



# The Clark Journal

SPRING 2009



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## THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Peter F. Drucker, a respected economist and business management leader, once said "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things."

During the past year, in a time of so many challenges, we have worked hard to do the right things. We reached out to the college community in unprecedented ways to create our 2009-2010 budget. With participation and input from across the college, through discussions and communication that were timely and transparent, we were able to build a budget that maintains critical services to students, accommodates growth and avoids layoffs.

We realize that times are still uncertain and that the state's fiscal outlook may change. We will be diligent in monitoring our enrollment projections and the state's financial picture during the coming year. If adjustments need to be made, we will discuss our next steps in the same way that we have dealt with the budget process throughout the past year—openly and honestly.

During this challenging year, we have also stayed focused on leadership through our Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy brings together employees from all different areas – including faculty, staff and administration – to ensure that leaders emerge from across the college. Our third cohort graduated in June after a year of learning opportunities relating to building trust, moving beyond conflict, and responsibility. I'm excited to announce that this outstanding program will continue next year with another exceptional group of leaders stepping forward.

As this academic year comes to an end, I'd like to leave you with one of my favorite quotes about leadership. It's from General of the Army George C. Marshall, who was the only military person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize and was commander of the Vancouver Barracks from 1936 to 1938.

It's simply this: "There is no limit to the good you can do if you don't care who gets the credit."

**Robert K. Knight,**  
*Clark College President*

# Budget brings challenges and opportunities for 2009-2010

Even before the state legislature had passed its budget and adjourned, Clark College had begun the 2009-2010 budget development process—making the budget a continuing topic of conversation at the college this spring.

## PLANNING FOR THE UNKNOWN

Given the uncertainty of the economy, and the possible routes that could be taken by the legislature, members of the college's Executive Cabinet established a framework for the 2009-2010 budget development process that established budget priorities in an open, transparent and inclusive process—long before the final word on budget cuts or tuition increases had been established at the state level.

“These were extraordinary circumstances,” said Vice President of Administrative Services Bob Williamson. “We needed a process as transparent and inclusive as possible.” A three-pronged approach was established to facilitate the inclusion of as many voices as possible from across the college community:

- Six open forums were held at various times, days and locations to hear the ideas, thoughts and suggestions of college faculty, staff, students and administrators.
- Deans, division chairs and other unit leaders across the college were encouraged to hold meetings with their staff to solicit input and feedback.
- A budget suggestions/feedback area was established on ClarkNet, the Clark College Intranet site, allowing employees to post ideas and suggestions directly.

The information gathered from each was compiled into a single document numbering 22 pages in length. “It was remarkable how engaged the college was in the process,” noted Williamson. From all the feedback, two primary themes emerged, which guided Executive Cabinet's budget prioritization process:

1. Protect and preserve Clark College's core services to students; and
2. Reduce expenditures by finding efficiencies before making cuts.

## HITTING THE MARK

Equipped with feedback from the college community, members of Executive Cabinet entered their April work session to set the budget priorities for 2009-2010. “It was during this time that we realized that if the state passed a 7% tuition increase, and our enrollment levels remained at these record-high levels, that Clark could likely absorb an additional budget cut in 2009-2010 without reducing positions or programs,” said Williamson.

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*“The college community was willing to roll up its sleeves to protect the core mission of serving students.”*

—Bob Williamson,  
*Vice President of  
Administrative  
Services*



# Budget brings challenges and opportunities for 2009-2010



The legislature completed its work—including passing the state budget—at the end of April. When all was said and done, Clark was handed a 10.7% budget cut for each year of the biennium—meaning that a total of 10.7% had to be cut each year from the college’s 2009-11 funding level (not cumulative). The state’s community and technical colleges were also given a 7% tuition increase—a number that is set at the state level and cannot be modified or changed by individual colleges.

Because Clark had already taken a 4.3% permanent budget cut in February 2009, this meant the college needed to realize an additional 6.4% reduction in the 2009-2010 budget—for a total of approximately \$3.69 million less than originally budgeted for 2008-2009. With the 7% tuition increase, coupled with funding from excess student enrollment and college-wide belt-tightening efforts, the 2009-2010 budget has absorbed the 10.7% decrease without making further cuts to programs or employees of the college.

