



COURTESY: PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY



Professional Development

WHEN ELECTRICAL ENGINEER Sam Blackman launched his own company, Elemental Technologies, in Portland a few years ago, he quickly found out how much he didn't know. "You wear a lot of hats in a start-up," says Blackman, who previously worked in engineering positions at Intel, Silicon Graphics and Pixelworks. "I was responsible for everything on the business side—accounting, finance, all of that—and I wasn't any good at any of it."

However, he had confidence in his product—software that enables fast, high-quality delivery of professional video content to "any screen, at any time"—so he turned to the University of Oregon's Portland-based Oregon Executive MBA program (OEMBA) to round out his business skills.

"I learned a ton," he says, "and I learned a lot just from interacting with my colleagues in the program. I've used that network ever since."

Elemental Technologies has done so well since Blackman received his OEMBA in 2008, the com-

pany was a finalist in two categories—"Rising Star Company of the Year" and "Cool Product of the Year"—in the 2011 Oregon Technology Awards, hosted by the industry trade group TechAmerica Oregon.

The OEMBA program is designed to be helpful to entrepreneurs such as Blackman and also to executives developing the skills needed to climb the corporate ladder, says Cornelis "Kees" de Kluyver, dean of the University of Oregon's Lundquist College of Business. "We know that we play an important role in meeting the educational needs of the Portland business community, whether that's enhancing the skill set of CEOs launching start-ups, or enhancing the skill set of executives who play key roles at existing companies."

Next year, to further meet the needs of the Portland business community, the College of Business will begin offering graduate-level certificates in areas ranging from management to finance. Students can focus on a certain area, or earn all of the certificates to receive a full OEMBA. While the specifics are still being determined, the full OEMBA will likely comprise four or five certifi-



College programs meet the needs of Portland-area businesses | By Melissa Steineger

ates, each of which can be earned separately by taking several graduate courses in a specific area of competency, de Kluyver says.

Thus, a busy CEO might elect to focus on a sustainable-business-practices certificate, while a chief financial officer being groomed for the CEO job might choose to receive management and marketing certificates and forgo the finance certificate.

“Our goal,” says de Kluyver, “is to become the preferred partner of companies in the Northwest as they develop their next layer of leadership.”

The University of Oregon is one of the numerous universities and colleges in the Portland area that are preparing students to meet the needs of local companies. Below is a look at just a few of the many programs training graduates to do an excellent job for the region’s businesses.

Concordia University–Portland

In 2009, Concordia University–Portland began offering a bachelor’s degree in exercise and sport science (ESS) after soliciting input from organizations such as the Multnomah Athletic Club and

Nike Inc., which is based near the Portland suburb of Beaverton.

“The beauty of the ESS,” says Joel Schuldheisz—a professor of exercise and sport science, and the director of the ESS program for the College of Health & Human Services—is that it’s diverse enough that you can specialize in the clinical side of things, like preoccupational therapy or prephysical therapy, or you can specialize in the performance side of things, like strength and conditioning, personal training or group exercise. The market is still showing a great need in all of these areas.”

K-12 schools are emphasizing fitness to combat the trend toward obesity; corporations are providing fitness-education and exercise classes to make employees healthier and happier, and reduce health-care costs; and baby boomers moving into middle age and retirement age are increasingly looking for ways to stay fit, Schuldheisz says.

“There’s going to be tremendous demand,” agrees Mark Jager, dean of the College of Health & Human Services. “We know that we have to keep people healthy.”

The ESS program already has 80 students—twice the number Concordia projected would be enrolled after just two years, he says. The students are being prepared to pass certificate exams from the American College of Sports Medicine or the National Strength and Conditioning Association, or to be accepted into graduate programs such as community health, biomechanics, athletic training, exercise physiology and physical therapy.

Left: Portland State University offers a real estate–related graduate certificate and this fall will add a master’s degree in real estate development.

Center: Portland Community College’s bioscience-technology program emphasizes hands-on labwork that gives students real-world skills.

