



2025

All-Oregon

ACADEMIC TEAM

LUNCHEON

Recognition Program

APRIL 18, 2025

Chemeketa Community College

Eola Event Center

Presented by:

17OCCA
Oregon Community College Association



April 18, 2025



Dear Members of the All-Oregon Academic Team:

It is my great pleasure to congratulate you on your selection as distinguished members of the Phi Theta Kappa All-Oregon Academic Team. This honor, recognized by the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) and your community college, is a testament to your hard work, perseverance, and academic excellence. Enclosed, you will find the All-Oregon Academic Team Recognition Program, highlighting the outstanding achievements that have earned you this well-deserved recognition.

Your journey through community college is more than an academic pursuit—it is a transformative experience. Community colleges serve as vital gateways to higher education, empowering individuals from all backgrounds to achieve their dreams. Regardless of where you began, your dedication and commitment have brought you to this moment of success. Your achievements demonstrate the power of education and the incredible potential within each of you.

Like a torch lighting the way for others, your perseverance and ambition illuminate paths of possibility for those who follow in your footsteps. You are role models—leaders who inspire those around you to dream bigger and reach higher. Whether you continue your education, enter the workforce, or engage in service to your community, know that your contributions will leave a lasting imprint on others.

On behalf of the OCCA Board of Directors, I extend my heartfelt congratulations. Your success is an inspiration, and I encourage you to carry forward the spirit of excellence and leadership that has brought you here today. Stay engaged, continue to uplift others, and never stop striving for your goals.

With admiration and best wishes,

Austin Folnagy, Board President

Oregon Community College Association



Keynote Speaker

Representative Ricki Ruiz

Oregon State Representative



Representative Ricki Ruiz, one of Oregon's youngest state legislators, proudly represents House District 50, encompassing Gresham and East Portland. Born in Portland and raised in Gresham by immigrant parents, Ricki attended Reynolds School District, becoming the first in his family to graduate high school.

He earned his B.S. in Social Entrepreneurship from Portland Community College and Warner Pacific University in 2016. As a college student, Ricki co-founded the Rockwood Initiative, securing over \$100,000 to build futsal courts in the community. Elected as the youngest school board member in Reynolds School District in 2017, Ricki is now dedicated to serving the constituents of House District 50 and advancing policies in education, housing, immigration, climate, racial justice, healthcare, and the economy. As the Co-Chair of the Oregon BIPOC Caucus, Ricki successfully secured several budget allocations, including \$5 million for Individual Development Accounts and funding for initiatives like Water Equity, Employment Related Day Care, Albina Vision Trust, and others.

He currently serves as the Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education, the House Committee on Education, the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services, and the House Committee on Education.

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



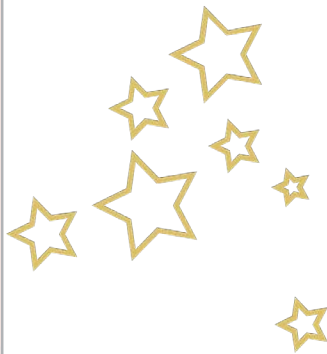
Maria Garcia Villalobos

Linn-Benton Community College



Makayla Vick

Mt. Hood Community College



Gina Ferguson

Portland Community College



Robert Shingleton

Treasure Valley Community College

Every year, the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) Member Services Committee selects three to four students to share their educational journeys at the 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, as well as the obstacles they have overcome on their path to an education.

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 15 four-year colleges and universities that have designated scholarships exclusively to All-Oregon Academic Team members. Students apply for these scholarships directly from the colleges and universities that offer them.

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:			
\$1,000-\$13,000	Bushnell University	\$2,500	Pacific University
\$1,000	Corban University	\$1,000	Portland State University
\$1,000-\$2,500	Eastern Oregon University	\$1,000	University of Oregon
\$5,000-\$15,000	George Fox University	\$1,000	University of Portland
\$2,000-\$30,000	Lewis & Clark College	\$1,000-\$8,000	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 with \$2,250 scholarships for the Transfer Pathways Scholars and \$1,500 scholarships for the New Century Workforce Scholars.



***Coca-Cola New Century
Transfer Pathways Scholar***

Emilee Lindquist

Klamath Community College



***Coca-Cola New Century
Workforce Scholar***

Cody Thompson

Clackamas Community College

Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team Scholar Recipient

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 Gold Scholars and receive \$1,500 scholarships, 50 are selected as Silver Scholars and receive \$1,250 scholarships, and 50 community college students are selected as Bronze Scholars and receive \$1,000 scholarships.



***Bronze Scholar
Kat Tabor***

Lane Community College

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Stephen Crow, Board Member

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Dr. Rachel Pokrandt, President
Steve Loosley, Board Member

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Traci Hodgson - Oregon Education Association
Chris Cronin - Oregon School Boards Association
Michelle Kyle - Oregon Community College Student Association (Linn-Benton Community College)



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President, Mt. Hood Community College

Donna Lewelling, Ex-Officio

Director, Office of Community Colleges & Workforce
Development

OCCA Member Services Committee

Thank you to the OCCA Member Services Committee for their work in selecting the featured student speakers for the Luncheon!

Andrew Speer, Chair

Mt. Hood Community College, OCCA Vice President

Dr. Randy Weber

President, Rogue Community College

Dr. Dana Young

President, Treasure Valley Community College

Dr. Jessica Howard

President, Chemeketa Community College

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President, Tillamook Bay Community College

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Lori Hall

Staff Member, Clackamas Community College

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Staff Member, Lane Community College

Shannon Franklin

Staff Member, Blue Mountain Community College

Lorie Lund

Staff Member, Tillamook Bay Community College

Jessica Griffin Conner

Staff Member, Columbia Gorge Community College



*Congratulations
Students!*

**2025 AOAT
Student Profiles**
(by college)

Blue Mountain Community College

Dr. Mark Browning, President



Amelia Durning

Since elementary school, books have been my one constant companion. I moved schools many times, but I always had a book to count on. When I graduated high school, I was fortunate to already be familiar with a great school where I could start my college journey. I have been able to work with my school's librarian as my advisor, which has been amazing! I will be transferring to Eastern Oregon University next year to achieve my Bachelor of Arts in English. After graduating, I want to work with literature in any way that I can and help others foster a love for literature. My ultimate goal is to be a librarian or an editor. I have received so much support from my school and family and I can't wait to see where the next few years take me!

