PEGAH ALAVI '17 wasn’t sure she should delay her graduation from PSU by a year to make time for two paid, six-month internships. But she’s really glad she did, because the internships led to a job in transportation engineering with David Evans and Associates as soon as she graduated.
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On the Cover Darrell Grant motivates students like Meghan and Kanda to find their voice and then share it with the world. Photo by NashCO Photography. See story on page 10.

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Celebrating a University of Creators

THE HONOR OF MY LIFETIME—leading Portland State University—became official May 4 when I was formally installed as ninth president. The day began with a procession through the South Park Blocks led by University faculty. It was incredibly meaningful for me and my family. I am the first in my family to attend college, and I could not help but think about all the people who championed me on my journey and shaped my future. The ceremony, held at the new Viking Pavilion in the Peter W. Stott Center, gave me an opportunity to thank the community for its warm welcome and to share the outlines of my vision for Portland State.

The beautiful Viking Pavilion is just one example of how Portland State is continually evolving to meet the needs of both Generation Z students, the digital natives born between 1995 and 2012, and adult learners, students who come to campus with significant life experience. I think of these two groups as creators and re-creators.

If I have learned anything about PSU in the past eight months, it is that this University is full of creators: designers, artists, mathematicians, writers, planners, researchers, scientists, technologists, builders—you name it. It gives us an edge.

University Studies builds divergent-thinking creators who can step outside their field of interest and practice skills from a mix of disciplines. It is one of the reasons why PSU is among the 10 most innovative universities in the nation. Our alumni demonstrate these same skills as they solve problems and contribute to their communities and our economy.

We also have a program to diversify the ranks of biomedical professionals by providing mentoring and undergraduate research experiences to first-generation college students and students of color.

Overwhelmingly, these kinds of programs help students stay engaged and on track to graduate. They deserve our investment. We can expand cross-disciplinary collaboration that solves real-world problems with research-based ideas. Existing research centers such as Life in Extreme Environments, Improvement of Child and Family Services, and Transportation Research and Education give us a template for discovery and success.

By partnering with business and industry, we can offer students more experiential learning opportunities. We can educate a creative workforce in sync with regional and global needs and provide every learner with relevant credentials for meaningful careers.

Let Knowledge Serve the City.

Rahmat Shoureshi
President, Portland State University
Wanted: More computer scientists

THE LACK of diversity in the tech industry has always been of concern to James Hook, a PSU engineering associate dean. Hook and his team of collaborators hope to change that by getting more students to study computer science. Using a $1 million National Science Foundation grant awarded to the University’s Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science, they plan to bring a proven, inclusive computer science curriculum to high school students of all backgrounds, life experiences and ethnicities across Oregon. “A working knowledge of computer science is quickly becoming fundamental to being an informed member of society,” says Hook. “With this grant, we’ll be equipped to bring every Oregon high schooler a valuable computer science education.”

Cutting waste at PDX

JUST STEPS from the loud whir of commuter aircraft propellers, John Dea and his fellow PSU students help Portland International Airport staff dispose of the 11 tons of waste generated each day while keeping as much of it as they can out of landfills. For the past 15 years, Portland State students have sorted trash, conducted food waste studies, and led green projects, including the first-in-the-nation liquid collection barrels located in the security lines. Their work has prevented nearly a third of the airport’s waste from going into landfills, and helped the airport win recognition as the best domestic airport in the United States in each of the past five years.
A place for everyone

THE UNIVERSITY’S Multicultural Student Center celebrated its 25th anniversary in February. A busy, art-filled gathering spot, the center is visited every day by close to 400 students of all races, ethnicities and backgrounds. In 1993, when the center was founded, diverse students accounted for approximately 10 percent of PSU’s student body. Today, that number is closer to 40 percent, and PSU has become Oregon’s most diverse university. The center spawned the formation of the University’s other cultural centers: The Native American Student and Community Center; La Casa Latina; Pacific Islander, Asian & Asian American Student Center; and Pan-African Commons.

A good man in any arena

I was happy and surprised to see the “Honoring football great Arthur Dickson” article in the fall 2017 issue of Portland State Magazine. Such a well-written feature by John Wykoff, and all credit to Tony Beatty for funding the Memorial Scholarship in his friend’s name. Everyone got it right! I didn’t get to watch Arthur play one down of football, but knew him from working together at United Grocers, and all of the admirable attributes that John used in his story were evident daily. A good man in any arena; you just wanted to be around that guy! Thank you for Arthur’s story.

~Hannes Jahns ’71

How did PSC become PSU?

The final article [Looking Back: In the Midst of Change] in the excellent, fall 2017 edition of Portland State Magazine reminded me of my days at PSC [Portland State College] and the constant “urban renewal” going on. It also reminded me that I was a part of the process of PSC becoming PSU. If I’m not mistaken, I was one of three graduate students to be the first to receive a Master of Arts degree. At least that’s what we were told at the time. My dissertation was submitted and approved in the spring of 1966, and I passed my oral exams later that summer.

