

LEGACIES

Central Oregon Community College Foundation Magazine | 2024



Generations of Generosity



As COCC arrives at its 75th anniversary, the Foundation reflects on how the Miller family of Bend has been a partner from the start

Shaping a Sustainable Path

Centered on Success

Impact of Giving Report

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On the cover: William Miller, at right, announced as Bend's mayor in *The Bend Bulletin*, with his father, Ham, reading along.

cover: Courtesy of the Miller family
left to right: Courtesy of the Miller family, Rosie Day (2), Eugen Von Helmbrecht



CENTRAL OREGON
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LEGACIES

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Letter From the President

Warm greetings, Foundation friends, and welcome to a very special edition of *Legacies*. It's quite possible that the very day you receive this issue will mark, exactly, a tremendous occasion for Central Oregon Community College: to the day, the College's 75th anniversary.

COCC started on September 20 back in 1949, and as that first fall "term" got underway — held as a night school, set in a high school — who could have imagined the future that lay ahead? My, how far the College has come: four campuses serving a district the size of Massachusetts, providing opportunity and enrichment across three unique counties.

It's also a major moment for you, our Foundation family. The College and the Foundation have certainly grown as one, the latter established just a few years after COCC. Both came into being largely thanks to several visionary members of one Bend family: the Millers. We proudly celebrated this big-hearted family, past and present, at this year's Meal of the Year gala, and you can read about their long tradition of service and altruism to Central Oregon in our cover story, "Generations of Generosity."

Anniversaries are a time for reflection — but also a waypoint on a much greater journey. I'm excited about where COCC is headed. Donning a hardhat and shoveling dirt (with gusto!) at the June groundbreaking of our Madras campus expansion was one of the highlights of my tenure. This development, now well underway, will be an integral part of Jefferson County's future. Other coming projects and plans, such as a revamped veterans center and initiatives to address climate change — both highlighted in this issue — are just a sample of what's in store.

Maybe you've heard news of my decision to retire at the end of next June. While it's business as usual for now, I want to let you know how gratified I am to conclude my nearly 40-year career at COCC. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve COCC and Central Oregon, and to be, like you, a part of this College's remarkable story.



Laurie Chesley
COCC President



Meal of the Year 2024
The Miller Family with Laurie Chesley.

CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION

The Rotary Club of Greater Bend uses scholarship support to strengthen the region. Kyle Frick shares the reasons why.

By Wendy Patton, Charitable Giving Officer



A beacon of support and generosity within the community, the Rotary Club of Greater Bend has long been a steadfast partner in fostering educational opportunities at COCC. The organization has supported more than 70 scholarships at the College over the past 15 years. Kyle Frick, past president of the Rotary Club of Greater Bend and current president of the Rotary Club of Greater Bend Foundation, shares why COCC is so central to the organization's philanthropy — and meaningful to his own life.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR OWN EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY

I graduated from Mountain View High School here in Bend in 1980, entered the Air Force, and after completing a four-year commitment, could pursue a degree in marketing. I attended COCC, with its small class sizes and great instructors, and then the University of Oregon. After spending eight years at a job in Seattle, I came back to Bend.

CAN YOU SHARE WHAT COCC MEANS TO YOU?

It is a special place. Through my involvement with the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development for Central Oregon, I see firsthand how COCC creates opportunities for students in Central Oregon.

WHAT DOES GIVING BACK MEAN TO YOU?

Giving back is an integral part of my identity. From a young age, I observed how my parents warmly welcomed new members into the community. In Central Oregon, it's widely recognized that our collective contributions enrich everyone, creating a vibrant and thriving community for all.

CAN YOU SHARE SOME OF THE KEY REASONS WHY THE ROTARY CLUB OF GREATER BEND SUPPORTS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS?

The Club has always believed in the transformative power of education. One of the key reasons we support vocational education scholarships is because of the critical role that skilled trades and technical professions play in the community's economic development. By investing in vocational education, we are fostering a diverse and skilled workforce, ultimately strengthening our community's fabric.

IN WHAT WAYS DO THESE SCHOLARSHIPS IMPACT OUR COMMUNITY AND WORKFORCE?

These scholarships enable many students who might not have the financial means to pursue education in high-demand fields such as health care, automotive technology and construction trades. This helps meet the growing needs of local businesses and industries. Beyond the economic benefits, these scholarships also foster a sense of pride and accomplishment among recipients, encouraging them to give back to the community.

WHAT MOTIVATES MEMBERS OF THE ROTARY CLUB TO EMBRACE THIS SUPPORT?

Members are motivated to continue supporting vocational education scholarships, year after year, because they see the tangible impact these scholarships have on students' lives and careers. A commitment to community service drives them to believe that investing in education fosters economic development and personal growth. Additionally, scholarship recipients' gratitude and success stories inspire members to keep contributing to this cause.