Above: Pacific University’s Health Professions Campus is near a clinic and a hospital where students do fieldwork and learn the most current practices.

Glenn Johnson, an exercise physiologist at the Multnomah Athletic Club and an adjunct professor at Concordia, recently began offering internships to Concordia students. “It gives them a realistic idea of what they’re going into, so they’re better prepared to choose a profession,” Johnson says. “We’re also interested in seeing how well the students do—it’s a testing ground for finding new employees.”

In 2010, the university also began offering a minor in sports management, preparing students for careers ranging from health club owner/manager to nonprofit-organization youth recreation leader to professional sports marketing director.

Oregon Health & Science University
OHSU researchers frequently make discoveries or have innovative ideas in their respective areas of research that may be of interest to local companies and the customers they serve. The university’s Technology Transfer and Business Development office makes it possible for many of those innovations to see the real-world light of a real-world day.

“Universities don’t make products; universities do research,” says Arundeeep S. Pradhan, associate vice president in charge of the office. “But research needs to find a route out of the university, and that’s what we do—transfer knowledge so companies can develop research into a product and deliver it to the public.”

One of the university’s technology-transfer endeavors is the Oregon Center for Aging & Technology (ORCATECH), a collaboration of about 50 organizations, including various Northwest universities and businesses, and also organizations such as AARP.

OHSU students pursuing technology degrees—such as biomedical engineering graduate students—have the opportunity to work with OHSU faculty members who are partnering with companies such as Intel to develop and test devices that could help people remain independent longer as they advance in years. This is invaluable research experience the students take with them as they begin their careers,



COURTESY: OHSU

says Dr. Jeffrey Kaye, the center’s director, and a practicing physician who specializes in neurology and geriatrics.

A current ORCATECH study is evaluating a sensor network that can collect, store and report real-time data such as whether the person has taken medications on schedule, says Steve Agritelley, director of Health Research and Innovations for Intel Labs, an Intel research division. The technology is designed to map activities to detect problems. For instance, several trips to the bathroom at night might indicate a urinary tract infection.

The system is being tested at private homes and at various retirement communities, such as Mirabella Portland, a \$130 million high-rise retirement community that Pacific Retirement Services opened last September. “Our concept is healthy, active, independent people, 60 and greater, who want to handle their own affairs, be in charge of their own lives and relieve their children of future responsibility,” says Paul Riepma, vice president of marketing for Pacific Retirement Services.

By identifying problems before they advance too far, treatment could begin earlier, and patients might remain healthier longer, Kaye says. “It’s hard for the patient to remember everything that’s happened since the last visit to the doctor. Imagine if we could transform all this information to real time and real data. Instead of [the patient’s] trying to remem-

Above: Oregon Health & Science University gives students the opportunity to work on projects that involve technology transfer. For example, the university is partnering with Oregon companies to test devices that may help people remain independent longer as they advance in years.

Left: In 2009, Concordia University began offering a bachelor’s degree in exercise and sport science, after getting input from local companies.



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Former Nike executive Darcy Winslow directs the Sustainable Enterprise Certificate program for Willamette University.

ber, the information is already there. So your doctor could actually be trying to solve problems and talking about solutions instead of trying to fill in the blanks. That's the direction we want to go."

Pacific University

Students pursuing bachelor's degrees in dental hygiene or graduate degrees in areas such as professional psychology, pharmacy and healthcare administration at Pacific University are benefiting from a university partnership with local healthcare providers. Five years ago, the university, which is based in the Portland suburb of Forest Grove, created a College of Health Professions satellite campus in nearby Hillsboro, where a Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center clinic and a Tuality Healthcare system hospital are located.

College of Health Professions students in eight healthcare programs (with a graduate degree in audiology expected to be added next year) do fieldwork at the clinic and the hospital, learning the most current practices. In addition, professional practitioners, some of whom sit on advisory boards for the college, often present to classes.

The college's student-industry connections are especially beneficial as Oregon healthcare providers strive to fill an expected 51,000 healthcare job openings

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between 2008 and 2018, with 24,000 of those openings occurring in the Portland metropolitan area, according to the Oregon Employment Department.

