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Linfield Digest

Linfield Magazine Staff

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Gift a game-changer for theater program



A generous contribution from Trustee Ronni Lacroute will transform theater education at Linfield for generations to come.

An endowment created by Lacroute's gift funds a new tenure-track position in theater. It also endows a chair in Shakespeare Studies. Daniel Pollack-Pelzner, professor of English, at Linfield since 2010, is the first holder of the Ronni Lacroute Endowed Chair in Shakespeare Studies. Lindsey Mantoan, assistant professor of theatre, will join the Theatre and Communication Arts department July 1.

"This major gift from Linfield Trustee Ronni Lacroute demonstrates once again that she is deeply committed to arts and culture in Oregon," said Thomas L. Hellie, Linfield president. "Ronni's generosity inspires all of us to do more for our students and for the liberal arts."

Lacroute developed a passion for the arts and liberal arts education during her student years at Cornell University.

"Linfield must be able to attract and retain remarkable faculty who reach out beyond Linfield and are respected by the broader community," Lacroute said. "That will attract students." Pollack-Pelzner, she said, is one of the best and brightest in the country when it comes to Shakespeare scholarship, and she's particularly excited that he will be the first endowed chair in Shakespeare Studies.

Lacroute previously established the Lacroute Arts Fund, which makes possible the Lacroute Arts Series at Linfield. The series is dedicated to connecting students with artists in meaningful ways, and helping the college present art events and activities for the campus and the wider community. It provides programs featuring artists in music, art and visual culture, as well as theater and communication arts.

Two earn prestigious scholarships



Lizette Becerra '18, left, and Sara Gómez Horta '17

Sara Gómez Horta '17 and Lizette Becerra '18 have earned scholarships to study abroad.

Gómez Horta, an English literature and political science double major from Ketchikan, Alaska, will start a public policy master's program in Beijing, China, this fall after being named a Schwarzman Scholar. She was one of 129 scholars selected from some 3,000 applicants for the program, meant to educate and prepare students to confront challenges of the coming century and develop a deeper understanding of China. Scholars will live and study together at Schwarzman College built exclusively for the program at Tsinghua University. Expenses for each scholar are fully funded by the program.

Becerra, a Latin American Studies major from Seattle, Wash., is studying abroad in Quito, Ecuador, after receiving \$5,000 from the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program. She will study at the Universidad San Francisco De Quito, taking courses on race, ethnicity and the culture of Ecuador.

Becerra is posting weekly bilingual blog entries reflecting on her experiences, allowing others to follow her travels. Once back in the United States, she will share travel insights with Latino parents through a presentation during the Spanish orientation program at Linfield.



In March, Stephanie Mulligan '13 guest directed *Circle Mirror Transformation*, the story of four lost New Englanders enrolled in a community center drama class. Actors included, from left, Arianna Strong '18, Antoine Johnson '19, Bailey Sipila '17, Ben Bartu '18 and Joella Cordelle '17.

Wilkins nominated for Oregon Book Award



Joe Wilkins, associate professor of English, is a 2017 Oregon Book Awards finalist for a collection of his poetry, *When We Were Birds*. Winners will be announced Monday, April 24.

Previously, Wilkins earned a High Plains Book Award for his poetry collection *Notes from the Journey Westward*. His memoir, *The Mountain and the Fathers: Growing up on the Big Dry*, won the 2014 GLCA New Writers Award and was a finalist for the 2013 Orion Book Award.

Rankings place Linfield high

Linfield College earned accolades nationally this fall when three well-known ranking sources released their annual reports.

Linfield tied for first among liberal arts colleges in Oregon and Washington in the 2016 *U.S. News and World Report* Best Ethnic Diversity list. The magazine uses a formula to create a diversity index based on the proportion of students of color to the overall mix of the student body. Linfield joined Willamette University as the only Pacific Northwest liberal arts colleges to qualify for the rankings. Nationally, Linfield is 27th among liberal arts schools on the list.

Linfield was recognized by *Washington Monthly* as one of the top liberal arts colleges in the nation for outstanding value. The magazine ranked Linfield 72nd out of 239 liberal arts colleges. The magazine also ranked Linfield as the top liberal arts college in Oregon or Washington on the publication's "Best Bang for the Buck" list.

Money magazine ranked Linfield 221st out of 705 colleges and universities nationally when it comes to delivering the most value. The magazine rated Linfield second among colleges and universities in Oregon.

Linfield tops at improving economic mobility

A nationwide study of anonymous tax returns and tuition filings found that Linfield is among the best in the Pacific Northwest when it comes to admitting students from disadvantaged families and helping them move up the economic ladder.

The study, called "The Equality of Opportunity Project" and conducted by a group of researchers from Cal-Berkeley, Stanford, Brown and the U.S. Treasury Department, developed a new measure it calls the mobility rate. It calculated a score for each institution based on the college's share of students from lower-income families (bottom 40 percent of the income spectrum) and its success at propelling them into upper-income (top 40 percent of the income spectrum) career paths.

By that measure, Linfield outpaced each of its peers in the Northwest Conference, and almost all private colleges in the region. Linfield also had a higher mobility rate than many of the large, public universities.

NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

COLLEGE	% LOW INCOME	SUCCESS RATE	MOBILITY SCORE
LINFIELD COLLEGE	13.6	66.7	9.1
Pacific University	14.7	56.3	8.3
Willamette University	12.0	68.6	8.2
George Fox University	15.9	51.5	8.2
Pacific Lutheran University	11.7	66.0	7.7
Lewis & Clark College	12.9	51.6	6.7
Whitworth University	11.8	46.8	5.5
University of Puget Sound	8.7	59.2	5.2
Whitman College	6.9	53.6	3.7

* % low income = percentage of students who come from families in the bottom 40% of the income distribution

Linfield earns national recognition for community service

The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll has recognized Linfield for leadership in civic engagement and service-learning. This is the sixth time since 2008 that Linfield has received this honor for its commitment to community, service-learning and civic engagement.

Last year, 600+ Linfield students volunteered more than 8,810 hours of service.

The primary areas of focus included conservation and environmental sustainability, mentorship and empowerment of disadvantaged youth along with outreach to those who are homeless, hungry or living in poverty.

Linfield students not only volunteer locally, but participate in humanitarian

projects across the globe. Linfield is ranked in the top 40 in the nation for participation in study-abroad programs, and sponsors service-learning projects that include health care, outreach to children and housing.

McKeegan leads Advancement division



John McKeegan has been named vice president for institutional advancement at Linfield.

At the college since 2010, McKeegan also serves as general counsel. He holds a bachelor's degree from Bucknell University and a law degree from the University of Notre Dame. He attended the Harvard University Graduate School of Education – Institute for Educational Management in 2016.