Rotary
The Rotary Club
of Greater Bend



Generations of Generosity

As COCC arrives at its 75th anniversary, the Foundation reflects on how the Miller family of Bend has been a partner from the start

By Mark Russell Johnson

It's a platinum-blue morning in Bend and a freight train rumbles slowly into the heart of the city, its horn nagging heartily, joining the hubbub of a weekday unfolding — traffic zipping along on the parkway, vehicles streaming through the Greenwood underpass, or waiting at the Olney Avenue railroad crossing. At Miller Lumber Co., just a little more than a stone's toss from the tracks, the day's pace is picking up too. Contractors and DIYers pull in to fill orders, grab punch list essentials. Yard workers load plywood sheets or bundles of siding, the forklift pinballing from stack to stack.

Trains and timber have a forever bond in Bend. When the rail line first arrived in 1911, the young city suddenly found a more prominent spot on the map. Deep forests and distant markets were instantly connected, and new industry — and opportunity — followed.

That same year, Harry A. "Ham" Miller, who had studied to become a teacher in Wisconsin but his

entrepreneurial spirit brought him to Bend, cofounded Overturf-Davis-Miller Co. He soon emerged as the lumber enterprise's sole owner, developing a thriving business. With a sales office located on Wall St. and a lumberyard along the Deschutes (present day Miller's Landing Park), the company ferried wood loads around town in horse-drawn wagons. Miller would become Bend's mayor, chair the school board, and help found the Bend Chamber of Commerce — central leadership for a young community.

As the city grew around its large-scale mill operations, and more families moved in, Bend began to develop the resources of a town in stride, including its schools. By the time World War II was over, and with the GI Bill established and Oregon investing in state progress, Bend, far from the brick college campuses of the valley, was prime for its own higher education option.



Ham and Sarah Miller with Charles, William, Harry Jr. and Sarah (Polly), late 1930s.



1915 Independence Day parade.



William is announced as mayor in The Bend Bulletin, with Ham reading along.

SETTING A LEGACY

They gathered at Bend High for night sessions, in subjects like business and accounting, attending a college that didn't yet have a home — or a name. The date was Sept. 20, 1949, and Bend was holding its first-ever higher-ed classes, with 109 students enrolled. William Miller, Ham's son, who went to Bend High and returned from the war after a harrowing rescue — his Hellcat had been shot from the sky over the Philippines and the drawn-out rescue made the front page of *The New York Herald Tribune* — had traveled to Salem many times to testify and help bring the College to Bend.

"He got behind the College movement," says Charley Miller, past president of Miller Lumber Co., recounting his father's efforts, who was only in his late 20s and a Stanford grad at the time. "His dad instilled community service and the value of education to economic vitality."

“ The first-ever COCC scholarship fund was established in his honor, dedicated by his parents.

As Oregon's first community college began to grow — becoming Central Oregon College in 1954, then adding a Nursing program that same year — so did the ranks, and needs, of students, many of whom were kids of millworkers and without ample financial resources.

While Charley's namesake uncle, William's brother, didn't come home from the war — he died on the Bataan Death March — the first-ever COCC scholarship fund was established in his honor, dedicated by his parents. Under a headline in the Jan. 15, 1955, edition of *The Bend Bulletin* that read "The Charles Miller Scholarships," the news item signaled the start of something spectacular: "For the benefit of worthy and needy students of Deschutes, Jefferson, or Crook counties," it stated, "the Millers' generous offer could well serve as a model for other Central Oregon families who wish to create living memorials." The \$4,000 gift funded four full scholarships.



Lt. William Miller climbs into an F4U Corsair fighter during WWII.



William and Connie Miller, early 1950s, on Tumalo Ave. in Bend.



The Foundation's first meeting in October 1955. From left to right: Don Pence, William Miller, Kenneth Sawyer, Webster Loy and Alva Goodrich.

William, like his father, would become mayor of Bend and president of the Bend Chamber. And as a sign of his budding civic leadership, he helped forge a vision for the College: the creation of the COCC Foundation. Stakeholders signed the articles of incorporation on June 2, 1955; later that year, they gathered for an historic first-ever Foundation meeting in a curved booth at the Trailways Coffee Shop, on the corner of Bond and Greenwood, to discuss the newly inked charter. In just a matter of months, the Miller family had brought a scholarship program and the state's first community college foundation to the nascent Central Oregon College.

William later served on the Foundation and College boards from 1962 to 1969, helping guide COCC during some milestone years: when the 10,000-square-mile College district was created in 1962; when the Bend campus opened on Awbrey Butte in 1964; and, in 1967, when the name officially became Central Oregon Community College.

“
We’re talking about a culture of giving over the last 100 years.”

