Youth help celebrate ground breaking for new learning center at Clark College

Program provides early intervention services to the Washougal School District

By HEATHER AGHESON
Post-Record staff

As Clark College embarked on construction of the first phase of its new Early Childhood Learning Center, word came that a substantial donation was made to help fund the second phase.

The early childhood education and family life departments provide a curriculum and a learning laboratory for early childhood educators, guide and partner with community parents and families, and equip children with what faculty members describe as a full spectrum of skills and training for life.

Phase 1 of the project will include two classroom spaces, a large multi-purpose room, kitchen and resource center. There will also be an outdoor play environment with a sensory herb garden, live willow hut, rock spiral area for storytelling, bubbling creek bed with hand pump and a tiered hillside for climbing and playtime.

"For more than a decade, it has been our dream to have a new Early Learning Center facility," said Laurie Cornelius, Clark College director of children and family services. "It is exciting to know that our new learning environment will fully support our program and our aspirations for our students."

The state of Washington provided $3 million in matching funds for the Early Learning Center, and during the ground breaking it was announced that an anonymous donor had contributed $1 million. A total of $1.6 million has now been raised, with the end goal being $3.8 million for phase 2 of the project.

"At a time when our state funding continues to decline, it's clear that donor support will be vitally important to our future — our students and to help us meet our region's needs in the future."

According to Clark College Vice President of Instruction Dr. Bassam Dastamozd, the child and family studies program is a lab school where Clark students have the opportunity to put theory into practice by working with children and families.

"This is a unique approach, which is considered a best practice throughout the U.S. in order to meet the needs of today's students and prepare them for the work they will do after graduating," he said. "It will be important to successfully complete both phases of this exciting learning focused project."

The program also provides early intervention services for children from birth to age 3 through a contract with the Washington Department of Social and Health Services.

Portland man sentenced in bank fraud case

Victimized businesses include those in Camas and Vancouver

By HEATHER AGHESON
Post-Record staff

The ringleader of a team of thieves that spent seven years burglarizing office buildings, including those in Camas and Vancouver, will serve a total of 20 months and pay restitution to his victims.

Antoine Lamont Lawrence, formerly of Portland, Ore., pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud in May. He was sentenced last week by U.S. District Judge Michael McLean. According to the plea agreement, he will serve 97 months in prison, followed by five years of supervised release, and pay nearly $700,000 in restitution.

"He was involved in a nationwide bank fraud scheme," said U.S. Attorney Dwight C. Holton. "This is a very important lesson for us all: even behind locked doors at the office, if you must leave valuables and personal information at work, make sure it is protected — not just in a locked desk, but in a safe."

In addition to Lawrence, who served as the "F" and as "Torry Montana," the main character from the 1983 film "Scarecrow," nine members of this team were indicted on federal charges, and an additional 10 persons associated with the team were convicted of state charges.

Judge McLean has handed down sentences to more than a half-dozen other men and women in connection with the scheme.

In the struggle for women's rights in the North, 2010 is the centennial of Washington gaining (and keeping) the right to vote. The challenges they faced and where we are visiting the museum's latest exhibit.

With generous support from Margaret and Patrick Jefferies.