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PAST TENSE

Looking Back: Success as a Student, Professional and Alumna



Vanport Extension Center (VEC), Portland State's founding institution, emerged in 1946 to meet the Post-World- War- II demand for increased higher education opportunities in the Portland area. The postwar baby boom created a shortage of classroom teachers, so VEC's emergence helped solve this problem. Women and men students interested in teacher education took beginning course work at VEC, and many continued their studies with the school's move to the Park Blocks in 1952 and its emergence as Portland State College (PSC) in 1955.

During the 1950s, an outstanding student in teacher preparation was Cathy (Bostwick) Williams who studied at both the VEC and PSC campuses. Cathy was a leader who excelled in academics and actively participated in student service organizations. She was a key member of the Vikes (a women's social service organization), a leader on the Viking's rally squad and the Portland State Pep Club, and served as society editor and then co-editor of the *Viking* (PSC's yearbook). In recognition of her varied achievements, Cathy was honored in the school's '53 *Viking* as "Outstanding Girl" by the students of Portland State. Cathy worked part-time while attending PSC, earned a B.S. degree in Elementary Education, and was one of 72 students in PSC's first graduating class of 1956.

Cathy's motivation and enthusiasm as a student carried over to an education career spanning 32 years, which included achieving an M.S. Degree in Counseling and Guidance. She was an accomplished eighth-grade teacher, a noted career education coordinator/consultant in the Portland Public Schools and statewide, a favored PSU instructor in her field, and a major contributor to professional organizations.

Following her retirement in 1989, Cathy expanded her community volunteering with a service focus over the years as a Portland State University alumna. She has served on the PSU Alumni Association Board, as a PSU Advocate, as a member of Friends of the Graduate School of Education, and as PSU Ambassador for Central Oregon. Cathy continues to serve, building her legacy as a dedicated student, professional, and alumna.

--Steve Brannan

Past Tense

The Beginning: Urban Studies at Portland State



PSU's College of Urban and Public Affairs originated with the establishment of the Urban Studies Undergraduate Certificate in 1959 and the Urban Studies Center in 1966, when the institution was Portland State College (PSC). Located in Harder House, both of these programs were directed by Lyndon Musolf in their earliest years.



In 1968, PSC was authorized by the State Board to offer the Ph.D. in Urban Studies through the departments of Economics, Political Science, and Sociology, commencing in 1969-70, coinciding with Portland State becoming a university (PSU). The Psychology department joined soon after and founding faculty included Jim Ashbaugh and Dick Lycan (Geography), Chuck Bolton, Leonard Cain, and Jim Weiss (Sociology), Jerry Lansdowne, Lyn Musolf and Dennis West (Political Science) and Morris Weitman and David Wrench (Psychology). The first graduate Urban Studies courses were listed in the PSU Bulletin in 1971 under the Urban Studies Center, with faculty holding joint appointments with the Ph.D. program.



Major steps forward that led to the establishment of the College were often accompanied by moves into new quarters across campus. In October of 1972, Nohad Toulan's hiring to direct the Ph.D. program prompted the urban programs to move from Harder House to Francis Manor. Hiring of new faculty with full-time appointments in the program began. The structure of the Ph.D. program was developed and published in the 1974-75 PSU Bulletin for the first time.

After masters programs were added in Urban Studies and Urban Planning in 1974, Toulan became the Dean of the School of Urban Affairs in 1976, with Urban Studies and Planning, Administration of Justice, and Black Studies programs included. The move to East Hall in 1987 allowed co-location of the academic departments and research centers affiliated with the School.



The final move to the new Urban Center occurred in 1997 as the School became the College of Urban and Public Affairs, currently comprising the Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning, the School of Community Health, and the School of Government. The latter School includes the Divisions of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Political Science and Public Administration. Today's College allows students with interests in urban problems and process to take advantage of the resources of an urban university, offering nine graduate and four undergraduate degree programs and the resources of a number of research centers.

