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# LOCAL NEWS

## Clark College Reports Enrollment Increase

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Fall 2024 - Students on Campus

## Zoo Readies Treats for Howloween



Red panda Moshu investigates a jack-o'-lantern full of treats at the Oregon Zoo. The zoo's Howloween celebration takes place Oct. 19–20 and 26–27. Photo by Michael Durham, courtesy of the Oregon Zoo.

Kids can show off their costumes, fill their treat bags and learn about wildlife in a fun and safe setting over two weekends, during the Oregon Zoo's annual Howloween celebration, Oct. 19–20 and 26–27.

Live entertainment will be taking place both weekends. Visitors can also enter a costume contest, pose with spooky animal X-ray photo ops, and try to guess the weight of an extra-large pumpkin.

Activities are free with zoo admission, and all candy is made by companies that have committed to using deforestation-free palm oil.

As part of Metro, the Oregon Zoo helps make greater Portland

a great place to call home. Committed to conservation, the zoo acts globally on behalf of species from pikas to polar bears. Over the past 30 years, it has prevented extinctions, expanded populations, advanced conservation science and formed powerful communities to protect wildlife in the Northwest and around the world.

Support from the Oregon Zoo Foundation enhances and expands the zoo's efforts in conservation, education and animal welfare. Members, donors and corporate and foundation partners help the zoo make a difference across the region and around the world.

## Almost 6% increase in students compared to fall 2023

Clark College continues to see an increase in enrollment across all categories. At its Oct. 16 board of trustees work session, the college announced a 5.8% increase in total unduplicated headcount compared to fall 2023, and a 16.8% increase between fall 2022 and fall 2024. The college released its official enrollment numbers at the end of the 10th day of class of the fall term on Oct. 4.

Clark College enrolled a total of 8,651 students during fall 2024 term. This translated to the full time equivalent (FTE) enrollment numbers at 6,164. Additionally, 879 students are enrolled in community and continuing education classes.

In fall 2020, early in the pandemic, enrollment at community

colleges nationwide—including Clark—dropped sharply. Since then, enrollment at Clark and other community colleges has experienced an uptick. Clark's enrollment increased by more than 10% in fall 2023.

Enrollment numbers are provided by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), which tracks enrollment data for the 34 public colleges in its system.

Clark College President Dr. Karin Edwards said, "I am so pleased to see our enrollment numbers continue to climb. Our numbers are up in every category: students planning to transfer to a four-year institution, Running Start, international, and those pursuing a bachelor's degree on our campus. It's good news all around for Clark College."

She added, "A notable 47.1% of our students are in the first generation of their family to attend college and 39.1% of our students are 25 or older. Clark is a great place for people to embark on a new career pathway, get a fresh start, and find help along their educational journey." Despite challenges of rolling out the updated Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at the federal level, Clark's fi-

nancial aid office has verified and processed more than \$7.32 million in financial aid grants and loans to our students fall term. This does not include \$2.4 million from other sources for scholarships, veterans, and workforce education.

Dr. William "Terry" Brown, Clark's Vice President of Instruction, attributes the college's continued growth trajectory to its dedicated faculty and staff who provide students with a high-quality educational experience and who listen and respond to what the community wants and needs. "When our community asked for a bachelor's program to train teachers, we delivered — and our first cohort graduated in June. Then our community asked for a two-year program to train surgical technicians, and we are developing that program now. We are committed to training tomorrow's workforce in Clark County for in-demand, living-wage jobs."

Clark College offers more than 100 degree and certificate programs, including bachelor's and associate degrees; professional certificates; high school diplomas and GED preparation; and non-credit community and continuing education.