

La Center resident wins Clark College award

Stories of perseverance and overcoming obstacles. A desire to make life better – for themselves and their families.

Those were the journeys of the more than 90 women and men who walked across the stage of the O'Connell gym at Clark College on June 18 to receive diplomas for earning their GED or completing high school.

Mark Knighten, who lost his job after working in the construction and trucking industry for more than 30 years, received the 2011 Pat Fencl Scholarship. Knighten, a La Center resident, hopes to earn an associate degree at Clark College then

transfer to WSU Vancouver to pursue a bachelor's degree in business administration.

An enrolled member of the Peoria Indian Tribe, Knighten says his ultimate goal is to “apply my education and experience within the Native American community in Washington state.”

Prior to announcing Knighten as the recipient of the award, Clark College President Bob Knight gave a little background to those in attendance about the vision of the Pat Fencl Scholarship.

“A high school diploma or GED is an important step forward in your education and

your life,” Knight said. “But, to succeed in today's workforce, many of you will need additional training and skills. That's the vision of the Pat Fencl Scholarship.”

The scholarship is given to a Clark College ABE/GED student who has attended classes regularly, demonstrated successful progression through those classes, and successfully passed all five GED tests with high scores.

“Pat Fencl is a dedicated educator,” Knight said. “After having six children, she went back to school, graduated from Clark College, and eventually became a teacher. She worked

for years in the Clark College ABE/GED program, where she was instrumental in touching the lives of students like you.”

“After she retired from teaching, she wanted to continue to support ABE/GED students as she had in the classroom,” he added. “So, with the help of the Clark College Foundation, she created the Pat Fencl Scholarship.”

Last year, Pat and her husband Jim received the Presidential Award for Excellence for their ongoing support of Clark College and its students.

The 2011 Pat Fencl Scholarship Award was in the amount of \$1,500.