



Badger Digest

Do you know of others who would enjoy this newsletter? Send us their contact information here: alumni@klamathcc.edu.

See what Lifechanges is all about

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Connect with others
Update your bio and status for classmates to catch up.

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Auto mechanics includes EV classes

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Soccer teams take campus by storm

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KCC Alumni Newsletter

Fall 2025

Hello KCC alums! Time to reconnect with your campus

Dear Klamath Community College Alumni. You are receiving the first of what we hope will be quarterly newsletters about what is happening on your Klamath Falls campus.

You may be a graduate of the college or you may have taken just a few courses here. Nonetheless, we consider you all alums of the college who have a shared experience.

We plan to send you updates on your colleagues, where they are working today, how KCC shaped their lives and other important news. We would like to hear from you on what topics you would like to see in this newsletter. Feel free to share your story with us and other thoughts.

Email us at alumni@klamathcc.edu.

Go Badgers!



KCC photo

New students undergo orientation on the KCC campus in early September just before fall classes get started.

Graduate profile

KCC grad credits faculty with marketing inspiration

When Lily Young launched a small jewelry business in high school, she didn't realize it would spark a passion for business and marketing that would shape her future.

Today, Young is a Field Mar-

keting Specialist at The Human Bean, a growing coffee franchise headquartered in Medford, Oregon. As an alumna of Klamath Community College, her story is one of ambition, accelerated learning and a commitment to continuous growth.

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Lillian Young

Life Changers

KCC Foundation thanks donors

The Klamath Community College Foundation held its annual Life Changers luncheon on campus Oct. 10 with about 50 long-time and new donors in



KCC President Dr. Roberto Gutierrez opened the luncheon by updating the audience on upcoming KCC projects.

attendance. The KCC Life Changers initiative is a multi-year awareness and fundraising campaign that will ensure the KCC Foundation can meet the varied scholarship needs of students into the future. Contributions to the Life Changers Endowment are placed in a permanent investment fund at the Oregon Community Foundation which manages the corpus to maximize earnings over time.

The earnings from the Life Changers endowment support scholarships including academic student degree and certification paths, skills-based training, job related certifications and licensure, Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeships to keep students on a successful path to completion.

Dr. Glenn Gailis was the keynote speaker for the luncheon, describing how community colleges have evolved from being known simply as vocational-technical colleges or vo-techs.

"People used to believe that the only reason you would go to a community college was because you couldn't get into a regular, four-year university," he said. "Today, community colleges have evolved. There is a great demand for the hard skills, such as plumbing, electricians. Today's community college generation is becoming known as the tool belt generation, and they are earning respect of other professions."

Many students can graduate, enter the workforce and begin earning a living because they come out of a community college with little or no debt, he said.

Helping these students succeed supports them and the community, he said.

Life Changers endowment

The Life Changers investments will surpass \$150,000 before the end of October. The KCC Foundation has received \$2,144 in earned interest to add to scholarships for the 2025–2026 school year.

Beyond scholarships provided through Life Changers endowment earnings, the foundation also distributes scholarships and emergency support through a variety of donor-specified



ABOVE FROM LEFT: KCC instructor Linda Williamson, Foundation Administrative Assistant Lisa Carter and Foundation Board Chair Kathleen Walker-Henderson, discuss the program. **At LEFT:** Jean Pinniger and Dr. Glenn Gailis, founding Life Changers donors, were honored speakers at the luncheon.



funds.

If interested in contributing to the KCC Foundation and the Life Changers

Endowment, visit www.klamathcc.edu under Foundation, or email Foundation@klamathcc.edu.

Haven't been on campus lately? Here's some new developments...

The KCC Apprenticeship Center obtained a new water well drilling rig from the

state worth about \$900,000. It also has a pickup truck and trailer to support it.

Starting this winter is a new well drilling apprenticeship, the only one on a community college campus in Oregon. While much of the classroom time is online, apprentices have to have about 15 hours of hands on drilling

experience at a site. There are several well drilling firms interested in apprentices.

There are only about 300 firms statewide and the need, especially during droughts, is increasing for new drilling firms.



Mark Griffith, director of the Apprenticeship Center, hopes to have up to 10 students start the classes next year. A new "barn" is under construction on campus to house the rig as well.



KCC photo

KCC Apprenticeship Center Director Mark Griffith shows off the new well drilling rig acquired from a nearly \$1 million state grant. The apprenticeship program is set to launch early next year.

From nursing to aviation, careers are taking flight



From nursing to aviation, Klamath Community College is seeing a spike in interest and enrollment.

The Nursing Program includes Practical Nursing, Registered Nursing and soon a 4-year Bachelors of Science in Nursing.

Ideally, a practical nurse will work and take classes to be an RN and further work towards a BSN all on the KCC campus and with

much lower costs than at a four-year university.

