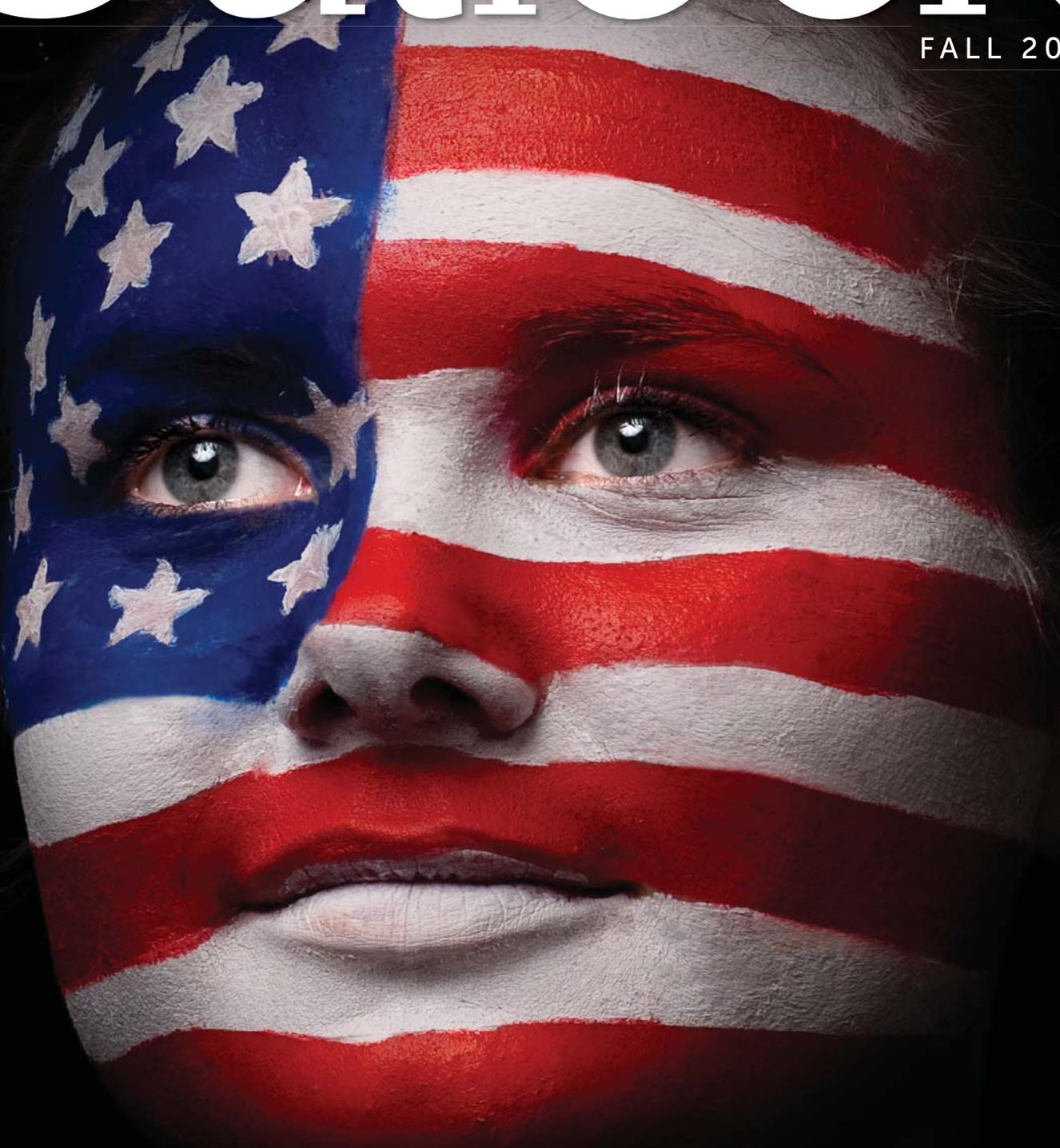


COLUMBIA BASIN COLLEGE

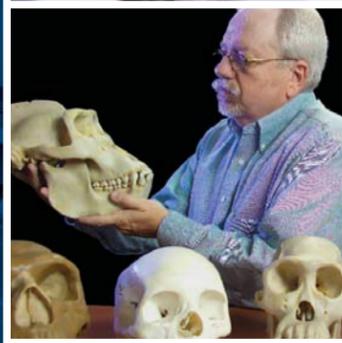
Outlook

FALL 2010



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About this Issue

"The Composition of American Culture" is the theme of this issue. In a country as diverse as the United States, what constitutes being American? Outlook explores this topic as it relates to Columbia Basin College's diverse student body and faculty.

Spanish summaries written by Amy Stroud, Casey Roberts, and Dawn Alford. Translation provided by Lorena Barboza.

LETTERS



American culture would be an oxymoron if not for our uniquely American ideas about government's subordination to the will of the people. The oxymoron comes from the fact that America is truly a cultural pastiche, a medley of various ingredients brought here by people from all the nations of the world. What's as American as apple pie? Tacos, spaghetti, and eggrolls, to name just a few scrumptious dishes.

But beyond the cuisine, the people who brought new foods and traditions were pulled by the magnet of freedom, which has been the foundation of our nation of immigrants since our birth and first words, "We the people." So while we are a nation with many diverse cultural practices, we are united and bound to one another by our belief in individual liberty and equality before the law.

I hope you enjoy this newest edition of Outlook!

Richard Cummins
PRESIDENT



There are many ways to describe American culture, but perhaps one of its most important aspects has been its ability to integrate aspects from the backgrounds of immigrants from many nations throughout the word to forge what we now call American culture. While we get our national language from England, there are many words from languages like French, Spanish, and German that have given us words (rodeo, elite, angst) that have become part of the "American" language. American cuisine is another area where influences from various nations have contributed, since one can easily find French bread, tortillas, and bagels in your local grocery store. And last, but not least, the variety of American musical styles from rock, to jazz, to tex-mex, to Cajun also demonstrate that American culture could above all else be described as a culture that blends and integrates newcomers.

