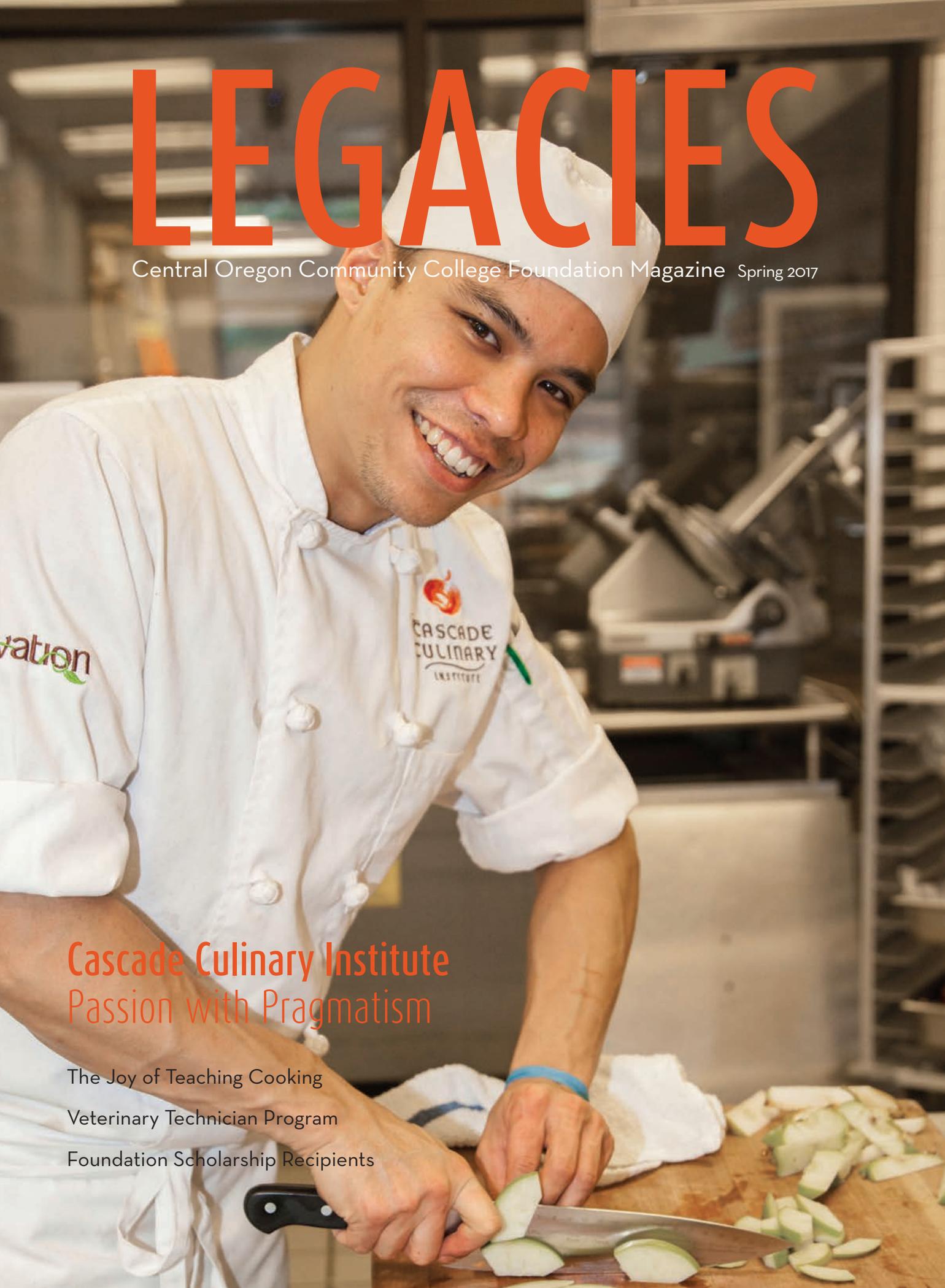


# LEGACIES

Central Oregon Community College Foundation Magazine Spring 2017



## Cascade Culinary Institute Passion with Pragmatism

The Joy of Teaching Cooking

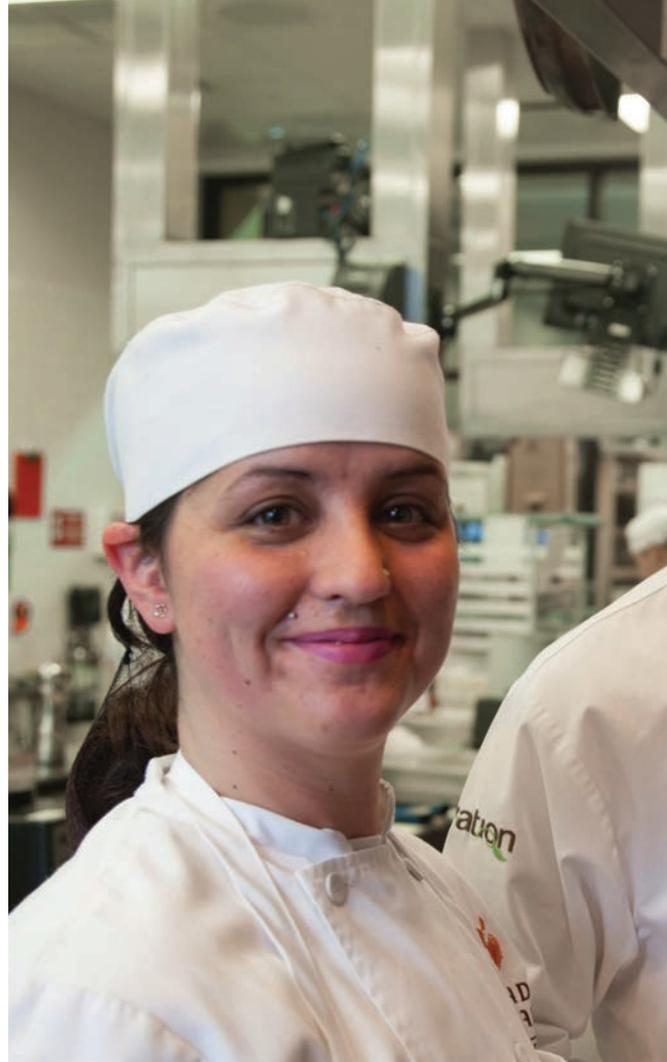
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Foundation Scholarship Recipients

