



2023

All-Oregon

ACADEMIC TEAM
LUNCHEON

APRIL 21, 2023

**Chemeketa Community College -
Eola Event Center**

Recognition Program

Presented by:

17OCCCA
Oregon Community College Association



April 21, 2023



Dear Members of the All-Oregon Academic Team:

I am delighted to write to you today to acknowledge your nomination and selection from your community college as a member of the Phi Theta Kappa All-Oregon Academic Team. It is my privilege to celebrate your accomplishments as detailed in the enclosed All-Oregon Academic Team Recognition Program.

I would like to share some thoughts on the community college journey you have completed and why I believe each of you is ready to face the future. For me, community colleges are the most significant launchpad in higher education. We get to provide education to students, many of whom have been marginalized because of academic preparation, ethnicity, skin color, religion, other-ability, pandemic-related challenges, economic status, and so on. Community colleges were created

to assure that you, our students, whatever your background or wherever you come from, have access to higher education – that we let you know that access to higher education is a right for everyone, not just the privileged few.

I hope you feel proud that you have attended a community college. Sometimes I hear students say they are going to *just* a community college – it is not *just* a community college, it is higher education. Be proud. In your time with us you have attained a quality education that will set you up for the rest of your life, whether you are going straight into the workforce or transferring to a university.

Remember your community college experience has set you on a course of impact and inspiration – do not let anyone put limits on what you think you can achieve. Much like a stone cast into water, the achievements attained through your community college experience will generate ripples that reach far beyond what you initially imagined, not only for yourself but for others as well.

Congratulations on your achievements and the completion of your community college degree or certificate. As our best and brightest, you represent hope for a strong future. Stay involved and engaged in your community, and by doing so, you will lead and teach by example, encouraging future generations as well.

Sincerely,

Kim Morgan, Board President

Oregon Community College Association

Keynote Speaker



Shemia Fagan

Oregon Secretary of State

Shemia Fagan is Oregon's 28th Secretary of State. She grew up in small Oregon towns, Dufur and The Dalles, and was raised by her single dad and two older brothers. Her public service began on her local school board. She was later elected to the Oregon House of Representatives, then to the Oregon State Senate. Secretary Fagan was a civil rights attorney before being elected to Secretary of State in 2020. She stays busy keeping up with her young children, teaching her dog not to jump on people and being a fanatic for women's basketball.

Thank You!

OCCA would like to give special thanks to the Phi Theta Kappa advisors and instructors at Oregon's 17 community colleges who helped nominate and coordinate with this year's AOAT scholars!



Student Speakers



Rachel P. Arceo
Umpqua Community College



Desiree Remick
Rogue Community College



Scott Truman
Treasure Valley Community College



Every year, the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) Member Services Committee selects three to four students to share stories about their educational journeys at the annual All-Oregon Academic Team Awards Luncheon. The Committee is made up of local college board members, staff, and presidents. The criteria used for selecting the student speakers is based on academic excellence, leadership, and community service while pursuing an associate's degree.

These selected student speakers share their stories at the awards luncheon, where all members of the All-Oregon Academic Team are acknowledged and celebrated. These stories are powerful and inspiring, and OCCA would like to thank these students for having the courage to share them with all of us today.

About Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

The purpose of Phi Theta Kappa is to recognize and encourage scholarship among two-year college students. To achieve this purpose, Phi Theta Kappa provides opportunity for the development of leadership and service, for an intellectual climate for exchange of ideas and ideals, for lively fellowship for scholars, and for stimulation of interest in continuing academic excellence.

All-State Community College Academic Team

Phi Theta Kappa, community college presidents, and community college state associations sponsor All-State Community College Academic Team ceremonies in 37 participating states. Students nominated to the national All-USA Community College Academic Team / Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team are automatically named to the All-State Community College Academic Teams. Ranking on the All-State Community College Academic Teams is generally determined by the student's score in the national competition.

All-State Community College Academic Team recognition ceremonies vary by state but are most often held in the state capitol with legislators, education leaders, and corporate leaders attending. All-State Community College Academic Team members receive special recognition at these ceremonies, including medallions and certificates and may include scholarships. If applicable, Coca-Cola Gold, Silver, and Bronze Scholars are also recognized.

College & University Partners

Phi Theta Kappa has partnered with over 750 four-year colleges and universities in the United States, the District of Columbia, Canada, and England, offering more than \$37 million in transfer scholarships to Phi Theta Kappa members each year. We are pleased to highlight 16 four-year colleges and universities that have designated scholarships exclusively to All-Oregon Academic Team members.

The Oregon Community College Association wishes to thank the following four-year institutions for offering transfer scholarships to this year's All-Oregon Academic Team:			
\$5,000-\$13,000	Bushnell University	\$2,500	Pacific University
\$1,000	Corban University	\$1,000	Portland State University
\$1,000	Eastern Oregon University	\$1,000	University of Oregon
\$5,000	George Fox University	\$1,000	University of Portland
\$2,000	Lewis & Clark College	\$1,000	Warner Pacific University
\$1,500	Linfield University	\$1,000	Western Oregon University
\$1,000	Oregon Institute of Technology	\$1,000	Willamette University
\$1,500	Oregon State University	THANK YOU TO OUR UNIVERSITY PARTNERS!	

Special Recognition

Coca-Cola New Century Scholar is a designation bestowed upon students in each state with the highest All-USA Academic Team application score. The program recognizes 100 scholars annually.



Coca-Cola New Century Transfer Scholar Oregon

Rachel P. Arceo

Umpqua Community College



Coca-Cola New Century Workforce Scholar Oregon

Vivian Norquest

Lane Community College



Congratulations!