While the integration and acceptance of every immigrant wave comes with at least some resistance, I am optimistic that in the long run the ideals of equality of opportunity, freedom of thought and religion, and the belief that honesty, integrity, and hard work are more important than any differences that people may have.

I hope you enjoy the articles in this volume of Outlook magazine. Each article serves to demonstrate, at least in one small way, how the varied backgrounds of our staff, students, and faculty help to create and strengthen what we call American culture.

Martín Valadez
VICE PRESIDENT FOR DIVERSITY & OUTREACH



RICH BENJAMIN'S SEARCHING FOR WHITOPIA

by Dawn Alford

Despite our nation's growing racial diversity, America is surprisingly more segregated now than it was in the 1970s. With more people of color flocking to cities and suburbs, some whites exodus to small towns that are predominately, even extremely, white.

"Call these places White Meccas. Or White Wonderlands... Or Blatched Bunker Communities... I call them Whitopia," writes Rich Benjamin, author of *Searching for Whitopia*.

Benjamin shared insights into this phenomenon during two talks at Columbia Basin College on June 7th. *Whitopia* took him on a nearly 27,000-mile journey into the heart of white America, to some of the fastest-growing and whitest locations in our country—venturing where many people of color dare not. He embarked on a three-day white-separatist retreat with links to Aryan Nations (north Idaho) to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue's upper echelon to the Mormon-established town of Dixie, Utah.

His unique vantage point gave exposure to racial, social, and political issues that appear to be dividing the American people, as well as commonalities that could bring the country closer together.

Perhaps, most noteworthy was Benjamin's discovery that for the first time in American history, many whites are questioning the future prosperity of their children; uncertain whether a better life for them is obtainable. According to Benjamin, immigrants (legal or otherwise) are seen as endangering America's future by costing taxpayers money for social services, taking jobs, and not contributing to a more 'relaxed' way of life. Consequently, this economic uncertainty is at the heart of immigration reform.

On the surface, talks of race are relatively still; yet, beneath an undercurrent looms. Benjamin explained that within these circles, race was not overtly talked about as an issue. Instead, he recounted examples such as an ex-Californian who relocated to a Whitopia because, "we wanted to move before things got too 'undesirable.'"

Benjamin noted progress in that race relations between individuals have substantially improved. This was true even during his travels within Whitopias.

But the contrary is true within group dynamics, such as political organizations. This was common among whites living in and outside of Whitopias, regardless of age and economic status,

according to Benjamin. As a result, this has played out in today's social inequities within zoning, labor policies, sub/urban planning, social and racial conflict resolution, community development, environmental policy, as well as local and national immigration reform.

"We must find the common good," stated Benjamin, "if we are to solve today's issues."

Whitopias account for 286 counties and 39 metropolitan areas in the United States. These whitest "best place to live" communities are found throughout the U.S.; including five counties in Washington state: Columbia, Jefferson, Pend Oreille, Skamania, Mason.

A pesar de la creciente diversidad racial, Estados Unidos está más separado ahora que en la década de 1970. El Dr. Rich Benjamin, autor de *En busca de Whitopia*, visitó Columbia Basin College para explicar esta anomalía. Con más gente de color mudándose a las ciudades y los suburbios, algunos blancos se están reuniendo en pequeños pueblos que son extremadamente blancos. El llama a estos lugares *Whitopias*. La investigación de Benjamin expuso asuntos que parecen estar dividiendo a Estados Unidos, y los puntos comunes que nos podrían acercar.

OUTREACH



by Roy Garcia

LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

The Department of Outreach at Columbia Basin College (CBC) must confront major obstacles that restrict students from attending post-secondary education. Many students are still kept out of the pipeline due to various obstacles at home and within their community. These barriers are particularly prominent in students of color. Others may be better prepared, but are discouraged by a lengthy college commitment and high tuition costs. For female students, a lack of role models and discouragement from pursuing post-secondary education from an early age may take their toll.

The United States has been addressing many of these concerns, but needs to do more to support students of color as they pursue their American Dream.

CBC is taking the necessary steps towards assisting students in making a seamless transition from primary to secondary education and secondary

to post-secondary education. CBC supports the development and enrichment of a learning culture that provides college awareness, advising, and readiness support in our community's middle and high schools. Partnering with various foundations and organizations, and obtaining various grants has supported our efforts in early outreach and college preparation.

One of our partners is the Washington College Access Network (WCAN). This is a new organization in Washington state designed to improve preparation and access to higher education to all students through a network of community organizations. The collaboration promotes and supports the use of best practices, leverages training opportunities, and supports public policies to ensure that all students have the opportunity and tools to succeed in higher education.

Through WCAN and other outreach efforts, CBC has brought more than 8,000 low-income and students of

color from area middle and high schools to campus. Our investment in early outreach serves to expose these students to higher education, show that CBC is a viable option in their future, and potentially make these students the first in their families to graduate from college. This exposure is at the cusp of what is needed to level the playing field to higher education.

La Red de Acceso de la Universidad de Washington (WCAN en inglés) en asociación con Columbia Basin College y el Departamento de Extensión, ha reunido con éxito, en el campus de CBC, a más de 8,000 estudiantes de bajos ingresos y de color de las escuelas secundarias e intermedias del área. WCAN es una nueva organización en el estado de Washington, diseñada para mejorar la preparación y el acceso de los estudiantes a la educación superior, a través de una red de organizaciones comunitarias.

