

# Clark College Professor Debi Jenkins Speaks on Workforce Diversity

Of The Skanner News

The winter quarter installment of Clark College’s renowned Faculty Speaker Series features Professor Debi Jenkins on how a lack of workforce diversity impacts employee retention.

The free event is Feb. 13, 4 – 5 p.m. in the Ellis Dunn Community Room (Gaiser Hall room 213) on Clark’s main campus. Clark College is located at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver.

Jenkins describes how many employees from historically disadvantaged communities feel disconnected from their workplaces, leading to challenges in employee retention—and how we can help our coworkers overcome those feelings of disconnection, thereby fostering a workplace environment that truly honors and supports diversity.

Using current research and her own scholarship, Jenkins creates a framework for supporting workplace diversity based on the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), Imani (Faith).

“My research focuses on higher educa-



Professor Debi Jenkins

tion, but really these are practices that could be incorporated into any workplace interested in fostering diversity,” says Jenkins. “I want people to ask themselves, ‘What is their role as an individual to support a diverse workforce?’”

Since 2011, Jenkins has served as division chair of Behavioral Sciences in addition to her role as head of the Early Childhood Education Department at Clark College. Her range of teaching experience includes topics in psychology and sociology, power-privilege-inequity, and early childhood development. She has designed courses for both face-to-face and online classrooms, including Race and Ethnicity; Parent Education; Family Dynamics and Culture; and Bicultural Development and Education. In addition, she is founder of Share the Flame, an organization that offers strategies for personal growth and change through one-on-one coaching, workshops and presentations. In 2009, she received the YWCA Woman of Achievement Award for Clark County.

Jenkins began her higher education at Clark College, earning an Associate in Applied Science degree in

## Not Just Any Thursday



Art is on display along North Mississippi Avenue during 2nd Thursday, this month on Feb. 13, from 5 – 8 p.m. At the Albina Press Coffeehouse is Elijah Klauder's Senior Print Show with guest Brett Superstar; at Good:a gallery - NERC (Non-Elctive Retroactive Collaboration) with Mike Wellins; at Black Wagon, Tripper Dungan will be showing; at Flutter is Giles Clement (\$40 for tintype photography sessions at the shop, a savings of \$20); at Mississippi Chiropractic is Sean Randall (his painting is featured above); at Reading Frenzy, owner Chloe Eudaly hosts a Valentine's card-making set-up, called You're Cut Out For Me: A DIY Valentine's Making Party. For more information go to [www.mississippiave.com](http://www.mississippiave.com).

Early Childhood Education. She holds both bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, Calif., and a Master of Science degree in Psychology from the University of Phoenix in Arizona. She expects to graduate from that same institution next year with a doctorate in Higher Education Administration.

Jenkins’ research focus for the last seven years has been on the influence of power-privilege-inequity on bicultural development of underrepresented communities in the United States and tri- cultural literacy development among Maroons children in Jamaica. Her doctoral dissertation is about the role of allies and communities of practice in supporting a diverse workforce. Jenkins believes that teaching and learning are reciprocal activities. As such, she continually refines her message and approach while focusing on desired student learning outcomes, not the least of which is to “foster a connection between course content and real world experiences.”

Jenkins quotes bell hooks, American author and social activist, when she talks

about establishing a supportive learning environment that “respects and cares for the soul of students ... to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin.”

Established by Clark College with support from the Clark College Foundation, the Clark College Faculty Speaker Series honors individual faculty members and celebrates academic excellence.

The series showcases recent experiences that have enriched both the life and teaching of a Clark faculty member. Faculty members share their developmental experiences with the college community—and with members of the community at large—while addressing some of today’s most intriguing issues.

Individuals who need accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should contact Clark College’s Disability Support Services (DSS) Office at (360) 992-2314 or (360) 991-0901 (VP) two weeks prior to the event. The DSS office is located in room 137 in Clark’s Gaiser Hall.

### Ella’s Kitchen

FORMERLY SOUP & SOAP

### Southern Style Cuisine

(one taste will bring you back)

3505 N. Mississippi Ave.

Mon—Sun 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Breakfast  
Lunch Special  
Dinner  
Seafood  
Dessert

Each Orders To Go .25¢

503-927-6708

## Trillium

Public Charter School

Trillium is a K-12 Public Charter School in North Portland, Oregon.

We believe in educating the whole child through a collaborative education model that emphasizes project-based learning and experiential education in a school that is inclusive and welcoming to all learning styles.

**Open House Events**

Please join us for a tour and learn more about our school

K – 8th:  
Wed, Feb 19th  
6 – 7:30pm

High School:  
Wed, Feb 26th  
6 – 7:30pm

5420 N. Interstate Avenue,  
Portland

[www.trilliumcharterschool.org](http://www.trilliumcharterschool.org)

## Avalon Flowers

Creative, original designs

Anniversaries, weddings, funerals, birthdays!

520 SW 3rd Ave. Portland, OR

(503)796-9250

[Avalonflowers@msn.com](mailto:Avalonflowers@msn.com)

[avalonflowerspdx.com](http://avalonflowerspdx.com)