It would be interesting for me to know just what was involved in making PSC a university. Your article indicates that occurred in 1969, but graduate degrees were being granted before that.

Many thanks for the fine publication. I enjoy it the most out of all the alumni magazines I see.

~Dick Slawson ’65, ’67

LETTERS

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.
Free is a very good price

LOW-INCOME Oregon college students transferring to Portland State will no longer have to pay tuition beginning in fall 2018 if they enroll full-time and are eligible for the federal Pell Grant. The new Transfers Finish Free program will cover base tuition and mandatory fees for up to 15 credits per term for eligible transfer students from any community college or four-year college. The program follows on the success of Four Years Free, which was launched in fall 2017 to cover tuition for low-income freshmen. More than 500 students were helped by the program, many of whom would have been unable to attend PSU without it.
In honor of ‘Professor D’

ALUMNI from around the country came to campus in October to celebrate the naming of the Don Dickinson Advertising Suite in The School of Business’s new Karl Miller Center. “Professor D”—as he is affectionately referred to by students—was director of the school’s Advertising Management program from 1998 to 2012. He continues to teach part time.

The event allowed Dickinson’s former students to share their successes and see the renovated and renamed business building. Dickinson, his wife, Anna, and mother, Irene, who all contributed to the funding of the Karl Miller Center, were present for the dedication.

During his tenure, Dickinson’s students won many awards for creating real-world advertising campaigns for high-profile national and local clients. He also oversaw the creation of FIR Northwest, the student advertising agency that remains active today.

Before teaching at the University full time, Dickinson was a well-known advertising executive in Portland for more than 30 years. He is also an alumnus of Portland State, having earned a bachelor’s degree in 1967 and an MBA in 1972.

Preparing for the worst

LIVING in the Pacific Northwest means living with the risk of disaster. Major fault lines and extreme weather as a result of our changing climate mean that local governments need to operate with seismic, flood and other disaster plans in place. Over the past year, PSU’s Institute for Sustainable Solutions has been working with the city of Portland on planning for post-disaster recovery efforts, including a map of critical infrastructure assets—pipes, roads, facilities and more—uploaded as an interactive program in the University’s Digital Visualization Studio, then analyzed during workshops. The collaboration has so far resulted in improved general knowledge and a list of short-term and long-term projects that five student interns will continue to work on. ■
AUDREY LUNA sang the highest note ever sung at the Metropolitan Opera last fall. She reached the A above high C as the character Leticia in Thomas Adès’s new opera, The Exterminating Angel. Adès composed the role for Luna ’01, who first sang it in Salzburg and London productions. Luna came to Adès’ attention when she sang the role of Ariel in his Shakespeare-based opera, The Tempest, performed at The Met in 2012. She received rave reviews for both her vocal and physical performances and won a Grammy for the recording. This summer, Luna is scheduled to sing in the opera Flight at the Des Moines Metro Opera and Carmina Burana with the Cleveland Orchestra.
Grad’s impassioned play performed

A POWERFUL, one-woman play, *The Second Coming of Joan of Arc*, by Carolyn Gage ’82, MA ’84 came to Lincoln Hall for one night in January. This was the first time a play by Gage (pictured left), an award-winning and esteemed playwright, has been performed on campus. She is the author of 75 plays, musicals and one-woman shows, and specializes in portraying nontraditional roles for women, particularly famous lesbians. In *The Second Coming*, Joan is a lesbian runaway who returns from the dead to give a modern, impassioned perspective of her life. For more than 20 years, Gage played Joan. For the performance at PSU, she directed Boston actor Julia Reddy (pictured right), and they held a Q&A after the show.

A missionary life

IN HER first book, *The Gospel of Trees: A Memoir*, just released by Simon & Schuster, award-winning writer Apricot Irving MA ’04 observes that most memoirs about missionaries are either hagiographies or exposés. But the missionary parents who brought Irving and her siblings to Haiti when she was 6 years old were neither saints nor marauders. Her family’s story—and the country’s—are far more complicated than that, and unraveling the complexities is what inspired her to put on paper the conflicting feelings of her childhood. In her unflinching narrative, Irving grapples with coming to terms with a difficult coming of age.
The influence of acclaimed jazz musician and composer Darrell Grant goes beyond the classroom.
ON A RAINY Tuesday in Lincoln Hall, a group of five students gathers in a rehearsal room for music professor Darrell Grant's jazz improvisation class. He strides into the room, sits at the piano and announces that they will be taking turns soloing over the chord progression of George Gershwin’s “I Got Rhythm.”

The trombonist, shy at first, dips her toe in the musical water, playing simple three-note motifs. Then the sax player. Then the guitarist. Another piano player takes a seat next to Grant, soloing over Grant’s chords. Then it’s Grant’s turn to solo, and he burns it up, rattling off complex swinging lines at the same time imploring the students to keep it simple.

“Feel what it’s like to play less,” he says. “We’re trying to keep rhythm primary. All that other stuff—noodling—is secondary. Wait until you hear an idea, and then come in.” The energy in the room heats up. It’s like a square dance or a game of hot potato, each player passing off to another. And sure enough, the more the students keep it simple, the better they sound.

