



**Portland
Community
College**

*Presidential Executive Internship
Portfolio*



Intern: Nishant Shrestha

2017-2018 Cohort

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NISHANT SHRESTHA

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EDUCATION

Portland Community College (PCC), Portland, OR 09/17 - present
 Degree: Associate of Applied Science- Civil Engineering GPA: 4.0 (*President's list*)

St. Xavier's College, Maitighar, Kathmandu, Nepal 05/14 – 06/16
 Degree: Cambridge International Examinations Advanced Level

WORK EXPERIENCE

Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania, Student Body President 06/18-present

- Represent the collective student voice of the Sylvania college
- Serve on the Budget Planning Committee
- Served as a voting member on the District Student Council
- Facilitate the weekly General Council Meetings

Portland Community College (PCC), Presidential Executive Intern 01/18-present

- Network with deans, directors, staff and faculties to learn organizational structure
- Serve as a member on the President's fund for Excellency review committee
- Run a reflection blog on the PCC website
- Contribute in the Spring 2018 radio and video PCC marketing campaign
- Prepare report on the sustainability commitments of the college and its status
- Work under project managers on construction of new buildings from the 2018 bond

PCC Sylvania- Tutoring Center, Peer Tutor 01/18-06/18

- Assisted students with understanding and tackling mathematics and statistics course work
- Connected students with the resources available in the library

PCC Sylvania- Multicultural Center, Peer Tutor 09/17-06/18

- Assisted students with understanding and tackling mathematics and statistics course work
- Created a welcoming environment for students
- Helped student leaders at the multicultural center promote and execute projects

PCC South East- Crossroads café, Food service worker 09/17-12/17

- Inquired and prepared food for the customers
- Learned of the sustainable initiatives practiced in the kitchen
- Maintained a hygienic and healthy environment

Nepal Sports Council, Nepal Taekwondo National Team 07/16-07/17

- Attended multiple physical training sessions daily
- Represented Nepal in international tournaments: 1st Place in The World Taekwondo Hanmadang Festival Tournament, Pokhara, Nepal



SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Phi Theta Kappa- Beta Pi Ro Chapter, PCC Southeast	03/18- present
- Serving as the Vice President of Service	
Muskan Sewa Orphanage, Kathmandu, Nepal	06/14 - 07/17
- Collected over 200 hours of helping orphaned children	
- Specifically helped with the children's academics and English-speaking skills	
Koteshwor Taekwondo Dojang (KTD), Kathmandu, Nepal	01/14 - 07/17
- Regularly conducted evening training sessions for Black Belt Taekwondo athletes	
- Acted as a liaison between the national coaches and the KTD coaches	

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Multicultural Center's annual Voices 2018, PCC Sylvania	05/18
- Emceed the historical social justice movement performances	
- Supported the producers in event planning and promoting	
3rd Annual Multicultural Night, PCC Southeast	05/18
- Volunteered to facilitate the International Cultural Fashion show	
iUrban Teen PCC Summit, PCC Cascade	05/18
- Spoke in a panel to share advices to high school students prospecting a career in STEM	
PCC Day at the Capitol, Salem, OR	02/18
- Voiced student experiences along with the needs of community colleges students	
- Received lobbying and persuasive speaking skills trainings	
Winter 2018 International Student Orientation, Portland Community College	12/17
- Welcomed and directed new international students in a week-long orientation	

HONORS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) 2018, Portland, Oregon	07/18
- Chosen to attend the RYLA leadership retreat by the Rotary club of Portland – Downtown	
PCC Foundation, Portland, Oregon	06/18
– Received the PCC Foundation Rose scholarship for the 2018-2019 academic year	
Phi Theta Kappa- Beta Pi Ro Chapter, PCC Southeast	03/18
– Received membership of the International Honor Society	

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

-
- Familiar with Adobe, Google and Microsoft Office Applications
 - Languages: Nepali (Native), Indian (Intermediate), Japanese (Basic), Korean (Basic)
 - Strong communication and teamworking skills
 - Excellent research, organizational and time management skills
 - Highly positive, energetic, and eager to learn
-



Original Objectives

Below listed items are the initial objectives I developed with Sylvia Kelley, executive vice president of Portland Community College, on the first day of the internship.

- Act as a liaison between the administration and the Student leaders to improve communications
- Learn about the sustainability initiatives
- Execution process and Portland Community College's (PCC) inner workings (learn about processes and how you can make it happen)
- Learn to create more internships (opportunities) at PCC

At the initial stage, it served as a possible pathway for my internship. Now, I believe that I have achieved and gone beyond from these objectives.

Personal Growth

As an international student from Nepal, I continuously strived to learn the culture and professionalism at PCC. This internship provided an excellent platform and exposure for me to grow and practice my interpersonal skills in a foreign country. With my growth, I have also developed a sentiment for equitable student success through the pillars of equity, inclusion and sustainability.

Through my internship, as I learned about PCC I learned myself better as well. When conversing with fellow students about PCC, I realized that my view of PCC was largely different from many students. As I questioned this, I ruminated on my own identity (values, views and background), which made me more confident in myself.

Being a first-generation college student, I believe in education as a necessity rather than an option. PCC has opened a platform for students of all age-group, sexuality, identity, nationality, and background to access academic success. Thus, I always wanted to contribute in PCC's mission of equity and inclusion in education. Plus, this internship has given me a better direction on how I can make a positive impact on student life experience.

With that realization, I also have solidified my future career goals. During the last year, I had countless opportunity to share, discuss and question my vision and pathway with experts here at PCC. I have decided to major in civil engineering and work towards building sustainable infrastructures and renewable energy sources specifically in developing countries like my home country, Nepal



Skills Developed

The level of exposure and opportunity provided in this internship demands similar level of commitment to learning and professionalism. I had to prepare and reflect daily, even after leaving the college premises, to be ready for upcoming events and meetings. Without realization, I became a better organizer of my time, energy and resources throughout this internship.

As a freshman, I am grateful to have had this opportunity in a professional work environment. This work was a continuous learning opportunity as I worked with experts and professionals at PCC. I have learned effective work habits, the critical mindset required in a decision-making process, and the ability to build relationships with people at the work place.

Overall, I have gained the ability to communicate effectively in a professional environment - which I can also apply to my personal life. Because of this, I have been able to grasp learning opportunities throughout my time as an intern. I feel proud to see my development in effective communication in speaking and writing, specially as English is my second language and United States of America is the first country I traveled to.