Special Recognition

Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team Scholar Recipients

Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation sponsors the Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team. The Coca-Cola Academic Team recognizes high-achieving college students who demonstrate academic excellence and intellectual rigor combined with leadership and service that extends their education beyond the classroom to benefit society. Nationally, 50 community college students are selected as Silver Scholars and receive \$1,250 scholarships, while an additional 50 community college students nationally are selected as Bronze Scholars and receive \$1,000 scholarships.



Silver Scholar
Oscar Toran
Central Oregon
Community College

Gold Scholar
Emily Killebrew
Chemeketa Community College



Silver Scholar
Katherine Ruffino
Klamath
Community College

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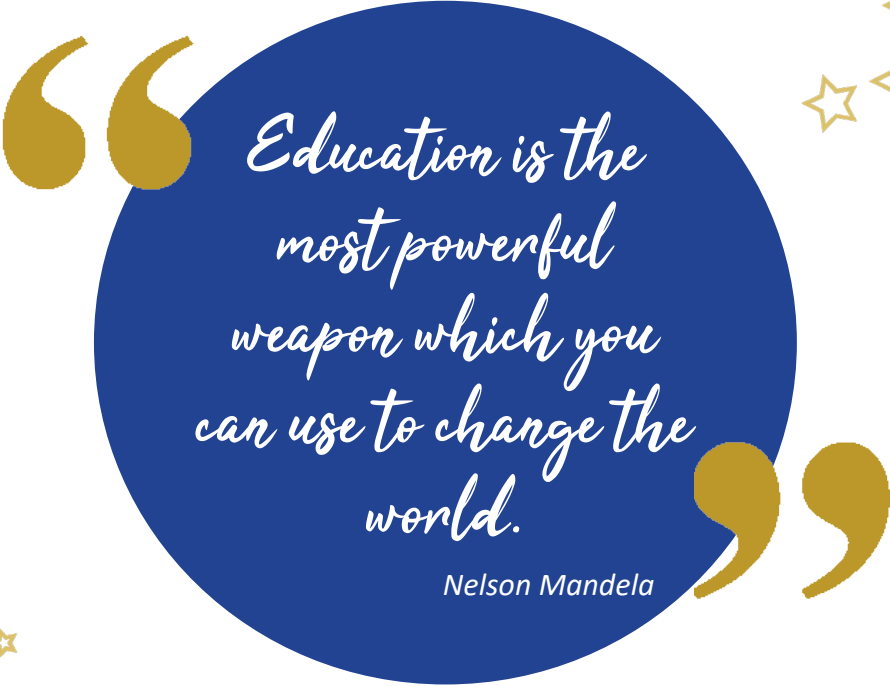
Treasure Valley Community College

Tim Cook, Ex-Officio - OPC Chair

Clackamas Community College

Donna Lewelling, Ex-Officio - Director

Community College & Workforce Development



*Education is the
most powerful
weapon which you
can use to change the
world.*

Nelson Mandela

Blue Mountain Community College

Dr. Mark Browning, President



Katrina Joy Holmes

I have developed my own freelance proofreading business, correcting and polishing various types of writings. I am the solo mom of a 16-year-old and a 4-year-old, as well as a cat-mom to a spoiled orange tabby. I also work in the BMCC financial aid office and at the Veteran's Resource Center. I plan to pursue a degree in Business Management at Eastern Oregon University.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Vice President's List
- TRiO Grant
- AAUW Scholarship
- NW Farm Credit Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Editorial Freelancers Association
- LGBTQ+ Editors Association
- Distributed Proofreaders

Activities

- Veteran's Resource Center
- BMCC Financial Aid Office student worker

Age	Hometown	GPA
42	Baltimore, MD	3.94

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science -
Administrative Professional Program

Transferring to: Eastern Oregon University

*Democracy cannot succeed
unless those who express
their choice are prepared
to choose wisely. The real
safeguard of democracy,
therefore, is education.*

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Central Oregon Community College

Dr. Laurie Chesley, President



Adriana Altamirano

When I was growing up college didn't seem within reach. Coming from a low income household, I couldn't pursue college immediately. Instead, I moved to a brand new state with only \$1,000 to my name, and dedicated a four-year gap away from school towards becoming independent and financially secure. When the time came that I felt ready and driven to return back to school, it felt as though a new light within me had been ignited. I am now recently licensed as a massage therapist and intend to work with a focus in injury rehabilitation and medical-based massage. Since returning back to school, I have been surrounded by compassionate teachers, who have truly fostered an environment for me to succeed.

Honors

- Dean's List

Activities

- COCC LatinX Club
- Art

Volunteerism

- COCC LatinX Club

Age	Hometown	GPA
23	Boise, ID	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science -
Massage Therapy

Transferring to: Oregon State University Cascades



Claire Landon

As a military kid, I've grown up all over the world. However, having attended Sisters High School and spent the last six years in Sisters, I like to say I've grown up here in Central Oregon. I began working on my Associate of Science degree in Aviation at COCC Fall term of 2021. My love for flying stems from my dad being a pilot and immersing me in aviation at a young age. Once I graduate from COCC, I plan to work as a flight instructor at my school and eventually transition to the airlines. In the pursuit of my education, I have had to take out many loans and pay a lot out of pocket - all worthwhile investments in myself and my future. I still live and work in Sisters and drive to Bend at least six days a week, which adds up quickly. However, I have received great support from my advisors at COCC who have helped me navigate and manage the costs of my education, discussing where I am at and preparing me for my transition financially into my career. They also provided connections and opportunities, and offering help and resources at every turn.