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CENTRAL OREGON  
community college  
FOUNDATION



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📷 Eugen Helmbrecht

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Program Director, Cascade Culinary Institute  
📷 Eugen Helmbrecht



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“ You are what you eat, so stop eating uninteresting food. ”

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# LEGACIES

Spring 2017

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## Letter From the President



This year was my fourth time attending Meal of the Year, and the third time I was honored to be part of the event as the president of Central Oregon Community College. What a tremendous gathering. And while we honor the students and the COCC Foundation that night, what I so treasure is being able to say thank you to the hundreds of supporters of the College and the Foundation. It is so inspiring to me, and reminds me of the theme, "Change a student's life and you change your community." Thanks to the COCC Foundation donors, we have made a tremendous change in our community.

In addition to our wonderful fundraising on behalf of the COCC Foundation, this year also has produced a great opportunity to work at increasing our level of student success. In the fall, we were notified that we had been selected as a recipient of a U.S. Department of Education Title III grant, with an award of \$2.25 million over the upcoming five years.

This grant will help us assist students as they transition from developmental to college-level math and writing, as well as increase the first-to-second term and first-to-second year retention rates. As part of this, we will work to implement culturally responsive strategies to better address the needs of our Native American and Latino learners.

While eligibility for the grant is determined by a variety of considerations, a primary factor is the percent of students who qualify for Pell grants, a federal grant available only to those students with the greatest level of financial need. At COCC, an astonishing 54 percent of students are Pell eligible.

I am very proud of the cross-campus group which came together to design our successful application as I believe this will be an incredible benefit to so many of our Central Oregon students.

COCC chose to focus grant activities on areas in which the College had already done some foundational work, but where the extra resources will allow us to more fully develop programs and activities. This includes a developmental education redesign and a first-year experience program.

Central Oregon Community College is committed to assisting all of our students, and all residents of our District, in attaining their educational goals. With the work being done as part of this Title III grant, and with the scholarship support shown year after year from people like you, we are making great strides in fulfilling our mission.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shirley I. Metcalf".

Dr. Shirley I. Metcalf  
COCC President



# THE NANCY R. CHANDLER VISITING SCHOLAR PROGRAM: ENRICHING OUR COMMUNITY

by Zak Boone and Charlotte Gilbride

The Nancy R. Chandler Visiting Scholar Program was established in 1985 by Robert W. Chandler Sr., to honor his wife, Nancy. With the Chandlers' role as owners of Western Communications, they often hosted visitors from across the nation and around the world. Discussions with these visitors covered wide-ranging topics and perspectives, and Nancy Chandler took great delight in sharing the knowledge of their visitors with the community.

The mission of the Visiting Scholar Program is to continue Nancy Chandler's tradition by bringing nationally and internationally renowned thinkers to Central Oregon to stimulate conversations and encourage thought on a wide range of topics.

The Visiting Scholar Program is a true asset to COCC students and the Central Oregon community. It's incredible to think we have been opening and expanding minds throughout our community for 31 years. The program continues to grow, evolve and thrive. We try our best to make the speakers timely, relevant and, of course, interesting and educational. We also count on the support from our generous annual sponsors to ensure that our programming remains top quality and ticket prices remain low.

This fall we hosted five different speakers, including a Native American language

preservationist to honor Native American Heritage Month, an art historian discussing Japanese woodblock prints, an Indian American author talking about her immigrant experience, a political science professor presenting the history and controversy of the Electoral College, and a panel discussion on suicide prevention and awareness.

Each winter we celebrate the Season of Nonviolence, which honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi and their work to advocate for human rights using nonviolent methods of resistance. In January, we welcomed filmmaker and racial justice educator, Dr. Shakti Butler who presented a film and dialogue session on the system of racialization in our society as well as a hands-on workshop on strategic questioning. In March, we hosted a facilitated conversation with peace worker Manuel Padilla on immigrants and refugees in Oregon. Both presentations embodied one of the key aspects of the Visiting Scholar program – to allow students and community members to engage in conversations on these important topics, rather than simply attend a lecture.

We put an emphasis on community partnerships and collaborations to make the program a success. For example, on April 24 we are collaborating with the High Desert Museum and hosting a speaker to discuss the Bracero Program in the Pacific Northwest. This presentation will com-

plement the museum's current exhibit on World War II (see details below).

We believe it is more important than ever to create programming in our community that leads to important, even difficult, discussions. We strive for programming that helps foster new ideas and build trust on our campus and in our community. Finally, we are always looking for ideas for speakers and topics. Please contact [cgilbride@cocc.edu](mailto:cgilbride@cocc.edu) or 541.383.7257 with ideas or feedback and thanks again for your great support!

## UPCOMING

**A Bittersweet Harvest:  
The Bracero Program in the  
Pacific Northwest**

with Dr. Mario Sifuentez,  
Assistant Professor of History  
at UC Merced

**Monday, April 24  
6 p.m.  
High Desert Museum**

Museum Members \$3  
Non-members \$7  
Students free with ID

RSVP:  
[highdesertmuseum.org/rsvp](http://highdesertmuseum.org/rsvp)

*Zak Boone is the executive director of the COCC Foundation.*

*Charlotte Gilbride is the Nancy R. Chandler Visiting Scholar Program coordinator.*

# CASCADE CULINARY INSTITUTE

## Cascade Culinary Institute Blends Passion with Pragmatism

— by Angela Reid —

If you know the difference between braising and poaching, how to properly pronounce bruschetta, or how to “bam, kick it up a notch,” you might have Jacques Pépin, Mario Batali or Emeril Lagasse to thank. And if you know any of those names, you might have your television to thank. Cooking shows have turned us into a nation of aspiring chefs—or at least, more educated eaters.

In fact, the very first cooking show was called “I Love To Eat.” Host James Beard—a native Oregonian who was later dubbed the “Dean of American Cuisine”—implored us to resist the processed food movement of the 1950s. The next decade brought us another brand of maverick: the endearingly clumsy Julia Child, who aimed to liberate the home cook from fear of mistakes, and fear of food itself. “If you’re afraid of butter,” she would say, “use cream.”