Grant was already enjoying a thriving career as a jazz musician and composer when he came to PSU 21 years ago, and he maintains that part of his life to this day. He also takes great joy in teaching the next generation of musicians, while using his music beyond the campus as an outlet for social causes and a way of supporting the broader Portland jazz scene. To him, jazz is emotional, visual; an articulation of empathy, of democracy, of fearless self-expression. It’s a calling.

GRANT’S journey to this moment started as a child taking classical piano lessons in Denver. He found himself experimenting with jazz before he even understood what jazz was.

“I liked improvising—just making stuff up. Then around junior high school I heard jazz on a record, and I thought ‘Oh, that’s a thing? If I did that, I wouldn’t have to practice all this classical music,’” he says.

He pulls out a record album. “This is me at 15,” he says pointing out the kid with the glasses and afro, part of a Dixieland band he was in in the mid-1970s. The band had a gig every Friday and Saturday at Denver’s Heritage Square Opera House. He made $40 a night while his other school friends were making $2.30 per hour minimum wage.

After high school, Grant earned a degree in classical piano at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and a master's in jazz studies at the University of Miami. Grant was playing eight gigs a week in clubs all over Miami. After graduation, he packed up and moved to New York City, where he devoted himself to playing in jam sessions and getting to know everybody he could in the jazz community.

He started a trio, and one of his bandmates got a gig with famous jazz singer Betty Carter and recommended Grant for an opening she had for a lower Manhattan river cruise. She listened to him play at a club, then hired him as her piano player.

Grant spent the next 10 years in New York. He had steady engagements with Carter, and worked with other noted jazz performers, including trumpeter and bandleader Woody Shaw. At the same time, he started a new band, composed his own pieces and signed a recording contract with Verve, one of the country’s most prominent jazz labels.

In 1994, Grant released Black Art, which The New York Times named one of the 10 best jazz CDs of the year. Two years later, he was a guest on Marian McPartland’s Piano Jazz, an intimate music and conversation show on National Public Radio on which piano virtuoso McPartland spontaneously invited her guests to play tunes. She would call the titles, and the guest had little or no warning. Grant says it was terrifying, but also a rite of passage that, along with his CD, gave him national exposure.

His move to Portland happened almost by accident. Grant and his future wife, Anne McFall, came out to visit friends, including drummer Alan Jones. A bandmate of Jones, who was getting his master’s degree at PSU, mentioned that Andrew Hill, a professor in the PSU jazz program, was thinking of moving on. He asked Grant for a resume and CD, then, unbeknownst to Grant, snuck it into the pile of applications for Hill’s replacement.

“I was traveling, and when I got home I saw this letter thanking me for my interest in the job. What job? I wound up getting the gig, and the rest is history.”
between the word “job” and the word “gig” is a reflection of Grant’s artist mindset and perhaps discomfort with the idea of settling in to a confining routine. Even though he’s taught at PSU longer than any other jazz faculty, the position represents only the hub of his professional life—not the whole thing.

“I’ve never seen this as a job. I see it as a platform,” he says as he looks around at all the accoutrements of his Lincoln Hall office: a Steinway baby grand piano, computers, copiers. “I have all the tools to do everything I want,” he says.

At PSU, that has included helping to establish the jazz degree program; founding the Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute, which puts on performances and educational events to connect jazz with the Portland community; and starting LV’s Uptown Jazz Lounge at University Place. At one point, he was offered the chair of the piano program at the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston but chose to stay at PSU.

“When I turned that down, I started thinking about why I really wanted to stay here and what I wanted to do. I decided I wanted to try to connect the music more with the community,” Grant was quoted as saying in Rhythm in the Rain, a book by jazz journalist and radio personality Lynn Darroch. “I was looking for a sense of community, a place where I could make a contribution and serve.”

For example, he wrote and recorded an extended suite about Oregon called “The Territory,” which balanced the ideas of Oregon as a utopia with its troubling history of oppression against blacks. In the same vein, he composed and performed the suite “Step By Step” about Ruby Bridges, the first African American child to attend an all-white public elementary school in the American South. He’s currently applying for funding to write a chamber opera about gentrification in Northeast Portland.

In 2017 Grant contacted some local musicians and organized a performance in the Elliott State Forest in Southwest Oregon as a way to bring attention to the possible sale of the land. The project included hauling a piano on a rental truck up steep, bumpy logging roads.

“In a way it was like giving something back. The land has inspired me, and I wanted to go to the forest and see what came out musically,” he said in an Oregon Public Broadcasting interview.

Local Jazz guitarist Dan Balmer performed a lot with Grant in his early days in Portland and is impressed with how far-reaching Grant’s influence has become.

“One of the things that make him special is the number and variety of different directions he’s gone since he’s been in Portland,” he says. “He has a different awareness of various things. He navigates different waters.”

The challenge is how to pack it all in.

