Whitney Center for the Arts at Sheridan College

Opening July 2016

The WCA will allow us to:

Serve an additional 150 students in Fine and Performing Arts,

Attract bright, curious, creative students from across the nation,

Host musical performances that could not otherwise be held in Sheridan,

Provide space to create new programs dedicated to the arts,

Feature unique, flexible space for program growth,

Engage the Sheridan community and Wyoming with live student performances,

Provide galleries for graduating students to showcase capstone projects.

“The Whitney Center for the Arts will give us the space and the expanded technologies needed to compete with every institution on a national level.”

– Jason Lanka, Art Faculty
Nestled at the base of the Bighorn Mountains, Sheridan College provides a wide variety of academic offerings, a modern state-of-the-art campus, and a breathtaking location for year-round active lifestyles. SC offers classes and degrees for today’s students while maintaining a personal level of commitment to each individual.

Sheridan College serves nearly 2,000 credit students per year. Our two-year Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Arts (AA), and Associate of Fine Arts (AFA) degrees prepare students to transfer to a four-year college or university. Our one-year Certificates of Completion (CoC) and two-year Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees prepare students to enter the workforce in specific career fields. In addition, we offer skill-focused industry training, professional development classes, and personal enrichment courses.

We are deeply honored by our community’s support, which allows us to continue to provide technologically advanced learning spaces for our students and neighbors. Our Whitney Center for the Arts includes a remodel of approximately 12,000 sq. ft. as well as construction of an additional 48,000 sq. ft. This $20 million project will bring Sheridan’s Fine and Performing Arts curriculum to new heights with the inclusion of a recital and performance space, studios, classrooms and a 422-seat concert hall. In addition, the Mars Agriculture Center elevates and promotes our agricultural education and research. The $8 million project will include a 16,000 sq. ft. building that will provide a cutting-edge space for a variety of disciplines within the Sheridan College Department of Agriculture, including top-notch learning environments and a commodities trading classroom.

We tie our academic priorities to the local economy and community. We maintain a strong commitment to Agriculture programs, Diesel Technology, Welding Technology, and Machine Tool Technology careers. Our Dental Hygiene and Nursing courses are the strongest in our region. With the recently added Thorne-Rider Campus Center and Edward A. Whitney Academic Center for student life and academics, Sheridan College truly has something for every student.

Sheridan College is YOUR community college. Visit us today to learn more about what we can offer you!
Crafting Computer Science

Mark Thoney draws parallel between computer science & architecture

The word "craftsman" generally applies to a worker in a construction-related job — plumber, electrician, bricklayer, and the like. However, for Computer Science instructor Mark Thoney, the 21st Century is giving rise to a new group of craftsmen: front-end developers, web programmers, mobile app developers, and other computer-related jobs.

"Think of building software applications the same way you think of building a home," he says. "The architect comes up with the blueprint, sure, but it's the craftsmen — the men and women pouring concrete, framing walls, laying pipe, putting up siding, and wiring the electric who really build the house."

As Thoney, a longtime computer science professional who began as a Sheridan College instructor in January 2016, sees it, many of the computer jobs of the future will require programming skill sets. That doesn't mean everyone needs to be a computer scientist.

"I've worked in computer science more or less since sixth grade," he recalls. "But I've never really done computer science work. Instead, I have been a craftsman. I utilize existing components and building blocks to develop solutions to business problems."

Thoney believes he and Carol Muirhead, his counterpart at Gillette College, can help students find their niches by focusing on smaller, more specialized jobs. "Not everyone needs to be an architect," he explains, "Take Google maps, for example. The science part is already there, it's already built. But a craftsman can come in and put together very specific applications for businesses or for individuals — applications that utilize the existing science. That field is huge, and it's only getting bigger."

The Computer program at Sheridan College is growing, thanks in large part to a Whitney Benefits grant of $890,686 awarded to the college and Sheridan County School District #2 in March. The support from Whitney Benefits will allow the school district, along with Sheridan College, to align computer programming and computer science programs with the nationally recognized curriculum and teacher development model, Project Lead The Way (PLTW). PLTW will strengthen existing programming classes and provide a tie between high school and college-level programs. Two classrooms on the main SC campus will be equipped to support the program. One room will be for use by high school students; the second will support college students pursuing a degree. The College will also hire an additional instructor who will help provide college-level instruction to area schools, as well as facilitate student advising and transition.

