

Board of Trustees

Marilee Scarbrough joins the Clark College Board of Trustees.

College mourns Trustee



Jane Jacobsen

Today the college community learned that Clark College Trustee Jane Jacobsen had passed away over the weekend.

“Jane became a Clark College trustee in 2016, and throughout her two terms on the Board she was an indefatigable cheerleader for the college,” wrote Clark College President Karin Edwards in an email to the college community announcing the news. “She liked to say that Clark was ‘the community’s college,’ because to her, uplifting and positively impacting the community was the most important and valuable part of our mission.”

A resident of Vancouver for more than 30 years, Jacobsen had profound impact on the region. She served in leadership roles with such organizations and projects as The Columbia Land Trust, the Marshall Lecture Series, the Columbia Gorge Commission, as well as many others.

Of the many achievements in Jacobsen’s life, the one her name is perhaps most closely connected with is Confluence. Jacobsen was the founding executive director of this ambitious nonprofit project to express the history of the Pacific Northwest through art and Indigenous voices. The Vancouver Land Bridge, located within Historic Fort Vancouver, is a Confluence installation.

During her two terms as a trustee at Clark College, Jacobsen served in many roles, including Board Chair from 2019 to 2020. She also served on the college's Presidential Search Advisory Committee, Social Equity Advisory Council, Guided Pathways Committee, and as an alternate Legislative Action Committee Representative to the Washington State Association of College Trustees.

"I know Jane touched the lives of many people at the college—including my own—and I know she will be missed," wrote President Edwards in her email.

An email from the Board of Trustees the college community read in part: "Those who knew Jane will remember her warmth, her kindness, and her seemingly limitless capacity for positive energy. Jane would show up with fresh-baked shortbread cookies just because she was thinking of us. Whenever there was a college event, you could count on Jane to be in attendance, joyfully participating in any activity offered. Whenever we had the opportunity to engage with students, Jane was the first to congratulate them on their successes and let them know she believed in their capacity to build better futures for themselves."

- Read the Board of Trustees' full letter
- Read an article in Partners Magazine about Jane Jacobsen's motivations for supporting students
- Listen to an interview with Jane Jacobsen about her work with Confluence
- Read the *Columbian's* obituary of Jane Jacobsen

A public Celebration of Life is scheduled for June 15 at 11:00 a.m. in Esther Short Park. Confluence has also created a tribute page where people can share their memories of Jacobsen and have their condolences forwarded to the family. Survivors include her husband, Paul, her sons, Ben and Gabe, a daughter-in-law, Allison, and two grandsons, Henrik and Emmett Jacobsen.



Clark College Trustee Jane Jacobsen, *center*, was a tireless cheerleader for the college who could be counted on to show up at college events, like this Sakura Ceremony.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Clark College announces new Trustee



Jeanne Bennett

Washington Governor Jay Inslee has appointed Jeanne Bennett to the Clark College Board of Trustees. Bennett is the retired CEO of Workforce Southwest Washington, a Vancouver resident, and a longtime community leader.

“I’m so pleased to serve Clark College and the community in this new role,” Bennett said. “I strongly believe in the college’s mission to be in service to the community and helping students achieve their educational and professional goals.”

Bennett will serve in the recently vacated position left open in May when trustee Royce Pollard stepped down to spend more time with his family. Bennett will join fellow trustees Jada Rupley, Paul Speer, Vice Chair Rekah Strong, and Chair Jane Jacobsen.

“This is good news,” said Jacobsen. “We welcome her to the board. We have important work to do in selecting a new president for Clark College, and it will be helpful to have her expertise and experience.”

Current

President Bob Knight will retire July 15th after serving 13 years as

President at Clark College. Dr. Sandra A. Fowler-Hill has been selected

to serve as interim president for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Fowler-Hill is a retired college president from Portland Community College. Her

first day is slated for July 15th. The interim appointment provides ample time for the college to conduct a year-long robust search

process for the permanent president.

Clark College has a website detailing the presidential search process at www.clark.edu/presidential-search.

Bennett's biography and photo are available upon request.

Honoring she-roes



On March 7, while people around the world prepared to celebrate

International Women's Day the next day, members of the local community gathered

in Gaiser Student Center to honor five women's contributions to Southwest

Washington at the 2019 Iris Awards.