Honors

- Dean's List

Age	Hometown	GPA
20	Sisters, OR	3.8

Degree/Major: Associate of Science - Aviation

Transferring to: Oregon State University Cascades

Central Oregon Community College

Dr. Laurie Chesley, President



Nacho Ruiz

Growing up in a low-income household where education was seen as a luxury, going to college seemed impossible. When the time came to pick a school, I blindly went into the process and decided to attend an out of state university, where I spent thousands of dollars on a career I was not sure was for me. After my first year of university, I decided to save money and finish my AA at COCC. Upon obtaining my degree this year, I plan to find a job in a city that values the arts. Thanks to the awesome community at Central Oregon Community College, I have been able to receive many opportunities to grow as an artist and as a person.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Dean's List

Volunteerism

- Madras H.S. Theater Graphic Design & Backstage work
- Madras Performing Arts Center

Activities

- Jefferson County Community Choir
- Latino Fest Artist
- COCC Art & Design Club
- COCC LatinX Club
- COCC Youth Camp Theater Instructor

Age	Hometown	GPA
21	Madras, OR	3.37

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree - Art

Transferring to: Oregon State University



Oscar Raymon Tovar

I am someone who came into college extremely discouraged. I went through a rather tough time in high school where I would then be told by a guidance counselor that there was nothing unique or powerful about me as a student or person. I was discouraged from pursuing higher education, yet I still don't know why I didn't believe them. I made the conscious decision to believe in myself. One of the first steps was deciding to go to community college. It was during my time at COCC and through both conversations with my professors and involvement in the research lab that I was able to learn that I adore research, and now know it is my goal to become a Clinical Psychologist.

Honors

- Dean's List
- COCC Foundation Scholarship
- COPE Evolution Award

Volunteerism

- COCC Thanksgiving Food Drive
- Moderator for Political Meet-&-Greet
- Student Campus Showcase organizer

Activities

- Student Government - Director of Financial Affairs
- Diversity Committee Chair
- Student Affairs Committee
- President/Founder Psi Beta Honors Society Chapter
- Central Oregon Psychology Enthusiast Student Leader
- LGBTQ+ Club Treasurer
- COCC Undergraduate Research Lab Research Assistant

Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Bend, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree - Psychology

Transferring to: Undecided

Chemeketa Community College

Dr. Jessica Howard, President



Bryce Aguayo Stroberg

I had very little interest in my education during my time in high school. During my six-year gap between graduating high school and becoming a full-time college student, I learned a lot about who I am as a person and who I want to be as a member of our society. I became enamored with politics and the desire to help improve the world in which we live. My time at Chemeketa Community College has reinvigorated my educational senses and has helped me develop into the kind of student that becomes worthy of this recognition. I look forward to continuing my education at Willamette and helping forge a society that works for all, not just the few.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Honor Roll
- Clyde Latino Scholarship
- Crouser Family Scholarship
- Jerome B. Steinbach Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Coordinated student artists for mural in campus lobby

Activities

- Student Leader
- College Council Member (for accreditation)

Age	Hometown	GPA
25	Sheridan, OR	3.88

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Willamette University



Emily Killebrew

I am from a small nuclear family and I always learned in public schools. I've always wanted to be a writer, so now I will strive to do that with a Bachelor's degree in business with a writing minor. I'm doing this because I realized I needed math in my life and I love to manage things. So while I am working full-time as a business manager I will work on the side to start my career as a romance novelist.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Honor's List
- Gretchen Shuette Leadership Award
- Chemeketa Scholars

Volunteerism

- Oregon Humane Society
- PTK Officer
- Campus Ambassadors President
- Homeless Shelter Drive

Activities

- Campus Ambassadors
- PTK Public Relations Officer
- Videogame Club

Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Salem, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Western Oregon University

Chemeketa Community College

Dr. Jessica Howard, President



Danielle McCalmon

My name is Danielle, I am a mom of eight and a wife to a loving and supportive husband. I love being outdoors and enjoying my country lifestyle, fishing, shooting at the range, and soon to learn to hunt, and four-by-four. I am immensely proud to say that I received my GED in 2021 and went straight into college courses starting summer 2021. I have since also been on the Honor Roll in all terms and became a Phi Theta Kappa member. I am dual enrolled with Chemeketa and WOU, and I work full-time. My anticipated graduation at Chemeketa is 2024 and WOU is 2025 or 2026, depending on how many credits I will need left from the ones that transfer over. My plans after I graduate are to work towards becoming a Homicide Detective or working in the Special Victims Unit. I am excited to learn about forensic investigation as it will help tremendously with investigating a homicide. I have always had a love for investigations and helping families get the closure they need.

Age	Hometown	GPA
35	Monmouth, OR	3.0

Honors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phi Theta Kappa• Honor Roll

Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentoring

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Western Oregon University

Additional Chemeketa Community College AOAT Scholars

Miralina Brown
Zachary Houston
Alexander Puckett



Clackamas Community College

Dr. Tim Cook, President



Jennifer Golden

I am the first in my family to attend college and had a rough childhood. My future consists of completing my Associate of Applied Science in Business degree with my career of becoming a Project Management Professional holding a PMP license and passing the exam with the Project Management Institution. My dream is to pursue a job for a city after graduation, unsure of which city currently. I am a mother, and my little girl is my life. Being a full-time student along with being a mother is an obstacle within itself; though it has only challenged me to do my absolute best. I am blessed that my college, Clackamas Community College, offers all online courses as I am in Lane County and not currently able to accommodate travel.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Henry & Lenore Klossen Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Family Resource Peer Support Mentor
- Pregnancy Support Mentor
- Mother/Baby Support Mentor

