

Portland Community College Hit Hard

Enrollment grows by double digits

Enrollment growth at Portland Community College has accelerated dramatically with the bad economy pushing more students back to school.

The college's fourth-week spring enrollment report shows total headcount increasing by 10.5 percent and 18.9 percent in full-time equivalent (FTE) over a year ago. It's the seventh consecutive term of growth at the college.

This has been the largest and most sustained increase in the number of students coming to PCC since the early part of the decade, just before the last recession took hold, college officials said.

"I have previously experienced an increase of enrollment during depressed economic times but I must say this time it has been much more dramatic than in past years," said Veronica Garcia, dean of PCC enrollment services.

Another impact has been the 20 percent increase in students applying for financial aid.

Total headcount at PCC now stands at 37,951, an increase of 3,616 students from spring 2008.

PCC is helping local compa-



An EMT training class at the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College in north Portland is tight on space. The college's Emergency Services Department has experienced a 39.7 percent increase in enrollment this spring.

nies transition laid-off workers into new careers by helping them take advantage of college services.

The \$374 million bond measure passed last November and will alleviate some crowding issues when classrooms and labs are built. The purchase of the Willamette Building at Southwest Second and Yamhill

also will free up classroom space on campuses.

The enrollment situation at PCC is not unique. Most of the Oregon's 17 community colleges have seen dramatic enrollment increases due to the dire economic situation, including Central Oregon, which reached credit enrollment capacity in

late March and temporarily closed its admissions process.

"We aren't in the same boat and will make keeping accessibility and affordability to our students our top priorities," said PCC President Preston Pulliams. "Students know we are critical to help the state get out of this historic recession.

But with our faculty and student services stretched to the limit, it makes it harder and harder to accommodate everyone who needs our help."

At PCC, the biggest surge in students is happening at the Cascade Campus where FTE has ballooned by 24.6 percent and total headcount by 24.8

percent this spring.

Home to the trades and industry, education, first responder, fire science and business administration programs, the north Portland campus swelled by 15.9 percent in FTE and 13.9 percent in overall headcount in winter term.

OAME Trade Show Thursday

The Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME) Luncheon and Trade Show is Thursday, May 7, beginning promptly at 10 a.m. and concluding at 3 p.m. at the Oregon Convention Center.

The 21st annual event will host over 120 small and large businesses; state, county and federal government agencies; and business development resources that assist minority,

women and emerging small businesses. Tradeshow admission is free.

"The OAME Trade Show is a personal, face-to-face forum to make sales, network and obtain resources among businesses large and small, new entrepreneurs, business development and coaching resources," said Sam Brooks, OAME founder, president and chairman of the board.

This year's theme focuses on "Building Sustainability with Equity." A panel of OAME members and supporters will discuss and give advice on how to achieve a sustainable green environment with equity for Minority Women and Emerging Small Businesses.

For registration, exhibit and luncheon information or reservations, call 503-249-7744.



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A new streetscape with sidewalk improvements, curb extensions, art, trees and ornamental streetlights is coming to North Denver Avenue in the Kenton neighborhood.

Investment in Kenton

PDC to make \$2 million upgrade

The Portland Development Commission has approved a \$2 million streetscape improvement project in the heart of the downtown Kenton business district, covering North Denver Avenue from North Interstate Avenue south to North Watts.

The project will include the installation of trees, sidewalk improvements, curb extensions, storm water planters, art, ornamental streetlights and pedestrian crossings.

The sidewalks will be widened and the center turn lane, currently little used, will be eliminated, providing capacity

for outdoor cafes and more pedestrian activity.

The streetscape work will create up to 42 construction and construction-related jobs. The new storm water planters will help infiltrate runoff and create one of the first green main streets in Portland.

PDC will enter an intergovernmental agreement with the Portland Bureau of Transportation in the amount of \$2,847,545, subject to budget appropriation, to complete the project.

The improvements are part of the larger Downtown Kenton

Redevelopment Project, begun in fall 2005 by the PDC, and are consistent with the Downtown Kenton-Denver Avenue Streetscape Plan.

The PDC expects the project to make Denver Avenue a safer and more attractive place for pedestrians and shoppers, spurring the revitalization of the Kenton commercial corridor.

The planned project is within the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area. Design and engineering will be completed soon with bids going out in late April and May. Construction is expected to be completed in 2009.

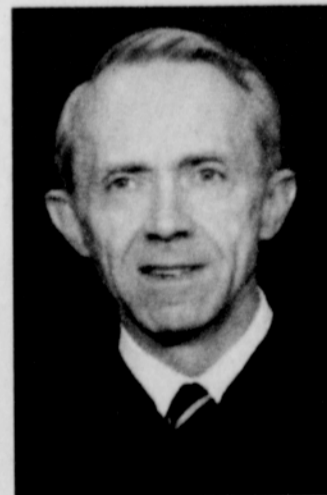
Obama to Pick Next Justice

High court retirement opens process

(AP) -- President Barack Obama said Friday he will replace retiring Supreme Court Justice David Souter with someone who shares the president's respect for "constitutional values" and hopes to have "him or her" seated on the nation's highest court by the start of the next term in October.

Obama thanked Souter for his dedicated service, and quickly looked ahead to the nomination of a replacement.

"As I make this decision," Obama said, "I intend to consult with members of both parties, across the political spectrum. And it is my hope that we can swear it in our new Supreme



David Souter

Court justice in time for him or her to be seated by the first Monday in October."

Souter informed Obama of his plans in a brief letter Friday. Obama praised Souter, who is leaving after nearly two decades in Washington. His retirement gives Obama his first pick for the Supreme Court.

Souter's departure is unlikely to change the court's conservative-liberal split. Obama's first pick is likely to be a liberal-leaning nominee, much like Souter.

The vacancy could lead to another woman on the bench to join Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, currently the court's only female justice.

At 69, Souter is much younger than either Ginsburg, 76, or Justice John Paul Stevens, 89, the other two liberal justices whose names have been mentioned as possible retirees. Yet those justices have given no indication they intend to retire soon and Ginsburg said she plans to serve into her 80s, despite her recent surgery for pancreatic cancer.

In Philadelphia, Sen. Arlen Specter said he would like to see more ethnic and gender diversity on the high court.

It pays to be green.



What's Green Seal™ certified and comes in colors from barn red to summer-sky blue? MetroPaint 100% recycled latex. Recognized as a 2008 Top 10 Green Product*, it's good for the environment and great for your home. And at \$10 or less per gallon, it's easy on the wallet, too.

*Sustainable Industries business magazine



Metro

Swan Island MetroPaint Store
4825 N. Basin Ave., Portland
503-234-3000
www.oregonmetro.gov/paint