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Portland State Magazine

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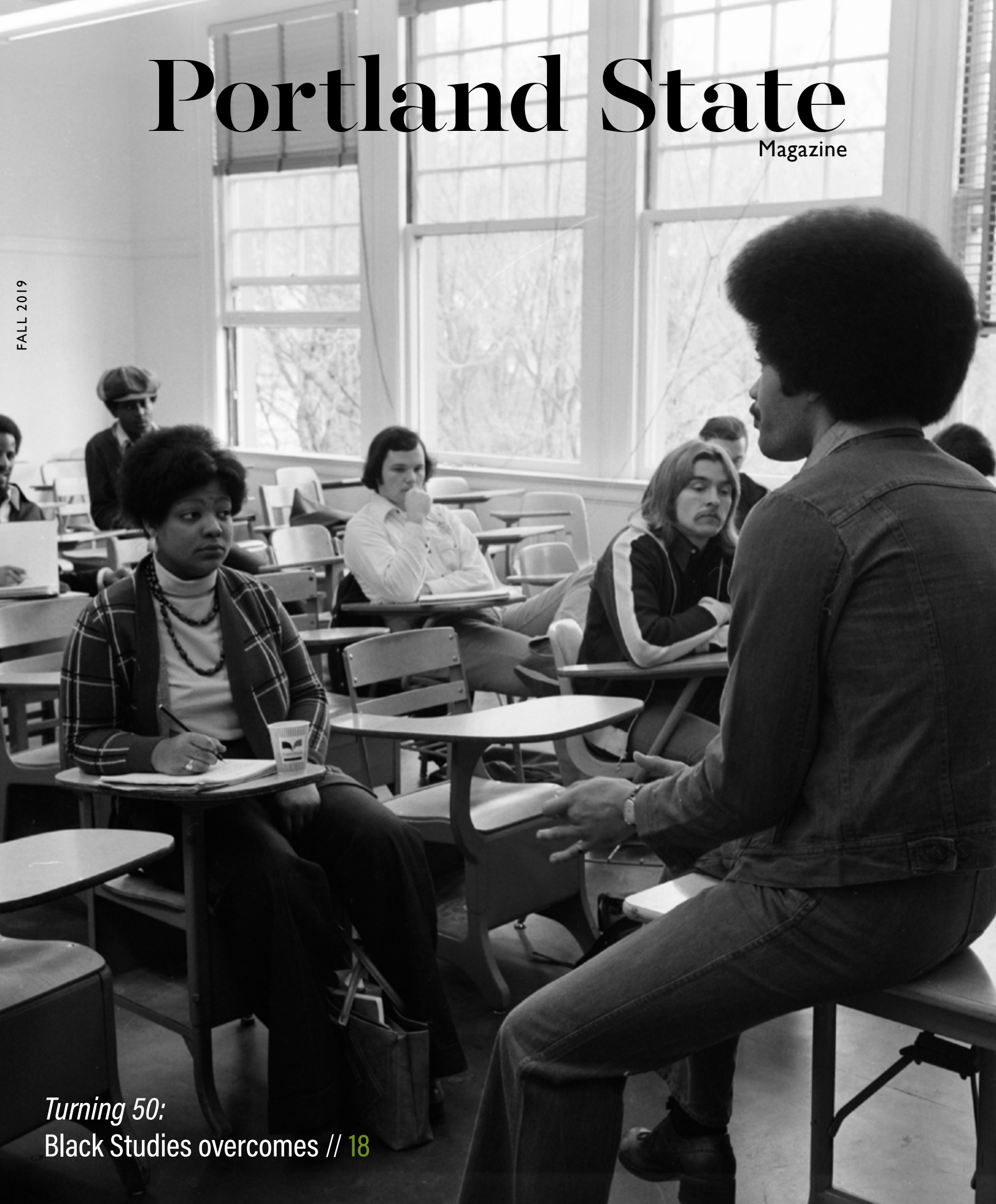
Portland State

Magazine

FALL 2019



Turning 50:
Black Studies overcomes // 18

a festival of knowledge & culture

PORTLAND STATE OF MIND

OCTOBER 10-20

50+ EVENTS, INCLUDING

Classes without Quizzes
Lectures on topics ranging from the 2020 census to building equity in the trades

Homecoming Tailgate & Football Game
Vikings take on University of Idaho at Hillsboro Stadium

The Future of Entrepreneurship is You
Tools, strategies and resources to spark the creative spirit

PDX Talks
Inspiring stories from students and faculty on topics close to their hearts

PSU Convenes Panel Discussion
What Can Oregon Do to Help Curb the Opioid Epidemic?

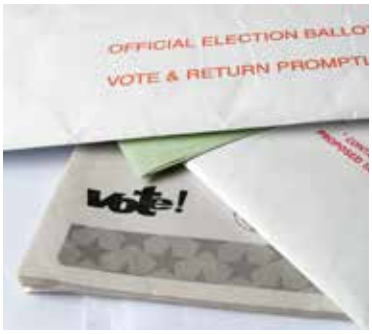
The Future of Transgender Health
A half-day symposium on research from around the nation

Stories Under the Bridge
Artist discusses her exhibit on Portland's houselessness community

FULL SCHEDULE FOUND AT
pdx.edu/portland-state-of-mind

CONTENTS

Features



Departments

Special Insert
PSU Foundation 2019 Impact of Giving

On the Cover Black Studies Professor Darrell Millner was instrumental in the success of the degree program. See story on page 18.

Portland State
Magazine

Fall 2019
VOL. 34 / NO. 1

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Saying yes to Portland State's future

ONE DAY in early May, I was at work in my garden when the chair of the Portland State Board of Trustees called with an unexpected question: Would I consider serving as the acting president of PSU?

It didn't take long for me to say yes. I have loved PSU since I joined the faculty in 2014 as the dean of the College of Urban and Public Affairs and a professor of political science. I have spent most of my academic career at urban universities, and I can tell you that at PSU, community connections run deep and student success is paramount. It is an honor to serve as interim president.

STUDENT success and the initiatives that support it are at the top of my agenda. More than half of PSU students are the first in their families to attend college. Many are raising children. Most must work part- or full-time to afford their education. And we want all of them to graduate with an education that will spark a meaningful career and enhance a fulfilling life.

You can expect to see us honing effective student recruitment and orientation practices. We will fine-tune our multicultural support systems so students from diverse backgrounds feel included and deeply welcomed by our campus. We are strengthening our advising system. And we will implement an early warning system so that we can intervene as soon as we pick up signals that a student is struggling.

You will also see us pursuing philanthropic support for PSU students who are experiencing tough times. Did you know that 42% of PSU students are food insecure and 39% are housing insecure? We plan to create a Basic Needs Center, a one-stop food pantry and hygiene station where caseworkers will connect students to financial advising, emergency aid and other resources. We're also establishing a University-wide emergency fund for students with one-time financial needs such as unexpected car repairs. This type of personal support is key to the success of low-income students.

OUR OTHER goals include growing our research portfolio, advancing equity and demonstrating PSU's impact. We will be busy, but we have the board's support and a collective sense of urgency. It's an exciting time on campus.

Follow our progress at *pdx.edu/student-success*, or connect with me on Twitter at *@PSUPresident.*

Stephen Percy
Interim President, Portland State University

LETTERS

From the editor

I've retired, which means this is my last—and 97th—issue of *Portland State Magazine*. For 31 years I've had one of the best jobs in the world. There is nothing more remarkable and varied than the stories that come out of a university.

And it has been a family affair. My husband, John Kirkland, has written many of the magazine's feature articles through the years. Our sons grew up with PSU as a big part of their lives, and our oldest son, Ian, earned a Portland State degree in mechanical engineering. As a child, he happily posed for photos for a magazine story or two. And I don't know if he remembers, but in 1998, one of his heavily corrected third-grade spelling tests appeared in the magazine when John interviewed an education professor about the difficulties of English spelling.

It's been a joy editing the magazine. Except for the deadlines and the infrequent vacations, I am pretty sure I am going to miss it. I am ready to start anew and see what stories now come out of my life.

~Kathryn Kirkland

More scenarios wanted

"Reimagining the Burnside Bridge" in the spring 2019 issue was thought-provoking and perhaps may cause us to think about preparing for the inevitable catastrophe of the Cascadia Subduction Zone "going live." Professor Schnabel's architecture students apparently did a laudable job creating various schemes for apparent replacement of the Burnside Bridge. But how about a "design scenario" that takes a comprehensive look at the survival of all the Willamette bridges and project a survival plan for that event? Maybe look at what would happen when the Vista Bridge collapses from Cascadia.

~Nick Steffanoff

Where's the real story?

In the latest issue of the PSU magazine [spring 2019], you took the easy way out on the resigning university president. You hid the reasons behind it, and never even mentioned the "why." I had to go online to another source to find out why he was being removed. This didn't happen when I was a student at PSU when it came to the school newspaper or subjects. We addressed it.

~Tony Hepner '84

That's me

Imagine my surprise, as I read through the spring issue of *Portland State Magazine* to see the photo on page 32 commemorating the 50th anniversary of Portland State becoming a university. I am the person on the ladder on the right side, then Terrie Todd and a graduate student. This photo has special meaning to me, not only because of my long connection to PSU but also because of my mother, Elinor Martindale Todd, who as a student lobbied for four-year college status for Portland State.

My three degrees from Portland State have served me well. After 17 years as the public health dean at Brown University, I am enjoying being "just" a professor once again. When I return to Oregon each summer to visit family and friends, I am amazed by the beautiful Portland State campus. PSU will always have a special place in my heart.

~Terrie Fox Wetle '68, MS '71, PhD '76

A question of citizenship

Your report on the census ["Census may undercount Oregonians" in the spring 2019 *Portland State Magazine*] displays the intellectual dishonesty and political bias of PSU in general, and your magazine in particular. You don't explain why a citizenship question would make children, renters, or "people of color" hard to count, as they have no reason to evade the question. Neither do legal immigrants. [But] counting illegal aliens steals congressional representation from American citizens in favor of lawbreakers.

~Lyneil Vandermolen

Portland State Magazine wants to hear from you. Email your comments to ***psumag@pdx.edu*** or send them to *Portland State Magazine,* Office of University Communications, PO Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity.

PARK BLOCKS

Unique stage presence

FOR THE sixth year in a row, the summer Pickathon music festival in Happy Valley, Oregon, featured a performance venue designed and built by School of Architecture students from reused materials. This year's rendition of the Treeline Stage utilized 160 wooden apple-harvesting bins turned into "an orchard of towering trees"—reaching 40 feet high at the tallest point. The sprawling site design incorporated space for audio equipment, a backstage green room, and space for food vendors and seating. Immediately afterward, the stage was dismantled and the apple bins were returned to service just in time for the late summer apple harvest, leaving no waste.

Eyes on the market

REAL-TIME financial, economic and government information from around the world is available to business students and faculty in the new Bloomberg Finance Lab. The lab has 12 computers armed with the Bloomberg Terminal, an electronic ticker displaying live stock market data and monitors streaming Bloomberg Markets. Located on the second floor of the Karl Miller Center, home to The School of Business, the lab will initially be used as part of undergraduate and graduate finance curriculum. The privately held Bloomberg conglomerate is known worldwide for its financial data, software and news.