“We are in a very enviable position among Washington’s community and technical colleges,” said Williamson. “The college community’s work to belt-tighten—by taking on extra workload and more students in classes—was a key element in making this year’s 4.3% budget reduction. The college community was willing to roll up its sleeves to protect the core mission of serving students.”

## **WATCHING AND WAITING—KEY WORDS FOR 2009-2010**

During its June 2009 meeting, the Clark College Board of Trustees passed the proposed operating budget, which totaled approximately \$57 million—a figure that is actually higher than this year’s budget of \$51 million. So how does the college actually increase its budget at the same time it is being cut? The answer lies in a combination of three factors: higher enrollment, tuition increase, and college-wide belt-tightening efforts.

And, as Williamson is quick to point out, the money is being spent in a controlled, deliberate and intentional manner. “We know that these current levels of enrollment will not stay,” he said. “So we are being deliberate in how we spend the revenue generated by excess enrollment. An example of this is the use of temporary positions to help serve the increase in our student population—which can be modified or changed as needed, in response to enrollment levels.”

A revised state revenue forecast was released during the third week in June—a quarterly occurrence that state agencies across Washington monitor very closely. The forecast includes a decrease in state revenues of \$686 million, leaving the state with a negative balance.

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## **STATE BOARD DECLARES FINANCIAL EMERGENCY**

During its June meeting, the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) voted to declare a “financial emergency.” As the state board had been contemplating this declaration for several months, the action did not come as a surprise.

This declaration allows community and technical colleges in the state to fast-track layoffs of full-time faculty, including tenured faculty. However, in his message to the college community following the board’s decision, Clark College President Bob Knight notes that the college is not considering layoffs of any personnel.

“Even with a 10.7% reduction in our base state funding, because of our belt-tightening efforts, fiscal management and strong enrollment, we are in a stronger position than many other colleges around the state,” said Knight. “Despite the board’s emergency declaration, Clark College is not considering layoffs of any personnel.”

Knight went on to say, “We will continue to monitor our enrollment projections, and we realize that the state’s fiscal outlook may change. If that happens, we will discuss the budget situation with the college community in a timely and transparent way—just as we have during the past year.”



# Budget brings challenges and opportunities for 2009-2010

In a message to state employees, Gov. Chris Gregoire noted, “The forecast does not include the new caseload forecast which we expect to increase given the severity of the recession.” In her message, Gregoire asked executive Cabinet agencies “to decrease their General Fund employee costs by two percent from what was budgeted.” In addition, the governor asked agency directors “to continue their stewardship of controlling spending on equipment purchases, out-of-state-travel and personal service contracts.” The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges is committed to finding a way to meet the governor’s targets without continuing any of the freezes that have been in effect since February.

In addition to monitoring state revenues and budget forecasts, college officials will continually monitor both enrollment numbers and whether revenue funds are coming in as expected—to ensure the college maintains its current approach of planned response, rather than reaction. “Our current position gives us the opportunity to be thoughtful in any future decline—giving us the chance to plan, as opposed to react,” said Williamson. Members of Executive Cabinet and the college’s fiscal staff continue to carefully monitor the state’s financial situation, enrollment levels and revenue streams, as they work to implement the 2009-2010 budget.

In a message to the college community, Clark College President Bob Knight noted that the college’s budget for 2009-2010 allows the college “to take steps to meet today’s challenges but also keep planning and growing for the future.” He noted, “We are doing that by using dollars from tuition increases and excess enrollment to address cuts in state funding.” Knight added, “Because our students are facing tuition increases, we need to work harder than ever to be good stewards of those dollars.”

“The state revenue projections may continue to decline even though there are encouraging signs of the economy stabilizing,” said Williamson. “If we have to make additional budget decisions, we will engage the college community in an open process—again—to address them.”



## **BUDGET INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON CLARKNET**

Several documents reflecting the 2008-2009 budget reductions; the compiled feedback from the college community; the budget values, principles and guidelines; and the approved 2009-2010 budget are available on ClarkNet, the Clark College Intranet.

To access the documents, as well as the online budget reduction suggestion form, select “College Information” from the left navigation bar on ClarkNet, then choose “Budget.”



