

TAKING ACTION

The Office of
Institutional Diversity

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Oregon State
University



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GREETINGS,

Welcome to the Spring 2023 issue of Taking Action, the biannual magazine from the Office of Institutional Diversity at Oregon State University. I'm proud to say this is Issue No. 10, which is an exciting milestone. We're excited to continue telling stories about the incredible work of OSU faculty, staff, students, alumni and community partners. I encourage you to visit the [Taking Action website](#) to see stories we've featured over the last five years.



Strong leadership makes change possible, and I'm thrilled Oregon State has a champion for inclusive excellence in our new president, Jayathi Y. Murthy. President Murthy is committed to improving access to higher education for all learners and advancing diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the university. This issue features an interview with President Murthy, highlighting her journey through higher education and to leadership as OSU's first president who is a woman of color.

New equity initiatives featured in this issue include the Bureau of Land Management Pacific Northwest Tribal Forest Restoration and Native Seed project in the College of Forestry, led by Cristina Eisenberg and her team in collaboration with five Oregon Tribal nations.

You will also learn more about the commitment by the OSU Extension Service to expand language access and equity through a newly launched bilingual website, a multilingual library, as well as guidance for translations, transcriptions and impromptu interpretation services.

Outstanding OSU students and alumni continue to make change. This issue of Taking Action includes profiles of:

- Saba Moallem, a computer science student who advocates for freedom and equality in Iran, where her parents escaped persecution in the 1980s. Inspired by her grandmother, she would like to use artificial intelligence in medical applications to reduce patient risk during procedures.
- Aparna Shrivastava, a 2011 alumna working in the Biden administration for the

Development Finance Corporation. As the DFC's deputy chief climate officer, she focuses on funding climate change adaptation and resilience projects in the developing world.

- A 2004 OSU alumna, Temmecha Turner, who joined OID in fall 2022 as the director of community diversity relations. She advances Oregon State's values and mission by building and sustaining strong, collaborative relationships with diverse communities, organizations, alumni and other community partners throughout Oregon, particularly in the Portland metro area where she is based.

One of the projects Turner is leading is Access OSU, a partnership between the Office of Institutional Diversity, the Division of Student Affairs, Enrollment Management and the Division of Extension and Engagement. Access OSU will bring together OSU programs and partner with community-based organizations to create pathways to higher education for students and families from Black and African American, Indigenous, Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Latinx communities in the Portland area. Through Access

OSU, the university will form long-lasting relationships that extend from elementary school through higher education. We look forward to celebrating the launch of the program at the OSU Portland Center later this year.

Finally, as the academic year races to the finish line, we invite you to join the Office of Institutional Diversity at our annual State of Diversity event, a celebration of students, faculty, staff and community partners who are advancing inclusive excellence through innovative teaching, research and engagement efforts. Please join us at this in-person event on Tuesday, May 30, from noon to 1 p.m., or online at beav.es/OSUStateOfDiversity.

Thank you for your continuing support and amazing efforts.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Vignos, J.D.
Vice President and
Chief Diversity Officer

Living the value of inclusion: OSU PRESIDENT JAYATHI Y. MURTHY BRINGS LIFE EXPERIENCE TO LEADERSHIP.



The women’s movement for equality was still very new in India when [Jayathi Y. Murthy](#) started college in the 1970s. Today, as Oregon State University’s 16th president, she brings a [career-long focus](#) on inclusivity and access to her role as the first woman of color to lead the university.

Encouraged by her mother to try new things, Murthy entered the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur at age

16. She was one of two women in an engineering class of 250 men, and one of just 10 women undergraduates at IIT.

“We were extremely early in the game, and we ourselves didn’t understand what it meant to take on this thing,” she said. “That first year was actually quite tough.”

Her first year in college was challenging in several ways. Academics

were rigorous, and there was stiff competition among students regardless of gender. Culturally, men and women didn’t mix in India — especially back then — and Murthy said that neither the men nor the women in her cohort were used to talking with each other, much less working together on projects or as lab partners. She had to understand the situation on her own terms, and “it took courage and toughness to navigate,” she said.

Things improved during her second and third years as Murthy found a group of like-minded people. She also recognized that “this was a huge opportunity because I was surrounded by very talented young people and terrifically talented faculty. The world really opened up to me in this place.”

CONNECTIONS WITH STUDENTS GO BOTH WAYS

As president, Murthy wants the world to open up for students at Oregon State. She acknowledges that OSU students of color may not see many people on campus who look like them. “They need to know they matter, their history matters, and their concerns matter,” Murthy said.

She said she wants students and employees to know that Oregon State’s seven cultural centers in Corvallis and other universitywide resources, programs and events are supported by OSU leaders.

