Portland State University Magazine

Portland State University. Office of University Communications

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ON THE COVER Travis Knight, president and CEO of Laika studios,
works with the puppets that starred in ParaNorman, the animation studio’s
summer hit. Photo by Reed Harkness. See story on page 10.
Campus life thrives in the heart of the city

IF YOU HAVEN’T been on campus in a while, I encourage you to visit in 2013 to see firsthand the progress we’ve made in creating a lively urban education environment. Perhaps what has changed the most in recent years is the student experience. Portland State continues to be the most diverse university in Oregon. The number of Latino students, for example, has doubled since 2008 to more than 2,230 students this fall. That reflects the efforts of Exito (success), our recruitment and support initiative that includes La Casa Latina, the campus cultural center. The number of international students also has grown to more than 2,000 from Saudi Arabia, China, Japan, Korea, India, and other nations. They make vital cultural contributions and add a cosmopolitan atmosphere to our campus.

We’ve been able to attract more international and out-of-state students largely because of the expansion of residential life. In the fall, we opened University Pointe, the privately built and operated complex that increased our residential housing from 2,000 to 3,000 students. They have the opportunity to experience the 24/7 energy and attractions of living downtown. Students who live off campus also have seen dramatic improvements that enable them to get here without a car. PSU is a hub for TriMet buses, the north-south MAX train, and the Portland Streetcar. Partnering with the city, we have designated a popular bike boulevard along southwest Broadway, and our campus now offers more parking for bikes than cars.

Academically, we have added advisers to help students determine their majors and chart their coursework toward a degree, expanded orientation for freshmen and transfers, boosted retention rates, and maintained class sizes at an average of 24 students. For high-achieving students, we have strengthened our Honors Program, which grew by a whopping 59 percent in the past year.

CAMPUS LIFE is anchored by more than 200 student groups, from traditional sororities and performance groups to organizations such as the Modern Buddhist Student Association, Viking Vets, Gamers Republic, and the Tango Club. Resources include the Multicultural Center, Native American Student and Community Center, Queer Resource Center, Women’s Resource Center, and a new Resource Center for Students with Children. Viking sports also play an integral role at PSU for athletes, fans, and alumni.

Student support, however, takes more than academic and social programs. Our busy Center for Student Health and Counseling provides medical and psychological services, and we established our CARE intervention team four years ago to help students in distress. Because of our urban setting, ensuring a safe campus is our top priority, and we’re moving forward on a plan to bolster our Campus Public Safety operation. All this is just a snapshot of Portland State’s rich campus life. Look for much more to come as we grow and create more opportunities for all of our students.

Wim Wiewel
PRESIDENT, PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
I enjoyed reading the article “Living History” (Portland State Magazine, Fall 2012) featuring Stan Amy and Portland Student Services in 1969, although it was frustratingly brief. It opened a tiny window into a unique period filled with stories and amazing, visionary people. I met Stan early on at PSU and quickly became deeply involved in Portland Student Services (PSS) as its second secretary and then its third president. Our first big mission was extending the 18-month leases to three years and renovating the nine old buildings using mostly student labor. We then lobbied the State Board of Higher Education and the legislature for money, obtained a HUD loan and built the Goose Hollow apartments. That project required the first environmental impact statement for a residential project west of the Mississippi. As a result we were able to extend the lease for a longer period of time, truly stabilizing the student-run nonprofit of that time.

There were many interesting things that spun off PSS, including the food co-op and the Portland recycling team led by Jerry E. Powell ’69. We worked with Sam Oakland on the Portland bicycle lobby, which helped launch the first official bicycle trails in Portland. Some of the other players included John Werneken ’77, Craig Donaldson ’72, Dick Solomon ’69, Gary Fouts, Don Mele, Norm Boice, and many more.

The working relationship that we helped develop with the city; the support of visionary PSU President Greg Wolfe, Mayor Neil Goldschmidt, and the Portland Development Commission; the student protests, which eventually led to the closure of the Park Blocks to through traffic, all combined to profoundly transform PSU into the urban campus of today.

It was an exciting time to be a student at PSU and help lead that period of transformation. Stan was a marvelous leader, motivator, and creative thinker, who, though young, taught me leadership lessons and skills that I have used throughout my professional career.

Paul Eisenberg ’74
Seattle

Editor’s note: There was no Portland State-owned housing until 1969, but you are right, there were many privately owned apartment buildings surrounding campus. You probably lived in the Viking Student Residence Hall at 1912 SW Sixth Ave. Dan Davis, a local land developer, built and owned the building, which opened in 1967. I have read that it had maid service, continental breakfasts and, with parental permission, women students had no curfew.

In 1975, PSU bought the building, which is now known as the Ondine.

Editorial Clarification
The work of the PSU Autism Training and Research Center was featured in the article “Seeing Autism,” Portland State Magazine, Spring 2012. We think a bit more information on the center is in order.

Established in 2005, the center was the result of years of autism research by PSU faculty Joel Arick, the center’s first director; Ruth Falco; David Krug; and Helen Young, director of the center today. Collaborating with the Oregon Department of Education from 1998 to 2003, they conducted the Autism Spectrum Disorders and Outcome Study and Training Project — tracking the educational progress of children with autism in early education programs and providing teacher training around the state.

Today, their work has resulted in a promising teaching model, which is being tested in a large scale research project called CAPSTAR—Comprehensive Autism Program using Strategies for Teaching based on Autism Research. This research project includes many teaching components, including the STAR program, written by Arick, Lauren Loos, Falco, and Krug, and published by Pro-Ed Inc. in 2004.

Survey coming your way
Our mission at Portland State Magazine is to provide you with interesting stories that reflect the excellence of the University. Are we doing that? Let us know this winter when you receive an email survey. Your comments will have a lasting impact on the direction of the magazine.
THE SEX LIVES OF MOSSES

In a new study published by leading scientific journal, *Nature*, PSU researchers discovered that female mosses actually produce scents that entice insects called springtails to help spread the plants’ sperm. Before this study, led by biology professor Sara Eppley, moss reproduction was thought to depend on individual sperm swimming through a water layer between male and female plants. Eppley and her colleagues study mosses in the PSU Center for Life in Extreme Environments, which received funding from Barbara ’75 and Duane McDougall.