It wasn’t until the 1970s, however, that cooking became not just a desirable skill but also a marketable one. That’s when the U.S. Department of Labor elevated the job of executive chef from service

status to professional status. Soon, chefs everywhere began to wear their toques a little higher.

The growth of the culinary profession has been a boon for those of us who love to eat, and a boon for culinary schools. But it hasn’t necessarily been a boon for the culinary student—at least those attending for-profit schools. Those students are too often saddled with unsustainable debt, and without the jobs they were promised. In fact, the American Le Cordon Bleu schools are closing this year, under legal scrutiny regarding recruiting practices and government regulations regarding gainful employment—in other words, “Top Chef” dreams, “Dirty Jobs” realities.

### HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The Cascade Culinary Institute (CCI) at COCC tempers those dreams with a generous dash of pragmatism. “We strive for an honest approach to culinary education,” says CCI chef instructor and department chair Thor Erickson. This honest approach means, in part, straight talk with students about the big picture of the restaurant business, from food costs to starting wages to the nuances of

kitchen politics. It also means a return more in line with the investment. It helps that CCI is not-for-profit, which translates to lower tuition, and more opportunities for scholarships and financial aid. This year, more than 400 COCC students (including 15 culinary students) received new or renewal Foundation scholarships, totaling over \$1.5 million.

Unlike liberal arts colleges, culinary schools are career technical schools, focused on developing the specific skills needed for a specific career path. A graduate’s first job may still be entry-level, but it is more likely to give the student a leg up, versus merely a foot in the door. “Instead of starting out as a dishwasher,” says Chef Erickson, “you might start as a line cook.” Movement up the ranks also happens more quickly, he adds.

Founded in 1993, CCI offers AAS degree programs and certificate programs in Culinary Arts as well as Baking and Pastry Arts. This year, the school also introduced an AAS degree program and certificate program in Hospitality Management. All these skills play out in the dress rehearsal that is Elevation, the



student-run restaurant on the southwest corner of the COCC Bend campus. Offering lunch and dinner service on select days when school is in session, Elevation provides a fine dining-style setting where students practice all roles—from the front of the house to the back—and learn quickly from their mistakes, and each other. “Humble pie is one of our favorite foods,” laughs Chef Erickson. The guests themselves serve an important role in the students’ educations, as a reminder that their art has an audience. “Art, science and math,” Chef Erickson points out, referring to not just the creativity and chemistry of cooking, but also the business of it.

The school itself had humble beginnings. In the early 1990s, Chef Julian Darwin moved to Central Oregon from the Bay Area for a job at Sunriver Resort. As the local mills began to turn off their saws and turn out their workers, more and more of those displaced lumbermen showed up at the back doors of restaurants, seeking work for which they were not trained. Chef Darwin saw a need for

culinary education, and began working with the late Tim Hill, then a business professor at COCC, to create a culinary program for the college. Soon, they were teaching classes in the Grandview Building on the Bend COCC campus. “Once the (Cascade) Culinary Institute was up here,” says Chef Erickson, “Chef Darwin had a fan base.” He hosted weekly community lunches, which all sold out. “It really put the ‘community’ in community college,” says Chef Erickson.

Today, the culinary program commands a place of its own in the Jungers Culinary Center, which dazzles with the latest kitchen classroom technology, several cooking labs, a demonstration theater and its Elevation restaurant. Built in 2011, the 15,000-square-foot facility was funded primarily through the college’s own funds and through community fundraising—jump-started by a \$1 million donation from part-time Central Oregonians Frank and Julie Jungers, big believers in the economic and social impact of COCC.

Inspired by the local landscape and constructed with regionally sourced materials, the building was a pilot project for the Earth Advantage commercial program for sustainability, and was certified EA Gold. The school also received the Bend Environmental Center 2013 sustainability award, recognizing not just the physical space but also the practices of its tenants. All waste from this building is recycled or composted—a local pig farmer picks up food waste, which seems especially poetic if truffles are on the menu.

#### **A COMMUNITY OF FOOD LOVERS**

Still, you might be wondering if culinary school is worth all this. Why not just learn on the job? “When you train in restaurants, you learn (how to cook) their menu,” says Chef Darwin. “And that doesn’t transfer to your next job. But when you train in culinary school, you learn techniques and skills that transfer.” These include basic knife skills, cooking methods, food safety, and nutrition, but also softer skills like leadership, collaboration and communication, essential in any



fast-paced, high-stress kitchen. (If you can't stand the heat, well, you may need a few more classes at CCI.)

CCI seeks to provide perspectives that are broader than just a job, or even just a region. Approximately 30 percent of the program's students come from out of the area, and many will eventually work elsewhere, too. The instructors—many of whom are also imported—realize the benefit of geographically and culturally diverse experiences. Students have had the opportunity to forage for chanterelles on the west side of Oregon's Cascade Mountains, study plants and farm animals on Washington's Lummi Island (and peek into the highly revered kitchen at the Willows Inn), learn more about Asian cooking or French pastries from visiting chefs, and pursue exchange programs and internships in cities around the world.

The local restaurant industry, at least, is taking notice. CCI often receives calls from executive chefs at 900 Wall and 5 Fusion in Bend, interested in accelerating their recruiting processes with some hand-picked recommendations from the school's instructors. "Bend's is a service-based economy with a demand for a steady stream of workers," says Chef Cliff Eslinger of 900 Wall. "Hiring out of the (Cascade) Culinary

Institute gives us access to candidates who are ready with the core skills and professionalism we expect."

Chef Joe Kim, of 5 Fusion and Ajjii Asian Kitchen, says he used to recruit on Craigslist, casting his net as far as Portland for candidates. Now he contacts CCI directly, seeking students who are passionate about food and the restaurant industry. "If they're willing to go to school for it, they're more likely to see it as a career and not just a job," he says. "And CCI is one of the better culinary schools on the West Coast." Some of his CCI-trained hires have then gone on to Michelin 3-Star restaurants in Napa, or to open food carts in Portland. Many have stayed on his staff for several years, which is itself remarkable in the otherwise high-turn-over restaurant industry.