## Raising leaders from within: The Clark College Leadership Academy



Members of the 2008-2009 Leadership Academy cohort on graduation day. Front row, from left: Steve Walsh, Madeleine von Laue, Susan Maxwell, Laurie Cornelius, Vanessa Watkins, Cath Keane, Jody Shulnak. Back row, from left: Erica Schwenneker, Tyler Chen, Michelle Bagley, Skip Jimerson, Dan Overbay. Not pictured: Monica Knowles.

With the announcement of its fourth cohort for 2009-2010, the Clark College Leadership Academy continues its mission of growing leaders from within the college community.

As spring quarter 2009 drew to a close, 13 individuals from across Clark College celebrated their graduation from the 2008-2009 cohort of the college's Leadership Academy. In a closing session of presentations, each person shared their significant learnings—and the changes others can expect from them for the future—from a nine-month process of training and self-reflection. For many members of the cohort, change has already begun.

"Leadership Academy created a space for self-reflection in both my personal and professional lives that I might not have otherwise made time for," said Jody Shulnak, Service Learning and Volunteer Program manager and a member of this year's Leadership Academy cohort. "It also provided a venue to give and receive valuable feedback through coaching. I walked away from the experience with tangible action steps, and by making subtle changes I have seen improvements in my relationships already."

"It was both a pleasure to get to know other Clark staff better and a relief to learn that we all had our own inadequacies and vulnerabilities," said Adult Literacy Program Manager and fellow cohort member Madeleine von Laue. "I also gained many useful techniques, from the facilitators and other cohort members, for managing, leading and just plain living and working with other people."

"My Leadership Academy experience was beneficial for many reasons," said Director of Library Services & eLearning and 2008-2009 cohort member Michelle Bagley. "The skill-building sessions gave me the opportunity to address some challenges within my department and to develop plans to move forward. Establishing a rich network of colleagues made my initiation to a new organizational culture a positive experience. And the one-on-one and group coaching sessions provided me with insight on what strengths and talents I bring to the college, as well as what I need to do to progress in my role."

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# Raising leaders from within: The Clark College Leadership Academy

## LEADERSHIP ACADEMY: YEAR ONE—AND BEYOND

The Clark College Leadership Academy was introduced for the 2006-2007 academic year through the college's Employee Development program. During the first year, cohort members attended a half-day workshop that was open to the entire college community; in the afternoon, cohort members then received further professional coaching on the topic of that day's workshop.

"The purpose of the Leadership Academy is to build capacity within Clark to help fill the gaps that exist in higher education administration—gaps that are part of a nationwide trend and shortage of individuals to fill the positions," said Rebecca Wale, environmental health and employee development program manager for Clark College. "It is Clark's way of saying that we will 'grow our own' leaders from within the organization."

Since its inception, some changes have been made—mainly in the format of the program and the number of people selected each year. The series of skill-building workshops, group coaching sessions and individual coaching sessions are still there—only structured a bit differently. "The program has evolved to support the cohort's professional growth," explained Wale. "We try to schedule things that would be meaningful to the cohort and the college. Our goal is to support people who make a significant commitment in both their time and energy to better serve students."

Another change that occurred from the first cohort to the second was the increase in the number of participants selected for the program. The first cohort, in 2006-2007, consisted of 10 individuals; cohorts two (2007-2008) and three (2008-2009) consisted of 15 and 13, respectively. Feedback from the first cohort and their coach indicated that an increase in participants would expand access to the program without being detrimental to the group's experience. For the upcoming (2009-2010) cohort, 14 individuals have been selected to participate. [See sidebar for a complete list of Leadership Academy participants to date.]

Clark's program remains unique in that cohort members work with a professional coach for an entire year—allowing them to set goals and work on leadership skills over an extended period of time. This coaching supports the practical application of leadership skills learned through the skill-building sessions.

## IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Following their Leadership Academy experience, members of the first cohort established periodic meetings to continue their discussion of leadership topics and their application to Clark College. As members of the second and third cohorts have completed the program, they, too, have been invited to participate—contributing to the number of Clark College employees who are continually seeking growth opportunities for the benefit of students.

Members of previous cohorts also find themselves using the skills they developed in their daily activities at the college. "The Leadership Academy helped me develop communication and conflict resolution skills that I use every day," said cohort two member and Interim Dean of Social Science and Fine Arts Miles Jackson. "It was a great learning experience."