A rise in rankings

PORTLAND STATE EARNED a top 10 “up-and-coming” rating in the Best Colleges 2013 guidebook published by *U.S. News & World Report*. The list recognizes universities making “the most promising and innovative changes in the areas of academics, faculty and student life” based on a survey of college presidents, provosts, and admissions deans. “These rankings reflect a growing recognition among our peers that PSU is an urban research university on the rise,” says PSU President Wim Wiewel.
Cyclists make good customers

BUSINESSES NOW HAVE an incentive to encourage bicycling. A Portland State study found that cyclists who arrive at bars, restaurants, and convenience stores by bicycle spend more money per month than people who come by car, mass transit, or on foot. The study, led by civil engineering professor Kelly Clifton, discovered that businesses that provide bike parking and are located closer to low-traffic, bike-friendly streets have measurably more bike customers than those that don’t. This suggests that building bike and pedestrian infrastructure could be good for business.

Studying the origins of life

IT’S A FANTASTIC NOTION that cooperating molecules may have set the stage for life on Earth. Now, chemistry professor Niles Lehman has got them to work together in a test tube, and the science community is impressed. The research was recently published in Nature. When Lehman and his team put six RNA molecule fragments together in a test tube, the fragments quickly assembled themselves into full molecules. By the end of the experiment, the researchers had millions of molecules. The work gives a glimpse into the possible origins of life—in which a primordial soup of RNA molecules cooperated to build ever more complex structures.
Unique mission to space

THE UNIVERSITY became part of space history in October when it sent an experiment to the International Space Station on board a SpaceX space craft, the first commercially owned rocket to bring cargo to the station since NASA retired its shuttle program. This is the 50th round of experiments Professor Mark Weislogel and his engineering students have conducted with the station. They have another 50 planned for the future, which they monitor in real time from a lab on campus. The students are able to communicate directly with the astronauts. “Very few institutions have what we have,” Weislogel says. Read about Ryan Jenson, a doctoral student involved in this research, on page 25.

Award for green leadership

PSU PRESIDENT Wim Wiewel (center) received the inaugural Presidential Award from the U.S. Green Building Council’s Center for Green Schools in November for creative leadership in sustainability. The recent addition on campus of the Green Building Research Laboratory for Oregon researchers, and Electric Avenue, a row of electrical car, motorcycle, and bicycle charging stations on Montgomery Street, caught the attention of the council. It also took note of PSU’s eight LEED-certified campus buildings. The award was presented at the annual Greenbuild Expo in San Francisco by Rachel Gutter, a green school expert for the council, and Geraud Darnis, a CEO in the building systems industry.
THE MORRISON BRIDGE lights turned Viking green when the University opened its doors to the community for Portland State of Mind in October.

History of Northwest quakes

READING CORE SAMPLES of marsh sediment with their trained eyes, Portland State geologists and archeologists were able to determine that four major tsunamis hit the Pacific Northwest coast in the past 1,300 years. Led by geology professor Curt Peterson, the researchers have fresh evidence that earthquake-generated tsunami waves struck Washington’s Olympic Peninsula around 300, 800, 1,100, and 1,300 years ago. The sediment samples were taken in the wetlands between Makah and Neah bays. A layer of clear sand and marine fossils in between layers of dark marsh sediment indicate a tsunami, and radiocarbon testing of the marsh layers date the events. The research was recently published in the *Journal of Coastal Research*. ■
Fanfare

WE WANT TO HEAR about your books and recordings and your future exhibits, performances, and directing ventures. Contact the magazine by emailing psumag@pdx.edu, or mailing Portland State Magazine, Office of University Communications, PO Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751.

Onstage at the Met

Soprano Audrey Luna ’01 won praise this fall singing the part of Ariel in a debut Metropolitan Opera performance of The Tempest in New York’s Lincoln Center. Critics admired her “vocal agility, color and power” in a role that is both musically and physically demanding. At various times, she sang while perched on a chandelier, suspended from a large ring, dancing, and head down. “Ms. Luna conquers the role,” said The New York Times’ Anthony Tomassini. In May, Luna will sing the role of Zerbinetta in Ariadne auf Naxos with the Fort Worth Opera.

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Opera in the spring

ZACH BORICHEVSKY, an up-and-coming American tenor, will sing in the PSU Opera production of Puccini’s La Rondine April 26 through May 4 in Lincoln Performance Hall. A former resident artist with the Academy of Local Arts, Philadelphia, (seen here in ALA’s Pêlles et Mélisandre) Borichevsky has been performing around the country and in Italy. La Rondine (The Swallow) is a light romantic comedy, but with a compelling Puccini score. The PSU production will be set in 1950s Paris and promises to have lush sets and costumes. For tickets, call the PSU Box Office at 503-725-3307 or visit pdx.edu/boxoffice.
Haunting imagery

OVERLAY A 19TH CENTURY portrait with intricately drawn waves of visual energy and sound, and enter the spooky world of local artist Anna Fidler MFA ’05. Her huge portraits of early Oregonians, both prominent and anonymous, were featured this fall in an exhibit titled Vampires of Oregon at the Portland Art Museum. Her Vampires and Wolf Men series is its own body of work, but all Fidler’s art has a haunted quality, which has led to numerous shows in Portland, Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Miami, and Tokyo. Fidler received a Laurels scholarship while attending Portland State, and now uses student art interns to help create her large works of art.

Clowning around

DON’T MISS the PSU winter play, The Servant of Two Masters, by Carlo Goldoni scheduled February 28 through March 9 in Lincoln Performance Hall. This classical Italian comedy tells the story of a deceptively zany servant who serves first one, then another master, outwitting them both. Guest director is Portland-based Jessica Wallenfels. For tickets, call the PSU Box Office at 503-725-3307 or visitpdx.edu/boxoffice.