Grant, 56, is an early riser, and will often come to campus and practice from 6 to 7 a.m., then go home to make his son’s breakfast and see him off to school. He’ll come back and put in a full day at work, go home at 6 p.m. for dinner, then head out the door to play a gig with one of his two bands (he has a trio and a quartet), or as part of another ensemble. He also has some album projects he wants to do, and he’s promised himself he will write a book. He came to the conclusion last year that the schedule was not sustainable, so he hired a manager to help keep him organized.

Looking back at his two decades of work at PSU, he sees music and his teaching of music not as ends in themselves, but as a path to something larger—a communication channel to tap into the soul and communicate truth without words.

“I have students all over town from these 21 years doing amazing things—making music, serving in the legislature, being lawyers, starting companies,” he says. “My belief is that artistic training is an incredible way to become an effective human being.”

John Kirkland is a staff member in the PSU Office of University Communications.
BY MID-JANUARY, there was no more gas for sale in Oregon. Towns near the borders still had access to fuel, but price gouging across state lines was common, making it unprofitable to transport people or goods to the interior of the state. The Willamette Valley reverted to a pre-industrial way of life, and politicians, unwilling to live in such a way, moved the state capitol from Salem to Portland.

The big city changed quickly in the wake of the boycott. Desperate throngs crowded city government buildings, shelters, and soup kitchens. Theft and extortion became a survivalist way of life for people who had never engaged in criminal activity. Portland’s black market economy exploded; every commuter from Vancouver seemed to bring something with them: toilet paper, shampoo, coffee, tampons. For a while most of us didn’t know how to live without many of these items, so we paid the exorbitant prices, but it wasn’t long before they could only be afforded by the wealthy.

A picture painted in colors of bleakness and lack, however, would be inaccurate; although there were struggles the likes of which we’d never known, we made advancements that, without such difficulties, may have taken us a hundred years to achieve. A new depth of community involvement blossomed, and it seemed we were always meeting new people, encountering each other in productive circles of cooperation. Suddenly we all knew our neighbors, and one group of relations quickly formed bonds with another, so galvanized were we by our mutual need. Individuals with valuable skills became widely known within these circles, and although some of them sought to profit from their abilities, many were content to teach their skills and lend them to cooperative efforts.

BARTERING enjoyed a new heyday, and sales of fishing and hunting licenses surged. People of similar inclinations banded together for weekly outings to forage, hunt, and gather supplies. There were “self-ers”—distrustful social hermits, who didn’t participate in our loosely-formed cooperatives—but they struggled to survive independently in an increasingly collective community. Those of us who pooled our resources and skills lived better, less afraid, with more variety, and in greater comfort. In our lighter moments, we mused that we’d been preparing for this for years. Backyard chicken coops, mushroom foraging, and handcrafted goods had been popular here since the early 2000s.

When we talked, it was almost always about solutions to common problems. Sure, we occasionally reminisced about favorite things we could no longer obtain, but for the most part necessity had focused our thoughts sharply on the present and future. We talked about spring. We knew that if we could make it that long, nature’s bounty would provide us with everything we needed to survive in comfort.

To read the entire story, visit pdx.edu/sustainability/writing-contest.
STEWART HARVEY ’69, MA ’71 considers himself the volunteer historian of Burning Man, but even he can’t believe how what started as a small hippie gathering on a San Francisco beach 32 years ago evolved into an international draw.

Harvey, a longtime Portland photographer and former English teacher, chronicles that astounding transformation in *Playa Fire: Spirit and Soul at Burning Man*, published by HarperElixir, a large-format book that he both wrote and photographed.

For him, “transformative” defines the annual gathering, which combines ritual, art and community. He has shot it every year since 1989. “The reason I go is because it’s a fantastic experience” he says.

It began in 1986 when Harvey’s late brother, Larry, became interested in blending ritual and temporal art. To observe the summer solstice, he brought a few friends to
Baker Beach, in sight of the Golden Gate Bridge, and built a 9-foot stick figure, then burned it. They returned each year with a larger figure, and with the crowds doubling annually, in 1990 Larry Harvey and his compatriots moved the event to Black Desert Rock, Nevada.

In recent years, up to 70,000 people from all over the world flock there for a late-summer week. To top it off, the Smithsonian American Art Museum currently is exhibiting “No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man,” calling the festival “one of the most influential phenomenons in contemporary American art and culture.”

STEWART HARVEY’S LATE BROTHER, LARRY, PICTURED HERE IN 1991, WAS ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF BURNING MAN.
As Tami Lasseter Clare was finishing her Ph.D. in chemistry and looking for work, she had a sudden, startling realization: she wanted more from her life than a purely scientific career could offer. To find a livelihood that would make her happy, she analyzed the skills she’d acquired during her education alongside her passions, and she found the perfect combination in the field of art conservation.

Now an associate professor of chemistry at Portland State, as well as director of the University’s Regional Laboratory for the Science of Cultural Heritage Conservation, Clare combines science and art, using her knowledge of chemistry to solve mysteries about artworks in the museums of the Pacific Northwest.