Photos (top to bottom) Harder House, Francis Manor, East Hall, and Urban Center

-- Nancy J. Chapman, Professor Emerita, Urban Studies

Past Tense

Lasting Artistic Impressions of Portland State Presidents



Cramer



Millar



Wolfe



Blumel

Images of the first four Portland State University presidents have been captured in three oil paintings and one sculpture. A portrait of **John F. Cramer** hangs in Cramer Hall in the third floor conference room. Cramer was the first Portland State College president (1955-1958), and State Hall, the second building on campus, was renamed Cramer Hall in 1969 in his honor.

A portrait of **Branford P. Millar**, Portland State's second president (1959-1968) is located on the first floor of the Branford Price Millar Library (built in 1969), named in his honor. Both of these portraits were painted by Florence Saltzman-Heidel (1917-1972), the wife of the first Art Department Chair, Fred Heidel. Saltzman-Heidel graduated from the Chicago Art Institute in the 1930s. She taught in California post-secondary institutions and occasionally at Portland State. She was an artist who did wood-cut print making and painted in several media, including gouache (opaque watercolor) and oil. She exhibited in several art shows over the years, with her last being a retrospective one-woman show in 1972 at the Portland Art Museum. Her works are in permanent collections in art museums in London, Paris, California, and Washington as well as in Oregon. The Florence Saltzman-Heidel scholarship was established for Art and Design students.

A bronze sculpture (bust) of **Gregory B. Wolfe**, third president of Portland State (1968-1974), is located in the Market Center Building, 8th floor, President's Suite. The sculpture was produced by Vera Prasilova Scott (1899-1996). Scott began her artistic training in photography at Charles University in Prague and continued her schooling at the Graphic Arts School in Munich. She pursued photography as a career in New York and Houston, becoming well known for her portraits. When she moved to Portland in 1937, she began her work in sculpture, which she successfully pursued into the 1980s. Her works have been exhibited in Portland, Eugene, Houston, and New York and are in the permanent collections of the Portland Museum of Art and the Museum of Czech Literature in Prague.

Sally Haley (1908-2007), a well-known Northwest artist, painted a portrait of **Joseph C. Blumel**, the fourth President of Portland State (1974-1986). Joseph C. Blumel Hall (built in 1986) was named to honor him. Sally Haley earned a Bachelor's of Fine Art degree at Yale University. Haley and her husband, Michele Russo, were active in the arts in Portland during the mid-20th century. She was known for her still life paintings and portraits. She held many solo and group exhibitions during her career as an artist throughout the 20th century.

Note: Special thanks to Mary McVein, Visual Resources Curator, School of Art & Design, College of the Arts, Portland State University.

--Mary Brannan

Past Tense

Vanport Extension Center: Portland State's Beginnings

In 1946, Portland State began as the Vanport Extension Center (VEC), primarily to educate servicemen and women returning from World War II. The VEC was housed in Vanport, a North Portland housing project that served shipyard workers during the war and remained open for other tenants postwar. The General Extension Division of the Oregon State System of Higher Education hired Stephen Epler as a counselor for returning World War II veterans desiring to attend college. Because many of these returning veterans could not attend college in Eugene or Corvallis, Epler spearheaded the idea that the VEC be created with classes held in Vanport. The State Board approved Epler's proposal because there were no public higher education institutions in the Portland area. He had less than three months to assemble the facilities, faculty, and staff to open a summer session. In that first summer session, 220 students (94% veterans aged 18 to 47 years; 46% married) took classes at VEC. In the fall of 1946, although a student body of 500 students was expected, 1,400 students enrolled, demonstrating the need for



a Portland-based school site. The VEC was intended to be a temporary, lower division, non-degree-granting institution, a place for students to begin their college education.

The VEC remained at the Vanport site until it was flooded and destroyed on Memorial Day, May 30, 1948. Within two hours, the homes and possessions of many students as well as the VEC were under several feet of water. From here, the VEC, often called Vanport College by students, moved to Grant High School in northeast Portland for summer session, 1948, and to the former Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation in St. Johns from fall, 1948 to

1952. Subsequently, the school moved to the present-day Lincoln Hall site in Portland and the name was changed to the Portland State Extension Center.