In addition, Murthy encourages students to do what she did: find support in their own groups, yes, but also look beyond them to find friendships and make connections. “I tried to find belonging in the larger community and through relationships with people different for myself,” she said. “I found that exciting, and I found it to be an avenue for growth.”

Despite her full calendar as president, Murthy’s approach to the job is to make sure she’s actively engaged in activities throughout the university, whether it’s handing out snacks during finals week, joining a book discussion in an Honors College class or visiting OSU-Cascades, the Hatfield Marine Science Center, the OSU Portland Center, as well as OSU Extension centers and experiment stations across Oregon.

Connection with students is a two-way process for Murthy. “It’s not just that I want to make myself available to students,” she said. “I want the energy of students to be available to me. It’s the thing that keeps me going.”

TAKING CONCRETE STEPS TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY, STUDENT SUCCESS

Murthy knows that Oregon State is “not where we want to be yet” in terms of diversity, equity and inclusion. Nor, she said, is any university. “But as an engineer, I think of concrete things we can do.”

She has taken such steps before. As the first woman dean at UCLA’s engineering school, Murthy led an effort to establish a Women in Engineering program as well as a collaboration with the Los Angeles Unified School District to build interest in engineering careers among K-12

Black and Latinx students. At the University of Texas at Austin, where only 18% of the incoming class of mechanical engineering students were women, Murthy launched a program — 35 in 5 — to increase the number of women to 35% in five years. The name choice was deliberate.

“Putting a number down made us all jump and gave us a target,” Murthy said. “It said, ‘We’re going to do this.’”

At Oregon State, Murthy is focused on supporting student success and advancing retention and graduation rates.

OSU’s current overall six-year graduation rate is about 68%, which is about average for public universities across the U.S. But that also means more than 30% of students are not graduating, and “that’s not acceptable,” she said. Graduation rates are also much lower for students from some communities of color.

“It’s going to take hard work to make these numbers move,” Murthy said, Oregon State’s next strategic plan will have targets, metrics and reporting structures to make sure there is follow-through. This includes continued action plans through the [President and Provost’s Leadership Council for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#), as well as presidential commissions on the [status of women](#), [Indigenous affairs](#) and the [status of Black faculty and staff affairs](#).

As an engineer, Murthy is used to working with data and numbers, but she knows that the human side of student success is every bit as important. “Students have to feel like they belong and that the campus supports them,” she said. Resources

for mental health and opportunities to build professional skills through internships and research experiences are also priorities.

And then there is the need to address the cost of education. “We are an expensive place for students,” Murthy said, pointing out that [Oregon ranks 45th](#) in the nation for funding per student at public universities, shifting the burden onto students and families. “Creating financial support pathways for students is going to be another big part of making them successful.”

DEDICATED TO INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

Seven months into her tenure as Oregon State’s 16th president, Murthy has found “there’s an enormous willingness to take these issues head-on, a gut-level commitment to DEI and inclusive excellence. Culturally we are committed,” she said.

Murthy said the Office of Institutional Diversity, colleges, divisions and many OSU units have made significant progress. She said she wants to see more people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community and women in STEM fields, both among students and among faculty and staff. “It falls to us to stand in support of these communities, to make sure they understand that they are safe, wanted and cherished on our campus,” Murthy said.

“I am deeply committed to contributing to inclusive excellence and success for all students and learners,” Murthy said when her appointment was announced in 2022. And as president, she is living up to that promise.



Temmecha Turner helps students discover their spark — and transform their future.

Temmecha Turner, '04, is an Oregon State alumna with years of experience working one-on-one with students and families from historically underserved communities on engagement and advocacy. She joined the Office of Institutional Diversity in October 2022 as director of community diversity relations. She also serves on the leadership council of the Black Alumni and Friends Network for the OSU Alumni Association, focusing on engagement and recruitment.

Q What do you hope to accomplish as director of community diversity relations?

A Through this role, I will develop relationships with our community partners and attend and/or host and sponsor community engagement events like My People's Market and The Skanner MLK Breakfast. I hope to collaborate with our partners to create culturally responsive programming and opportunities that support our students and families. The goal of this programming is to address the barriers that students from historically underrepresented backgrounds face and provide resources and support that will give them a sense of belonging.

Q Can you describe your previous work in student advocacy?