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Mary Johns Endowed Scholarship



Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Wallowa, OR	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: Eastern Oregon University



Ashley Henry

As a full-time employee and student, I'm excited to be graduating with an Associate of Applied Science in Business Administration this spring. My goal is to continue working in construction and eventually start my own business. I have faced many personal and family challenges on my path to this point. In high school, I transferred to online school so I could work full-time, which helped prepared me for balancing college and a full-time job. Despite the obstacles, I've remained determined to build a better future for myself. With the help of financial aid, I was able to attend college, and I'm incredibly grateful for that opportunity. The support I've received from the staff at Blue Mountain Community College has made a huge difference in helping me stay on track and achieve my goals. I'm proud of how far I've come and excited for what's ahead.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa

Age	Hometown	GPA
21	John Day, OR	3.1

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science Business Administration

Blue Mountain Community College

Dr. Mark Browning, President



Nikaela Higley

As a first generation college student I was thrilled to accept my Letter of Intent to play softball at Blue Mountain Community College. For my family, signing on a scholarship was crucial for me to go to college! I did just that and played two full years while studying business administration. I plan to use my knowledge from BMCC to pursue my dream in owning my own cafe or bakery. The Blue Mountain business program has been extremely helpful to students. The professors have been generous with sharing their knowledge on internships and assistant opportunities to gain experiences and to practice our studies. The guidance and hands on experience in the Business Department made the biggest difference in my decision to continue my education.

Honors

- Heart of the Pack 2024 - Softball
- Dean's List
- Softball Scholarship

Activities

- Softball

Age	Hometown	GPA
20	Filer, ID	3.6

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer - Business Administration

Transferring to: Unknown



Darla Holden

I grew up in a small town and went to a small kindergarten through twelfth grade school. Growing up I had always struggled in school, no matter how hard I tried. But after attending Blue Mountain Community College my school work and grades have been amazing. I had consistent grades and even had 4.0 GPA for three terms in a row. If I didn't have my amazing advisors and instructors at Blue Mountain, as well as support both at school and at home, I wouldn't be taking the next step in my college career by attending Eastern Oregon University. Attending EOU brings me one step closer to my goal of becoming a teacher. After graduating with my Bachelor of Arts in Education at Eastern Oregon University I plan to start teaching in a rural school district and eventually get my Master of Arts in Education.

Honors

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

Activities

- Senator, Student Government
- Student Ambassador
- Work Study

Age	Hometown	GPA
21	Helix, OR	3.56

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon
Transfer - Elementary Education

Transferring to: Eastern Oregon University

Central Oregon Community College

Dr. Laurie Chesley, President



Emma Bloss

Growing up with various struggles, both family-related and financial, has made me want to make a difference not only for myself but for others. I grew up watching my mother help others even when we were struggling the most. I'm currently a preschool teacher and have been teaching for the past 7 years. I love having the opportunity to work with these unique children and have the chance to watch them grow into amazing individuals, knowing that I helped make a difference in their lives. I have had the opportunity to grow as an educator because of all the help from Central Oregon Community College. I have had the most amazing advisor and professors, and these supporters have done nothing but help me stay on my path to achieving my goal of getting my associate degree in early childhood education. I have had a lot of financial struggles trying to finish my schooling as well as achieving my end goals. COCC has helped me in more ways than I can count and I will forever be grateful. Thanks to COCC I plan on finishing in June 2025 with both my associate degree as well as my transfer degree in early childhood education. My end goal is to be able to transfer to a university and become a children's therapist to continue to keep making a difference in multiple children's lives.

Age	Hometown	GPA
25	Sisters, OR	3.83

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science - Early Childhood Education; Associate of Science Oregon Transfer degree - Early Childhood Education

Transferring to: Eastern Oregon University or University of Oregon

Honors

- DALE Certificate
- STEM Certificate

- Dean's List
- PIP Scholarship
- COCC Foundation Scholarship

Volunteerism

- COCC Meal of the Year event



Erin-Rae Cook

My time at Central Oregon Community College has been so much more than an educational experience. I have broken down barriers and exceeded my highest expectations. Since joining the licensed massage therapist program I have grown in confidence and really become the person I have always wanted to be. The past two years have been an opportunity to see the world in a new way, set goals and really be intentional with my life. I am so grateful for the supportive community that has developed because of my time at school. I greatly look forward to the future and to see where the next chapter of my life takes me.

Honors

- Dean's List
- Honor Roll

Volunteerism

- Big Brothers Big Sisters

Age	Hometown	GPA
34	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada	3.9

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Massage Therapy

Central Oregon Community College

Dr. Laurie Chesley, President



Taylor Taliesin

Building community and engaging in the constant world building process is the best way to build the world that I want to live in. I have been an EMT, a CNA, a CMA, a peer support, and a community health worker. I've worked in giant hospital systems, small non-profits, and private practices. For me, my career goals are firmly rooted in personal experience and responding to the needs of my community. I want all the tools. Naturally, I feel the need to get an MD PhD so I have as many tools I can possibly get. Going to school at Central Oregon Community College gives me a good example of how to build community because the level of engagement with the local people, government, and beauty is pretty unique to community colleges. There is so much work to be done, there must be something for me to do. I am looking forward to it.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Dean's List

- Umbrella Club
- Q+ Club

Age	Hometown	GPA
31	Fairbanks, OR	3.8

Degree/Certificate: Community Health Worker Certification; Associate of Addiction Studies & Human Services

Transferring to: Oregon State University or Portland State University

Activities

- NAMI Central Oregon Board
- Support Group Facilitator for LGBTQIA, neurodiverse & positive masculinity communities

“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

Chemeketa Community College

Dr. Jessica Howard, President



Haven McElravy

I never imagined myself going to college, especially to pursue art as my dream until I was encouraged to apply by a dear high school teacher who cheered me on no matter what. Now I can't imagine my life without it. Chemeketa Community College has given me an incredible space to thrive, with supportive instructors who have helped me grow as an artist and a human being. Balancing two jobs while attending school full-time to help support my single mom has been a challenge, but it has also shaped my resilience and work ethic. As an embedded art tutor, I've not only gained valuable experience but also discovered a deep passion for mentorship, leadership, and collaboration. Despite the challenges, I have genuinely loved my time at Chemeketa, and the encouragement I've received has solidified my dedication to higher education. Transferring to the University of Oregon for Art and Technology is the next step in turning my passion into a lifelong career.

Age 20 **Hometown** Salem, OR **GPA** 4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: University of Oregon

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Association of Women in Community College Scholarship
- Chemeketa Scholars

Activities

- Art, Science & Writing Tutor
- Art Club



Kaitly Sosa

Congratulations to all the other first-generation college students graduating this year! We understand how challenging it can be not having a family member who can relate and help with the immense pressure, grit, and process it takes to further your education. Yet we've found a way to achieve this regardless. I've deeply appreciated the time I've had at CCC. I've not only been a student, but also had the rewarding opportunity to serve as a Student Ambassador and Mentor, helping other students that were once in my position as a new college student. I am grateful for the opportunity to receive my Associate of Science Oregon Transfer degree in Business and go on to pursue my Business Administration, Finance Option, B.S. at California State University Long Beach. This achievement is not only for me but for my parents who have worked hard to provide me with the life and education they also deserved, but did not have the opportunity to receive.

