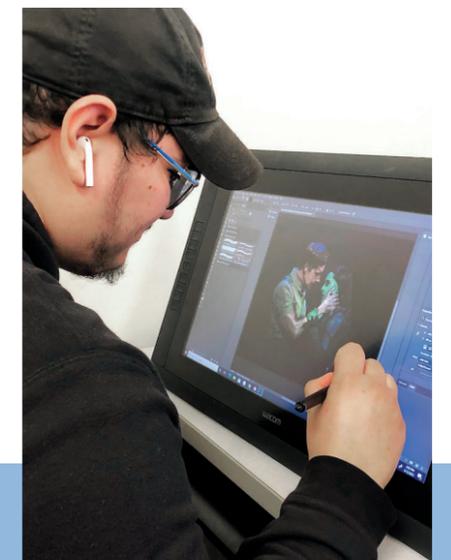


Taking the LEAD

At Caldera High School, Crook County High School and Madras High School, a new diversity-centered **college prep program is bringing Black students a definitive stepping stone toward higher education — and higher purpose.** COCC's Legacy Education Afrocentric Development, or LEAD, which launched last fall, is currently connecting with 32 students across the three schools. Participants earn a college credit while learning leadership and team-building skills, with curriculum tied to celebrating cultural identity. Coordinator Marcus LeGrand embeds in the schools once a week to teach the class, emphasizing an ongoing exploration of heritage. The program and its one-week, summertime stay-on-campus counterpart, Ubuntu, are modeled after COCC's established, highly successful prep programs designed for district Latinx and Native American high schoolers.

Designing (and Illustrating) New Careers

With a background in seamstress and licensed aesthetician work, local small business owner Monica Bock designed her own logos and graphics to best market her services. That can-do creativity sparked a career leap. Now, Bock is one of the first students in COCC's all-new Graphic Design and Illustration certificate programs, **one-year, affordable paths that can be accomplished separately or combined to complete in just four terms.** "I researched other programs and the ones offered at COCC stood out the most to me," she says. Future illustrators, designers and animators learn practices, methods and industry vocabulary to work with the latest technology, developing a project portfolio for use in gaining employment or pursuing further studies. State investment last year helped COCC purchase a fleet of touchscreen-enabled monitors to complement existing computers, along with laptops and a large-scale fine arts printer.



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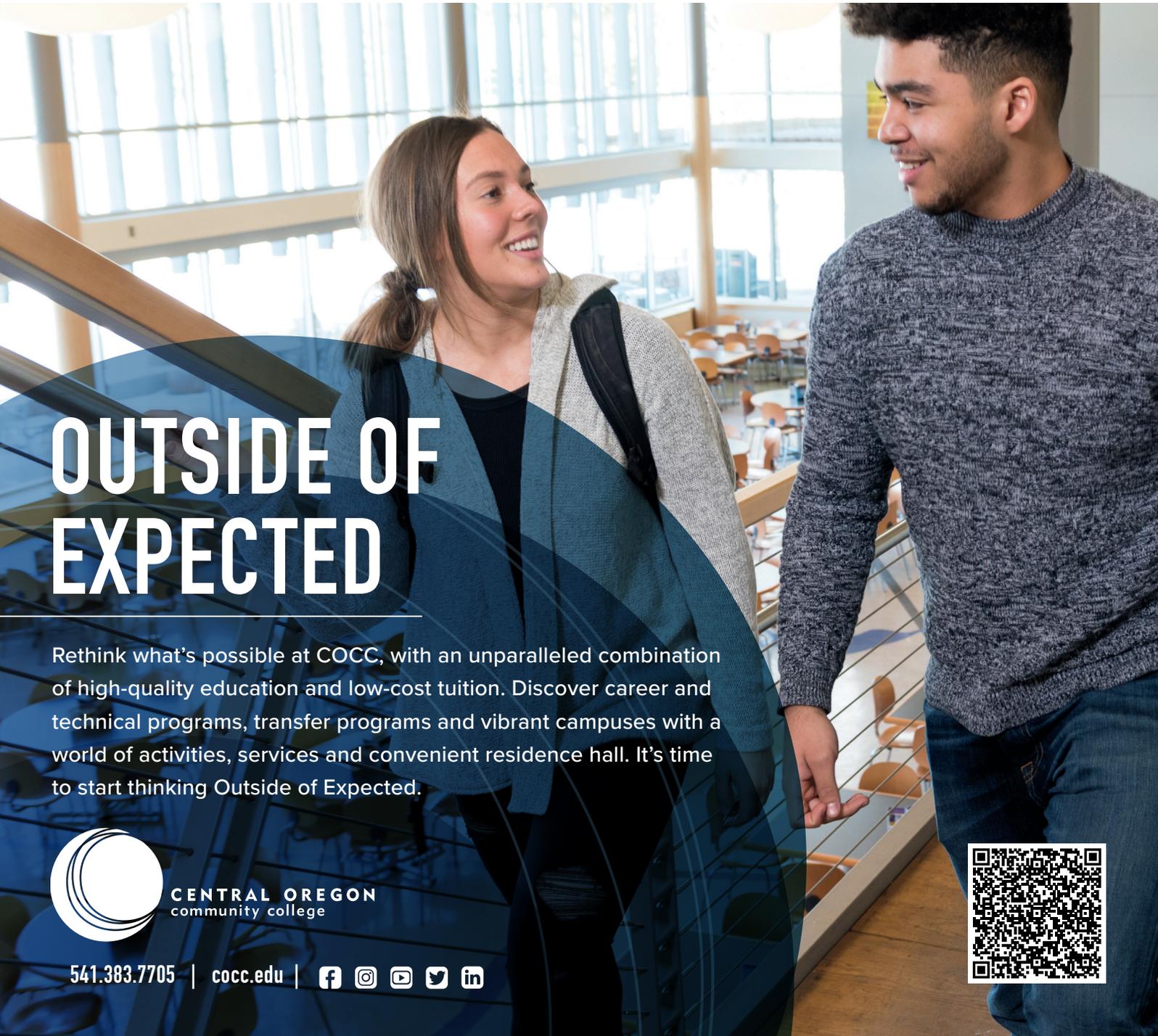


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