

A Conversation with Rebecca I. Long

LCC's Director of Marketing and Strategic Communications

By River Shepherd

On a cold night during the January 2024 ice storm, Rebecca I. Long, Lane Community College's director of Marketing and Strategic Communications, interpreted her power staying on as a sign that she should complete the application for the Public Relations Society of America's Anvil awards, which "are like the Academy Awards" for public relations Long said.

Long submitted a social media campaign called "Level-Up at Lane" to the PRSA Anvil Awards Integrated Communications category. She had created the campaign when LCC was "between advertising agencies and had no money left for a big project," Long said.

Instead, Long made creative use of resources to create the campaign's content and spent \$40 on boosting the resulting social media posts for it.

Since LCC's entry was going up against PR campaigns from companies and organizations with multi-million dollar budgets — such as Walmart — she assumed it would not win an award. Long's motivation to enter was to get feedback from the judges on her campaign, which she would use to help get the accreditation in PR she was working toward.

"We ended up coming in second place to the United States Navy," Long said. "We were the first community college in the country to have ever won that particular category."

Long's journey to LCC started in Georgia and took her through a career in newspapers, local government, and higher education, eventually leading her to move across the country to Oregon, earning multiple degrees along the way.

'Hey, easy A, I can write.'

Growing up in a small town in Georgia, Long's career path was initially inspired in part by the 1993 documentary, "The War Room," which follows several key people working on former President Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign. "A few key moments in that film made me realize not only that I could do this kind of work, but that I wanted to dedicate my career to it," Long said.

One of those moments was James Carville's speech to the staff and volunteers on election eve. "He reminded them that what they were doing wasn't just a job — it was a labor of love. That idea resonated with me then, and it still does today," Long said.

"The War Room" also showed Long the importance of remaining calm and steady during crisis situations and how doing well in communications requires strong teamwork.

"That documentary helped shape my career path. It showed me that public relations — especially in public service — is about more than messaging," Long said. "It's about strategy, trust, and the ability to stay focused under pressure. And that's what I've aimed to bring to every role I've had since."

The only problem was that when

Long first started college, her parents were against the idea of her getting a degree in communications. "My mother actually said, 'We will support you (going to college), just don't major in communications,'" Long said.

That tune began to change when Long decided to work for the school newspaper for college credit while attending West Georgia College. "I thought, 'Hey, easy A, I can write,'" Long said.

"My first assignment was interviewing the president of the college, asking him about budget cuts," Long said. "I was so green I did not know that I should be scared of this interview."

Long, majoring in education at the time, went breezing into the office of the college president. "I just walked right on in, and said 'Hi, I need to interview you,' and the president said, 'You just walked past like four receptionists and security,'" Long said. "Even though he was looking at me like, 'have you lost your mind?' ... I got my interview, it ended up on the front page, I got my A, and I changed my major."

Long's parents began to come around when she brought home a newspaper listing all the careers someone could go into after graduating with a degree in the field. "My mother said 'OK,