Age 21 **Hometown** Salem, OR **GPA** 3.7

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science Oregon Transfer - Business

Transferring to: California State University Long Beach

Honors

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

Volunteerism

- Student Mentor/Ambassador
- TRiO

Clackamas Community College

Dr. Tim Cook, President



Stephani Dale

I have always wanted to go back to school but life simply got in the way. I was ready to get started after my son was born. I began looking into options and found that because I needed to be fully remote to complete my education, I was having trouble finding the right school. My best friend was in her final year at CCC and shared how amazing it was. I started looking at my options and I was nervous about how I can be connected and stay on track. CCC and the staff just made me feel like I belonged from the very first conversation I had. I was seeking opportunities to learn and grow and applied for Associated Student Government after my first term, and this just opened a whole other section of the school where I felt part of the community without ever being there. I'm going to school to be an HR manager and I have learned leadership, conflict management and so much more. I will be transferring to WGU to complete both my bachelor's and master's degrees in human resources management. I have even thought about returning to CCC after I finish my other degrees to pursue additional associate degrees just because of how connected I feel. The administration listens to the students in a way that I have never seen before and appreciate that my voice always matters to them. I'm so happy to pursue my education and growth.

Age 33
Hometown LaPine, OR
GPA 3.9

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Business; Associate of Applied Science - Accounting

Transferring to: Western Governors University

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List

Activities

- Honors in Action Project - VP of Scholarships
- Student Government - Vice President



Camryn Horner

There has never been a time when my passions for literature and dance have wavered. English class was where I felt at peace in elementary school, and my living room has been my makeshift dance studio for the majority of my life. High school was a time dedicated to transforming my skills in these particular areas, and my fixation on my goals developed an unhealthy level of perfectionism I've only recently begun dismantling within myself. Thanks to the academics at Clackamas Community College and the opportunity it's given me to join the Portland State University Dance Team, I've been able to maintain my studies and dance training while focusing on becoming a person I can be proud of being. I'm beyond grateful and delighted to soon further pursue my passions at University of Portland. I aspire to be a writer and a Blazer Dancer, and I'm ready to work harder than ever!

Age 20
Hometown Clackamas, OR
GPA 4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer - English Literature

Transferring to: University of Portland

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- UP Transfer Scholarship
- Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship
- Pilots First Award

Volunteerism

- Church Lifegroup Leader

Activities

- Portland State University Dance Team

Clackamas Community College

Dr. Tim Cook, President



Cody Thompson

As a new father undergoing a career change at age 36, I knew that pursuing my dreams and attaining my goals was critical. Not only to myself, but to my daughter, my spouse, and everyone who knows me. That is why I chose to pursue a formal education and get on the fast-track to understanding the sciences of plants. Learning from the best is one of the best ways to learn. I will graduate, attain a job with the City of Portland as a horticulturist, and begin building the foundation for my fruit tree and berry bush nursery, Bearly Farms. Bearly Farms is where my passion lies, as it allows me to express myself outwardly into the world. I have a deep-rooted desire to ensure food availability in my community and to assist in my community learning what foods can grow well in our climate.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List

Volunteerism

- Home Orchard Education Center

Activities

- Horticulture Club

Age	Hometown	GPA
36	Boring, OR	3.9

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Horticulture; Plant Health Management

Transferring to: Oregon State University

The purpose of education is to replace an empty mind with an open one.

Malcom Forbes

Clatsop Community College

Jarrold Hogue, President



Emily Bates

I never saw myself attending college. I struggled with school when I was younger, which led me to pursue a GED. I spent the better part of my 20s working in restaurants and searching for answers as to why I struggled more than others. Through a lot of hard work and an ADHD diagnosis, I was ready to give college a try. After 10 years of being away from formal education I applied to Clatsop Community College. Clatsop CC is a welcoming place that offered me support the whole way through my time there. Being at a small college allowed me to take on leadership roles in Pi Theta Kappa, Associated Student Government, and Fiber Arts Club. I will be graduating from Clatsop CC with my Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree in spring 2025 and will be moving on to the University of Oregon where I will work towards obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Data Science.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Sue Richardson CCC Foundation Scholarship
- PEO Marguerite Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Community Warming Kit Event

Activities

- PTK President
- Student Government Vice President
- Fiber Arts Club President
- Pi Day
- Faculty/Staff Appreciation Party
- 2023-2024 Induction Ceremonies
- Send a Crush Fundraiser

Age 30
Hometown Astoria, OR
GPA 4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: University of Oregon



Eliza Glasson

I'm in my second year at Clatsop Community College, chasing my dream of working in marine biology. The ocean has always been my favorite mystery—there's so much to learn and protect, and I want to be part of that. Getting here hasn't been easy, but the challenges have shaped me and made me tougher. Since starting college, I've gained confidence and discovered what I'm capable of when I really put my mind to something. Clatsop has been a big part of that, and I'm excited to keep moving forward toward a future I'm passionate about.

Activities

- Pi Day

Age 19
Hometown Long Beach, WA
GPA 3.7

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: University of Alaska Southeast



Columbia Gorge Community College

Dr. Kenneth Lawson, President



Danielle Herndon

I provided in-home childcare for 12 years before seeking higher education. College helped me see that I have bigger goals and more potential than I was living up to. I look forward to being a bigger service to the community after graduation.



Age	Hometown	GPA
40	Cascade Locks, OR	3.8

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Early Childhood Education; Associate of General Studies

Transferring to: Western Oregon University



Holly King

I had been in and out of college over the last 12 years. Last winter, I was pushed to further my education in Early Childhood Education. My passion for working with special education children gave me the real drive to further my education to better support those children. I will graduate with my associate degree in Spring 2025 and will start in the fall at Western Oregon University to work on my Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education with Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) concentration. I have been very fortunate to have great support while being back in school and I am feeling much more confident in my ability to serve children in need in my community. It goes to show you that it is never too late to get your degree! I am very excited for the future and to see where my work with children goes.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Dean's List

Age	Hometown	GPA
34	Columbus, OH	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of General Studies; Initial Early Childhood Education & Early Childhood Education Curriculum Certificates

Transferring to: Western Oregon University

Klamath Community College

Dr. Roberto Gutierrez, President



Emilee Lindquist

As a first-generation college student, I am excited to graduate with my associate of science degree from Klamath Community College and pursue the next steps toward my educational and career goals. I have been extremely pleased with my attendance at KCC and will forever be thankful for my decision to attend community college before transferring to the university level. 2024 was not entirely kind to me and many others, but I am proud to say that I have been successful in following my educational aspirations regardless of any challenges that were presented. I will be transferring to Iowa State University to continue my studies in animal science, with the long-term goal of becoming a large animal emergency veterinarian, specializing in swine and ruminant species; and continuing my dedication to the livestock and agricultural industries.