New Works

HOP IN THE SADDLE: A GUIDE TO PORTLAND’S CRAFT BEER SCENE, BY BIKE

STARTING FROM ZERO: ONE-ACT PLAYS ABOUT LESBIANS IN LOVE
By Carolyn Gage MA ’84, Gage Press, 2012

OVERSOUL: STORIES AND ESSAYS
E-book by Mitchell S. Jackson ’99, MA ’02, the Collections House, 2012

THE HUNTER
By Scott Lazenby PhD ’09, CreateSpace, 2012

13TH HOUR – TALES FROM LIGHT TO MIDNIGHT

GETTING THERE: WOMEN’S JOURNEYS TO AND THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

A DROP IN THE OCEAN
Music CD by the Portland State Chamber Choir, PSU, 2012

CLOSE IS FINE
By Eliot Treichel, PSU Ooligan Press, 2012

HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN ANTIQUITY THROUGH THE MIDDLE AGES
By William H. York (University Honors faculty), Greenwood, 2012
Travis Knight ’98 leads the enchantment at Laika animation studio.

A LONG DAY at Laika lasts about four seconds.

That is, four seconds of a silicon puppet doing something—kicking a ball, opening a school locker or running from an evil ghost. Those four seconds might take a 14-hour workday and will enlist the talents of animators, sculptors, set designers, and photographers.

This is the world of stop-motion animation, and Laika, headquartered in Hillsboro, is one of the top studios in the world doing this work. ParaNorman, which opened last summer, has earned an Academy Award nomination just as Coraline did in 2010.

The company’s CEO is Travis Knight, a 1998 graduate of Portland State who was honored in October with a PSU Alumni Achievement Award. He divides his time between the heavy business decisions of overseeing a 700-employee studio, and doing what he really loves: playing with puppets.

The puppets in Laika movies are about nine inches tall, made of flexible molded silicon wrapped around a steel skeleton. Everything about them can be shaped and moved in tiny increments. The job of animators such as Knight is to inject personality into these movements. If he wants to show the hero of ParaNorman brushing his teeth, the animator will spend an entire day having the character squeeze toothpaste onto a brush, raise it to his mouth, do all the little motions of brushing, and generate a mouthful of white froth.

After each movement, a camera takes a shot. Twenty-four shots make a second. ParaNorman is 5,520 seconds long. You do the math.

“It’s ridiculous,” says Knight. Ridiculous in a cool way, because Knight can’t imagine doing anything else.

“Ultimately the films we make are really labors of love. You can see it as you walk around this building. There are not very many people on the planet who have the patience or the skill or the intense focus to do this labor-intensive, mentally taxing kind of work.”

Wouldn’t it be easier and cheaper to make these movies with computer animation? Knight says no, stop-motion is actually less expensive and requires a lot fewer people. But that’s not the point. Stop-motion, because of its hands-on
nature, imparts more humanity in its characters than any computer ever could. That’s why he loves it and why Laika is widely admired.

“Laika is helping to build Portland as the stop-motion animation capital of the world,” says Vince Porter, executive director of the Oregon Governor’s Office of Film and Television. “Clearly they stand up against anyone in the industry.”

Laika is also bolstering the local economy, says Porter, who knows of former Laika employees who have created spin-off businesses to support the animation industry. Vendors supplying parts and services to Laika are also growing in tandem with the company’s success. Portland’s Cambridge Precision Machining experienced a 20 percent increase in revenue when it manufactured the tiny puppet skeletons for ParaNorman. It now gets referred business from as far away as Great Britain.

KNIGHT, son of Nike founder Phil Knight, grew up watching classic stop-motion movies and TV shows such as Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and the works of stop-motion pioneer Ray Harryhausen. The latter combined stop-motion with live action photography in movies such as Jason and the Argonauts (1963) and One Million Years B.C. (1966). As a boy, Travis Knight loved to sketch and make things, and tried his hand at stop-motion, even through there were barely any books on how to do it.

“My story is the same as every other animator of my generation. We were just kids who loved the art form and went into our parents’ basement or garage and figured out how to do it on our own,” he says.

After college, he got a job as a production assistant at Portland’s Will Vinton Studios, which made it big in the 1980s with its claymation California Raisins ad campaign. Knight worked there in the 1990s, when Will Vinton was making the TV show The PJs. His job entailed doing a hundred different things, from helping build sets to scheduling shoots, but it did not include the one thing he really wanted to do: animate. He got his chance one day when the studio was shorthanded.

“I was terrified, but I did a fine job,” he says. From then on, animation was added to his job description. Vinton suffered a devastating financial downturn after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The studio was heavily dependent on ad work, and the attacks led to an advertising recession in the United States, says Knight. Phil Knight was a majority shareholder in the company, and acquired it outright in 2002. He and Travis talked about how to salvage the company in a way that focused on its best qualities.

“It ultimately came down to people,” the younger Knight says. “When we rebuilt the company, we wanted it to be about this community of artists.”

Mike Smith, an artist who still works with Knight, came up with the name Laika, which was the dog the Soviets sent into orbit in 1957.

“There was something about it we liked—this aspirational quality—a mutt from humble origins that touched the stars,” Knight says.
LAÏKA was formed in 2003, and Travis became president and CEO in 2009.
But before he took the helm, he was the lead animator for the company’s first major film, Coraline. Filmed in 3-D, it’s the eerie story of a young girl who moves cross country with her parents to a strange town. She’s lonely, and her parents are too busy to give her much attention. She finds a hidden corridor in her new home, follows it, and discovers an alternate world inhabited by her “other” parents—ones who are nicer and more attentive. As attractive as this other world is at first, she finds that things are not quite right. The other mother turns out to be a witch bent on keeping Coraline captive.

Based on the 2002 book by Neil Gaiman, the story had all the elements of some of the best children’s literature: discovery, gaining power in a world of flawed adults, dealing with emotional issues such as isolation, fear, and loneliness. Viewers expecting to see a typical kids’ movie might have been disappointed. Or shocked: it’s pretty scary.

That suits Knight just fine.

“I don’t want to put out little pop culture confections to the world. I want to tell stories that have some meaning. That’s a big part of what this company is about,” he says.

New York Times reviewer A.O. Scott, who called Coraline’s 3-D effects “unusually subtle,” admired the film’s novel approach. “…Rather than race through ever noisier set pieces toward a hectic climax in the manner of so much animation aimed at kids, Coraline lingers in an atmosphere that is creepy, wonderfully strange and full of feeling,” he wrote.

ParaNorman has some of the same themes as Coraline. So does Laika’s next feature film, scheduled for release in fall 2014. But Knight isn’t talking much about it. Not yet, anyway—not until the company formally announces it this winter.

