

The Clackamas Print

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Clackamas Community College

Q&A focus on health concerns

Brad Zimmerman
Managing Editor

A question-and-answer session drew about 75 people Monday and focused on the water-intrusion problem and how it might affect the health of students and staff.

The question-and-answer session was headed up by Leslie King-O'Neal, an Orlando, Florida based lawyer specializing in water-intrusion cases.

Some of the experts present included Patricia Heinsohn, who holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Health Sciences. Heinsohn fielded most of the questions during the Q&A session.

Also in attendance were Odin Ansari, an indoor air quality consultant, Mark Williams, a building diagnostics expert, and Kelly Keeth and Barbara Woodhull, Industrial Hygienists from Clayton Environmental Consultants. Lastly, Ed Barlow-Pieterich, an architect from CH2M Hill, was present.

Some of the questions included the following:

Q: Is there a health risk with higher levels of mold in a confined space?

A: According to Heinsohn, it

depends on the person or persons in question. Heinsohn stated some people could be affected by very little exposure to mold, while others can be exposed to higher levels of mold and not experience any adverse effects.

Q: What is a dangerous level of mold?

A: Again, it all depends on the person. Heinsohn stated that the U.S. government currently does not have any set limit for how much or how little mold can be in one area. The people testing the mold levels in the affected areas (Gregory Forum, Streeter, Oregon Advanced Technology Center and Dye Learning Center) first tested the outside air to get an idea of what the local levels were and then tested areas which were supposedly infected to see how they compared.

Q: If someone thinks they are being affected by the mold, who

should they contact and what should they do to alleviate the problem?

A: According to King-O'Neal, the college is thinking about setting up a hotline. In the meantime, if someone thinks they are being affected by the mold, they should contact their physician and or talk

to Dr. Joseph Jarvis, a Colorado physician hired to help the college deal with the water-intrusion problem and with affected people.

In addition, if someone believes they are affected by mold, they should avoid dust, areas where vacuuming is going on, etc.

Heinsohn said some symptoms include sinus congestion, tightness in the chest, headaches and respiratory problems. It should be noted, however, the same symptoms can be present in a normal cold or flu virus.

Heinsohn stated the solution to

eliminating those symptoms simply means removing yourself from whatever area is affecting you.

Q: Has the tent over Streeter Hall helped at all?

A: Yes. Keeth stated the tent not only keeps out water (mold can only grow with food — paper, wood, etc. — and water), but it should also help to slow the growth of the mold.

Q: Is the computer lab in Streeter or the library scheduled to move and, if so, where?

A: Neither the computer lab or the library is scheduled to move at this time. Dean of College Services Gary Dirrim said if the college feels it is necessary to move people, it will. At this point in time, the computer lab in Streeter is inside the building, not on the affected perimeter walls. The Dye Learning Center is in the same situation: since both areas are away from the perimeter walls of the buildings where the mold count appears to be at its highest levels, there is no reason to move them.

"What we can do is minimize your exposure...that's what Dr. Jarvis recommended us to do. That's what we're doing," said Dirrim.

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— Garry Dirrim
Dean of College Services



Leslie King-O'Neal, an Orlando, Florida-based lawyer specializing in water-intrusion cases.



Patricia Heinsohn, who holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Health Sciences.

Tuition increase looms on horizon

Brendon Neal
Sports Editor

Clackamas students face the possibility of a three-percent increase in tuition cost next year.

Even with the state legislature projected to pay for the financial losses due to Measure 47, the college will be in the red by the 98-99 school year.

"They [the proposed budgets] assume that we will start from square one. The final budgets [for community colleges], I don't believe will be decided until mid-session to early spring," said Dean

of Instructional Services Liz Goulard. "But all of our preliminary indications look very positive from the preliminaries for the community colleges."

Without the \$1 per-credit tuition hike, the college expects a deficit of \$957,980 in the 1999-2000 school year. With the increase, the deficit would be reduced to \$714,916. The Clackamas' figures include another \$1-per-credit tuition increase the 98-99 school years. The increase is based on the cost of living index for the Portland Metropolitan

area, which is currently about three percent.

"We are trying to limit our tuition increases to what you might consider a cost of living increase. By that I mean a three-percent increase," said Goulard.

The college also plans to use cut backs, primarily not replacing some retiring administrators, to balance future budgets.

"It seems the prudent thing to do is use a variety of strategies, so we don't have to take any one strategy to a drastic level," said Goulard.

The college released one assistant dean position and has not filled an administrative position in public safety. After 97-98, Clackamas will not replace another retiring dean.

"We will continue to look at savings opportunities through attrition," said Goulard.

The money gained would be put into direct instruction, hiring new teachers. In addition, they are considering increasing the prices for outside contracts and grants.

"We continue to look at where we can cut our overhead. We will look first to administrative overhead. We may look at other tra-

ditional services. We have tried very hard to protect the investment we have in direct instruction. There have been instances where we have retired three faculty and hired four because of lower starting salaries," said Goulard. "We have tried to slowly grow our ability to serve the students."

The current tuition rate of \$33 per credit is similar to their competitors (PCC, \$35 per credit, Mount Hood, \$34 and

Chemeketa, \$34). Goulard noted the other community colleges do not have a tuition-increase plan yet. Several other colleges have told her they are waiting to see the legal repercussions of Measure 47, the property tax limitation measure.

Clackamas hired the law firm of Miller and Nash to find out how it can raise revenue. The firm said Clackamas can raise tuition with the permission of the legislature, but cautioned against more than a cost of living increase.

On Wednesday, Feb. 12, Deans Liz Goulard and Gary Dirrim went before the board of directors with the plan. The fi-

nal decision will be made in April or May of spring term.

"We presented the recommendation for the \$1-tuition increase to the budget committee and the board, so we could put the discussion on the table with them, so we could come back to it as an action item next month," said Goulard. "Their action was rather favorable. While they didn't take an official vote, the comments I heard as we discussed it [were] that we had few alternatives as we look at the situation."

The training center is already in the budget and will not be affected by cutbacks or Measure 47.

"We have certificates of participation that will cover the initial costs. The building is actually a partnership between Clackamas County and the college," said Goulard. "The revenue the training center makes will pay back the costs. In fact, we hope that there will be a revenue string that will go back to the general fund."

Clackamas hopes to avoid major budget cuts similar to what happened in the late 80s due to Measure 5.

"What we want to do is avoid a situation where we are forced to make additional cuts in services. We did that due to Measure 5 and again in the early 90s. It does affect our ability to serve students. We will do what we can to avoid that situation in the future," said Goulard.

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