With that, I feel an obligation to give back to the community. Thus, I am grateful and inspired to serve as an effective student leader throughout my college life, and as an inspirational leader in my after-college life.

Academic Component

Winter Term 2018

Public Speaking (Communication 111) & Technical Writing (Writing 227): Taking these courses at the same time as the start of my internship enabled me to develop a solid foundation for my effective communication skill. I was able to connect my experience in the internship with the knowledge I was learning in class. I also based my final report in my writing class on the Learning Gardens at PCC ([link to learning garden report](#)).

Spring Term 2018

In the Spring term, I took **3 classes in 3 campuses** (Southeast, Sylvania, Cascade) and one of them was a **night class** (6:00 pm – 9:50 pm). Therefore, my classmates had a diverse background and I conversed with them to learn about the challenges they faced and the resources they use at PCC. I learned that shuttle service and night classes made higher education accessible to a significant population of students around Portland and Beaverton.



Intern Projects

President's Fund for Excellency Committee

Mentor: Josh Alex-McBride, Southeast interim associate dean of student development

- The President's Fund for Excellency was an opportunity for the staff and faculty to apply for a grant for projects that will directly impact student experience at Portland Community College in the academic year 2018-2019. The total amount available was of One million dollars, which was distributed to 25 projects out of 64 applicants.
- I served on the committee as a student representative to provide student opinion on the faculty proposals.
- I reviewed over sixty proposals based on how they align with PCC's mission, utilize the five tenants of Critical Race Theory and impact student experience at Portland Community College.
- Lastly, I actively attended the finalist proposal presentations to learn, understand and question the proposal's workplan for the academic year 2018-2019.

iUrban Teen Summit / Cascade Pre-College Academy

Mentor: Michele Cruse, Cascade dean of student development

- The iUrban Teem Summit was a one-day program for high schoolers and middle schoolers living near the Cascade campus and prospecting a career in a STEM major to visit the PCC campus and learn about the programs and resources available at the campus.
- Cascade Pre-College Academy was an eight-week summer program for students who will start at PCC in the following Fall term. It was a tutoring and mentoring program to prepare students of color and low-income background who have been placed into levels under College level English and Mathematics.
- On both occasions, I had the opportunity to sit on a student panel to share my experience at PCC with my educational plans to inspire the students and answer questions regarding student life at PCC.



PCC Bond Office (Planning and Capital Construction)

Mentors: Linda Degman, director of the bond office, and Rebecca Ocken, project manager

- The Bond office, the Planning and Capital Construction office as of 2018, is responsible for building and maintaining the large physical infrastructures at Portland Community College.
- At the Bond Office, I learned about the projects of the 2008 bond, specifically the LEED certified buildings at PCC. Plus, the new projects proposed for the 2017 bond and the structure of the complex planning process that forms the bond proposal.
- I served as a liaison between the student leaders, the administration and the bond office to communicate progress on some misunderstandings on PCC's sustainability commitments.
- I researched on PCC's sustainability commitments and presented a report to Linda Degman, director of the bond office, and Sylvia Kelley, executive vice president of PCC. [\(link to bond office report\)](#)
- Last but not the least, I attended team meetings for PCC Rock Creek's new Child Development Center project, which is possible through the 2017 bond, with Zahava Jones, the project manager for the project. The meeting consisted of PCC representatives, engineers, architects, construction company representatives and various other parties collaborating to build the Child Development Center.

Student Outreach with The Internship Cohort

Mentor: Mona Smith, executive assistant to vice president of student affairs

- I participated in the Spring 2018's PCC Marketing Campaign (#ThinkPCCFirst campaign) by recording radio advertisements at Cappelli Miles studio, which played on numerous radio stations around Portland.
- I recorded video advertisements for the #MyPCC3 campaign, which played on Social Media platforms like Facebook and Instagram.
- I also started a blog on PCC's website to share insights as an intern in the office of president.



Intern Learning Opportunities

Learning Garden and the Climate Action Plan

- I researched the learning gardens as a primary example of the sustainability initiatives at Portland Community College.
- I interviewed Peter Ritson, environmental center coordinator at PCC Sylvania; Julia Betts, STEM center manager at PCC Southeast; Elaine J. Cole, Sustainability Coordinator at PCC Rock Creek, to learn about the workings of the Learning Gardens at each campus.
- I researched the Climate Action Plan, as learning garden was one of the focus of the plan to direct PCC in a path to reduce Carbon emission by 80% (of the carbon emission level of 2006) by 2050.
- I learned about the Eco Social Justice Grant (previously The Green Initiative Fund) and how students contributed to sustainability initiatives at PCC.
- I researched the Second Nature, AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education) and USGBC (United States Green Building Council) organizations along with PCC's commitments to sustainability.
- I sat on the SLC (Sustainability Leadership Council), SPARC (Sustainable Practices for Academics and Resources Council), and campus-specific Green team meetings to learn how the SLC is coordinating staffs to establish and forward the culture of sustainability in staff and faculties at PCC.

Equitable Student Success

- I sat on YESS (Yes to Equitable Student Success) committee meetings to learn about the planning process to effectively reinforce equitable student success with PCC's membership in the Achieving The dream national network.
- I met with Rob Stienmetz, vice president of student affairs, to learn about the student feedback system, student leadership, advising, and the organizational structure changes.
- I met with campus presidents, deans, and student leaders to learn about the different structures at each campus to encourage student



involvement, support student leadership and address student needs and concerns.

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) 2018

- RYLA is a week-long leadership retreat for young community leaders involved with the Rotary club. Every Rotary district hosts a RYLA event in the summer to provide a platform to grow goodwill, community and leadership skills.
- I attended the RYLA for Rotary District 5100. The opportunity is accessible to Portland Community College student leaders through Dr. Jessica Howard's membership in Rotary Club of Portland-Downtown. This year, I was the sole RYLA inductee from the Rotary Club of Portland- Downtown.
- Numerous community leaders spoke to the participants throughout the week to teach foundational interpersonal communication theories, facilitate critical discussions, and inspire the participants to serve the community.
- I have uncovered and recognized my own leadership style, personal values, inner-community and communication practices as my strengths. I will use this knowledge to reinforce Portland Community College's mission of Equitable Student Success by serving students to positively impact their student life experience at Portland Community College.
- RYLA 2018 has been the most transformative leadership retreat in my life till now and will always be a pivotal week in my leadership journey. This was possible due to my involvement as an intern.