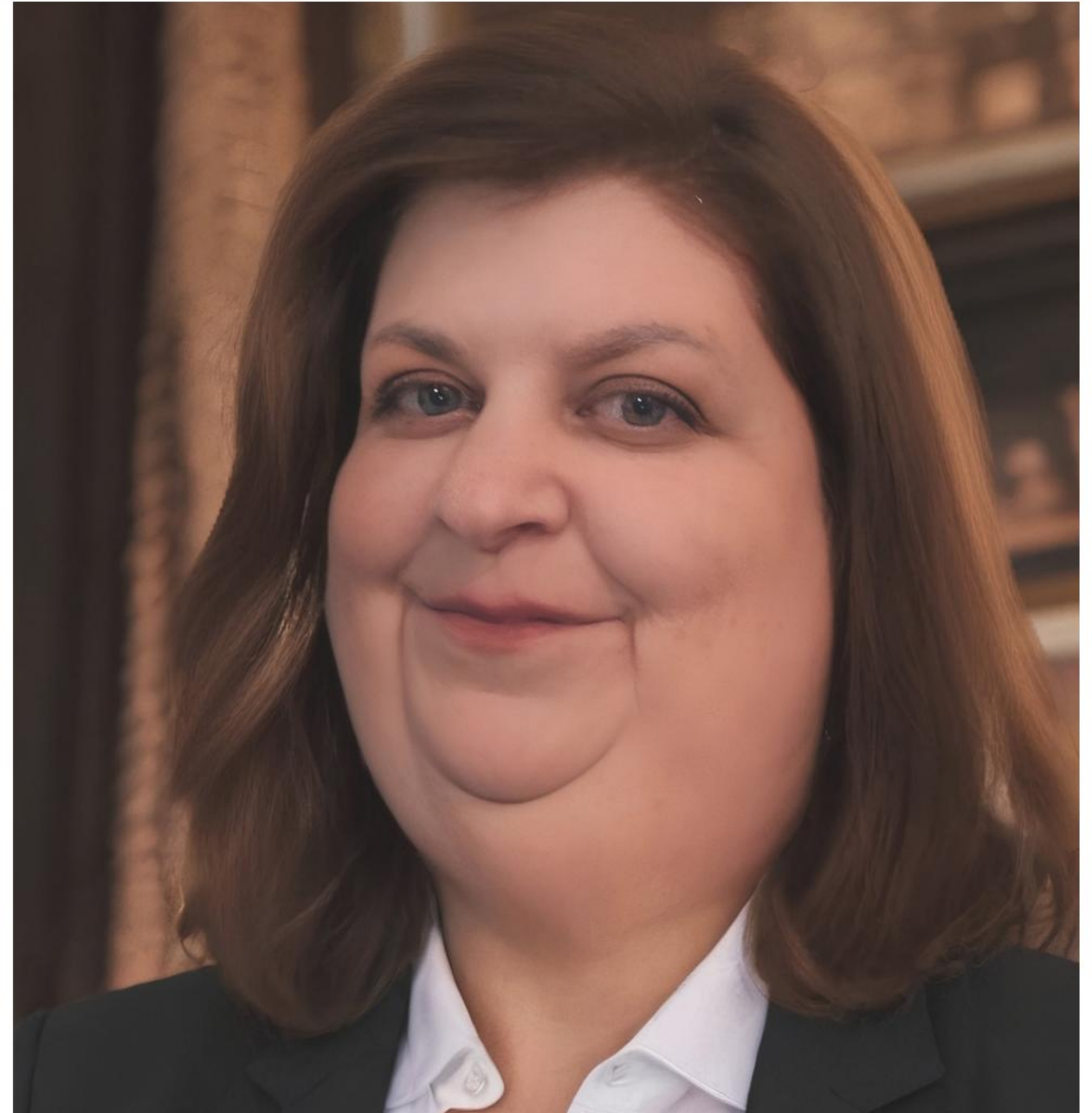


Photo Courtesy of Rebecca Long

I don't know about this, but we're going to support you,'" Long said.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Communication with a focus on Public Relations and Media Studies from Kennesaw State University, Long started her career as a local government and political beat reporter for the Daily Tribune in Cartersville, Georgia. It was there that Long continued to grow her skillset, by "writing such scintillating stories as the mayoral race that ended in a tie four times," Long said. "The only reason anybody won was because somebody had to go to the hospital and couldn't vote, so the mayor won by one vote."

Reporting on local government and politics gave Long a strong background in public relations. She said it also allowed her to learn more about how the government works in addition to learning about writing for different audiences.

These experiences helped Long get a job working for a city government near Atlanta. The new job also included running the city's social media accounts. Taking on this new responsibility spurred Long into going back to school to learn more about communicating in the digital age and using social media professionally.

After earning a Master of Arts in Public Relations from Ball State University in 2020, where she studied PR and journalism, Long continued her work in city government.

Soon she began to think about getting a job in higher education again.

Though Long has worked for both local governments and higher education institutions, she does have a preference. "I like higher education because I will walk up at commencement and someone says, 'I came here because I saw an article in the newspaper,' or, 'I read something online,' or, 'I saw an ad,' or, 'my mom saw an ad and kept putting it in front of my face,' and I can see the change in someone from

the beginning to end," Long said.

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Cartoon By Jade Wilkerson

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Frogs

By River Shepherd for The Denali

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Too early spring takes flight.
For now the wakened frogs sing
Marshy pools filled anew
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Something they never knew.
For now the wakened frogs sing
And life still finds a way
In this valley so polluting
Corporations here to stay.
For now the wakened frogs sing
But their future is fading fast
Our fate forever tied to theirs
When will we see at last?



From the Editor's Desks

A joint message from the incoming head and managing editors of *The Torch*

By Kat Tabor and River Shepherd

As we step into our roles as incoming editors, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to Chandler Henderson for his mentorship and dedication in elevating *The Torch* to new heights. His hard work and commitment to both the publication and his studies at LCC and the University of Oregon have been truly inspiring. We are thrilled to congratulate him on his acceptance into the Berkeley School of Journalism and wish him all the best as he embarks on this exciting new chapter.

We are also honored to welcome him to our Board of Advisors, where we will continue to benefit from his expertise. With his guidance, we aim to carry forward the spirit of print journalism that he helped establish — not just to sustain *The Torch*, but to see it thrive.

As part of this vision, we are bringing back a more classic print aesthetic, embracing the timeless qualities of traditional journalism. In doing so, we honor the legacy of print and respond to the desire for a tangible, in-person connection — something that has been missed, especially in the wake of the pandemic.

We are also excited to report that our team is rapidly expanding, and we are still seeking more interested students who want to join *The Torch* and Denali.

Want to submit a letter to the editor? Reach out to Kat Tabor at torcheditor@lanecc.edu



Kat Tabor



River Shepherd

Steadfast Commitment to Students in Uncertain Times

By President Stephanie Bulger, Guest Viewpoint

Large scale federal actions have undoubtedly caused unease across our campus. Tracking the changes as they come can feel daunting. What I wish to convey to you is Lane Community College's unwavering commitment to providing high-quality educational opportunities to all students in safe and welcoming learning environments. We stand with our students in advocating for their pursuit of accessible higher education.

Earlier in the month, the U.S. Department of Education announced substantial reductions-in-force, and on March 20, President Trump signed an executive order to close down the department to the maximum extent appropriate and permitted by law. The actual impact of these sweeping changes is not yet truly understood.

While the full impact of these cuts is still unfolding, teams at LCC are preparing to adjust to any potential delays in federal support that may come as a result of these changes. It is also important to note that as with other recent federal actions, these changes are being met with litigation from states across the country. For example, a coalition of 21 state attorneys general, including Oregon, has filed a lawsuit against the drastic changes at the Department of Education. I want to reassure you that LCC remains vigilant in monitoring and assessing how these changes may impact our students, processes, and institutional support from federal agencies.

Additionally, the new administration has notified more than 45 universities of pending investigations by the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights for alleged violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The allegations stem from last month's Dear Colleague letter. Our partners at the University of Oregon are among the named institutions. The UO has provided a response indicating their commitment to following applicable federal regulations. While this action does not affect our college, I want to reassure you that we are confident that our programs and operations here at LCC are compliant with applicable laws.