Age	Hometown	GPA
20	Redmond, OR	3.9

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science
Transferring to: Iowa State University

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Sisters Rodeo Association Scholarship
- Klamath Master Gardners Scholarship
- Central Oregon Hay Growers Association Scholarship
- John Melville Scholarship
- Thornton FFA Collegiate Scholarship

Volunteerism

- KCC Canned Food & Toy Drive
- National Junior Swine Association #GiveAHam Project
- FFA/Youth Coaching

Activities

- Deschutes County 4H
- Agriculture Club Treasurer
- Science Club
- PTK Member Orientation
- PTK New Member Meet & Greet
- Welcome Back Scavenger Hunt



Nikita Mashburn

Although I have had a hard time with school and daily activities due to having multiple physical and mental illnesses, as well as recently being diagnosed with lupus at only 20, I have continued to show determination for my passion. I want to become a child psychiatrist who specializes in autism and addiction because I want to make a difference in the future generation of the world. I want to work in a psychiatric inpatient hospital because I believe we can change how traumatizing they are, and make its environment a healthy, safe, yet fun place for the kids to focus on healing themselves.

Honors

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

Age	Hometown	GPA
20	Klamath Falls, OR	3.7

Degree/Certificate: Associate of General Studies - Psychology
Transferring to: Oregon Institute of Technology or Western Oregon University



Lane Community College

Dr. Stephanie Bulger, President



Haley Jo Feigert

Coming from a financially unstable home I always thought college was not something I could pursue. I did try before when fresh out of high school, but the stress of doing full-time school and working to try and pay for it all led me to drop out. I later tried again at an online school that was paid for by my employer, but once again my financial burdens made me have to put work before my education. Now with the help of Oregon grants and federal funding, along with a better income I am pursuing my associate in applied arts in graphic design and certification in web design. I hope to someday be able to work for a more financially secure future and be a motivator for others struggling with financial hardships.

Activities

- RPG Club

Age	Hometown	GPA
22	Bismark, ND	3.6

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Arts - Graphic Design; Web Design Certificate



PJ Knight

With the compassionate support of a handful of extraordinary faculty members at Lane Community College, I have managed to surpass my own educational expectations, despite immense disability-related barriers. LCC has provided the resources needed for me to explore the depths of my academic passions and strengths. Following graduation, I am eager to embark on the next phase of my educational journey: a Bachelor of Arts in Women's, Gender, & Sexuality studies, along with a minor in disability studies at University of Oregon. I plan to continue on to graduate studies in sociology. My time at LCC has also allowed me to excel in my creative pursuits and actualize a long-standing dream of mine: self-publishing a 'zine of my poetry. I am confident that these two years at LCC have been foundational to my future successes in both academic and creative endeavors.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Sigma Chi Eta Honor Society
- Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship Semifinalist

Activities

- Neurodivergent Student Union
- Poetry Club
- People's Revolutionary Garden
- Neurodivergence Inclusivity Panel Participant
- Health Clinic Student Worker

Age	Hometown	GPA
24	Atascadero, CA	4.16

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: University of Oregon

Volunteerism

- Spay/Neuter Clinic Volunteer
- Cat Rescue Veterinary Assisting

Lane Community College

Dr. Stephanie Bulger, President



Kat Tabor

I am thrilled to be earning my Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree and a Certificate in Educational Assistance at LCC. My next step is transferring to the University of Oregon to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, with the long-term goal of attending graduate school. I aspire to be the first in my family to achieve this milestone. I haven't always been the strongest student, but LCC has provided the resources and support I needed to build confidence and succeed. My family has been an unwavering source of encouragement, instilling resilience, adaptability, and the value of hard work. One of the most impactful experiences I've had at LCC has been my role as a reporter and social media manager for The Torch. This opportunity has allowed me to amplify voices and share meaningful stories, reinforcing my passion for journalism. LCC has given me a strong foundation for growth, and I am excited to embark on the next phase of my journey.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Vice President's List
- Betty Gray Community College Scholarship
- LCC Momentum Scholarship
- Honors Program

- Emerald Art Center
- Music Box Media Interviewer
- Reporter/Social Media Mgr, LCC The Torch Newspaper

Activities

- Toastmasters Wordweavers
- Black Student Union Secretary
- Creatives Club President
- Center for Accessible Resources Student Ambassador

Age
20

Hometown
Eugene, OR

GPA
3.85

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Transfer - Education Asst. & Community Educator

Transferring to: University of Oregon

Volunteerism

- Photography Exhibit Coordinator, Lane Co. Fair

*The beautiful thing
about learning is
nobody can take it
away from you.*

BB King

Linn-Benton Community College

Dr. Lisa Avery, President



Minkyung Chung

As an international student from Korea, I have embarked on a challenging yet rewarding journey in higher education. My goal is to transfer to Oregon State University to pursue a degree in animal science and prepare for veterinary school. Previously, I worked as an ICU nurse in Korea during the COVID-19 pandemic, which strengthened my resilience and dedication to the medical field. Transitioning from nursing to animal science has been a significant change, but my passion for veterinary medicine keeps me moving forward. Balancing academics while working as a student ambassador and a member of student government has not been easy, but the support from my professors and peers has made this journey even more meaningful. I look forward to continuing my education and making a valuable contribution to the field of veterinary medicine.

Honors

- SLC Leadership Scholarship
- George & Cheryl Pugh Scholarship
- International Merit Scholarship

Activities

- Student Government Executive Assistant
- Student Ambassador

Age	Hometown	GPA
28	Seoul, South Korea	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science - Animal Science

Transferring to: Oregon State University



Travis Clarkson

Balancing life as a single father of three while pursuing a career in nondestructive testing (NDT) has been both challenging and rewarding. My journey has been shaped by perseverance, overcoming depression and anxiety while striving to build a stable future for my children. Higher education plays a crucial role in this path, equipping me with the skills and certifications needed for long-term career growth in NDT. Despite financial struggles and the emotional toll of parenting alone, I remain committed to my education as a means of providing a better life for my family. The support from my college—whether through flexible scheduling, counseling resources, or encouraging instructors—has been instrumental in my success. Every step forward in my education brings me closer to financial stability and personal fulfillment, proving to my children that resilience and determination can

Honors

- Robert Dale Schmidt Memorial Scholarship Endowment
- Charles W. Chambers Memorial Scholarship Endowment

Volunteerism

- Non-Destructive Testing Lab volunteer
- Little League Coach

Age	Hometown	GPA
38	Chino Hills, CA	3.53

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Nondestructive Testing

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Linn-Benton Community College