This is all in keeping with Thoney's vision for the future of computer science education in Sheridan County. He believes the connection between the high school and Sheridan College will help funnel students into a high-quality and potentially lucrative program. "There are many career options that require computer training," he notes. "Just about every job nowadays requires some kind of programming. In STEM fields, for example, you're going to get huge piles of data, and you're probably going to have to write code. Our aim is to strengthen the link between our program and what they will be teaching at the high school level, with the ultimate goal of producing the next generation of craftsmen in the computer field."
What’s Art Got to Do with It?

Fine Art opens worlds of opportunity for students

Many people associate community colleges with technical and career-oriented programs such as Machining and Welding Technology. However, at Sheridan College, there is much, much more. The Arts, for example, are very well represented, with majors varying from English and Theater to Music and Fine Art.

The Sheridan College Fine Arts department features one of the most exciting and unique programs in the region. Far from the “fluff” degree it is often portrayed as being, Art is in fact the kind of major that can lead to a whole swath of lucrative careers, such as digital photography, graphic design, and even architecture. Entry into these growing fields can start with an Associate of Fine Art (AFA) degree.

Sophomore Art student Brenna Powell, who will head to the University of Wyoming in the fall, is looking to take advantage of the “wide-open” nature of an Art degree. “Art has always been something that I’ve been interested in, as well as something I’m really good at,” she reflects, “but I also know that there are actually tons and tons of jobs in the art world.”

Jandey Shackelford, another Sophomore headed to UW in the fall, concurs. Though she is looking to either work as an independent artist or an art instructor, she knows that her AFA will help her in a number of different fields. “Right now,” she says, “we’re working on making three-dimensional geometric sculptures out of cardboard. We took a bunch of shapes — squares, pyramids, stuff like that — and fit them together as a team effort.” This type of collaborative work is quite similar to what is done at architectural design firms, print houses, and graphic design companies, where teams often work on specific parts of a project but come together in the end to put their individual elements together.

Student groups utilized cardboard to create their individual geometric shapes, then brought them together using overlaid paper and glue. The result showcases models that focus on form, lift, and thrust, giving the viewer an impression of motion and movement.

The lessons students are learning are easily applicable to a variety of careers. Brenna believes working on projects like this has helped her find her calling. “Assembling this structure has been very therapeutic,” she explains. “It made me realize that one of the best things you can do with an art degree is help others. So what I really want to do is get into Art Therapy, which can help people with physical, mental, or emotional problems.” This would take an advanced degree in counseling or creative art therapy, but Brenna believes it would be worth it.

However, even if Art Therapy doesn’t work out, she knows there are still many jobs available to her. To expand her horizons, Brenna has taken on a summer internship in Dallas, Texas, to explore graphic design. “I’m hoping to single out what I like and don’t like,” she says, noting that while it might not be her first career choice, graphic design has “a lot of potential.”

With job growth in so many industries related to art, it is without a doubt the students truly have “a lot of potential.”
Open for Business!

Agricultural business students learn the trade while setting up their own companies

The Ag Business program at Sheridan College is more than a great career choice for those interested in how day-to-day operations of the agricultural community work. In fact, it is helping students begin their careers by providing them a foundation in the essentials of running their own agriculturally based businesses.

Take sophomore Caleb Green. The Douglas native grew up on a large tract of land, and he was active in his local chapter of Future Farmers of America (FFA). While he was still in high school, he began an FFA project, collecting and baling hay for his parents. After doing it for his parents, his neighbors began to take notice and requested Caleb service their land as well. The business proved lucrative enough that in 2013, he opened up his own seasonal business, Evergreen Custom Haying, which bales the hay to customers’ specifications using his own equipment. He now counts eight clients for his business, haying approximately 300 acres of land.

“I have a passion for this,” Caleb explains. “Haying is in my blood, and it’s something I love doing. But I really love all the different aspects of agriculture.”

