



Urban Agricultural program proves to be a growing field



Loretta Mills (left) and Chris Chulos II ran the CCC Farmer's Market on the Oregon City campus. CCC is becoming more known for its growing horticultural prestige.

Donny Beach
Associate Copy Editor

Surrounded by lush trees, organic farms and flowering nurseries, Clackamas Community College's horticulture department fosters a passion for plants while teaching students the practical aspects of working in the field.

The department's Urban Agriculture program offers students who want to be in the agricultural industry a hands-on approach to working in organic small-scale farms.

Loretta Mills, administrative assistant in arts and sciences, helps run the Urban Agriculture program.

"It's an exciting field," Mills said. "Urban Agriculture is a growing, no pun intended, a growing field."

Students can choose between a one-year certificate or a two-year Associate of Applied Sciences Degree in a horticulture career pathway that will enable them to enter into a variety of agricultural positions. Additionally, some of the horticulture classes

transfer to Oregon State University for students planning to cultivate a bachelor's degree.

The OSU transfer agreement isn't the only reason CCC is known for its growing horticultural prestige. The Professional Landcare Network, a national trade association of landscape industry professionals, based in Virginia, also acknowledges CCC's horticulture programs.

The college is the only accredited program in Oregon, boasts the department website.

Jamie Korst, one of the Clackamas Community College students looking to turn agriculture into a career, heralds the importance of the program.

"The horticulture classes directly relate to work on a farm," said Korst.

Chris Konieczka, the newest member of CCC's full-time horticulture teaching staff, leads the Fall Food Harvest class, which provides the produce sold in the campus Farmer's Market which meets on Fridays but ended for the season in mid-October.

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Men's Cross Country wins regional title in dominating performance

Donny Beach
Associate Copy Editor

The day dawned grey and bleak with the suggestion of rain hanging in the sky, but even the chill morning air couldn't dampen the energy of the Clackamas Community College cross country teams as they warmed up for the Southern Regional Championships on Saturday.

Five schools crowded the fields of CCC — Clackamas CC, Clark College, Lane CC, Mt. Hood CC and Treasure Valley CC. The teams were stretching, listening to last minute pep talks from their coaches and preparing

for the big event.

Watching Coach Keoni McHone run through the pre-run setup was like watching a Hollywood director choreograph the moves of actors in a big budget film — telling the backup timekeepers, event helpers, and camera people where to stand, when to act and what to watch out for. When asked about the reason for deploying timekeepers throughout the course, his passion for the sport is unmistakable.

"They give the runners their 'splits' at the mile markers, so runners know if they are pacing themselves appropriately," McHone said.

Meanwhile, Coach Kaitlyn

Reid checked on the Clackamas runners to give them encouragement. Reid has worked with the CCC cross country team for the past three years, the first two years as an assistant coach.

This year Reid was named men's cross country Coach of the Year. Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges, Southern Region.

That wasn't the only title awarded to CCC at this year's Southern Regional Championship. The Cougars also earned first place for the men's cross country 8K run team division, as well as first, second and third place individual positions in the men's race.

Finishing the 8K run in

under 26 minutes were Badane Sultessa, followed by Jorge Gil-Juarez, with Jackson Baker capping the third place spot, a full 10 seconds ahead of Clark College's lead runner.

Also finishing in the top 10 of the men's run, Pake Benthin of Clackamas, came in seventh out of the 45 competitors entered.

Not to be left behind, Courtney Repp finished in the top 10 of the women's 5K run. Coach Reid went into the meet expecting similar results and with undiluted faith in her runners she speaks out on event placement.

"The ladies have been getting a lot of personal bests throughout the season, which is really

cool, and that to me is more important than what place they get. As a team they have really grown from that," said Reid.

This year Clackamas had a well-balanced mix of women and men running cross country, with 11 men and 10 women filling up the team roster.

Gil-Juarez spoke about the camaraderie that developed during the cross country season.

"Cross country is more than a sport, it's a second family," Gil-Juarez said.

That was doubly evident during the race as cheers and shouting of encouragement fell onto the athletes from the spectators. Family, friends and teammates alike spurred them on.



Alan Ekanger leads the pack for the Cougars in their cross-country regional championship. The Cougar men won the title.



The men's and women's cross-country teams pose with Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges Coach of the Year, Kaitlyn Reid.

Photos by Donny Beach The Clackamas Print