

# Clark names commencement speaker

## Entrepreneur and inventor's message is of empowerment

By **HOWARD BUCK**  
*Columbian staff writer*

Only about one in five adults with a disability has a full-time job.

That's just not good enough for Vail Horton, a Portland-based entrepreneur born without legs and with improper bone growth in his arms.

Horton, 30, is founder and chairman of the Keen Mobil-

ity Co. of Portland and the Incight Foundation, a self-empowerment organization that provides scholarship and internship opportunities for disabled students.

On June 18, he will be the keynote speaker at Clark College's 2009 commencement ceremony, the school has announced.

"I've had the privilege of hearing Vail Horton speak," said



**Vail Horton**  
Clark College  
commencement  
speaker

Clark President Bob Knight in a written news release. "He is passionate and dynamic. I know that this message will add power and meaning to that special night for our graduates and our families."

Horton exhorts individuals to recognize their boundaries, but also to move beyond them.

The message should connect with new Clark graduates who will gather at the Amphitheater at Clark County at 7 p.m.

In his 20s, Horton invented a crutch with shock-absorbing technology that allowed him to forgo a wheelchair. Soon after, he founded Keen. The business quickly grew to multimillion-dollar sales, more than 25 product lines and a dozen employ-

ees.

Keen has been lauded by local and national groups for its rapid climb.

Horton has served on national disability policy panels, was named a "Top 40 Under 40" business leader by the Portland Business Journal and was chosen as one of the 2007 Ten Outstanding Young Americans by the U.S. Junior Chamber (Jaycees).

His Incight Foundation has raised more than \$1 million in public and private donations to pay for \$750 college scholarships for 164 disabled high school students. Fifteen internships have been set up, and five universities have created matching scholarship programs.