Time versus money

WHEN given the choice between donating time or money to a charitable cause, a recent PSU study found that most people prefer to donate time—even when a monetary donation would be a better value. Economics professor J. Forrest Williams says the positive feeling or "warm glow" of volunteering consistently beats out money. However, it was clear to Williams and his research colleagues that high wage earners could never work hard enough for a charity to equal their hourly pay—resulting in money donations making more sense. It's unclear how charities should respond to the findings. They could be better off insisting on donations that pay for labor to replace volunteers, says Williams, but charities could lose potential donors influenced by the volunteer experience.

Old building made new

LIGHT now pours into the former Neuberger Hall, which reopens this fall under a new name following a $70 million renovation. The 61-year-old building had a reputation for being a stuffy, dark bunker. A light well cut through the center of the building, more and bigger windows and reconfigured spaces has turned it into a modern, efficient and much more appealing space. The remodel was funded through a $60 million commitment in state bonds leveraged by $10 million in philanthropic contributions. The two principal donors are alumnus Fariborz Maseeh '80, MS '84 and arts philanthropist Jordan Schnitzer. The building will be rededicated on September 26, and an art museum in Schnitzer's name located in the building will open in November.

Helping TriMet gauge the winds

TRIMET has enlisted Portland State mechanical engineering students to help determine the effectiveness of 12 wind turbines that were installed at either end of the Tilikum Crossing bridge in the spring. The 4-foot-tall turbines, which can generate up to 1,000 watts of electricity per hour, illuminate lights on the devices themselves. Excess power is stored in batteries. The students will measure the actual power being generated and use the date to determine if turbines could be used in future transit projects. The bridge opened in September 2015 and is used by light rail, buses, cyclists and pedestrians. ■

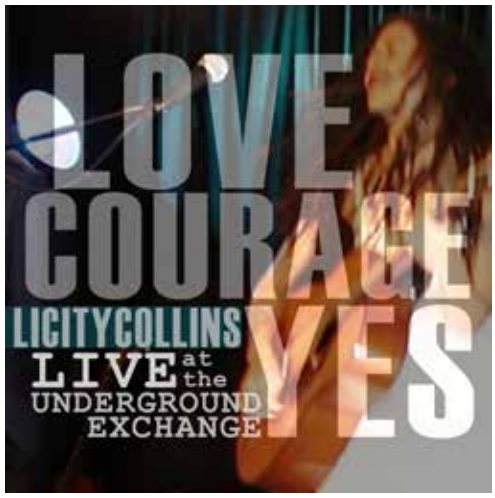
FANFARE

From Oregon to the world

EAGLE CREEK, Oregon, is the small-town home of a big-time artist: Oscar Flores-Fiol '77. His impressionistic and abstract oil paintings are in collections in Italy, Germany, England, Canada, Singapore, Japan, New Zealand and nearly all 50 states. Most were created on his remote16-acre farm where he lives with his wife, Lynn. The world around him, as well as his dreams, inspire Flores-Foil's paintings, which are brightly colored and full of whimsy. Now in his 80s, the Peru native continues to exhibit his work—most recently at The Spiral Gallery in Estacada.

Honoring the state's cycling devotion

A BICYCLE pushing forward into clean air is how architecture students describe the new campus sculpture they helped design. Anthropocene, also known as the Bicycle Bill Sculpture, was the creation of Aaron Whelton, architecture faculty, with contributions from his students. It honors the legacy of the late Sam Oakland, an English professor who championed Oregon's Bicycle Bill. Passed in 1971, the bill requires that a minimum of 1% of new, yearly state highway funds be used for walkways and bikeways. The steel sculpture is located near the PSU Library and features a bicycle and human figure that fades in an out when looked at from different perspectives.



Music for all

DEEPLY PERSONAL LYRICS are sometimes read but mostly sung by Licity Collins MFA '06 on her new live album *Love Courage Yes*. Collins blends rock and folk in her original compositions and describes her music as "'Eleanor Rigby' meets 'Refugee' by Tom Petty." This is her second album, and it was recorded at the Underground Exchange in Ojai, California, where Collins now lives. On the June 14 release of *Love Courage Yes*, Collins was interviewed by both NPR and Fox News. She writes that she is gratified that "her passion bridges audiences." ■

NEW WORKS

The East End: A Novel
By Jason E. Allen '09, Park Row, 2019

The Widmer Way: How Two Brothers Led Portland's Craft Beer Revolution
By Jeff Alworth, PSU's Ooligan Press, 2019

Oregon Wildland Firefighting: A History
By Sean Davis '09, The History Press, 2019

Breaking Cadence: One Woman's War Against the War
By Rosa del Duca, PSU's Ooligan Press, 2019

Prospects of Life After Birth: Memoir in Poetry and Prose
By David Hedges '59, 2019

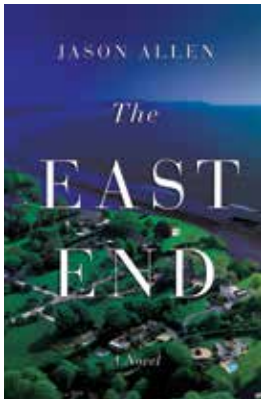
Whale's Tails
By Dale S. MacHaffie MBA '73, MT '80, Page Publishing, 2019

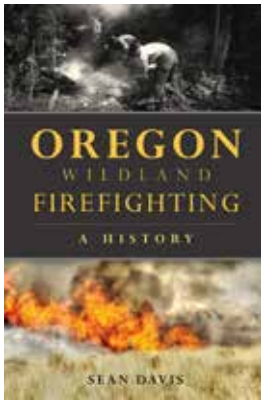
A River in the City of Fountains
By Amahia Mallea '99, University Press of Kansas, 2018

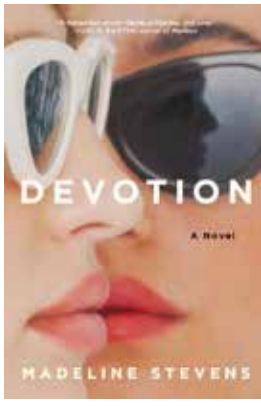
Choices: Death, Life and Migration
By Patricia Rumer '71, PhD '81, CreateSpace, 2018

Devotion: A Novel
By Madeline Stevens '09, HarperCollins, 2019

The White Death: An Illusion
By Gabriel Urza (English faculty), Nouvella, 2019







DRIVEN to INVENT

Students are challenged to solve environmental problems.

Written by Katy Swordfisk
Photos by Kim Nguyen

Mel Turner, Blake Turner and Sean Krivonogoff have created a kit that will allow a car to run on clean hydrogen and gasoline.

FOR ABOUT $5,000 and an hour of your time, Turner Automotive has a plan to convert your 1994 Honda Accord—or any gas-engine car—into a zero-emissions vehicle. The key is hydrogen and a conversion kit.

The kit was invented by Portland State students who want to reduce carbon emissions.

At PSU, that sense of innovation is ingrained in the student body. It's not uncommon for students to not only think about problems, but develop solutions, too. The PSU Cleantech Challenge—where Turner Automotive first unveiled its conversion kit—is emblematic of that drive to change the world. The challenge gives students an opportunity to invent a solution to one of the numerous environmental issues facing society today.

This year's Cleantech Challenge launched not only Turner Automotive but a second PSU team as well, Lite Devices, into the InventOR Collegiate Challenge. InventOR is a statewide competition focused on solutions to social and economic challenges facing Oregon. All told, 21 teams competed from 17 different Oregon colleges and universities. Turner Automotive and Lite Devices represented PSU. "When we empower students to see themselves as inventors, it changes their perspective," says Juan Barraza, who manages the PSU Center for Entrepreneurship, Cleantech Challenge and InventOR.

All the students, including Blake Turner, presented their inventions on stage at their university and at a state challenge.

Both Turner Automotive and Lite Devices took different approaches to the same underlying core issue: protecting the environment.

Turner Automotive

THE CONVERSION kit created by students Blake Turner and Sean Krivonogoff, utilizes a car's existing engine and its components, meaning after it's installed, the car can switch back and forth between gasoline and hydrogen as needed.

Turner, a PSU engineering student who developed the concept driving Turner Automotive, says the ability to switch back and forth between two fuel sources will allow consumers to use clean energy when it's available, and gasoline when it's not.

As it stands now, hydrogen fueling stations are operating only in California. But Turner says they hope the flexibility the kits provide will pave the way for a focused effort to make hydrogen fuel more accessible.

They also plan to offer a specialized service—possibly mobile—to install the kits for customers.

The hydrogen car isn't a new concept, BMW developed a version of its 7-series called the Hydrogen 7 in 2005. But the car never permeated the market. And with a $118,000 price point, it wasn't affordable to the general public.

Turner says recent technological advancements in carbon fiber have allowed his dream to become an affordable reality.

Sean Krivonogoff and Blake Turner won more than $10,000 to further develop their hydrogen converter kit for cars.

He first worked with a team at Rogue Community College to build the kit and convert his own car to run on hydrogen. The prototype fueled a trip to InventOR in 2018 that included driving a converted car in the competition. But the pitch flopped.

Turner transferred to PSU geared-up to try again. Teaming up with Krivonogoff, a business student, proved to be a winning combination.

This year, Turner Automotive competed in the Cleantech Challenge—and won.

That win sent them to InventOR for a second chance to pitch the conversion kit. They took second place in the statewide competition.

"PSU is a school that was really focused on renewable energy," Krivonogoff says. "And that always caught my attention—there's a ton of energy and power out there, but we're not harnessing it to its full potential."

Further, they argue that addressing climate change is now an ethical obligation that businesses need to consider.

"I'm here, I want to build a business, so why not do it to help mitigate climate change," Turner says. "Solving climate change is less of a neat thing to do now and more of a big business opportunity—because the solutions are going to have to be adopted."

Krivonogoff added that modified focal point—and moral obligation—is even being taught in business schools now.

"We're focusing on the triple bottom line," he says. "Focus on the planet, the people and then profit comes last. Because if you're benefiting the planet and people in the community, profit should be there, because you're giving back."

Lite Devices

IN THEORY, the millions of dollars in damage caused by the Eagle Creek Fire in the Columbia River Gorge could have been less if Lite Devices existed in 2017. But that fire—and the devastating Carr Fire that followed in California—served as inspiration for Lite Devices to develop a monitoring system that could help prevent another similar occurrence.

"Each time we have any of these types of disasters, inevitably, the dialogue always moves toward, 'Well, what could we have done? And how can we position ourselves to prevent something like this in the future?,'" says Kai Brooks, a PSU electrical engineering student. " And that led us to ask, what does fire detection look like?"

Brooks and his team, PSU computer engineering students Seth Rohrbach and Mikhail Mayers, found that the Oregon Department of Forestry still relies on satellite imagery and lookout towers, in remote parts of the state, to detect fires.

"They're mainly using satellite imagery, which is useful, but it can be a bit slow, expensive and ineffective with cloud cover, which never happens here, obviously," he quips.

The team thought developing a sensor that utilizes a mesh network might do the trick.