A GRATEFUL COMMUNITY

As a Bend Little Leaguer in 1973, Bob Shannon gained an early appreciation for great acts of generosity. The young ballplayer was paying a visit to Miller Lumber Co. in search of donations for his team. He was amazed when William Miller wrote a check big enough to end his season's obligatory soliciting right then and there.

Now a retired orthopedic surgeon, he never forgot that moment. “They’ve been incredibly giving,” shares Shannon, who grew up in the “two-stopligh town” and saw how Bend, and COCC, benefitted immensely from the Millers. “Charley has really carried that on, he’s very generous.”

Shannon, who got to know the family and their company during lumber runs when he owned a general contracting business, would attend COCC in the early ‘90s,

earning premed credits while raising a family. “I am forever grateful to COCC,” Shannon adds, calling his time at COCC — one of four higher education places he would attend to earn his MD — “by far the best in instruction.”

That community generosity extended in many directions, from gifted land that established High Lakes Elementary School, to donated lumber for community projects, to making Miller’s Landing Park (the company’s original lumberyard) a reality. “They’re such a humble family,” says Don Horton, the Bend Park and Recreation District’s recently retired executive director. “We’re talking about a culture of giving over the last 100 years.”



High Lakes Elementary School



Charley Miller



Miller Lumber Co.

“My personal highlight was helping pass the bond during that downturn in the economy, a testament to the community.”

BUILDING A FUTURE

In a meeting room at Miller Lumber Co., Charley breaks into a smile at the memory of taking an accounting class at COCC with his mom: “It was a little competitive,” he shares. All his siblings, he adds, took some COCC classes before heading off to four-year schools; his own kids have, too.

Charley would return to COCC. He served two terms on the COCC board of directors, including as chair in 2009, continuing the family tradition of stepping up with stewardship. “My personal highlight was helping pass the bond during that downturn in the economy, a testament to the community,” he says of the \$41.58 million bond that proved transformational for COCC. The community investment built the Health Careers Center and Middleton Science Center in Bend, added the Technology Education Center to Redmond’s campus, and gave Madras and Prineville campuses of their own. At the time, Miller Lumber Co. had lumberyards in Madras and Prineville, in addition to Bend and Redmond, allowing Charley to more easily connect with stakeholders across Central Oregon, helping champion the hoped-for growth.

In the years since, he’s occasionally seen his signature around Central Oregon in places of business. Board chairs have their moniker printed on COCC diplomas, and the sight of the blue-bound document, hung on a wall or set on a shelf, and bearing a familiar penmanship, brings him joy — picturing those proud graduates on commencement day, happy he could play a part.

Charley and other members of the Miller family continue to attend the annual Meal of the Year fundraiser and lend scholarship support, building on their grandparents’ formative impact. “You know it’s going to do some good,” Charley says, softly, of the scholarships and investment. The whole family was honored at this year’s event, celebrated for generations of generosity.

That deeply rooted altruism is now moving into a new era as some in the Miller family gifted a parcel of downtown Madras real estate — the Miller Lumber Co.’s former site — to the COCC Foundation’s “Growing Together” campaign, with proceeds to support the innovative Madras campus expansion. When it opens next winter, the campus addition



will train nurses and educators and provide an in-demand child care center, enriching lives and adding economic strength.

As COCC embarks on its 75th year, and the region reaches new heights while facing swift growth, the history of how it all began might be tied to mighty trees and rolling trains, but it’s been the people who have made these communities what they are. The Millers, past and present, have brought care and commitment to Central Oregon, always advocating for education, lifting others with opportunity. It’s an ingrained legacy, felt far and wide, a pivotal part of so many lives and stories.

left, top to bottom: Courtesy of the Miller family; Submitted photo; Northwest Collective; Courtesy of the Miller family
right: Timothy Park



CENTERED ON SUCCESS

Aided by state and federal investment, the Veterans program is furthering its peer-and-support mission with a newly established resource center

By Mark Russell Johnson

When Adam O’Neill first arrived at COCC from Portland, the former U.S. Army infantryman was ready for a fresh challenge. One thing he didn’t anticipate: earning a degree in a field he had never heard of.

Through the Veterans program, O’Neill learned about Geographic Information Systems, or GIS, and how it can combine with a commercial drone license to do exciting work like aerial support for wildland fire response. Or be a lifesaving tool during search and rescue missions. He was all in.

“I had very few connections in Central Oregon,” O’Neill, a Foundation scholarship recipient,

shares, “and I had no idea of how I would begin my journey to a degree. Bonnie (Jordan) and the Veterans department made it as smooth and simple as possible. I doubt I’d be doing as well as I am now without their help.”

