

# President's Report

## July, 2008

We've Learned A Lot Over the Years.....

For 50 years, Clatsop Community College has served Clatsop County, focusing on providing the people in our communities with the education they have needed to better their futures. Having reached this milestone of a half-century of service, we take pride in what has been accomplished in our past. But we also look toward the future, making the preparations that will ensure we are here to provide this same service to our communities for the next 50 years. Part of ensuring this future has been our ongoing efforts to find creative solutions to our facilities needs and, while not everything we have tried has worked, we have learned a thing or two in the process.

In a sense, it all began back in January of 1977 when the College established an "Architectural Barriers Committee" to identify the structural barriers to full access on the Jerome Avenue campus. Almost six pages of barriers and proposed resolutions were identified by this group in their November 1977 Report and, according to that same report, work was to be completed by June 3, 1980. Unfortunately, much of the work was not completed at that time and many of the barriers to access remain to this day, 28 years later. And, over the past quarter of a century the College's Jerome Avenue facilities have, if anything, gotten worse while the internal and external pressures to achieve full accessibility have increased. In addition to the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prompted the 1977 Report, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and directives from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and the Civil Rights Office of the Oregon Department of Education have made us at the College more and more aware of the need for a fully accessible campus. At the same time, structural and safety codes have been strengthened while we have been reminded of the inevitability of a significant seismic event within the next 25 years or so. If it was not clear to us 28 years ago it is most certainly clear to us today that the Jerome Avenue campus is in serious need of facilities improvements.

It has also become manifestly clear over these past 28 years that the College's facilities problems can not be resolved with only its own limited operational resources.

In 1980 progress on facilities improvements was seriously impeded by the lack of resources when the College more often than not simply "didn't do" out of an attitude of "making do." But today we know that not doing this important work simply "won't do" any longer, and so we are committed to finding the resources necessary to do the work that we know needs to be done.

This "new" commitment to finding the resources necessary to address the College's facilities isn't really all that new. Instead, beginning in the late 1990's, good people at the College and in our community began a spirited effort to identify new solutions to the College's facilities challenges, and new possible revenue sources for their implementation. While the resulting 2002 Bond did not pass, it did serve as the first in a number of very important lessons for us; lessons that have informed our subsequent efforts to secure the College's future for our community.

Over these past eight years, many possible solutions have been developed and considered. A whole new “from the ground up” campus on the Jerome Avenue site, new campuses in or adjacent to downtown Astoria, a campus at Tongue Point, and a campus in Warrenton, together with their respective funding strategies, were developed and corresponding Bond Measures were sent to the voters of Clatsop County. And, while each of these proposed facilities solutions had their own merits, the people of our County saw limitations as well and so voted down two more Bond Measures; one in November 2006 and one in May 2007.

Anecdotally, we at the College heard over and over again that, while the people of this County supported the College and wanted to affirm its place and important purpose in our community, there were specific aspects of the projects we were asking them to support that did not meet their needs. We at the College listened, and we learned, and the Jerome Campus Redevelopment Project incorporates this learning in a way that we sincerely believe will merit the support of our community.

So, just what have we learned, and how is this learning reflected in this Jerome Campus Redevelopment Project (JCRP) that you may now be asked to support?

First, we’ve learned that this project needs to respect and build on the resources we already have – especially those that have strong historic meaning and value to us as a community. So, instead of proposing a whole new campus, the JCRP is a “redevelopment” project, taking the best of what we already have – things like the historic Towler Hall – and adding to them the modern laboratories and classrooms and technologies that we need to better serve our students. Towler Hall, fully restored into a historic AND state-of-the-art teaching and learning environment, plus a new building that will house classes and laboratories for Nursing, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and many other of our core programs. JCRP is a blend of the future and the past, saving history and saving money at the same time.

Second, we’ve learned that this project needs to reflect the values of dependability and durability that have characterized our community throughout the years. Some have told us “we don’t want a Taj Mahal,” and we have heard this as a desire for functionality – and the JCRP certainly is this. Nor is the JCRP in the least bit plain, or uninspired, but instead it is a project that focuses on practical beauty that will result in a campus that will both last a long time and that we as a community will be proud to have with us for a long time to come. The “new” word for this might be Sustainability, but what it really is functionality at its best.

Third, we’ve learned that this project needs to respect not just the financial limitations of the College, but of our Community as well. While we as a community are rich in many ways, this does not necessarily include resources that can be expended without careful consideration. Many in our community are on a fixed income, and any request for community tax support must be respectful of this reality. That is why we have worked so hard to contain the cost of the JCRP, and then to find much of the required funding from other sources. Whereas previous projects were estimated to cost upwards of \$60 million, the JCRP is a \$25 million project AND \$20 million of this has already been raised from

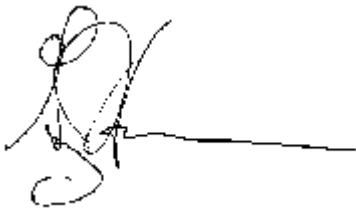
other sources! So, unlike the previous Bond Measures that asked for somewhere between \$20 and \$30 million, the JCRP Bond Measure proposed for the November 2008 ballot is for \$5 million – less than 1/4<sup>th</sup> of even the smallest previous Bond. It is estimated that the repayment cost to the average Clatsop County homeowner will be about \$11.15 per year.

Finally, we've learned that, while this project needs to reflect a solid plan for the future – and a bright and promising future at that – we don't necessarily need or want to build all of that future now. And so the JCRP incorporates the idea of "phases" into its design. The JCRP is a significant but singular step toward a Master Plan for the Jerome Avenue Campus, allowing us to address all of our immediate facilities challenges while at the same time positioning us for the "next step" that can then be taken when the need and resources present themselves. Phasing reduces the cost of the JCRP, and it allows us to adjust our plans as each subsequent phase accommodates whatever unforeseen developments become a part of our future as a community.

Our history of not doing in order to make do simply won't do any longer. The Jerome Campus Redevelopment Project is a solid plan for building on our history and on our current assets, providing a reliable, attractive, and sustainable campus, and doing so within the resources that we possess as a community. It is all these things because we have listened, and we have learned.

In 2003, my wife Rita and I came to Clatsop Community College and immediately we fell in love with both the College and the community. In the five years since, my affection for "Clatsop" as a people and as a place has only grown as I have seen faculty, staff, and students do amazing things in facilities that are anything but conducive to this important work. I am passionate about Clatsop, and this passion has, for me, fueled an unrelenting effort to help us find a solution to our College's facilities challenges. This is not something I can do alone. But I do believe that, as your president, I have a role to play with you in making sure this important task is completed, for the sake of this community and this College that we all have come to love.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Hamann', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Greg Hamann