The small, self-powered device is attached to a tree and can detect the low-frequency wavelengths that emerge when a fire begins. Once detected, the data including GPS coordinates, time, intensity and temperature, is sent to the customer for review.

"It gives the customer more visibility, and helps them allocate their

Small sensors created by engineering students Mikhail Mayers, Kai Brooks and Angel Gonzalez network from tree to tree to detect forest fires.

resources more effectively, especially during the critical first moments that a fire starts exponentially," Brooks says. "The opportunity to contain a fire diminishes as time goes on. So if we can address something right away, that might be the difference between going in and hosing something down versus digging fire lines."

The device is 3D printed using a wood compound. Brooks says to be most effective, four devices are needed per acre.

"We can figure out very quickly if an event is isolated, like a campfire that's otherwise contained, versus a fire that's out in the wild," he says.

If multiple sensors go off, the system can triangulate and find the spark point. In more remote areas where cell and internet reception are problematic, that's when the mesh network feature really shines.

"Because we utilize small, low-power devices deployed in an array, if one of our devices detects an event, but doesn't have a reliable internet connection, it actually bounces the information off of our other devices until it reaches one that sends it out," Brooks says.

Most importantly, however, the device can integrate with any existing system a customer uses.

"The forest service, for example, is heavily invested in these geographical information systems that give them a lot of information about the lay of the land and things like soil quality," Brooks says. "We really designed this from the ground up to be very interoperable with existing systems."

Seth Rohrbach, the fourth member of Lite Devices, holds their fire-detecting prototype.

Although Lite Devices hasn't yet reached the final prototype stage, Brooks says the Oregon Department of Forestry has been interested to see what the final iteration of their product will look like.

"That's a conversation that we're continuing," he says. ■

Katy Swordfisk is a staff member in the PSU Office of University Communications.

OREGON'S BETTER WAY OF RUNNING ELECTIONS

The state's vote-by-mail system should be a national model as we approach the presidential primaries.

WRITTEN BY PHIL KEISLING

IN LESS than 150 days, New Hampshire voters will traipse to their polling places to cast ballots in the nation's "always first" presidential primary election. Between that contest on February 11, 2020, and the end of March, 19 other states will also hold primary elections, including such key states as California, Minnesota, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Arizona, Florida and Illinois.

But just how many Americans will participate in this determinative phase of the 2020 elections? In 2016, fewer than 60 million Americans cast ballots (or attended party caucuses)—and in a year when both major parties had spirited contests. At that time, there were more than 220 million eligible voters. This means almost 75% of our citizens sat it out—while the two major parties nominated the two most widely disliked presidential candidates in modern American history.

> ***Traffic, bad weather, sick children, work schedules—none of these stand between Oregon voters and their ability to exercise the most fundamental of their constitutional rights.***

Only in New Hampshire, where 52% of eligible citizens voted, did more voters turn out than not. Oregon's overall turnout fell just shy of New Hampshire's due largely to our "closed primary," which unlike New Hampshire's makes it very difficult for our vast number of "non-affiliated" voters to cast ballots. Among Oregon's registered Republicans and Democrats, our combined turnout was a remarkable 65%.

SO WHAT makes Oregon such a stand-out state for turnout? How might other states learn from Oregon in terms of boosting turnout in 2020 and beyond? And how might even Oregon do better?

These are important questions as we approach a consequential presidential primary election. While there are good reasons to predict higher turnout in 2020—especially on the Democratic side—there are dangers too. Bad weather—think February blizzards in New Hampshire and icy roads in key Midwest states—could play a surprisingly big factor. Photo ID laws and other legal obstacles might also play a role in depressing turnout in key contests.

But perhaps the biggest obstacle of all is one that we Oregonians jettisoned 20 years ago: the traditional polling place itself.

In 1998, Oregon voters by a 2:1 margin voted to consign the traditional polling place to the ash heap of history. Every active registered voter now receives a ballot in the mail, hand-delivered by the U.S. Post Office, several weeks before each election. Voters can then decide how—and even whether—to return them.

Traffic, bad weather, sick children, work schedules—none of these stand between Oregon voters and their ability to exercise the most fundamental of their constitutional rights. And the system clearly boosts turnout. The 2018 midterm elections set a new, national record. But had the rest of the country matched Oregon's level—and Colorado was even higher—another 25 million Americans would have voted.

IN 2020, Oregon's won't be the only state holding a full "Vote at Home" presidential primary; joining us will be Washington, Colorado and Utah. All voters in a dozen California counties, representing more than half the population, will also enjoy such a system—as will all Hawaii voters in the 2020 general election.

While every other state can and should eventually adopt the same model, that fight will largely need to wait until state legislatures' 2021 sessions. But meanwhile, Oregonians can encourage our out-of-state friends, relatives and colleagues to use "Vote at Home" ballots (aka "absentee ballots") during the 2020 primary election cycle and beyond.

That will be hardest in the 18 states—including Pennsylvania, New York, Missouri, Virginia and Texas—that still require a legally valid excuse (e.g., an "absence" from one's home county) to receive a mailed-out ballot. But in the remaining 28 states, obtaining a "Vote at Home" ballot is as simple as merely asking for one.

Many of the "no excuse" states also happen to be among the top battleground states in 2020, including Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Arizona and Nevada. And what better time to introduce voters to this somewhat foreign concept: "What, I can make the polling place come to me, rather than having to go to it?"

AS EXPERIENCE in Oregon proved, even fiercely resistant voters have come to quickly embrace this system—much like the main character in that famous Dr. Seuss book, *Green Eggs and Ham*. We can certainly further improve Oregon's system. Colorado, for example, has far more full-service "Vote Centers" where voters can go to update their registration or get other assistance up through Election Day. Still, after 20 years and more than 200 million mailed out ballots, the system has produced no meaningful fraud—and lots of voters who feel they have the time and means to cast a more informed ballot.

When more voters participate in a primary election, they're a lot more likely to vote in the November general election. Just 60% of eligible voters actually cast ballots in 2016. Regardless of which candidate prevails, wouldn't 70% or even 80% turnout in 2020 be healthier for our small-d democracy? ■

Phil Keisling championed the state's vote-by-mail system when he was Oregon Secretary of State from 1991 to 1999. He recently retired as director of the PSU Center for Public Service, but he remains a senior fellow of the center. Today, Keisling works for the nonprofit, nonpartisan National Vote at Home Institute, which he helped found. The institute is dedicated to ensuring the security of elections and putting voters' needs first.

SMART.

BUILD EXITO is creating the next

MOTIVATED.

generation of health researchers.

DIVERSE.

Written by John Kirkland

TWO YEARS ago, David Bangsberg, dean of the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health, invited student Travis (Henke) Benson into his office and pointed out two framed documents on his wall. One was a rejection letter from Harvard Medical School that he received as a disappointed undergrad some three decades earlier. The other was a congratulatory letter from the very same Harvard Medical School, welcoming Bangsberg as a new faculty member.

His point: Aim high, because you never know when fate will deal you a winning hand.

"The worst that could happen is that you could get a letter like this," he says, pointing to the rejection.

Benson, a first-generation student who started at PSU after nine years working in construction, initially thought Harvard was unobtainable. "I felt like I couldn't compete with the numerous well-qualified students who came from an Ivy League background," he says.

But he took Bangsberg's advice, applying to Harvard as well as nine other schools.

"He was the first person I texted when I got my interview invitation and the first person I told when I got accepted," he says. "I think he was more excited about it than I was at the time."

Bangsberg's mentoring—as well as Benson's ultimate success—is part of a larger program to help first-generation students from ethnically diverse backgrounds become top-level biomedical, behavioral, social or clinical researchers in the health sciences. It's called BUILD EXITO, an acronym that includes the words diversity and cross-disciplinary, describing the program's mission.

THE PROGRAM began in 2014 when PSU received a $24 million research and training grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The program has been so successful that NIH recently issued another $19.3 million grant to carry it through for the next five years, by which time PSU hopes to make it self-sustaining.

The PSU grant was part of a larger $240 million investment by the NIH to develop new approaches that engage researchers, including those from backgrounds under-represented in biomedical sciences, and prepare them to thrive in the NIH-funded workforce. PSU was one of 10 primary institutions selected through this initiative, which ultimately will support 50 institutions through partnerships.

PSU's partners are Portland and Clackamas community colleges, Oregon Health & Science University, Clark College, University of Alaska, University of Guam, Northern Marianas College and American Samoa Community College.

Students apply for the three-year program in the spring of their freshman year, either at PSU or one of the partner schools. Participants receive intensive mentoring and instruction on how scientific research is performed, then spend 10 hours a week on actual research projects at PSU or OHSU for the bulk of their time in the program. The research time is on top of their other school obligations.

Not only is BUILD EXITO good for underrepresented students, it's good for science in general.

"There's a reason why we are not doing as many major discoveries as we could, and that's because our research workforce is not diverse at all," says BUILD EXITO director Carlos Crespo. "And there is science behind the fact that a more diverse workforce produces better research."

BOASTING a retention rate of nearly 90%, the program graduated its largest class in June: 52 students.

They include Elizabeth Perez, the first in her family to complete college. A Detroit native, Perez moved to Portland for work and enrolled at Portland Community College. She was accepted to the BUILD EXITO program there, and then transferred to PSU as a sophomore.

"Being first-generation, I didn't know all the different possibilities available to me. I thought I wanted to be a lab technician, but BUILD EXITO took me into a totally different direction," she says.

Perez received her bachelor's in biochemistry and will become a Ph.D. student in the Biological and

Biomedical Sciences program at Harvard University. Her goal is to become a professor and pursue science policy on the side.

Another June graduate, Sulema Rodriguez, earned a degree in speech and hearing sciences with a minor in psychology. She was accepted into graduate schools at New York University and Columbia University, but chose PSU as the place where she will pursue her master's degree starting this fall. Her goal is to get a doctorate and become a speech pathologist who can work with both English- and Spanish-speaking patients.

Her path is partially the result of her own speech difficulties—a stutter that presents challenges in her daily life.

"Before I heard about BUILD EXITO, I honestly wasn't sure how I was going to get through college because of my speech impediment," she says. "The program helped me pay for college, and I got a lot of help from some great people in the process."

Benson's story is equally personal.

BENSON'S father, once an architect in Port Angeles, Washington, became a transgender woman when Benson was a young boy. The change had a profound effect on his father's professional and personal life. She was discriminated against and lost her job. Even her primary care physician refused to treat her. Benson's parents divorced, and he hasn't seen his father in 25 years. Benson thinks his father may be dead.

"The transgender community faces disproportionate amounts of interpersonal violence, self-harm and medical neglect. Any of these factors may be at play," he says.

Benson's studies at Harvard focus on the medical needs of the transgender community—a mission that includes research at Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston Children's Hospital. He wants to specialize in dermatology because transgender individuals have unique dermatologic needs that often go unmet.

"If I can help anyone avoid what my father had to go through to get even routine medical care, my efforts will be worth it," he says.

While the stories of Benson, Perez and Rodriguez are inspirational, they're not rare.

