

# Job Support for Challenging Times

## PCC Cascade's Pursuit of Employment

Hundreds of local job seekers convened at the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College in north Portland for something much different from a job fair.

PCC's Workforce Development Program recently held its second Pursuit of Employment at the campus' Moriarty Arts and Humanities Auditorium. The event, which occurs each term at the campus, is designed to bring inspiration and motivation to job seekers who may have hit a roadblock in their search for work and need encouragement. Attendees get to hear from local motivational speakers who conveyed their experiences.

One of the speakers was Ken Berry, a 40-year teacher and administrator for Portland Public Schools and a product of Portland Community College.

"We all need a boost," said Berry,



Tracee Wells (from left) and Rita White, employment specialists with Portland Community College's Workforce Development Program, meet Joyce Phelps, one of the participants at a 'Pursuit of Employment' job fair.

who runs the annual Martin Luther King Jr. communitywide celebration through Portland Public Schools. "One thing I try to share with the group is that we all have resources around us and regardless of what our challenges are, our goals are attainable. A lot of people are going through challenging times, but the more individuals surround them-

selves with others that are motivational and provide support, the better."

Bennie Hill, in her 60s, attended the PCC employment event and said it indeed gave her a boost. Hill, who works as a hairdresser and is interested in becoming an entrepreneur, has explored PCC to get more administrative skills and wants to learn

more about business plans. She's been to both Pursuit of Employment get-togethers and has seen a tremendous growth in the concept.

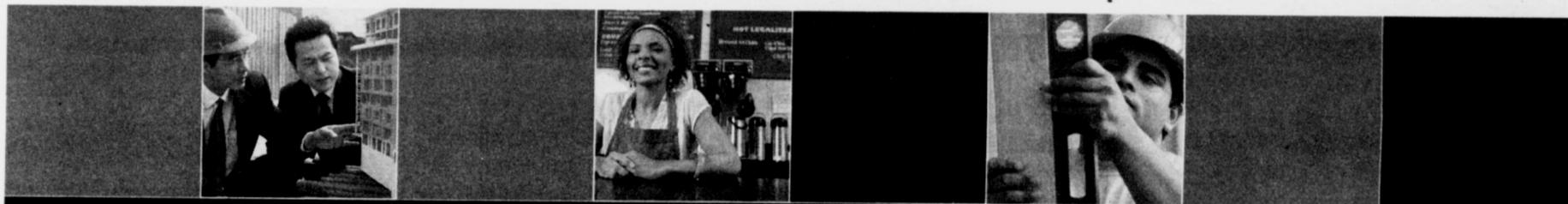
Tracee Wells, who is an employment specialist with PCC's Workforce Development Program and is a certified life coach, trainer and career placement specialist, said the Pursuit of Employment fair gives

job seekers a way to build relationships and find support.

There were plenty of connections at the recent event. Community leaders and speakers included Roy Jay of the African American Chamber of Commerce and Project Clean Slate; Melissa Ballard, a supportive employment coordinator; Eddie Lincoln, PCC's Workforce Network and Project Enterprise Coordinator, April Johnson, a PCC alumna; and Frank Harris, an associate facilities manager.

"Many times we limit how much effort we put into ourselves when we are working on a project yet we expect a different outcome," Harris told the crowd of nearly 200. "Know the true value of time. Be prepared. Make every opportunity count. So, in everything you do, be committed to yourself and give it your best shot."

Ken Berry, the 40-year veteran of Portland Public Schools, emphasized the power of having an education in that preparation for finding a job. He worked at KGW radio as a disc jockey while taking classes at PCC.



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Greg Wolley: 503.823.6860, [greg.wolley@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:greg.wolley@portlandoregon.gov)  
Loretta Young: 503.823.6850, [loretta.young@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:loretta.young@portlandoregon.gov)  
Gene Jackson: 503.823.9166, [gene.jackson@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:gene.jackson@portlandoregon.gov)  
[www.portlandonline.com/omf/purchases](http://www.portlandonline.com/omf/purchases)

### Multnomah County

Sophia Cavalli, Procurement Supervisor:  
503-988-5111 x 26106,  
[sophia.cavalli@co.multnomah.or.us](mailto:sophia.cavalli@co.multnomah.or.us)  
<http://www.co.multnomah.or.us>

