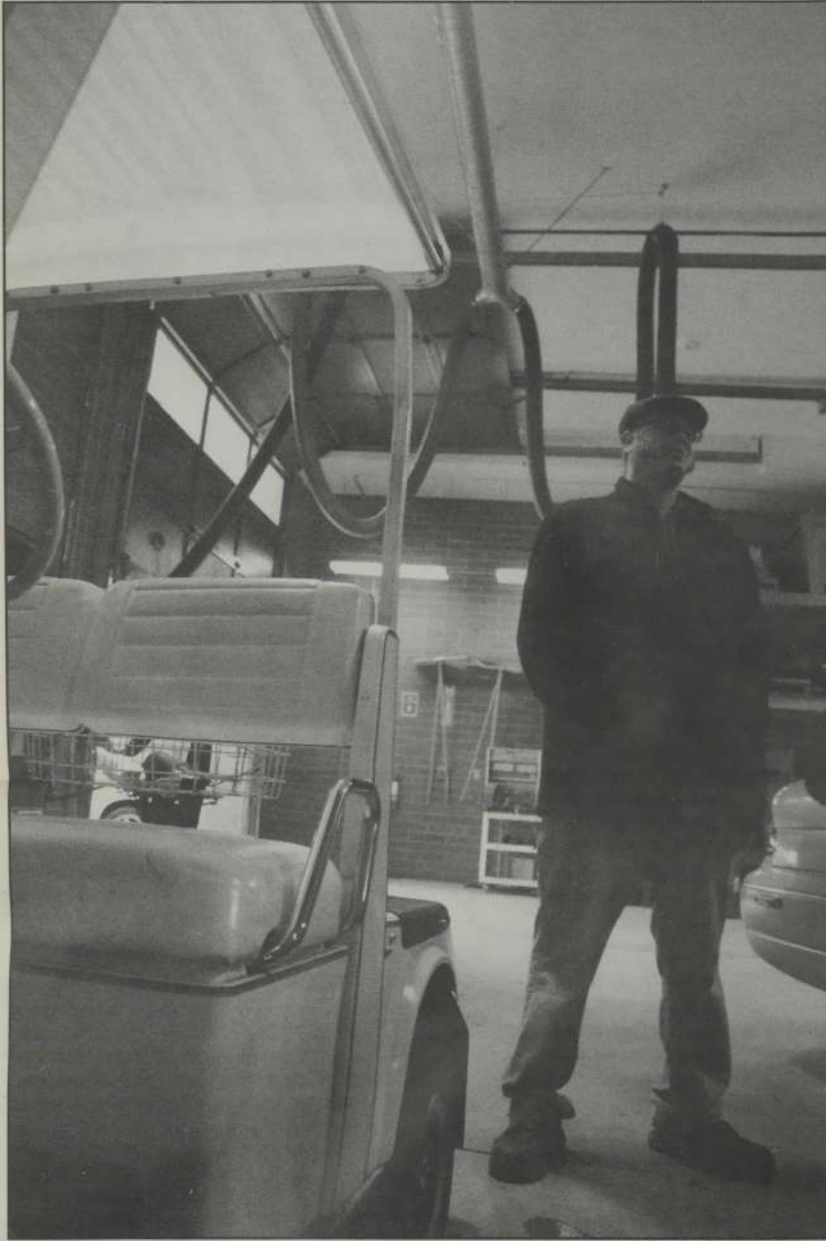


Mini grants spark new class innovations

By James Duncan
Associate News Editor



Erik Andersen Clackamas Print

Casey Sims, a counselor at Clackamas Community College, speaks on the importance of sustainability education and the contribution of the mini grant.

Brilliant innovation, a new way of teaching, something that can change the way students interact with their school. These are a few of the things that the Mini Grant for Innovation can help Clackamas Community College achieve. The Clackamas Foundation is working to help change our school for the better by letting creativity take the lead and giving up to \$3,000 to those who have the idea.

"This is a program that was started in the late 80s by the CCC Foundation Board, and their goal was to help departments jumpstart cool program ideas," said Karen Martini, director of the Clackamas Foundation. "A lot of times, there isn't money in the college budget to sort of explore something interesting. Faculty members have ideas about something that might be an innovative teaching technique or some kind of cool event to launch on campus or some new way to out reach to the community ... and there just isn't any money available to try that."

The mini grants are one-time micro loans of no more than \$3,000 each. The CCC Foundation started the project in 1988-1989 school year awarding only five grants coming to a total of \$4,007. Now it has grown to serving out as much as \$30,000 a year in mini grants.

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Casey Sims
CCC Counselor

"It's basically seed money for new projects, new ideas," said Janet Meister, the foundation's department secretary. "We look for things that are innovative; we don't like to fund requests that would normally be funded through college budget ... like desks, furniture and things like that."

One of the more recent success stories of the Mini Grant for Innovation is the Clackamas Repertory Theatre.

"I think the first one was to pay for someone to do some grant writing to get the thing going and then we supported them I believe in the next season. Now they're completely self-supporting and they do three big productions every year," said Martini. "Their ticket sales are going great; they're getting a lot of sponsorship."

The seed money that the grant provided gave the theater the kick start to become self-sufficient. The list of successful pro-

grams started by the foundation is staggering. Another one of the programs the foundation is supporting is a project by David Arter in the Science Department an online homework tutorial for chemistry students that gives immediate feedback you're studying for tests. Arter has developed an entire module to help students stay up to date with the class.

"Without the mini grant there wouldn't have been a project, period," said Casey Sims, a counselor at CCC.

Sims and supporters from various departments on campus have started a project for students and the college. The project is to convert a golf cart to hydrogen and electric power.

"I'm really interested in emerging technologies and how it applies to transportation," said Sims. "My dad mentioned when he was visiting in town that he had seen the idea of a compressed air car where you compress air and it powers a vehicle. We looked online and found some examples of that, which I thought was pretty neat. But then every engineer I spoke with said that it wasn't really viable so I changed the idea to say 'Well, what other technologies are emerging?'"

"Electric cars certainly have caught around, hydrogen as well. I talked with some of the different faculty members and some of them got back to me about being interested in doing a project and ... one of us, Bob Delgatto, Rick Lockwood and Abe Fouhy and myself, we decided to use hydrogen to recharge the electric battery in an electric golf cart would be a good project to tackle that would combine a couple different technologies and give our students a good experience working with both."

The golf cart is expected to be finished spring term of next year. A class working on converting the engine to run on hydrogen and a machining student building the mounting for the engine.

Sims had some advice to give to a person who would like to apply for a mini grant. "When you write a project proposal this a student's focus has to be tied to the economy in such a way that it will help students when they're in a job interview. Give them an opportunity to talk about what they've accomplished and maybe give a leg up for the job," he said.

The power of the Mini Grant for Innovation lets anyone on campus apply to get help in exploring an innovative way of doing something. Whether it is a new event on campus or the start-up to teach a new class, your innovation can find funding with the foundation.

"It's one of the programs we really are good about," said Martini. "It's something our foundation board really loves and the process of awarding these grants for the helps them understand better what the college does and what our departments are to. It's like an added bonus in the whole process, just the education that people get about what's going on here. So it's a one; we love it."

To contact the Clackamas Foundation call 503-594-3132.

Clarification

In the April 27 issue of *The Clackamas Print*, information in the front page graphic should have been attributed to Rosemary Teetor.



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Staff

The Clackamas Print

19600 Molalla Ave.
Oregon City, OR 97045
503-594-6266

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