CCI also offers exploratory classes for those of us wanting a taste of culinary school, or just a few more skills to take home. At a recent orientation for a new class at the Prineville COCC campus called, "Want To Be a Chef?," a kitchen tour revealed tools no fancier than in this author's kitchen.

The difference, it seems, comes in knowing how to use those tools. "You don't need Teflon," says Chef Darwin, holding up two Teflon skillets among dozens of well-used aluminum and stainless steel pans, "when you know how to cook."

In addition to their stated mission of providing competency-based skill proficiency and career preparation, the chef instructors at CCI hope to slowly but surely improve the quality of food and service in Central Oregon and elsewhere. That also means elevating the awareness and expectations of an entire community of eaters, beyond just the Portlandia-esque foodie.

"I've got to be honest," says a new student in the Prineville class, "I don't really cook much." Her husband is a professional chef and, thus far, she's been happy to benefit from his talents. So you might say she likes to eat—which for any cook, is the perfect place to start. ■

*Angela Reid is a freelance writer living in Bend.*



Timothy Park  
David Morris  
Eugen Helmbrecht  
YGH Architecture



# SPRING HIGHLIGHTS

## APRIL

April 24

### A Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program in the Pacific Northwest

With guest speaker Dr. Mario Sifuentez, learn about the uniqueness of the Bracero Program and how it set the pattern for migration in Oregon, Idaho and Washington. 6 p.m.

April 28

### Poetry Reading

Elizabeth Woody, Oregon's Poet Laureate, will be reading her work in celebration of Poetry Month, Barber Library. 7 to 8:30 p.m.

## MAY

May 3

### Film and Discussion

Watch and discuss the documentary *Birth of a Movement*. Wille Hall, Coats Campus Center. 4 to 5:30 p.m.

May 4

### Book Talk

Reading and discussion with COCC professor, Mike Lankford, author of *Becoming Leonardo: An Exploded View of the Life of Leonardo da Vinci*. South Oregon Room, Barber Library. 4:30 p.m.

May 4-31

### Patricia Freeman-Martin

Enjoy Freeman-Martin's paintings at the Pence Pinckney Gallery on the COCC Bend campus. Opening reception and artist talk, May 4 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

May 12

### Redmond Campus Open House

Explore the possibilities at the COCC Redmond campus. Free and open to the public. Food and prizes. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

May 13

### Asian Pacific Islander Festival

Come celebrate with festive food and entertainment. Coats Campus Center. 1 to 4 p.m.

## JUNE

June 3

### Salmon Bake

Join in COCC's annual Salmon Bake on Mazama Field. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

June 17

### Commencement

Celebrate this year's graduates. Mazama Field. 10 a.m.

June 21

### President's Scholarship Luncheon

Honoring donors and community members who contribute to the COCC Foundation's scholarship program. Coats Campus Center. Noon.

## MORE

For more information and a full event schedule for the Nancy R. Chandler Visiting Scholar Program, visit: [cocc.edu/foundation/vsp](http://cocc.edu/foundation/vsp).

For more information on all campus-wide events, visit: [cocc.edu/whats-new-calendar](http://cocc.edu/whats-new-calendar).

# THE JOY OF TEACHING COOKING

## Chef Darwin's Legacy Reaches Beyond Campus

— by Angela Reid —

When I ask Chef Julian Darwin what his guilty pleasures are regarding food, he says, "I have a lot of them." Hoping I have found my Juanita's Chips soul mate, I nod—but then he adds, "Like good butter, on good bread." In his office at Jungers Culinary Center on the Bend COCC campus, he then waxes rhapsodic about the creamy texture of the butter complemented by the airiness of the bread, and I make a mental note to start baking my own bread. I ask what's in his fridge right now, trying one more time for some evidence that gourmet chefs are just like us. "Red lentil dal."

Chef Darwin is not just like us—in many ways.

Julian Darwin was born and educated in England. His mother stayed home and cooked for the family; his grandmother cooked in the canteen of a local textile mill. In their family, cooking wasn't

reserved for special occasions, and food didn't just magically appear on the table. It was the thread that tied everything, and everyone, together. When pressed to name the pivotal point in his youth that led him to cooking, he thinks for a minute and then shakes his head. "It was a more natural progression than that," he finally says. "I just enjoyed eating. And eating gets you to cooking."

After graduating from culinary school, he built a successful career in hotels and restaurants in Europe and the United States, including Atlanta, Dallas and San Francisco, before he arrived in Central Oregon, where he is now program director and chef instructor for Cascade Culinary Institute (CCI). But it's not his career that sets him apart—it's his reverence for food as a means toward a healthy body, healthy community and healthy planet. "Food is everything," he says, more than once.

When he's not cooking food, he's foraging for it, fermenting it—or finding it for others. After Chef Thor Erickson moved to town, Chef Darwin enlisted him for some late-night co-conspiring: he needed help picking up food past its sell-by date (but still good) and destined for grocery-store Dumpsters, and driving it all to local food banks and shelters. Then, in 2001, Chef Darwin enlisted the entire culinary program to help organize a local version of Empty Bowls, a national grassroots movement to help end hunger. Local artists created and donated one-of-a-kind bowls, CCI students prepared and served soup, and about 800 community members broke bread together. Funds raised went to support NeighborImpact, which connects low-income families in Central Oregon with food and other essential resources.

Chef Darwin has also volunteered to teach classes for a program called Cooking Matters, funded by the Oregon Food Bank and locally organized by the High Desert Food & Farm Alliance (HDDFA). The classes serve low-income families and teach not just cooking techniques and skills but also food budgeting, how to navigate a grocery store, and how to read food labels. The goal is to inspire confident cooks who can buy what's in season or what's on sale and know what to do with it, without being slave to a recipe. Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, as the saying goes, but teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. Jess Weiland of HDDFA says, "He's an excellent instructor, first and foremost." And he loves to share his passion for food. He also mentors their newer instructors—teaching a man to teach a man to fish.