"Leadership Academy provided me not only training in areas where I needed growth, but also empathetic team members who gave me support and targeted advice," said cohort one member and Mature Learning Program Manager Tracy Reilly Kelly. "This was made all the more valuable because these colleagues shared my vision of stewardship to the college, and the students whom we serve."

## LEADERSHIP ACADEMY: LOOKING AHEAD

The fourth cohort of Clark College's Leadership Academy was recently selected by members of Executive Cabinet and announced to the college community. They are:

- Sheryl Anderson, Admissions
- Rebecca Benson, Human Resources
- Deena Bisig, Communication Studies
- Chris Concannon, Communications & Marketing

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# Raising leaders from within: The Clark College Leadership Academy



- Karen Crosland, Clark College Foundation
- Kael Godwin, Planning & Effectiveness
- Jim Green, Plant Services
- Lora Jenkins, Advising
- Jeri Kemmer, English, Communications & Humanities
- Ray Korpi, English, Communications & Humanities
- Mashelle Ostermiller, Advising
- Jean Roniger, Plant Services
- Jenny Schrock, Admissions
- Ann Virtu Snyder, Women's Studies

Cohort members are selected on an application basis, and selected based on a variety of criteria, including:

- Service on college wide committees;
- Contribution to balance amongst employee groups;
- Contribution to balance of participation across the college;
- Contribution to balance of gender and diversity in the group;
- Contribution to balance of both new and long-term employees;
- Desire to grow as a leader;
- Currently in a leadership position; and
- Demonstrated commitment to students.

The Leadership Academy brings together employees from all different levels of the college—including faculty, staff and administration—and is stratified to ensure that leaders will emerge from across the college. Of those who have participated to date, 23.1% were faculty members, 40.4% were classified staff, 30.8% were administrators and 5.8% were employees of the Clark College Foundation. “It is the intent of the program to get a mix of people from across the college,” said Wale, “in part to break down the silos in which individuals work on a daily basis. This helps build relationships across the boundaries of position or role at the college.”

“I found the experience to be useful and helpful, in a surprising number of ways—including personal and professional from a leadership position and from a team player role,” said Clark College Bookstore Manager and cohort three member Monica Knowles. “I enjoyed learning from others’ experiences and making some on-campus peer connections.”

## LEADERSHIP ACADEMY GRADUATES

### 2006-2007

Kelly Benson, *Admissions*  
Lee Brand, *Health & Physical Education*  
Debi Jenkins, *Child & Family Studies*  
Lori Jimerson, *Central Receiving*  
Gail Liberman, *Teaching & Learning Center*  
Priscila Martins-Read, *English as a Second Language*  
Barbara Miller, *Clark College Foundation*  
Erin Morgan, *Registrar*  
Tracy Reilly Kelly, *Mature Learning*  
Sue Williams, *Human Resources*

### 2007-2008

Christina Barsotti, *Engineering*  
Barbara Chen, *Clark College Foundation*  
Mary Deal, *Health Services*  
Joy Horning, *Social Science & Fine Arts*  
Dwight Hughes, *Data Networks & Telecommunications*  
Robert Hughes, *Computer Technology*  
Miles Jackson, *Social Science & Fine Arts*  
Stacey Mitcham, *Plant Services*  
Scott Morris, *Adult Basic Education*  
Janet Owens, *Workforce Development*  
Lisa Quednow-Bickler, *Athletics*  
Mirranda Saari, *Assessment Center*  
Janet Turner, *Financial Aid*  
Linda Tuve, *Accounting Services*  
Rebecca Wale, *Human Resources*

### 2008-2009

Michelle Bagley, *Library*  
Tyler Chen, *Instruction*  
Laurie Cornelius, *Child & Family Studies*  
Skip Jimerson, *Plant Services*  
Catharine Keane, *Career & Employment Services*  
Monica Knowles, *Bookstore*  
Susan Maxwell, *Planning & Effectiveness*  
Daniel Overbay, *Admissions*  
Erica Schwenneker, *Communications & Marketing*  
Jody Shulnak, *Career & Employment Services*  
Madeleine von Laue, *Adult Literacy*  
Stephen Walsh, *Business Administration*  
Vanessa Watkins, *Admissions*

