

PCC CASCADE CONNECTION

Envision Yourself in the Classroom

BY ALGIE C. GATEWOOD

Children are a never-ending source of joy and humor. The wonder with which they view the world can be a welcome reminder to adults who have sometimes become jaded by the demands of working life. I got to experience this firsthand recently when a group of students from Ockley Green Middle School paid a visit to Cascade Campus.

The kids got the red-carpet treatment. They checked out our classrooms and science laboratories, took a look at our music studios and multimedia labs, and enjoyed a barbecue lunch. They spoke with professors and students, and generally got a taste of what college life is about.

More importantly, they saw students not so very much older than they are, who represent diverse cultures, studying hard and working to improve themselves.

Once young people have this firsthand perspective, it is a short step to envisioning themselves in the classroom, behind a microscope, or at the controls of a studio mixing board. Once they see that

people just like themselves are on their way to bigger and better things, the idea of a college education begins to seem less like a far-off dream and more like a natural step waiting to be taken.

Overcoming this perceptual barrier is of critical importance. Too many young people, especially those from

close-up look at a college campus is the first step toward one day becoming a college student. Seeing that something is possible can make it possible in someone's mind. That's why I was happy to host the Ockley Green kids and their teacher, Mr. Lee Williams, during their day at Cascade Campus. And

Sometimes, getting a close-up look at a college campus is the first step toward one day becoming a college student.

underrepresented backgrounds, believe that a college education is something that is denied by the hand that circumstances have dealt them. In reality, however, this could not be further from the truth.

Community colleges are relatively inexpensive, eminently accessible, and offer a high level of instruction and academic support. And for those with social and economic obstacles in their path, significant financial aid is available.

And sometimes, getting a

that's why I was so pleased to receive a bundle of handwritten letters from them, recalling what they saw here with such wonder and delight.

The opinions expressed in the letters as to what each student enjoyed the most were as diverse as the kids themselves, but all of them were excited and inspired by what they saw.

But it was after the tour was over when the fun really began, at least for me. The kids assembled in the hallway near my



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office to listen to me speak about education and working hard to better oneself. When I was through, they asked me a few questions, a couple of which we adults have been trained not to ask.

"How much money do you make, Dr. Gatewood?" Leave it to a child to cut right to the chase.

"Did you have to go to school for a long time to be a Campus President? What kind of car do you drive? Do you have to wear a suit every day?"

Important stuff, really—exactly what I would be wondering in their shoes. I was only too happy to answer, especially if in doing so I helped some of them connect the dots between higher education and the car, the suits, and the office. And of course, one of the Ockley Green students hit on the most important question of them all:

"Do you like being in charge?"

Again—leave it to a child. *Algie C. Gatewood, Ed.D., is president of Portland Community College's Cascade Campus*

Stressed out? Learn to Cool-down

Expert shares communication tips

Shareefah Abdullah, a local authority in business communications, will keynote Clark County Chamber of Commerce's August meeting with the presentation "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff: Curbing Conflict by Learning to Chill."

The session, part of the chamber's free Monthly Speaker Series, includes refreshments and time for networking, is 7 to 9 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 14, at Big Al's, 16615 S.E. 18th St., in East Vancouver.



Shareefah Abdullah

Abdullah—whose Hot Ovaries company earned a chamber Best-in-County Award in 2005—has garnered recognition for her communications work and civic achievements. She also operates the community-service program Black Entrepreneurs of Clark

County, a multicultural business round table providing free educational sessions and mentorship.

RSVP to the chamber at 360-258-1181 or info@clarkchamber.com.

Trust Supports Concordia Library

The M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust of Vancouver has awarded \$1.1 million to Concordia University for state-of-the-art technology in the new library building planned for its Northeast Portland campus.

"We are so grateful that the Murdock trustees affirm Concordia's mission to prepare leaders who will transform society," said Concordia University President Chuck Schlimpert. "We will apply these funds towards providing excellent education, and we hope this grant will attract additional resources to help Concordia serve our students and our community."

Murdock Charitable Trust Executive Director Steven Moore said the grant was a natural next step in a long partnership with the school.

"We believe that Concordia is making a tremendous contribution to the Portland/Vancouver community," he said.

In January, Concordia announced an anonymous gift of \$1 million to be divided equally between construction of the new library building and an endowment dedicated to long-term support of service learning through community engagement programs.

Feast to Delight the Tastebuds

Creole Jambalaya dinner supports meal site

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Loaves & Fishes Center is hosting its second annual Authentic Creole Jambalaya Dinner on Saturday, Aug. 11, from noon to 5 p.m.

The culinary team for this event is headed by Loaves & Fishes Centers Board Member Teletha Benjamin and Loaves

& Fishes Centers Executive Director Joan Smith, both of whom have connections to Southern Louisiana.

The pair will be using a traditional Creole-style recipe passed down in Benjamin's family. This is the second year for the Creole Jambalaya event, which raises needed funds to help serve hot

meals to in northeast Portland. Zydeco music and dancers will provide entertainment, as well as help diners learn the steps.

"The daily menu at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center has evolved over the last year to include a variety of soul food entrées," said Center Manager David Lomax. "The food has received such good reviews that we decided to make it available to the general public for one special night. We guarantee a sumptuous feast to delight the

tastebuds!"

The menu includes authentic Creole-style jambalaya (a non-seafood version is available), along with bread, salad, beverage and dessert. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$7 for children. Tickets are available from the center. Meals are available for take-out.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Loaves & Fishes is located at 5325 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. For more information, call David Lomax at 503-988-5211.

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