“It’s definitely a Laika film, which is to say it’s not your standard Hollywood family fare,” he says.

BEING DIFFERENT is a kind of personal mission for Knight, who said his artistic goals changed the instant he had children. He said the entertainment industry just wasn’t making ’em like they used to, and he wanted to resist the temptation of going with the flow just to make money.

“We’re awash in a world of sequels and reboots and remakes, where old presents are rewrapped and offered up as new gifts. At Laika, we want to do things that make our kids proud and have a positive effect on how they see the world,” he says.

His children are now 9 and 11 years old, just the right age to critique their dad’s work.

“They’re the perfect focus group,” he says. “I run ideas by them all the time. They’re very honest—they’ll tell me if something sucks or if they like it.”

Knight’s goal for the company is to overlap projects so that it’s putting out a movie a year. No stop-motion company has ever been able to do it, he says. The genre is known for ramping up employment while a project is going on, then letting most of the animators and craftspeople go when it’s completed. Because of this, the artists who make stop-motion films tend to live kind of rootless lives.

Knight wants his artists to come to Oregon and stay. Making that happen is where the business side of Laika comes in: acquiring story rights, figuring out the funding and the scheduling. But all of that is in service to the art of making movies one painstaking frame at a time.

John Kirkland is a staff member in the PSU Office of University Communications.
The University’s film program is attracting the next generation of cinematographers.

CINEMATIC CRAFT

Written by Heather Quinn-Bork
BACK IN THE DAY when movies were made from film instead of pixels, many entry-level cinematographers could only afford to hone their craft in film school. The apparatus for making motion pictures—complicated film cameras, editing equipment, and untold reels of film to buy and process—was expensive. Today’s digital filmmaking equipment is affordable enough that children are shooting, editing, and publishing their own movies while in grade school. But even with these new tools, there’s much about filmmaking that can be learned in a university setting.

Dustin Morrow, PSU film faculty, says that students often enroll with years of experience in DIY digital film production, but the essential characteristics of successful filmmaking still need to be taught.

“The point is learning how to use those tools to effectively tell stories, to understand how to use sound and image together, how to edit in such a way to provoke thought or create feeling,” says Morrow. “Those are the things that they’re learning, and those are the things they don’t really know.”

Morrow teaches digital film production in Portland State’s recently rebooted film program. Back in the 1970s, the Center for the Moving Image at Portland State was one of the most prestigious film programs in the country. Unfortunately, it was eliminated in 1981 because of budget cuts. It wasn’t until 2007 that the film program started up once again, merging with the Theater Arts Department to become the Department of Theatre and Film. For the first few years, the film program focused mainly on film studies, but last year, with the hiring of Morrow, the department was expanded to provide a sequence of courses in production.

Student demand was a major factor in establishing the new program, but so was the need to support and take advantage of an active, local film industry. In the past few years, the Portland area has become a hub for film and television production. Shows such asPortlandia, Leverage, and Grimm, as well as feature films such as the first Twilight movie and this summer’s ParaNorman (see story on page 10) have been either shot or produced in and around Portland, and many students in the film program have been able to work on these productions.

“There are a lot of movie and television opportunities for students. In fact, some of them are always missing class because they are PAs on Grimm or other shows,” Morrow jokes.

FILM SENIOR Clarke Leland is one of those students who have taken advantage of local filming. He’s been a PA, production assistant, for Grimm, does freelance video work, and he works with local company Flying Rhino Productions.

Leland has also worked on several productions with other film students, and he runs the department’s new production suite, which includes digital editing rooms, space for group collaboration, and a growing collection of video equipment that students can check out. Since the film program is still new and growing, Leland says it is up to students as well as faculty to lay the foundation for the future.

“I have the opportunity to be instrumental here, and I’m trying to be that,” Leland says. “We can make this a holistic film program, and it’s even more advantageous because we’re
The still frames on page 13 are from the video, I Go To Sleep, created by film students Darcy Sharpe and Kat Audick. Their film is also featured above along with frames from Geek to Go by student Clarke Leland.

based out of Portland where productions are happening, and where the hub of Oregon filmmaking is. We have a program that could cradle that, that could hold it all together.”

The film program is designed as a holistic one that readies students for careers in production, but also keeps a focus on film studies. Students have embraced that dual emphasis as an opportunity to gain hands-on experience while also focusing on fundamentals.

“I prefer having film studies as a basis, and then the production stuff adds value to that, rather than being all I’m focused on,” says film student Tiffany Creed. “They’re both challenging to me for different reasons.”

Creed, who moved from Alaska to attend Portland State, chose to study film using her Western Undergraduate Exchange Scholarship, which allows students to attend colleges out of state at reduced tuition. Film students are also benefitting from the Evelyn I. Crowell Endowed Scholarship funded by a retired PSU librarian.

Professor Morrow sees the newness of the program as an opportunity to build a center of study that caters to what students are interested in now while continuing to develop the core fundamental skills of teamwork and storytelling.

“I didn’t want to walk in and say, ‘here’s how I want to do it,’ and impose my own ideas of the perfect film program without listening to the students,” says Morrow. “That’s why we’re growing fast, but not so fast as to not be listening.”

Heather Quinn-Bork, a graduate assistant in the Office of University Communications, wrote the article “Asking the Right Questions” in the fall 2012 Portland State Magazine.

Andries Deinum directed the PSU Center for the Moving Image in the 1970s. Photographs from the 1969 Viking yearbook.
Too many students? 
It’s off to the portable classroom, 
but this one is something special.

WRITTEN BY SUZANNE PARINGTON

TO GO TO SCHOOL, kindergartners and first-graders in Gervais, Oregon, have to take a bus six miles out of town to a remote building in an apple orchard.

The daily trip is too long for the children and too expensive for the small, rural school district north of Salem. But the superintendent, Rick Hensel, thought he couldn’t afford to build a new school closer to home—unless he bought cheap, boxy, inefficient portables.

The solution came from an unexpected place: Portland State’s Architecture Department.

Professors Margarette Leite and Sergio Palleroni and their students have designed and built the first affordable, green portable classroom, and Gervais School District is their first customer.

What started as a design exercise in a PSU studio could transform the $5 billion modular classroom industry and improve the health and academic achievement of countless students now placed in overcrowded and dilapidated schools.