Career Development Interviews, Networking & Public Speaking

Learned about the inner structure and process of a large educational institution at the **PCC Board of Directors Meeting**

Networked with PCC Foundation board members at the **PCC Foundation Board Winter Retreat Social Hour**

Networked with local community leaders at Wilsonville at **Brad Kliener's Tip Club and LinkedIn Workshop**

Got professional headshots taken by Keely Mooney of **Kelly Moon Photography**

Attended **Lobbying 101** workshop presented by **PCC's government relations director Emma Kallaway** to prepare for **PCC Day at the Capitol**

Participated in the **PCC Cascade Vice Presidents' Focus Group** with **Rob Steinmetz, vice president of student affairs**, and **Katy Ho, vice president of academic affairs**. The program provided an opportunity for students to voice their experience, needs, concerns and questions directly to the administration

Attended the **District Leaders of Diversity Council (DLDC) Winter Retreat** to learn about the past, present and future of the diversity, equity and inclusion work at Portland Community College. Also volunteered to sit on the **Men of Color sub-committee**

Visited Salem as a participant of **PCC Day at the Capitol 2018** to share student life experience at PCC and the importance of PCC to the community to the state legislators

Attended the **Washington & Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC) 2018**, at Portland State University, with **Javier Mitchell, presidential executive intern**, and **Briar Schoon, district sustainability manager**, to learn of various successful sustainability initiatives in higher education institutions



Had a trip around Sylvania's College Center (CC) building to learn about the recent project's execution timeline with **Gary Sutton, the project manager of the CC building's remodeling project**

Attended multiple **Sustainability Leadership Council** and **SPARC** meetings to learn about the Earth week programs, sustainability awards, and the Eco Social Justice Grant updates

Attended and helped to create a welcoming, productive and fun environment at **PCC Southeast's International Club and ESOL Club weekly meetings**

Volunteered at the **Winter 2018, Spring 2018, and Summer 2018 International Students Orientation** to help facilitate the program and welcome new international students to Portland Community College

Narrated at the **Multicultural Center's Annual Voices night 2018**. Participants portrayed themselves as historical social justice advocates to share social justice movements in the history of United States of America

Volunteered at the **3rd annual Multicultural Night** at PCC Southeast to help run the event smoothly and participated in the **International Cultural Fashion Show**

Regularly met **Mark Mitsui, District President of Portland Community College**, to share student intern experience and receive guidance and feedback

Attended a **Rotary Club of Portland—Downtown** meeting at the Sentinel Hotel with **Jessica Howard, PCC Southeast campus president** as the Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA) recipient for 2018

Met with the **two final candidates** for the **Rock Creek Campus President position** starting the academic year 2018-2019 and learned about their past roles in student administration and development

Visited **Scott Edwards Architecture** and met with the team assigned to design and build **PCC Rock Creek's new Child Development Center**

Attended multiple **District Student Council** meetings to familiarize myself with conduct of the student government at PCC



Informational interviews

Rob Steinmetz, vice president of student affairs: Learned about the YESS and SEM (Strategic Enrollment Management) work; Followed up on the popular student needs and concerns brought up in the focus group; Received advice as a future student leader

Linda Degman, director of the bond office: Learned about the structure of the bond office and the past bond projects; learned how the office evaluated and planned projects for the upcoming bond

Rebecca Ocken, project manager: Received insights on the career of building large scale infrastructures; Learned about the extensive planning process required to build and improve buildings at PCC

Zahava Jones, project manager: Learned the details about the new PCC Rock Creek's Child Development Center building; Often debriefed on the whole team meeting for the project

Gary Sutton, project manager: Learned about the numerous challenges in extensively improving PCC Sylvania's campus center building; Received educational and career path advice

Briar Schoon, sustainability manager: Learned about prospecting renewable energy options for PCC; learned about the Climate Action Plan and the Eco Social Justice Grant; learned about the green building signage project

Peter Ritson, Sylvania environmental center coordinator: Learned about the structures and events at the Learning garden at Sylvania; discussed the student involvement in sustainability initiatives at PCC

Julia Betts, Southeast STEM center manager: Learned about the STEM center programs, learning garden, and past student involvement in these initiatives

Elaine Cole, Rock Creek sustainability coordinator: Learned about the extensive service programs offered due to the learning garden at the Rock Creek campus; Learned about the grants that has supported numerous sustainability initiatives

Heidi Sickert, SPARC chair: Received insight in a career in entrepreneurship and received recommendations for possible internship providers

Jennifer Mcbartney, PCC foundation scholarship program officer: Learned about the PCC Foundation and the scholarships available to PCC students; Received recommendations for possible transfer scholarships

Rut Martinez, Southeast multicultural center coordinator: Learned about the present workings, past challenges and plans for the multicultural center at Southeast



Miguel Arellano Sanchez, Sylvania multicultural center coordinator: Learned about the challenges faced by the students at PCC, specifically food insecurity; Learned about the additional challenges that students of color face and the resources available to help them

Allison Blizzard, director of Office of International Student Services (OISS): Learned about the past and future services for international students; Learned about the international student recruitment process; Learned about the specific roles and responsibilities of the individual OISS staff

Michele Cruse, Cascade dean of student development: Learned about the organizational structure at the Cascade campus and unique programs at each campus

Josh Alex-Mcbride, Southeast interim associate dean of student development: Learned about the organizational structure at the Southeast campus; received insights on my own leadership style

Traci Fordham, program administrator: Received a personalized effective communication lecture on both written and verbal communication

Karen Edwards, Cascade campus president: Learned about the unique challenges of the Cascade campus; Learned about the numerous summer programs happening at the Cascade campus; Received advice on how to be an effective communicator at PCC as a student leader

Jessica Howard, Southeast campus president: Learned about the unique challenges of the Southeast campus; Learned about the general fund distribution process; Received insight on the role of a president; Received encouragement and guidance for my possible future educational and career path

Internship Cohort Contribution

I made the most of my networking opportunities, but Mona Smith (presidential executive internship coordinator as well) and my cohort have taught me, guided me and inspired me to learn with passion. Mona facilitated an excellent environment and was the most foundational resource for the interns to discover opportunities at PCC.

