

Yellow brick road from Kansas to Oregon

NEW BOOKSTORE HEAD SUE ZIPPERER BRINGS EXPERIENCE TO CCC

STORY BY KYLER FLEMING
STAFF WRITER

Sue Zipperer is the new Clackamas Community College bookstore manager. Zipperer came to CCC from the University of Kansas and was previously the Store Manager of a Barnes & Noble in Portland.

The Clackamas Print:
What's your background?

Sue Zipperer:

I come from about 27 years in managing [retail] Barnes & Noble stores. Yeah, so, books, coffee — fun stuff. Most recently, five and a half years I spent as the director of the University of Kansas bookstore so I had eight stores there. Now I'm back in Oregon and I'm really excited to be here.

TCP:
How did you find out about CCC?

Zipperer:

Actually, I'd been looking to come back to Portland, because I used to manage the Jantzen Beach Barnes & Noble, the Lloyd Center and the Vancouver Barnes & Noble. If you've ever lived in Kansas you wouldn't question why I wanted to come back.

TCP:
In your short few weeks here, what are your first impressions of CCC?

Zipperer:

I've been so impressed with this place it's funny. I love the energy of working with students [and] everybody's so excited here. People seem really interested in what they're doing and like they've got a purpose. I've also really been impressed with all the art in the buildings. I didn't expect that at a community college.

TCP:
Do you have any goals set for your time at CCC?

Zipperer:

My main goal is to find ways to find affordable course materials for the students, but not just affordable ones, ones that you're going to use because there's a difference between just having something that's inexpensive and something that you're really going to use because you've probably all taken classes where the book is required and you barely use it. Yeah, so just working with everyone on campus to try and find ways to make sure that we're playing a role

to help me get you [students] all the tools that you need to be successful.

TCP:
What should students know about the bookstore?

Zipperer:

Come see us, come talk to us, let us know what you want. I know that we try to be flexible to meet changing needs, like when we started opening at [7:30 a.m.] to provide food and stuff when it was needed.

TCP:
What differences are there between working at a university versus a community college?

Zipperer:

There are so many different models for campus stores. You've got independent stores, you've got the large universities, you've got little stores like this one is right now. You've got so many different models and we're all trying for the same thing. How do we get the materials? How do we get them in a timely manner? How do we get the right ones and get them in your [students'] hands so that you can use them? And I think the biggest thing that I've seen coming here is the commitment to optical character recognition (OCR) and digital access. I'd say percentage-wise it's a lot higher than it was at University of Kansas.

TCP:
So what started your passion for books?

Zipperer:

Growing up in a book-loving family. I mean, that's where it all starts doesn't it? I grew up haunting bookstores — that sounds creepy. It's just always been a passion of mine. You know that the thing I love about this industry is that, it's that combined with helping people prepare for their future, and discover who they are and what they want to be doing in the world — what's right for them, so it's that marriage. When I was in college I wanted to be doing this. It was weird.

TCP:
What's your all-time favorite book?

Zipperer:

That's like, an impossible question to ask somebody

who loves books because it's always the next one. I'm such a dork. My current one, I'd have to say I like Patrick Rothfuss "Name of the Wind." I know that's one that's recommended in one of your classes, but I loved it. It takes like 100 pages to really get hooked. I waited until the second book was coming out because I'm a book snob and [I was telling customers] like, "You gotta read this." Then the hype was coming out for the second one, so I started reading the first one and then I went from that into the second one and it's the only time in my life I was ever late to work, because I was reading a book and I couldn't stop. But I love that book.

Photo by Jordy Villagomez



Sue Zipperer shows off the inventory at the Oregon City campus bookstore.

This interview has been edited for clarity and space.