Guests enjoyed refreshments and light fare provided by

Beaches Restaurant as they celebrated the honorees. Ceremonies began with a greeting from Clark College President Bob Knight, after which the evening was turned over to emcee Colleen Boccia, chief marketing officer of Columbia Credit Union. Boccia introduced speeches by both the honorees and their nominators.

This year's Iris Award recipients were:

- Ann Fischer, founder of the Healthy Equitable Living Project
- Stacey Graham, president of the Humane Society for Southwest Washington
- Maureen Montague, executive director of Columbia Springs
- Rekah Strong, executive director of Educational Opportunities for Children and Families
- Lynn Valenter, vice chancellor for finance and operations at Washington State University Vancouver

This annual ceremony has a long tradition in this community. The event began in 1985 as a photography exhibit during Women's History Week, which later developed into a larger awards program and ceremony known as the Southwest Washington Women of Achievement Awards. In 2012, the event was reintroduced as the Iris Awards with the same core mission: honoring the women of Southwest Washington for their outstanding contributions in the categories of public, private, philanthropic, and civic service.

Ann Fischer



Ann Fischer and Diane Irby

The evening got off to an emotional start when Diane Irby took to the podium to describe her experience being a client of the Healthy Equitable Living Project, which Ann Fischer runs and founded.

“The pantry has fed my body quite well,” she said. “But the pure unselfish love [Ann] provided me has fed my soul and my heart and was something I didn’t even know I was starving for.

“The pantry keeps me alive,” Irby continued, facing Fischer directly, “but you make me want to stay alive.”

Fischer embraced Irby before beginning her own remarks, which centered on the work that HELP does providing food to families in need at 14 different schools. She spoke about the importance of not just providing people with food and assistance, but doing so in a way that allows them choice and dignity, mentioning how HELP sets up its food pantry so that clients can “shop” for the groceries they prefer instead of receiving a pre-made box. Fischer also thanked the many volunteers and partners that support HELP, including Clark College nursing students who volunteered to provide clients with education on hygiene and first aid.

Fischer also made clear that it was not just the clients who benefited from HELP, but she herself found inspiration and motivation from the work. “The biggest gift you can give yourself is helping other people,” she said.

Stacey Graham



Stacey Graham and Debra Hentz

The next honoree of the evening was Stacey Graham, president of the Humane Society for Southwest Washington. Before coming to HSSW, Graham had a long career that encompassed work in the Oregon State Legislature, national public relations and advertising agencies, the United Way of Columbia-Willamette, and First Independent Bank. When she joined HSSW in 2013, she was charged with raising the level of awareness and visibility of the Humane Society in the local community and animal welfare industry; and dramatically increasing the save rate of the animals in care. Under her leadership, HSSW launched a five-year, \$6 million capital campaign. In 2018, HSSW was named the Best Nonprofit in Clark County.

“I’ve been a volunteer with HSSW for 20 years,” said nominator Debra Hentz. “One thing you see with people at humane societies is they say, ‘We want to focus on the animals.’ Stacey really focused on the people and building them up.”

Graham admitted that she wasn’t a born animal-lover. “I didn’t grow up with animals,” she said. “The first time I walked into the kennels, I was scared to death—that’s how I learned I was afraid of dogs. But I walked those kennels every day, and I learned to love dogs.”

Graham noted that caring about animals is part of caring about humanity, and noted that HSSW donated pet food to pantries like Ann Fischer's. "We know how much animals mean to people," she said. "We know they will give food to their animals before they feed themselves. So we're hanging in there with you."

Maureen Montague



Maureen Montague and Heidi Johnson Bixby

The next award presented was the H-RoC Iris Award, a special category created in 2017 to honor women in the community who have promoted civil discourse, teamwork, collaboration, and cooperation. H-RoC, a non-partisan political action committee dedicated to the advancement of elected and appointed female leaders in Southwest Washington, sponsors this annual award.

H-RoC member (and 2016 Iris Award recipient) Heidi Johnson Bixby introduced honoree Maureen Montague. Montague currently serves as the executive director of Columbia Springs, an environmental education nonprofit and protected urban natural area on the Old Evergreen Highway in Vancouver. Previous to this position, she was the co-founder and eventual executive director of North Bank Artists.

Johnson Bixby described Montague as "the first to raise her hand to volunteer" and someone with a gift for collaboration

and
community-building.

Like most of the night's honorees, Montague said she learned the value of community service from her family. She recalled watching her grandmother sewing a quilt with fellow church members to donate to a recently widowed woman to keep her warm during the winter, and feeling "the kindness of that good deed in my heart."