ESL PROFESSOR AIDS DEVELOPMENT OF OPEN COURSE LIBRARY

by Meg Molton

Many college faculty across the state are currently involved in an Open Course Library project and are busy designing digital courses for 81 high-enrollment classes. This huge project is a part of the Washington State Student Completion Initiative funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Washington State Legislature.



Dr. Yongsheng Sun, Multicultural Global Citizen expert (center).

The courses are being designed for face to face, hybrid and/or online delivery, and will lower textbook costs and provide new resources for college faculty, while improving student access and course success for students. The goal is to improve and break down key barriers to student completion.

Dr. Yongsheng Sun, Associate Professor of English as a Second Language at CBC, is engaged in the project as the Multicultural Global Citizen expert. He provided initial training to the faculty course designers on integrating multicultural and global citizenship themes appropriate to course content. He discussed how to include critical perspectives throughout the course curriculum, for example, communications across cultures,

multiple political views, and cultural/religious/institutional awareness. Currently he is acting as an ongoing resource and support to the faculty as they continue to design the initial courses, and will be closely involved until the final product is approved for use.

When asked about the experience, Yongsheng said, "This open course library concept is an amazing, promising project that gets everyone excited. It is changing the world one course at a time. I am much honored to be a part of it, and to play a role in this revolutionary effort which will provide quality education and open access to students far beyond Washington state."

El profesorado universitario en Washington diseña en estos momentos cursos digitales para 81 clases, como parte del plan Clases abiertas en la biblioteca. Este proyecto es parte de la iniciativa "Conclusión de los estudios" del estado de Washington, creada por la Fundación Bill y Melinda Gates y la legislatura del estado de Washington. Entre los principales objetivos de estos nuevos cursos están bajar los costos de los libros de texto, proporcionar nuevos recursos, y mejorar el acceso de los estudiantes, para lograr el éxito y obtención de un título.

REVITALIZING
DOWNTOWN
PASCO



CONCEPTUAL VIEW
(EXTERIOR OPTION 1 - LOOKING SOUTHEAST)

by Rolando Garcia

Throughout many of the businesses in downtown Pasco, many local merchants begin and end each day trying desperately to live the American Dream. Some may have faced numerous obstacles to get to where they are at now, but it is a way of life; a life of determination for providing their respective families a better life. This will and mindset mirrors the very principles this great nation was built upon and it usually resonates and encompasses the whole family.

Different generations throughout the family structure are also influential in many of the business practices. As sons and daughters embark upon the family business and take on more managerial duties, they are now becoming the decision makers. The end result may then become a culmination of more “Americanized” views but with old-heritage values and customs. Though the Latino influence in the downtown business district of Pasco is steady and growing, there is a variety and distinct difference amongst the business owners. Influence is strong; it entails people coming from dif-

ferent parts of our country and/or having origins from different states of Mexico.

Columbia Basin College’s HUD HSIAC grant, along with Community and Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding through the City of Pasco and Pasco Downtown Development Association (PDDA) are responsible for providing a number of resources to the local business owners of Pasco. These resources include the façade improvement program, which is designed to help in increasing the business traffic flow throughout the Pasco downtown

district. Other phases include small business workshops entailing a plethora of topics that deal with basic business practices. All of these resources are instrumental in keeping the “American Dream” alive as it not only educates business owners with the hope of expanding or streamlining their business, but it also helps in retaining small businesses, which are the backbone to America’s economic machine. As the economy tightens, it is important to maintain the efforts of keeping small business afloat. Small businesses are crucial to any local economy.

Muchos comerciantes locales en el centro de Pasco comienzan y terminan cada día tratando desesperadamente de vivir el “Sueño Americano.” El subsidio HUD HSIAC de Columbia Basin College, junto al Fondo Comunal y de Desarrollo (CDBG en inglés) financian a través de la ciudad de Pasco y la Asociación para el Desarrollo del Centro de la Ciudad de Pasco (PDDA en inglés) una serie de recursos a los dueños de negocios locales de Pasco.



by Meg Molton

POSTERS
CELEBRATE
STUDENT
SUCCESS

As you walk through the A building, you may pause to examine and be inspired by the framed posters lining the walls. You may wonder just who this diverse group of people represents, and what they might have in common.

In fact, they are just a very small sampling of the many successful Adult Basic Education students who come back to CBC to get an education that will improve their job opportunities. The posters also feature local business representatives who are active supporters of Adult Literacy, and who appreciate the contribution of an educated workforce to the economy of our area.

Columbia Basin College Basic Skills & Transitional Studies Division created this display as a celebration of Adult Literacy Week, to highlight representative stories of our incredible students. The posters were recognized as being so meaningful, that smaller versions were

used by the State Board for Community and Technical Education in presentations to DC stakeholders emphasizing the concept that better skills lead to better jobs and a better Washington state. Currently, two of the posters are hanging in U.S. Senator Patty Murray’s and Congressman Norm Dick’s offices.

Here is a sampling of some of the students whose stories we celebrated:

Angel Venegas dropped out of high school to help support his family but later returned to CBC to obtain his GED. He went on to earn his Commercial Driving License and an AA Transfer degree in psychology. He is now earning a livable wage and has goals to earn his B.A.

Phonesavanh Syuanouthai came to the U.S. not knowing any English. She first took ESL classes and then went on to

earn her GED and both her Nursing Assistant Certified (NAC) and Phlebotomy certificate.

Rebecca Guizar dropped out of the seventh grade. In the following years, she ran a family business and raised five children but desired to do something different. Rebecca came to CBC to earn her GED. She is now employed by Washington State University.

Haga una pausa en su camino y observe los carteles enmarcados que cubren las paredes del edificio A. ¿Quiénes son estos estudiantes?, ¿qué tienen en común? Ellos son algunos de los estudiantes exitosos de la Educación Básica para Adultos que asisten a Columbia Basin College (CBC) con el fin de conseguir una educación que mejore sus oportunidades de empleo. El programa de Destrezas Básicas y la División de Estudios de Transición de CBC han creado esta muestra para celebrar la Semana de la Alfabetización de los Adultos.