I connected with Javier Mitchell, presidential executive intern, as a fellow first year student interested in engineering and sustainability. We share similar paths and visions even though we have vastly different communication styles.

Another fellow intern, Ivan Hernandez, made me envision my future self in him. I took this opportunity to learn about him so that I can excel by having his path as a guide. Being on the same team as him, inspired me to be student body president—as he is a former student body president at the Sylvania campus.



Reflection

As an International first year first generation student of color, this internship provided a platform to learn comprehensively about a higher educational institution. I learned about Portland Community College's institutional structure, the motivational personnel here, the professional culture and my identity in this community as well. I am deeply grateful for this experience as it has surely set me up for a more productive and positive future.

I started out as a fresh energetic student with vague goals. This internship has given me a sense of direction, a purpose, by learning to figure out what I want my impact to be and who I want to serve. I have realized my strengths and weaknesses. I have learned to present myself professionally. I have learned the workings, layout, and the methodological approach of a large organization.

Overall, this internship has been a tremendous transformative opportunity. I learned, practiced, and improved on effective communication, professional conduct, methodological approach, time management, comprehensive thinking, effective goal setting, long-term planning, and relationship building. I believe, where I have developed immensely as a character, and a student, which has prepared me to grasp more opportunities in the future. Thank you very much everyone for this special opportunity.

From here, I am directly going on to practice this knowledge into a student leadership position right here at Portland Community College. I am honored and grateful to be the Student Body President at the Associated Students of Portland Community College (ASPCC)—Sylvania Campus for the academic year 2018-2019. This is my chance to give back to the community, specifically, to the students and I have had the opportunity to learn about PCC on a comprehensive scale.

For Future Interns

The Presidential Executive Internship is unique as it provides an immense learning opportunity about PCC and its role, impact and contribution to the community as the largest higher educational institution in Oregon. It is a platform to learn about the whole working process, or specific processes, of a large organization—from planning, to presenting, to reviewing, to forecasting, to executing.

I tried to put my energy into learning comprehensively about PCC and gained knowledge of the whole organization as a specific campus and a district organization. However, I did feel I had stretch my scope to far and thin, which disabled me to focus on a single task and execute an impactful project. I did learn the processes I sought to learn, but I would recommend future interns to consider carefully their path as an intern and have an end goal in sight.



Snapshots of my journey





Annual Report

Portland Community College

Bond Program Building Our Future

Fulfilling Our Promise January 2009 – June 2010

Annual Report

Portland Community College

Bond Program Building Our Future

Before beginning, plan carefully. – Cicero July 2010 – June 2011

Annual Report

Portland Community College

Bond Program Building Our Future

“The ancestor of every action is thought.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson July 2011 - June 2012

Dear Residents of the PCC District:

This is an exciting time at Portland Community College! Thanks to your collaborative support, the PCC Bond Program is fueling community enhancement and economic growth in many ways. As this report goes to press, the sights of campus construction are maturing throughout the district. This past year the college completed its selection of the local construction manager/general contractor (CMGC) firms to oversee the complex construction and renovation projects on each campus. The firms' experience, expertise and demonstrated record of performance are helping the college to not only attain the highest possible value for its dollars but also maximize opportunities to partner and mentor smaller contracting firms and minority, women-owned and emerging small businesses (MWESB). Helping these companies to grow, providing apprenticeships, and creating opportunities for job training and career advancement, is part of the college's commitment to our community. The college is pleased to be working with:

- Howard S. Wright Construction Company on the Sylvania Campus.
- Fortis Construction, Inc. partnering with NW Renovations, LLC and Kiewit Concrete, Inc. on the Rock Creek Campus.
- Chivalry Mason Commercial Construction, Inc. on the Southwest Campus.
- Southern Construction Company partnering with Boardwalk Group and Pacific Mark Construction Company on the Clatsop Campus.

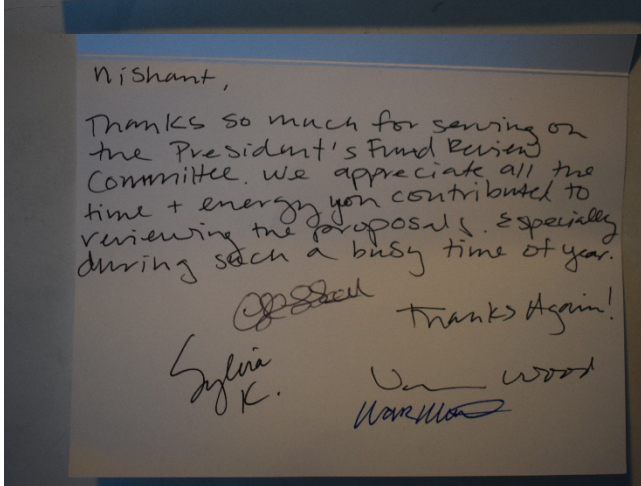
A few highlights of the year include:

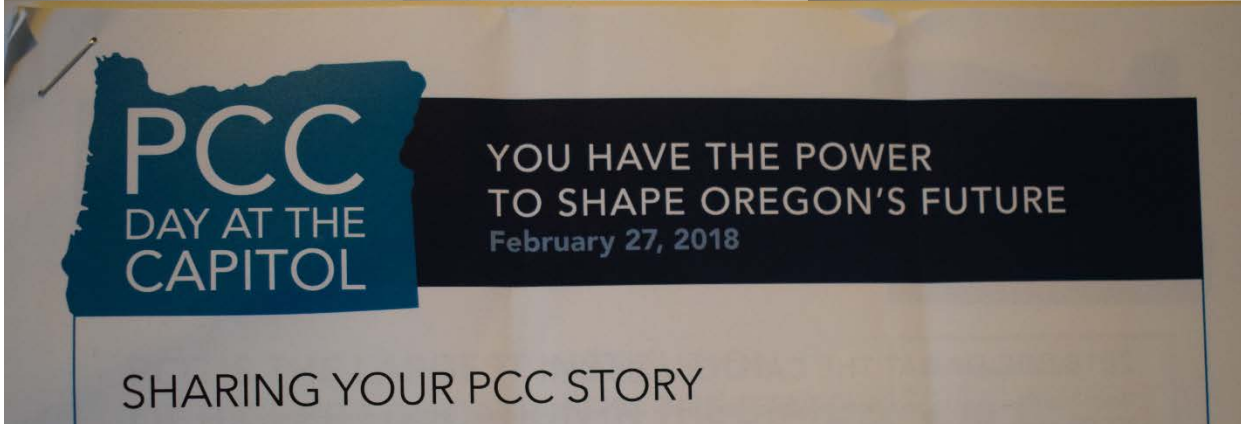
- In spring 2012, the college completed installation of a 500 kW “ground-mounted” solar array on two acres at the Rock Creek Campus. The electricity produced will ensure the college's access to low-cost energy over the next 20 years. This exciting and cost-effective partnership with SolarCity of Portland and the Oregon Department of Energy, among others, was made possible by consolidating several smaller college-planned and state-requested solar energy initiatives. The project is expected to save the college more than a million dollars.
- The year began with the start of major renovation to the Sylvania Campus. Classrooms, equipment, laboratory and infrastructure upgrades will help the college meet growing educational demands at its largest campus.
- The National Association of Minority Contractors (Oregon Chapter) recognized PCC as one of its “Champions for 2011” for innovative approaches to and support for MWESB general contractor firms. PCC's Newberg Center made it to the “Top Ten” 2012 list of winning “Green Projects” chosen by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Committee on the Environment. The committee acknowledged the building for reducing water usage by 45.2 percent.
- With 60 percent of PCC's carbon footprint generated by college-related auto travel and much of its property needed for parking, the college initiated a comprehensive assessment of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. A committee identified over 100 concepts aimed at reducing single-occupancy vehicles and parking demand.