Majoring in Ag Business has allowed Caleb to better learn how to run his business, helping him understand how to grow and shape Evergreen Custom Haying into a profitable company. “It’s great because I do most of my work in the summer,” he says. “I’m going to pursue an Ag Education degree — I want to be an Ag Ed teacher at the high school level — but working in the industry gives you a whole new perspective on everything.”

To amplify its connection to real-world agricultural business, SC is working hard to make its Ag Business program one of the top in the nation. The College is currently constructing the 16,000 sq. ft. Mars Agricultural Center that will include a commodities room, complete with up-to-the-minute stock market ticker tape, real-time price updates, multiple flat screen displays, and more.

“The premise that we adopted when we started dreaming up the new Mars Center,” says SC Ag Instructor Chuck Holloway, “was that we want to be the top Agricultural Business community college program in the region, if not the nation. It’s ambitious, but with the backing and foresight of Forrest Mars and his family, we’ve been able to put together a building that will blow everything in the region out of the water. It will give our students a leg up on others graduating with the same degree.”

Students like Caleb Green have managed to start and run successful companies without access to such facilities — but that doesn’t mean they won’t use it. “If they’ll let me in,” Caleb says with a laugh, “I’m going to make sure I get a chance to hang out there. It’s going to be really cool, and it’ll probably be better than anything I’ll see anywhere else.”
A Lesson on Wyoming’s Political Identity
Former State Rep. Pete Simpson shares state’s, family’s legacy

Former Wyoming State Representative Pete Simpson has had a long and illustrious career. A member of the prominent Simpson family, he is the son of former Wyoming Governor and U.S. Senator Milward Simpson, brother of former U.S. Senator Alan K. Simpson, and the uncle of former Wyoming Speaker of the House Colin Simpson. But politics was never Dr. Simpson’s true calling. Instead, he found his way as Dean of Instruction at Sheridan College in the 1970s — a path on which he continued after his political career ended.

A historian by trade, Dr. Simpson earned his Master of Arts degree in 1962, writing his thesis on the first Wyoming legislature. Fast-forward to the present: Dr. Simpson has just completed teaching a course at Sheridan College that allowed students to investigate that same type of history, dissecting the State of Wyoming’s political identity.

“It’s essentially the same idea as the class I taught for 12 years at the University of Wyoming,” Dr. Simpson explains. “But I can’t say it’s the same class because the history and culture of Wyoming change every year.”

The class tackled the question of how Wyoming is unique compared to other states. Much of this, he says, has to do with the population. “We’re small,” he says, “so that leads to many cultural differences. [In the class,] we discuss how we as Wyomingites treat outsiders as well as insiders. We also contend with some of the more difficult periods in our state’s history: Japanese relocation, the massacre of Chinese laborers at Rock Springs [in 1885], the killing of Matthew Shepard.” All of these, Dr. Simpson notes, have impacted the cultural and political climate of Wyoming as a whole.

Though he has taught many similar classes since officially retiring in the late 1990s, Dr. Simpson says this particular class was one of the most intriguing he has ever taught. “It was mostly older adults,” he says approvingly, “and it included some senior citizens, so it fit the concept of ‘lifelong learning’ perfectly. There was also a three-generation gap between the youngest student in the class, who is 26, and the oldest, who is 92.”

Another wonderful benefit of the class, Dr. Simpson says, was that it provided him the opportunity to learn something new each time he led a discussion. “This class renews my understanding and reveals more about my home state every time I teach it,” he smiles. “It is constantly reaffirming to me what it means to be a Wyomingite and, as an extension, what it means to be an American. It’s very rewarding.”