"Chef Darwin is great at palpating the need for something," says Chef Erickson, describing Chef Darwin's gifts as an instructor. "He has a magical way of

**"This is a Ferrari.  
It deserves the  
best fuel possible."**

coaxing people through anxiety.” Part of that seems to be a genuine affection for people, and a desire to make cooking—and himself—accessible. He begins a recent class with enthusiastic recommendations for his favorite food-related movies, including “Mostly Martha” and “Jiro Dreams of Sushi.” He tells the class where they can buy a good cutting board, cheap. He gives out his cellphone number and urges them to call anytime. And he seems to mean it. “The most underutilized

## “He has extreme passion and he's instilled that in myself and all the rest of us here.”

resource on campus?” he asks, hopping out from behind his podium. “The instructor!” He smiles a lot, jokes a lot, and walks a lot. “This is also an exercise class,” he says, on his third or fourth lap around the classroom.

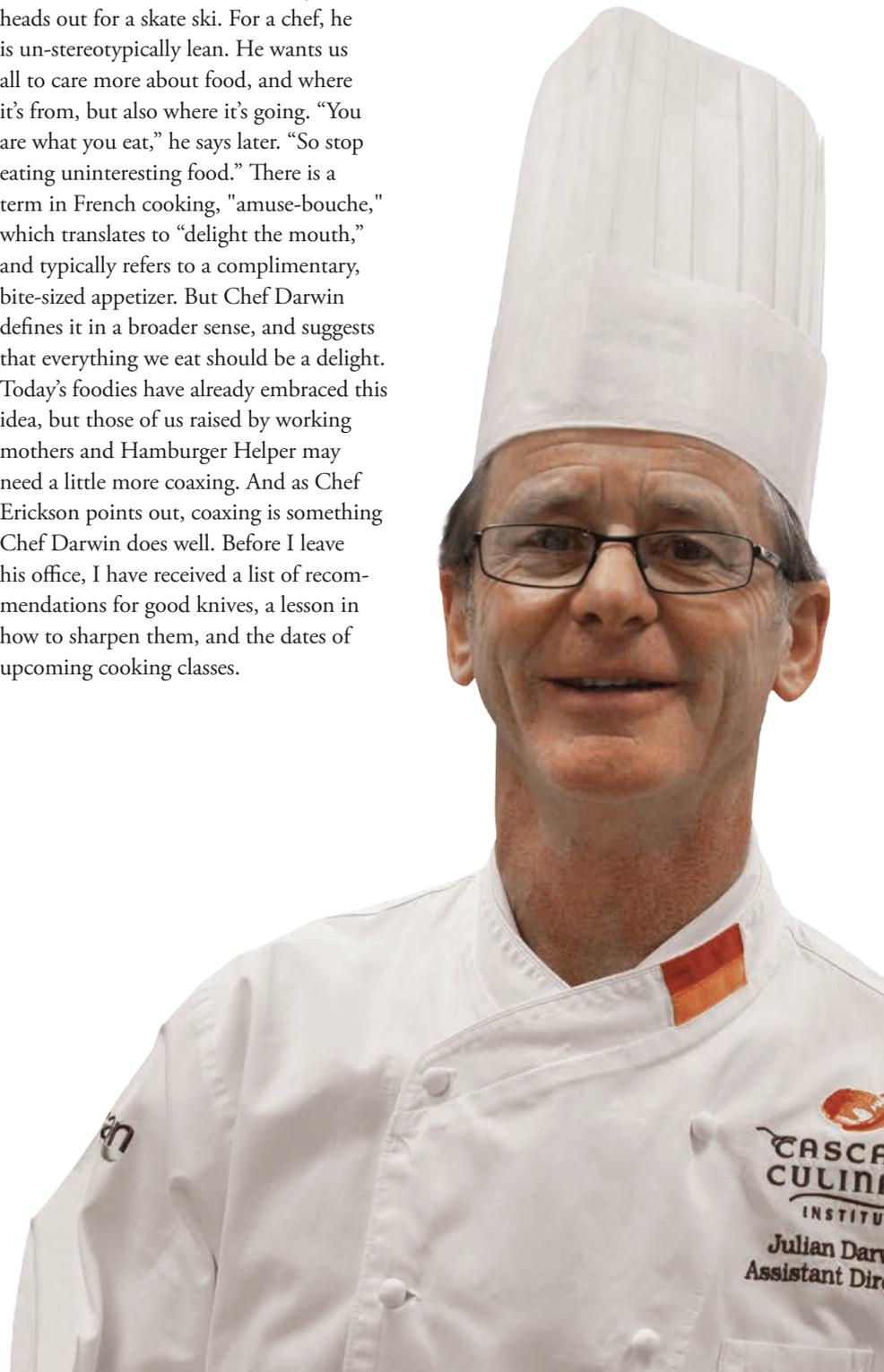
He gets especially animated when he talks about teaching elementary- and middle-school kids. “They’re young and impressionable,” he beams. “They’ll try things.” When his own kids were young, in fact, he would assign them the job of seasoning the dish he was cooking, which required them to taste it, adjust the seasoning, and taste it again, until they could report back that it was ready. By that point, they’d tried the food several times, without the negotiations and bribery (and chicken nuggets) that accompany many family meals. Now, he teaches other people’s kids, through COCC’s summer cooking camps and field trip opportunities. When a local Girl Scout troop visited the school this year, Chef Darwin helped expand their food knowledge beyond Tagalongs; together, they made spanakopita.

Students take home the food they prepare, or if it’s left behind at school, the instruc-

tors will eat it for lunch—whether the recipe was a success or not. “We’re not going to throw anything away,” Chef Darwin tells a class, as he demonstrates the proper way to apply plastic wrap. “That bugs me more than anything.” For Chef Darwin, food is a precious resource.

His vision for Cascade Culinary Institute reflects this philosophy, and you can see it in the way he teaches. “This is a Ferrari,” he says, thumping his abdomen. “It deserves the best fuel possible.” Fuel he needs as he leaves work for the day and heads out for a skate ski. For a chef, he is un-stereotypically lean. He wants us all to care more about food, and where it’s from, but also where it’s going. “You are what you eat,” he says later. “So stop eating uninteresting food.” There is a term in French cooking, “amuse-bouche,” which translates to “delight the mouth,” and typically refers to a complimentary, bite-sized appetizer. But Chef Darwin defines it in a broader sense, and suggests that everything we eat should be a delight. Today’s foodies have already embraced this idea, but those of us raised by working mothers and Hamburger Helper may need a little more coaxing. And as Chef Erickson points out, coaxing is something Chef Darwin does well. Before I leave his office, I have received a list of recommendations for good knives, a lesson in how to sharpen them, and the dates of upcoming cooking classes.