EDUCATED, SELF-MADE, RELIGIOUS, EQUAL, FAMILY ORIENTED...

Americans Epitomized

by Miriam Fierro

The following is a “transcript” of a facilitated discussion with the current 2010-2011 College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) Scholars.

Facilitator: In a sentence, what is American culture? (Excerpts from a class discussion.)

CAMP Scholar(s): American culture is having the freedom to say what you want because of how you feel.
 CAMP Scholar(s): The American culture is all about working and paying bills, going out to eat and the notion of feeling safe and secure.
 CAMP Scholar(s): I believe American culture is one-of-a-kind freedom that no other nation can compare to.
 CAMP Scholar(s): For me, American culture is the many opportunities you get in life to become a successful person and the many new things you learn that you never knew before.
 CAMP Scholar(s): The American culture is about remembering historic pasts of the U.S. and recognizing those who fought for this country.

Facilitator: Create a list to describe American culture. Then, determine which of those items you listed best describes American culture.

CAMP Scholar(s): Educated, wealthy, strong, and democratic. Educated; because without education, we wouldn't be where we are today as a country.
 CAMP Scholar(s): Active voters, unionized, and self-made. Self-made; being self-made is what encourages people to want to have a “good life.”
 CAMP Scholar(s): Opportunistic, religious, wealthy, unique, and picture perfect. Religious; religious freedom is what brought the first Americans here.
 CAMP Scholar(s): Free, happy, equal, and multicultural. Equal; at the end of the day, we all just want to be

“For me, American culture is the many opportunities you get in life to become a successful person and the many new things you learn that you never knew before.”

CBC CAMP Students

respected and treated fairly; that is what's great about America.
 CAMP Scholar(s): Family orientated, a “tad” more modernized, goal setters, and diverse. Diverse; we all come here from different places and it's what makes this such a great country!

In essence, this “transcript” shows how across the board our current CAMP Scholars perceive American culture. They, without a doubt, are optimistic and hopeful about the many splendors American culture has to offer them as they continue to work towards their degrees. And the CAMP team is excited to have the opportunity to positively influence and empower our scholars!

El Programa de la CAMP ayuda a estudiantes de familias migrantes y de trabajadores agrícolas, o de temporada, en su primer año de universidad. Los estudiantes de CAMP están optimistas y esperanzados con las ricas posibilidades que la cultura estadounidense les ofrece mientras continúan estudiando para obtener sus títulos. ¡El personal de CAMP está entusiasmado con la oportunidad de influir positivamente apoyando a nuestros estudiantes!



REFLECTIONS OF THE
"AMERICAN"
 EXPERIENCE

One-third of Columbia Basin College's Upward Bound students are immigrants. Another third are born from immigrant parents. And there are Upward Bound students preparing to be the first in their families to graduate from college, whose families have been in this country for many generations. The following article details the perspectives of two Upward Bound students related to their "American" experience.

by Susan Vega



MY NAME IS MANUEL RUIZ.

I was born in Guanajuato, Mexico. I am from a very religious state, where family is of the utmost importance. I have lived for nine years in the United States and am the first generation to attend college. My family is most proud of the education we have achieved in the United States and the opportunity to begin a new cycle here. What I hope for is to be treated equally and with respect, to have access to education, to have fair employment, to be able to live freely, and to count in society. I predict that seven to 10 years from now I will be able to attain the hopes and dreams of my family. My biggest disappointment is seeing Americans who have a chance to progress and decide not to take the opportunity. If I could change anything here in the United States, I would change people's minds from the stereotypes they hold about those who are different from themselves.

(Manuel is in his second year at Columbia Basin College.)



I AM ALEXANDRA CLIFTON.

My ethnic background and countries represented in my culture are: German, Filipino, White, and Alaskan Native American. My mom is from Juneau, Alaska and grew up with a Mormon family and also in a children's home. My father was born in Pasco. He is Lutheran and a Vietnam veteran. All of the generations of my family, as far as I can remember, were born in the United States. I will be the first in my family to graduate from college. My expectations are that I will then have a great career, feel successful, and be able to provide for myself and family. As an "American" my greatest value is freedom. My family and I are very proud of my dad and brother's military service. What I would like to change for all Americans would be to tax only the upper income citizens and allow more of a chance to the lower class.

(Alexandra graduates from Chiawana High School, June 2011.)

Dos tercios de los estudiantes del programa Upward Bound que estudian en CBC son inmigrantes o tienen padres inmigrantes, mientras que otros provienen de familias que han estado en Estados Unidos por muchas generaciones. Todos ellos serán la primera generación de graduados de la universidad comunitaria. Manuel Ruiz, expresa sus ideales sobre la cultura estadounidense desde la perspectiva de un inmigrante recién llegado. Alexandra Clifton, cuya familia ha vivido en este país por generaciones, comparte sus esperanzas y su orgullo como ciudadana estadounidense.

A HAVEN FOR
**CULTURAL
RICHNESS**

by Amy Stroud



Through the Higher Education Act of 1965, our nation has maintained a commitment to providing educational opportunity for all Americans and legal residents regardless of ethnic background or economic circumstance. In support of this commitment, Congress established a series of TRiO programs to help under-represented groups of students enter college, graduate, and move on to a more prosperous life.

In honor of our nation's commitment to strengthen America through higher education, Student Support Services/TRiO has selected two very outstanding individuals to showcase their thoughts about their perceptions of American culture: Carla Cribb (CC) and Erik Ben-Zekry (EBZ).