Jordan, who coordinates the Veterans program at COCC, oversees a busy office of connecting veterans with services and resources. This past academic year, 7.4% of credit-seeking students at the College were listed as veterans — many looking for peer connection and educational advice, along with fluency in making the most of the GI Bill. The Robert D. Maxwell Veterans Center, a compact lounge-like space in the Coats Campus Center, saw 423 veteran visits in just one recent term.

“This program has value because veterans bring in unique experiences and skills,” says Jordan, whose appointments can touch on everything from counseling to housing options to facilitating peer support. And, of course, central to it all: helping those who are newly enrolled at the College identify their next career.

“We bridge past experiences and educational goals,” she adds. It might be helping a U.S. Coast Guard guardsman envision a culinary career. Or assisting a retired Navy aircraft mechanic to realize a flight school dream. Jordan recalls a Marine veteran who wanted to pursue studies in business or computer science, mostly for job security. “But after connecting with various veteran services in

the community in his first term,” she recalls, “he had clarity that he wanted to work directly supporting veterans, and he is now pursuing a degree in Human Development.”

Even with the aid of an outreach coordinator and several work-study students, the program — split between two buildings — could use better infrastructure, and more space. When U.S. Senator Ron Wyden visited COCC in the spring of 2023, he was inspired by the work happening for vets. “COCC attracts some of the greatest numbers of student veterans among Oregon’s colleges and universities, so setting up lasting support structures is crucial to ensuring that these Oregonian veterans succeed in higher education and beyond,” he said at the time.

Soon, a federal grant was announced: \$600,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for a new and improved resource, to be called the Robert D. Maxwell Veterans Resource Center. Then late last year, the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs provided \$81,128 for the Veterans program, funds that will support tuition and emergency assistance, along with training faculty and staff in how to better serve vets.

The Center, at the time of this writing, is beginning to shift from concept to blueprint. It will be located in an underutilized area in the lower level of the Coats Campus Center.

There will be three soundproof offices and adjacent spaces for studying and relaxing, with a multiuse room that can pivot into a virtual classroom — serving a number of active-duty and rural students. In addition to students and staff, the space will accommodate certifying officials, Deschutes

AN IDEAL LANDING

Air Force veteran excels at Vet Tech studies, thanks to scholarship backing



After maintaining flight-ejection systems for U.S. Air Force aircraft for nine years — striving to ensure that pilots from planes like B-2 Stealth Bombers and A-10 Thunderbolts safely ejected when disaster struck — Jacob Wilson was ready for a dependable touchdown himself. He had entered civilian life and gained long-term employment, only to be laid off days before Christmas. Then his mother passed away from cancer. His next move needed to be a grounding one.

“I was struggling with what to do with my life after those devastating events and decided to use this as an opportunity to go to college for the first time,” says Wilson, the first in his family to enter higher education. He came to COCC, received a Foundation scholarship, and began accruing credits that would enable him to apply for the Veterinary Tech program — he felt drawn to the caring of animals and the employability of those skills. On commencement day last year, a proud morning when he accepted his Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree with highest honors, things got even better: He received word that he’d been accepted into the competitive Vet Tech program.

The program’s training has been a great fit and life reset for an animal lover, and, in particular, he’s been drawn to parasitology, hematology and microbiology. “We’ve learned all about blood, bacteria and fungi. I think I found these subjects so enjoyable because I’ve always been a treasure hunter,” he says. “I’ve spent countless hours panning for gold in rivers and swinging my metal detector searching for treasure not found yet. To me, looking for toxic changes in blood cells, parasites or bacteria is just as exciting.”

Together with his wife, young son and a chocolate Labrador named Big Duke — and very likely a small herd of goats in the near future — Wilson is excited for what’s next. He hopes to find a laboratory position, eventually earn a bachelor’s degree in microbiology, and plans to always make time to volunteer for animals in need.

“Receiving this scholarship has meant everything to my grades and study time while working toward both of my degrees,” he says. “I can honestly attribute my academic achievements to the generosity of Foundation donors.”



This past academic year, 7.4% of credit students identified as veterans.

County Veterans' Services officers and community volunteers, plus partners such as the College's Small Business Development Center. It all amounts to "students having a central location for services and community," Jordan says appreciatively. The location, she notes, has an ADA-parking spot just outside the entrance, with the Mazama Gym steps away, and the popular Student Veterans Club — now a Student Veterans of America chapter — will have a roomier spot to gather. That resource has been invaluable for Aviation student Royce Greiner. "It is a great group of people with welcoming energy," says the Foundation scholarship recipient. "They really make me feel like I have people on my team."

While creating the Center offers student veterans a place that is specific to them, it's also about inviting the broader community in. For instance, the space will be used in partnership with journalism students in a new COCC class that's centered on the national Veterans History Project. Student veterans will help the journalism class find and facilitate interviews with community vets, recording oral histories for the Library of Congress. COCC librarians are looking into cataloging the same stories for a Central Oregon audience.