Thus, today's Portland State University was created because of:

- The World War II GI Bill that provided money to help pay for higher education for returning veterans,
- The leadership and insight of Stephen Epler, its founding director,
- Vanport, a city built to house wartime shipyard workers that provided cheap housing and services to its residents after the war,
- The raging Columbia River that flooded Vanport on Memorial Day, 1948, and
- The strong advocacy of students, faculty, legislators, and community to continue public post-secondary education in Portland.

Stay tuned for the next part of the Portland State story!

--Mary Brannan

Sources: Brannan, S. A., and Swanson, S. (Eds.) 2011, *Creating Portland State 1946-1955*. Portland, OR: Retirement Association of Portland State.

Sanders, R., & Schauer, B. *Portland State: A History in Pictures*. Portland, OR: Retirement Association of Portland State, 2009.

Past Tense

Vanport Extension Center Becomes Portland State College



Seated at Governor Paul Patterson's right is John Cramer, the first President of Portland State College and to his far right is Stephen Epler, at the signing of legislation on February 14, 1955 making Portland State a four-year college.

It took nine years for Vanport Extension Center (VEC) to become Portland State College. There were many political obstacles along the way. In fact, Paul Packer, chancellor of the Oregon State System of Higher Education suggested closing VEC shortly after the 1948 Vanport flood. However, Edgar Smith, state board president, foresaw continued veteran growth and promised to keep the two-year school in operation as long as enrollment remained above 1,000 students. The original intent was for VEC to be a temporary institution to educate returning veterans.

While there was much opposition to continuing the school, many strong advocates, including students, faculty, alumni, community members, Portland newspapers, and politicians, fought for its survival. In 1946, the school newspaper *Vet's Extended* published a letter written by student council member Richard Miegs proposing that VEC become a permanent institution. Early on, Richard Neuberger, journalist and Oregon state senator advocated for a four-year college in Portland. John Hakanson, a former Vanport student, led a successful campaign to get legislation passed to establish a permanent two-year junior college in Portland and purchase a building. Governor Douglas McKay authorized the purchase of the old Lincoln High School in the Park Blocks in 1949. Classes began there in 1952 after remodeling, with the school named Portland State Extension Center, although students prematurely began calling it Portland State College.

In 1952, the Oregon Board of Higher Education commissioned a consultant's report that recommended expanded teacher training, including the establishment of a program at Portland State to address the upcoming critical shortage of teachers. This prompted Stephen Epler to write a proposal for a four-year college in Portland, and two legislative sessions later, Governor Paul Patterson signed House Bill 27 granting four-year college status to Portland State on February 14, 1955. Students were elated that they could now obtain a bachelor's degree at Portland State College, rather than transfer to other higher education institutions.

--Mary Brannan

Past Tense

Art in the Park Blocks: “Farewell to Orpheus”



Frederic Littman



Dedication of “Farewell to Orpheus” in 1972

“Farewell to Orpheus,” an iconic cast bronze sculpture and fountain, resides in the Park Blocks west of Smith Memorial Student Union and Cramer Hall. It depicts Eurydice, the wife of Orpheus from Greek mythology. Orpheus was allowed to bring Eurydice back from the dead on the condition that he walk in front of her and not look back until they both reached the upper world. Orpheus could not resist looking back to see her face, and she vanished back into the underworld. The sculpture was created by PSU Professor Frederic Littman (1907-1979) in 1968. It was installed as part of the South Park Blocks urban renewal project in 1972. Although the sculpture was always surrounded by water, it did not have a fountain until sometime in the early 1990s. The fountain continually recycles 227 gallons of water. The fountain stopped working in the early 2000s, but has now been repaired so that everyone can enjoy it more fully again. *(This information was adapted from the PSU Facilities Department website.)*

Littman was born in Hungary, and, as did other Jewish artists, fled the growing holocaust in Europe in 1940 and came to the United States. He moved to Portland in 1941 where he was an artist-in-residence at Reed College. In 1946, he became an instructor at the Museum Art School. He came to PSU as an associate professor of art in 1960, became a full professor in 1966, and retired in 1973. His works have been described as romantic, impressionistic, and figuratively based. His works are highly respected. *(This information is adapted from the Oregon Encyclopedia – www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/littman_frederic_1907-1979)*

Mary Brannan