The careful planning, designing, costing – and especially, the opportunity to collaborate on decisions with the community – have well prepared the college for the future. We will continue to build on these successes and not just the immediate future. Our practices will not just be measured by the college but will ultimately be measured by the community. We are extremely proud of the commitments we have made and will continue to make and the opportunities we will create. We are already building the future for our community and looking forward to being a part of it.

Patricia Sullivan
President, Portland Community College







Report on the information around PCC bond and Sustainability initiatives

TO: Linda Degman, director of the bond office

Amanda let me know that you wanted me to research on the following points:

- Publicly accessible data around PCC's commitment to Sustainability (PCC bond and Sustainability initiatives)
- Second nature organization summary, is the college able to meet it?
- AASHE's STARS rating system, and report.

I started my research from PCC's website for sustainability and moved on to all the available links on the page. Thus, the information below is publicly accessible.

In a summary, PCC is a member of the President's Climate Leadership Commitments, formerly known as American College & University presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). The college pledges to numerous commitments to sustainability as a member and the Climate Action Plan is a separate document for the college to map out its initiatives to reach the sustainability goals. The Climate Action Plan is unique to each college and an annual report must be submitted to Second Nature. Second Nature is the organization that founded ACUPCC. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) and its STARS rating system is a method on tracking participating colleges' sustainability initiatives and to be recognized on the same scale with other participating skills.

Portland Community College

First, the PCC's sustainability homepage includes "striving for minimum on PCC's newest construction projects" as one of the points on how "PCC demonstrates its commitment to sustainability." However, the Commitment tab hosts all the information on where the college showcases its standings to sustainability.

Going from the homepage to the Commitment page (<https://www.pcc.edu/sustainability/commitment/>), This page hosts direct links to the Climate Action Plan for PCC which was adopted in 2009 and 2013. The Climate Action plan is the plan for the college's sustainability initiatives to become Carbon neutral as soon as possible, while participating with other colleges in this same path.

The Climate Action Plan at PCC is a direct result of the participation of the college in the President's Climate Leadership Commitments. I have attached PCC's both the Climate Action Plans (1st edition = 2009, 2nd edition = 2013). I have taken a piece from the letter signed by President Pulliams, which is below:

- a. Establish a policy that all new campus construction will be built to at least the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standard or equivalent. (Climate Action Plan, Page 51)

Second Nature

Second Nature is an organization founded in 1993 to make the principles of sustainability fundamental to every aspect of higher education. In 2006, Second nature founded the American College & University presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) which is now known as the President's Climate Leadership Commitments since 2015. I have attached the commitments here. In a summary:

The Commitment directly addresses that the participating college must develop a comprehensive Climate Action Plan with targets, actions and timelines. It also requires the participating colleges to submit annual evaluation of progress, which is meant to be publicly available through the Second Nature's reporting system.

Second Nature and USGBC (United States Green Building Council) recognized Portland Community College as the winner for 2017 Climate Leadership Award for two-year category as PCC "has reduced energy consumption by 65 percent per square foot since 2006, counts nine LEED-certified buildings including a net zero LEED Platinum center in its portfolio, and has three solar installments totaling more than 700 KW." (Climate Leadership Awards)

Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) was first established by Second Nature in 2001 as Education for Sustainability Western Network (EFS West). In December 2005, it was officially launched as the first professional higher education association for the campus sustainability community in North America.

In 2006, American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) was created with support from AASHE, Second Nature and ecoAmerica. Signatories to this commitment pledged to measure and report their greenhouse gas emissions, take immediate actions to reduce them, and develop and implement a plan to go climate neutral.

In 2010, Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) 1.0 launched providing institutions the opportunity to benchmark their sustainability efforts.

By the end of the 2017, there were 343 rated institutions out of 878 participating institutions (726 from the U.S., 72 from Canada and 80 from other countries).

In June 30, 2017, Briar Schoon, sustainability manager, submitted the report for Portland Community College to AASHE for STARS grading. PCC got a score of 61.96 and an overall silver rating. This report is publicly accessible to anyone and PCC has a direct link on its sustainability commitment page. Moreover, all the reports of any college that went for a STARS rating is publicly open. I have attached the letter to AASHE signed by President Mitsui, which also specifically includes PCC is committed to a minimum of a rating of LEED silver rating (AASHE_PCC_executiveletter).

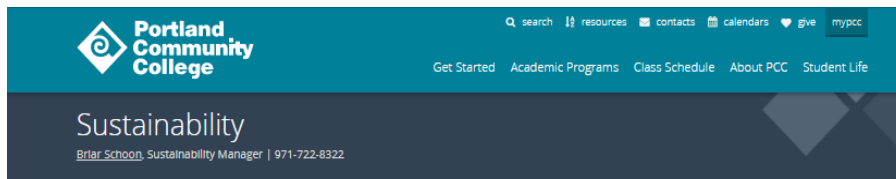
In the STARS rating, the rating is system is divided into categories like academics, operations, engagement, and so on. Each category has sub headings with specific subcategories

which host a few questions for the college to answer. Questions can range from policies adopted to current and future statistics.