Understanding that the degree of uncertainty associated with federal activity is unnerving, at LCC, we remain steadfast in our mission to provide access to quality educational opportunities and resources that support student success. Despite these unsettling actions, our commitment to student success, equity, and academic excellence remains unwavering. We will continue to monitor these developments closely and work with our partners to advocate for policies that support our students and our college.

I want to reassure you that all here at LCC are committed to your success and are dedicated to supporting your access to the rich program offerings here.

As always I encourage you to stay informed, ask questions, and reach out if you need assistance in navigating any challenges that arise from these federal changes. We will move forward together, ensuring that Lane Community College remains a place of opportunity and support for all.

In Support,
President Bulger

To the Next Generation of Truth-Tellers

Eugene Weekly salutes the student journalists of Lane Community College.

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Jerry Rust



Jeffrey Cooper



Devon Lawson



Julie Weismann



Austin Fölnagy



Richard Vasquez



Jesse Maldonado

LCC Board of Education Candidate Campaigns

What To Know

By Kat Tabor

Four seats on the Lane Community College Board are up for grabs in the May 20 special election. Elected candidates will serve four-year terms, except for At-Large Position 7, which carries a two-year unexpired term.

Zone 1, representing western Lane County, is currently held by Denise Diamond. Chair Zachary Mulholland represents Zone 2. Julie Weismann, who represents Zone 3, covering Springfield, is seeking reelection. Austin Fölnagy, the incumbent for Zone 4 which includes eastern Lane County, is also running for reelection.

The 2025 Candidates:

Zone 1

Jerry Rust

Former Lane County commissioner and longtime educator Jerry Rust is running for the Zone 1 seat on the Lane Community College Board of Education. His background includes serving in the Peace Corps and teaching English as a Second Language at LCC. Rust is prioritizing board unity, support for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), and expanding educational access. “Education is the one thing that, once you have it, no one can take it away,” he said. “I want to support diversity, equity and inclusion, especially for immigrants and transgender folk. I’ll have your back,” he added.

Jeffrey Cooper

Jeffrey Cooper, chief operating officer at Paramount Iron Works, is also seeking the Zone 1 seat. He chairs LCC’s Advanced Technology Advisory Committee and brings a background in the trades along with experience mentoring youth through coaching. His campaign emphasizes job readiness, high school outreach, and practical leadership. “I work in the industry, and I’ve worked for several companies that stay in touch with what employers are really looking for,” he said. “I think I can bring that perspective.” In regard to his perspective on DEI, Cooper said: “I think everyone should have the opportunity to access a good education. I don’t think personally that that should be a prioritized policy,” he said. “But again, I’m not trying to take away from the importance of everybody having had the ability to get a great education and have access to all of the opportunities that LCC has to offer, but I don’t want it to be a prioritized policy.”

Zone 3

Julie Weismann

Appointed in July 2024, Julie Weismann is seeking to retain her Zone 3 seat. An LCC graduate and former nonprofit executive, she is focused on equity, student support and deepening community connections. “I’m not lying when I say that I love LCC and feel very connected and passionate about making sure that students get what they need,” she said. “Teachers want to know what happens if ICE knocks on their door in the classroom. We do fire drills and shooting drills — let’s do an ICE drill,” she added.

Devon Lawson

LCC student and Bond Oversight Committee member Devon Lawson is challenging Weismann for the Zone 3 seat. Dual-enrolled at McKenzie High School, Lawson has worked on over 30 political campaigns and focuses on student-centered leadership, DEI protections and accountability. “Our students, faculty, and community deserve better,” he said. “I’m running because LCC needs board members who show up, who fight for students, and who put education ahead of personal politics.” “I want LCC to become a true sanctuary campus,” he added.

Zone 4

Austin Fölnagy

Incumbent Austin Fölnagy is running for re-election in Zone 4. He currently serves as president of the Oregon Community College Association and previously served as vice chair of the Klamath Community College Board. At LCC, he has championed student engagement, DEI policies, workforce training and maintaining funding for student services. “DEI is critical. It’s not only about safety and being an inclusive environment, but also about

supportive services,” he said. “I believe in the promise of Lane Community College — that individuals can make courageous changes to their lives through education,” he added.

Richard Andrew Vasquez

Richard A. Vasquez, a former trustee at San Joaquin Delta College in California, is challenging Fölnagy for the Zone 4 seat. A Native American author and educator, Vasquez is focused on cultural inclusion and equitable education. “Diversity is a must, not only in education but in the classroom,” he said. “A lot of people don’t understand that diversity is about cultural awareness — about understanding someone’s different beliefs,” he added. He currently serves on the Lane County Parks Advisory Committee and the board of Singing Creek Educational Center. Vasquez holds degrees in criminal justice, legal studies and education administration, and is pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership from Trident University.

Zone 7 (Two-Year Term)

Jesse Alejandro Maldonado

Jesse Maldonado, an adjunct professor at the University of Oregon and a first-generation college graduate, is running for the at-large Seat 7 on the LCC Board of Education. He previously applied to fill the seat after Rep. Lisa Fragala’s resignation but was not appointed due to a board deadlock. His background includes early public service on the Lewiston City Council, and he currently serves on the Eugene Parks Foundation board and the city’s Budget Committee. “It’s time for a new generation to step up,” he said. “I value education almost more than anything.” He added, “I want to wear my values on my sleeve.”

The deadline to register to vote is April 29. For details on Lane County’s special elections, visit lanecounty.org. Voters can check their registration status at sos.oregon.gov.

