

2024 Staff Development Days



Shelly Williams, *back left*, of the Fine Arts Division led a jigsaw puzzle competition and spoke about using hobbies to find work-life balance.

Hundreds of Clark College staff spent two days learning together during the tenth annual Staff Development Days on August 13 and 14.

The event, chock full of professional development training, allows staff time to connect with other staff on campus, learn valuable skills, and share department information. Six breakout sessions offered three dozen professional development opportunities focused on a variety of topics. This year's workshops included a supervisor training series, mini-learning sessions, opportunities for department meetings, and time for individuals to complete Higher Ed Works online training.

In her welcome to staff, Clark College President Dr. Karin Edwards quoted educator, Rudine Sims Bishop: "Mirrors allow you to see your own experiences, windows to see others,' and sliding glass doors to enter other worlds." Dr. Edwards added: "Over the next two days, there may be many mirrors, windows, and doors for you to explore, learn, and grow."

Keynote Speaker on Building Community



Clark College Foundation CEO Calen Ouellette, *pictured above*, presented Tuesday's keynote, "The Community We Build." Calen focused on three key terms: Engagement, empowerment, and collaboration, and posed a reflective question for each term.

- **Engagement:** What specific actions can you take to make your colleagues feel more engaged and valued in the workplace?

- **Empowerment:** How can you empower team members to take the initiative and feel confident in their roles?
- **Collaboration:** What steps can you take to foster better collaboration and communication within your team and across teams at Clark?

The following day, Erin Jones presented “Building Bridges with Others.” Read more about her presentation: [ppi-guest-speaker-at-staff-development-days](#)

Many Departments Participated



Departments presenting sessions included Accounting Services; Career Services; Clark College Foundation; Communications and Marketing (*pictured above*); Counseling and Health Center; Disability Support Services; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Event Services; Facilities Services; Fine Arts; Human Resources; IT-Network Services; Information Technology Services; Payroll; Planning and Effectiveness; Purchasing; Student Affairs; Teaching & Learning Center; Veterans Center of Excellence; and more.

Sessions addressed burnout prevention, conflict management, time block planning, and unlocking the power of data.

Some sessions focused on how best to assist others in our community.

- Bellamy Holt from Entry Services taught “Etiquette to a T: Treating Trans Folks with Courtesy.” Bellamy provided vocabulary terms for allies and cis individuals to use and gave examples of how to politely ask for someone’s pronouns, and how to avoid misgendering people.
- Tre Sandlin from the Teaching and Learning Center taught “Accessibility: Headings and Alternative Text.” Participants learned how headings enable folks who use

assistive technology and how to use them to improve the navigability of their content. Teams of participants viewed images and discussed how to write alt text for different lenses.

- Valentina Pishchanskaya-Cayanan from the Counseling & Health Center presented “Understanding the Ukrainian Student Experience.” She emigrated from Ukraine as a child and still has family in Ukraine. She shared a deeper understanding of the Ukrainian culture, various challenges that new arrivals from Ukraine are experiencing, and how folks can best support our Ukrainian students.

There was time for fun and relaxation, too.

- Courtney Braddock from Accounting Services taught a lively line dance workshop to get staffers’ minds and bodies moving to a variety of music.
- Jenny Shadley from Communications/Marketing led a “Creative Mindfulness” workshop to encourage participants to experiment using creative practices to be more present. After a guided meditation and a creative prompt, participants had an opportunity to take a short walk on campus and either take a photo or write a poem.
- Shelley Williams from the Fine Arts division led two hands-on jigsaw puzzle competitions. While teams worked together to complete a puzzle, Shelly shared about how engaging in hobbies can help employees find a healthy work-life balance. The winning team received Symphony chocolate bars.

Many thanks to the staff who organized Staff Development Days: Andra Spencer, Vanessa Bural, Alyssa Montminy, Carolyn Stark, De’Gundrea Harris, Donna Larson, Haley Tucker, Lindsey Schuhmacher, Maggie Li, Michelle Golder, Sandra Bush, and

Wendé Fisher.



Students from the McClaskey Culinary Institute with lunch boxes they prepared.

Thanks also to instructors, staff, and students from McClaskey Culinary Institute for providing delicious box lunches on both days and to the bookstore for providing free ice cream treats.

“The members of our planning team are so pleased with this year’s Staff Development Days,” said Andra Spencer, who works in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. “We saw the excitedness of staff members connecting across departments. When we gathered together in Gaiser Student Center, the energy was palpable. What a positive start to our 2024-2025 academic year.” Continue Your Professional Development Journey

For those who want to continue their learning journey, attendees can reflect on their conference experience and share feedback with the Staff Development Days planning team. Here’s how you can stay engaged:

- Review session materials: Access presentation slides and other valuable resources from the conference: Presenter Files
- Share your feedback: Your thoughts are crucial for improving future professional development events. Please fill out our feedback survey: <https://bit.ly/SDD-24-feedback>

“We hope these resources will help you build on the insights gained and continue your professional journey.” –Staff Development Days planning team

Photos: Clark College/Susan Parrish