One of her first mysteries came soon after she started at PSU in 2009. The Portland Art Museum had a second-century Han Chinese Dynasty Money Tree that was shedding some of its delicate metal leaves. The Money Tree is a bronze sculpture over four-feet high that was placed in a tomb to bring good luck to the dead. Clare analyzed the chemical composition of the debris that had accumulated on the tree’s surface to determine what approach to take with its conservation. Based on her research, the museum decided to gently remove the encrustation, leaving the underlying design more clearly visible than ever before.
Conservation of Asian and Native American art at the Portland Art Museum and four other West Coast museums is the focus of a new consortium headed by professor Tami Lasseter Clare. Photos by NashCO Photography and courtesy of the Portland Art Museum.
It is this kind of work that led to a recent $1 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which has Clare leading a new Pacific Northwestern Consortium for the Science of Cultural Heritage Conservation at PSU. She will work with five partners: Seattle Art Museum, Portland Art Museum, University of Washington Libraries, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon and Alaska State Museum.

The initial focus of the consortium will be on Native American and Asian art, areas that are particularly strong in the collections of the museums. The members will work together to choose which works will be selected for study. Clare says that doing so will help magnify the impact of the grant.

“Any results can be shared,” she says.

TWO TYPES of roles exist in art conservation: conservators and conservation scientists such as Clare. Samantha Springer, the conservator of the Portland Art Museum, says it’s like the relationship between a doctor and a specialist. Doctors treat patients and observe symptoms, but they may need a specialist’s assistance to find the cause of a particular symptom. Conservators can look at an artwork and find where there’s damage, but they may have to call in a conservation scientist to analyze that damage with more sophisticated tools. Conservators have a background in studio art, art history and science, while conservation scientists have doctorates in chemistry or other physical sciences.

Springer had to call on Clare when she discovered salts developing in glazed Islamic tiles on display at the museum. In her own lab, she could do spot tests, but she could only characterize the salts to a certain extent. “I knew that some were coming from their previous environment, but I wondered if any were coming from the cases the tiles were being exhibited in.”

When Clare followed up with a deeper analysis, she confirmed Springer’s suspicions. Some of the salts were acetates, formed by acetic acid emitted by the exhibition cases.

“It indicated to me that we couldn’t show in this type of environment anymore,” says Springer.

CLARE, the only conservation scientist west of Chicago and north of Los Angeles, was also involved in the conservation of the Portland Art Museum’s painting “Il Femminiello” by Giuseppe Bonito. Femminielli were cross-dressing men in the Italian city of Naples, and this painting, done between 1740 and 1760, was the only known representation of a femminiello until photographs were taken of them in the late 19th century. The painting had a large loss of paint in its lower quarter, and Clare needed to identify the original pigments, especially the blues.

“Blues are very subjective,” says Clare. “The hue will appear to shift depending on the light, so they’re very hard to match.”

By analyzing the chemical elements in the pigments, she could identify the original colorants in the paints, so they could be matched during the restoration process.

In the United States there are only four universities that offer a graduate degree in art conservation, and none that offer a degree in conservation science. Clare explains that the idea of a conservation science degree is controversial, because some believe that students should first earn a Ph.D. in chemistry physical science, then specialize in art conservation in their post-doctorate work, as she did. Clare did her post-doc at the Philadelphia Art Museum, one of the most robust institutions for art conservation in the country. Her three doctoral students are learning about conservation science through their work in her lab, as they keep their options open by getting a broader education in chemistry.

Nevertheless, Clare says that PSU has been strongly supportive of conservation science, which means that her students get the balance between science and art that she has sought in her own career.

“Portland State provides a very unique educational experience,” she says. “There just aren’t opportunities like what students have here, that combine lab and cultural work. I hope people can explore these crossovers and break out of the boxes people draw around categories.”

Stephanie Argy is a graduate assistant in the Office of University Communications.
Scholarships change lives

THIS SPRING, Portland State and the PSU Foundation held their annual gathering in honor of scholarship donors and recipients. Nearly 200 guests—including students, donors, faculty and alumni—joined together to celebrate the power of giving to create life-changing opportunities for students.

Bill Boldt, president and CEO of the PSU Foundation, opened the program and spoke to the deep impact that philanthropy makes on campus. Last year, for example, donor support funded scholarships for 2,850 promising students across the University.

“One in three PSU students will not complete their degree due to financial need,” Boldt said. “Scholarships give us an opportunity to change this—to help every motivated student find their path, finish their degree and make a better life for themselves and their families.”

KEYNOTE student speaker Auna Castellon is the recipient of the President’s Equal Access Scholarship. She shared her personal story of how, as a first-generation college student, a scholarship offered her much more than financial support.

“After receiving a scholarship, I found that I became more confident—not just in myself but in my abilities,” she said. “It gave me the courage to advocate for myself and others.”

Castellon is a senior preparing to apply for graduate programs in post-secondary adult education leadership. She earned her associate’s degree from Walla Walla Community College in less than one year before transferring to PSU. On campus, she works four different jobs and participates in the McNair Scholars Program—a specialty program designed to prepare first-generation students for doctoral studies.