"Leaving the military, vets are suddenly faced with many choices — career choices, living location choices, social choices," explains

Jenny Malone, a member of the COCC Foundation board since 2021. Malone spent 20 years in the U.S. Air Force and Air Force Reserve, managing personnel at Little Rock Air Force Base and serving as an admissions liaison officer for the U.S. Air Force Academy, among other assignments, before retiring as a captain in 2012. "I have been impressed with COCC's existing commitment. The increased staff support and infrastructure made possible by these grants will have an even greater impact."

Ideas for the Center include installing a flagpole near the new field-facing entrance, with the American flag visible from many parts of campus. When the project is finished, it will be a welcoming and empowering place, a resource that takes students over bridges and beyond.



“Leaving the military, vets are suddenly faced with many choices — career choices, living location choices, social choices.”

Change a Life Today!

Donate to the COCC Foundation Scholarship Fund today and change a life forever. Learn more at cocc.edu/give



CENTRAL OREGON
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THEN & NOW

BRILLIANTLY FOCUSED

A past scholarship student attains a Ph.D. in cellular biology — only after adapting to a challenging brain injury and relearning how to learn

HEAVEN ROBERTS

Class of 2010



Collaborating in programs of more than 50 engineers and immunologists — “It’s a huge honor to work here, I work with geniuses” — Roberts herself was recently touted as an expert in her field by her Fortune 500 employer.

Then: It was finals day at COCC, in the spring term of 2010, and things weren’t going well for Heaven Roberts: She couldn’t figure out how to write her name. The Culver resident, a pre-veterinary student with a goal of someday working with horses — a dream she’d harbored since she was a toddler — wasn’t suffering from severe exam-day jitters. She’d recently been in a serious car accident and the major concussion she’d experienced wasn’t allowing her mind to fully connect. She recalls how her professors came to her aid and made sure she postponed the exams until she was ready.

But that was just the start of her journey. What followed were years of speech and occupational therapy. “It was a ton of work,” she says. “I felt like an alien...I was a little lost for a while.” The mind that emerged after the accident didn’t absorb content and material as it once had — it had a new way of processing things. “It gave me a fundamental appreciation for the uniqueness of people.” Ultimately, she found a new way forward, a new method of harnessing her attention. “I have a hard time with anything that’s not super analytical.” That understanding would enable her to flourish.

Although she’d been accepted into Oregon State University’s honors college, Roberts realized she needed to heal first. It took two and a half years, and she initially used classes at Linn Benton Community College to make her way back. She discovered early on that research-driven work — the minutia, the data explorations — were what enlivened her mind.

Now: At OSU, Roberts would earn a bachelor’s degree in animal science and then a Ph.D. examining fungal toxins in livestock diets. When wet weather and warmer temps trigger mold in crops, in say, a field of alfalfa, that can cause a fungal bloom that spreads throughout the feed and can pose a major health hazard for animals, including neurological issues and even death. When Roberts began her doctoral work, the phenomenon of mycotoxins wasn’t a huge scientific field — climate change, though, has accelerated those outbreaks like never before. “By the time I left, everyone was talking about it.”

It was actually the equipment used to capture the studies’ bioinformatics that led to her career. “I got really interested in the new instruments and technologies,” she recalls. Now a staff scientist with Thermo Fisher Scientific, based in Eugene for the global company, Roberts works on a device called a flow cytometer, utilized primarily in the field of immunology to provide single-cell analysis for things like cancer research. Collaborating in programs of more than 50 engineers and immunologists — “It’s a huge honor to work here, I work with geniuses” — Roberts herself was recently touted as an expert in her field by her Fortune 500 employer.

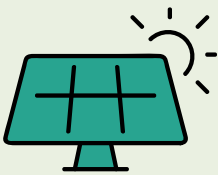
“There are many more world experts in the making,” she says, appreciatively, thinking back to how her COCC Foundation scholarship put a wonderful opportunity in her hands. “It’s helping students who can’t help themselves go further. I am so grateful.”

SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE PATH

Taking greater strides of environmental responsibility, the College tapers its carbon footprint and invests in climate-aimed actions

By Mark Russell Johnson

When the new Madras campus learning center opens early next winter, a number of innovative features will be at work: a mock hospital wing for health care programs; a community child care facility that allows for one-way mirror observation by Early Childhood Education students; and science labs with wireless instruments that can sync data to laptops and smartphones. There will be innovation on the surrounding carparks, too.



“The campus will be 100% powered by the sun,” says Jeremy Green, Madras campus director, referring to a solar array that will handle all electricity needs.

Funded by a \$70,000 grant from the Oregon Department of Energy and an investment of \$43,000 from the Oregon Clean Power Cooperative, the building’s array is helping the project earn a LEED Silver rating. Other green-building practices for the two-story, 24,000-square-foot structure will include reflective roof materials, the use of permeable paver sidewalks and expansive windows.