"These are stories that repeat," Crespo says, adding that they're as much a product of the students themselves as the BUILD EXITO program. The disadvantages that the students have had in some ways set them up for success. "All their lives they've had to be innovators and survivors," he says. "We tell them: Don't leave that behind; it's a big part of what you are. That's what scientific investigators want."

For his part, Bangsberg couldn't be happier with the quality of students coming out of BUILD EXITO.

"They're stellar. They're breathtaking. They are smart, motivated, inspired and committed to making a difference in the world," he says. ■

John Kirkland is a staff member in the PSU Office of University Communications.

Travis Benson '18, a Harvard medical student, graduated from the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health with help from the BUILD EXITO program.

Elizabeth Perez '19, the first in her family to attend college, is also at Harvard, thanks to the mentoring from BUILD EXITO.

BUILD EXITO empowered Sulema Rodriguez '19, who has a speech impediment, to earn a degree in speech and hearing sciences at PSU and go into the master's program.

Turning 50:

BLACK STUDIES OVERCOMES

Through years of struggle, PSU's Black Studies Department remains unique in the Northwest.

WRITTEN BY **JOHN KIRKLAND**

FIFTY years ago, following one of the greatest decades of change for African Americans since the Civil War, Portland State became the first college in the Pacific Northwest to offer a program in Black studies.

Over the years, it went from being an experimental program to a full-fledged department. Now, after a half-century, it remains unique in the region. While other universities in the Northwest offer courses in ethnic studies or African American studies, PSU is the only one with a full degree-granting department with the word "black" in its name.

"At the time of our founding, 'black' was a very powerful and political term," says recent department chair Shirley A. Jackson. "It was a way of throwing off the older ways of referencing people who had black skin."

An influential assortment of students and faculty pushed the idea of starting the program in 1968 and 1969 as part of a wave of other universities around the country doing the same. Portland State—which had just gained university status—approved it as an "experiment" on August 22, 1969.

"It was deemed experimental because it was so new—there was no guarantee that this would actually be something that would continue to exist," Jackson says.

In fact, according to former department chair Darrell Millner, who came to PSU as a history instructor in 1975, Portland State essentially put up roadblocks to undermine the success of Black Studies, making the launch of the program tenuous indeed.

"Portland State did not invite Black Studies to come to campus. In many ways it was hostile to the concept of Black Studies—as much of the higher education structure in the country was in the late '60s," he says. These programs were created essentially because of pressure from students and the black community. Universities—and I would include Portland State—looked at Black Studies with great disfavor, even hostility, and didn't consider it to be a legitimate academic discipline."

For example, Millner says the program originally required 60 hours of coursework for a student to earn a certificate—not a degree—in Black Studies. And courses taken in Black Studies were not accepted to satisfy normal degree requirements. So, a student majoring in history could take a history class through Black Studies, but it wouldn't count toward the student's major.

"No doubt about it, that was one of the ways Black Studies was made unattractive and unavailable to students. You had to be highly motivated to decide to be part of the Black Studies program. That was not accidental. That was part of the tradeoff in getting Black Studies approved," he says.

Black Studies Director Phil McLaurin accepts books and papers that Jeannette Gates is donating to the PSU Library.

CHARLOTTE Rutherford, a former civil rights attorney with the NAACP Legal and Educational Fund who donated a vast collection of her mother's black memorabilia to the PSU Library, earned her certificate in the program in 1976. She says she took classes from the program—and continues to support it—through her desire to learn "about our history as black people both in Oregon and in the history of the U.S."

"The public school system then and probably now does little to teach race history and the true story of how black people (and other people of color) have contributed to and been treated in this country," she says. "I always knew there had to be more information than I had been given in school but I had no idea so much information had been suppressed."

INITIALLY, PSU's program focused on the African American experience, based on what was happening around the country at the time. The few years before its founding saw marches on Washington, D.C., and in the American South, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the assassinations of both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr., the founding of the Black Panthers in 1966, numerous race-fueled riots in American cities, and the emergence of the Black Power movement.

The program also had the mission of providing assistance and support to Portland's black community.

"At that time the majority of Portland's black residents resided in an area known as Albina," recalls Phil McLaurin, the first director of what was then called the Black Studies Center. "Black Studies offered courses to Albina-area residents at a PSU-funded facility known as Albina Presence, and was actively involved in all issues impacting the community residents."

The program survived its rocky start, and stabilized over time, although Millner says it was almost always struggling for money. PSU created a Black Studies minor in the 1980s, which opened the way for more enrollment. It created a major in the 2000s.

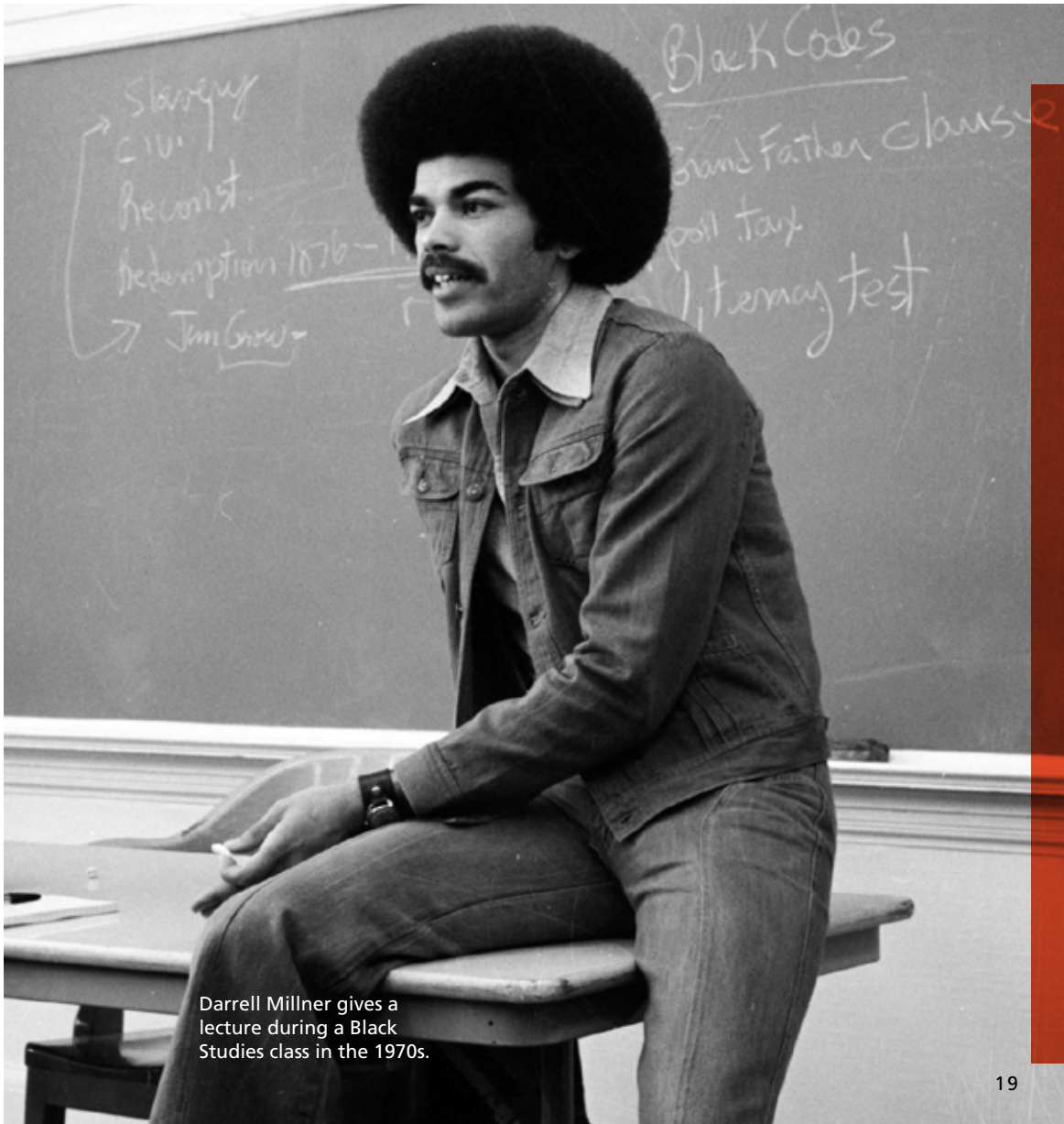
Its mission broadened to include courses on the black experience in Europe, the Caribbean and Latin America. It added travel opportunities, and in December 2019 it will offer study in Cuba. There are plans to develop a study trip to New York City—probably the most diverse black population in the United States.

The curriculum is multidisciplinary, covering history, sociology, cultural anthropology, literature, film and other fields. Although many believe that only black students take courses in Black Studies, Jackson says it's really for everybody. In fact, she says, most of the students in Black Studies courses are white.

"This is a degree that really helps students prepare for working with people in diverse communities, and not just the black community," she says. "It's about learning to deal with differences and becoming culturally aware."

Rutherford says her interest in issues of race has been lifelong and started with her parents, who were active in the Civil Rights Movement. Black Studies at Portland State filled in the information gaps left by the meager offerings of her public school education. She says it propelled her into a degree that led to her career as a civil rights investigator and then attorney.

"Portland State filled a personal role for me. I just needed more information about my people—a fuller history of this country." ■



Darrell Millner gives a lecture during a Black Studies class in the 1970s.

WRITTEN BY **KURT BEDELL**

Voices of the Holocaust

Starting in 1943, the childhood of Laureen Nussbaum (left) and her sisters, Marion and Susi, was made easier through the intervention of lawyer Hans Calmeyer, who saved thousands of Jews in Amsterdam.

Laureen Nussbaum elevates Anne Frank's literary prowess, and her own story of survival.

Laureen Nussbaum wishes the world would remember Anne Frank for her potential as a budding author instead of only for her eye-opening chronicle of life as a Jewish child hiding from the Nazis during World War II. But she wouldn't blame you if you hadn't noticed Anne's literary promise. Most American kids read an edited version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Only recently has the unfinished text of the book Anne Frank was working on been published. And that's thanks in large part to the tireless work of Nussbaum, a Portland State alumna and emerita professor of German language and literature.

Nussbaum, herself a Holocaust survivor by subterfuge, made it her life's work to get Anne Frank's epistolary novel—*Liebe Kitty* or *Dear Kitty*, named after the imaginary friend she wrote to—published. With its European release in May, this 91-year-old retired professor and activist hasn't slowed down a bit. She just wrapped up her own memoir, out this fall, entitled *Shedding Our Stars: The Story of Hans Calmeyer and How He Saved Thousands of Families Like Mine*. In it she chronicles the impact Hans Calmeyer, a German government lawyer, made saving at least 3,700 Jews from disaster by determining them to be not "fully" Jewish or not Jewish at all, in the eyes of the law.

BORN in Frankfurt, Germany, in August 1927, Nussbaum had a stable, predictable childhood. "We were a middle-class family. We were comfortable," she remembers. But then things began to change.

As early as the spring of 1933, Nussbaum noticed a shift. Long rows of brown-shirted Nazis had begun marching through the streets of Frankfurt. Like many young kids, Nussbaum picked up what was going on around her like a sponge, not always realizing what was appropriate to share.