Dr. Lisa Avery, President



Maria Garcia-Villalobos

As I reflect on my path, I feel proud of myself for all the accomplishments I have made throughout the last three years of my life. Being an Hispanic mom, who was born and raised in Mexico, I have to say that it has not been easy; however, I keep trying. I am very excited to be graduating with my associate of arts degree, and look forward to pursuing my bachelor's degree in criminology. I moved to Oregon when I was 15 years old. Spanish was my only way of communication, which was not easy, but my parents taught me to keep learning, so that's what I did. I want to thank Linn-Benton Community College for always helping me out when I needed it. I am so proud of myself for being able to accomplish more than what I expected. Now, I feel even more confident about my future, and I can't wait to keep making my dreams come true.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- LCC Honor's Program
- Candace Callen Scholarship

Activities

- Student Navigator Work Study in Early Outreach Office

Age 27
Hometown Corvallis, OR
GPA 3.58

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts
Oregon Transfer - Criminal Justice
Transferring to: Oregon State University



Nathan Garrison

I will be the first person in my family to finish college and pursue university; it came with many challenges. Since I was 10 years old, I have moved 15 times, and I didn't have stability at home, which made school a struggle. I was told by an advisor to quit and get my GED. I got my GED and started volunteering at the Toledo Fire Department when I was 16. I injured my back while working at the Les Schwab distribution center and was told I couldn't do that type of work anymore. I chose to attend Linn-Benton Community College to pursue an associate degree in machine tool technology. During my second year, I decided that I was going to chase a bigger dream, which I never thought was possible because of my background. I am transferring to Arizona State University to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering.

Honors

- Honor Roll

Volunteerism

- Volunteer Firefighter

Age 21
Hometown Toledo, OR
GPA 3.57

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied
Science - Machine Tool Technology
Transferring to: Arizona State University

Mt. Hood Community College

Dr. Lisa Skari, President



Shaleah Gaston

My educational plan is to be able to be finished with school and have a degree within 2 years. It's hard to attend school full time on top of working two jobs as well. My career goal is when I finally get my degree I want to become a social service worker at DHS and be able to look out for and help the kids in the system that are really in need. I want to be able to give these kids the love and support they deserve. A significant change that occurred in my life was my dad passing away in 2008 when I was only 10. At first I didn't respond well; I was mad at everyone around me and it wasn't anybody's fault. It was just his time to go. But I still blamed everyone and thought my life was over when really it was just beginning. I was sad my dad wouldn't be there to watch me grow up and be the successful girl he was raising, and that really broke me. But that made me learn that I have to push my self to do better and try harder as if my dad were still alive because that's what he would've wanted me to do. MHCC has helped me in so many ways. I do want to thank Karen Green for pushing me and letting me know my worth, mostly when I felt like giving up on school. She has been a big support for me at MHCC and I can't thank her enough.

Age	Hometown	GPA
26	Portland, OR	3.7

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Mental Health, Social Service & Addiction Counseling

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Dean's Honor Roll
- Saff Family Scholarship



Ethan Hudgeons

I never knew what career path I wanted to take until I became a medication technician. My dad left when I was in the fifth grade, which was difficult, but my mom and grandparents stepped up to support me. They taught me the value of hard work and encouraged me to build a better future for myself. Working in an assisted living facility opened my eyes to the impact of healthcare and sparked my passion for nursing. One of the most intense moments I experienced was helping a resident in a life-threatening situation. It was terrifying, but it made me realize how much I wanted to be there for people in critical moments. Higher education is giving me the skills and knowledge I need to become a nurse and make a real difference. My college has supported me through hands-on learning and valuable coursework, helping me prepare for my future. I'm excited to continue my education and pursue my goal of becoming a nurse.

Age	Hometown	GPA
21	Portland, OR	3.4

Degree/Certificate: Nursing

Honors

- Deans List

Activities

- Wind Ensemble

Mt. Hood Community College

Dr. Lisa Skari, President



Evgeniia Sedletskaia

I grew up in post-Soviet Russia in the 1990s and experienced first-hand the devastating effects of generational poverty. These difficult experiences taught me invaluable lessons about resilience, resourcefulness, and the importance of personal education. I learned to appreciate every blessing, avoid loss, and commit to working hard. These experiences shaped my strong character and fueled my determination to pursue higher education. My plans include applying critical thinking skills, unique perspective, and interpersonal problem-solving skills honed through adversity to succeed in my chosen field. Higher education and lifelong learning are valuable resources for breaking the cycle of poverty and opening new horizons for the future. Although I have overcome significant obstacles, including limited resources and economic instability, these challenges have only strengthened my resolve. I am grateful for the support I have received and am determined to use my education to create a better future for myself and to contribute to society.

Age 35
Hometown Vladivostok, Russia
GPA 4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science - Medical Billing & Coding

Transferring to: Undecided

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's Honor Roll

Activities

- Swimming

Volunteerism

- Summer School Camp
- Campus events



Makayla Vick

My journey through college has been far from easy. To start, I graduated high school in 2020. I moved out of my parents' house in June 2020 and essentially had no support navigating college and becoming an adult. I am the seventh born of 12 kids, and my brother and I are the only ones who have a college education. Throughout the past four years I have been relentlessly pursuing nursing school while working as a certified nursing assistant. My parents' divorce, life changing car accidents, and financial struggles have posed challenges as I sought education. Each hurdle has made me more confident that I will make it through difficult situations and become a licensed nurse. Now that I am in the program, I feel the support from my teachers and peers and I am so excited to have a graduation date set! I hope to do labor and delivery nursing upon graduation. My plan is to pursue my Bachelor of Science in Nursing while working as a nurse. While it is further in the future, I would be interested in becoming a nurse practitioner. I am so thankful for this opportunity as I have felt most of my struggles have not been seen. This recognition has made me so proud of how far I have come and so grateful for the teachers, mentors, peers, and friends who have believed in me.