Board meetings are held on LCC’s main campus in Bldg 3, Rm 216, unless otherwise noted. Monthly meeting dates are subject to change and are announced in the previous month’s agenda. Additional meetings are scheduled as needed, and meeting materials are posted on lanecc.edu.

All photos were provided to The Torch by each candidate.

Read stories on each candidate online at LCCTorch.com.

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4/17 Linn-Benton @ Lane – Doubleheader 1:00 PM & 4:00 PM

4/20 Lane @ Linn-Benton – Doubleheader 12:00 PM & 3:00 PM

TRACK AND FIELD

4/5 @HOME (ALL DAY) – Bill Dellinger Distance Carnival

4/6 @HOME (ALL DAY)

4/11 @HOME – 12:00 PM

4/12 @HOME – 12:00 PM

4/18 @HOME (ALL DAY)

4/19 @HOME (ALL DAY)

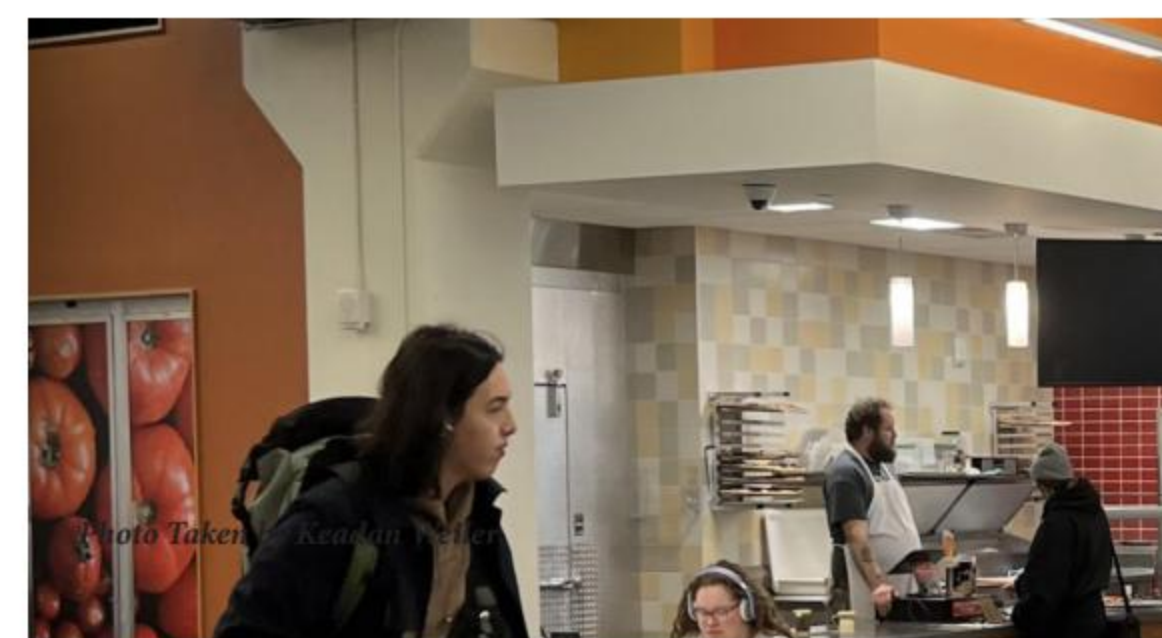
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A Bite To Eat Near You!

LCC's Center has options

By Keadan Weiler

On the first floor of the center building at Lane Community College, there are several food options. They are Bartolotti's Pizza, the Irie Jamaican Kitchen and Doug's Place.

Walking up to Bartolotti's pizza, you are greeted by the smell of delicious pepperoni and the sight of the smiles of happy students eager for food. Open Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. The operations manager, Grant Hubbard, gave The Torch a rundown of the menu.

Bartolotti's Pizza sells cheese and pepperoni pizza slices; whole pies; Caesar salad; and a list of drinks. This list includes Mountain Dew; Pepsi; diet Pepsi; Dr. Pepper; diet Dr. Pepper; and Bubly Sparkling Water.

The next restaurant in the Center is the Irie Jamaican Kitchen. Diners are given the feeling they are getting a taste of not just Jamaican food but also Jamaican culture. This kitchen is open from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and on Friday, closes at 1:30 p.m. Desmond Wilson, the son of the chef/owner, gave The Torch a rundown of the menu. This includes curry chicken with potatoes; stewed chicken with carrots and bell peppers; dessert and pastries; daily specials; and sides. Wilson specifically wanted the Torch to mention the fried ripe plantains; and the boiled dumplings.

Daily specials Irie are as follows: On Monday, baked chicken with ginger glaze; the stew chicken with white rice bowl; on Tuesday, curry tofu meals; on Wednesday, chickpea macaroni salad; jerk chicken leg and thigh meal; on Thursday, you can order curry goat with potatoes and tofu fried rice; on Friday you can order fried chicken wing meals. All these meals come with rice, beans and steamed cabbage. All throughout the week you can order the Jamaican sorrel drink, a delicious beverage with ginger and cane sugar.

The third restaurant in the Center Building is Doug's Place. Formally located on McVay Highway. Doug's Place is perpetually busy, drawing people in with its casual dining that offers something for everyone and a welcoming atmosphere.

Doug's Place is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Doug's Place sells teriyaki chicken; burgers, stir fry vegetables; chicken strips; French fries; patty burgers, and vegan burgers.

When asked if Doug's Place had vegan alternatives to meat the manager, Yuen Lee, replied "Definitely." She went on to say she created the menu by making "food I like to eat, and my husband does like to eat."

Lee said, "Most everything is made from scratch." When asked if the store has bounced back from COVID, Lee said, "A lot of our business depends on college. Now that my employees can't find parking, that means it's a good thing."