A I began at an alternative school setting in Portland called Open Campus (formerly known as Open Meadows), where I helped African and African American students navigate through high school, in addition to serving as a liaison between school and home. I conducted home visits and helped students navigate through some of the challenges they were facing. Through Self Enhancement Inc., I also hosted a middle school girls' group at the César Chávez School to talk about identities, cultural awareness, self-love, self-awareness and more — to help them find their spark. Following that, I worked for Friends of the Children for nine years as a professional mentor, developing strategies to support students early in their academic journeys. This included getting parent concerns to the right place to help with subjects where students were struggling, along with enrichment activities in the community that provided students with a well-rounded learning experience. I

also worked as a student engagement coach for Portland Public Schools where I supported building systems for student success and supporting the mental health of students through a racial equity lens. The goal of this program was to increase support and student engagement for historically underserved populations, as well as increase graduation rates.

Q What would you say contributes most to student success?

A By letting them know the definition of success starts with tapping into their own greatness rather than meeting someone else's milestone or timeline, they become more empowered and confident. It's never too late to learn, and it's never too late to accomplish a goal. Sometimes it just takes a little more time and discipline. And if we can help families navigate the education system — which hasn't always been accessible due to language barriers, income restrictions or limited family support — we can get closer to reaching education equity.

Q What can Oregon State do to better support students from historically underserved areas?

A We want students to thrive at our school and have a safe emotional space and sense of belonging. Unfortunately, students from historically underserved areas haven't had equal access to the same opportunities as their white counterparts. For example, white students grow up going to OSU football games, visiting campus and can envision their future here. We want the same for historically underrepresented students — especially those who are first-generation college students. They should have the opportunity to go into a career after college that will help

push through the glass ceiling — as many have families who come from generational poverty. And we can do that by helping students develop a network and find resources and connections that can help them land the job they want.

Q How did your experience getting to Oregon State shape the changes you want to make for future students?

A I grew up in a low-income neighborhood called the Columbia Villa in Portland. In my childhood, I don't remember Oregon State being an option for me. I did have the opportunity to prepare for college through the Upward Bound program and a scholarship from Casey Family Programs. But I had to navigate through all of it on my own. It made me realize the importance of advocacy, support, navigation, negotiation and engagement for students through a culturally responsive lens. Being able to direct them toward opportunities is one thing but helping them build pathways in uncharted waters before and throughout their college career will add intrinsic value to their educational journey.

The more we can collectively create a universal design model of inclusivity that focuses on cultural affirming programs, increase resources, identify and eliminate barriers for students, we will be able to show our commitment to educational equity and what it means to have accessibility with intentionality.

I hope that by telling my story, it will one day empower the next student to focus on their goals and become change agents within society.



Despite knowing nobody in Washington, D.C., Aparna Shrivastava's qualifications and persistence helped her land a job in the Biden administration.

WHEN YOU HAVE THE POWER TO DO GOOD, USE IT.

It was after 2 a.m. in London, but Aparna Shrivastava, '11, stayed up to watch Joe Biden and Kamala Harris deliver their victory speeches from Delaware after the 2020 presidential election was called on Nov. 7. Hearing both talk about how addressing climate change would be integral to their agenda, she decided she had to find a way to get a job in the new administration.

A year later, Shrivastava represented the United States at the COP26 summit in Glasgow, Scotland, as the first Deputy Chief Climate Officer for the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. The DFC, which partners with the private sector to finance projects in the developing world, announced nearly \$900 million in funding at the summit for projects aimed at mitigating and adapting to climate change and building more resilient infrastructure. They include biodiversity protection zones in Belize, energy-efficient public lighting in Rio de Janeiro and electric motorcycles in Rwanda and Kenya.

Shrivastava grew up in the Portland suburb of Tigard, the daughter of

first-generation Indian immigrants. After earning her degree in mechanical engineering from Oregon State, she spent more than a decade in sustainable development and humanitarian work in Africa, Central America and Asia. At the DFC, she focuses on integrating climate change projects into at least a third of the \$6 billion the agency currently invests each year in global development.

Shrivastava came to focus on climate change after seeing "the potential unraveling that the climate crisis either already was doing or was definitely going to do to decades of hard-earned development gains in water access, public health, infrastructure and agriculture," she said. "I don't think you can work on international development issues right now without addressing the climate crisis."

Shrivastava is also motivated by international development on climate as a driver for global justice, equity and economic opportunity. "Historically marginalized populations are disproportionately bearing the impacts of climate change around the world," she wrote in a DFC blog post.

She believes investing in climate-smart infrastructure represents a "once-in-a-generation" opportunity for job creation, healthier communities and dismantling racial inequities.

Determination is how Shrivastava came to work in the Biden administration, despite knowing nobody in Washington, D.C. Her professional contacts were all international, so she looked for who in her networks knew people in the capital and sent several cold-call emails to appointees who were covered in the news. Her sister, who had worked in Washington before, guided her through how the appointment process works. And after the call came, she compiled "about 36 pages of notes" to prepare for the interview. It took about a month before her appointment was announced, which was "very excruciating in terms of refreshing my email inbox," she said.