"One day I was caught in the hall of our apartment, with my father's cane slung over my shoulder, marching down the hall and singing one of the Nazi songs," she remembers. Her parents did not appreciate her impromptu performance. "I was told to please stop and never do it again."

As time passed and the Nazi crackdown on Jews intensified, there were other changes to Nussbaum and her family's daily life. Soon, Jewish families were fleeing Germany for other parts of Europe and beyond.

By the fall of 1935, Nussbaum's parents, the Kleins, decided to go to Amsterdam in the Netherlands, a neutral country during World War I, joining the Franks who had moved in late 1933. "There was this hope—maybe an illusion—that whatever would happen, the Netherlands would remain neutral again, like during World War I," she remembers. "So, this would be a safe place." But safety would prove to be a relative term.

In May of 1940, the German military invaded the Netherlands. Soon the German anti-Jewish laws were enforced in the occupied country. By the fall of 1941, Jewish families were excluded from public cultural events. Those who valued culture took to organizing performances for themselves and others in their homes.

It was through theatre and music performed in their homes that Nussbaum got to know the Frank family even more closely, and where she met her future husband, Rudi Nussbaum. "Rudi played the piano, and was good at sight-reading music," she remembers.

With Anne Frank and half a dozen other young teens a play was performed in December 1941. Anne had a leading role. Nussbaum herself directed. "Anne was a lively girl and could learn her lines very quickly," Nussbaum recalls. "But she definitely didn't stand out. Her later fame did not cast a spell over these years." Nussbaum admits that given her age she herself was much more interested in Anne's older sister, Margot, who was just one year older than Nussbaum.

NUSSBAUM remembers being a high-energy kid who helped her future husband's father with deliveries from the corner drugstore that he ran in their immigrant neighborhood in Amsterdam. "When a customer called and needed something, I would be ready to run or bike over and take it to the to the customer," Nussbaum remembers. "So, I became sort of an errand boy."

That's also how Nussbaum got to know her future husband better. As the Nazi's crackdown on Jews continued to intensify, as early as February 1941, roundups of young Jewish men had begun in the Netherlands. Rudi and his family decided he too must start to take precautions, moving out of his parents'

apartment and into the homes of various non-Jewish families. Already the "errand boy," Nussbaum took to delivering the daily meals to Rudi that his mother had cooked for him.

While Rudi had to worry about being targeted by the Nazis, Nussbaum largely escaped such scrutiny and was able to remove the hated yellow star, a symbol that identified one as Jewish, from her clothing in mid-January 1943. Because Nussbaum's maternal grandmother wasn't Jewish, her family was able to successfully plead its case to the highest civil authority in the Hague and Nussbaum and her sisters were declared not "fully" Jewish in the eyes of the occupiers. The man who reviewed and adjudicated their case, Hans Calmeyer, helped thousands avoid the bane of being labeled Jewish and is the subject of Nussbaum's new memoir.

Nussbaum's language expertise has helped in her endeavor to get Anne Frank's authentic text published and the well-known childhood author's literary potential appreciated.

After the family won its case with Calmeyer's help, life returned to relative normalcy for Nussbaum, considering it was still wartime. But there were still terrifying close calls with Nazi police and little time for fun and frolic. "I grew up very fast and started taking on responsibilities very, very young," Nussbaum remembers. "As I've traveled and spoken to many students in America as an adult, invariably they'll ask, 'What did you do for fun?' There was no time for fun. We had to survive. That was our focus."

AFTER the war, Nussbaum completed her high school diploma, became a fledgling journalist for a while, and spent time at a Quaker school learning Latin and improving her fluency in English. Rudi also continued his education and they ended up back in Amsterdam together doing coursework in chemistry and physics. It was that training that set the stage for Rudi's eventual career as a nuclear physicist.

After Rudi completed his Ph.D. in December 1954, the family moved to the United States. Following stints in Indiana and California, the Nussbaums decided in 1957, to take a chance on an emerging new school in the Pacific Northwest—Portland State College—the precursor to Portland State University. They loved the climate in Portland and the unusually collaborative faculty vibe they found in the physics department.

Nussbaum went on to earn a doctorate at the University of Washington in 1976, commuting between Portland and Seattle while raising a family and teaching German part time at Portland State. "Those were tough years," she remembers. Eventually, she secured a full-time, tenure track position in 1978. "Learning a new language is so valuable because any language and every language is full of metaphors," she says. "Metaphors enrich your view of life and help you understand the thinking patterns of people from other cultures."

Nussbaum's language expertise has helped in her endeavor to get Anne Frank's authentic text published and the well-known childhood author's literary potential appreciated. Her father, Otto, the only member of the Frank family to survive the war, had made editorial decisions when he first published *The Diary of Anne Frank*, which is so widely read today.

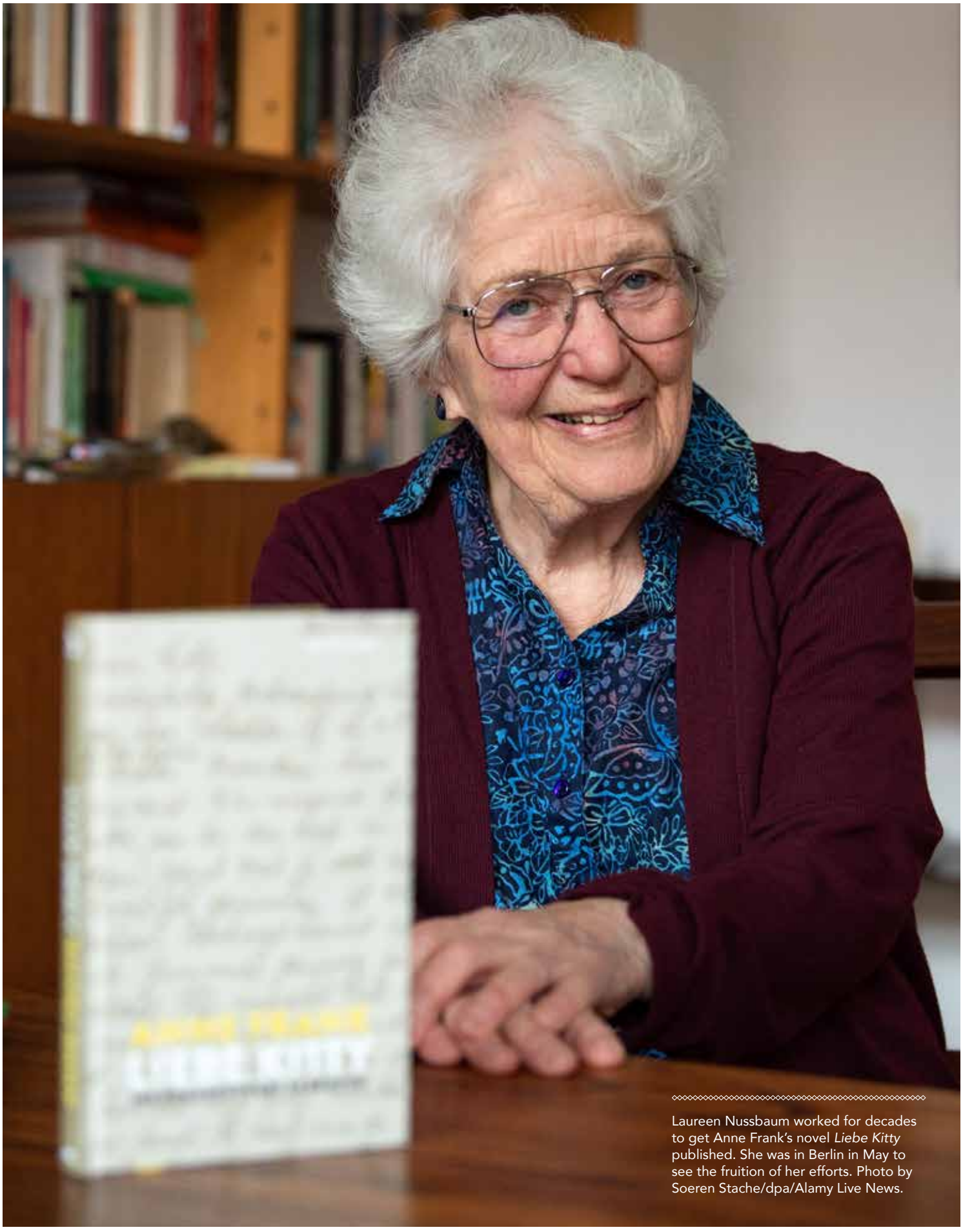
So far, *Liebe Kitty* has only been published in German in the countries of Germany, Austria and Switzerland due to copyright restrictions. "Anne's work was an epistolary novel, not just a diary," says Nussbaum. "And it's remarkable. How a 14- or 15-year-old had the literary prowess and stamina to be writing with such an eye for what it takes to create literature is really amazing."

HEARING the voices and perspectives of immigrants, minorities and anyone "othered" is critically important to Nussbaum, who sees ominous parallels in today's immigration debate in the United States to the plight of the Jews in Europe during World War II. To her, there's no difference between the immigration detention centers along the United States/Mexico border of our time and the ways that Jews and other undesirables were marginalized during World War II. "Concentration camps are what they are," she says, referring to today's immigrant detention centers. "I know it. There are no two ways about it."