EBZ: The United States is a haven for cultural richness and social innovation because of our diverse population's ability to freely exchange ideas, allowing us to gain a greater understanding of our humanity.

WHAT IS AMERICAN TO YOU?

CC: America is rich with diversity which is a significant reason that I feel that America is so great. Being American to me means embracing diversity with an open mind and positive perspective. This enables each of us to learn and grow from our differences.

EBZ: I believe that being American offers the reassurance of living in a just land encompassing integrity and equality with an inimitable system of checks and balances, as well as opportunity for all who strive toward prosperity.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE DIVERSE POPULATIONS THAT COMPOSE THE UNITED STATES?

CC: The United States is a nation of immigrants which I believe is something extraordinary. I believe that language is a primary force which can serve as a gateway for better understanding and embracing the beauty in other peoples' cultures.

HOW IS STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES (SSS) REPRESENTATIVE OF DIVERSE POPULATIONS? DO YOU FEEL THAT THIS IS HELPFUL?

CC: SSS's group of friendly, helpful people have been there for me to lean on for support. I am a non-traditional and first-generation student and have received services that have helped me navigate my way successfully through the educational system. SSS has made my journey through higher education an enjoyable one.

EBZ: SSS is composed of dedicated individuals from a variety of backgrounds who have formed a supportive family setting where students are encouraged to persevere while their academic ambitions are nourished.

Student Support Services/TRiO programs are funded by the U.S. Department of Education and can be found in colleges and universities throughout our nation.

A través de la Ley de Educación Superior de 1965, nuestro país ha mantenido el compromiso de proveer oportunidades educativas para todos los estadounidenses y residentes legales, independientemente de su origen étnico o circunstancia económica. En honor al compromiso de los Estados Unidos por fortalecerse a través de la educación superior, el programa de Servicios de Apoyo Estudiantil/TRiO (SSS/TRiO en inglés) ha seleccionado a dos personas sobresalientes para compartir sus ideas y percepciones de la cultura estadounidense: Carla Cribb y Erik Ben-Zekry.

WHAT IS AMERICAN?

A VIEW THROUGH HEP STUDENTS

by Adán Suárez



The definition of an “American” is not necessarily based on race, color, national origin, or religion. An American is not the same thing as simply living in the United States. What distinguishes this nation from others, and what unites different people who make up our country, are unique political, economic, and social values, beliefs, and institutions.

Columbia Basin College High School Equivalency Program (HEP) students believe that “Americans” are immigrants of different nationalities who live in the United States and work for their living and work for a better future. Of course, it is something more than merely living in this country, speaking English, obeying the law, and holding a job. Americans are the dreams of opportunities made into realities.

Harry S. Truman once said, “You know that you being an American is more than a matter of where your parents came from. It is a belief that all men are created free and equal and that everyone deserves an even break.” HEP students can relate to this. They want to feel accepted, equal, and even given a second chance at an opportunity to better their lives. In this case, many have chosen education as the vehicle. For the population served by HEP, migrant and seasonal farm workers, that is the case and HEP has provided them with that opportunity, an opportunity of education and placement into post-secondary education, career position, or the military.

American culture is one big melting pot of many mixed cultures into one. One HEP student expressed, “to be American it is to adapt or assimilate to the customs of this country. It is a privilege

“Americans are the dreams of opportunities made into realities.”

CBC HEP Students

to live in such a nation of freedom, one which many other countries do not have. Many immigrants have fled their countries to find truth in the dream, the opportunity, and the freedom.”

As HEP students gain the opportunities that this great nation provides, they begin obtaining values and culture acquiring a change in their life by becoming “an American.” The new American acquires the role to transform other immigrants to become “Americans” by their example. This is the dream. This is what it means to be an “American.”

Los estudiantes participantes en el Programa de Equivalencia de Educación Secundaria (HEP en inglés) del Columbia Basin College creen que los estadounidenses son inmigrantes de diferentes nacionalidades que vienen a los Estados Unidos para trabajar por un futuro mejor. HEP ha apoyado las esperanzas que muchos estudiantes tienen para un futuro mejor al ofrecerles oportunidades para obtener su educación secundaria, y ganar un lugar en la educación post-secundaria, en una profesión o en el ejército.

PAVING PATHWAYS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS



by Daphne Larios

Opportunity Grant is a state-funded grant that began at Columbia Basin College in 2007. The grant assists low-income adults to complete up to 45 college credits and earn a degree or certificate in a specific professional technical program that will lead them to employment in high-wage, high-demand careers.

Currently, the Opportunity Grant funds qualified students in the Administrative Office Technology, Automotive Technology, Early Childhood Education, Health Information Technology, and many Health Science programs. In addition to financial support, Opportunity Grant supports students by providing mentoring, tutoring, financial assistance, and emergency assistance for housing and child care.

Opportunity Grant serves a wide variety of students from very diverse backgrounds. Grant recipients represent native-born students and students from countries all over the world and their cultural differences and beliefs about education are as diverse as the students themselves.

Students arrive at CBC with long-held beliefs about the kind of people who can attend college and what it takes to be a successful student. Many are fearful they do not have the skills to do well. They are surprised to discover that college is truly a land of opportunity and if they are willing to work hard and be persistent, they can be successful both at college and in life. There are many students who are surprised to discover the wide variety of support services that are available to help them on their journey. A common feeling from Opportunity Grant students is expressed well by one student who said, "We can't believe how much education is valued here in this country. We are so thankful that not only are we provided an education, it is like they truly want us to learn and succeed."

There are a variety of different reasons for students to seek assistance from the Opportunity Grant. Some are seeking retraining due to a recent job loss. Others are looking to update their skills in order to enjoy

continued employment in their current occupation, and some are simply excited to begin college coursework for the very first time. Most students express the need for training that is short term to allow them to find employment quickly upon completion of their degree or certificate.