But most rewarding for Dr. Simpson has been the chance to return to a town in which his family has deep roots. “Sheridan is great,” he says. “It has one of the best community colleges in America, and it was my home and my family’s home for many years.” Dr. Simpson and his wife Lynne indeed raised their family in Sheridan for several years and have continued to appear occasionally in productions at the WYO Theater, such as this year’s production On Golden Pond. It is, he explains, a proud accomplishment to be able to return. His commitment stems from his time in Sheridan, and he couldn’t be happier. “I am grateful to be back in a place we loved as our home,” he says, grinning.
Bighorn Mountain High

Spear-O Mountain Campus is better than ever thanks to unprecedented volunteer restoration project

Nestled high in the Bighorn Mountains, Spear-O Mountain Campus is truly a sight to see. Its picturesque views and rustic log cabins provide an atmosphere of liberating isolation that afforded author Ernest Hemingway the seclusion he needed to complete his first draft of *A Farewell to Arms* in 1928. Eight decades later, it was acquired by Sheridan College, and operates under an educational permit with the Bighorn National Forest. Since then, Spear-O has become known as the Mountain Campus for the District.

The campus is managed by Trudy and Dave Munsick, longtime Sheridan residents who took a keen interest in the property from the moment it became part of the College. Trudy, a 30-year veteran of the District who served as Dean of Health Sciences and Outdoor Education, retired from her dean’s position to focus her energy on overseeing the management of Spear-O. Her husband Dave, who was a range technician and field biologist in New Mexico before moving to Sheridan, also retired from his position as a high school science teacher to assist Trudy. Both have made it their goal to restore the campus’ historical buildings.

That’s where John Merrill comes in. Merrill, an architectural history buff and volunteer at Spear-O Mountain Campus, began relentlessly researching historic photographs and records to plan an authentic restoration of the buildings following the acquisition of the property by the district. Rather than simply using modern techniques, John had to plan out ways to comply with federal regulations to keep Spear-O on track to be added to the National Register of Historic Places (to which Spear-O was added in 2016).

Sheridan College Construction Technology Instructor Josh Michelena and his students have also come into play here. “Beginning last winter, my Construction Technology classes have been working with John to build exterior cabin doors that match old photos of the original cabin doors,” Josh explains. His students have learned to work with rough sawn lumber to develop jigs and fixtures, which aims to make it easier to replicate near-identical pieces. All this is an effort to preserve the integrity of Spear-O’s nationally recognized historical look and feel.

Students recognize that this learning opportunity is unique not only to Sheridan College but to most college experiences in general. Spending a few days at a time working under Michelena and Merrill gives them the chance to receive a hands-on education, allowing them to take ownership of a project that will better the Mountain Campus.

“ar the most exciting part of this project has been watching students learn from John,” Michelena said. “It has also been great to watch them take an ownership stake in a project that will better the Mountain Campus.” Thanks to partnerships with the US Forest Service and citizens like the Munsicks and John Merrill, Spear-O will continue to serve as the communities’ direct connection to the Bighorn Mountains.
All of Sheridan’s a Stage…  

Gene and Lillian Sager instrumental in Theater Program growth

In 1998, Gene and Lillian Sager, veteran actors who had graced stages in New York and Los Angeles, moved to Wyoming. Both are fully vested members of Actors Equity Association with over twenty years of professional experience. The Sagers were excited to build upon the rich theater history of the Sheridan community.

That year, Gene began teaching theater and music classes full-time and Lillian began as the assistant speech team coach, as well as Gene’s frequent collaborator and co-director. Their first production at SC, the legendary 1960s comedy *You Know I Can’t Hear You When the Water’s Running*, was performed as “dessert theater” in the old band room.

“The maintenance crew helped build a curtain system for us,” Lillian recalls. “We commandeered a closet nearby to use for costume storage, and the set building happened somewhat all over campus. We just had to be creative.”

Since then, the Sagers have become integral to the SC community. Gene continues to teach theater and music, while Lillian is a full-time theater and communications instructor. Together, they have codirected and produced more than 30 SC play productions and numerous chorale performances.

They have also been instrumental in creating a growing theater program that now boasts more than 30 majors, with a dedicated space for a costume shop, set storage, construction, and rehearsal space. Their most recent production, Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Cinderella*, played to more than 1,000 people on the main stage of the WYO Theater, one of two theaters with which the SC theater program maintains a partnership (along with the Mars Theater).

While theater students often make up a number of the participants, the Sagers encourage many non-theater students to participate in SC productions to provide a rich Liberal Arts learning environment. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Gene notes, “two of our lead actors were culinary students. It’s all about the skills these students can learn on the stage. We encourage students to become confident and develop self-expression. I often remind my students that Ronald Reagan was the president of the Screen Actors’ Guild before he became a politician, just to show them that theater skills can be applicable to many aspects of life.”