Dr. Sheridan Thiringer, a Tuality Healthcare system-affiliated physician specializing in family practice, says that as baby boomers age and require more care, and as the number of people with conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes increases, there may not be enough

'Portland Community College has the ability to react quickly in a [bioscience] industry that evolves rapidly. In a short amount of time, PCC can be turning out graduates with a different focus if the industry needs that.'

It always starts so innocently.



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physicians to go around. "Doctors can't do it alone; it has to be a team effort," says Thiringer, who has practiced medicine for 47 years. "We really need a lot more trained nonphysician providers to meet the health-care demands we'll be seeing." Patients will also need to be involved in their own care, he says.

Tuality Healthcare prefers to hire Pacific University students who have become familiar with Tuality in their clinical rotations, says Linda Budan, R.N., Ph.D., who is the manager of clinical education for Tuality Healthcare. "It makes sense to hire out of that pool. As the economy picks up, we're going to prioritize students we've taken a good look at and who know our programs."

Ann Barr, vice provost and executive dean of the College of Health Professions, says the college "really values our industry partnerships. They help us stay grounded in the practicality of practice, and that enables us to better prepare our students to compete and succeed."

Portland Community College Members of Oregon's bioscience industry approached PCC for help in 2008 when they were having trouble finding qualified

employees. Within seven months, the school had established a two-track program: a 13-credit certificate in bioscience for students seeking entry-level skills and a two-year associate of applied science degree for students looking for more in-depth training.

Students earning a certificate are trained in areas such as pipetting, solution preparation, microbiology basics and lab safety. Degree earners not only learn those basics, but are also trained in techniques such as protein purification and cell culture.

"The college has the ability to react quickly in an industry that evolves rapidly," says Dennis McNannay, executive director of the Oregon Bioscience Association, a nonprofit industry trade association. "In a short amount of time, PCC can be turning out graduates with a different focus if the industry needs that," says McNannay, who also serves on PCC's advisory board.

For instance, when a local bioscience company told PCC it needed workers with the skills to fill and package medical vials, the college collaborated with the company and other industry members to create a new curriculum that was up and running in just six months.

Josephine Pino, chairwoman of the college's bioscience-technology program, says she regularly consults with advisers from local bioscience companies to keep the program tightly focused on the \$4 billion-plus industry's needs and to make sure that students get the necessary hands-on experience.

Students in the program are often coming onto a college campus for the first time, after a career in other fields, she says. Getting them into science labs rather than lecture halls is the best way to prepare them for their new careers.

"What we do is develop the actual skills that are needed on the job," Pino says. "Our lab courses are not a typical lecture-lab setup. It's the opposite. We teach our skills in a lab environment that's like a workspace."

Recent associate-degree graduate Kristi Smith, who now works as a laboratory technician for Immunology Consultants Laboratory—a Newberg, Oregon-based manufacturer of products such as antibodies and immunoassays—says she easily transitioned from the classroom to the workplace. "The lab techniques we learned in the classes—I use all of them in my job," says Smith, who purifies antibodies and works in quality assurance.

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Continued from page 27

Portland State University

This fall, PSU will begin offering a master's degree in real estate development (MRED), featuring classes such as real estate finance, public policy and project development. The school will join the University of Washington as one of only two Northwest universities offering this type of advanced real estate degree.

The long-term trend for real estate throughout Portland and the state of Oregon is positive, and the need for well-trained professionals will continue as the economy grows, says Gerard Mildner, director of the university's Center for Real Estate, a partnership of PSU's School of Business Administration and School of Urban Studies and Planning.

The center was founded in 2004 after Mildner, then a professor in the School of Urban Studies and Planning, surveyed the local commercial-real estate community about its needs. "Basically," he says, "I did a whole bunch of one-on-one interviews, asking, 'What kind of education would make sense?'"

The new master's degree complements an existing bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis on real estate finance, and a graduate certificate in real estate development, which can be earned in 29 credit hours, or about nine to 12 months.