“He has extreme passion,” Chef Erickson says, getting choked up about Chef Darwin’s upcoming retirement. “And he’s instilled that in myself and all the rest of us here.” Indeed, Chef Darwin is confident in the future of the school, its students, and its faculty. “They will add their own flavor,” he says. And what will Chef Darwin do? He’s reluctant to commit to anything now, beyond spending time with family, breathing in the High Desert air, and delighting in three anything-but-square meals a day. ■





# PLUGGING AUTOMOTIVE

— by Mary Ann Asson-Batres —

**T**he electric car industry is picking up speed. Models like the sleek Tesla S, or the more affordable Chevrolet Bolt EV (recently named Green Car of the Year), are part of a fast-growing, hybrid-electric/electric vehicle market (HEV/EV) that is sweeping the nation. And here on the West Coast, we're leading the way—two to three vehicles of every 1,000 registered autos in Washington, Oregon and California are electric vehicles.

But as HEV/EV ownership increases, a pertinent question arises: Who will maintain or fix your electric-drive vehicle when it's time for a service? While the internal-combustion engine has been around for over 100 years, leading to industry standards and generations of trained technicians, electric-drive vehicles are so new that standards have yet to be developed.

Ken Mays, automotive technology professor at Central Oregon Community College (COCC), has given a lot of

thought to this issue. During the past three years, he has set about creating a program to train a new generation of technicians with the skills and know-how to diagnose and maintain electric-powered vehicles.

Ken submitted an application to the National Science Foundation (NSF) for an Advanced Technological Education award to support the development of new curriculum, a new degree and the purchase of new equipment for HEV/EV advanced technology education at COCC. Ken and his colleague, Dr. Bruce Emerson, a physics professor at COCC, received a two-year grant totaling \$199,873.

The funded Northwest Engineering and Vehicle Technology Exchange (NEVTEX) project has three major activities directed at standardizing training so that technicians will have the critical thinking and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills needed for them to be valued employees and leaders in the emerging HEV/EV-powered industry.

COCC students have already benefited from the first major activity supported by the NSF grant. Acting on behalf of the Automotive Technology Program at COCC, Ken submitted and received state approval for a new two-year Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, Automotive Technology in Electronics and Diagnostics, with stackable certificates in HEV/EV technology. In this first year of the grant, he has developed and beta-tested five advanced vehicle courses in: diesel performance; automotive controller systems; and, hybrid-electric vehicle technology, providing the foundation for the new degree. Instructors and students have set up a new-generation, high-voltage battery charger and discharger for nickel-metal hydride and lithium-ion applications, purchased with grant funds. This equipment allows students to examine and restore high-voltage battery systems in HEV/EV vehicles.

A second major activity supported by the grant is the investigation of digital badges as a potential new tool for certifying training and for validating competency. Dr. Emerson is leading this effort. His



# ING INTO INNOVATION

long-term goal is to direct a badge viewer (a potential employer, for example) to a website where they can see actual work samples from the badge holder.

Still, this has a largely unresolved database question with a range of implications for privacy and longevity. Bruce's short-term goal is to identify the questions and possible solutions for issues of privacy and effectiveness of badge certifications, as well as to examine various approaches

## **These are exciting times for advanced technologies—and for the students who are preparing to enter these emerging fields as technicians and engineers.**

for writing computer code for the badges. This will provide necessary information for a longer-term project aimed at adoption and use of the tool to certify skills acquired by high school students to validate transfer credits to community colleges as well as to certify skills acquired by community college students to certify

their transfer to other institutions and support their applications for employment.

The third major activity supported by the grant is the establishment of a regional consortium of colleges and industry partners with the aim of setting appropriate teaching standards for electric-drive technologies. Ken has facilitated the creation of a legally constituted, non-profit organization, Advanced Vehicle Training Group NW

(AVTGNW), and now serves as its secretary. The group meets regularly and maintains a website to promote advanced vehicle training. COCC, Lane Community College, Linn-Benton Community College, Portland Community College, Chemeketa Community College, Walla Walla

Community College and Peninsula College are current AVTGNW educational partners. Together with industry representatives, these institutions aim to share intellectual resources, develop and standardize common tooling, develop certification for instructors and students that aligns with standards, serve as a resource center for schools, students, customers and industry, sponsor annual and continued training beyond certification, and endorse standards for First Responder education.

These are exciting times for advanced technologies—and for the students who are preparing to enter these emerging fields as technicians and engineers. If you haven't seen the new equipment and facilities for teaching new concepts and skills in advanced automotive technology, advanced manufacturing, or computer-controlled systems, be sure to take a tour of the COCC Redmond campus. Tina Redd, campus director, will be happy to coordinate your visit. ■

*Mary Ann Asson-Batres, Ph.D., is COCC's grants coordinator.*

# Vet Tech Program Impacts Central Oregon

## Community Enrichment is Going to the Dogs

— by Emily Woodworth —



When you think of community enrichment at Central Oregon Community College (COCC), you might imagine the Nancy R. Chandler Visiting Scholar Program or continuing education programs first. But COCC doesn't stop short at the human world.



In 2013, COCC launched its Associate of Applied Science Veterinary Technician (Vet Tech) program, one of only two in Oregon. At its helm is Beth Palmer, a certified veterinary technician turned professor, with 13 years of experience in private practice and shelter medicine.

When I met Palmer this past December, she seemed the perfect balance of passion and poise. I could imagine her holding the attention of a class and calming a nervous animal with equal ease. It's not surprising that even among animal handlers, Palmer is known as the "Cat Whisperer."

Palmer took the reins of the program in December of 2013, and has since moved it to Redmond and launched two cohorts into the workforce. Together with Medical Director Dr. Cindy Elston, she overhauled the curriculum. "We started with a 55 percent national exam pass rate, so we revised the curriculum and achieved an 80 percent on our last cohort," she says. "That's normal with new programs, though. The American Veterinary Medical Association provides a list of subjects to teach, but they're pretty broad." With some tweaks, they hope the next cohort will close in on 100 percent.

