

Spring peeks through

The air might feel heavy, but spring is making an appearance throughout the city. Flowers are springing up in yards and public spaces at every turn.



KEIZERTIMES/Lauren Murphy

CENSUS, continued from Page B1

sharing any personal information.

On the federal level, Census numbers to guide more than \$1.5 trillion annually from 316 federal spending programs for education and health programs, highways, roads and bridges, water and sewage systems, and other projects vital to community health and well-being.

Census results determine congressional representation, the number of Electoral College votes per state and is used to draw boundaries for state and local election districts.

In the last census, Oregon was just shy of gaining one additional seat in Congress, and 2020 is the year that could happen.

Nonprofits and businesses use Census data to help de-

termine where to build health care facilities, child care and senior centers, grocery stores and new factories.

It can even have an impact on local government, said Keizer City Manager Chris Eppley.

“When grant funds are available, a major part of deciding who gets the money is determined by demographics. Having a comprehensive view of who is living in the community can increase our chances of getting that type of funding,” Eppley said.

The demographic information also helps city staff decide where to put their efforts when it comes to applying for grants, which is a time-consuming effort in almost every instance.

Some local projects that have included state and federal grants, and relied partly on Census data, are the Chemawa Road Northeast roundabout, Keizer Rapids Park and Cherr-

“In addition to that, it’s simply important for a local government to know who they’re trying to serve. As demographics of our citizens change, we have to change with it,” Eppley said.

The demographic information informs how the city engages with the its residents at nearly every level.

“The very simple form is extremely important for us to establish what the city’s representation should be in state and federal governance,” said Mayor Cathy Clark. “We want to make sure that our counts are accurate so we get the portions of the formula funds that should be coming to support projects in our area for roads and other infrastructure.

“The number one reason people should complete the Census is because everyone counts and we want to be sure to count you.”

SIX: Perseverance is the common thread

(Continued from Page B1) and make a positive impact on the campus and in the community,” Morales said.

For many Act Six recipients, their scholarship is more meaningful than just a way to pay for school. For Valdez, it’s about developing her skills and abilities to make the world a better place.

“I believe in equity of voice and I think that everyone deserves to be heard. My purpose for this scholarship is to develop my leadership skills to help others when they can’t be heard,” Valdez said.

Valdez is on the yearbook committee at McNary and volunteers her time working with children at her local church.

Valdez’s love for kids made her want to pursue a degree in elementary education with a minor in counseling.

“I really like helping young kids out because they’re the future generation,” Valdez said.

Valdez fell in love with Corban when she went on her campus visit and is thrilled to be going to a Christian university.

“I feel like this scholarship was a window of opportunity for me to further my education. Being a private Christian institution, I feel like it will be the perfect school for me,” Valdez said. “I’m just really thankful because sometimes you don’t have the resources to go to college, but this just extended the hand of help for me.”

Act Six Scholarship winners often times end up being first-generation college students, which is the case for Cruz, who will also be attending Corban.

“To know that I don’t have to worry about money, especially for me and my parents’ sake, is just a huge sigh of relief,” Cruz said.

Since his sophomore year, Cruz has worked more than 30 hours a week at the McDonald’s on Lancaster Street in Salem. He also volunteers

with AVID and with kids at local elementary schools.

Whether he’s at work or at school, Cruz takes pride in being selfless, which he credits to his Christian faith.

“When I see a person struggling to find change or if they forget their wallet, I’ll just cover it. At the end of the day, it’s not about saving the world, it’s about just trying to make

someone’s day better,” Cruz said. “Faith is very important in my life. I don’t think I would have made it here without my faith.”

While he’s leaning towards going into pre-dentistry, Cruz isn’t 100 percent sure of what he wants to study. He’s just excited for the opportunity to go to college.

“I’m really not passionate about anything yet, but I know I just want to further my education. Education is a big way to have influence,” Cruz said.

Medina, on the other hand, is incredibly passionate about law enforcement and has a clear vision of how she wants to impact her community.

“As a Latina, I really want to change the Latino community’s perspective on law enforcement. They feel like they need to defend themselves against law enforcement rather than see them as someone that

is there to help them,” Medina said.

When Medina was notified that she would have the opportunity to study forensic psychology and receive fire-arms training at Corban University on a full scholarship, she immediately thought of her family.

“I love that I can make my parents and grandparents proud after everything they have done for me. It meant that I could walk home and tell my parents that they wouldn’t have to worry about paying a penny for me to go to school. That was the greatest gift I’ve ever had in my life,” Medina said.

Although she went through some rough patches earlier on in her high school life, her faith is what helped her through some dark days.

“I had a lot a difficulty with mental health and self-harm, but when I decided to let God back into my life, it was like everything started to fall into place,” Medina said.

The Act Six Scholarship has the ability to change people’s lives, and Farris believes that these four students will use what they have been given to change the lives of others.

“This particular scholarship is really special for a lot of reasons. What’s exciting about it is seeing kids that I know to be leaders and are already involved in their school community, to take that from McNary to another campus,” Farris said.

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