Other popular professional training includes commercial truck driving. KCC has a big rig driving simulator machine as well as a flight simulator for aviation students.

KCC contracts with Pure-Flight for aviation instruction. That includes fixed wing and helicopter pilots and instructors.



KCC photos

Simple, easy ways to give back...

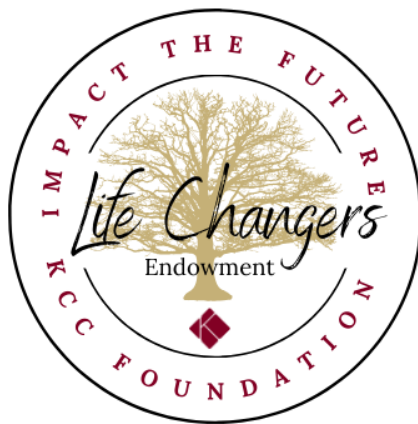
You Can Change a Student's Life!

The KCC Life Changers initiative is a multi-year awareness and fundraising campaign that ensures the KCC Foundation can meet the varied needs of students into the future.

The goal is to raise \$1 million and then build the Endowment to \$3 million by 2030. Fundraising for Life Changers will be ongoing. The fund will be central to scholarship fundraising efforts being done through the Foundation and KCC in perpetuity.

The KCC Life Changers Endowment is the first long-term investment the KCC Foundation has with the Oregon Community Foundation. The strength of OCF's investment strategy and fund management provides significant growth opportunities through excellent guidance from a national leader in nonprofit management and philanthropic investment.

Earnings from the Life Changers endowment supports scholarships for academic students (degree and certification paths), skills-based training (job related certifications and licensure, apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship



career paths), and emergency support (to keep students on a successful path to completion).

The KCC Foundation manages a wide range of scholarship funds. This includes direct contributions to KCC scholarship funds, creation of directed scholarships, and establishment of individual endowments.

Your contribution will change lives, it will have a positive impact on community vitality and economic growth as we prepare students to move into quality careers and jobs here in Klamath and Lake counties, and across Oregon.

As of October 2025, the KCC Life Changers endowment has raised \$150,000.

Life Changers Contribution Levels

Legacy Architect (\$25,000)

You will receive special recognition in the annual State of the Foundation report Life Changers section and mention from the podium at the State of the Foundation event. Your name will be featured on the Wall of Benefactors in KCC's Founders Hall, and you will receive the "Life Changer" level benefits listed below.

■ Generational Impactor (\$15,000)

You will receive enhanced recognition in the annual State of the Foundation report Life Changers/Generational Impactors.

■ Path Builder (\$10,000)

You will receive enhanced recognition in the annual State of the Foundation report Life Changers/Path Builder section.

■ Transformer (\$5,000)

You will receive recognition in the annual State of the Foundation report Life Changers/Transformer section.

■ Life Changer (\$1,000)

You will receive personal invitations to KCC Foundation events and be honored on the KCC Foundation web page.

Share your story with us

Badger alum, we want to hear from you!

What have you been up to?

Did you find work in your field?

Are you planning on returning to college for a degree or a certificate?

We would like alumni to tell their classmates how they are succeeding after graduation.

Please fill out our electronic form at <https://bit.ly/49CqQc7> or email us to share your story.

Your success breeds success! Please tell us your story.

Email us at alumni@klamathcc.edu



KCC photo



KCC photo

Aerial drone photo of the KCC campus off South Sixth Street. The campus now hosts 10 buildings, with two more in the planning stages.

Alum credits KCC instructors for inspiration

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An Accelerated Path

Young's academic journey began with Klamath Community College's dual enrollment program while she was a student at Crater High School in Central Point, allowing her to earn an associate degree in business management while finishing high school in 2022.

"Dual enrollment was a game-changer," she said. "It helped me discover my career interests and graduate with minimal student debt."

After KCC, Young completed her bachelor's degree in business management at George Fox University in just two years. There, she participated in the National Student Advertising Competition, gaining hands-on experience in marketing strategy.

Joining The Human Bean

In 2024, Young joined The Human Bean as a field marketing specialist, supporting franchise partners with localized marketing campaigns. Working with a team of eight, she focuses on

strategic initiatives rather than day-to-day social media posting.

"I love the big-picture side of marketing — developing campaigns that align with brand strategy," she said. Her role even connects her to the global coffee supply chain.

Instructors who care

Young credits KCC's professors and coursework for laying the foundation for her success.

"The support from my professors was fantastic. I had the opportunity to take several non-business-related classes as part of the coursework, which I also enjoyed," she said.

"KCC Instructor Linda Williamson's Intro to Business Management class introduced me to corporate social responsibility, which influences how I approach my career today," she said. "At the time, I was trying to land on what exactly within business made me feel excited. The opportunity to use business for good in the world, and the framework for that...was presented to me for the first time. Following that semester, I spent a lot of time learning

about social responsibility. I knew that was something I wanted to weave into my role in the future."