The Sagers’ faith in students has produced positive results. Not only have their plays been well-attended and excellently reviewed, but the students themselves have learned a great deal. “Gene and Lillian taught us to be dedicated and work as a team to establish healthy relationships with the people you work with,” says Dan Cole, a former SC student who was the lead actor in several of the Sagers’ productions. “This was not only an acting lesson, but a lesson to be used in all facets of life. I owe them so much for shaping me into the person that I am today.”
Sheridan’s Got Talent

Machine Tool Technology students take advantage of exciting projects and newly remodeled lab

Defining what a machinist does is no easy task and can only be limited by the imagination … and maybe resources. The Sheridan College Machine Tool Technology students are learning just that, and have good job prospects locally and regionally.

By the end of their two-year degree, one of the last projects is to manufacture an original product. Austin Livesay, of Billings, stands at one of the massive Haas CNC (computer numeric controlled) mills in the newly remodeled Machine Tool lab. He peers through the clear door at a probe that tells the machine where his material is located. That material is a strip of carbon fiber, not a cheap material, nor an easy one with which to work.

“It’s been a challenge,” said Livesay, “and expensive.” He’s had to purchase his raw materials as well as new tools to machine it. “But, it’s totally worth it.”

So why spend all the time and money to use carbon fiber? Livesay has a brother in the United States Army who works in bomb detection. He is manufacturing digging knives for the purpose of unearthing explosives, a task that cannot be done with metal tools.

These kind of projects excite instructor Sara Spann. Machining is a multifarious industry and the SC Program continues to grow. Students are learning more about the design and technical side of the industry as well as the manual manufacturing. “Our program was built around repair and maintenance machining for the oil and coal industry. Obviously we’ve diversified and we’re focusing more on the manufacturing side of things,” said Spann. “Now, in the program, we try to emphasize the automated manufacturing. In addition, 3D printing has become an added bonus to the students’ skills.”

“In our free time, I like the ability to create personal projects. For myself, I’ve done a little extra 3D printing and I like having the ability to just come up with an idea, jot it up in Solidworks (a 3D design software), and be able to print it off and make it real,” said recent graduate, Kevin Barger, of Worland. Barger initially thought of becoming an engineer, but costs made community college his best option. He started in the SC Welding program and has his Welding Associate of Applied Science. He will compete in SkillsUSA Nationals in June after winning gold on the additive manufacturing team and silver on the automated manufacturing team.

“We’ve come a long way,” added instructor Randy Whyte. “We use the SkillsUSA competition as our barometer, nationally. SkillsUSA is the foundation for our leadership. Other programs don’t look at it like that; they don’t look at themselves from a national perspective, but we do.”

During the 2016 SkillsUSA state competition, the Machine Tool students were able to tour machining shops in the Casper area, which ranged from manufacturing parts for oil extraction to miniscule intricate surgical parts. As demonstrated on the following page, SC Machine Tool students are repeatedly among the best in the state and are doing great things on the national level.

“We aren’t specifically training our students for local industry. We train our students to be successful nationally, making them more versatile for the jobs in the area as well,” said Whyte.
SkillsUSA is a career-technical student organization serving students in secondary and post-secondary technical, skilled, and service occupations. SkillsUSA helps prepare America’s high-performance workers and provides quality educational experiences for students in leadership, teamwork, citizenship, and character development.

SkillsUSA Awards 2011-2016

Every year, students in Sheridan College’s Technical Education Programs have the opportunity to test their skills and knowledge against students from the region. Event champions earn the right to compete nationally against thousands of their peers.

SkillsUSA is made up of more than 350,000 members in nearly 17,000 classrooms and 4,000 high school or college postsecondary chapters spread across all 50 states.

More than 6,000 students compete at the National SkillsUSA Championships in occupational and leadership skill areas.
Sheridan College Recognizes Excellence

Each year the Northern Wyoming Community College District recognizes several outstanding students, staff and faculty. Through the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees (WACCT) and the American Technical Education Association (ATEA), we celebrate the accomplishments of several members of our college community for the 2014-15 academic year. These individuals have demonstrated excellence in their chosen area, contributed to the college, served in their community, and led innovative change and improvement in the College District.