"Community service, to me, means collective kindness," she said. "These things add up. ... I'm blessed to live in Clark County, where so many people seem to understand this."

Rekah Strong



Jada Rupley and Rekah Strong

The next honoree of the night was also nominated by a former honoree. Jada Rupley, 2004 Women of Achievement Award recipient, introduced Rekah Strong by noting that they currently served together on the Clark College Board of Trustees. She praised Strong for her dedication to the community, saying, "Thank you for being a gentle teacher, thank you for being a fierce advocate, and thank you for changing our community."

Strong is executive director of Educational Opportunities for Children and Families. Prior to that position, she served in leadership roles at the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette and at Clark County. Along

with her work on the Clark College Board of Trustees, she serves on Clark County's Developmental Disability Advisory Board and is a former board member of We Reign Youth Foundation and Southwest Washington Chapter Red Cross.

Strong spoke about her experiences as a young child attending political events with her grandmother and mother, drawing with crayons and not entirely understanding why she was there, but even so learning the importance of public engagement. "What my grandmother was doing for me was pouring into me, and creating a template for me that would come full circle in my life," she said.

Strong also noted a theme that arose from her experiences: "Small yesses can have huge outcomes." As examples, she offered the time she said yes to an employee who needed to bring her baby to work, which led to a program that served a dozen employees and became a model for other workplaces. Another "small yes" was agreeing to speak at an open forum about Clark County's system of governance, which in turn led to her becoming part of the work group that changed the county's Freeholder process and expanded the Clark County Council.

Strong also recounted providing her own children with crayons as she took them to public meetings—and how, years later, her daughter would volunteer to visit the State Capitol to advocate for others.

"You never know the ultimate outcome of modeling for others, of pouring into other people, and all those small yesses," she said.

Lynn Valenter



Lynn Valenter and Renee Bartocci

The final honoree of the night was Lynn Valenter, vice chancellor for finance and operations at Washington State University Vancouver.

Valenter, who began her career at WSUV more than 20 years ago, now leads a range of functions including budget and accounting, capital planning, facilities operations, human resources, public safety, and dining services.

Valenter was introduced by WSUV Chief of Staff Renee Bartocci, who expressed her appreciation for her colleague's work ethic and enthusiasm. "She's there to be a partner, to bounce ideas off of, and to ask the hard questions," Bartocci said. "And she's really good at it."

Valenter thanked her family for supporting her work—both in her career and as a volunteer—acknowledging the difficulty women face when they try to manage the obligations of their families with those of their workplaces and communities. "For many, many years, the daily prayer was for balance," she said. Even so, she said the balancing act was worth it.

"I believe each of us finds satisfaction when we make a difference," she said. "That can be in your family, in your

work, and in your community.”

To view more photos from the event visit our [Flickr page](#).

Paul Speer named to Board of Trustees



Paul Speer

Paul Speer has been appointed to the Clark College Board of Trustees by Gov. Jay Inslee. His appointment began October 31, 2018, and ends September 30, 2023. His first board meeting is tomorrow, Wednesday, November 14.

“Paul has deep roots in Clark County and a diverse background that will be a great asset to the Clark College Board of Trustees,” Gov. Inslee said. “He has skills in strategic planning, fundraising and capacity building and I know that he will help the college achieve its strategic plan and vision.”

A resident of Clark County for the past 37 years, Speer has long demonstrated a commitment to his community. He has volunteered or is currently volunteering with almost 20 different organizations, including on boards of The Historic Trust, Oregon Public Broadcasting, Social Venture Partners International, Leadership Clark County, and the Nonprofit Network Southwest Washington; and advisory boards of iUrban Teen, Cascadia Tech Academy, and the Superintendent’s Management Task Force for Vancouver Public Schools. He has chaired the University of Portland’s Engineering Dean’s Advisory Council and its Franz Center for Leadership,

Entrepreneurship, and Innovation board; the City of Vancouver's Aviation Advisory Committee; and the Pearson Field Education Center.

Currently, Speer is an executive advisor and coach who also appears as a guest lecturer and panelist on topics including leadership, new business creation, business planning, venture philanthropy, sustainable energy, and encore careers. He has a long career in the tech industry, including more than 25 years at Hewlett-Packard Company, where he retired as Vice President of Development Strategy in the Office of Strategy and Technology.

