

OPINION

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OUR VIEWS

Clatsop Works offers real-world experience

Not all graduating high school seniors advance to a four-year academic college degree program.

That should be — to borrow a quote from a long-ago author — a truth that is universally acknowledged.

Oddly, despite the horrendous cost of college educations, we are not all at that point yet.

It is pleasing to note, however, that programs that encourage career and technical education (CTE) opportunities are increasing. One such, featured last week in *The Daily Astorian*, is Clatsop Works, a new summer internship program offering North Coast students an introduction to the workforce.

Interns from Astoria, Warrenton and Knappa high schools, along with Clatsop Community College, are working full-time jobs around the county. Among those providing places include our two Clatsop County hospitals, a couple of car dealerships and construction firms, plus Englund Marine and Hampton Lumber.

For some time now, Hampton managers, particularly, have shown enthusiasm for expanding career-technical courses at Astoria High School. It is one of the better-paying local employers and its internships expose students to an environment where safety and work habits are just as important as the lumberyard tasks undertaken.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Leo Matthews, a Clatsop Works intern from Astoria, assembles orders for Englund Marine & Industrial Supply.

Clatsop Works allows students to spend a day each week in professional development workshops learning customer service, safety, communication and other skills.

The program provides a small injection into the regional economy, but more importantly teaches job skills that make potential job applicants more employable, like reliability, punctuality, accountability and trustworthiness. Call us old-fashioned if you like, but those traits are desirable in any level or type of employee, whether a graphic designer, a delivery driver, or a sales assistant in a cannabis store.

There are just 16 students in the internship program this summer, but Kevin Leahy, director of Clatsop Economic Development Resources, wants to expand next year to 24. We hope that happens to

broaden the benefits of the concept.

Clatsop Works is so highly regarded by the Northwest Regional Education Service District that its leaders, seeking to expand career-technical learning opportunities, are looking to replicate Clatsop Works' model in neighboring Columbia and Tillamook counties in the next couple of years. That reflects credit on Leahy and his colleague, Anna Stamper, who oversees the program.

The good folks who have built the stellar seamanship program at Tongue Point have known since Day 1 that formats which offer hands-on skills training while teaching students to be a solid employee are what's needed.

Clatsop Works is another commendable step in the right direction.

SCHEDULES

Fred Lindstrom Memorial Park (at the top of the hill on Niagara Avenue near the Peter Pan Market). Free

Aug. 8: "A Wrinkle in Time," a sci-fi film about a girl searching for her father.

Aug. 22: "Coco," an animated tearjerker about a young boy in rural Mexico who dreams of becoming a musician.

McClure Park (off Eighth Street). Admission \$5.

Aug. 18: "Grease" promises a nostalgic singalong opportunity.

Welcome back, free movies

Free movie showings are back at Fred Lindstrom Memorial Park. And the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department has some generous sponsors to thank.

The action is a timely reminder that these days, little good happens without creative public-private partnerships.

The Parks Department operates two movies-in-the-park programs, one free and another, operated by the Astoria Parks Recreation and Community Foundation, where admission is charged.

A couple of years ago, parks managers were forced to cut all the free family and community events because of budget shortfalls as the department sought to match the true costs of operations with revenue.

This included the free movie program at Lindstrom Park. But sponsors Recology Western Oregon, Arbor Care, Clatsop Power Equipment, Gimre's shoe store, Aquafina and the Mini Mart have stepped up to restore the program.

In welcoming this generosity from these businesses, we would note that a similar, paid-admission program flourishes, with the cost kept low because of sponsors. People attending "Parks After Dark" at McClure Park off Eighth Street pay only \$5, thanks to the support of the Astoria Co-op Grocery, Astoria Downtown Historic District Association and the Liberty Theatre. The events feature beer from Fort George Brewery and pizza from Baked Alaska.

The department's family and community events have always been a signal of a city's mental health. They are an enjoyable way to turn off the TV, put away your phone, get outdoors with your neighbors, and just kick back for some entertaining summer fun.

LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to *The Daily Astorian*.

Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar, and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are allowed each month.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTEBOOK



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Tyson McGorty, assisted by Danner Walters, leads a pig back to the pens during the Clatsop County Fair.

Hardworking kids deserve support at the county fair

Every year I have a list of things that are quintessential summer experiences that I check off to be sure I'm making good use of every minute of these long-lighted days.

One of those items, every year, is "go to a fair."

My appreciation for the fair goes back to my early days in 4-H, when I worked all year to get to the one glorious week to present my work, and best of all, hang out with my friends every day from dawn to dusk. I completed market lamb, dairy, sewing, cooking and presentation projects.

My children tested my coping skills with market swine, market lamb, horse, sewing and cooking projects.

My best friend then remains a best friend now. Our kids were in the same 4-H club. We were 4-H leaders together, and fair superintendents.

You see, my appreciation for county fairs isn't really about the fair. (Although I have to admit that fair food is part of the attraction.) It's about the kids who work all year long on their projects to learn how to raise a superior market animal, and acquire the patience to show

it. It's young people learning basic skills like cooking, outdoorsmanship, gardening, sewing, or perfecting techniques in photography, presentations, art and science.

I'm an unapologetic advocate for 4-H and FFA programs. I appreciate the leaders and families who teach responsibility and hard work.

Watch 4-H and FFA kids at the fair. They've learned what it's like to feed, care for and clean up after another living thing. They work together on barn duty, washing animals and practicing for show. Then they take their animals through the auction at the end of the fair. That, too, is part of learning the business of agriculture.

This weekend I'll check the box on my summer checklist item, "go to a fair," as I head to the Clatsop County Fair. I'll eat fair food, to be sure. But mostly I'll be there to watch a group of our county's finest young people present their projects for sale to the grandparents and businesses who will support their efforts by buying their market animals.

I hope that I'll see you there, too.

Kari Borgen is publisher of *The Daily Astorian*.



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