



BOB KNIGHT, PRESIDENT of Clark College (right) conducted a tour of the Vancouver Historic Reserve for visitors interested in the national Plus 50 Initiative. From left are **Dr. Robert Cromwell, National Park Service archaeologist, Katya Nekrasova, program associate for the national Plus 50 Initiative, Todd Oldham, Clark College Executive Director of Corporate and Continuing Education, and Kim Morey, director of the Plus 50 Initiative at Western Dakota Technical Institute in South Dakota.**

Clark College offers new careers for seniors

Clark College will target people age 50 and older for new careers as business owners in the wine and food industries, and as in-home caregivers.

The new program is part of the national Plus 50 Initiative, a pilot program in which several colleges will demonstrate ways to keep retiring workers age 50 and over in the workforce.

Tracy Reilly-Kelly, who heads the new program at Clark College, said Clark College is one of five mentor colleges nationwide to be involved in the program. As a mentor college, Clark will work with Western Dakota Technical Institute in South Dakota and Chaffey Community College in California. Western Dakota will develop and pilot a training model for seniors who want to become seasonal rangers and interpretive guides at national parks. Chaffey will start a new program to train volunteers to mentor and tutor under-prepared students and help them be successful in college.

The Plus 50 Initiative got started at Clark College with an Aug. 26 visit by leaders of the American Association of Community Colleges, and representatives of Western Dakota Technical Institute.

Clark president Robert Knight, whose last duty in the U.S. Army was as Commander of the Vancouver Barracks, hosted the visit.

Kelly said the idea of the program is to serve people looking for a second career. "We looked for businesses that were adapted to our region," said Kelly in explaining the choice of careers in wine and food. "Other colleges have similar programs."

In addition to the wine and food business training, Clark College will offer a program for in-home caregivers, devised in conjunction with Southwest Washington Agency on Aging.

"We looked at other kinds of training," said Kelly. "We know there will be lots of jobs ahead in health." Kelly categorized in-home caregiving as a health occupation.

The program will begin this fall with a class called "Catch the Crush--Wine Making for Fun and Profit." Class fee will be \$85. Other classes in wine studies and cooking will follow as space is available, said Kelly. Classes will be aimed at the small-scale wine business, she said. Training in managing a business will be part of the program.

The Plus 50 Initiative, funded nationally by a \$3.2 million grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies, provides \$70,000 over three years to Clark College for its role as a mentor college in the program.

Kelly said that nationwide, 10,000 baby boomers turn 62 years of age every day in 2008.

If they all left the workforce, she said, the U.S. economy would suffer a severe labor shortage. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that the country will be short 10 million workers by 2011. These figures, she said, result in an emphasis on keeping older workers in the labor force.

Atlantic Philanthropies, with offices in Bermuda, Great Britain, Ireland, South Africa, Vietnam and the United States, awards grants to serve disadvantaged people and to "advocate for social change," according to their Web site. "Our grantmaking is strategically focused to have an impact on critical social problems related to older adults, children, people with little or no access to health care, people who are being denied basic human rights, and people struggling to live in peace with their neighbors."

The Atlantic Philanthropies is designed to spend its multi-billion dollar endowment by 2020 and then dissolve.

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