When Shrivastava was a student at Oregon State, she recognized that "as engineers, we have so much power to do good in the world." She encourages current students to follow the issues they care about. "Don't be afraid to admit what you don't know and try to learn. Keep at it," she said.

She has followed her own advice. After graduation, Shrivastava knew she wanted to work in international development. Over her career, she has worked at the community level to understand what the needs are and at the system level to make change happen. "I was really interested in making an impact," she said.

Aparna Shrivastava has done more than achieve her goal. Every day, she works to exceed it.

¡BIENVENIDO AL OSU EXTENSION SERVICE! Ensuring equity for non-English speakers.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires all federally funded programs to provide meaningful language access to people with limited English proficiency. Going beyond this baseline, the OSU Extension Service is implementing a comprehensive [Language Access Plan](#). It ensures LEP populations can access programs, activities and services, and it makes serving these communities more efficient for Extension operations statewide.

Developed in part through bilingual listening sessions with staff across Oregon, the plan includes:

- Transport, an online portal to submit documents for translation or get a price quote to help with planning. Extension units are expected to budget for language access costs.
- [Language Line Professional Interpreting Services](#), available to OSU Extension employees for on-demand, over-the-phone or scheduled on-site interpretation. Phone interpreters are available for virtually all languages spoken in Oregon.
- A [Spanish version of the Extension website](#), along with a [Translated Document Library](#).

"It's our mission in Extension, and also for Oregon State University, to be inclusive, and that includes people who speak other languages," said Ana

Fonseca, OSU Extension's director of diversity, equity and inclusion. "It's the law to have equitable communication to multilingual communities, and it's also the right thing to do."

Fonseca explains that the federal government uses a four-factor analysis to ensure language accessibility, which can be used as a needs assessment:

1. Number or portion of LEP persons in a target or eligible population.
2. Frequency of contact the organization's programs have with LEP audiences.
3. Nature and importance of the program or activity.
4. Organizational resources available to implement language access services.

The Language Access Plan centralizes information so that all Extension offices and programs in Oregon can have clear guidance, tools and resources that support what they need to do in their local or program context, Fonseca said.

The Spanish Extension website went live in summer 2022, following two years of research, planning and web development.

"This was a significant undertaking from a web development perspective because we wanted to do more than the minimum. We weren't just adding



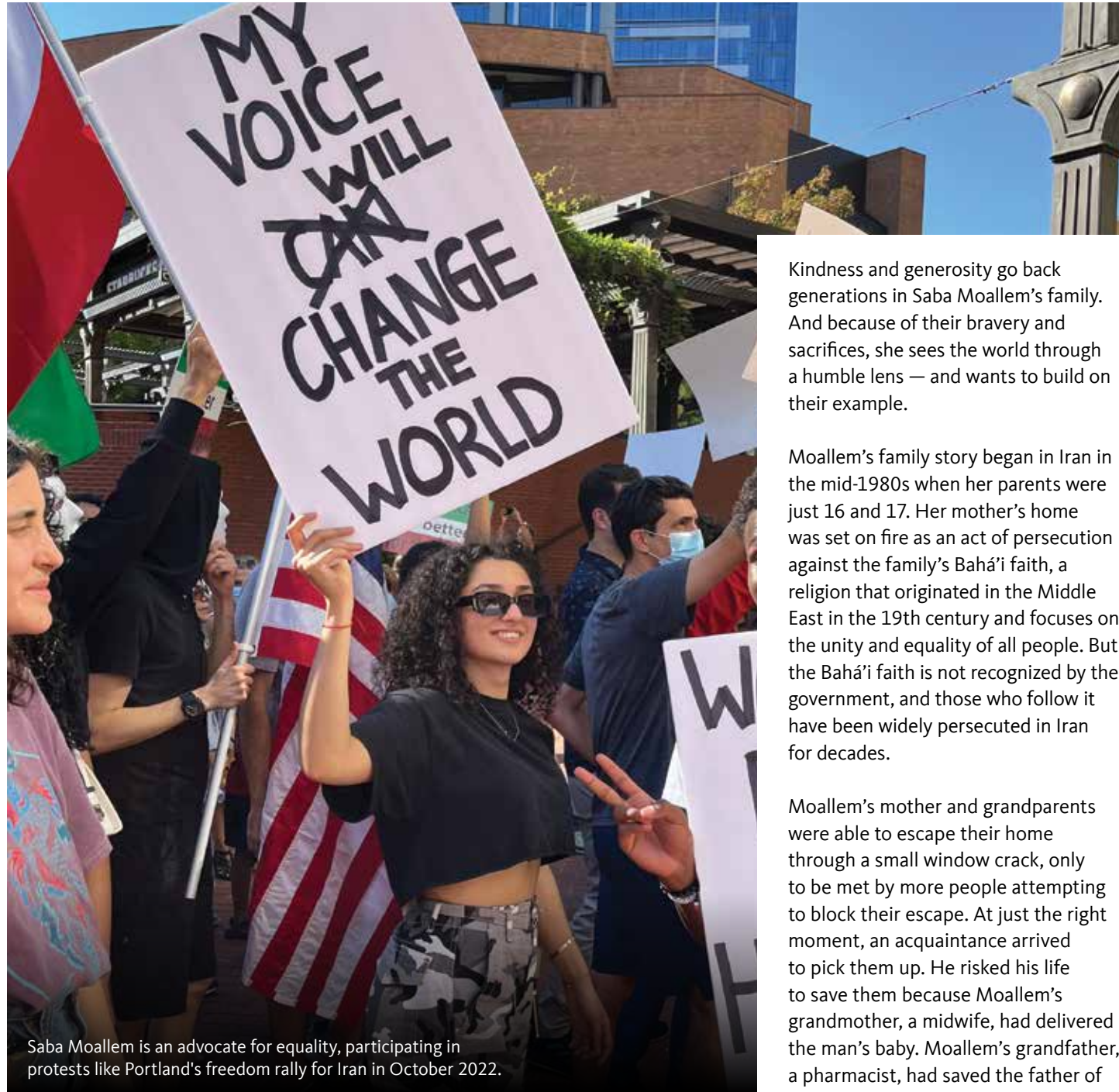
a widget like Google Translate," said Jennifer Alexander, director of Extension communications. "We reviewed and custom-translated critical content. We made sure the homepage was accurate and menu labels were correct."