Age	Hometown	GPA
29	Springfield, OR	3.8

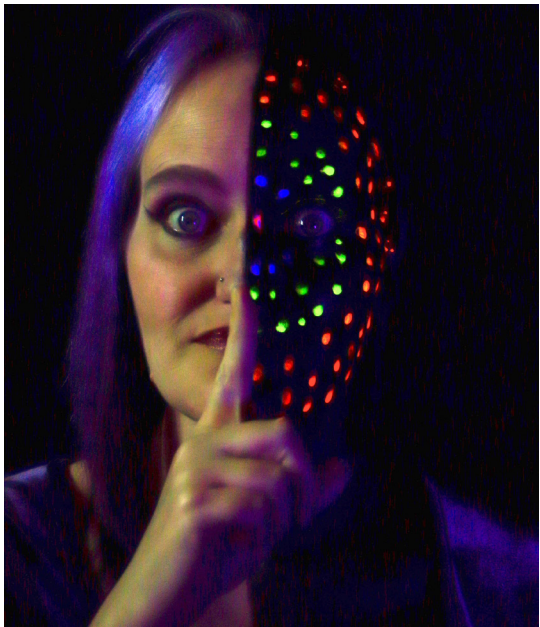
Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science - Project Mgmt.; Mgmt. Fundamentals Certificate; Project Mgmt. Leadership & Communication Certificate; Project Mgmt. tools & Techniques Certificate

“Ensuring quality higher education is one of the most important things we can do for future generations.”

Ron Lewis

Clatsop Community College

Dr. Chris Breitmeyer, President



Jennifer Ginn-Bennett

I have overcome social anxiety, panic attacks, self doubts, migraines, arthritic pain, and poverty to pursue my educational goals. I am going to get my Bachelor of Science degree, then a Master's in English so that I can help others at the college level communicate effectively, understand others more clearly, and hopefully open them up to the joys and benefits of literature. I also want to become skilled in grant writing to help the colleges, students, and the community where I land after getting my Master's. I'd then like to earn my Doctorate when I can. None of this is fully possible without continuing my education.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Emmet D. Towler Scholarship
- Magic Opportunity Grant
- TRiO
- Jack Kent Cooke Semifinalist

Volunteerism

- PTK fundraisers
- TRiO peer tutoring
- Grocery Delivery for Elderly
- Community Transportation Planning
- Bottle/Can Donations

Age	Hometown	GPA
41	Clatskanie, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Science Oregon
Transfer degree - Business Management

Transferring to: Eastern Oregon University

Activities

- PTK Induction Ceremonies
- PTK Pi Day
- PTK Awareness Efforts



Brandi Swiderski

I am a recovery addict with five and a half years clean and sober! I have two children, one who will graduate from high school this year, and a 15-month-old. My future plans are to get a Masters in Business Administration and show other addicts that there is a life worth living after addiction. I want to prove to myself that I have what it takes to see this through. Higher education fits in to those plans because with it, I wouldn't be able to earn a degree. Obstacles that I have overcome in my pursuit of education have been being a working mother and full time student.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa - President
- Bridge Scholarship
- Mary Wood Memorial Scholarship
- Sara Shawa Scholarship
- Magic Opportunity Scholarship
- TRiO

Volunteerism

- PTK fundraisers
- Clatskanie PEO fundraisers
- Clatskanie H.S. Senior Class Fundraisers

Age	Hometown	GPA
36	Salem, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Portland State University

Activities

- PTK Induction Ceremonies
- PTK Pi Day
- PTK New Student Orientation
- Work Study for Clatsop Community College Foundation

Columbia Gorge Community College

Dr. Marta Yera Cronin, President



Gabriel Eldredge

Before starting school I worked in the oil field for a little over 5 years. During that time, I acquired skills that helped me in the Electro-Mechanical Technician program at CGCC. While in school I was able to build onto these skills. Reading schematics and learning electrical analysis are some of the new things I learned from the program. I plan to get my degree in Electrical Engineering or Mechanical Engineering. Like most other students one barrier that affected being in school was funding. Fortunately, the college informed me of a couple of scholarships that helped me get through the program. Once I've completed more education I want to work in the renewable energy field.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- CGCC Foundation Scholarship
- Metallica Scholars Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Campus Food Pantry

Activities

- Resident Assistant
- Food Pantry
- Work Study

Age	Hometown	GPA
24	Roosevelt, UT	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science
- Electro-Mechanical Technology



Mitzi Mason Wickenham

I come from a place in life where I was allowing my struggles to consume me. At a moment of clarity, I decided to turn my life around and attempt to live a life that I could be proud of, and that my children could look up to me for. I have had an amazing support system that encouraged me to seek a higher education even though I was 38 years old. I am now 42 and rounding out my community college experience with nothing but the utmost gratitude for the life lessons I have acquired. I have a sense of self that I never thought possible. I am proud of who I am and what I have accomplished.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- CGCC Foundation Scholarship
- President's List
- Honor Roll

- Motivational Interviewing Training

Activities

- Work Study Program - GED/ College Readiness
- STEPS Program

Age	Hometown	GPA
42	Dufer, OR	3.94

Degree/Major: Associate of Science Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Portland State University

Volunteerism

- Recovery Mentor for Women with Children
- Childcare Specialist for Children in State Custody
- Mental Health First Aid

Klamath Community College

Dr. Roberto Gutierrez, President



Katherine Ruffino

I am a wife and mother of three beautiful young adult children. My husband is disabled, and his health problems and my family responsibilities have made the pursuit of my education at times very challenging. My education is supporting me by giving me confidence that I can meet academic challenges and meet my other responsibilities. It is also giving me the training and skills I will need to work in my chosen field in the future. Klamath Community College supports me by providing tutors that I reach out to whenever I need assistance. I have used them repeatedly for math and accounting classes to make sure that I master the coursework. They also helped me by encouraging me to apply for this honor, and I am so glad I did.