Speer earned his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering degree and his Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Portland. He earned his Master of Science in Aeronautics degree from Embry-Riddle University. Among his many awards and recognitions are his 2009 Outstanding Alumni Award from Leadership Clark County and his 2013 Pilot of the Year award from the Washington Pilots Association.

Speer joins other trustees Royce Pollard, Jane Jacobsen, Jada Rupley, and Rekah Strong.

About Clark College

Located in Vancouver's Central Park and serving more than 10,000 students per quarter, Clark College is Southwest Washington's oldest public institution of higher education. The college currently offers classes at two satellite locations: one on the Washington State University Vancouver campus and one in the Columbia Tech Center in East Vancouver. Additionally, its Economic & Community Development program is housed in the Columbia Bank building in downtown Vancouver.

Jacobsen named new trustee



Jane Jacobsen

Jane Jacobsen has been appointed to the Clark College Board of Trustees by Gov. Jay Inslee. Her term began February 23 and ends September 30, 2019.

“I am thrilled and honored to have been named a trustee of Clark College,” said Jacobsen. “It is an integral part of our community and essential for an increasing number of students.”

A resident of Vancouver for the past 27 years, Jacobsen has long been an influential presence in the Pacific Northwest. She was the founding executive director of the Confluence Project (now known simply as Confluence), which creates educational art installations in Washington and Oregon that connect people with places. Jacobsen led that organization for 12 years and now serves as its board treasurer.

Jacobsen was instrumental in bringing nationally recognized speakers to Vancouver’s Marshall Lecture Series, including Bill Richardson, Madeline Albright and Tom Brokaw. Jacobsen has also co-developed programs and exhibits to celebrate the history of the Pacific Northwest through folk art. In 2001, Washington State Governor Gary Locke appointed Jacobsen to a four-year term as one of 13 commissioners on the Columbia Gorge Commission, which oversees the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act.

Currently, Jacobsen is a private consultant for a waterfront development project in downtown Vancouver. She is also board president of Friends of Fort Vancouver and serves on the

Columbia Land Trust's advisory board and development committee, as well as on The Children's Center's advisory board. She lives in Vancouver with her husband, Paul; they have two grown sons.

Jacobsen earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas and her Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Vermont. She fills the vacancy left by Mike Ciraulo, who left his position at Clark County Fire & Rescue in September to become chief of the Pendleton (Oregon) Fire Department.

Jacobsen joins other trustees Vancouver City Councilor Jack Burkman; Royce Pollard, who served as mayor of Vancouver for 14 years; Jada Rupley, administrator consultant and former educator; and Rekah Strong, chief of operations and equity at United Way of the Columbia-Willamette in Portland.

Photo: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Strategic Plan Approved



The Clark College Board of Trustees approved the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan on Wednesday night during its monthly board meeting. The Board's approval is the final step in the approval process, and the campus will begin implementing the new strategic plan right away. According to Associate Vice President for Planning Effectiveness Shanda Diehl, the college has already begun to implement elements of the plan, as the final approval represents two years of discussion and work at

the college to clarify the mission, vision, themes and values that will guide the campus over the next five years.

The updated vision statement for the college is, "Clark College inspires learners to excel, transforms lives, and strengthens our increasingly diverse community."

The updated mission is, "Clark College, in service to the community, guides individuals to achieve their educational and professional goals."

Beyond the mission and vision, the college developed core themes to guide its priorities for the coming five years:

- **Academic Excellence:** Facilitate student learning by providing the conditions for intellectual growth through scholarship, discovery, application, creativity, and critical thinking.
- **Social Equity:** Facilitate student learning by providing the conditions that improve educational outcomes and eliminate systemic disparities among all groups.
- **Economic Vitality:** Facilitate student learning by providing programs, services, and conditions that improve the economic well-being of the students, college, and community.
- **Environmental Integrity:** Facilitate student learning by providing the conditions that continually improve the college's physical, virtual, and social environment.

The complete strategic plan, along with many documents that led to its creation, can be found at:
http://www.clark.edu/clark-and-community/about/strategic_plan/index.php.

A Decade of Service



During her decade as a Clark College trustee, Sherry Parker has been a frequent presence at the college.

Ever since she first became a member of the Clark College Board of Trustees in 2003, Sherry Parker has been vital presence at the college, where she has faithfully attended not just board meetings but also Opening Days, State of the College addresses, cultural events, Commencement ceremonies—even when inmates were celebrating earning their GEDs through Clark at Larch Correctional Facility, Sherry Parker was there.