Leite and Palleroni’s SAGE (Smart Academic Green Environment) classroom lets in at least twice the natural light, circulates three times as much air, and consumes half the energy of a standard portable classroom.

For the Gervais School District, the new classroom eliminated the biggest obstacle to green construction: high price.

“All way we can make a healthier environment, logic tells you that’s the way to go,” says Hensel, the superintendent. “But it really comes down to dollars.”

The SAGE classroom costs about $75,000—20 percent more than standard portables in Portland—but saves money over time by using less energy. Other green modular classrooms are at least four times as much.

“Every school district in the country could conceivably afford this classroom,” says Palleroni. “It’s a dramatic paradigm shift from what exists now.”

THE FIRST PROTOTYPE was unveiled in November outside the entrance of San Francisco’s Moscone Convention Center for Greenbuild 2012, the world’s largest green building expo. The project won a 2013 international SEED award for excellence in public interest design.
For Leite and Palleroni, who are married and partners in their own architecture firm, the project fulfills a shared design mission: to provide “sustainability for people who can’t afford sustainability.”

The classroom is the first flagship project of PSU’s new Center for Public Interest Design, established this year with a $1.5 million anonymous donation. Palleroni, who will head the center, was one of the first senior fellows at the Institute for Sustainable Solutions, supported by a $25 million challenge grant from the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation.

Leite and Palleroni initiated the classroom project with a grant from the institute to study how to make schools better and greener. They quickly focused on portables, because when school districts need more space fast, they usually can’t afford to build permanent buildings.

The issue became personal for Leite and Palleroni in fall 2011, when their daughter was assigned to a fifth-grade class in a portable at a Portland elementary school, amid protests from parents.

They studied portables in the district, and found many are 50 to 60 years old, have few windows, and are made of materials that release toxins in the air. The ventilation systems are so noisy that teachers continually turn them on and off so they can be heard, causing spikes in carbon dioxide levels and reduced energy efficiency.

The more they learned, the more concerned they were. Strong research links conditions in school buildings with student health and performance. Natural light helps keep kids alert, for instance, while poor ventilation can cause health problems and lower performance on tests.

To produce the first prototype, they worked closely with a builder and distributor to keep costs down while targeting improvements that most affect student wellbeing and learning.

“When compromises had to be made, we always erred on the side of student health,” Leite says.

The result “is so much healthier and cleaner that it is on a different planet,” Palleroni says. “It feels so spacious and airy and light; even though the dimensions are the same, it feels dramatically different.”

Gervais School District plans to sell its existing far-flung schools to help pay for new, centrally located SAGE classrooms, starting with an order for up to 20 to house kindergartners, first-graders, and middle school students next fall.

Leite and Palleroni plan to monitor the air quality and energy performance in the new classrooms and continue to improve the design.

“We’ve reached the frontier of truly affordable green classrooms,” Palleroni says. “Now the question is how can we go further than that?”

Suzanne Pardington, a staff member in the PSU Office of University Communications, wrote “A More Perfect Union” in the Fall 2012 Portland State Magazine.
In the hit television show, the young, hip, and unambitious find a home in Portland. Two PSU professors pit fiction against fact.

Remember when people were content to be unambitious, sleep until eleven, just hang out with their friends, had no occupations whatsoever? I thought that died out a long time ago. Not in Portland. Portland is a city where young people go to retire.

- “Dream of the 90s,” Portlandia sketch

Portlandia, the wildly popular and Peabody Award-winning IFC network television show, has burned a certain image of Portland into pop culture: a city filled with transplanted hipsters who can’t decide between making jewelry or applying to grad school; who have made the annual Allergy Pride Parade a well-attended event; who proudly serve food retrieved from dumpsters. Gainful employment? It just gets in the way of a lifestyle that is Portland.

This begs the question: Could fiction be fact and Portland really be the city where young people go to retire, as the show claims?

Yes and no, say Jason Jurjevich and Greg Schrock, PSU Urban Studies and Planning faculty, who were inspired to look past the stereotypes for solid data.

They examined the migration patterns of college-educated young people (a group they affectionately call YCEs) in 50 metropolitan areas from 1980 to 2010. In that timeframe, Portland consistently attracted and maintained an extremely high rate of YCEs. “This holds true regardless of economic conditions,” says Jurjevich. “Some metro areas only attract YCEs during good economic times. We have a ‘brain gain’ occurring in Portland even in economic downturns.”

At first glance, the two professors’ research appears to support the Portlandia stereotype: Portland YCEs scored high for self-, part-time, and no employment at all compared to other metro areas. In addition, wages in Portland for YCEs were among the lowest.

“However, that high rate of part-time employment is not semi-retirement,” says Schrock. “That is a coping strategy.” Jurjevich and Schrock conclude that young professionals don’t come to Portland to retire, but they don’t come expecting to get rich, either. They are committed to Portland...
Sara Tunstall MBA ‘10 (front and center) moved to Portland without a job, but unlike the characters in Portlandia, her work ethic moved with her. She now owns Spooltown, a sewing factory where she employs 13 full-time workers. Photo by Kelly James.
THE REAL PORTLAND

Pop culture has branded Portland as a haven for the hip and unambitious. Professors Jason Jurjevich and Greg Schrock decided to explore the facts. Do young, college-educated people (under the age of 40, and referred to as “YCEs”) really move here without jobs? Are they actually content to just hang out? Or are they seeking meaningful work? Jurjevich and Schrock analyzed data going back to 1980, and then compared the numbers with 50 other metropolitan areas. Here’s what they found:

• YCEs move to the Portland area and stay here in higher numbers than other metro areas.
• Since 2000, the unemployment rate for Portland YCEs is among the five highest in the United States.
• One in five Portland YCEs worked 35 hours a week or less between 2008 and 2010—the highest part-time rate in the 50 metro areas studied.
• One in three Portland YCEs held jobs that did not require a bachelor’s degree, making the local occupational underemployment rate slightly higher than the national average.
• Portland YCEs consistently earn 90 percent or less of their counterparts’ wages in the other metro areas, even when adjusted for cost of living.
• Nearly 90 percent of Portland YCEs were either working or looking for work between 2008 and 2010.
• Finally, Portland’s YCEs consistently have one of the country’s highest self-employment rates. “That’s a good news/bad news scenario,” says Schrock. “People create work that suits them, but it’s often more precarious than traditional employment.”