COCC has long carried a commitment to the planet, with efforts large and small leaning determinedly into this mission. They include the formation of the Sustainability committee in 2010 (by Physics professor Kevin Grove) and College-wide recycling rolling out a year later. Since 2015 — and with National Science Foundation backing — the Automotive Technology department has been co-creating a nationally recognized credential for hybrid-electric vehicle technicians. In recent years, the College has conducted irrigation audits with the city of Bend. Donors have made a difference, too. COCC Foundation friends John and Joan Casey, as an example, started a sustainability grant in 2013 to fund special

student projects, which later merged with the Alex Kollar Memorial Scholarship, named for a COCC graduate who championed sustainability.

All that collective commitment took an institutional leap when COCC hired its first-ever Sustainability coordinator in 2021. It went even further the next year when President Laurie Chesley signed a national climate pledge — the Presidents’ Climate Leadership Commitment, a higher education initiative that strategically reduces the College’s carbon footprint and aligns COCC’s environmental objectives with several hundred other colleges and universities around the country. The goal: carbon neutrality.

“Part of the pledge is to do a greenhouse gas inventory every year,” explains Noelle Bell Copley, whose position as Sustainability coordinator soon grew from part-time staffer to full-time role. The inventory she’s taking tabulates things like miles driven — by using staff surveys and student zip codes — heating and cooling bills, and other carbon-producing actions. “We’re doing all this analysis that’ll be the baseline for how we reduce our emissions, and we’re hoping to have a climate action plan by the end of this year.”

Software from Second Nature, the national organization that founded the Leadership Commitment, allows for data parsing and the defining of a carbon neutrality date: A newly hired consultant is helping COCC establish that date and plot the way, with things like solar options for the Bend campus and further reducing College-wide waste as key strategies. Ideas like agrivoltaics — to combine a rural campus solar “farm” with leased land for raising sheep — might even be a someday fit for COCC. Cost savings, in turn, will impact COCC’s bottom line, which will help keep tuition costs down.

Owen Murphy, bottom right, with a Sustainable Food class.



This past spring and early summer, a visit to any of COCC's campuses revealed a number of climate-focused activities and endeavors taking place. An Earth Day reused-clothing fashion show in Bend energized students, staff and community members — and imparted some blunt facts, like that it takes 766 gallons of water to manufacture a single T-shirt. Staff commuter vanpools were starting to enlist riders. A new electric vehicle-charging station opened in Prineville, thanks to a grant from Pacific Power. In Redmond, bees and butterflies began touching down on a new pollinator garden that envelops a donated sculpture titled “Daryavesh” — a tranquil spot for students and staff to alight as well. As shovels moved dirt at the June groundbreaking ceremony for Madras’ solar-driven expansion, the future of COCC felt more fixed on sustainability than ever.

For Bend Forestry student Cedar North, being able to study on a campus which recently earned Bee Campus USA designation from the Xerces Society and was named an official Tree Campus by the Arbor Day Foundation brings extra inspiration to their learning. They became an active member of the 10-person student-and-staff Sustainability committee, participating in promoting energy conservation, recycling and enhancing green spaces.

“This role aligns with my passion for environmental conservation and provides a platform to advocate for meaningful changes that benefit both the campus and the wider community,” says North, who plans to pursue a master’s degree in Forestry.

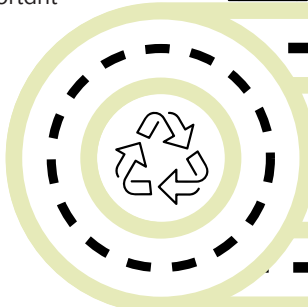
Seeing students excited for this important work is gratifying to Copley, whose own deep dedication earned her a 2023 Environmental Center Sustainability Award, and also to professor Owen Murphy, who was integral in designing Copley’s position. He’s helping bring additional sustainability-centered curriculum to the College.

“As an institution of higher education, it’s COCC’s responsibility not just to educate about sustainability, but to live and model it,” says Murphy, who teaches classes like “Sustainable Food and Agriculture” and knows that connecting his students to the content is more profound when the College’s values are an evident shade of green.

“Instructors like me will be able to share with students what works and what doesn’t at the institutional level,” he says of the pending climate action plan, “as well as how individual actions like composting, buying local and investing in solar contribute to the end goal.”



An Earth Day reused-clothing fashion show in Bend energized students, staff and community members.



*Noelle Bell Copley,
Sustainability coordinator*



The Nancy R. Chandler Lecture Series

The Nancy R. Chandler Lecture Series brings renowned speakers, lecturers and experts to the region to deliver broad-based programming on a diverse range of educational and topical subjects. The program was established in 1985 by the late Robert W. Chandler Sr. to honor his wife Nancy.