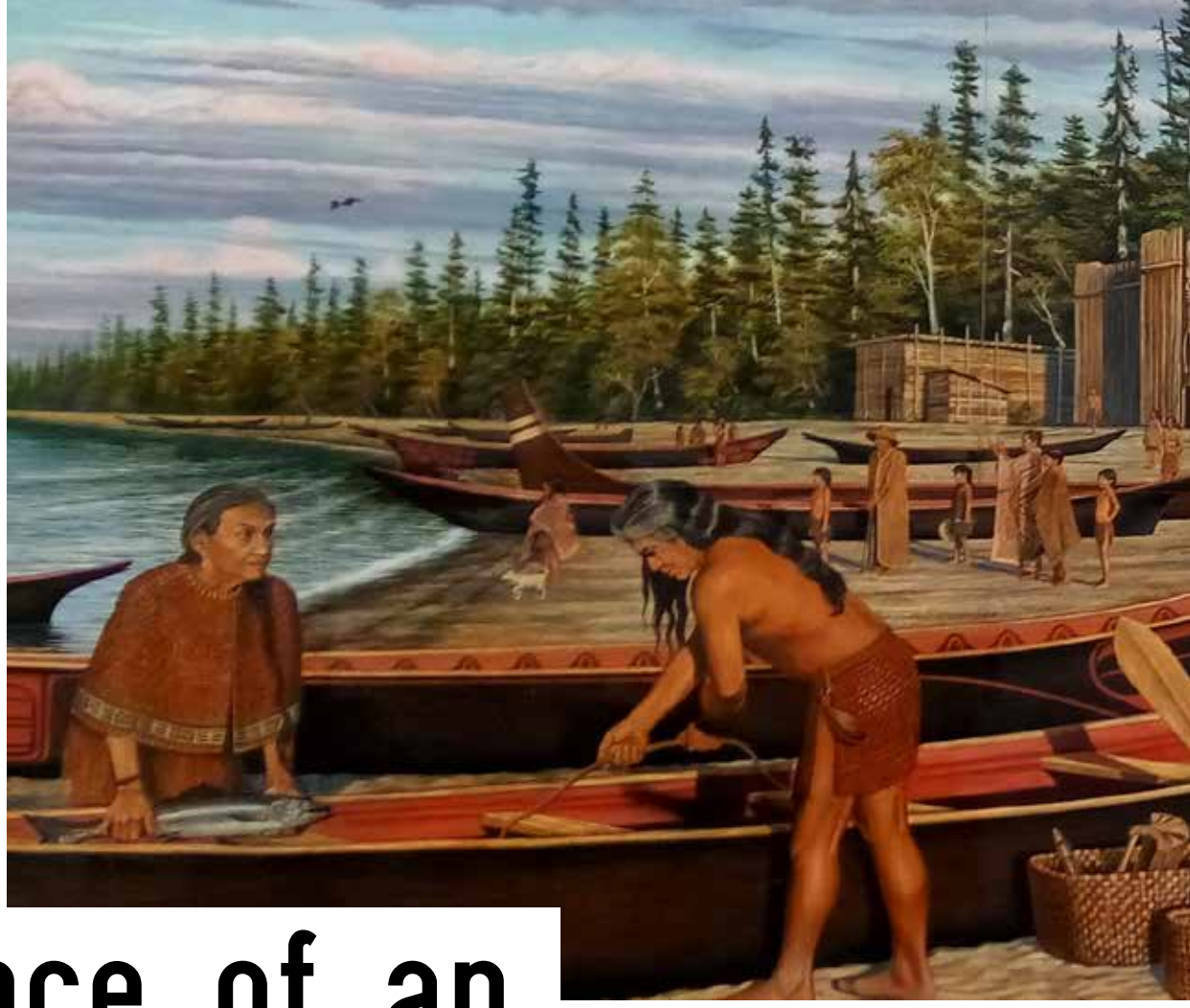
Yet, she still holds hope. Her husband, Rudi, passed away in 2011 and she now lives in Seattle and enjoys the company of her grown children and grandchildren. She swims regularly and stays involved in advocating for immigrant rights in her community. And all along, she sees the learning of multiple languages as critically important. "Learning another language gives Americans a healthy respect for the struggle many immigrants who come to the U.S. experience learning the English language," she says. ■

Kurt Bedell is a staff member in the PSU Office of University Communications.

Laureen Nussbaum will give the talk "Resistance as a Viable Option, Exemplified by Hans Calmeyer, a German Official During World War II" on the Portland State campus Monday, October 14, at 3:30 p.m. in Smith Memorial Student Union, Room 238. The event is free and open to the public and is part of Portland State of Mind, the campus' yearly festival of arts and culture.



Laureen Nussbaum worked for decades to get Anne Frank's novel *Liebe Kitty* published. She was in Berlin in May to see the fruition of her efforts. Photo by Soeren Stache/dpa/Alamy Live News.



Resilience of an ancient people

Written by Cristina Rojas

Archaeologists explore the remains of a Native American village in Washington that survived multiple tsunamis.

FOR ALMOST 3,000 years, the Native American village of Číx^{w}icən was washed away by as many as five tsunamis. Yet, its people rebuilt each time.

Archaeologists from Portland State University, Western Washington University and the University of Rhode Island have studied the remains of the village located near present-day Port Angeles, Washington. They say their findings shed new light on local earthquake impacts and can help prepare the public for future seismic events.

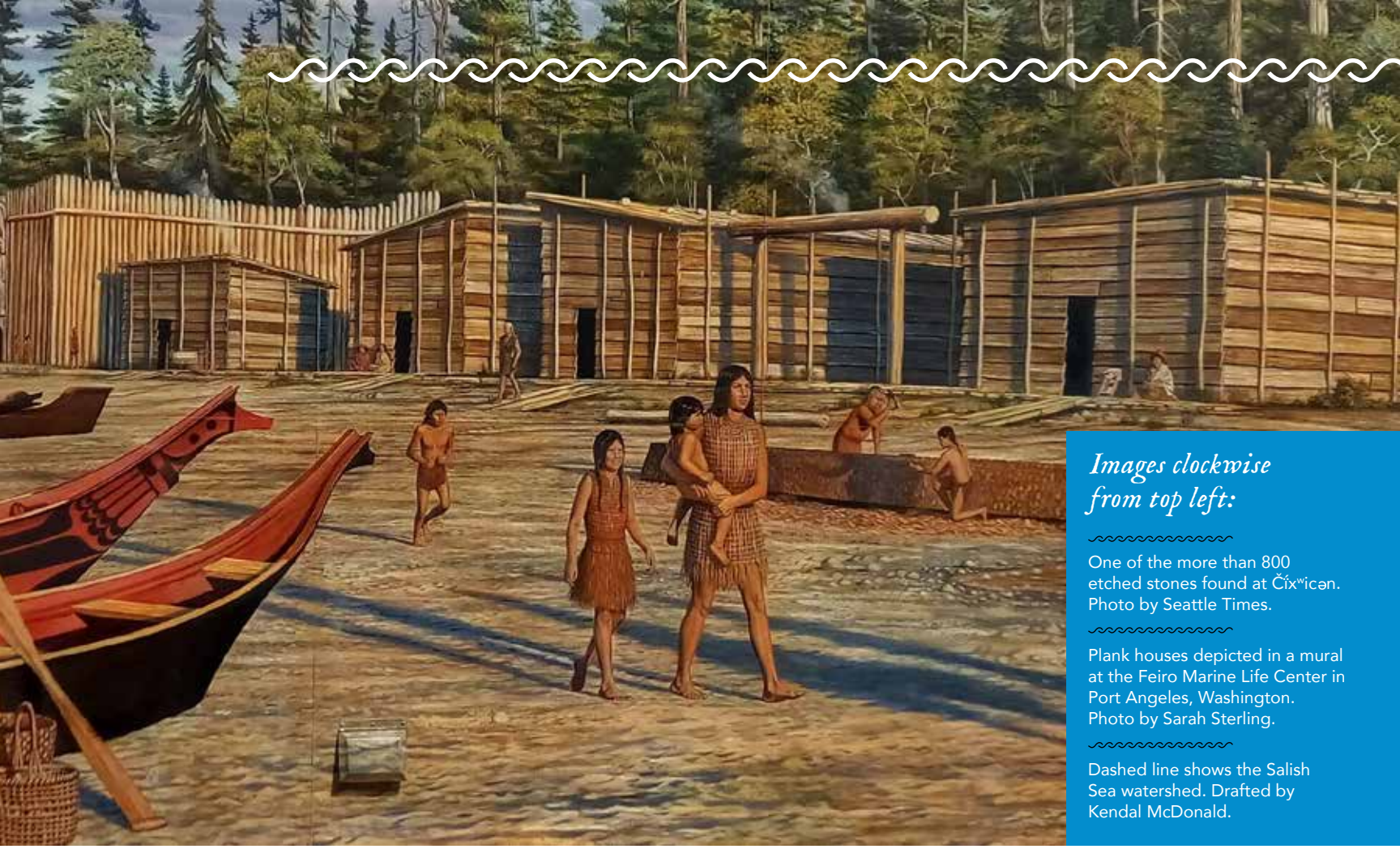
"When you have direct evidence of a community that experienced these tsunamis and earthquakes, you better believe that Port Angeles should be ready because they're in the zone," says Virginia Butler, a professor of anthropology at PSU and the project's principal investigator. "But the other lesson is that if you're prepared, you can come back."

Číx^{w}icən (pronounced ch-wheet-son) is the 2,700-year-old ancestral village of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe—first built at approximately the same time Rome was founded. A traditional village, it included a sacred burial ground, which holds great significance for the tribes' descendants. Native peoples occupied the site until the early 20th century, when they were displaced and eventually forced to move to a reservation in the Elwha Valley west of Port Angeles.

In 2003, excavators uncovered the village during construction of a large dry dock. It was one of the largest Native American villages ever discovered in Washington. The state eventually abandoned the costly construction project, but the discovery turned into one of the most important archaeological finds in the Pacific Northwest with more than 12,000 artifacts and over a million animal remains discovered, as well as the remnants of large plank houses. More than 300 human remains were also unearthed and have since been reburied by the tribe on the site.

"We didn't set out to find the largest village in Washington state; we happened to come across it," says Sarah Sterling, an assistant professor of anthropology who, at the time, was hired as a project geoarchaeologist at the excavation site.

There were signs of possible past tsunamis during the initial



Images clockwise from top left:

One of the more than 800 etched stones found at Číx̌ʷicən. Photo by Seattle Times.

Plank houses depicted in a mural at the Feiro Marine Life Center in Port Angeles, Washington. Photo by Sarah Sterling.

Dashed line shows the Salish Sea watershed. Drafted by Kendal McDonald.

analysis, but it wasn't until Butler and Sterling secured funding from the National Science Foundation in 2012 that they could take a deep dive into those findings.

IN THE FIRST major research project to come out of the excavation, faculty and students from Portland State, Western Washington University and the University of Rhode Island analyzed the animal remains and the evidence of plank houses: posts, walls, hearths and trenches. The large, diverse sample gave them new insights into the ways that the animals, and in turn, people responded to recurring catastrophic events. The team's findings were published in a 2019 special section of the Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports, "Tracking Human Ecodynamics at Číx̌ʷicən, a 2700-Year-Old Coastal Forager Village in Northwest North America."

"Perhaps the simplest takeaway message here is one of resilience in the socio-ecological system," Butler says "After each natural disaster, people returned, rebuilt and adapted to changed environmental and social circumstances.

"They were able to live there for close to 3,000 years and the only thing that broke their occupation periodically were these earthquake and tsunami events," she adds. "To have a community live sustainably for that long is a testament to their relationship with the local world."

Among the team's key findings:

The Klallam people relied on more than 100 species of shellfish, fish, birds and mammals for millennia. The breadth of resources available to them and their knowledge about where and when to forage for certain creatures contributed to their resilience.

Analysis shows that shellfish and fish were acutely affected by the tsunamis, but the people were extremely adaptable. There's evidence that a tsunami caused one plank house to collapse, only for people to rebuild a new one at the same location with a slightly different floor plan. One house was discovered to have been occupied for 800 years

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and another for 500 years during obviously less volatile ecological times.

There were multiple indicators of tsunamis, says Sterling. "The clearest was a layer of sand." The marine sand washed over wrecked houses and hearths and was preserved when the village was rebuilt on top of it.

The researchers submitted 102 samples from the site for radiocarbon dating. They noticed there were periodic gaps in the dates they got back. Sterling says those gaps correlate with known major earthquakes in the geologic past.

Previous research by geologists in the local coastal marshes found evidence of big tsunamis every 200 to 800 years with the first happening around 1,600 years ago, which correlates with the evidence at Číxʷicən.

"It's rare to be able to see how a place evolves over 2,700 years," says Sterling.

BUTLER says a major goal was to determine how the people socially negotiated environmental challenges. Animal records from two households allowed the team to compare whether tsunamis led people toward more cooperation or more independence in their quest for food.