Both certificate- and degree-pursuing students gain practical experience by working on projects for local property owners, such as envisioning uses for a multiblock site near Portland's Lloyd Center shopping mall in the city's Lloyd District. Students solicit information from the property owner, city planners and industry consultants, then develop a detailed proposal for the site.

Mark Fisher, vice president and managing director of StanCorp Mortgage Investors LLC, a Portland-area commercial-real estate finance division of The Standard (StanCorp Financial Group), has hired six PSU graduates in recent years. "It's always a benefit if you can find a steady source of qualified applicants," says Fisher, who serves on the Center for Real Estate's advisory board. "We find them to be extremely well prepared. They're fluent in the nomenclature of commercial real estate, technically skilled—and they're more focused and ambitious. They understand where they want to go; they've made a commitment to get ready; and they are. To us it is absolutely a benefit."

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The Oregon Executive MBA program at the University of Oregon covers areas ranging from management to finance. Next year the program will begin offering graduate-level certificates in specific areas of competency to meet the needs of students who don't want or need to pursue the entire program.

Willamette University

Holly Meyer, environmental programs manager at NW Natural—a Portland-based natural-gas utility that serves more than 670,000 customers in Oregon and southwestern Washington—never envisioned herself standing up at an annual employee meeting to talk about composting. But this past November—just months after she completed Willamette University's Sustainable Enterprise Certificate program and transitioned to the environmental programs job after several years as NW Natural's accounting controls and procedures manager—she was using her classroom experience to promote greener practices at her workplace.

The Sustainable Enterprise Certificate program looks holistically at the long-term impact a public- or private-sector organization's practices have on the well-being of its employees and on the communities in which it operates, says Darcy Winslow, who directs the program for the university's Atkinson Graduate School of Management.

Students are typically working professionals whose organizations support their participation as they earn the certificate via classroom and Internet sessions over the course of about three months. Sustainability is a topic of widespread interest in a city that has frequently been named one of the nation's most sustainable and whose government annually gives awards to large, medium, small and very-small local businesses deemed to be demonstrating excellence in sustainable practices.

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Rather than merely learning how to develop a company recycling program, the Sustainable Enterprise Certificate students learn how to incorporate sustainability into their organization's strategic plan. "This is about creating a sustainable society that can thrive at the expense of none," Winslow says, adding that sustainability includes maintaining the financial health of the company or organization. "If you compromise the financial side, it's not sustainable."

Winslow is a former Nike executive who spent more than 20 years working to integrate sustainability into each business unit she ran at the sportswear giant. She left in 2008 to form her own company, DSW (Designs for a Sustainable World) Collective, a consulting firm that advises companies and organizations on how to create sustainable enterprises.

Meyer says the certificate program has given her "a new lens for looking at problems and solutions." One concept she now uses is setting a "North Star goal"—a goal that may not be immediately attainable, but that can guide long-term efforts. For instance, when she presented her composting idea to employees, she explained that her North Star goal for NW Natural was to have zero waste leaving the headquarters building within five years. While that goal might be challenging to reach, she acknowledges, it can help guide company efforts to recycle and compost in the present.

"Employees have gotten pretty excited about it," Meyer says. "When we rolled out the composting program, people started looking beyond composting to the whole waste issue—things like the packaging waste and cost of having individual creamers in the break room, and they started going to the purchasing department and saying, 'We can't have this.' Instead of a small group that's working on sustainability, a lot of people really got the idea and acted on their own. So that's been very successful."



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PROGRAMS RANGING from the Sustainability Enterprise Certificate to the Oregon Executive MBA are helping many Portland-area companies be more successful, as they benefit from the performance of employees, and even owners, who have acquired valuable new skills. Thanks to education designed to meet the needs of local industries, Portland-area students are gaining in the classroom the knowledge they need to do well in work settings such as offices, healthcare facilities, bioscience labs and boardrooms. ■

Writer Melissa Steineger lives in Portland.