OSU Extension also started a Spanish-language Facebook account in fall 2022. Across Extension, printed materials are created or translated as needed for intended populations. For example, Extension's nutrition education program has four cultural workgroups — African Heritage, Indigenous Peoples, Latinx and Pasifika — to make sure materials are linguistically correct and culturally relevant.

Alexander said Extension's Language Access Plan supports Oregon State's DEI strategies.

"Because we work so closely with communities across the state, sometimes we can advise the university on ways to make other efforts inclusive and welcoming."

SHE DOESN'T JUST DREAM OF CREATING A BETTER WORLD. She takes action.



Kindness and generosity go back generations in Saba Moallem's family. And because of their bravery and sacrifices, she sees the world through a humble lens — and wants to build on their example.

Moallem's family story began in Iran in the mid-1980s when her parents were just 16 and 17. Her mother's home was set on fire as an act of persecution against the family's Bahá'í faith, a religion that originated in the Middle East in the 19th century and focuses on the unity and equality of all people. But the Bahá'í faith is not recognized by the government, and those who follow it have been widely persecuted in Iran for decades.

Moallem's mother and grandparents were able to escape their home through a small window crack, only to be met by more people attempting to block their escape. At just the right moment, an acquaintance arrived to pick them up. He risked his life to save them because Moallem's grandmother, a midwife, had delivered the man's baby. Moallem's grandfather, a pharmacist, had saved the father of

Saba Moallem is an advocate for equality, participating in protests like Portland's freedom rally for Iran in October 2022.

the man by providing medication they couldn't otherwise afford.

Following their rescue, Moallem's mother and father met by chance — when their families gathered together to plan their final escape from Iran. Her father was asked to look after her mother as they joined a group of fellow teenagers on a harrowing journey to the United States, with nothing but a small bag of almonds and a few gold coins that were sewn into her mother's skirt. They arrived in the U.S. in 1989 and married in 1992.

Because her parents went through so much to get to America and build a new life for their family, Moallem's drive to give back is incredibly strong. A fourth-year computer science student in the College of Engineering, she wants to develop artificial intelligence applications for medical procedures, a way to reduce patient risks and increase survival rates and a field where she is looking forward to gaining real-world experience.

Moallem's career goal is inspired by her relationship with her maternal grandmother, who left Iran in 1995 and joined the family in Oregon. She got sick and was considered too high-risk to undergo the procedure she needed. But AI could help reduce some patient risks — by allowing doctors to program a robot to perform full surgical procedures or controlling and moving the robot themselves throughout the surgery. This reduces potential human errors like the slightest shake of a hand.

"I know I'm here on this Earth to help other people," Moallem said. "If I can do that with my work — and help people benefit from life-changing procedures — I will 110% do it."