Castellon ended her remarks with an encouraging message to the students, alumni and supporters in the room.

“For all those of you who have come a long way in their pursuit of higher education, I want to say that I see you,” she said. “Your work matters, and this is just the beginning.” –written by Rebecca Olson, PSU Foundation Marketing and Communications.

To make a gift in support of student scholarships, please visit psuf.org. Elizabeth Perez, a Vernier Scholar at PSU, was honored at the spring scholarship reception.
AS THE BIGGEST bankruptcy and audit scandal of its time, the failure of the Enron Corporation in the early 2000s grabbed headlines around the world. The unraveling of this Texas-based energy company exposed a tangled web of offshore tax shelters, inflated stock values and questionable accounting practices orchestrated by its executives and board of directors.

What could have led to such systematic and widespread fraud in a major American corporation? And what can be done to prevent another Enron-like disaster from happening again in the U.S.? More regulation? Deeper government oversight?

Research by two Portland State faculty who study corporate governance suggest there may be a higher-level way to prevent the “groupthink” that may have contributed to Enron’s demise: instituting policies and practices that attract and retain a more diverse set of employees at all levels, from boardroom to factory floor.

Jing Zhao and Brian Bolton, who teach and do research in The School of Business at PSU, used big data in separate studies to show that companies that hire a more diverse workforce produce more innovative products and earn higher profits. And for local companies like Daimler Trucks North America, based in Portland, the benefits of a diverse workforce go far beyond the bottom line.
ZHao worked with two colleagues from North Carolina State University to publish her results in a paper entitled “Do Pro-Diversity Policies Improve Corporate Innovation?” They scoured and analyzed data on publicly traded U.S. businesses, looking at new product introductions, patents and other company milestones. They found that companies that had pro-diversity hiring policies and practices produced more innovative products and services along with higher profits.

“With the extensive analysis we completed using publicly available data about U.S. corporations, we’ve been able to demonstrate that more diverse teams deliver more innovations in terms of new products, patents and citations, which in turn increases future firm value,” says Zhao, who teaches investment courses to both undergraduate and graduate students at PSU.

In other words, companies that promote a culture of inclusion, specifically attracting and retaining minorities, women, the disabled and LGBTQ employees, get a wider range of views, backgrounds, expertise and experiences that lead to more innovative problem-solving and more well-rounded business decisions.

“Top corporate leaders, academics and policy makers have long been wondering about the real economic benefits of corporate diversity policies,” Zhao says. “Many didn’t see how hiring a more diverse workforce positively affected shareholder value. Now we have strong evidence that creating a more diverse workplace today results in more innovative outcomes for companies tomorrow.”

Most surprising to Zhao in her research was to see that companies with diversity policies were helped the most during broad economic downturns.

“During the financial crisis of 2008 investors and consumers lacked trust in financial markets and corporations,” says Zhao. “My research shows that companies with diversity policies had an extra layer of protection that helped them weather the financial downturn far better than organizations that were less diverse.”

WHILE Zhao’s research focuses on new products, patents and citations as markers of innovation, her PSU colleague Brian Bolton looks at long-term investment performance. Like Zhao, Bolton uses enormous sets of data about U.S. corporations to draw causality relationships between diversity policies and positive business results. Bolton’s first book, Sustainable Financial Investments, looked at how corporate investments can be good both for a firm’s profitability and the environment, employees or community.

“Case studies or anecdotes are great for relaying specific examples, but the kind of work we do is based on thousands and thousands of observations,” says Bolton. “Our aim is to paint a picture of what’s happening through that large set of data rather than with one case at a time.”

Bolton’s big-picture study of companies looks for diversity of perspective among members of their boards of directors.

“Diversity of perspective leads to better outcomes,” says Bolton. “Period. It’s that simple.” Without it, tunnel vision can set in that can be very dangerous, he says. “Enron’s big downfall was its dominant culture, where aggressive risk taking—even if it resulted in failure—was rewarded. They suffered from a myopic vision of how performance and risk management happened that led to their eventual demise.”

DIVERSITY of perspective can be difficult to achieve. One potential solution is to set quotas for representation of certain populations on executive teams. Bolton points to Norway as an example of a country where legislated quotas enacted in 2003 forced the boards of companies in that country to hire more women.

“They went from 15 percent representation of women on corporate boards to 43 percent in just 10 years,” says Bolton. “The government didn’t care how they implemented it. They just wanted to see it done.”

Reception of the more diverse corporate boards has been on the whole positive. “Having a diverse board is now considered a ‘no brainer’ in Norway,” says Bolton.

One local company hasn’t needed any extra urging to incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion programs into how it conducts its business. As Portland’s third-largest employer, Daimler Trucks North America, formerly Freightliner Corporation, sees diversity in hiring as a strategic priority for its business.