WACCT Student of the Year Nominee: Gaylene Spence
Sophomore, Gillette College

As a non-traditional student and mother of six (the youngest of whom is still in high school), Gaylene Spence truly embodies the exemplary student. From her campus involvement to her dedication to her studies, her commitment to excellence is demonstrated daily. She works with other students in the Records/Admission Office, mentors other students in the Math Center, and is an active member of Phi Theta Kappa, serving on the executive team.

WACCT Classified Employee of the Year Nominee and State Winner: Elaine Pridgeon
Administrative Coordinator, Gillette College Nursing Department

Elaine Pridgeon is a real cheerleader for students and wants nothing more than to see them succeed. Her expertise has been instrumental in implementing new online exam software this year. She is the go-to person for questions from staff and students alike about electronic testing and preparing for nursing exams. When Gillette College lost its lab assistant last year, Elaine stepped up and is doing not only her own job, but also taking on the functions of the lab assistant.

WACCT Professional Employee of the Year Nominee: Zane Garstad
Director of College Services, Sheridan College

Zane Garstad began his current position in 2014, overseeing food services and bookstores for both Gillette and Sheridan Colleges, as well as the fledgling Sheridan College AgriPark arena. He also developed and chairs the Food Advisory Group on campus, made up of a cross-section of students, faculty, and staff. A man of integrity and conviction, Zane firmly adheres to a philosophy of respecting and valuing all people.

WACCT Faculty Member of the Year Nominee and State Winner: Troy Miller
Welding Technology Instructor, Gillette College

Troy Miller has leveraged his knowledge and experience to work in conjunction with industry partners to build the program at Gillette College into one that meets their needs. He establishes and builds lasting relationships with his students, and he is well-respected because of his patient teaching style and calm demeanor. He has been the driving force behind incorporating new technology into the welding program, such as pulse welding, a CNC plasma cutter, and a Meltview welding camera.

WACCT Trustee Leadership Award Nominee: Kati Sherwood
Chair, NWCCD Board of Trustees

Kati Sherwood has served as Chair of the Board of Trustees for the last five years. She was instrumental in the hiring of Dr. Paul Young as President of the district in 2010 and was an early proponent of applying the Completion Agenda goals to our strategic plan. She has also served on the steering committee for the capital construction project to renovate the Whitney Academic Building and build the new Whitney Academic Center.

WACCT Foundation Volunteer of the Year Nominee: John Merrill
Volunteer, Spear-O Mountain Campus

John Merrill relentlessly researched historic photographs and records to plan and carry out authentic restoration of the buildings at Spear-O Mountain Campus. He has helped preserve and restore the historic facilities. John and his team have rebuilt several porches to their original dimensions and specifications, repaired the cabins, and removed and replaced rotted logs with wood harvested from Bighorn National Forest.
**Sheridan College Fast Facts**

**SC Annualized Enrollment**

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**Student Characteristics**

**Fall 2015**

- Average Age: 25
- Average Student Load (credit hours)
  - Part-time: 4.7
  - Full-time: 14.8
- Gender: 42% Male, 58% Female
- From Wyoming: 89%
- From Sheridan County: 59%
- On-Campus Living Capacity: 400

Sheridan College offers 53 programs of study with 507 certificates & degrees awarded in the 2014-15 academic year.

**In-State Tuition & Fees for one Academic Year at Sheridan College are $3,156 (30 credit hours)**

**Economic Impact**

- FY16 Operating Budget: $28,273,911
- Full-time Employees: 195
- Part-time Employees: 166

**Funding Sources for FY15 Operating Budget**

- State Appropriations: 68%
- Tuition & Fees: 25%
- Local Taxes: 7%
“I am here to help the men and women of our Armed Forces transition into college. I will assist you with each step along the way, helping you get the most out of your benefits.”

– Tyler Jensen, Veteran Services Advisor

For more information, connect with Tyler at 307-674-6446 ext. 2720