OPERATIONS	
AIR & CLIMATE	
OP-1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions	
OP-2: Outdoor Air Quality	
BUILDINGS	
OP-3: Building Operations and Maintenance	
OP-4: Building Design and Construction	
ENERGY	
OP-5: Building Energy Consumption	
OP-6: Clean and Renewable Energy	

The workings of the Bond office for sustainability is mainly question in the category of operations. OP-4 is the most relevant category for the workings of the bond office, which got a score of 2.42/3.00 (<https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/portland-community-college-or/report/2017-06-30/OP/buildings/OP-4/>). The STARS system has specifically distinguished LEED rating as a certified a rating system for design and construction used by an Established Green Building Council (GBC), and non-GBC rating system for design and construction (e.g. Green Globes NC, Certified Passive House). According to PCC’s report, PCC builds new buildings with a minimum of LEED silver rating, while striving for gold and platinum ratings; The report is verified with data of all the area of new building

construction being certified as a LEED silver or higher.



We're all in this together

At Portland Community College, we're doing our part to shrink our carbon footprint and promote healthy, equitable systems. As leaders in sustainable purchasing and green building practices for institutions of higher education, PCC demonstrates its commitment to sustainability in the following ways:

- As the only community college in the nation to be a founding member of the Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council.
- By practicing a closed loop system on the PCC Rock Creek Campus, producing cafeteria food in campus gardens and returning food waste to the soil in the form of compost.
- By achieving LEED Platinum and Gold certifications while striving for Silver as the minimum on PCC's newest construction projects.



Sustainability
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PCC Climate Action Plan Update — July 2017

GHG Savings Since 2006, Portland Community College has reduced total greenhouse gas emissions by 7%.	Energy Consumption Efficiency and conservation efforts for the college have resulted in a 65% reduction in energy use per square foot since 2006.	Solar Three solar systems have produced over 4 million kwh of electricity, diverting over 1,500 tons of CO ₂ e from entering the atmosphere.	Green Building PCC hosts green building efforts including: 10 LEED projects, a net zero building, advanced storm water systems, and a green roof.	Compost & Recycling With over 400,000 lbs composted and 6.7 million lbs recycled since 2012, solid waste contributes to less than 1% of PCC's greenhouse gas footprint.	Water Water-fill stations throughout the district have diverted over 3 million water bottles from the landfill.	Learning Gardens The college has four learning gardens, which collectively harvest over 15,000 lbs of produce and clock upwards of 2,000 student volunteer hours each year.
Transportation With alternative transportation options including inter-campus shuttles and bike rental programs, half of our students, faculty, and staff use more sustainable modes to get to PCC.	Operations Green cleaning and integrated pest management efforts have resulted in over 80% reduction in chemical purchases within FMS.	Dining Services Over 32% of Food Services' food purchases have sustainable attributes, including: local, organic, fair trade, and vegan/vegetarian-friendly.	TGIF Projects Over \$900,000 have been spent on student-funded sustainability projects through the Green Initiative Fund.	Sustainability Courses The college now has over 100 courses with a focus on sustainability or environmental topics.	STARS Ranking PCC reports to the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System and currently has a STARS Silver rating.	We're all in this together.  pcc.edu/sustain


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<https://www.pcc.edu/sustainability/commitment/>

<https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/portland-community-college-or/report/2017-06-30/>

<http://secondnature.org/who-we-are/background/>

<http://secondnature.org/what-we-do/climate-leadership/>

<http://secondnature.org/our-impact/climate-leadership-awards/>

<http://www.aashe.org/about-us/aashe-history/>

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**Portland Community College's Learning Gardens:
Sustainability in question**

For

Professor Chris Cottrell
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By

Nishant Shrestha
Writing 227 Student

March 20, 2018

March 20, 2018
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Professor Chris Cottrell
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Dear Professor Chris,

Enclosed is my report, *Portland Community College's Learning Gardens: Sustainability in question*. Portland Community College has been recognized nationally as a leader in Sustainability initiatives and Learning Gardens have been a major point in this recognition. While preparing this report, I learned about how different sustainable initiatives at Portland community college start and function. I had numerous informational meetings with the students, staff and faculty at our huge institution. Initially, I thought the Learning Garden at Southeast was established by the student activity fees and needs to be backed by the administration to function sustainably.

I have chosen to research on this topic as it is a popular concern among the students and faculty involved in Sustainability. I am a civil engineering student with an aim to focus on renewable energy and sustainability. I am also honored to be one of the first Presidential Executive interns at the office of the President. Thus, I believe that researching on the Sustainability at Portland Community College, specifically the Learning gardens, would be beneficial for me and the college as well.

Thank you for teaching this class so that none of the students do not mistakenly risk people's lives. If there are any questions regarding my topic or this report please feel free to contact me any time.

Respectfully,
Nishant Shrestha

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Abstract

Portland Community College is internationally recognized as a leader in successfully implementing sustainability in higher education institutions. Portland Community College has developed a Climate Action Plan to meet carbon neutrality by 2050. Although PCC is on the right track, the situations of some of its initiatives are questionable.

The Learning Garden at the Southeast Campus is currently dormant with no one staffing it. There are 4 Learning gardens at Portland Community College including one at the Southeast campus; One of the Learning garden is at the Rock Creek campus, one is at the Sylvania campus, and one is at the Newberg Center. The Cascade campus is also set to build a leaning garden in 2018. The learning garden at Southeast and the oncoming learning garden at the Cascade are funded by The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF), now known as The Eco Social Justice Grant (ESJG), and donations from the community. This means that there is no commitment to it from the administration.

The student leaders at Portland Community College are concerned about the sustainable initiatives as the college administration have not committed to the continuity of the sustainable initiatives, started by the students, after the original funds finish. For this concern to be addressed and solved, there needs to be numerous meetings between the college administration, campus presidents, faculty, staff and student leaders to come up with an effective solution.

Introduction

The Learning Gardens at Portland Community College is a nationally recognized program, which could be strengthened for the betterment of the environment at district-wide level. Since the gardens do not yield results quickly and is relatively difficult to conduct on a community college environment, the Learning Garden at Southeast is lying dormant and requires administration attention.