Age 23
Hometown Milwaukie, OR
GPA 3.75

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science - Nursing

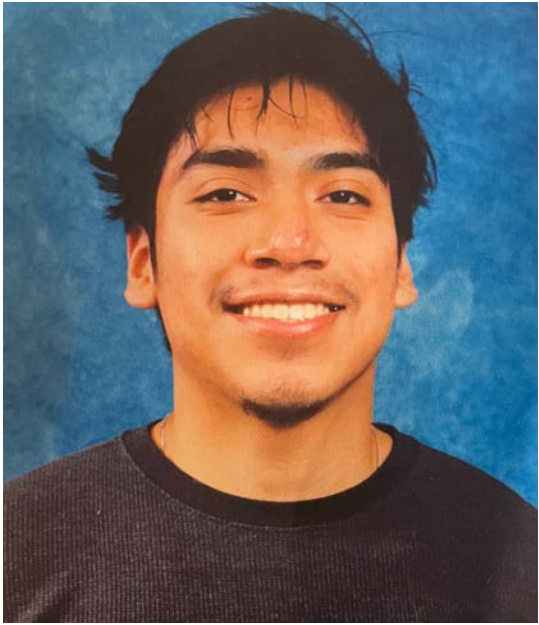
Transferring to: Undecided

Honors

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

Oregon Coast Community College

Dr. Marshall Mease Roache, President



Gael Maldonado

I am a first generation college student working toward a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. I've always aspired to be a nurse due to my passion for helping others and my fascination with the complexity and understanding of the human body. I am currently pursuing this dream at Oregon Coast Community College, a college that has provided me with both financial support as well as an inviting community. Thanks to their assistance, even the challenging classes are not only manageable but enjoyable as well. I am very excited to continue on this path and to help people in the medical field.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Oregon Coast Scholars Scholarship

Activities

- Student Government
- Game Club
- Media Production Club
- Men's Club

Volunteerism

- Special Olympics volunteer - volleyball & basketball

Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Newport, OR	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of General Studies

Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know.

Daniel J. Boorstin

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Armando Angeles-Hernandez

Being a first-generation college student and growing up in a single-parent household, I have faced financial and language barriers that many of my peers did not. My mother did the best she could with what she knew, always supporting me even when she didn't fully understand my journey. As the first generation in my family to grow up in the U.S., I often had to navigate everything on my own—translating, figuring out school systems, and finding opportunities. One of the most valuable lessons my mom taught me is to never give up and to use every resource available before quitting. That mindset has shaped my journey toward earning a bachelor's degree in Data Science. I feel privileged to continue my education, knowing how far I've come and that my family stands behind me. I am extremely grateful for PCC and the grants that have helped me get this far.

Age	Hometown	GPA
20	Portland, OR	3.8

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts
Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: Portland State University or
University of Oregon

Honors

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

Volunteerism

- Operation Nightwatch

Activities

- PTK Induction Ceremony



Cassandra Duvall

At first, I was nervous and unsure of if I could succeed at college. However, now I am very glad that I ended up taking up the opportunity provided to me to take my final two years of college at Portland Community College. My junior and senior year at PCC have been challenging with the coursework, but extremely rewarding and satisfying, and although adjusting was a struggle, I can now confidently say that I feel right at home in a college setting. It's made me more confident than ever in paving the way for my future and story, and I look forward to what else I may learn and accomplish henceforth.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List

Age	Hometown	GPA
17	Beaverton, CA	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts
Oregon Transfer



Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Gina Ferguson

Education has been a transformative journey for me, shaped by both challenges and resilience. As a childhood leukemia survivor, I faced early medical and financial hardships that deeply impacted my family. Growing up with an unstable home environment, I moved out at 17 to support myself, working full-time while navigating life independently. Though I was on an advanced academic track, I initially had to forgo college, instead teaching myself programming and working in tech. Now, as a returning student and a first-generation college graduate, I am pursuing a degree in computer science, with the goal of becoming a software developer in healthcare. Portland Community College has been instrumental in my success, providing me with invaluable resources such as transportation assistance, the PCC Foundation Scholarship, work-study employment with the Student Engagement Team, free food, and emergency grants. Phi Theta Kappa is a new chapter in my journey, and I look forward to engaging with this community as I continue toward my goals.

Age 35 **Hometown** Gainseville, GA **GPA** 3.67

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science
Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: Portland State University

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- PCC Foundation Scholarship

Volunteerism

- PCC Food Pantry

Activities

- Student Engagement Team Receptionist



Kelly Grant

As an astrophysicist, I hope to expand our understanding of the universe and use astronomy to engage the public. I've cared for friends and family for decades, and astronomy lets me combine community support with a passion for science. I am a first-generation, non-traditional student with ADHD which is tough, but I have overcome many challenges through optimism and determination. I've had amazing support from my wife, PCC, and TRiO who provided me with a roadmap to success and were by my side for every step. A great education is essential for STEM careers, so I am proud of my 4.0 GPA as I near graduation with an Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer and Associate of Science degrees. My next destination is University of Oregon to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Physics. My dream of proudly representing neurodiversity in STEM and fostering wider participation in astronomy research is getting closer, thanks to knowledge gained in classes every day.

Age 49 **Hometown** Portland, OR **GPA** 4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer; Associate of Science Oregon Transfer; Associate of General Studies

Transferring to: University of Oregon

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Dean's List
- National Society of Leadership & Success Inductee
- Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholar
- Oregon Community Foundation Blue Wolfe Scholar
- Alpha-1 Foundation John Wash III Educational Scholar

- Oregon TRiO Association Last Mile Scholar

Volunteerism

- College Success class panelist
- Student Peer Mentor, TRiO

Activities

- PTK Transfer Edge, Competitive Edge, Research Edge Leadership Programs

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Steph Ivanov

I began my educational journey at Chemeketa Community College, where I studied to get my bachelor's degree but never got around to finishing. Pursuing higher education was not without challenges; balancing working full-time and full-time studies required immense dedication. At Portland Community College, I further specialized in interior design, earning an Associate of Applied Science with honors next summer. PCC provided incredible support through scholarships and faculty mentorship, which fueled my passion for creating functional, aesthetically pleasing spaces. Looking forward, I am excited to integrate sustainable design principles into my work. Higher education has been instrumental in shaping my skills and career aspirations, empowering me to turn creative ideas into tangible, impactful designs.

Honors

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



Age	Hometown	GPA
25	Woodburn, OR	3.87

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Interior Design



Age	Hometown	GPA
22	China	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science

Transferring to: Portland State University

Piaotong Li

Growing up in two different cultures and being the first-generation college student in my family, I am eager to earn my Associate of Science degree at Portland Community College. I am transferring to Portland State University to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Data Science. As a first-generation immigrant, college wasn't affordable for my family, especially when we first moved to the U.S. I am grateful that PCC offers affordable education and a flexible schedule, allowing me to balance both work and full-time studies. Although English is not my first language and I have faced challenges because of it, the support from my instructors and advisors has helped me to succeed in every class. I'm thankful to have the opportunity to pursue higher education, and it has helped me to get closer to my academic and career goals. I believe that this education journey will lead me to greater success in the future.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List

Volunteerism

- Night Strike
- Burnside Shelter

Activities

- PTK Vice President of Service
- PCC Women's Volleyball Club Official
- Vacation Bible School

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Amanda Moss

As a single mom, trying to balance family, work, and education has been challenging, but finding multimedia as a career path has been a game changer. I've always been passionate about art, but figuring out how to channel that into a sustainable career took time. Multimedia blends creativity with technology, making it the perfect fit for me. Pursuing my degree will not only enhance the work I do now as a Programs Coordinator at a non-profit art center but will also expand my ability to serve my community through engaging, accessible content. The flexibility of Zoom classes and the support of great instructors at PCC have been invaluable to me. I thrive in hands-on, creative environments, and the multimedia program allows me to learn in a way that aligns with my strengths. My ultimate goal is to use these skills to connect with people -- whether through advocacy, storytelling, or teaching.