But what is a veterinary technician? Well, it changes by the minute. They are dental, X-ray, surgical, anesthesia and laboratory technicians, treatment nurses, phlebotomists and client care specialists that

work with animals and people. The fields they can choose are as countless as their duties, ranging from private practice and zoos to the Iditarod and caring for animals on Hollywood sets. Students may also work for the USDA or Army, act as supply reps or teach. "There are 13 specializations," explains Palmer. Although both veterinarians and techs work with animals, veterinarians focus on diagnosing and performing surgeries, while techs carry out daily treatments.

COCC's Technology Education Center on Redmond's campus houses the program's classroom, while the hands-on training facility is five minutes away, behind BrightSide Animal Center. "I have students from Madras, Prineville, Bend, La Pine, Fossil, Powell Butte and Redmond," says Palmer. Whether students work in the classroom or perform rotations at the training site, the principles of their courses are constant.

**"We're big on two things: figuring out how students can benefit and how animals can benefit."**

"We're big on two things: figuring out how students can benefit and how animals can benefit," explains Palmer. The program also emphasizes interactive learning. For Anatomy & Physiology,

Elston has students build muscles on model cat skeletons out of clay and examine four plastinated cat cadavers—literally, real cats turned plastic—which allow repeated dissections. On the left side of the

lecture room looms a horse skeleton shipped from Germany. “Obviously, we don’t feed him enough!” jokes Palmer. For one safety demonstration, Palmer arranges their clinic with numerous code violations, then unleashes her 24 students to fix the errors.

One nerve-wracking skill students must master is phlebotomy. To protect them, and their animal patients, Palmer progresses from foam rollers with fake blood and cloth “skin,” to rubber dummy legs, and finally to “Jerry” and “Fluffy”—dog and cat models that can be intubated, have blood drawn, and mimic breathing and heart rate. “We always practice on stuffed animals and models before the animal,” says Palmer. “With the technology we have today, there’s no reason to poke an animal until you’re skilled. I wouldn’t want to be someone’s pincushion!”

The Vet Tech training facility includes a radiography department, laboratory, surgery room and lounge. The sprawling main area of their 10,000-square-foot facility serves many functions. On the day I visited, it was bisected by a line of shiny moveable kennels. Along the left wall are doors to the surgery room and lab, numerous cabinets, and a dental cleaning station. On the other side of the kennels, partitions can be erected to create consultation rooms or cleared entirely for large animals to visit. Later, students tour ranches for field experience with horses, cows, llamas, pigs, sheep and other large animals. And in addition to the usual dogs, cats and birds, they cover exotics like mice, rats, rabbits, lizards and snakes. During her externship, one

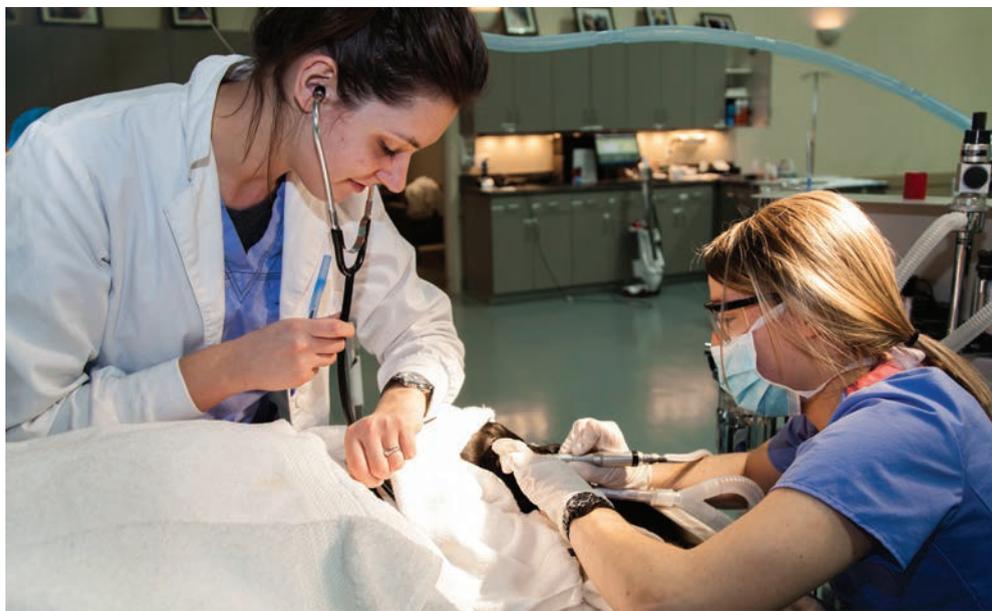
student even treated a hedgehog with a head cold.

In 2018, the program will institute a selective admissions process, and someday Palmer wants to expand to yearly enrollment. The number of animals and staff available will be assessed in that decision. Right now, they have two full-time faculty (Palmer and Elston), and three part-timers: Dr. Sarah Bird (large animals), Dr. Ashley Portmann (Pharmaceutical Math) and Certified Veterinary Technician Kelsey Penn (Veterinary Anatomy & Physiology, Animal Nursing Lab). Enrollment expansion would necessarily reflect an expansion in investment too. Before a decision is made, the Vet Tech program will undergo an academic review, evaluating strengths, weaknesses and what they need for success.

No matter what, they can trust the vital support of their Central Oregon community. “The veterinary community

return, we provide free services for their animals. It really is a community effort.” During COCC’s most recent surgery rotation, they spayed, neutered and performed dental cleanings on 73 shelter animals. The Vet Tech program also partners with more than 30 vet clinics for student externships, where they gain 360 hours of real-world experience. Veterinarians get an extra pair of hands and many students are hired after graduation.