“We think that a diverse organization provides a unique, intriguing and interesting work environment that’s rewarding for employees,” says David Carson, chief diversity officer at Daimler Trucks North America. “We aim to create a workplace where employees say, ‘I can bring my whole self. I feel welcomed. I feel included.’ For us, diversity is much more fundamental to our business than the benefit to our bottom line. It’s about creating a rewarding, challenging and stimulating environment for our people.”

“A DIVERSE ORGANIZATION PROVIDES A UNIQUE, INTRIGUING AND INTERESTING WORK ENVIRONMENT THAT’S REWARDING FOR EMPLOYEES.”

Carson says Daimler has found that diverse teams collaborating on projects always creates a lot of different perspectives in the process of doing their work.

“It creates a lot more challenges for the teams to be able to harness all of those different perspectives,” says Carson. “But ultimately we get a better dialogue that results in better outcomes.”

“The world is changing so quickly today,” he adds. “In businesses like Daimler’s the pace of change is faster than it’s ever been. Companies that are able to harness the collaborative power of a diverse group of employees are clearly a step ahead.”

Kurt Bedell is a staff member in the PSU Office of University Communications.
The Viking Pavilion at the Peter W. Stott Center

The new Viking Pavilion Arena is just inside the remodeled Park Blocks entrance to the Peter W. Stott Center. Photos by Eckert and Eckert.
A LONG-AWAITED events space for the community and a sports arena for the University—the new Viking Pavilion at the Peter W. Stott Center—opened in early April.

The pavilion faces the South Park Blocks through an all-glass façade and has reclaimed wood mounted high on its concourse wall that’s reminiscent of a Viking ship. It can hold up to 3,400 people and accommodate conferences, banquets, concerts, and, of course, sporting events. It is home to Portland State volleyball and basketball.

The Viking Pavilion was the result of an ambitious $52.1 million project to remodel the facility, which was built in 1966. The center was named after alumnus Peter W. Stott in 1997 following a $1 million challenge grant he provided at the time to renovate the building. Stott was instrumental in creating the Viking Pavilion.

IN ADDITION to the multi-event arena, which seats more than twice as many people as the old gym, the renovation created new student lounges, five classrooms, and new athletic administrative offices. There is also a new OHSU Sports Medicine Center for student athletes as well as a large, new weight room that replaced the pool. A café and Viking Athletics Hall of Fame display will open in fall 2018.

Funding for the remodel, which broke ground in spring 2016, came primarily from private gifts to PSU, along with state bonds and student fees. No general funds or student tuition dollars were used for the improvements. OHSU, a partner in the project, provided $7.5 million. Designed by Woofter Architects/Perkins+Will, the renovation is expected to achieve LEED Gold certification, a top category for sustainable construction.

For information about hosting an event in the Viking Pavilion, email conferences@pdx.edu or call 503-725-CONF.
Photographing the souls of homelessness
Pedro Oliveira, a communication and advertising major, graduates this spring, but he already is making his living as a commercial photographer. It all started with “Careful: Soul Inside,” a two-year photographic project profiling homeless individuals in Portland and several other cities.

The work, which starkly portrays folks living on the margins of society, has garnered awards, media exposure and two museum displays. Its reach inspired him to pursue his chosen career, says Oliveira, a native of Brazil.

His project’s theme resonated with his own background, making it easier for him to relate to people he met who were living on the street. “I was always an outsider—grew up in a Third World country, single mother, in a small town. I saw the other side of the camera.”
Raising more awareness of the problem of homelessness was what drove him. He hoped to surmount what he calls the barriers that society erects to isolate others. For most of his subjects he includes short narratives. A common theme he detected was that everybody has a dream, such as “being in a better job, or just having a better future.”

Homeless people “are very self-aware, something I never had anticipated,” says Oliveira. Some, such as a young woman addicted to heroin from her early teens, told him they blame their predicament on themselves. Most subjects don’t have the opportunity to see the photos he takes of them, but this woman did: When he texted her the picture, she told him she cried, seeing herself that way. —written by Cliff Collins, a Portland freelance writer.
Branden Harvey is a really optimistic person, but at the end of 2016 even he was overwhelmed with despair. The news was full of stories about the fallout from a divisive presidential election, the growing refugee crisis, and terrorism, conflict and injustice around the world. Bad news.

So, he decided to spread more good news.

Harvey, who majored in advertising and marketing at Portland State, launched a newspaper devoted to telling stories about the good in the world.

He was inspired by a quote from the late Mister Rogers: “When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’”

“It’s not that I wanted to pretend that there’s not injustice in the world, or that everything was fine,” Harvey says. “I just thought, ‘What can I do to encourage people to look for the helpers and give them the tools to become the helpers themselves?’”

Harvey, who is 25, started telling stories through photos as a teenager in Pullman, Washington. By the time he was a junior at Portland State in 2013, he had a successful photography business, thousands of social media followers and national brands eager to hire him.

He traveled the world taking photos on assignment, from Eastern Oregon to Southeast Asia and Uganda, directly applying what he was learning in his marketing and advertising classes to his business. Since then, he has been featured in national media outlets such as Fortune, Mashable, and Esquire.