Last Thursday, however, Parker attended her last board meeting, as her tenure has officially expired. There was little fanfare at the event; Clark College President Bob Knight had hosted a private celebration at his home that Monday to thank Parker for her decade-long service to the college. Even so, as each trustee rose in turn to speak, it became clear how valuable Parker has been to the board.

“Sherry Parker was Clark College at the state level,” said Trustee Jada Rupley, referring to Parker’s role as a tireless committee member of the statewide Trustees Association of Community and Technical Colleges.



Clark College Trustee Jack Burkman, Trustee Emeritus Sherry Parker, alumna Dena Brill, Trustee Royce Pollard and Trustee Rekah Strong at the 2014 State of the College address.

That work earned her a TACTC Trustee Leadership Award earlier this year. Her nomination for the award cited her work in helping the college complete several key initiatives including the construction and opening of Clark College at Columbia Tech Center and the opening of the Oliva Family Early Learning Center, adding that she “has been a central figure in keeping the college focused on the student experience and student success. She is truly an advocate for students.”

Parker’s focus on students was due in part to her own experiences as a Clark student. She enrolled in the college in 1981, soon after she moved to Vancouver due to her husband’s job. Parker, who already had a bachelor’s degree in education from the University of South Florida, realized she would need to improve her computer skills to compete in the modern job market. She earned her Associate of Applied Science degree in 1983 and wound up working for the college as well, working part-time as a department secretary and teaching computer skills to mature learners through Clark’s Corporate and Continuing Education.



Sherry Parker, *blue jacket*, could always be counted on to attend events during her decade-long tenure as a Clark College trustee.

Eventually, Parker moved on to other job opportunities, working as a substitute teacher, in advertising, as a legal secretary in the juvenile court system, and in the Clark County Clerk’s office as Deputy Clerk. She was elected County Clerk in 2006 and served in that position until 2011.

In an email after the board meeting, Parker called the end of her tenure on the Board of Trustees “bittersweet.”

"I would be happy to continue my service, but after almost 11 years, it is time for a new perspective on the board," she wrote. "I know [Michael] Ciraulo will do a great job as a trustee."

Ciraulo, who also attended Thursday's board meeting—his first—acknowledged during the speeches that he would have "big shoes to fill" in taking Parker's spot on the board. But even though Parker's time on the board is ending, she will continue to be a familiar presence at the college—in fact, she has already begun volunteering at the college's Corporate and Continuing Education office.

"I will always be a member of the Penguin Nation," Parker wrote, "and I will help out in any way I can."

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Clark Welcomes New Trustee



Clark College Trustee
Michael Ciraulo

Michael Ciraulo has been appointed to the Clark College Board of Trustees by Gov. Jay Inslee. His five-year term will begin Nov. 1, 2014. Ciraulo takes over for Trustee Sherry Parker, whose term expired this summer.

"Mike Ciraulo brings a long history of public service to the board and we are happy to welcome him," said Clark College President Robert K. Knight. "As a graduate of a community college, a community leader, and a professional firefighter, he brings a lot of energy and enthusiasm to the college."

A 20-year veteran of the fire service, he is currently the Division Chief in charge of Training and Education at Clark County Fire and Rescue. He earned his associate degree in fire protection from Portland Community College, a bachelor's degree in business management and communications from Concordia University, and is a graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program through the National Fire Academy.

A dedicated public servant, Ciraulo has previously served as both Mayor and City Council member in Battle Ground, where he resides. He has given his time to many public causes statewide and in Southwest Washington, including the Washington State Higher Education Facilities Authority, President of the Clark County Mosquito Control District, Board of Directors for the North County Community Food Bank, Chairperson of the North Clark County Steering Committee for Loaves and Fishes, Larch Corrections Community Advisory Board, and the Lewis River Rotary.

The Clark College Board of Trustees consists of five members who are appointed by the Governor of Washington. Members serve a five-year term and must live in the college's service district. The Board seeks to ensure the quality and relevance of college programs and to provide stewardship of public resources. In this role, the Board is responsible for strategic planning; development and approval of college policies; and approval and oversight of the operating budget.

Ciraulo's first meeting will be November 19 at 5 p.m. in Gaiser Hall at Clark College.

Photo courtesy of Michael Ciraulo.