

PCC to Purchase Property in Columbia County

Property to serve as site for the Training Center as part of regional OMIC project

Portland Community College's (PCC) elected Board of Directors approved the college's president or his designee to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement at its monthly public board meeting regarding property in Columbia County. The parcel of land – just over 17 acres – is earmarked for the Training Center as part of the regional Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center (OMIC) project.

Located just north of Wagner Court and east of West Lane Road, in Scappoose, the property under consideration is owned by SPB Holdings, LLC, from whom the college has a signed letter of intent. In terms of next steps, the college will begin a phase one environmental scan and conditional use permit process on the property for due diligence purposes. These will be conducted simultaneously over several months.

"We're thrilled to be able to announce this news," said Mark Mitsui, PCC president. "This piece of property meets our needs in a complete way. The infrastructure is already in place, enabling us to build quickly. It's close to Highway 30, so it offers easy access for our students and the local community. And finally, its proximity to the OMIC Research & Development Center was another important factor in our decision."

"Many thanks to our constituents in Columbia County, who have patiently waited as the college researched property options. PCC is delighted to soon have a permanent facility and presence in Scappoose to serve you," Mitsui added.

The college plans to launch construction in summer 2019, with fall 2020 as the estimated opening of the Training

Center, focused on advanced manufacturing and offering such programs as Computer Numerically Controlled Operation, Machining, Welding, and Mechatronics. Programs will be based on an apprenticeship model, whereby students will be able to complete an associate degree or certificate leading to an advanced degree. Until the Training Center's opening, courses will be taught in temporary locations, including at Scappoose High School.

The center is part of the regional OMIC project, which seeks to combine applied research and development and workforce training to serve the region's advanced manufacturers, and create economic mobility for area residents to access living wage careers in the metals manufacturing industry. It will complement OMIC R&D, which is modeled after the University of Sheffield Advanced Manufacturing Research Center in partnership with Boeing in Sheffield, England. Its Scappoose facility is owned and administered by the Oregon Institute of Technology (www.OMIC.us).

The announcement of the property purchase and sale agreement comes on the heels of nearly a year's worth of milestone accomplishments related to PCC's Training Center:

- In February 2018 representatives from Vigor, Evraz, Rightline Equipment, and JC Custom Machining & Design formed a Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JATC) for OMIC. The JATC worked with PCC and the Bureau of Labor and Industries to begin developing apprenticeships.
- In May 2018 a facility design build firm was selected. Mortenson Construction, with Hennebery Eddy Architects, was tapped from a competitive pool of RFPs to lead the planning and implementation of the Training Center.
- In June 2018 the Oregon State Apprenticeship and Training Council

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VRFPD Welcomes Class of Volunteer Recruits

15 local volunteers have begun training to become certified firefighters

excitement in their eyes and know that they're joining something bigger than themselves."

By Scott Laird

The Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District (VRFPD) has started training a group of volunteer recruits to become certified firefighters.

Vernonia Training Captain Will Steinweg began a joint training academy on October 20 with 12 recruits for the Vernonia Fire District, and three recruits for the Mist Birkenfeld District.

A recruit class of this size was a welcome relief for a Fire District that has been struggling to attract volunteers who willingly give so much of their personal time to be of service to their community.

"This is the first time in a really long while that we've had a class of recruits this size who are volunteering to become trained as firefighters," said Vernonia Fire Chief Dean Smith.

Captain Steinweg says his recruits will be learning the basic skills of firefighting during eight weekends of training, scheduled to be completed by the end of January. Training will consist of classroom learning, as well as hands-on training with equipment and the tools of the trade. Trainees will need to show proficiency and get signed off in a number of firefighting skills before they can be certified as Firefighter I. Once certified, volunteers are then able to respond to calls and fight structure fires. Steinweg says the total training is about 200 hours.

"We're moving in the right direction," says Captain Steinweg. "It's really exciting. It's great to see the



Chief Smith says this type of training program was only possible because the community stepped up and passed a five year operating levy that allowed the District to create the Training Captain position and hire Steinweg to develop a training academy for local volunteers to become certified as firefighters.

As Vernonia's Training Captain, Steinweg is accredited through the Oregon Department of Safety Standards and Training (DPSST).

Steinweg says the academy training is for 16 hours each weekend. He said the class is a real mix of local citizens, split almost evenly between men and women, with recruits aged from their early 20s into their 60s. There are even a few volunteers from outside Vernonia's fire district that are part of the training who plan to spend time here as volunteers on nights and weekends.

Steinweg says that, in addition to learning the basics of fighting a structure fire, training recruits will learn about handling hazardous materials, how to fight wildland fires, and about

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Where Are They Now? Back in Vernonia!

Vernonia Schools' new art teacher, Kaitlyn Carr-Kiprotich, is a former graduate of the District

By Scott Laird

They say "You can't go home again," but that's just not true.

Just ask Kaitlyn Carr-Kiprotich, a 2010 graduate of Vernonia High School who has returned to the community she grew up in to be the new art instructor for middle and high school students at the Vernonia School District.

Carr-Kiprotich was a student of former Vernonia instructor Linda Allen, who retired this last year and who Carr-Kiprotich has replaced. "Miss Al-



len was my art teacher for my last few years in Vernonia," says Carr-Kiprotich. "I had always been interested in art, but

Miss Allen really turned me on to the idea of teaching it as a career, and I really admired her so much as a person and as an educator. She was the one who opened my eyes up to being an art teacher. She had a huge impact on me during my time here in school."

Following her high school graduation, Carr-Kiprotich spent several years working on her college prerequisites, eventually entering Oregon State University in 2014, where she earned a Bachelor Degree of Fine Arts in Applied Visual Arts. "It's a studio specific degree and I focused on paper collage, textiles, and screen printing," explains Carr-Kiprotich. "I had some really wonderful mentors at Oregon State and I had some really great successes there in terms of my own personal art. It was

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