Age	Hometown	GPA
55	Klamath Falls, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of General Studies
Transferring to: Oregon Institute of Technology

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Klamath Community College Foundation Scholarship
- Coca-Cola Academic Team Silver Scholar
- OIT Winston Purvis Scholarship

Volunteerism

- PTK Beta Lambda theta Chapter Secretary



Christopher Ward

After the first week of Fall 2021, I became homeless for nearly 6 months. If it weren't for the support of the teachers and staff at KCC I probably would have dropped out. They were incredibly helpful and understanding at every turn. Thanks to them, I not only stayed in school but with their encouragement, maintained a 4.0 GPA. That accomplishment led me to a 2-year scholarship offer when I recently transferred to Webster University in Saint Louis, Missouri, where I'm currently going after my Bachelor of Arts degree in Games & Game Design.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Honor's List

Volunteerism

- Dinner Cook/Supervisor at Gospel Mission
- KCC Food Pantry Liaison
- Gospel Mission Food Pantry Liaison

Age	Hometown	GPA
54	Greensboro, NC	4.0

Degree/Major: Digital Media Design Certificate
Transferring to: Webster University

Lane Community College

Dr. Stephanie Bulger, President



Vivian Norquest

I started my journey at LCC with no idea where I wanted to end up. I hopped from public health education to human services before finally ending up where I am now, pursuing a degree in Dental Hygiene. I struggled to find which path I wanted to commit to, but with the help of the instructors and advisors, I realized I didn't need to limit myself. I've found a passion in all of these programs, and the things I've learned from each one have ensured that I'll be a better, more compassionate hygienist with a well-rounded pool of knowledge and skills. I intend to move forward in my field with a strong focus on accessibility – I want everyone to be able to access high quality dental care, regardless of what barriers they may face.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Robert & Bernice Ingalls Staton Scholarship
- LCC General Foundation Scholarships

Association

- National Give Kids a Smile Day
- Danceability International Internship

Activities

- Student American Dental Hygienist's Association
- Council of Clubs
- Tutoring

Age	Hometown	GPA
26	Tuscon, AZ	4.18

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science
- Dental Hygiene

Volunteerism

- Vice President - Student American Dental Hygienist's

Additional Lane Community College ADAT Scholars

Brandy Green

Jessica Lee

Annabel Winningham



Linn-Benton Community College

Dr. Lisa Avery, President



Charlie Mackey

I am a non-traditional student and have worked full-time throughout my time as a student. Like many of us, we endured changes, hardship, and doubt about our abilities as a student during the turmoil of life. However, overcoming those challenges what make us the scholars that we are! My long-term plan is to go to OSU and get my degree in history with an emphasis on medieval studies. I would like to eventually go on to get my doctorate and teach at a college to inspire the same way I have been on this journey. Needless to say, being in college has meant everything to me, and becoming more educated and well-rounded has allowed me to grow into the intellectual that I have longed to be!

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Honor Roll

Volunteerism

- COVID-19 Clinics
- EMT

Age	Hometown	GPA
27	Corvallis, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Additional Linn-Benton Community College AOAT Scholars

Adam Thomas



Mt. Hood Community College

Dr. Lisa Skari, President



Mike Furuya

I am proud of what I accomplished in this short period of time. After struggling in the classroom setting, I got tested for a learning disability and was diagnosed with Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). GAD is a diagnosis that can easily derail a student's career plans. It would have been easy for me to give up and completely change professions, but I decided not to give up. Through this process, I have become a much better student and learned a lot of new learning strategies that I am implementing at Mt. Hood Community College. My goal is to become a highly skilled Physical Therapist Assistant and advocate for students with anxiety disorders that they can become successful like me.

Age	Hometown	GPA
31	Portland, OR	3.909

Degree/Major: Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Dean's List
- Joseph E. Weston Student Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Feed the Streets
- MHCC Foundation Secret Tea Party



Marisol Salas

I am a first generation college student. My future goal is to achieve my BSRT, Bachelor's of Science in respiratory therapy. I had to work my way through school while going to school full-time. My school provided as much tuition help as they could and I will always be thankful.

Age	Hometown	GPA
25	Salem, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science

Honors

- Dean's List
- President's List

Mt. Hood Community College

Dr. Lisa Skari, President



Emily Bentea

I am a first generation college student attending nursing school. I will be the first person in my family to get a bachelor's degree. My college supported me in this goal by teaching me how to apply to a BSN program and gave me the tools to get in.

Honors

- President's List
- Dean's List
- Honor Roll

Volunteerism

- Make a Wish Foundation

Activities

- Scholarship Directive

Age	Hometown	GPA
30	Camas, WA	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Linfield University



Graciela Zwart

When I first dreamt of becoming a respiratory therapist, I never thought that connecting patients to a ventilator could be as risky as it is now. COVID-19 has led a dramatic loss of human lives, and as scary it sounds Respiratory Therapists are the first ones in line against it among other health professionals. However, in 2014 I graduated as an ICU Respiratory Therapist in Costa Rica, and I pledged to act with compassion, kindness, integrity, honesty, and endeavour to be true to myself. The decision to become a Respiratory Therapist comes from when I was a kid and my mom went into a 2-month coma. Even though I was only 10 years old, the memory of the respiratory therapists working non-stop in order to help her inspired me to help other people in the same situation by providing care, compassion, and the capacity to save lives. In 2017, I made the big decision to come to the United States to learn English and have a sense of living immersed in a different culture. Even though it was very hard at the beginning due to my lack of English skills, I persisted, and I earned my ESOL certification back in 2018 with honors. It was a dream come true. During that time, I fell in love with Oregon, its people, and their love for different cultures, and diversity. I felt this was my second home since then, so I made the decision to get certified as a Respiratory Therapist in the U.S.