UPCOMING EVENTS: FALL 2024

Join us for a thought-provoking season of the Chandler Lecture Series this fall as we explore space, Indigenous knowledge and screen a film to honor Veterans Day.



TRAILBLAZING IN SPACE: MISSIONS OF DISCOVERY AND DIVERSITY

Dr. Ellen Ochoa,
former NASA director,
2024 Presidential Medal
of Freedom recipient

THURSDAY, OCT. 3, 7 P.M.
Tower Theatre, Bend

The first Latina in space, Ellen Ochoa, Ph.D., has charted an inspirational career path, from her four missions as an astronaut, to heading up NASA's Johnson Space Center. Ochoa will discuss diversity, corporate management and space exploration, and how innovative change can push a team forward.



WHY WE NEED INDIGENOUS INGENUITY – INDIGENUITY – NOW

Daniel Wildcat, Ph.D., author
and professor at Haskell Indian
Nations University

SUNDAY, NOV. 3, 2 P.M.
Madras Performing Arts Center, Madras

This presentation will challenge the misconception that Indigenous knowledge is solely about the past. Dr. Wildcat will highlight how American Indian Nations are dynamic, evolving communities with living cultures and traditions. He will explore the concept of *Indigenuity* (Indigenous ingenuity) — how ancient wisdom informs modern problem-solving — and argue for the critical need for this unique knowledge in today's world.



TO WHAT REMAINS
Free film screening followed by a Q&A
facilitated by Derek Abbey, Ph.D.,
retired U.S. Marines major and CEO
of Project Recover

TUESDAY, NOV. 12, 6:30 P.M.
COCC Bend Campus
Coats Campus Center, Wille Hall

"To What Remains" is the story of Project Recover, a team of scientists, oceanographers, archaeologists, historians, researchers and military veterans, who have dedicated their lives to scouring the depths of the ocean and the farthest corners of the earth, to search for, recover and repatriate the remains of the more than 80,000 Americans missing in action since WWII.

For more details and to register: cocc.edu/foundation/cls



CENTRAL OREGON
community college
FOUNDATION
Nancy R. Chandler Lecture Series

2023-24 Impact of Giving Report

CENTRAL OREGON
community college
FOUNDATION



TOGETHER, WE CHANGE LIVES

Our Mission

The COCC Foundation provides funds for scholarships and capital improvements, cultivates relationships with stakeholders to support COCC and its students, and develops programs that foster COCC student success.



IMPACT OF GIVING A NOTE FROM SEAN TEVLIN

The diversity of projects and initiatives that grants fund at COCC is truly staggering. Over the past year, grants have funded projects ranging from expanding training for students to be teachers in their own communities, to developing veteran-focused Small Business Development programs, to starting new training for students entering the manufacturing industry.

Some \$8.5 million in new grant funds have been awarded to COCC over the past year, creating numerous opportunities for COCC students that would otherwise not be available to them. Since I started at the College in 2021, the opportunity to help COCC staff and faculty acquire this funding — and learn more about COCC's wide variety of programs and the people who operate them in the process — has been a source of ongoing joy.



Sean Tevlin
Grants Director

Impact of Scholarships

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

\$2.1M



offered in scholarship support



362

scholarships awarded to hard-working students



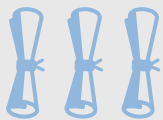
32%

of scholarship recipients identify as **BILAPOC***



\$75K

provided to students for **emergency funds and child care assistance**



3.26

average GPA of scholarship recipients

2



more credits earned per term than the average COCC student

Degrees Pursued

2%

Associate of General Studies degree

6%

Exploratory degree

40%

Transfer degree

52%

Career and Technical Education certificate or degree

7.4%

of COCC credit students received a **Foundation scholarship**

Lasting Impact

STUDENT IMPACT

Lori Yeo

Associate of Applied Science degrees,
Unmanned Aerial Systems and
Geographic Information Systems



Lori Yeo, COCC Foundation
Scholarship Recipient

“How do you reinvent yourself at the back end of your life? You go back to school and chase a dream. Since 2014, I have been a seasonal employee for a private contractor assisting the Oregon Department of Forestry. I operate a helibase mobile command trailer dispatched to wildland fires. For the last couple of seasons, we’ve had an influx of drone operators utilizing helicopter bases as a launching point for aerial operations, supporting firefighting efforts and keeping them safe.

As I started talking with these contractors, I began to wonder how you could apply these concepts differently, to offer real-time support of firefighters on the ground. I also wondered how to repurpose my skills and create something valuable to match these possibilities. During my first year at COCC, I decided to tackle the GIS side of the UAS degree and fell in love with it — all I wanted to do was fly drones and help firefighters. Who knew this passion would lead me to another!