Over the summer, Palmer worked with three of her students at Bend Equine and another four while volunteering at a feral cat clinic in September. “I was so proud of them!” she says. “To see them pass the national exam and find work in the veterinary field in our community, that’s the most satisfying part of my job.” Another former student, Kelsey Penn, graduated with honors, landed her dream job with HSCO and teaches part-time for her alma mater. “Our program is committed to training the next generation of veterinary technicians,” says the Cat



welcomed us with open arms,” remarks Palmer, recounting how touched she has been by the dedicated volunteers at their shelter partners: the Humane Society of Central Oregon (HSCO), Three Rivers Humane Society and BrightSide Animal Center. “We wouldn’t be here without their supply of patients,” she says. “In

Whisperer, “providing the best education possible so our students can provide the best care possible to the animals in the community.” From humans to animals, that’s what community enrichment is all about. ■

*Emily Woodworth is a freelance writer living in Sisters.*

# Dreaming Big at YouthCamp

— by Glenda Lantis —

Remember when you were 12 years old and felt like you had the world in the palm of your hand?

There's a wonderful kind of freedom in being a "tween"—you're more open to exploration, to trying new things, and discovering who you are and what you enjoy doing.

YouthCamp@COCC helps facilitate and celebrate this age of discovery and dreaming big. Created by COCC's Community Learning department to foster and encourage the learning process, YouthCamp@COCC is designed specifically for middle school students to explore career, college and life skills in a hands-on learning environment.

Since 2009, more than 1,300 young students have attended YouthCamp@COCC. And this year there are more than 30 camps for youth to choose from at COCC's campuses in Bend, Redmond, Prineville and Madras. Participants will find a neat range of program offerings, such as aviation, unmanned aerial systems (drones), science studies, junior police academy, virtual reality, Lego film, video game production, baking and pastry, and more.

"This is an opportunity for these 10- to 14-year-olds to try out something that they might want to do for a career when they grow up," says YouthCamp Coordinator Kirdy Molan. "At the very least,

they get the chance to try out the college environment and see what the classrooms and atmosphere feel like and realize it's not that scary...that (college) is doable."

A graduate of COCC and OSU-Cascades, Molan sees the YouthCamp experience as a special rung in a young person's ladder of success. She also knows how vital Foundation scholarships can be to attaining this particular rung.

"We definitely want to reach out to students who cannot afford the experience," she says, "because they need to have the experience to dream big." YouthCamp@COCC sessions average \$189 for a four-day session and each camp is about three to four hours per day. For students who qualify, Foundation scholarships are available through an application process, one per student per summer.

"We know we have touched the lives of our scholarship recipients by their thank-you letters and comments," says Molan. One boy was so overcome upon receiving his camp scholarship, he wrote:



"This means everything to me. I want to go to college someday to study computers and I love Minecraft and this scholarship to the Minecraft Camp is the first step to college for me."

*Glenda Lantis is the director of Continuing Education.*

# STUDENT SUCCESS

**"Just one year of schooling has really turned my life around."**

**- BEN J. DAVIES**



## **BEN J. DAVIES**

**Certificate of Completion, Welding**

"I've never done well in school but just one year of schooling at COCC has really turned my life around. Before college I worked several different jobs, never really getting anywhere, now I own my own business doing what I love.

"My favorite part of the COCC manufacturing program is that it is mostly self-paced. I never did very well in a classroom environment, especially high school, so being able to work without someone watching my every move was very beneficial. The instructor was a crucial part of my success. He saw something in me that no one else did. I would like to let people know that attending the community college was a great experience."

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Nicole Kraus



Elfreda Mitchell

**N**icole Kraus is catching up with her dream. “This calling has been burning in my heart for quite a while and I am so excited to be on this journey,” says Nikki. “I have dreamt of this occupation since I was a child.”

After finishing high school in two years, Nikki was on track to study law when she and her high-school-sweetheart husband started their family. They started with one child...and then added four more. So she shelved her plans, focused on the family and poured herself into raising their kids. Along the way, she taught herself how to take professional photographs and opened a thriving studio business, testament to her pluck and can-do spirit. “I learned strong skills in business management, customer service and budgeting,” she explains of her desire to go after things. But the dream of law school never faded, and shaping her kids’ future has inspired her even more.

Having first enrolled at COCC in 1999, Nikki’s now back on track. “I had a wonderful experience here and it made perfect sense to come back as I relaunched my college career,” she says. Now completing her Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree with a pre-law focus, she’s been accepted into Willa-

mette University where she plans to earn a bachelor’s degree in political science before heading to law school.

Nikki received the Donald and Heidi Castleman Scholarship, and is incredibly appreciative of the difference this has made as she navigates forward. “Your support is changing my life and my future,” she shares. “I am so grateful.” She acknowledges that the next six or so years will be extra busy, but her will is unshaken. “My life experiences have equipped me with focus, wisdom and strength,” she says. “I am excited and ready for this journey!”

**F**ew of us can pinpoint our career ambitions at age 14. Yet from her early teens, Elfreda Mitchell knew where she wanted to be one day: teaching kids on the Warm Springs Reservation, where she grew up. “I finally got to college-level classes,” she shares of her studies at COCC, “and they have been enlightening.”

But getting to where she is now has not been without its hardships. “I have had my electricity shut off, and been days when I had only bread on my shelf to eat,” she shares of growing up in a family of 12 siblings and working parents. But the goal is growing steadily closer.

When Elfreda is finished with her associate’s degree at COCC, she will be poised to take the next step in her journey of becoming an immersion classroom teacher on the Warm Springs Reservation, speaking in their native language, enhancing the educational experience. After graduating from COCC, she plans to transfer to the University of Oregon’s Native American teaching program and pursue her bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education. Support from the Linda Jackson Moore Memorial Scholarship is helping her achieve this goal.

“I’m so excited from my positive college experiences that COCC has given me which would not have been possible without the help from the COCC Foundation Scholarship,” she says. “I would like to express my deep appreciation for your generosity.”

Having served as Miss Warm Springs, representing her tribe in competitions of indigenous people throughout Indian Country, and taking on the responsibility as a Longhouse young leader, passing on traditions, not to mention many years of teaching, Elfreda has long been an active presence in her community. And that role will further develop when she completes her degree and steps in front of a classroom of eager eyes, the culmination of a prescient path.



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## TASTE OF THE TOWN & MEAL OF THE YEAR

February 24th & 25th, 2017

The 39th annual Taste of the Town and Meal of the Year events raised more than **\$347,000** for scholarships at COCC! Honoring community philanthropists Chris and Jan Wick, the events celebrated COCC and the importance of higher education in our region.