To find more information on the dining experience — including what's available at J&J Java Coffee Roasters and The Titan Store for grab-and-go Lane Community College visit www.lanecc.edu/experience-lane/dining.

A conversation with Rebecca I. Long

Continued From Page 1.

Bored one day, scrolling through jobs during a city council meeting, she found a job opening at LCC that caught her eye. “It had two things I liked – higher education, and the Pacific Northwest,” Long said. She had visited Oregon before and knew she liked the area.

A couple of months after applying, Long was offered the job. After packing everything she could fit in her car and two suitcases, she moved cross-country to start a new chapter in Eugene.

‘If you want to be inspired, sit down and listen to a student.’

As the director of Marketing and Strategic Communications at LCC, Long’s job is all about showing what Lane has to offer, as well as making sure communications from the college to current and prospective students are consistent across all platforms.

“Digital advertising is the majority of what we do,” Long said. Long coordinates the filming of LCC commercials and photo shoots with an advertising firm, meeting with them every other week.

LCC has three main categories of media and marketing methods: paid, owned, and earned. “Paid” includes things like commercials that are filmed by the advertising firm. The “owned” category includes LCC’s social media, email accounts, and website. The “earned” category is where Long or her boss writes a press release about something newsworthy going on at LCC and sends it out to local media outlets in hopes that they want to do a story on it.

“That’s my true love of my job, is being able to do that,” Long said, “Because I love people being able to see it, and it always means something even better when somebody else says it about Lane instead of Lane says it about themselves.”

When a new or prospective student interacts with Lane, many channels of communication may be used – such as email, text, LCC’s website, and social media accounts — and part of Long’s job is to make sure that all communications going out are correct and consistent with one another.

While other team members manage the social media accounts and website, Long is responsible for ensuring the communications going out through these channels all say the same thing and that the branding is consistent.

In addition to communications going out from the main channels to students, Long also directs the PR campaigns for LCC. “I did earn my accreditation in public relations, referred to as the APR,” Long said, “It’s been a goal for most of my career, and I decided in 2023 that it was time to quit putting it off.”



Photo Courtesy of Rebecca Long

“In the past few months,” Long said, “I have been working with a videographer and crew to capture some stories about the students, faculty, and staff at LCC and how their efforts are transforming lives.

Long is entering another PR campaign in the Anvil Awards this year. This time with a campaign that “we actually spent money on,” Long said. It’s a campaign created for the new Bachelor of Applied Science and Business offered at LCC. Long

said they got some national news coverage and had more advertising for it than the project that won second place last year, so there are hopes of another win in the future.

Regardless of the outcome of the 2025 Anvil Awards, Long will be continuing her work for LCC, motivated by the people and ideas at the heart of the school.

“I have studied writing and communication my entire life. Now I’m studying computers to meld the two together and understand that user experience,” Long said she has been taking computer science classes at LCC. Though she is taking this term off from classes, her hope is to continue to study programming and computer science “to understand how it can intersect with marketing and public relations to automate, simplify, and expand some processes.”

“For example there are a handful of companies that sell data scraping services to monitor news and social media mentions of their customers,” Long clarified in an email to The Torch. “These services are extremely robust, not always that accurate, and very expensive. I have thought about how to improve them and make them more cost effective. With the right skillset, I think I could make a better product.”

“There are opportunities to grow around every corner. Maybe that’s a degree, maybe that’s a class to build your skills, maybe that’s an opportunity to take on a leadership role with student organizations, try something new, or enhance what you’re already doing,” Long said. “I don’t have a background in computers, so I’m picking that up. So it doesn’t matter your age, or your background, or any of that. If you want to be inspired, sit down and listen to a student.”

Simons And Moose

The Duo Who Wants To Meet You.

By Keadan Weiler

You may have seen a large shepherd-type dog on campus wearing a vest and stopped yourself from petting him. Moose is one dog wearing a vest whose handler wants you to pet him — he’s a therapy dog.

Unlike service dogs who need to be left alone to do their job, part of Moose’s job is for students to interact with and pet him freely. His handler, Ashlea Simons, says of Moose: “He is here for other people. He is not here for me.” Simons and Moose met in August of 2021, she says he is “German Shepherd, Husky, Doberman, Lab and 100% Goodboy!”

Simons is an administrative specialist with the Public Safety Department at Lane Community College. Simons told The Torch that she started in public safety while pursuing a criminal justice degree during her last year of college. She got an internship that turned into a job opportunity as an officer before joining the administrative side of things.

Simons said she was inspired to be a public servant. She had a rough childhood, and criminal justice was a step in the right direction. Additionally, Simons had dreams of being an animal control officer, and this allowed her to pursue that. However, Simons had a change of heart. She said, “I never actually pursued that because I really enjoy working here and doing what I do.” Simons told The Torch that she’s been with LCC Public Safety for eight years.

Simons was happy to talk about how Moose became a therapy dog. Moose always had a good temperament and loved people. She had heard of therapy dogs before and decided to make Moose a therapy dog as soon as possible. She looked into a local group called F.E.T.C.H. (Friends Eager To Come Help), which is certified through the National Alliance of Therapy Dogs to test, observe, and get people certified for therapy teams.

Simons specifically asked The Torch to mention Betty Flinn. Simons said that Flinn is one of the tester/observers with F.E.T.C.H. who facilitates dogs becoming therapy animals. Simons says, “If your dog has a great temperament, doesn’t jump on people or lick faces, the process is easier than you might think!” She adds that F.E.T.C.H. is “very friendly and always willing to have more therapy teams!”