Since 2007, the number of students who have stayed with the Opportunity Grant program over the course of a school year is 88 percent. This success is evidence of how CBC and the Opportunity Grant are a perfect combination that joins financial and student support services helping students to reach and achieve their ultimate educational goals.

El Subsidio Oportunidad ayuda a los adultos de bajos ingresos a completar hasta 45 créditos de la universidad comunitaria y obtener un título o certificado en un programa específico de profesionales técnicos; de esta forma, conseguirán un trabajo con altos salarios, en carreras de alta demanda. Desde el 2007, el 88% de los estudiantes de CBC han permanecido en el programa anual. Este éxito es una prueba de cómo CBC y el Subsidio Oportunidad son una combinación perfecta para ayudar a los estudiantes a alcanzar sus metas educativas.



MESA

DICHOTOMY

- AS MUCH AMERICAN AS AMERICA ITSELF

by Gabriela Whitemarsh

What does it mean to be "American?" For many, it means to be born in the United States. For others, it means to be born in one of the American continents. Regardless of each person's own opinion, I pose the following questions. What if we were born in El Salvador and moved to the United States and were told we are not American? Is it enough to be born in a certain region to be a part of that culture? How does the simple fact of where we are born affect what we are called to do, how we are supposed to think and behave, and what we are supposed to feel, believe, and value?

The students within the Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) Community College program at Columbia Basin College continuously deal with these very questions.

The MESA Community College program serves first-generation under-represented minority students seeking a degree in a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) based field. These Ameri-

can students have grown up in homes that highly value education, but through no fault of their own, lack the necessary resources to know what it means to be college-ready in this country, what the expectations are of incoming freshmen students, and how to fully make use of all the resources on a college campus. Thus, the American lives these students lead are vastly different from their peers who grew up with a very different idea of what it means to be American.

The beauty of this highly complex relationship is that it is that very core of what makes America what it is. Specifically, America is made up of a multitude of countries, who although have vastly different philosophies, political structures, economic stability, and social responsibility, they all are in pursuit of success for their people.

The American culture is one that cannot be simply defined to understand what it is or means, but rather, can only be experienced. It is our responsibility to learn from these amazing students and look outside

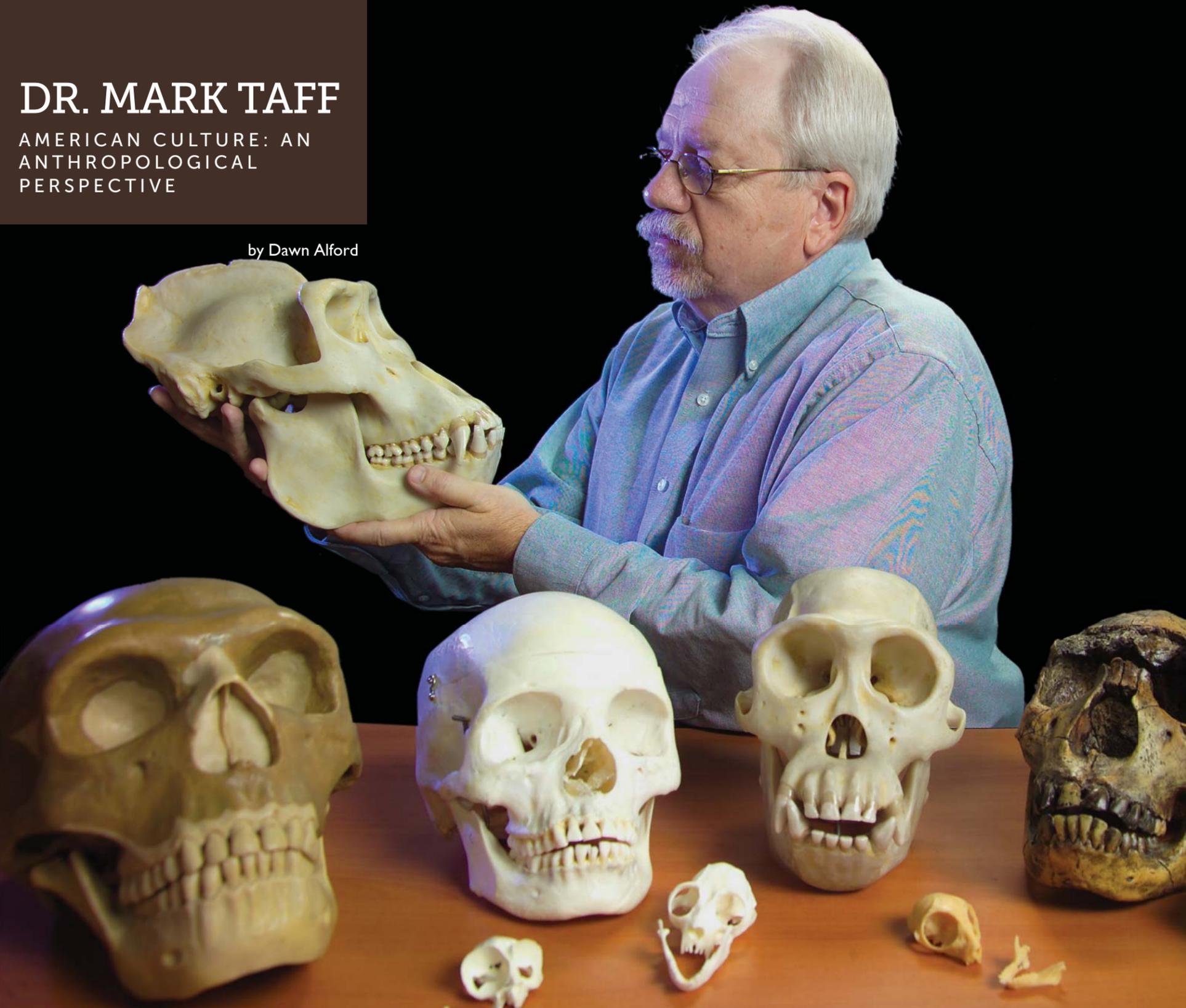
of our own world, take part in this ever-changing environment, and embrace the diversity that exists.