Moallem pays it forward in other ways, too. She is the social media chair for the student group Yes, I Am, which aims to help students come out of their comfort zone and reach their potential. With the help of the group's founder, she created an annual event called Visionary, an art exhibition for students to showcase their work, build their confidence and see themselves as leaders. In addition, Moallem helps with several events in the Black Cultural Center and for the National Pan-Hellenic Council, also known as the Divine Nine. She is a photographer in her spare time and often captures portraits and event photos for both groups. Moallem said having the opportunity to participate in groups like these has helped her embrace her culture even more.

"Knowing a lot of different people of color and hearing their life experiences — even though they are not exactly the same — makes it easier to connect on those deeper levels than I had before," she said.

Looking ahead, Moallem has many goals: land her dream job, grow her photography business and see all her family members together again — especially those still living in Iran. She also wants to help her parents visit Iran, a place they haven't been able to return to for more than 30 years.

"Each journey I go on is all for them — to show them I'm grateful," she said. "I will do the best I can to bring a better future for my family and millions of other families around the world."

It's a journey that's already well underway.



TURNING THE LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT INTO POSITIVE ACTION.

Humility, respect elevates collaboration with Tribal nations.



When College of Forestry Associate Dean Cristina Eisenberg reflects on college and university efforts to acknowledge the Indigenous people who were forcibly removed from their traditional homelands, especially those whose land was seized to fund and site land grant universities, she sees a work in progress.

Eisenberg, whose heritage is Latinx and mixed Native American from the Rarámuri and Western Apache Tribes, wants to take the land acknowledgment beyond a statement made at Oregon State gatherings or a footnote on websites and emails. The associate dean of inclusive excellence in the College of Forestry and Maybelle Clark Macdonald director of Tribal initiatives, Eisenberg is leading efforts to honor Tribal sovereignty while working with Tribes to address natural resources issues and find pathways that lead to equity and inclusion for Indigenous people.

Eisenberg is the lead principal investigator for the [Pacific Northwest Tribal Forest Restoration and Native Seed Project](#), a three-year, \$5-million grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior. Researchers are using [Traditional Ecological Knowledge](#) practiced by Tribal nations in Southwest Oregon to assess soil processes, seed banks, forest structures and wildlife habitats to help make forests on Bureau of Land Management lands in the region more resilient to climate change.

Eisenberg and her Oregon-focused research team are developing partnerships with five sovereign Tribes in the state: the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Coquille Indian Tribe and the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

Eisenberg believes partnering with Tribal nations is one way to make land acknowledgment an active process. But it requires bringing the idea of a potential collaboration to the Tribes as early as possible and approaching them with cultural humility. If Tribes want to participate, the next step is to work together to create a Memorandum of Understanding, which is a binding, enforceable contract.

Cultural humility means first acknowledging the deep trauma Tribes have suffered from the theft of their lands. It recognizes the differences between cultures, including among Tribal nations. “Those differences need to be not just honored, but totally respected,” Eisenberg said. “You do things on a Tribal nation’s terms.”

One of those terms, which is a cornerstone of Indigenous values, is reciprocity. “Whatever you take from a system, you give back at least what you take, and you only take what you need,” she said.

Other terms include incorporating Tribal priorities into research, priorities that may vary among the Tribes involved. Western researchers are expected to work not only with the Tribes’ natural resources experts but with all Tribal members, including elders and children. Tribal members are invited to co-author manuscripts and are acknowledged in publications. Data that is collected on Tribal lands

belong to the Tribes, and information on culturally significant plants must be protected through a Data Sharing Agreement and not made publicly available without the Tribes’ permission. Finally, much of the project’s funding must go directly into Tribal communities by supporting Tribal youth, providing jobs and purchasing goods and services.

Reciprocity benefits university researchers through Traditional Ecological Knowledge. Eisenberg describes TEK as “this deep wellspring of wisdom that is thousands of years old. It is science. It is humans interacting with nature and the worldview of Indigenous people who are embedded in nature.”

This is a different perspective compared to Western science, which has long held that “humans can control nature,” Eisenberg said. “And today, we know that doesn’t work. Our relationship with the natural world is broken. Western science is not enough to fix it.”

TEK is increasingly seen as a valuable resource for addressing natural resource issues, so much so that the Biden administration has issued a memorandum that commits to incorporating TEK into federal scientific and policy processes.

Throughout her career, Eisenberg has found Tribal nations successfully combine TEK with modern technology and scientific methods, augmenting their reciprocal relationship with the natural world.

“I’m a very rigorously trained Western scientist,” she said. “Indigenous people love Western science. But we see it as a tool. It’s not the way we look at the world.”

Eisenberg said both BLM leadership and Tribal partners have been happy with how this collaboration is progressing.