Simons and Moose walk around campus hitting several departments. Simons will specifically go to classrooms who email her asking for a visit. Simons and Moose try to see as many people as possible so that any willing student can interact with Moose.

Simons said that sometimes she gets a “weird side eye” from people who can’t tell whether Moose is a service dog. Simons said that if you see Moose, please come and say “Hi.” Moose is happy to say hello to anyone.

Moose has his birthday on Feb. 22, celebrating 5 years of life.

Anyone who has questions about Moose, or would like to schedule a visit can email Simons for a visit at simonsa@lanec.edu, call 541-463-5558 or find them at the Public Safety Office in Building 12. To learn more about F.E.T.C.H. go to [FETCH Therapy Dogs \(fetchtherapydogs.org\)](http://FETCHTherapyDogs.org).

Have a staff or faculty member you think we should feature? Reach out to us at torcheditor@lanec.edu



Photo Taken by Kat Tabor

A Mentor, Coach, and Leader

Jack Graves

By Sequoia Hall

Women's assistant basketball coach, Jack Graves has helped lead the Lane Community College's team to back-to-back championships narrowly missing out this year on a third this season. The Torch sat down with Graves to discuss his life, coaching style, and philosophy around the game.

Growing up in Spokane, Washington, basketball was ingrained in Jack Graves' life. His father Kelly Graves was Gonzaga's women's basketball coach so he was always around the facilities. Jack said that McCarthy Athletic Center was like his second home, he would get out of class three blocks away and up until high school and go right there. Being able to hang out around all the amazing players, and listening to the coaches, he was able to foster his love for the game and inspire him to continue.

After completing his high school career at Gonzaga Prep, where he also played basketball, Jack moved to Eugene because Kelly got a job coaching the University of Oregon women's basketball team.

Jack Graves enrolled at Lane right after high school in 2014 and stayed around basketball as a practice player for some of the best men's squads Lane has seen. While he continued to learn and develop his knowledge of the game. After two years of playing, current women's head coach Greg Sheley offered a position as an assistant coach for the team, so he traded in high-tops for a clipboard and began his coaching career.

As a coach Graves emphasizes unselfishness, competitiveness, and helping the players make the most of their opportunities. Having the ability to cater to all the player's different needs is one of the most challenging parts of the job. All players are different so finding a way to make them mesh is an opportunity to make sure the athlete's needs are met. This starts with bringing in the right crop of talent and Graves has been helping on the recruiting trail; his contributions have gone up as his tenure elongates. The Lane staff focuses on bringing in athletes who are "made to be Titans." Having a competitive mindset, being coachable, and being unselfish are things he looks for when recruiting.

"There is not a lot you can't accomplish if you get the right players and they are able to embrace the culture of being competitive and being unselfish," Graves says. When the team is like this you can set the standard as the coach and let the players create the comradery. Graves said that this year's team was a great example of this where the coaches could be more focused on the on-court product, and the veteran leadership of the sophomores was able to show through. Graves' philosophy on the X's and O's basketball is an offense-first approach; his dad has run a system like that for the majority of his career. Graves has taken some things from that but Sheley's approach is also one of offense so Graves said he is learning new ways to score every day with his current staff.

Under Sheley, someone who Graves holds in high regard as a boss, coworker, and mentor, the Titans have won three championships with Graves on their staff in 2016, 2023, and 2024. These are things that Graves is very proud of, but he is also proud of all the athletes who have come through this program and gone on to play elsewhere after their two years.

One of Graves's favorite things to do is to turn on a game and watch one of his former players play at a higher level. He cited a game where Sierra Scheppele of Southern Oregon University and Bella Hamel of the University of Oregon actually played each other. "It was great to see them compete against each other, I felt proud for them and that I helped even a little." That would be the thing that he is most proud of from coaching creating a solid stepping stone for players to build their careers on

Jack Graves has two brothers, Max who began coaching at the same time as him and went on to coach with the Dallas Mavericks, and Will who played for Lane as well as Gonzaga and is now coaching for the Florida Gators. Jack said he always had a good relationship with his brothers and they would always debate sports whether it was the NBA, college hoops, or even the team their dad was coaching. "Having people to always talk basketball with helped my love of the game grow," he said. Jack and his brother Max started coaching at the same time so being able to bounce ideas off each other was helpful.

There were times for Jack Graves when basketball was not the main focus, his father Kelly Graves focused more on being a father to the boys than a coach. While his father's style of coaching and philosophy were absorbed by being around him, his team, and the facilities. Jack credits a lot of his coaching knowledge from coaches he had growing up and ones he had the chance to watch do their job like his dad.

Mark Few, coach of the highly successful Gonzaga men's basketball team, was one of the many people around him from whom Jack took valuable lessons as he grew up. There was also Jack's Little League coach Brett Bonam; Jodie Barrie, his dad's assistant who came with him to Oregon; and Lisa Fortier the current Gonzaga women's coach. Those are all people who impacted his style, philosophy, and attitude toward coaching. Jack Graves said "he is grateful for all the opportunities that have come his way" but it would not have been so without his hard work, dedication to his craft, and his love for the game.

Jack plans on staying with Lane "as long as they will have me," he said with a smile. Jack will head to the recruiting trail along with coach Sheley in search of more Titan material. Lane's season ended with an unfortunate loss on March 16 in the championship game, but they are in good hands and are poised to make a run next year when the season



Photo Courtesy of Dan Acosta

Lane Basketball Season Wrap-Up

Strong Playoff Push and Bright Future Ahead

By Sequoia Hall

Lane basketball has come to an end after an action-packed season filled with thrilling games. Both men's and women's basketball programs made the playoffs and neither completed the ultimate goal of a championship, but they worked hard and were a force to be reckoned with. Both programs are on the rise in the Southern Region conference with strong freshman classes who have been around success and look to continue it.