To learn more about the study, visit the website mkn.research.pdx.edu.

and to all the city has to offer: cultural diversity, natural beauty, and a progressive political and social climate. Essentially, Portlanders earn—and cherish—a second paycheck that consists of a thriving performing arts scene and easy access to the ocean and the mountains.

Sara Tunstall MBA ’10 could not be further from the retiring-young-person stereotype. However, the beginning of her story could make a good Portlandia sketch.

Originally from western Massachusetts, Tunstall earned her bachelor’s in analytical chemistry with a pre-med focus but decided not to enter medical school. Shortly after graduation, she says, “I sold my stuff, packed my trunk with camping gear, and took off with my dog.”

After camping her way across the country to Northern California, she headed up the coast to Portland. “I didn’t have any close friends in Portland. But I was in search of adventure, and I found a place that greeted newcomers with open arms.”

Tunstall floundered, as she put it, for a year or two, and then landed a position as shipping manager for a local toy manufacturer. After five years, she found work at a local handbag and accessories manufacturer Queen Bee Creations. She managed production for Queen Bee while she earned an MBA at PSU, and then established her own sewing factory, Spooltown, which now employs 13 people full time in the same building as Queen Bee.

“We do Queen Bee’s production sewing and work with about 30 other clients on design, product development, and production sewing,” says Tunstall. “I spend my days championing the revitalization of American manufacturing.”

Artists often come to Spooltown with an idea for a project but no practical experience on how to get it to market. Tunstall prides herself on helping new businesses get started. Her MBA training helps.

When asked about the Portlandia stereotype, Tunstall says, “Portland is often ridiculed as a city of dreamers without goals, but a lot of us work our butts off. Portlanders are viewed as being at the forefront of trends and ideas. Maybe it’s because we’re a little weird; we’re not afraid to be on the cutting edge.”

Jurjevich and Schrock aren’t done focusing on Tunstall and her age group. “We’ve uncovered a number of interesting follow-up research questions we’d like to explore,” says Jurjevich. Stay tuned for more news about Portland’s young creative class and their attempts to craft fulfilling professional and personal lives.

Meg DesCamp is a Portland freelance writer.
American Indians are bringing Native teaching practices into their classrooms.

**WRITTEN BY** MELISSA STEINEGER

**TERRI REED** was just 8 years old when her third-grade teacher stared at her light brown face, black, almond-shaped eyes, and asked in a voice that sounded cruel to the little girl, “What are you?”

Reed had known for a while that others thought she was different. But to have an adult seemingly accuse her of being alien felt overwhelming.

Reed, of Chickasaw and Irish heritage, dropped her eyes and from that moment on, the once lively little girl shut down. At least at school.

Reed’s story illustrates how the predominately European-American culture of many U.S. schools can overwhelm youngsters of other cultures. In Reed’s case, the once inquisitive and imaginative kid who loved to learn, learned to become invisible.

Now, after benefitting from a new program at Portland State, Reed MEd ’11 is helping bring American Indian and Alaska Native educational practices into the classroom, so she can help other “different” children learn to love school.

In 2010, PSU was one of eight colleges and universities in the nation, and one of only two non-tribal schools, to receive a four-year federal grant to increase the number of Native teachers. PSU partners include four Oregon tribes—Siletz, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde—that are recruiting students for the program and developing financial sustainability to continue the program after the grant ends.
The Portland metropolitan area has one of the largest indigenous populations in the United States, and 2.1 percent of youngsters in K-12 schools are Native American, but only .06 percent of teachers. In 2005, only 15 teachers in the entire state were Native American. The new program, The American Indian Urban Teacher Program (AIUTP), aims to more than double that.

The AIUTP, in the Graduate School of Education, will help 18 students earn teaching certificates and master’s degrees. Support includes fully paid tuition and fees, $1,000 toward a laptop and books, $1,500 monthly as a living allowance and $300 a month for childcare. Just as important, the program provides personal support.

Marie Tenorio, project director, says personal support is crucial. Only 35 percent of Native American students who start college graduate within six years, the low number reflects a lack of support networks taken for granted by many non-native students.

To help AIUTP students succeed, Tenorio and other program staff establish close ties with students from the moment they apply for the program. They help each student with whatever is needed, including course counseling, career advice or just a friendly ear.

In return, students agree to spend their first year teaching in a school district with a significant number of Native American students, which isn’t hard to do in Oregon. Tenorio says 90 percent of Native youngsters attend public schools, not reservation schools.

In addition to required education classes, students learn to design culturally responsive curriculum and help children overcome cultural dissonance in school, something Reed had experienced herself, but that didn’t come home to roost until her own son began school.

Her son was active, she says, and needed to be able to learn experientially, which she understood from her own childhood. But his school wasn’t able to accommodate his needs, and he struggled.

“I saw teachers not teaching with students in mind, but rather the structure,” she says. “I decided I needed to help change things not for myself, but for my community… When I heard about the (AIUTP) program, it was like the angels began singing.”

For Reed, the program helped her focus on bringing the educational style of her childhood to her students.

“Teaching is a natural part of being Native,” she says. “The whole culture is about teaching.”

IN HER CHILDHOOD, Reed’s extended family—parents, 11 aunts and uncles and their families—got together every weekend and holidays at her grandparents’ home in The Dalles to harvest whatever might be in season, to share stories, to cook meals, and to informally teach.

“We would lie on our backs looking up at the night sky,” says Reed, “and learn about the stars.”

When a child asked a question, adults would turn the question into an investigation, “They tried to broaden your thinking,” says Reed. “They would ask what you thought about something. Or if you didn’t think broadly enough, they would ask questions to draw you out.

“I wish everyone,” she says, “could have that.”

Reed’s making a dent at Gause Elementary in the Washougal School District in Washington, where she teaches a class of children labeled emotionally and behaviorally disordered—although she prefers to call them active.

While some classrooms might focus on having kids sit quietly, Reed is more interested in making sure that her students are respectful of the classroom community and still asking the questions that help them learn and think for themselves.