His company, Good Good Good, published the first quarterly “Goodnewspaper” in 2017 with more than $55,000 in Kickstarter donations, along with a podcast, “Sounds Good with Branden Harvey.” Both can be found on his website www.goodgoodgood.co.

“Ultimately what we want to do is inspire action,” he says. “We really want people to put the newspaper down and find a way to get involved.”—written by Suzanne Pardington, a Portland freelance writer.
ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

GINA MICHEL ’73 had her musical instrument-themed fused glass on display in March and April at The Hub Gallery in Langley on Whidbey Island in Washington.

NAVY REAR ADM. NANCY NORTON ’86 is vice director of the Defense Information Systems Agency in Fort Meade, Maryland.

REBECCA NEWMAN ’97, MURP ’00 is principal owner of Forensic Accounting Services in Portland. The company’s founder Gregson Parker ’78 is still active at the firm. They are both certified as public accountants and fraud examiners.

CODY SHEEHY ’02, a documentary filmmaker and video coordinator at University of Arizona, won two Rocky Mountain Emmys in 2017 for the films Camp Bravo and Beyond the Mirage. Rocky Mountain is a regional division of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

NICHOLE MAHER MPH ’06 is president and CEO of Northwest Health Foundation in Portland and was recently appointed to the Oregon Arts Commission by Gov. Kate Brown.

T.J. FINLAYSON ’08 is a dentist in the office of Dr. Dennis Marshall in Hood River. He was a dentist with the Navy, where he reached the rank of lieutenant.

ALEX BIGAZZI, ’09, MS ’11, PHD ’14 is an assistant professor of civil engineering and community and regional planning at the Vancouver campus of the University of British Columbia.

TYRELL MARA ’09 is training to throw discus for Canada at the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. He is fund- and friend-raising for the training (tyrellmara@gmail.com) in Vancouver, B.C., where he lives with his wife and two daughters and works as a digital marketing director.

KIP BARRETT MBA ’10 is the Bend-area director for Economic Development for Central Oregon, a membership organization that promotes job creation.

MAYUKO YAMURA ’12 was on campus in February to talk about entrepreneurship in Japan. She is co-founder of Tokyo-based Edison.ai, a startup that helps companies connect with consumers through AI.

LILIANA LUNA ’14 is the multicultural center coordinator at Portland Community College, Rock Creek. She received a 2017 Women of Achievement Award from the Oregon Commission for Women. The award recognized her work in helping open a recent PCC center for DACA—Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program—students and their families.

LILY BROOKS DALTON MFA ’16 had her debut novel, Good Morning, Midnight (Random House, 2016), chosen for the Lake Oswego Reads program in February. The book is being made into a movie by Netflix.

VELAIDA HARRIS ’16 is in her first year as assistant coach of the University of Rhode Island women’s basketball team.

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.
She brought her long game

FRESHMAN GOLFER Windy Huang is becoming a standout player with an interesting backstory. Just six months into her first season as a Viking—and still new to the United States—she tied the school record, shooting a five-under par 67 at an invitational.

Huang is a Taiwan native who started playing at age 10. She gave up a budding career as a gymnast to play golf, an expensive game in Taipei, so expensive that she spent most of her time on a driving range. That changed during her junior year in high school, when she auditioned to qualify for membership at the Taipei Golf Club, one of the best public courses on Taiwan. Even without extensive on-course experience, she qualified and represented the club at tournaments throughout Asia.

She had also decided at an early age to attend college in the United States. In Taiwan, serious athletes go to an athletics university, says Huang, where academics aren’t as important. She wanted both.

ON A TRIP to the U.S. to explore universities, she ended up playing at the College Golf Combine, a tournament in California for potential college players.

And, that’s where she came to the attention of PSU golf coach Kailin Downs.

“She had a full swing in the long game and was really accurate (not surprising given her time at the driving range),” says Downs.

Huang chose PSU after a campus visit.

“She’s fun, easy going and has really embraced the culture here,” says Downs.

On the course, Huang needed to improve her short game. And, she’s already done that, says Downs, knocking nearly four strokes off her fall average. At the Big Sky Conference Championship in April, she tied for 15th in a 60-player field.

It all adds up to fulfilling another dream Huang has had since age 10: playing in the Ladies Professional Golf Association Tour. —from a longer article written by John Wykoff ’65, a feature writer for PSU Athletics.
50-year reunions

Biology Club
Former Portland State Biology Club students from the late 1960s are invited to reminisce, sing campfire songs and catch up on each other’s lives at a 50th reunion planned for the third week of July. If you have not yet been contacted, send an email to Joanne (Wentland) Turner ’71, jnjlt@aol.com, or John Howard ’68, jhowardcdt@comcast.net.

Study Abroad in Pavia, Italy
Saturday, August 25, 2018, is almost 50 years to the day when students in a Portland State College-led international program returned from a year in Pavia, Italy. Program alumni and their families are invited to a reunion reception that evening in the PSU Simon Benson House, 1803 SW Park Ave. For more information, email organizers at pavia6768@gmail.com.
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