Honors

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

Activities

- Art Studio Technician

Age 45
Hometown Portland, OR
GPA 3.7

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Multimedia; Associate of General Studies

- Joe & Bessie Robboy Memorial Scholarship



Jaci Muma

I have experienced major bumps in the road of my educational journey. I started college in 2009 in hopes of pursuing a career as an electrician, but it did not turn out as I had hoped. I had a major addiction to alcohol that interrupted my growth in college. I got sober in 2013 and have been ever since. I decided to go back to college in 2024 and change my career path to accounting. I currently work in accounting as an internal site auditor and plan to progress in my career into managerial accounting. I am working full-time and go to college part-time and am now working towards my first Associate of Science degree with a major in accounting. I have not decided if I will continue to get a bachelor's degree.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List

Activities

- Accounting Club

Age 42
Hometown Portland, OR
GPA 4.0

Degree/Certificate: Accelerated Accounting Certificate

Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President



Abigail Robles

Growing up in a family that values hard work and perseverance, I learned to adapt through frequent moves across countries, embracing new cultures and educational systems. These experiences shaped my determination and ability to thrive in change. My goal is to become a sustainable architectural engineer, designing innovative structures with renewable materials and biodiversity-promoting landscapes, while addressing the needs of underserved communities. I aim to create affordable, resilient, and eco-conscious spaces that harmonize environmental sustainability with social equity. Higher education is crucial to achieving this vision, providing the knowledge and skills to make a meaningful impact. With the support of scholarships, health resources, networking and academic advising, I am empowered to overcome challenges and stay focused on my goals. I am excited to leverage my unique experiences to contribute to a more sustainable, inclusive, and innovative world.

Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Forest Grove, OR	3.91

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Family & Human Services

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Honors

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

Volunteerism

- WFWA & Laurel Hall Community

Activities

- Jiu Jitsu Club



Meiling Zhou

After moving to the U.S. 10 years ago, I took a career break to focus on my family. When I decided to re-enter the workforce after a 10-year gap, I chose Portland Community College's accelerated accounting program to enhance my skills. Balancing coursework, family, and a full-time job was challenging, but PCC's supportive and flexible learning environment kept me motivated. This journey has strengthened my confidence and provided valuable accounting knowledge, helping me successfully return to the workforce. My goal is to obtain an accounting certificate and further develop my financial skills to support my career in supply chain management. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn, grow, and advance professionally.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List

Age	Hometown	GPA
37	Zhuhai, China	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Accelerated Accounting Certificate



Portland Community College

Dr. Adrien Bennings, President

Additional Portland Community College AOAT Scholars

**Erin Tatti
Christopher Trout**



*The whole purpose
of education is to
turn mirrors into
windows.*



Sydney J. Harris



Rogue Community College

Dr. Randy Weber, President



Cheyann Fitzgerald-Cooper

In the past, learning and attending school came with many struggles for me. I got low grades and began believing that education was unimportant, so I eventually dropped out. A few years later I went back to high school and received a lot of staff support through my struggles with academics and an undiagnosed chronic illness. This gave me hope that further education may be possible and encouraged me to try out Rogue Community College. Immediately, I was met with support and kindness, which has made academic success seem easy in college compared to my past academic experiences as a child. In recent years I have found value in the education I have gained, and I am excited for the learning experiences I have ahead of me in the field of drug and alcohol counseling.

Honors

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

Volunteerism

- Josephine County Food Bank

Age	Hometown	GPA
27	Grants Pass, OR	3.79

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science - Human Services



Tammar Hoorain

As a first-generation college student, I am excited to graduate from Rogue Community College with an Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Degree and pursue a bachelor's degree in accounting at Southern Oregon University. Moving to America from Pakistan at the age of eight, I was thrown into a completely new world where I didn't speak the language and had no one to rely on. This experience fueled my passion for numbers, providing me with something familiar amidst all the changes in my life. I am truly grateful to my teachers, friends, and family who have always supported me, offering help when I needed it and encouraging me through tough times. After graduating from SOU, I plan to work locally in my community, giving back to my family, friends, and society.

Age	Hometown	GPA
19	Central Point, OR	3.93

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: Southern Oregon University



Rogue Community College

Dr. Randy Weber, President



Laurie Kaiser

I began working when I was 16 and was fortunate to have a great job right out of high school. At that time, I didn't see the need to pursue further education. After spending 35 years in California, I made the difficult decision to move to Oregon and leave my husband. Shortly after arriving here, I looked into pursuing my associate degree in accounting. My biggest obstacle has been my age. I never imagined I would be going back to school at 55 years old. Not only did I prove to myself that I could handle college, but I completed my 2-year associate degree in 14 months with a 4.0 GPA. Rogue Community College reassured me through my entire process that I was one of many older students which helped give me the confidence I needed to reach my goal.

Honors

- President's List



Age	Hometown	GPA
55	Grants Pass, OR	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Business Technology - Accounting



Camilo Rios

I am currently in my second year at Rogue Community College. I am getting my Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer in summer 2025, and in the fall I will be transferring to Oregon State University to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. I am really thankful for all the opportunities and amazing people that I have been able to meet at RCC and will miss my time spent here. However, I am also excited to see what the future holds at Oregon State, and excited to get my degree and officially become an engineer.

Honors

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

Activities

- TRiO Student Success Program
- Rogue Engineering Club

Age	Hometown	GPA
20	Medford, OR	3.88

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Southwestern Oregon Community College

Dr. Patty Scott, President



Brook Chester

As a first-generation college student, I am excited to graduate with my Associate of Science in Accounting. I look forward to pursuing my Bachelor of Science in Accounting at Oregon State University. I decided to get my GED in the summer term of 2023, which started this amazing path to higher education. At Southwestern Oregon Community College, I have been surrounded by amazing people, from my instructors, advisors, all my club advisors, and my inspiring fellow students. I am beyond grateful to have this support and opportunity to pursue my higher education and transfer to Oregon State University. The experiences and culture at Southwestern Oregon Community College have prepared me to follow my dreams to succeed as I navigate through my studies and my future.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Honor Roll