After a tsunami, the two households appeared to have worked more cooperatively gathering shellfish than before, while their fishing practices became more autonomous. Of all the animals, the use of birds changed the least after the tsunami. People in one household liked to catch inshore birds, while the other household favored offshore birds. The pattern continued after the tsunami, suggesting that the two households maintained a distinct identity or cultural knowledge about which birds to pursue, even after a tsunami and house rebuilding.

Butler says the findings can help provide context for the Lower Elwha Klallam tribe's planned curation facility that will eventually house the artifacts from the excavation. She says the animal histories can also help tribal biologists and state wildlife agencies as they look to restore some habitats in the severely degraded Port Angeles Harbor and surrounding coastal areas.

More broadly, the study provides coastal communities with more detailed knowledge about local earthquake impacts than existed before.

Butler says the project and their collaborations with the tribe created an opportunity for cultural healing.

"Archaeology, when done right and with respect, can help heal the hurt that came about through colonialism," she says. "They were reunited with their own heritage. Archaeology is the physical evidence that they were there, and the scale of the project brought to the fore that tribal primacy that had not been in people's consciousness." ■

Cristina Rojas is a media relations specialist in the PSU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Images clockwise from top left:

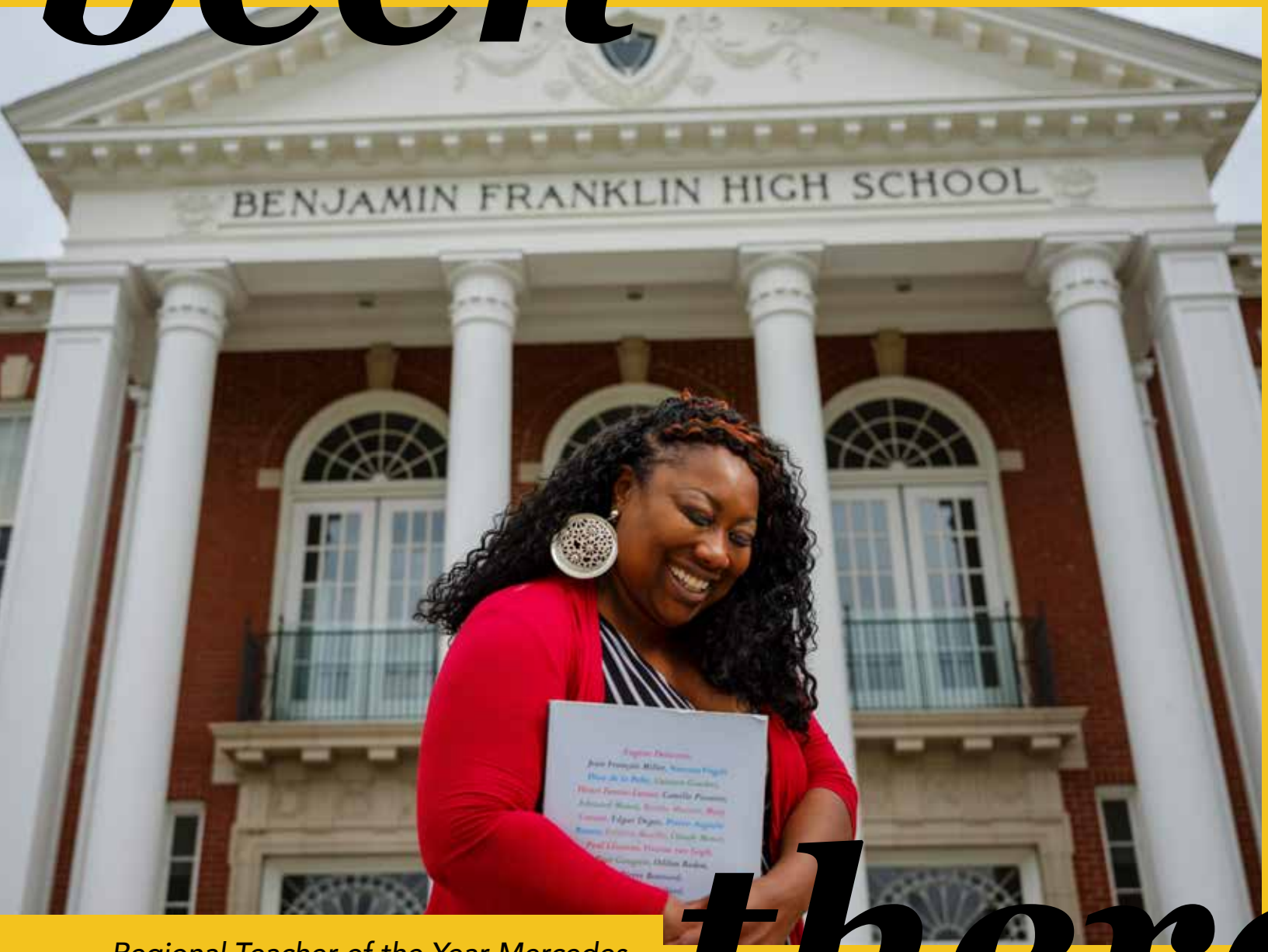
A huge bear tooth was unearthed at the village.

This bone comb found at the site is about 4.5 inches long.

A recovered animal carving.

Photos by Seattle Times.

been there



Regional Teacher of the Year Mercedes Muñoz draws on her own troubled history when relating to her students.

WRITTEN BY JILLIAN DALEY

IN HER first term at Portland State, Mercedes Muñoz found herself homeless and on her own with her three children: an infant, a seventh-grader and a second-grader.

"That was super-super-stressful to try to take the finals and do well and be in a housing crisis," Muñoz recalls.

She and her boyfriend had been evicted from their apartment because they couldn't pay rent—he had lost his job, unable to work as he struggled with sadness over deaths in his family. She and her boyfriend split, and she found a place to stay for herself and her three children in a motel in Sandy. That was 12 years ago, and Muñoz, 42, a first-generation college student, has slowly risen through the academic ranks.

She started her education with an associate degree from Portland Community College in 2005. Amidst her housing crisis, a friend sheltered her and her kids, risking losing her Section 8 government-subsidized housing by taking on unsanctioned tenants. Muñoz had

Muñoz says she has struggled like many of her students.“Part of what I bring to this community is authenticity and passion and hope.”

no vehicle of her own and took a bus from her friend's place in Gresham. Then PSU Portland Teachers Program alumnus Bud Mackay and spouse Vivian stepped up to provide Muñoz with a home closer to campus. Six years later, in 2011, she earned a bachelor's in English from Portland State and soon after a license to teach. She kept going, and in 2017, Muñoz received her master's in special education from the PSU College of Education.

She says the house that the Mackays provided and the Portland Teachers Program, which offers all participants tuition support and mentorship, were what made it possible for her to become a teacher. Now, she has a home of her own and a position at Franklin High School as a Learning Center teacher and special education case manager. The man she loved overcame his loss and they married. She changed her name from Miller to Muñoz.

Now, with only six years in the profession, Muñoz's hard work and dedication to teaching has garnered notice. In May, she was named a 2020 Oregon Regional Teacher of the Year by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). She is one of 13 teachers to receive the honor.

"My students were so excited," says Muñoz. "For them, it was like we all have won."

Chris Two Two, who graduated from Franklin in June, had Muñoz as a teacher for four years. He says he wasn't surprised when he heard the news about her award.

"When she got it, I was like, yeah, she deserved it because she helped a lot of people graduate and helped people stay in school," Two Two says.

WINNING teachers, according to the ODE, are "assessed on leadership, instructional expertise, community involvement, understanding of educational issues, professional development and vision by a diverse panel of regional representatives." The award, organized in partnership with the Oregon Lottery, includes a $500 prize and entry into the 2020 Oregon Teacher of the Year Award, which will be announced in September.

Jon Fresh MS '93 is another special education teacher and graduate of PSU who has received the Oregon Regional Teachers of the Year award. He teaches at Westview High School in the Beaverton School District and specializes in behavior management. Fresh says he loves what he does and has helped many students weather difficult circumstances, but he was still surprised to be nominated.

"I think I am fortunate and incredibly humbled to be chosen for this recognition and in the company of some pretty incredible teachers," he says.

Muñoz does not know who nominated her for the regional honor, and, in fact, assumed the nomination announcement in her email wasn't genuine.

"I figured it was spam," she says.

She did not respond for a month, and only after someone from ODE persuaded her that she was up for a major award did she write the essays that applicants must submit for consideration. She also quickly gathered the necessary letters of recommendation. But she actually has quite a few fans, including her colleagues.

Gary Sletmoe, a Franklin High English teacher, says that it's clear how much Muñoz cares about her students and that "she is tough, but fair, and will fight for each student to be successful."

Many students, in addition to Two Two, also believe in her.

"I think she's a really good teacher," says Emily Medina, a senior. "If you don't understand something, she explains it to you in a way you will understand. No matter how much you want to give up, she helps you keep moving on it. You need all these things to be able to graduate, and she doesn't want you to fail."

Franklin senior Carol Dwyer says Muñoz is special because she cares so much, and when students need support, she's there for them.

"She asks if you're having a bad day or a good day—she checks in with you," Dwyer says.

Muñoz says she has struggled like many of her students, so she understands how they feel when life gets overwhelming.

"Part of what I bring to this community is authenticity and passion and hope," she says

MUÑOZ grew up in the Bay Area, arriving in the Mount Tabor area as a sixth-grade "terror." She dropped out of Benson High School short of just one credit. Muñoz moved back to the Bay area and she was homeless for a few years.

"I remember I would stand at the campus of UC Berkeley, and I knew that something about college would change my life," she says.

But for so long, she thought college wasn't for her. Seeing her sister Cimone get accepted and attend a university helped change Muñoz's mind about her own future. "When Cimone graduated, it really gave me hope, because if she could do it, I could; We came from the same family," Muñoz says.

With support from Springdale Job Corps, she earned her GED and got her diploma from Reynolds High School. Then, she earned her two degrees at PSU and is now in the position to inspire other students.

Because Muñoz's focus is special education, she reaches a wide range of students who come to her for support for classes of all types, including advanced placement courses. For her academic skills class, students study independently. Muñoz floats from desk to desk as students ask for help with how to craft and submit assignments that include historical reports, an exploration of Margaret Atwood's work or a treatise analyzing Maya Angelou's poetry.

Sletmoe says Muñoz is a great colleague, and her guidance helps students achieve in their other classes.

"When some students were struggling to write body paragraphs for their essay [for Sletmoe's class], Mercedes came up with the idea of a 'burger' paragraph, using the visual of a cheeseburger to illustrate the necessary and different elements of a paragraph (topic sentence, analysis, etc.)," says Sletmoe. "I still tell students to 'build the burger' in class today when we are writing essays. Thanks to Mercedes, kids know what I mean!"

Franklin English teacher Scott Aronson says Muñoz has a comprehensive knowledge of each grade level.

"More importantly, she is kind and empathetic to the myriad struggles of our students, but she also holds them accountable for what they need to do in the classroom," Aronson says. "She is extremely dedicated, and she doesn't give up on any kid. She helps the kids who need help the most. She has been a tremendous resource for myself and others because of her ability to reach so many students."