Lane's women's basketball had a perfect 32-0 regular season and were looking for their third championship in a row. They have to do so while playing at the neutral site of Columbia Basin College Student Recreation Center located in Pasco, WA. They were seeded number one and faced Bellevue College where they quickly dismantled them 79-58 with a strong offensive effort on March 5. The next day during the second round, they breezed by Green River College 75-50 in a game where Lane's defense thrived, getting 61 rebounds as a team.

In the Final Four game on March 15, they faced their most formidable opponent yet, Peninsula College, which Lane beat in overtime four months prior. Lane came out hot and the offensive bombardment lasted all night with all five starters for Lane reaching double-digit points. Leading to an 80-63 landslide win over a dominant program securing their spot in this year's championship the next day.

They were slated to face Walla Walla College, who were the 1 seed in their East Region conference as well. The game did not go as planned for Lane as their lead slipped away in the second and from there they were playing catch but they did not have enough time dropping this one 58-65.

There are bright skies ahead for Lane as they won their fifth straight NWAC Southern Region Championship with the freshman getting experience they are poised to make a deep run next year.

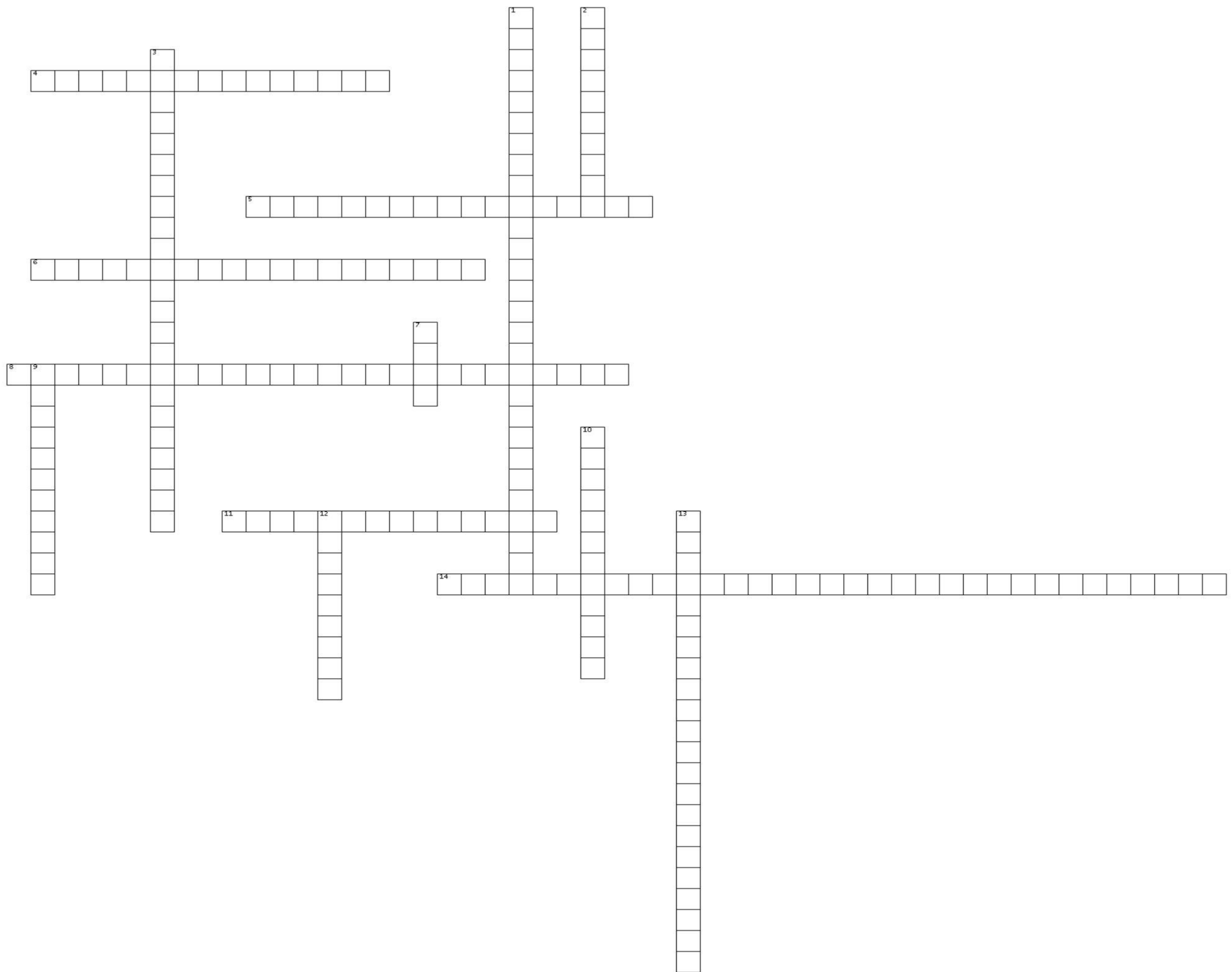
Lane's men's basketball team finished the regular season 20-8 and clinched a playoff spot with the third seed in the South Conference. They faced Spokane College in the first round who was second seed in the East Conference. The game was extremely close the whole way and unfortunately ended on a buzzer-beater lay-up by Spokane losing 71-72 almost making their first elite eight since 2022.

They are saying goodbye to five sophomores, including Ben Thornbrue who was named NWAC South Conference Player of the Year. They have made an incredible turnaround since going 10-18 in 2023 all behind head coach C.J Edwards. They look to build upon this year and make another run at the playoffs.

