



**ACADEMIC ALL-STAR.** *Men-Ok (Irina) Ziyu was among 62 students from Washington's 34 community and technical colleges selected on the 2008 All-Washington Academic Team. Ziyu came to the U.S. from Russia in 2004 with no English language skills. She now volunteers in the school's adult literacy program, helping immigrant students develop reading, writing, and speaking skills. (Photo courtesy of Clark College)*

## Clark College students honored for academic achievement

Two students who bring international perspectives to education were recently selected to represent Clark College on the 2008 All-Washington Academic Team. Vancouver, Washington residents Men-Ok (Irina) Ziyu and Jennifer Patterson were among 62 students from Washington's 34 community and technical colleges to be recognized in Olympia. Former Washington Governor Gary Locke was the keynote speaker. Both students are now members of the All-Washington Academic Team.

Ziyu came to the U.S. from Russia in 2004 with no English language skills. After taking English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes at Clark College, she enrolled in general education classes and discovered a passion for chemistry. She is currently studying nursing and works as a chemistry tutor. She also volunteers in the school's adult literacy program, helping Russian immigrant students develop their reading, writing, and speaking skills.

While Irina Ziyu's experience in the American educational system is different than in Russia, she said she finds value in both. "Studying here in the United States has helped me to realize that everything we learn in the past will help us in the future," she said. "Although my past and present educational experiences are very different, both have the same ultimate goal: to educate students as well as they can. I am glad that I am involved in this process and can help other people too."

Patterson, a Las Vegas native, has made significant contributions to the college's German Club, serving as its president, communications officer, and club representative. She is also active with the college's History Club and the Queer Penguins and Allies organization, and volunteers at the Vancouver Vietnam War Memorial and with Columbia Land Trust, among other activities.

To learn more about the All-Washington Academic Team, visit [www.spscc.ctc.edu/allwa/index.html](http://www.spscc.ctc.edu/allwa/index.html).