El programa MESA (por sus siglas en inglés: Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement) de la universidad comunitaria ayuda a la primera generación de una minoría estudiantil poco representada que sigue estudios en ciencias, tecnología, ingeniería o matemáticas (STEM). Estos estudiantes aunque valoran la educación, es posible que no sepan lo que significa la preparación universitaria, lo que se espera de los estudiantes universitarios en el primer año, o cómo conocer un campus. MESA los conecta con los recursos disponibles ayudándolos a convertirse en futuros líderes americanos en los campos del STEM.

DR. MARK TAFF

AMERICAN CULTURE: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

by Dawn Alford



I posed what I thought was a simple question to Biological Anthropologist and CBC Associate Professor Mark Taff, Ph.D. What followed was a most enlightening conversation on culture.

The question: What is American culture?

Dr. Taff began by asking a question of his own, “How are we going to define culture? If you talk about the composition of American culture, one thing is clear, we are an immigrant culture. Almost everybody is an immigrant.”

“Every wave of immigration has brought in more vitality that’s done a lot to shape the nature of the country. But again, how would you define it?” he asked.

According to Taff, it’s difficult, from an anthropological perspective, to define culture. To do this you need to determine three key points: the specific rules, standards, and norms that unite a people.

“Our country is so large and diverse. I don’t know of one single unified shared belief that would unify us all as a culture,” stated Taff.

Instead, Taff described the need for a ‘super culture’ concept, defined as sharing certain things but allowing room for variation. Americans vary from region to region, generation to generation, occupation to occupation, thus ‘super culture’ is malleable to these differences.

Although, this country’s makeup is diverse, Taff recognized common traits of Americans. The sense of being individualistic, for instance, is an American norm. We are trained from an early age to be more competitive

and look out for yourself or your own. We also believe that we control our world and what happens to us. In addition, Americans share an inherent sense of fairness. That does not mean that Americans always act in a fair way, but we do wish for fairness. We also are willing to take risks.

Other than that, “We are such a pluralistic society that other things like religion, marriage, kinship, don’t work here (U.S.) because we have brought in so many different people from so many different cultures that the traditional things that you would generally look for that define a culture have been so blended and mixed,” suggests Taff.

With the blending and cultural variety, people in the U.S. are free to pick what they want.

“We live in a kind of cultural smorgasbord—what do I eat, get married, don’t get married, work, don’t work, work 70 hours a week or 20,” rattles Taff.

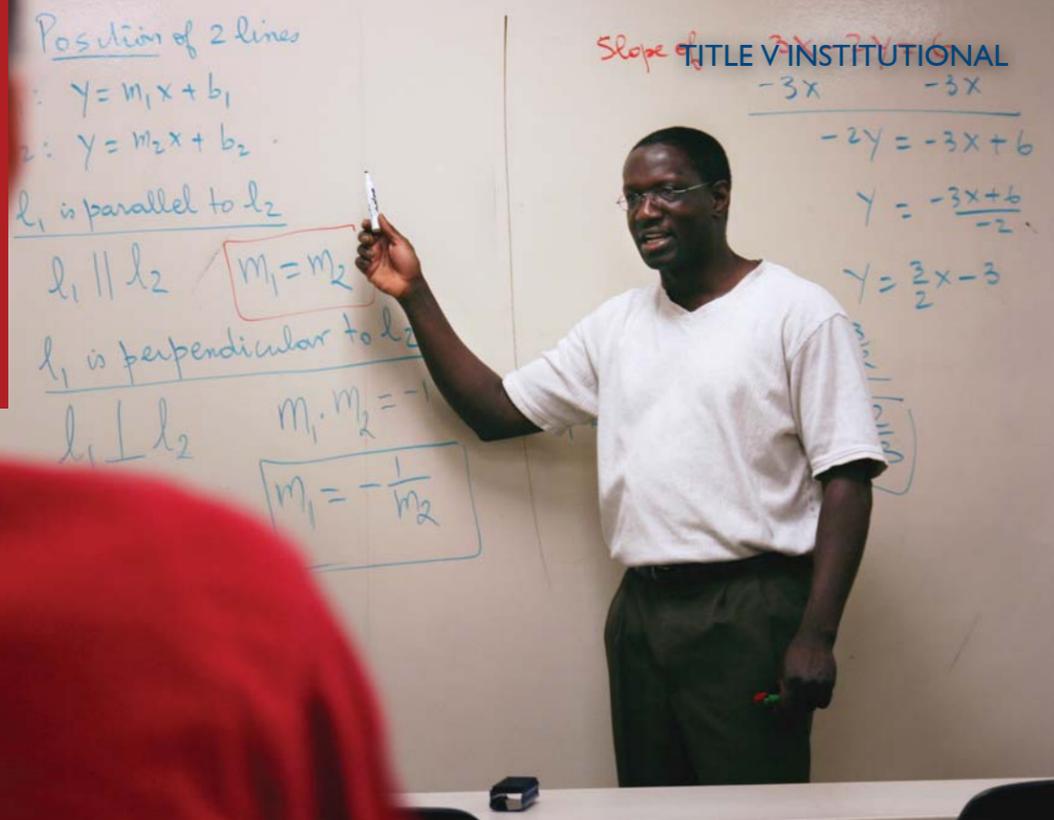
These qualities, in and of themselves, are not unique to the U.S. However, when grouped together, they exemplify American culture.

