

Clark College set to open new branch

A sneak peek at the school's new east Vancouver location

BY PAUL LEONARD | of the VBJ

For a school founded in the middle of the Great Depression, it was fitting that Clark College debuted its newest location last week in east Vancouver during another prolonged – albeit less cataclysmic – economic downturn.

An estimated 1,100 visitors stopped by for the new Columbia Tech Center's open house last Saturday afternoon, with residents from as far away as Camas coming to check out the facility and its new offerings.

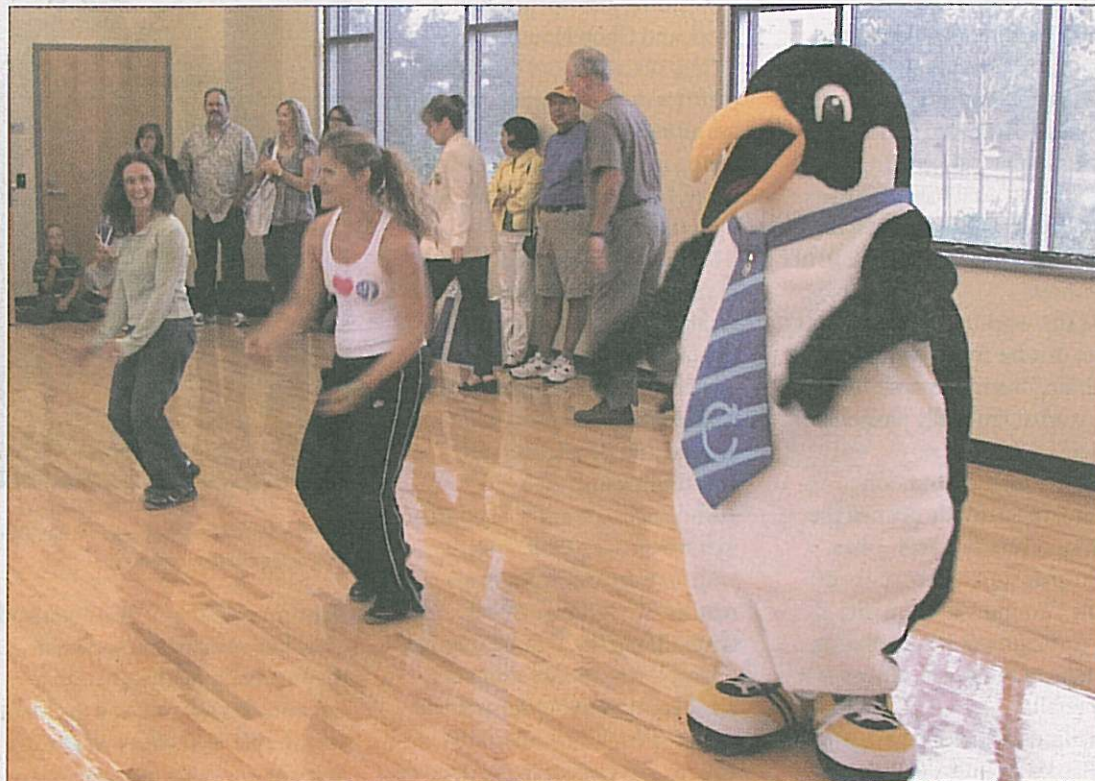
Columbia Tech Center joins Clark College's 101-acre main campus in downtown Vancouver's Central Park. With 2008 enrollment hovering around 10,000 students, the school celebrated its 75th anniversary last year.

At the event, attendees lined up to learn more about

the center's power utilities program, its new cooking school and continuing education classes, according to Clark College spokeswoman Barbara Kerr. "We've have been gearing up for this for months," Kerr said. "And it's really gratifying to see people as excited as we are."

Many prospective students from east Vancouver and the Camas-Washougal area were eager for a continuing education option closer to home. "It helps that it's 15-minutes away from my house, especially since I don't have a lot of time between work, home and school to spend driving around," said Camas resident and part-time student Teresa Palley.

The \$30 million, four-story building, built to exceed silver LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)



Barbara Kerr, Clark College
Marlaina Renton teaches Zumba, a new Latin music-inspired workout, in Columbia Tech Center's new fitness classroom with Clark College mascot, Oswald, at last Saturday's open house event. CTC is scheduled to offer its first classes for students Sept. 21.

CLARK: New branch set to open

Continued from pg. 1



Barbara Kerr, **Clark College**

CTIC Instructor Bev Jozwiak from the "Painters Ensemble" demonstrates her talent for visitors at last week's open house.

certification by the U.S. Green Building Council, includes 18 classrooms, eight science and computer labs, faculty and staff offices and parking.

In total, more than 550 Clark College students are expected to attend classes at the new building in the fall, 340 of whom will be full-time equivalency students, according to Kerr. More than 250 class sections will be offered, including 70 noncredit corporate and continuing education courses.

Some classes have been transferred east to CTC from Clark College's main campus so that the school can better serve not only the Camas-Washougal area, but Skamania and Klickitat counties as well.

With first classes starting on Sept. 21, the CTC houses the college's Corporate Learning Center offering

Associate's degrees, business and administrative support certificates. Created to meet the need of non-traditional students, area corporations and community groups, the center plans to offer space for business, nonprofit and other group events.

The center will also hold college-level classes geared toward high school students looking to complete the Running Start program. Classes offered run the gamut from accounting, calculus to business administration.

There are also plenty of physical activities on tap for the fall semester, including Latin and International music-inspired workout Zumba, tai-chi and belly dancing – all demonstrated for visitors in CTC's first-floor fitness room at last Saturday's open house event.

"I think it's one of the best facilities I've ever seen," said Chef Rick Browne, the author of "The Best Barbecue on Earth" and host of the PBS series "Barbecue America," who will teach a Holiday Grilling class at CTC this fall.

According to Browne, his classroom will have room for 26 students to sit down, with more space for students to stand and watch as he grills Christmas and Thanksgiving appetizers,

side dishes, entrées and – surprisingly – dessert.

Browne's classroom, like many others in the new building, is a "smart" facility equipped with a camera, recording equipment and high-speed wireless Internet access. "There are so many possibilities with the technology offered in the classroom that I don't think we've figured out exactly what to do with it yet," he said.

Though the new branch

offers many business-centered programs, there were plenty of other activities for guests at last Saturday's event, including painting instruction, an apple pie-making demonstration and an appearance by Clark College's penguin mascot Oswald.

"It was great to see the looks on people's faces," Kerr said. "I think a couple of people really got excited about the kinds of programs we offer." **VBJ**