Age	Hometown	GPA
33	Cartago, Costa Rica	3.71

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science
- Respiratory Care

Honors

- President's List
- Dean's List

- Phi Theta Kappa

- Oregon Community Foundation
Joseph E. Weston Scholarship

Oregon Coast Community College

Dr. Birgitte Ryslinge, President



Michelle Lynn Cottrell

My dream has always been to be a teacher or a librarian. I am currently living my dream as the District Librarian for Lincoln County School District under a temporary license that will become permanent after I graduate. I have worked hard to keep my 4.0 while working full-time and supporting my family. Last year we lost my mother, and my professors supported me throughout her nine-day battle with cancer. They provided me with time to make up the assignments and keep my 4.0 that my mother was so proud of. As the first college graduate in our family, she was beyond proud that I went back to school to accomplish my dream and show my children it is never too late to dream big.

Age	Hometown	GPA
40	Newport, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree- Elementary Education
Transferring to: Western Oregon University

Honors

- President's List
- WOU Academic Transfer Scholarship
- Phi Theta Kappa

Volunteerism

- Hope Rises Village
- Oregon Coast Book Review
- Wyldlife/Young Life
- Coastal Act Productions
- Dance! And All That Jazz!

Activities

- PTK Induction Ceremony



Jessica Angela Eubank

I grew up as the middle child of seven (counting step and half siblings). My family was/is riddled with addiction. Getting an education past high school seemed unattainable in my family. The older I got, the farther away a college degree seemed. And then I found fishing. I fell in love with the fish, nature, and conserving both for generations to come. Once I found my passion for fishing, I knew nothing would stand in the way of my goals. Once I graduate with my AAS in Aquarium Science this year I plan on eventually transferring to Oregon State University to complete my BS in Fisheries and Wildlife. I still have a ways to go, but I couldn't be more excited or proud to be on this journey.

Age	Hometown	GPA
41	Springfield, OR	3.79

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science
- Aquarium Science
Transferring to: Oregon State University

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Dean's List
- Robert A. Clapp Memorial Scholarship
- ODFW Scholarship - American Fisheries Society Oregon Chapter Meeting

Volunteerism

- Newport ODFW Salmon Trout Enhancement Program (STEP)
- ODFW Salmon Trout Advisory Committee Board Member
- Student Resource Closet

Activities

- Associated Student Government
- Sea Fans (Aquarium Science Club)

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Kahneeta Atkin

I came from a very hard place in life. I had a drug addiction and have since overcome and have become a productive member of society again. I am five years clean.

Age	Hometown	GPA
36	Portland, OR	3.96

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science - Addiction Counselor

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Dean's List
- National Honor Society



Beatrice Borkor

I am from Ghana. There is always very few or no women in engineering everywhere I go. In most of the schools in Ghana there are no female Professors in the Engineering departments. I want to become a Professor one day to go back and teach, so that I can be someone that the women may look up to and be inspired to join the team. If I have no education, I can't fulfill this dream.

Age	Hometown	GPA
23	Kumasi, Ghana	4.0

Degree/Major: Mechanical Drafting
Transferring to: Ogon State University

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List

Volunteerism

- Senior Center

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Ajai Nicole Duncan

I am a biracial, queer woman who was raised by my grandparents. For 21 years I made a life for myself in the beauty industry. I paid my own way through three different types of beauty schools in order to further myself, in order to survive. Before the pandemic, I was working three different types of jobs: on-call at Nordstrom as a Beauty Consultant, trying to make it on my own as an Esthetician, and performing at night. Sex work helped me pay my bills for 12 years. Both of my parents are addicts and my father passed away at a young age. I have no other family alive still besides my mother and little brother, both addicted to drugs and in and out of prison. I support them when I can. In 2021, I was 40 and I had never graduated high school. Now I am in school, belong to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and planning to transfer to a university. I plan to earn my Masters in Social Work. I want to set an example and help our youth, letting them know there are other ways out and they can change their lives. The more support children have from stable people who care, the better off they can be in order to succeed in life and change their own family dynamics.

Age

42

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa



Michelle Effle

I was born and raised in Hollywood, California and left home at a very early age. After getting my GED, I lived on the streets and traveled all over the country and the world. I worked mostly migrant seasonal jobs and studied the environments and cultures I was immersed in. All the while I have been an artist by trade illustrating the complex relationships of plants and animals in the different bioregions of the world, and portraying them in the myths and stories that I find along the way. I am currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in natural resource management to give academic credit to my life's work.

Age	Hometown	GPA
45	Hollywood, CA	4.0

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Honorary Ann Prater Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Friends of the Lost Coast Trail Steward
- Native Plant Garden Work
- Trail Maintenance

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Emily Swenson

I am a first generation college student living with a disability. When I was 17, I had to leave high school after an incredibly unfortunate personal incident, and I thought my education would end there. When I was about to turn 20, I decided to take back control and finish my education. I got my GED, and PCC was kind enough to provide me with a scholarship to begin my higher education journey. I am now about to graduate with my Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree, and I have already been accepted into Washington State University to further my education. I will be pursuing my Bachelor of Science in Psychology, then moving on to get my Master's so that I can begin my career in counseling.

Age	Hometown	GPA
22	Vancouver, WA	3.80

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree

Transferring to: Washington State University

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Delta Alpha Pi
- Dean's List

Volunteerism

- Assisting disabled students with access to remote accessibility to classes

Activities

- Developed magazine for disabled community
- Alternative Format Technician student employment



Joshua J. Webb

As a freshman, I dropped out of high school, obtained my GED in 2013, and worked my way up to being a Store Manager of several different Subway locations. Unfortunately, I became addicted to hard drugs but have been sober since August 26, 2015. I had to re-think what I wanted to do with my life. Plants have been my passion since I was young. I want to dedicate my life to understanding the biological functions of plants; thus, I want to become a botanist. I plan to attend Oregon State University's Botany Program to obtain a Bachelor's degree, and later a Master's degree. I love learning just about anything and I have always been able to achieve my goals through focus, dedication, and hard work.