“The BLM is getting data from federally owned lands that will help improve forest landscapes so that they are much more resilient to climate change,” she said. “The Tribes are getting empowerment, capacity and similar benefits to their lands, although most Tribal lands are in better condition. It’s a win-win situation.”

For Tribal nations. For university researchers. And for the natural world.



Making the land acknowledgment personal

Cristina Eisenberg believes making a land acknowledgment personal makes it more meaningful. Using Oregon

State’s official land acknowledgment as a basis, she added her own thoughts and commitments. Then she had her draft peer-reviewed — by Indigenous leaders within and outside the university, College of Forestry Dean Tom DeLuca, non-Indigenous colleagues and students. After gathering feedback, she sent out a revised version for another round of review, a process meant to be as respectful as possible.

Eisenberg has also written a positionality statement that is on her faculty [website](#). This emerging practice augments the description of a scholar’s research interests to include their social positions, as well as the identities that shape their worldview and influence how they approach their work.

“It says, ‘This is who I am. And this is how who I am informs what I do.’”

CRISTINA EISENBERG’S LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT
“I am committed to taking people and the institutions with whom I work beyond the land acknowledgment to find ways to support and empower Native Americans and their communities. I am mindful of the truth that for thousands of years the Marys River, or Ampinefu, Band of the Kalapuya have been in relationship with the land where Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon, now sits, and I now live and work. I acknowledge that they were forcibly removed to reservations in Western Oregon and that their living descendants are part of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians. I value the long and deep interactions they have with the land and aspire to find ways to honor and manifest that value in my work and life.”

FACILITATING LASTING CHANGE BEGINS WITH GREAT LEADERS.

Five Oregon State University community members received legacy awards at the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. commemoration for their progressive, inclusive and inspirational work. Read on to learn more about their many accomplishments:

OSCAR HUMBERTO MONTEMAYOR AWARD

Nya Buckner

Oregon State graduate student Nya Buckner is kind, empathetic and dedicated to lifting up those around her. As chief of staff for Associated Students of Oregon State University, she oversees more than 15 staff, approves expenditures, connects with community partners, plans ASOSU events and programs and advocates for underrepresented student groups. Buckner was also co-founder and president of Dam Change, a campaign to empower student-athletes from historically underserved communities and address systemic racism in the U.S. through awareness, education, engagement and action.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ALUMNI LEGACY AWARD

Keith Dempsey, '93, M.S. '96, Ph.D. '10

Keith Dempsey has dedicated his career and personal life to empowering African Americans throughout Oregon. He has worked as a therapist and clinical social worker in Portland and has presented nationally on issues of diversity and racial trauma. At Oregon State, Dempsey was instrumental in the development of the Black Alumni and Friends Network, was the first major donor to the Black Student Access and Success program and was the first Black member of the OSU Alumni Association Board of Directors.

FRANCES DANCY HOOKS AWARD

Janet Nishihara

As executive director of the Educational Opportunities Program, Janet Nishihara is a compassionate educator and mentor. She has a diverse group of academic counselors in her unit and supports underrepresented students through grant writing and programs like the College Assistance Migrant Program and Student Support Services. She is a faculty advisor for the Asian and Pacific Cultural Center, the Association of Faculty and Staff for the Advancement of People of Color and the Asian Pacific American Student Union. Nishihara has also written curriculum for the Difference, Power and Discrimination Academy, which helps educators cover topics like racism, classism, xenophobia and sexism.

Dana Sanchez

An associate professor in the College of Agricultural Sciences, Dana Sanchez isn't afraid to start hard conversations about oppression and offer solutions to address it. Sanchez also created her department's Vanguarding an Inclusive Ecological Workforce program, which provides underrepresented students in ecology programs with skills and guidance to help them get into graduate school. In addition, she is continuously looking to recruit new students by attending the SACNAS conference, the largest diversity event in the U.S. that focuses on STEM education.

PHYLLIS S. LEE AWARD

Dorian Smith

Director of Dr. Lawrence Griggs Office of Black and Indigenous Student Success, Dorian Smith encourages Black students in K-12 schools to see themselves at Oregon State at an early age. As a mentor for the Project Harvest program — a pre-college partnership between Oregon State and Portland Public Schools serving middle and high school students — he shares insights about attending college. Smith also created a summer camp for African American middle school students to expose them to STEM-related careers. As coordinator of OSU's Black Student Access and Success Initiative, Smith has recruited students across the Pacific Northwest, developed the Black Student Access and Success Strategic Plan and more.

SKANNER SCHOLARSHIP

Mathilde Fayette

Mathilde Fayette of Riverdale High School in Lake Oswego was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship to Oregon State from the Skanner Foundation at its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast in Portland. Scholarships were awarded to students who have completed community service hours, submitted an essay regarding improving the school system for underrepresented communities and maintained a 2.5 GPA.