Through extensive research, the Learning Gardens are found to be a part of a larger commitment to sustainability. In this current situation, the huge size of Portland Community College plays as a disadvantage in providing equitable success in terms of sustainability initiatives. To address these concerns the students, staffs, faculty and the administration collectively have to discuss and develop possible future plans for the sustainability of sustainable initiatives.

Learning Gardens

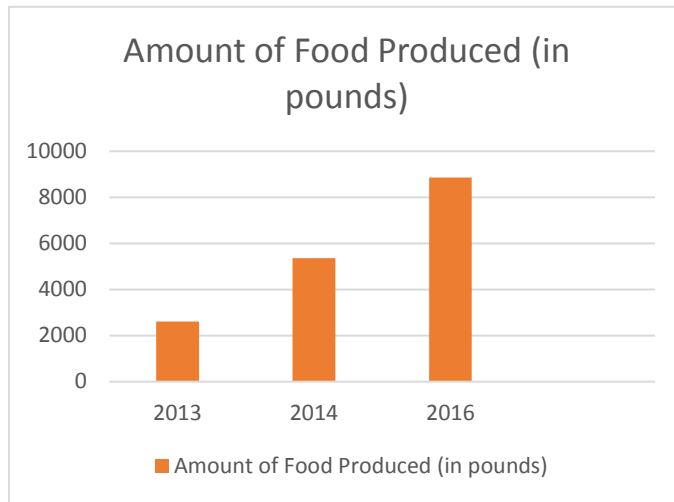
Learning gardens are educational gardens that provide an environment for experiential learning with hands on practices growing food. Learning Gardens are regarded as living classrooms. The inclusion of a Learning Garden in an educational institute fosters concepts of sustainability, teamwork, gardening and food consciousness. According to the Learning Garden Labs of OSU, it also facilitates the creation of an inter-generational and multicultural learning community while motivating everyone to learn (“Learning Gardens Laboratory”). The Learning Garden programs are also a medium to collect volunteer hours for students and the members in the community. Overall, Learning Gardens are considered one of the major initiatives that educational institutions can integrate into their environment to boost sustainability.

Learning Gardens at Portland Community College

At Portland Community College, there are 4 Learning gardens located throughout its 8 centers. The oldest and the biggest Learning Garden is at the Rock Creek campus, which is followed by the Learning Garden at the Sylvania Campus, and then followed by the Newberg Center. The Learning Garden at the Southeast Campus was opened in 2017. At Portland Community College, The Learning garden directly fights the major issue of student food insecurity by providing produce food to the students. Faculty and students can engage in the garden to learn teamwork, stress relief, community service education, gardening and even earn extra credits.

Rock Creek’s Learning Garden

The Learning Garden at Rock Creek grows vegetables, fruit, flowers and herbs on 3.6 acres of land. It was established in 2005 and has slowly grown to become a massive resource for the college. In 2015, The Learning garden at Rock Creek received the AASHE Case Study Award, which provided almost 10,000 pounds of produce food every year (Schrott, Portland Community College integrates sustainability on campus and community). Currently, The Learning Garden is able to sustain itself by selling the food harvested from the garden at Portlandia FarmStandia and to the PCC Dining Services. Surplus produce is donated to the Rock Creek Canteen Project (“Learning Garden”).

Figure 1

According to Figure 1, The growth in food production of the Rock Creek's Learning Garden is significant. Currently, The Learning Garden produces over 10,000 pounds of food every year.

Source: "Rock Creek Learning Garden." History | Sustainability at PCC, www.pcc.edu/sustainability/on-campus/rock-creek/rock-creek-learning-garden/history/

Sylvania's Learning Garden

Sylvania's Learning Garden was established in 2009. It is smaller than Rock Creeks' Learning garden and is not able to sell its food. According to Peter Ritson, the environmental center coordinator at Sylvania, the produce food grown at the Learning Garden at Sylvania directly goes to ASPCC (Associated Students of Portland Community College) to support the Panther pantry (Ritson). The Panther Pantry is run by ASPCC to collect and distribute food to students who face food insecurity. According to an online article, The Learning Garden also has been a home to the organic gardening club, which has over a hundred members who volunteer to work at the garden (Sylvania's Learning Gardens Kick-Start Recycling Efforts"). Volunteering hours are also an important piece at this Learning Garden as many courses provided at PCC have a Community Based Learning (CBL) component which allows students to gain credits in their class. For example, Tara Nelson, a civil engineering instructor at Portland Community College, took her class down to the garden to help build the worm bin at the Learning Garden (Nelson).

Newberg's Learning Garden

There is not enough information on the Newberg Center's Learning Garden. Portland Community College's website does not have sufficient background to the Learning Garden as the Newberg Center is not recognized as a major campus. The absence of student body government and retention centers also has limited the accessibility of understanding the Learning Garden.

Southeast's Learning Garden

Southeast's Learning Garden was started in 2016, but just has finished phase one of the three planned phases for its complete establishment (Schoon). The Learning Garden was planned and proposed by a collaboration between ASPCC Southeast and the Green Team (which consist of staff and faculty). The proposal was submitted to The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF) and community members around the area to establish a garden in Southeast campus's urban

community. In 2017, The Learning Garden hosted free gardening classes, picnic days, pollinator educational week and numerous events in its initial operating phase. The college had also applied for a Americorp member to serve as a coordinator at the Learning garden, but after her one-year term ended the plans around the Learning Garden has been discontinued.

Cascade's Learning Garden

According to Briar Schoon, the ASPCC at Cascade just recently got a \$40,000 grant from the Eco Social Justice Grant 2018. This learning Garden is still in its initial planning phase and student leaders are collaborating with the facilities management service department and the sustainability department to make it happen. This Learning Garden is close to the idea of the Southeast's Learning garden of urban gardening. However, Joe Culhane, a student leader at Cascade, believes that the Environmental Justice club at Cascade can make the most out of the on-campus Learning Garden resource.

The Eco Social Justice Grant

In 2008 the Associated Students of Portland Community College (ASPCC) District Student Council approved a ten-cent addition to the student activity fee, creating The Green Initiative Fund, now known as the Eco Social Justice Grant ("Eco Social Justice Grant."). Through this fund, students can apply and receive grants for projects with a sustainability focus, such as purchasing reusable to-go containers, creating learning gardens and waste education centers, composting at the office and eliminating water bottles on campus (Schrott, Portland Community College integrates sustainability on campus and community). According to Briar Schoon, the sustainability manager at Portland Community College, the funds collectively have raised and used almost a million dollars since its initiation. Overall, The Eco Social Justice Grant is a brainchild of the students at Portland Community College which has been an integral part for PCC's national recognition in terms of sustainability.