Age	Hometown	GPA
27	Portland, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Science

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- PCC Foundation Max & Pearl Wallack Endowed Scholarship
- OSAC Andy Aitkenhead Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Narcotics Anonymous

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President

Additional Portland Community College ADAT Scholars

Tammy Hendon

Kathy Tran

*Education is the
passport to the
future, for tomorrow
belongs to those who
prepare for it today.*

Malcom X

Rogue Community College

Dr. Randy Weber, President



Teri Evans

As a non-traditional student I have had to work hard to balance being a full-time student, mother partner, employee, and caregiver for an aging parent. I felt very out of place in the beginning of my college journey as I was almost two decades older than my classmates. Luckily, that quickly faded and I knew that I deserved to be there and I wasn't "too old." My future plans are to continue working towards certifications in my field to expand my knowledge, skills, and wage. My college has supported me by providing the tools needed to succeed and the guidance to reach my goals and beyond. I am incredibly thankful for the support and encouragement from all my instructors within the Dental Assisting program at Rogue Community College.

Age	Hometown	GPA
38	Grants Pass, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Dental Assistant Certificate

Honors

- President's List
- Ashland Community Hospital Foundation - Allied Health Scholarship
- Bewley, Tim & Fellows Carol Endowed Scholarship



Desinee Remick

I was born and raised in Ashland, OR, and I've known since early childhood that I want to be a writer. However, my goal of becoming a creative writing professor is relatively new; I realized when I started attending RCC that I love college, and teaching is one way for me to stay connected to the college environment after I graduate. Despite being an excellent student, I dropped out of high school due to struggles with anxiety, and I did not earn my GED until I lost my job at the start of the pandemic and was forced to reconsider my future. RCC has welcomed me in and inspired me to maximize my effort and achieve my dreams, and for that, I am extremely grateful.

Age	Hometown	GPA
31	Ashland, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Southern Oregon University

Honors

- Honor Roll

Volunteerism

- Tutoring

Activities

- RCC Peer Tutor

Rogue Community College

Dr. Randy Weber, President



Mackenzie Shirley

I emancipated myself from foster care at 17 after graduating high school at 16. I started college the month I turned 17 and have been working towards my degree since. My future plans are to pursue my Bachelor's degree in Psychology and eventually become a case worker to work with foster children. I just had a newborn in February and plan to continue my education for her. My college has supported me with trio services and by my professors being absolutely amazing and helpful.

Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Grants Pass, OR	3.88

Degree/Major: Associate of General studies
- Early Childhood Education/Psychology

Transferring to: Southern Oregon University

Honors

- Honor Roll
- National Honor Society - Alpha Zeta Pi



Caroline Elizabeth "Froggy" Tinker

My dream is to create a massage practice and retreat center employing and healing many in Josephine County. I intend to continue my education with a Creative Writing and/or Psychology degree focusing on healthcare and addiction psychology. Overcoming serious drug and alcohol addictions along with severe mental health challenges have been the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life. I have since accomplished much to help the environment, my community, and family. I learned that love, resilience, trust, discipline, and determination make anything possible. RCC has made success attainable with the assistance of financial counseling, financial aid, great advisors, dedicated teachers, and tutoring. I never thought I could afford to go to college, and while still a struggle, it truly is a dream come true.

Age	Hometown	GPA
45	Cave Junction, OR	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of General studies
& Massage Therapy Certificate

Honors

- National Honor Society - Alpha Zeta Pi
- RCC General Scholarship Fund

Volunteerism

- KSWild
- KXCJ Radio

Southwestern Oregon Community College

Dr. Patty Scott, President



Brayden Edwards

My background is that of a non-traditional student with a family that didn't value education as I grew up. Consequently, I achieved a 1.57 GPA in High School with no plans to attend college. However, in 2021, I decided to pursue a degree in Computer Science. Since then, I have attended college full-time. The main obstacle I had to overcome was my feeling of inadequacy resulting from my high school performance. However, with hard work and support from tutors, professors, and advisors, I was able to grow self-confidence in my own ability. I aim to get two bachelors, one in computer science and the other in mathematics. I hope to work in the field of Artificial Intelligence and get a master's degree in that field. College has done more for me than merely supplying a degree. I have grown so much personally and have overcome my past school failures, but most importantly, I have developed a desire for learning that I never had before.

Age 23
Hometown Sonora, CA
GPA 4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Science - Computer Science

Transferring to: University of Oregon

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- SOCC Foundation Scholarship
- Dean's List
- College Reading & Learning Association Master Tutor Certificate

Volunteerism

- PTK Officer (Treasurer, Vice President, President)
- SOCC Student Government - Clubs Director

Activities

- Tutor
- PTK



Damian Lilienthal

I have been interested in the STEM field for as long as I can remember. While I am unsure to this point what really sparked my interest in math or science, I have always been a very curious person in this area. I feel that a career in engineering is great in my case because it utilizes all of what the STEM field represents on a daily basis. There is always new information to be known or discovered, and that's what I love about it. I am always looking for new ways to get involved with anything that may help me achieve these goals, and that is ultimately why I joined PTK. It allows me to meet new people, get involved with school activities I wouldn't otherwise be a part of and much more. Southwestern Oregon Community College has done a lot to assist me in all areas of my education, and PTK is just part of it.