Even Muñoz's emails show her caring. The bottom of each one includes a quote from American philosopher Cornel West: "You can't lead the people if you don't love the people. You can't save the people if you don't serve the people."

Muñoz says that's how she approaches teaching. For her students, that philosophy shines through.

"She's nice, and she's the best," Two Two says. "She helps us." ■

Jillian Daley is a media relations specialist in the PSU College of Education.

ALUMNI

A FULL-BODIED LIFE

HARVEST time at Sokol Blosser Winery draws people from all over the world to come work in the vineyard. Handpicking the grapes together inspires great camaraderie, but the volume of work also makes for an intense time. For Alex Sokol Blosser '97, MBA '03, co-president and winemaker of Sokol Blosser Winery, this is his favorite part of his job.

"The intensity during harvest forces me to focus and I appreciate that," he says. "We're making something delicious and fun and, as much as it wears me out, it's rejuvenating."

Sokol Blosser was raised on the vineyard and participated in his first harvest by the age of 11. His parents had bought the property in 1970 and planted Pinot Noir vines the following year.

At the time, Oregon had no wine industry, and his parents didn't view the winery as a feasible multi-generational business, which led to Sokol Blosser toying with various career options after high school. He trained as an Air Force reservist and worked as a foreman at another vineyard. After brief stints at other universities, he enrolled at PSU, where he paid for his own education and majored in philosophy.

"It really taught me how to think," he says. "Philosophy trains your mind to not get carried away by surface explanations, to dig deeper, ask questions, and gain more understanding."

UPON graduation, Sokol Blosser's mother suggested he try selling wines, and he worked at a beverage distributor. He then came back to the family winery to work with distributors and run the financials, and he subsequently obtained his MBA at PSU.

Sokol Blosser's sister, Alison '00, eventually became the winery's CEO and head of sales, which freed Sokol Blosser to return to his first love: wine production. He says winemaking is a mix of understanding the seasons, working with the land, and positioning oneself to make something special and compelling, which takes both science and art. He likens it to a baseball game.

"Mother Nature is always changing up the pitches she's throwing you," he explains. "My job is to make at-bat adjustments and move the runners. I draw from all the lessons I've gained over the years to make great wine, but I'm constantly learning and being humbled."

Now, Sokol Blosser blends his affinity for PSU with his love for winemaking. In addition to serving on the PSU Foundation board for three years, he donates wine to various PSU events and occasionally hosts events at the winery. "PSU helped me tremendously, he says, "and I'll be forever grateful." —*Article by Kellie Fields and photo by Erin Berzel.*

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

MIKE RICHARDSON '77, founder of Dark Horse Comics, received a PSU Presidential Medal in July for his professional achievements and support of PSU. He has donated all materials produced by Dark Horse to the library, and this past year, provided scholarships for every member of the men's and women's basketball teams.

DOUG MERRITT '78 is founder and CEO of Headset Advisor, a nationwide provider of wired and wireless headsets for business professionals. He started the company following a successful 16-year career at Pitney Bowes.

JAMES A. PATTERSON '84 is the new executive vice-president and chief communications and experience officer of Oregon State Credit Union.

LEANNE BREMER '86, a partner at Miller Nash Graham & Dunn law firm, was appointed to the board of directors for Educational Service District 112, representing schools in Ridgefield, northern Vancouver and Battle Ground, Washington.

RICK MILLER MBA '91 was awarded the PSU Presidential Medal during The School of Business June commencement ceremonies. Miller is co-founder of Rogue Venture Partners. He and his wife, Erika, contributed $9 million to the Karl Miller Center, named in honor of his grandfather.

RONDA GROSHONG '92 officially became Beaverton's interim police chief and the first woman to lead the 185-member department in July. She joined Beaverton Police as an officer in 1995.

EBONY SLOAN CLARKE MSW '01 is the new director of Multnomah County's Mental Health and Addiction Services Division. Clarke has been deputy director since 2014 and acting interim director since August 2018.

LAVERT ROBERTSON ME '01 is the new CEO of All Hands Raised, a nonprofit which began as an arm of Portland Public Schools Foundation and now works independently to ensure racial equity and quality education throughout Multnomah County schools and community colleges.

RODRIGO GEORGE MIM '13 received one of Bonneville Power Administration's highest honors: the 2019 Achievement in Environmental Protection Award. He is a policy analyst in BPA's Environment, Fish and Wildlife Office.

KATIE BOOS '16 was hired as the Lakeridge High School softball coach in Lake Oswego in July. She was the hitting and outfield coach at Concordia University.

GRACE TUMWEBAZE '19 left in June for the East African country of Malawi to be a health volunteer for the Peace Corps during the next two years.


MIKE RICHARDSON


RONDA GROSHONG

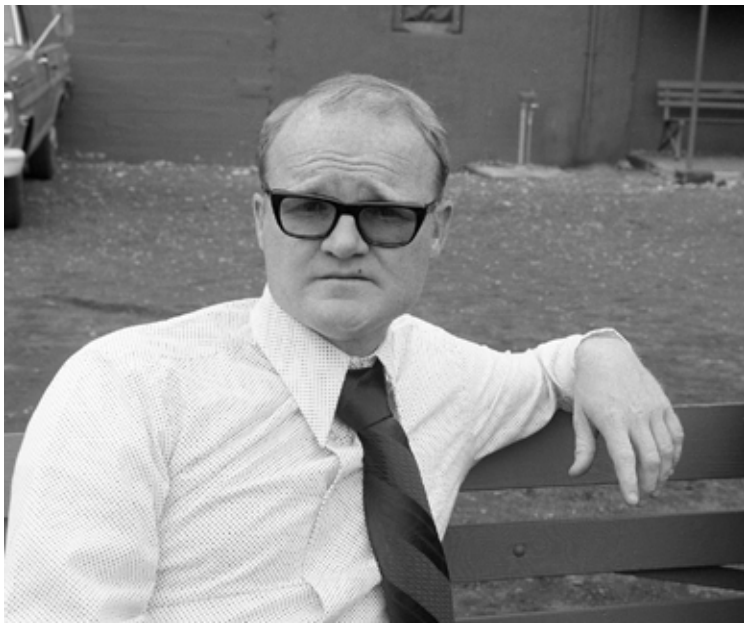

EBONY SLOAN CLARKE


LAVERT ROBERTSON


GRACE TUMWEBAZE

FOR MORE ALUMNI NEWS follow us ***@PSU_Alums*** on Twitter and ***PortlandStateAlumni*** on Facebook. Have news you would like to share? Email *alum@pdx.edu* or mail your information to Portland State University, Office of Alumni Relations, PO Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751. To submit your own alumni news online, go to ***pdx.edu/alumni/contact***. ■

ATHLETICS



Loss goes deep

PORTLAND State Athletics lost a history-making member of its past when former coach and administrator Roy Love ’61 passed away on June 17 at the age of 82.

Love did it all for Athletics. He played baseball as a student from 1955 to 1959; returned to coach baseball and eventually football and golf; served as Athletics director from 1975 to 1986, retired, then was asked to return for an additional six years starting in 1988.

As head baseball coach, he compiled a win-loss record of 257-215. He took eight teams to post-season play, with the 1967 team winning the Pacific Coast College Division title. His 1962 team placed second in the nation at the NAIA level.

As Athletics director, he was a great judge of people, says Larry Sellers, former sports information director. “He hired coaches Mouse Davis, Don Read, Pokey Allen, Jack Dunn, Jeff Mozzochi, Teri Mariani, Marlin Grahn and Greg Bruce to name a few."

Love was inducted into the Portland State Hall of Fame in 1998 and later into the Oregon Sports Hall of Fame.

Home for good

HILLSBORO Stadium is now Viking football’s home venue. The team joins the PSU softball and soccer programs, which already call the Gordon Faber Recreation Complex, home.

Scheduling challenges with Portland Timbers soccer at Providence Park grew too frequent to keep playing at the downtown stadium, which had been the Vikings’ home venue since the 1960s. PSU and Hillsboro are working together to upgrade the Viking fan experience, including amenity upgrades and enhanced tailgating.

Following two home non-conference games, the Vikings will host four Big Sky games in Hillsboro: Southern Utah on Oct. 5, Idaho on Oct. 12, Montana on Nov. 2 and UC Davis on Nov. 9. Season and individual game tickets are on sale now. ■

LOOKING BACK

When unrest reigned

Doug Weiskopf '71 shares his memories from the remarkable year of 1969-70 at Portland State.

FALL TERM 2019 will mark the beginning of a 50-year look back at the most politically active and explosive year in PSU history. The Portland State campus had suddenly grown from being a sleepy commuter college to becoming a full-fledged university with hundreds of student-housing apartments suddenly available.

The war in Southeast Asia had been raging for five years, with campus protests against it growing to a head in October 1969 when there was a nationwide call for a Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam. At PSU we organized and held marches on the 15th of October, November and December, putting as many as 12,000 people on the streets of Portland.

During that school year, there were several tense confrontations when uniformed military recruiters showed up on campus and were met by several hundred protesters, shocking the school administration and Portland public by physically blocking the recruiters from entering the offices provided for them. On more than one occasion Portland Police were summoned to restore order, which had the effect of galvanizing us even more in opposition to the military recruiters.

The steady procession of large antiwar marches all over America and acts of civil disobedience on campuses hit a boiling point when on April 30, 1970, President Nixon announced he was invading Cambodia, which borders what was then called South Vietnam.

Students across the country began angrily protesting Nixon's escalation of the war, when on May 4, 1970, 11 peacefully protesting students were suddenly gunned down at Kent State University by Ohio National Guardsmen. With four dead, student protesters all over America forced the closing of their campuses, including PSU.

THE PARK BLOCKS on campus were at the time open to auto traffic, which protesting students blockaded with everything we could lay their hands on and for a week created what was dubbed a "liberated zone." In the late afternoon of May 11, 1970, more than 300 Portland Police, led by an elite riot squad of officers in leather jackets who carried 42-inch white batons that looked like thick pool cues, marched in formation down the PSU Park Blocks from the south end towards student protesters determined to "show you unruly kids who's in charge in Portland," as we heard one police officer say at the scene.

Police supervised city sanitation workers as they removed the barricades from the Park Blocks (four years later the area was remodeled into how it appears today, with no cars and in exactly the same configuration we created with our barricades). The hundreds of protesters on the scene sullenly gave way as the police marched through, that is until they came to the huge geodesic dome that was erected out of aluminum pipes and canvas by the Vietnam Combat Veterans Against The War to use as a medical station "in case of trouble," as they put it.

The hospital tent had been given a city permit to be across from Smith Center in the middle of the Park Blocks, where it was not interfering with car traffic. However, the police officer in charge at the scene informed the protesters that he was revoking the permit as of that moment. This sent a wave of anger through the crowd, and (we) immediately placed (ourselves) between the police and the tent, where (we) locked arms and refused to budge.

The police captain gave the protesters a warning to disperse but the crowd just grew larger. Finally, after about 20 minutes, he ordered his officers to "charge" and a horribly violent battle ensued, injuring dozens of students, some requiring hospitalization, as well as wounding five officers. ■

Read Doug's full account at:
pdx.edu/news/looking-back-fall-2019

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