

McLaughlin Community Resource Center

Dr. James L. McLaughlin became president of Lower Columbia College in 1997, only the third leader for the campus in more than 40 years. He previously led Doña Ana Branch Community College in Las Cruces, New Mexico, where he served as Campus Director and Chief Executive Officer from 1992-1997.

President McLaughlin placed strong emphasis on community outreach through personal relationships and professional communication efforts. He encouraged participation in community activities and led the way as a member of the Kelso-Longview Chamber of Commerce, the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council and other civic and business organizations. On a state level, he advanced the role of community and technical colleges as chair of the Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges presidents. The system received significant legislative support during his tenure.

Under his leadership, the LCC Foundation matured into a professional, successful non-profit completing its first major gift campaign of \$4.6 million, another testament to the success of LCC's community outreach efforts.

During Dr. McLaughlin's tenure, LCC was revitalized to continue its mission of serving the job training and higher education needs of Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. LCC also expanded campus technology and related faculty training to provide online education and college services, leading the state in the online learning growth.

In 2003, the college was the successful recipient of a \$1.8 million, five-year federal grant to implement new technologies. Online courses and services enabled LCC to accommodate enrollment growth of over 150% during the current economic downturn.

In 2008, the Rose Center for the Arts opened at LCC, Southwest Washington's premiere arts education and performance venue. Concerts, theatrical performances, art exhibits and public lectures at the new facility brought record numbers of community members to the campus.

The groundwork was also laid for the construction of a Health and Science Building that would bring together all of the science and healthcare programs and faculty under one roof. Dr. McLaughlin's advocacy for the project saw acquisition of property adjacent to the campus and design work completed while waiting for final construction funding.

Dr. McLaughlin earned his Ed.D. from New Mexico State University and an M.S. and B.S. from the University of Akron. After his retirement in 2011, he and his wife, Chris, moved from Longview to Central Oregon. Both of their children attended LCC before transferring to graduate from Washington universities.