"I think that ties in nicely with coffee, because The Human Bean is involved in projects at the origin, where they're sourcing coffee. So, it's not just about the end consumer of that cup of coffee, but what's happening all along the way, starting with the coffee farmers."

And she said she graduated from college with little debt attached to her education.

Future strategy

Looking forward, Young hopes to deepen her expertise in brand strategy and is considering pursuing a master's degree. But for now, she says she's excited to continue learning within her role at The Human Bean.

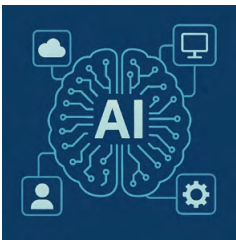
And she recommends the dual-credit program to friends, especially thanks to the way KCC instructors work closely with students to ensure their success.

Editor's note: Generative AI was used in creating parts of this feature story.

Artificial Intelligence classes coming to KCC

We've been hearing a lot about Artificial Intelligence as the next disrupter for the U.S. and world economies and society as a whole. While AI has been around for several years, it is becoming more prevalent as a tool at work and in schools. On one level, AI is a super-charged search engine. But it is so much more than that.

AI is the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think, learn and make decisions.



These systems can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as: learning, reasoning, perception, decision making and language understanding.

Many people are already using AI platforms such in Open AI, ChatGPT, Grok, and CoPilot.

In the coming year, Klamath Community College plans to offer elective classes in AI.

"AI will cause major disruptions in higher education," KCC President Roberto Gutierrez said. "KCC plans to keep up with the AI trend by offering instruction on what it is, how it works and how it can benefit students and staff."

To that end, the KCC administration recently toured the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis which offers comprehensive graduate and undergraduate programs in AI. It is building a new AI research center to house a super computer.

KCC staff and faculty heard more about AI during the colleges convocation Sept. 17. More is certainly to come.



Roy Haggerty, top right, OSU Provost and Executive Vice President, discusses the Huang Collaborative Innovation Complex now under construction on the OSU campus with the KCC administrators and faculty. The new building will house a supercomputer and AI research labs to promote AI.



KCC administrators and faculty visit Oregon State University, the site of construction of the Huang Collaborative Innovation Complex, home of a new AI supercomputer.

Submitted photos



KCC welding students create missile-launcher silhouettes

If you've had a chance to visit the Apprenticeship Center parking lot, you may have noticed a large vehicle covered in metal plates that looks similar to a missile launcher. The item is a conex box modified to look like a Russian BUK M2 SA-17 missile system. These builds are to prep the Eastern Oregon range with static targets for the new fighter group of F-35s coming into Kingsley Air Base over the next couple years. Kingsley Field has asked KCC to convert some of its old vehicles to military targets. The F-35 pilots won't actually destroy the vehicles, just target them for practice. We'll have a more detailed story on this in coming weeks.

KCC photo

Auto and diesel mechanics enrollment going strong; adds electronic vehicle class



KCC photos

AT LEFT, Lakota Jones and Erin Garcia work on engine parts in the auto and diesel classes, above, at KCC. The school recently added electric vehicle technology to its courses, one of the few colleges offering this instruction.

Campus value ranked the best among Oregon community colleges

Klamath Community College has been named the best community college in the state of Oregon in a national study in early 2025.

The designation was handed down by SmartAsset and published in the News and Observer newspaper of Raleigh, N.C.

Here are the statistics it used to compare KCC to other colleges:

- ❑ Klamath Community College ranked across the U.S. – 124 of all community colleges
- ❑ It has a full-time retention rate of 64%.
- ❑ Student-to-faculty ratio is 14 to one.
- ❑ In-state tuition & fees: \$4,713

The best community college in the U.S. is located in Wisconsin. Gateway Technical College in Kenosha, WI, claimed the top spot out of 616 schools included in this study.

Here is a bit more about the SmartAsset study:

Associate degrees offer students flexibility to achieve different educational and vocational goals. They usually take half the time of a bachelor's degree and could help you meet the academic requirements for many entry positions into a career. Community colleges that offer associate's degrees are often a more affordable option for students. However, education can still be



New students are "framed" with Baxter the Badger during orientation in September.
KCC photo

a hefty cost at any level, so it's important to choose a school and degree program that will help you attain the knowledge and skills needed to advance your career.

With this in mind, SmartAsset compared 616 two-year schools that offer associate degrees—and have

at least 500 full-time enrollments—based on their retention rates, student-to-faculty ratio, and tuition and fees to determine the best community colleges in the U.S.

If you would like to read the entire article, go to <https://bit.ly/4a24C3e>

Badgers Soccer



Caleb Herrera/KCC photos



Lady Badgers mark their first season