Mark Taff, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor at CBC where he has taught for 11 years. His courses include: Survey of Anthropology, Biological Anthropology, and Cultural Anthropology. Dr. Taff earned his Doctor of Physical Anthropology from U.C. Berkeley.

El Dr. Mark Taff, sostuvo una conversación esclarecedora sobre la cultura desde una perspectiva antropológica. En referencia a la cultura estadounidense, él considera que el país es tan grande y diverso que no hay una sola creencia unificada y compartida que nos una como cultura. En cambio, Taff describe la necesidad de tener un concepto de ‘super cultura’ que incluya rasgos comunes permitiendo, al mismo tiempo, espacio para la variación.

BRIDGING
THE GAP

by Cruz Gonzalez



Over the last few years it has become clear that our nation is in desperate need of more professionals in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematic (STEM) fields. To encourage this growth the U.S. government has provided more federal grant opportunities to colleges and universities that focus on promoting such fields.

A report conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics tracked 12,000 undergraduates who entered college in the fall of 1995. The study found that in 1995, 18.6 percent of black students and 22.7 percent of Hispanic students began college interested in majoring in STEM fields, compared with 18 percent of White students and 26.4 percent of Asian-American students. Then by 2001, only 62.5 percent of Blacks and Hispanics majoring in STEM fields attained a bachelor's degree compared with 94.8 percent of Asian Americans and 86.7 percent of Whites.

According to this study, the biggest challenge with underrepresented students seems to be with the successful attainment

of a bachelor's degree in STEM fields.

One explanation for the low success rates has been attributed to the level of preparedness of these students when they enter college. Any students beginning college underprepared must take developmental courses that do not count towards their degree and these can oftentimes be a series of courses that may take a full year to complete. Classes that do not count towards graduation can be discouraging to any student and with the consistent increase of college tuition rates can become a financial burden.

Columbia Basin College's U.S. Department of Education funded Title V Institutional grant program has provided the college with several academic support tools to bridge the preparedness and achievement gaps for its students. In an attempt to tackle the preparedness issues, CBC's Title V staff has worked with math faculty to create workshops called Summer Academies of Mathematics (SAM). SAMs are two-week intensive math workshops de-

signed for students who test into developmental math and would like to retest into a higher math course, potentially saving CBC students time and money.

To deal with the achievement gap, Title V has funded a project conducted by several math faculty to develop online math videos that depict math concepts that students often struggle with. These two initiatives are only a glimpse into what CBC's Title V grant program has worked on to support the achievement of CBC students. Title V continues to work diligently not only to improve the performance of our historically underrepresented students, but to enhance the college experience for all.

El mayor desafío que enfrentan los estudiantes poco representados es el logro de su bachillerato en las áreas de la ciencia, la tecnología, la ingeniería y las matemáticas (STEM en inglés). Sólo el 62.5 por ciento de los negros y los hispanos que se especializan en campos de STEM alcanzan un grado de licenciatura en comparación con el 94.8 por ciento de los asiático-americanos y el 86.7 por ciento de los blancos. Con los fondos federales del Título V de Subsidio Institucional Columbia Basin College ha dotado el campus con varias herramientas de apoyo académico para unir la preparación y los logros de sus estudiantes.



Miriam Fierro
CAMP
College Assistance Migrant Program



Roy Garcia
Outreach



Adán Suárez
HEP
High School Equivalency Program



Gabriela Whitemarsh
MESA
Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement



Rolando Garcia
HUD HSIAC
Hispanic-Serving Institutions
Assisting Communities



Daphne Larios
Opportunity Grant



Amy Stroud
SSS (TRiO)
Student Support Services



Cruz Gonzalez
Title V Institutional Director/Assistant VP for
Grants Administration



Susan Vega
Upward Bound (TRiO)



Meg Molton
Dean for Basic Skills & Transitional
Studies/Interim Dean for the Library

The U.S. Department of Education provides 100% funding for the following Columbia Basin College federal programs for the 2010-11 academic year: College Assistance Migrant Program at \$402,947, Student Support Services at \$301,347, Upward Bound at \$366,988.00, High School Equivalency Program at \$450,026, and the Title V Institutional grant at \$573,665. Washington MESA Community College program grant is funded by the National Science Foundation through the University of Washington at \$275,000 from 2009-2014. The Community Focused Scholarship in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science scholarship program is funded by the National Science Foundation through Washington State University Tri-Cities at \$31,827 for the 2010-2011 academic year. The Washington College Access Network program is funded at \$20,000 from 2010-2011. HUD HSIAC grant is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development at \$600,000 from 2009-2012. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission provides funding for the following federal program: Nuclear Scholarship program at \$120,000 for the 2010-2011 academic year, Minority Serving Institution program at \$180,000 from 2010-2012, and the Nuclear Education Curricula Development grant program at \$100,000 for the 2010-2011 academic year. The Department of Energy provides funding for the Nuclear Energy University Programs-Infrastructure Support at \$166,389 for 2010-2011.

Columbia Basin College complies with the spirit and letter of state and federal laws, regulations and executive orders pertaining to civil rights, equal opportunity and affirmative action. CBC does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status, physical, mental or sensory disability, sexual orientation or Vietnam veteran status in its educational programs or employment. Questions may be referred to Camilla Glatt, Vice President for Human Resources & Legal Affairs, (509) 542-5548. Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to participate in all college sponsored events and programs. If you have a disability and require an accommodation, please contact the CBC Resource Center, (509) 547-4412, or TTY/TDD at (509) 546-0400. This notice is available in alternative media by request.

heritage awareness month events

July 2010–January 2011



July

Independence Day

September 15-October 15

Hispanic Heritage Month

October

Disability Awareness Month

November

American Indian Month

January

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



For a current list of events and times,
visit the diversity calendar

columbiabasin.edu/diversity