To all the exiting sophomores Lane and The Torch wish you the best of luck in future endeavors. Forever Titans.

Lane Athletics is not over; the baseball season has just begun with the Titans 9-7 with their next game on Sunday, March 30, home against Southwestern Oregon. The track and field season has begun as well with the next meet being Saturday, March 29 at the Willamette Invitational at Willamette University. LCC students can show their student ID cards to get into any Lane athletics event

CROSS WORD: OREGON SPRING BREAK DESTINATIONS



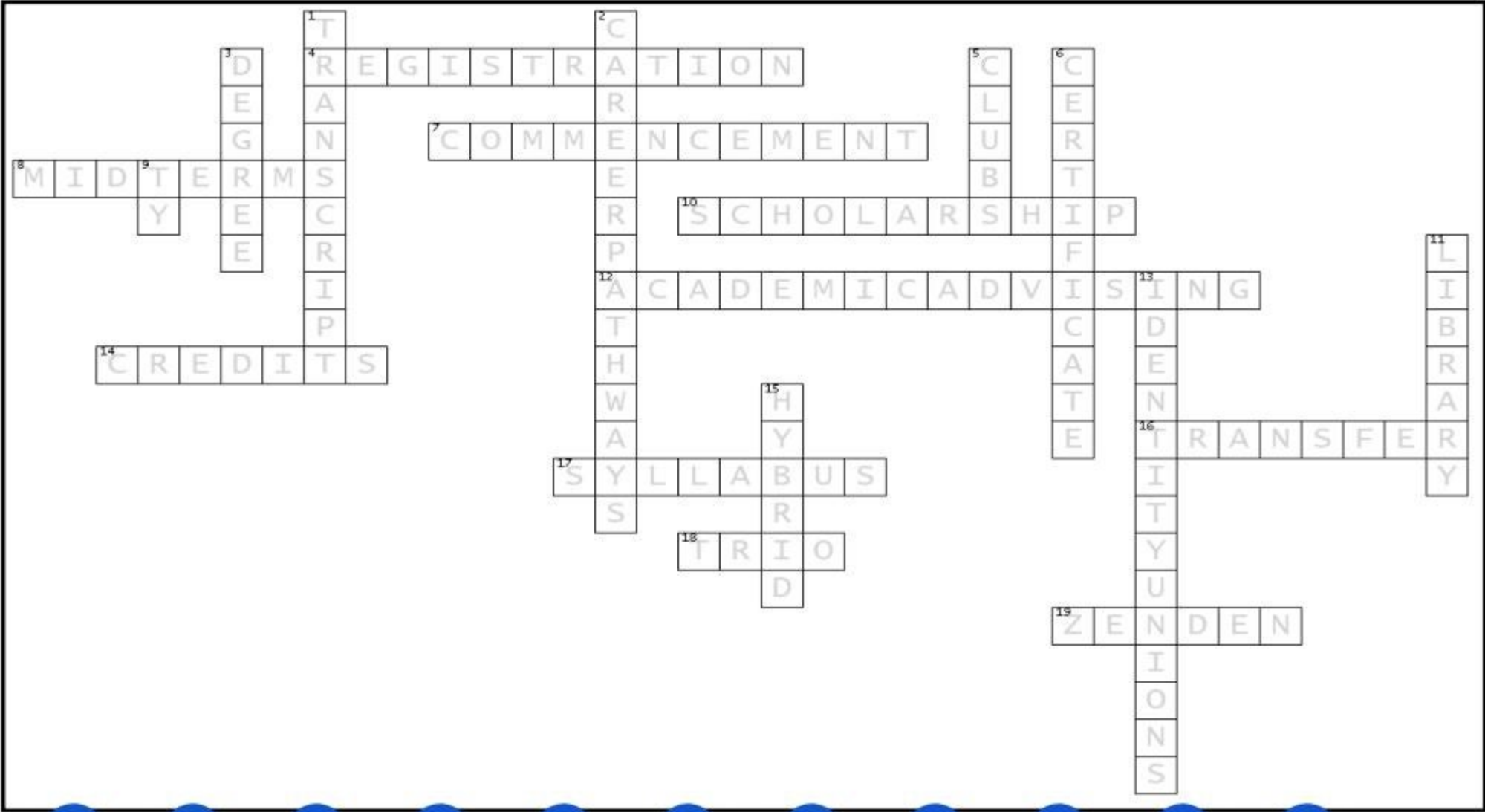
ACROSS

- 4. A fairy tale-themed amusement park in Turner, featuring a crooked house and a haunted mansion.
- 5. One of the oldest art museums in the Pacific Northwest, featuring Native American and modern art.
- 6. Home to sea otters, sharks, and an underwater tunnel in Newport,.
- 8. Located on the University of Oregon campus, this museum features Asian and contemporary art.
- 11. A historic Portland home with panoramic city views.
- 14. A Eugene museum showcasing Oregon’s geology, fossils, and Indigenous cultures.

DOWN

- 1. A Victorian mansion in Eugene known as the “Castle on the Hill.”
- 2. The deepest lake in the U.S., formed from a collapsed volcano.
- 3. Home to over 10,000 roses, overlooking downtown Portland.
- 7. A hands-on science museum in Portland featuring a submarine and planetarium.
- 9. A coastal playground of sand dunes, part of the Siuslaw National Forest.
- 10. A mysterious attraction in Gold Hill where perspectives seem to shift and gravity feels different.
- 12. Located in Portland, this is home to elephants, penguins, and a famous conservation program.
- 13. A peaceful oasis in Portland with koi ponds and cherry blossoms.

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