Age 19
Hometown Myrtle Point, OR
GPA 3.96

Degree/Major: Associate of Science

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Honors

- Honor Roll
- Dennis & Janet Beetham Family Foundation Scholarship - Engineering
- Academic Excellence

Volunteerism

- SPEAR Outreach (Space, Physics, Engineering & Atmospheric Research)

Activities

- STEM Student Tutor
- STEM Student Researcher through SPEAR

Tillamook Bay Community College

Dr. Ross Tomlin, President



Aiden L. Sifford

My family has never really emphasized education, so I'm going to be the first one to ever graduate. It was hard growing up as one of the first people in my family who felt driven to receive an education, everything was a first to me. That's why I'm really appreciative of the advising support that my college has given me. Once I graduate this year, I plan on continuing on to do a pre-med at Dartmouth and get a doctorate from a medical school. My dream is to become a radiologist and respected academic so I can give back and inspire as many people as possible to achieve higher education.

Age
18

Hometown
Cloverdale, OR

GPA
3.85

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Honor Roll

Volunteerism

- PTK Mock Interviews with High School Students

Degree/Major: Associate of General Studies

Transferring to: Dartmouth University

Activities

- Math & Science Tutor

*The cure for
boredom is
curiosity. There is
no cure for curiosity.*

Dorothy Parker

Treasure Valley Community College

Dr. Dana Young, President



Kelsi Leigh Deal

My future plans are to graduate from TVCC in June 2023 with my Associate degree in Crop Science. I then plan to go and work in agriculture either working with plants or soil. I am a triplet and growing up we were our own individual people, but we always had each other. Once we graduated high school, we all attended separate colleges. An obstacle I have faced was paying for college; with being a triplet our parents couldn't help us very much or at all. I overcame this obstacle by applying for many scholarships. I was awarded several and that is how I'm paying for college. TVCC has supported me through my education by being a welcoming environment and making it easy to learn with small class sizes.

Age	Hometown	GPA
20	Klamath Falls, OR	3.71

Degree/Major: Associate of Science - Crop Science

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Honor Roll
- FFA Scholarship
- Dr. James & Emma Jean Mann Scholarship

Volunteerism

- TVCC Foundation Gala
- TVCC Donor Scholarship & Recognition Dessert

Activities

- Smart Tech



Jessica Gonzalez Torres

I have two wonderful kids. I plan to own a business. TVCC has supported my education by being flexible with online classes and very communicable teachers!

Age	Hometown	GPA
29	Emmett, ID	3.5

Degree/Major: Associate of Science - Business Management

Honors

- Dean's List

Treasure Valley Community College

Dr. Dana Young, President



Scott Truman

The first obstacle I have had to overcome is being a 49-year-old student returning to college after 30 years of no formal education, and a lot has changed. I have also had to overcome bankruptcy, homelessness, divorce, and a few other personal issues just to get back to school. TVCC has been great to me. It is a very accommodating institution. I plan on finding a rewarding and successful career in Natural Resources Management through hard work, good grades, staying actively involved in school, my community, and volunteer program, and continuing to refine my skills to be the best I can be at anything I do.

Honors

- President's List

Volunteerism

- Veteran's Memorial Garden
- Ontario (Oregon) Chamber of Commerce Worlds Fair

Age	Hometown	GPA
49	Nampa, ID	3.4

Degree/Major: Associate of Science -
Natural Resources Management

Transferring to: University of Idaho

Activities

- Peer Mentor, Multi-Cultural & Diversity Center
- Natural Resources Club

“When you educate
on person, you can
save a life, when you
educate many, you
change the world.”

Shai Reshef

Umpqua Community College

Dr. Rachel Pokrandt, President



Rachel P. Arceo

I am first generation college student and first generation American raised in a predominantly immigrant city in California. I dropped out of high school shy of 10 credits, working instead until I developed an autoimmune disease 14 years later. Lupus severely changed my lifestyle and physical capabilities, finding me in need of social security disability income. Social security freed me to focus on my health, eventually pursuing the education I never received. After finishing my high school diploma and achieving more stability with my health, I moved to Oregon, eventually pursuing higher education at UCC. Because of the abundance of support I have received here, I have thrived as a college student; I've pursued ways both in journalism and tutoring to encourage other nontraditional students to do the same.

Age	Hometown	GPA
39	Oxnard, CA	4.0

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: University of Oregon

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Dean's List
- UCC Foundation Scholarship
- PEO Sisterhood Scholarship

Activities

- Reporter & Story Editor, The Mainstream student newspaper
- Spanish Club - President
- Oregon TRiO Student Advisory Board

Volunteerism

- PTK Public Relations Officer
- Honors in Action
- Tutor



Jalee Chandler

I graduated high school from Camas Valley Charter School in June of 2022. I was enrolled in the dual credit program since my sophomore year of high school, and had the opportunity to complete many of my prerequisites. I am now pursuing a degree in paramedicine. I will have my EMT-Basic certification by April of this year. I have enjoyed every aspect of my time so far at Umpqua Community College. I have been encouraged, challenged, and motivated by all of my instructors and advisors. They have not only enabled me to complete testing with the knowledge they have given me, but they have also prepared me to serve in my community.

Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Roseburg, OR	3.74

Degree/Major: Associate of Applied Science
- Paramedicine; EMT Basic Certification

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Dean's List
- Richard L. Resurreccion Public Safety Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Lookingglass Cemetery clean-up & maintenance
- Young Adult Group
- Church volunteer

Umpqua Community College

Dr. Rachel Pokrandt, President



Amy Kathleen Mury

I am not a traditional student; I am a single mother returning to college in my 40s to finish my AAOT, Case Management Certification, and Bachelor's in Social Work. My goals are to become a case manager so that I can reach out and help those in need and be able to provide the support and services needed to help clients become more self sufficient and successful in achieving their goals.

Age	Hometown	GPA
44	San Diego, CA	3.79

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Mildred Whipple Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Peace At Home Certified Domestic Violence Advocate

Degree/Major: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer degree

Transferring to: Portland State University

“The beautiful thing
about learning is
that no one can take
it away from you.”

B.B. King