“They’re kids,” she says. “It’s okay to be active, to have opinions. If they need to stand at their desk while I teach, that’s okay, so long as they’re respectful. My goal isn’t to stop their behavior, but to make it appropriate and transfer their natural behavior into the classroom. My class is highly structured, but kids are part of the structure.”

Each morning, her class of first- through fifth-graders sits in “circle time” to talk about their behavioral goals for the day.
One youngster might need to practice raising his hand before speaking; another might need to remember not to interrupt others.

As each child talks about his or her goal for the day, Reed asks the other students to consider ways to help the student achieve that goal. Just as in her own upbringing, she says, teaching involves the community.

At the end of the school day, the class again forms a circle and talks about what worked and what didn’t, with all students participating as a community in helping each other reflect on how they did in making—or not making—progress toward their goals.

“It’s very Native to bring the entire community into the process,” says Reed. “As a community we focus on helping each other succeed in our goals. It’s part of your DNA. You don’t think, ‘How can I be separate from you?’ You think, ‘How can I be part of you?’”

WHILE EACH NATIVE TRIBE has its own customs, Reed sees common threads. The family unit and respect for elders, she says, are common to all tribes. And while specific legends and stories are different, all tribes embrace storytelling, often to pass down their history and beliefs. And tribal people favor experiential learning, she says, an approach she uses in her classroom.

For instance, when her students were learning about the solar system, Reed had them make planets out of clay as she talked. “You have to do that with Native kids or they will get lost,” she says, “but it helps all kids.”

The AIUTP also emphasizes the need to educate communities about Native American culture. Reed did just that during her first year of teaching in Oregon’s Dallas School District. Her class of emotionally and behaviorally disturbed children, had never been on a field trip, which Reed decided to rectify. But she didn’t take just the class; she made it into a family event.

Each child was accompanied by at least one adult family member, whether a parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle. And Reed asked each family member to bring food to share.

“I created something my family would have done,” says Reed. “Let’s all get together and bring food.”

Because of limited district funding, Reed paid for the trip to a ranch specializing in therapeutic horses for children. The event was a success for the kids, and for the adults who, she says, saw the children having fun and socializing happily with each other—a rarity when a child bears the label “emotionally or behaviorally disturbed.”

Reed also introduced all the adults to one another, and, as was common with her own extended family, suggested making play dates for the children. This, she says, helped parents see how to continue the process after the field trip.

She sees such community building as part of the tradition of her family and her culture.

“In what I do,” she says, “I’m honoring those who came before me, who taught me, and I’m passing that on.”

Melissa Steineger is a Portland freelance writer and a regular contributor to Portland State Magazine.
Honoring those who give and achieve

A RECORD $1 MILLION was raised and Stephanie Fowler, Irving Levin, Arlene Schnitzer, Jordan Schnitzer, and Travis Knight were honored at the Simon Benson Awards Dinner in October.

Nearly 1,700 people turned out to celebrate the award recipients and listen to actress Diane Keaton, keynote speaker. The event owed much of its success to co-chairs Kimberly Cooper and Ken Thrasher. The Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund matched $100,000 in scholarship gifts, raising a total of $270,300 for scholarships.

At the event, PSU President Wim Wiewel announced that Levin and Fowler have funded a new Graduate School of Education scholarship. More than 60 students have benefited from a University-wide scholarship the couple previously created.

Levin is executive chairman of Genesis Financial Solutions and chairman of Digital Divide Data. Fowler is an award-winning journalist and psychotherapist.

Jordan Schnitzer, president of Harsch Investment Properties, his mother, Arlene, and his late father, Harold Schnitzer, have been philanthropic forces in Oregon for decades. The Schnitzer family has contributed more than $1.6 million to PSU, making it possible to hire the first tenured faculty member in Judaic Studies, and also create the James DePreist Visiting Professorship in Ethnic Art.

Knight ’98, winner of the Alumni Achievement Award, is president and CEO of Laika, the Hillsboro animation studio that produced the films Coraline and ParaNorman. Knight earned a bachelor’s degree in social science from Portland State. His wife, Donna, is also a PSU graduate. Read more about Knight on page 10.
A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION opens doors and transforms lives. It teaches students to think critically and prepare professionally. Student Angela Rico-Rairan plans a legal career after she graduates, and doctoral student Ryan Jenson applies his engineering skills to research on the International Space Station. Both are succeeding thanks to PSU scholarship support. “The fact that someone cared about me and believed in me, that was a huge boost,” says Rico-Rairan.

In the wake of higher education budget cuts, many students are borrowing more money and carrying more debt to pay for school. Nearly 50 percent of PSU students are trailblazers like Rico-Rairan—the first in their family to attend college. For these students in particular, scholarship support is vital. That’s why President Wim Wiewel has made scholarships a top fundraising priority.

Working toward the law

“YOU CAN DO IT, and here’s how—with a lot of hard work,” a PSU adviser told Rico-Rairan. The “it” was her goal to practice criminal law as a district attorney.

Rico-Rairan is no stranger to hard work. In 2004, when she and her family arrived in Oregon from Colombia, she was 13 and spoke no English. She rapidly acquired the language and did well in school. In an effort to lessen her accent, she taped TV news and imitated the anchor’s pronunciation.

That same drive underscores her college career. She works full-time in Gov. John Kitzhaber’s education policy office to help support her family and attends school part time. She almost had to drop out when her mother lost her job. Instead, she landed a scholarship.

Rico-Rairan credits the scholarship with keeping her on track. “Without it, I would not have the opportunities I have right now,” she says. “I’m so grateful!”

This school year, PSU awarded more than $2.9 million in donor-funded scholarships, providing 958 students with an average award of $3,123. But with nearly 30,000 students, PSU’s scholarship endowment does not meet the need.

“When we are the largest University in this state, we do not have the scholarship funds we need to serve students,” says Wiewel.

Experimenting in space

SOME KIDS blow things up for fun. Ryan Jenson’s mayhem had a purpose. “I was always making things, breaking things, launching rockets, setting off fireworks. I was driven to understand how things work,” he says.

For high-achieving students, scholarships may be the deciding factor in choosing PSU over another institution. When students choose PSU, they often stay in the area—contributing knowledge and skills to the region.