Activities

- Student Veterans Organization Vice President
- PTK Vice President

Volunteerism

- PTK Veteran Blessings Bags

Age 42
Hometown North Bend, OR
GPA 3.78

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Accounting

Transferring to: Oregon State University



Rylee Madison

Up until the last six months of my life, I was completely unsure where I wanted to go career-wise. I knew I wanted to be a part of a community that helps those who are experiencing mental illnesses, as my brother suffered from numerous obstacles that affected him until his death in 2022. After his death, I realized that I wanted to help others who experienced similar situations. While attending Southwestern Oregon Community College, I have taken nearly every psychology course. In order to get work experience, I volunteered at a non-profit that helped the mentally ill and displaced individuals of Coos Bay. After seeing heartbreaking things every week, I knew I wanted to change the lives of those around me. Through SWOCC, I have been provided with amazing opportunities to help others. I am beyond excited to pursue a degree in helping those who are less fortunate.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Full Tuition Scholarship
- Academic Excellence
- Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholarship
- Toni & Poole Scholarship
- Student Academic Research Review Award Program

Volunteerism

- Homeless Navigation Shelter
- Club Rush

Activities

- PTK President
- SWOCC Psychology Club

Age 19
Hometown Mollala, OR
GPA 4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: Portland State University

Tillamook Bay Community College

Dr. Paul Jarrell, President



Whitney Johnson

Growing up, college was not something that was discussed in my household. Raised by a single mom, we had countless obstacles to face, and college was never an option until I became an adult and knew I wanted to increase my chances of success. Four years ago, I found myself navigating the job market and was faced with a degree barrier. Tillamook Bay Community College showed me that working full-time while earning my degree was possible. Earning this degree will not only allow me to continue to advance at my current position but open new opportunities if I find myself looking for employment again. I am incredibly grateful to the staff at TBCC for supporting me along this journey.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Career to Career Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Oregon Women in Timber
- Clatsop County Chapter
President

Age	Hometown	GPA
38	North Bend, OR	3.86

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Business Administration Management



Meagan Burnis

For many years, I was uncertain of what type of career I wanted for myself, and I am still slightly uncertain even today. All I knew was that I wanted to help people in some way. When I started at Tillamook Bay Community College, I was nervous since it was the first time I attended college, and I had taken a break from school. TBCC was a place for many first times for me. My first college, my first official job, and the place where I first decided what career I would like. The people at TBCC made it easy to learn and work. Many instructors and school staff were great with me, asking questions and helping me solve problems that I was blowing out of proportion. Thanks to those people I can hold my head higher and have a goal to work toward.

Honors

- AB Honor Roll

Volunteerism

- Campus Food Pantry

Activities

- Civil Air Patrol

Age	Hometown	GPA
26	Birmingham, AL	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer

Transferring to: Oregon State University

Tillamook Bay Community College

Dr. Paul Jarrell, President



Jennifer Holler

I started college straight out of high school, but had to take a break due to some health issues. I always intended to go back to finish my degree, but I was busy working and never felt like I had enough time or money for school. A few years ago, I wanted to make a career change, and not having a degree was really holding me back, so I decided to start taking classes at Tillamook Bay Community College because of their Natural Resources program. I am graduating with an Associate of Science degree spring 2025, and transferring to Oregon State University to finish my Bachelor of Science degree.

Volunteerism

- K12 STEAM Field Trips

Activities

- Forestry Internship

Age	Hometown	GPA
42	Hillsboro, OR	4.0

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Science -
Natural Resources

Transferring to: Oregon State University

*An investment
in knowledge
pays the best
interest.*

Benjamin Franklin

Treasure Valley Community College

Dr. Dana Young, President



Age 20
Hometown Kiev, Ukraine
GPA 3.64

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Arts - Business

Artem Rozhko

Studying and being an athlete in the United States has always been my dream, especially after watching all those classic American movies. Growing up in Ukraine, I never imagined I'd have the chance to make that dream a reality. When the war started, our lives came to a standstill, and I buried those hopes completely. But life had different plans for me, and here I am. Treasure Valley Community College made the application process smooth and provided support through scholarships. My journey hasn't been easy—I haven't been able to return home or see my family and friends for three years—but I know it all has a purpose and will pay off in the end. I'm not stopping here. I plan to pursue a bachelor's degree in finance and eventually earn my master's. I don't know what the future holds for me, but I can't wait to find out.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Honor's List
- Soccer Scholarship
- Tennis Scholarship
- TVCC Presidential Scholarship
- Frank & Betty Harano Memorial Scholarship
- Leo Adler Scholarship

Diversity Center

- Student Ambassador
- Soccer
- Tennis
- PTK Scholarship Night
- PTK Induction Ceremony
- PTK College Project Basic Needs Drive
- PTK Vice President of Leadership

Volunteerism

- TVCC Foundation Gala
- Athletic Program Fundraising

Activities

- Peer Mentor, Multicultural &



Age 41
Hometown St. George, UT
GPA 3.8

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Addiction Studies

Transferring to: Unknown

Robert Shingleton

Overcoming adversity has defined my journey. Growing up amid financial hardships and severe disruptions, I faced homelessness and battled addiction. Despite these obstacles, I discovered that higher education offered a path to transformation. At TVCC, rigorous coursework and unwavering support helped me rebuild my life and pursue my passion for neuroscience and brain chemistry. Inspired by my own recovery and the resilience of my community, I aspire to harness scientific research to develop innovative solutions for addiction and homelessness. I aim to influence policy change by integrating cutting-edge neuroscience with practical social initiatives, creating opportunities for those struggling with these issues. Higher education has empowered me with critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a vision for a more just society. My future is dedicated to using science and policy to spark meaningful change and ensure that every individual has a chance to overcome adversity and thrive with determination and to learn in a safe and positive environment. As a non-traditional student, the school accommodated and made me feel comfortable and gave me the tools to succeed. I've received many job offers, but continued education is for me.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- Honor Roll
- President's List
- Dean's List
- Nathaniel Stringer Scholarship Finalist

Volunteerism

- Meals on Wheels
- Recovery Center Intern
- Senior Center

Umpqua Community College

Dr. Rachel Pokrandt, President



Jessica McKinney

As a first generation high school graduate and then college student, I am extremely excited to be graduating with a degree in criminal justice. I was a victim of identity theft, which caused me to get a later start at college than I would have liked, however because of this I feel it inspired me to work harder and be the best student that I could be. While sometimes challenging, I have continued to hold myself to high standards in order to keep the grades that I wanted to achieve. I never expected to get the grades that I have through college, but it has made me very confident in my journey through college. Umpqua Community College has been amazing. I have had amazing instructors, and I would not have been able to do this without them. I am excited to graduate and cannot wait to show my kids that hard work does pay off.

Honors

- Phi Theta Kappa
- President's List
- Dallas Butler Memorial Scholarship
- Del Blanchard Family Scholarship

Volunteerism

- Helping the Homeless

Age	Hometown	GPA
38	Roseburg, OR	3.95

Degree/Certificate: Associate of Applied Science - Criminal Justice

Additional Umpqua Community College AOAT Scholar

Joshua Atkins





PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY



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