HIGHER EDUCATION CREATES PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS.

Access OSU opens doors to higher education.

Students from minoritized communities frequently do not receive the same access to post-secondary educational opportunities and higher education often feels out of reach. Access OSU is working to change this by creating culturally responsive pathways to higher education where students and their families see college as not only option, but a reachable destination.

A new Oregon State University partnership between the Division of Extension and Engagement, the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Institutional Diversity and Enrollment Management, Access OSU focuses on students and families from Black and African American, Indigenous, Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Latinx communities in the Portland area to build relationships to create seamless transitions from elementary school through entrance into a community college or university and career opportunities beyond.

Working closely with community-based organizations and families, Access OSU plans to align the many programs

OSU already offers — from 4-H to Pre-College Programs to academic support through the Educational Opportunities Programs — to provide holistic, culturally relevant and responsive support. This collaboration will enable new outreach events like workshops with community partners to help families learn about resources to address common barriers to accessing education like paying for college and understanding the application process, as well as experiences for students focused on hands-on exploration of degree options and career interests and engaging with campus life. By creating trust and providing spaces for conversation, students and their parents can get their questions answered early on.

“Opportunities like these will also help to relieve the stress and anxiety often associated with applying for college by providing support,” said Temmecha Turner, director of community diversity relations in the Office of Institutional Diversity and a member of the Access OSU team.

As part of its focus on strengthening relationships with community partners, other institutions of higher education, school districts and businesses, Access OSU seeks to shift the trajectory for students and families by addressing long-standing barriers to post-secondary education for minoritized communities that emerge early in a student's journey. According to Oregon Kids Read, 90% of students who do not earn a high school diploma struggled to read in the third grade. Access OSU will enable collaboration between OSU and local nonprofits and knit together programs already working to build student skills and confidence at an early age.

Access OSU will also improve students' educational experience by working closely with community members on the ground to ensure programming and strategies are responsive to specific community needs. It's essential everyone has a seat at the table — to show students and families that they are seen, valued and heard.



WHEN STUDENTS FIND BELONGING, THEY THRIVE.

CAMP sets the foundation for both.

Fifty years ago, access to higher education was severely lacking for families of migrant workers. In response, the federal government created the College Assistance Migrant Program, commonly known as CAMP, to help first-year migrant students navigate their college experience — financially, socially and academically — and receive support along the way.

Oregon State University's CAMP program began in the 1980s, and one of the main objectives is to remove financial barriers. Each CAMP student automatically receives \$1,800 toward first-year expenses, as well as free tutoring and academic counseling. Students also participate in a social cohort to help build community and connect with other migrant students. In addition, students can apply for the CAMP Scholars Internship Program — an opportunity offered in partnership with University Housing and Dining Services that offers leadership training and hands-on work experience in various places.

CAMP director María Andrade, who has held various roles in the program over the last 17 years, said the sense of belonging that CAMP provides greatly impacts student retention. In addition, more students come back to Oregon

State following graduation or enroll at other universities to begin master's or Ph.D. programs.

Angel Esiquio Ruiz, '19, who participated in CAMP and is now its recruiter and outreach coordinator at Oregon State, said many students face transitional challenges such as homesickness and imposter syndrome — where they doubt their abilities to succeed in this new atmosphere.

"I always try to encourage our students to support one another, to remind them of the support they had back home, and that they can re-create it here at OSU," Esiquio Ruiz said.

Esiquio Ruiz said that's what led him to success — and made him want to give back. After struggling mentally and academically when he first started college, he began making friends in the CAMP program and built connections with the staff. That guidance gave him the confidence and camaraderie he had been missing.

Alexsandra Cortés, '14, who is now CAMP's academic counselor, said she is still close with the friends she made in her cohort nearly 10 years ago. In her current role, she helps students find their path, just like others did for

her. And current Oregon State student Ismael Ochoa, who participated in CAMP's 2022 cohort, said it helped him adjust to an unfamiliar environment.

"Before arriving at OSU, I kept to myself and was not very extroverted," he said. "CAMP brought out that side of me."

CAMP is continuing to find ways to recruit new students, including its summer program, the Oregon Migrant Leadership Institute. It brings high school juniors and seniors to campus for a week to learn about important details such as admission requirements, financial aid and scholarships. It also includes special sessions with representatives from the College of Engineering and College of Agricultural Sciences — to give students a real-life glimpse into those specific fields.

In the future, leaders hope to develop a partnership with local community colleges to give students earlier access to CAMP resources and support.

Esiquio Ruiz said CAMP changed his life for the better. And many others would say the same.



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