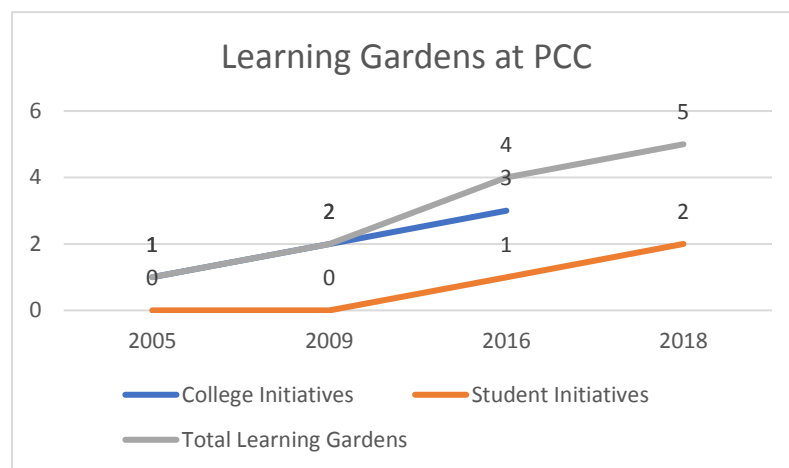


Figure 2

According to Figure 2, Portland Community College is gradually establishing more Learning gardens with faculty and student driven initiatives.

Source: "Learning Gardens." Learning Gardens | Sustainability at PCC,

www.pcc.edu/sustainability/initiatives/learning-gardens/

Portland Community College's Sustainability Commitments

The Learning Gardens play an important role in integrating sustainable practices in education. Integrating sustainable practices in its education has been a major pillar for PCC's mission of equitable student success. Through extensive research, the writer learned that the Learning Gardens were a portion of the greater picture of sustainability the college was painting.

Portland Community College is recognized nationally for its leadership in implementing sustainable practices in education. PCC is a member institution of several consortiums spearheading the campaigns to encourage and implement sustainable practices into its curriculum. PCC is a member institution of Second Nature and Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), two major organizations leading the charge of sustainability in education. The two organizations came up with the President's Climate Leadership Commitments, formerly known as American College & University presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), which encourages member institutions to develop a Climate Action Plan with the goal to b. The Learning Gardens at PCC are a major part of the Climate Action Plan of the college. It means that the college is always considering the best approaches to establish and upgrade Learning Gardens at PCC.

Climate Action Plan



As a member of ACUPCC, the PCC pledges to numerous commitments to sustainability. The Climate Action Plan is a unique document for the college to map out its initiatives to reach the sustainability goals listed in the commitments. The Climate Action Plan is unique to each college and an annual report must be submitted to Second Nature to update the progress of the college.

In a brief summary, Second Nature and Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) founded the ACUPCC. The Climate Action Plan and the Association for the

AASHE STARS rating system are methods on tracking participating colleges' sustainability initiatives and to be recognized on the same standard scale with other participating institutions.

Therefore, The Climate Action Plan at PCC is a direct result of the participation of the college in the President's Climate Leadership Commitments. This plan directly addresses Learning Gardens as an integral resource to host for sustainable future.

Second Nature

Second Nature is an organization founded in 1993 to make the principles of sustainability fundamental to every aspect of higher education. In 2006, Second nature founded the American College & University presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) which is now known as the President's Climate Leadership Commitments since 2015 ("Second Nature Background."). The Commitment directly addresses that the participating college must develop a comprehensive Climate Action Plan with targets, actions and timelines. It also requires the participating colleges to submit annual evaluation of progress, which is meant to be publicly available through the Second Nature's reporting system.

Second Nature and United States Green Building Council (USGBC) recognized Portland Community College as the winner for 2017 Climate Leadership Award for two-year category as PCC “has reduced energy consumption by 65 percent per square foot since 2006, counts nine LEED-certified buildings including a net zero LEED Platinum center in its portfolio, and has three solar installments totaling more than 700 KW” (“PCC Wins National Climate Award through Second Nature, U.S. Green Building Council.”). Thus, Second Nature has been a great motivator for Portland Community College to strive for rapid sustainability while tracking its progress.

Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) was officially launched in 2005 by Second Nature, as the first professional higher education association for the campus sustainability community in North America. It also supported the creation of ACUPCC with Second Nature and ecoAmerica. Signatories to ACUPCC pledged to measure and report their greenhouse gas emissions, take immediate actions to reduce them, and develop and implement a plan to go climate neutral (“AASHE History”). In 2010, AASHE launched Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) to provide member institutions the opportunity to benchmark their sustainability efforts. Currently, there are over 343 rate institutions out of the 878 participating institutions along with Portland Community College.

In June 30, 2017, Briar Schoon, PCC’s sustainability manager, submitted the report for Portland Community College to AASHE for STARS grading. PCC got a score of 61.96 and an overall silver rating. In the STARS rating, the rating is system is divided into categories like academics, operations, engagement, and so on. Over the numerous grading scales, the Learning Garden does play a role in numerous specifications like academic engagement, biodiversity, sustainable practices, and food waste management. Thus, proving the Learning Garden’s importance to sustainable initiatives.

Conclusion

The Learning Gardens promise a sustainable future for Portland Community College. The college is integrating sustainability as a system, whereas the students are developing new sustainable initiatives as well. The Learning Gardens are a specific example of the college and the students not aligning on the same initiative. While the college has developed a great Climate Action Plan and according to Briar Schoon, the college is “currently on track to meet all its sustainability goals” (Schrott, Portland Community College integrates sustainability into campus and community). Since, the student leaders spearheading great sustainable initiatives tend to move to a 4-year institution in a couple of years, the staff and the students have a harder time to collaborate together on large sustainable innovative projects. Thus, most sustainable initiatives at Portland Community College have a time where it temporarily becomes an excess resource.

Currently, I believe that providing opportunities to connect new students and PCC staff and faculty to work on existing projects would be fruitful for every party. Through extensive research, I have managed to discover the relationship between the ongoing projects and the mission of the college. However, I need more time to research and schedule meetings between all the concerned parties to create a straightforward proper effective and clear procedure for future sustainable initiatives at Portland Community College.

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