My Foundation scholarships have been a lifeline. They have not only provided me with financial support but also been a catalyst for significant personal and academic growth. Your generosity enables scholarship students to move forward and instills a sense of responsibility, to reach out and pay it forward to someone else in need.”



All A's: COCC staffers Amy Ward, Aimee Metcalf and Amy Howell

COCC Colleagues Toast Cornerstone Commitment

Nearly 60 members of the staff-and-faculty “Bobcat Society” gathered on May 14 on the Cascade Culinary Institute’s patio for an inaugural Foundation event: to celebrate an employee commitment to student support. As part of a larger group of past and present COCC employees who provide ongoing donations in the name of scholarships, attendees sampled tasty creations from the College’s Culinary students and unified around a collaborative goal. “These contributions have been the cornerstone of success for countless students at COCC,” says Wendy Patton, charitable giving officer. “It’s a commitment that lights the path.” The Bobcat Society, officially launched in 2019, now includes 132 current and former COCC staffers.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Roundhouse Foundation Invests in Rural Student Success

The Roundhouse Foundation continues to be a large supporter of COCC through robust grant awards. In 2024, the organization contributed three separate grants to the College and the COCC Foundation, providing incredible assistance to students in a wide variety of programs and disciplines.

Joining a growing number of foundations, government agencies and private citizens, The Roundhouse Foundation provided a \$300,000 contribution toward the “Growing Together” COCC Madras campus expansion campaign, with funds dedicated to equipment, supplies and art for health careers and Early Childhood Education facets of the campus build-out. The organization also contributed \$30,000 to COCC’s Community Education department to offer low-cost or free summer educational programs for youth in

rural areas of Central Oregon, including Madras and Prineville. This has allowed COCC to increase summer youth programming in rural communities — with a record 700-plus youth enrolled in summer programs for 2024. Lastly, The Roundhouse Foundation provided a \$45,000 grant that directly supports students in select career and technical education programs, such as Forestry, Manufacturing and Early Childhood Education. Funds will cover the costs of equipment and supplies needed to complete these programs, which can be cost-prohibitive to many students.

The Roundhouse Foundation is a private family foundation based in Sisters, Oregon, that supports creative solutions to the unique challenges associated with rural culture and the landscapes of the Pacific Northwest.

For more information, visit roundhousefoundation.org.



left: Rosie Day

right: Timothy Park

The Cost of Education: Your Donated Dollars Go Further



Annual tuition and fee cost for most in-district students attending COCC full time.



Estimated annual cost of attending COCC for a student living on their own. This includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, personal needs, transportation, food and housing costs.



The **increase in earnings each year the average associate degree graduate from COCC will receive** compared to someone with a high school diploma working in Oregon.

When You Invest in the COCC Foundation, You Create Lifelong Impact for Students and Our Communities

IN 2023-24



Individual and business donors contributed to our scholarship program*



Students received donor-supported child care assistance and student emergency awards

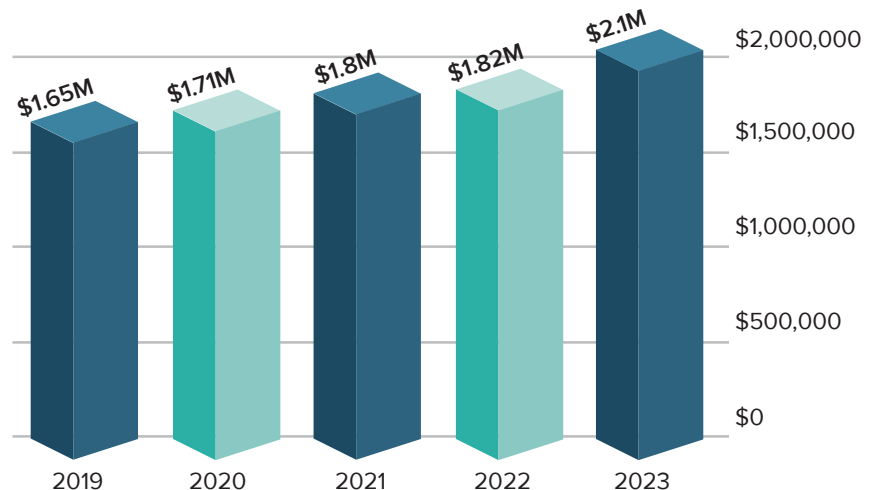


Contributed directly to COCC programs

*For a full listing of current donors, please visit: cocc.edu/foundation

TOTAL AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED

Previous Five Years



Since 2019, the COCC Foundation has offered our students more than \$9 million in direct scholarship support. This reflects strong endowment returns combined with annual fundraising. Historically, and again this year, the COCC Foundation's endowment ranks as one of the largest funds in the nation for community colleges of comparable size.

Words of Gratitude





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