Jenson grew up in Eagle Creek, enrolled at Clackamas Community College at 14, and graduated at 19 from PSU with a bachelor’s in mechanical engineering. He began his master’s degree at Stanford but returned to PSU after one term to work with Professor Mark Weislogel. A 2007 Maseeh Fellowship helped with tuition. Now Jenson holds a master’s degree in mechanical engineering from PSU and is working toward his doctorate. He and Weislogel have experiments on board the International Space Station.

“Astronauts are testing our systems that manage fluids by way of capillary action,” explains Jenson. “Capillary systems reduce weight, cost, system complexity, and are more reliable than pumps or centrifuges.”

Like all good space experiments, this one has practical applications back on Earth. He and Weislogel are partners in a company that is developing products ranging from high-tech candles to biological diagnostic tools.
The Alumni Association is listening

IT’S THE SEAL OF APPROVAL when alumni recommend their alma mater to family and friends, says Tom Bull, Alumni Association executive director.

The endorsement came from 75 percent of the alumni who completed an online survey in October. “That’s really heartening,” says Bull, adding, “We want to know what we are doing right and what we need to improve upon, especially in our efforts to keep in touch with alumni.”

Portland State graduates gave other high marks to the University, as well, including 62 percent of the survey participants who agreed with the statement, “I owe a portion of my career success to PSU.” And 71 percent said that they had a full-time job one year after graduation.

However, understanding what alumni want and will support was the most important survey takeaway, says Bull. Findings included:

• 60 percent identified email as their favorite way to stay in touch with PSU (update your address at pdx.edu/alumni/contact);

• Professional seminars, faculty lectures, and visual and performing arts are top campus activities for survey respondents; and

• 62 percent are planning or considering making a gift to PSU in 2013, and their top choice for giving is student scholarships (especially online through pdx.edu/giving).

NETWORK WHERE YOU LIVE

THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION is offering support to graduates interested in starting alumni networks in their area. Network leaders can reach out to alumni, coordinate professional development and social events, and initiate any other activities—from brainstorming to fundraising. PSU alumni Facebook pages are a good way to begin a network and pages are in place for Salem, Seattle, Chicago, Washington D.C., Germany, India, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. To help start a network in your city or country, contact Elicia Reed at 503-725-8209 or ekreed@pdx.edu.
An evening with King Tut

**IN DECEMBER**, Portland State alumni and friends from Oregon and Washington got together in Seattle for a lecture, reception, and viewing of Tutankhamun: The Golden King and the Great Pharaohs exhibit, which included hundreds of artifacts from King Tut’s tomb and other sites. Donald Ryan, archeologist and Egyptologist from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, provided information about mummies and tombs.

**Margaret Wallen ’56** contacted the Alumni Office on the occasion of her 100th birthday in October. “I have many happy memories of PSU,” she wrote. Wallen was a member of Portland State’s first graduating class. She served in England and France during World War II, and then entered college at age 40 to become a second-grade and special education teacher. She taught for 20 years.

**James Black ’74, MS ’77, PhD ’81** was recently named board president of the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation, a private nonprofit dedicated to the economic development of Lamoille County, Vermont. A faculty member at Johnson State College since 1987, Black is chair of the economics department. He is also the president of Software Seminars, which provides software training to corporations and government agencies.

**Rebecca Concepcion ’87** was recently elected secretary-treasurer of the International Association for Applied Sport Psychology. She is also the chairwoman of the association’s Health and Exercise Psychology Committee and is an associate professor of kinesiology at Saint Mary’s College, a private school just east of Oakland, California. Her research has appeared in such publications as the *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* and *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*.

**Tanya Ostrogorsky MS ’96, MS ’97, EdD ’08** is assistant vice provost for assessment and evaluation at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland. She was previously an assistant dean in the OHSU School of Nursing. Ostrogorsky has worked in the program evaluation field for more than 17 years.

**Dennis Mulvihill MPA ’01** is a new board member of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance, a Portland nonprofit that promotes bicycling and safe bicycling conditions. He retired in 2012 after 24 years as a government relations manager for Washington County. He lives in Portland.

**Anna Viemeister ’09** is a soprano who recently won the Metropolitan Opera National Council Oregon District audition and will advance to regional auditions in late January. In November, Viemeister was a soloist in the Regina Opera Company’s performance of *Gotta Sing!* in Brooklyn, N.Y. In August, she sang in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* for the Delaware Valley Opera in Narrowsburg, N.Y. Viemeister lives in New York City, where she is a vocal coach.

**Sadie Carney MURP ’11** is director of community relations for Salem-Keizer Transit. She is also a member of the Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee for the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, as well as a member of the Women’s Transportation Seminar, an international organization that supports women in the transportation industry.

**READ MORE CLASS NOTES** on our website at [pdx.edu/alumni/notes](http://pdx.edu/alumni/notes). Email us your own news at psualum@pdx.edu or mail your information to Portland State University, Office of Alumni Relations, PO Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751.
ALL FOR VOLLEYBALL — The team made its 11th consecutive appearance at the Big Sky Tournament this past season but lost to Northern Colorado. Portland State volleyball finished the season 21-11 overall—its fifth 20-win season under head coach Michael Seemann. Photo by Scott Larson.

Miles of green

The Vikings hosted the Rose City Collegiate Tournament this fall at Langdon Farms Golf Club in Aurora, Oregon. Senior Britney Yada, seen here, is a leading scorer for the team, which competed in four fall tournaments and will participate in another five this spring prior to the Big Sky Conference Championship in April. So far the team is in 13th place among 16 teams; however, head coach Kathleen Takaishi has led the Vikings to Big Sky titles in 2008, 2010, and 2011. Photo by Mike Lund.
FIFTY YEARS AGO, “the machinery of higher education with its IBM cards and ID numbers ground to a temporary halt in the middle of winter term,” wrote editors in the 1963 Viking Yearbook. The campus closed for two days because of heavy snow, but when it re-opened, students enjoyed hanging out in the cafeteria, located in the College Center (today’s Smith Union). That academic year, enrollment was 5,788, dances and homecoming drew big crowds, Neuberger Hall was completed, and the College’s first master’s degrees were authorized.
FUTURE FORWARD

MBA

Amelia Papé MBA ’11
My Street Grocery

mba.pdx.edu