A one-stop enrollment center on the Centralia College campus will make it much easier for students to sign up for classes and move through other steps to get into their class of choice. On the drawing board is the TransAlta Commons (TAC), the much anticipated student center.

The high-tech, high-touch center will combine the best of student-staff interaction coupled with access to online virtual services to greatly increase efficiency of services.

Construction of the building, which will match the 70,000-square-foot size of adjacent Washington Hall and the science center, could begin in summer 2015. Most of the projected near-$40 million price tag will come from the state, although $1 million was raised through a Centralia College Foundation capital campaign. The building could be opened in 2017.

Studies show that this type of facility, one that houses all enrollment services in one building, serves as a strong tool in recruiting and retention. It helps build a sense of belonging and students appreciate the efficiency.

The proposed center would be constructed on the southeast corner of the Walnut St. and Washington Ave. intersection. When finished, the TAC will be one of the three largest college buildings totalling nearly a quarter of a million square feet. The cost of construction of the three buildings, when the Commons is complete, will have come to nearly $90 million. It is expected that virtually every college student will pass through the new Commons.

The center will house enrollment functions, financial aid, counseling, the bookstore, and cashiering, among other departments. The facility will include an expansive, multi-function public use area connected to the cafeteria that could host community activities, ceremonies, and be converted to a reception area that could provide seating for up to 500 people.

The college will lose student parking slots with the construction but plans continue to acquire replacement slots to accommodate parking needs.

What could quickly prove to be a major public attraction is the planetarium, which will offer astronomy-related presentations using a state-of-the-art full dome projection system. The college will be developing programs that could be on-going public presentations.

The planetarium would double as a lecture hall or meeting room.

An essential feature of the new building will be the technology that will run through it. Each room and all common areas of the TAC will be wired to accommodate current and emerging technologies and learning styles.
Thank you Gordon Aadland for all you have given us

There are no words to express the loss that many of us feel with the passing of Gordon Aadland. He died Sunday, Oct. 27, following a fall at his home.

As many of you know Gordon was a friend of and an advocate for Centralia College. Threads of his passion for this institution ran throughout his column, Saturday’s Child, appearing weekly in The Chronicle.

Gordon began his Centralia College career in 1961, teaching English. He rubbed shoulders with teaching legends including Rufus Kiser and Katharine Kemp; he helped usher in the college’s first president, Dr. Nels Hanson and, although he retired from teaching in 1985, served as an unofficial adviser to presidents since.

During his tenure at the college, his work expanded to encompass the duties of the college’s first public information officer, telling the college’s story to the community. He knew of the importance of good public relations.

In 1982, he and Professor David White initiated the college’s Distinguished Alumnus Award program. Gordon served on just about every selection committee since. He was the motivator behind the foundation’s drive to commission the Margaret Corbet/Katharine Kemp statue, to be placed just off the Aadland Esplanade, the brick walkway named in his honor in 2006.

He pushed for the commencement processional, now a central part of the college’s graduation ceremony.

There are other examples of how Gordon made a difference in the life of this college. He was more than just a motivating force behind important events and activities; he was dedicated to bringing a special brand of what could be to his adopted college.

Because of the depth of his passion, molded around his 52 years of service, Gordon received the Distinguished Lifetime Service Award, the first such honor given by Centralia College and the Centralia College Foundation.

We have lost a strong advocate for education and a voice that spoke loud for this college. We have lost a voice that recognized the value of preservation of ideals, a voice that continually reminded us of the good in people. His was a voice that said we all matter, that we all have purpose. We have lost a voice that told us that the past is important because it is the foundation for all that awaits us. His was a voice of education.

Thank you Gordon for all that you have taught us, for all that you have done for us. You will be missed.

An endowment in Gordon’s name has been set up through the Centralia College Foundation.

Invest in the Centralia College Foundation through a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust, and you’ll help to sustain Centralia College and ensure that the foundation can continue to have a favorable impact on deserving students.

By donating, you can receive income payments for life, some of which may be tax-free. Also, your charitable donation could earn an immediate federal income tax deduction.

Giving something away has never felt so good.

One important option that allows individuals or families to make a difference in the lives of Centralia College students is the Legacy Society. The Centralia College Foundation conceived The Legacy Society to welcome donors who have committed to a future gift through a will or bequest. Such generosity will help the college change lives and brighten the future through innovative facilities, program initiatives, and especially scholarships for deserving students.

Visit http://foundation.centralia.edu/trusts, or call the foundation at 360.736.9391, ext. 290.

Do something you’ve never imagined!

(Manage your money by giving it away)
Foundation hands out more than $550K in scholarships to students

Centralia College Scholarship Award Night saw 211 students benefit from over $559,000 in scholarships handed out at the annual event held in mid-September. The scholarship total surpassed last year’s record by almost $8,000. Students, their families, donors and local dignitaries attended the celebration. The event also provided the opportunity for scholarship recipients to meet their donors.

Scholarships provide tuition assistance to students who might not otherwise have the resources or the ability to attend college.

“The resources to attend college are here for you,” Dr. James Walton, college president, told the audience. “Your success is the college’s success.” On average, over the past ten years, Centralia College has been the number one two-year, comprehensive college in the state for graduation rates.

Speakers throughout the evening praised the students for being bright, but more importantly, for being among the hardest working students.

Student speaker and scholarship recipient, Haley Graham, spoke about the importance of getting good grades at an early age.

“I didn’t understand the importance of good grades until I realized that I wanted to go to college,” Graham said. “That’s when I knew that if I wanted to reach my goals that I had to put in the work.”

She also encouraged other students to try something new and not let fear hold them back.

Centralia College alum and Sports Hall of Fame member Bill Watterson, who recently had the resurfaced gym floor named in his honor, spoke on the importance of his education.

“I value my education from Centralia College as much as I value my education from Stanford University,” Watterson said. “Both have shaped my life in profound ways and I’m proud to help create that legacy for others.”

Watterson founded what has grown into one of the largest construction companies in Alaska. Over the years, he and his wife Helga have donated nearly $500,000 to the college.

One of the highlights of the evening was when Rod Meade, father of international opera star and Centralia College Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient Angela Meade, read a statement from the singer.

“It’s important to give back to the place where I received my training, honoring the memory of my mother,” Meade said. “Centralia College is where I found my passion; it’s where my life was changed forever.”

Board begins search for new college president

Perhaps the most important task facing the Centralia College Board of Trustees is the selection of the college’s president. For the second time in the past 28 years the board takes on that challenge.

Earlier this year, Dr. Jim Walton announced that he would retire at the end of June 2014, concluding 12 years as the college’s president.

Walton has been involved directly in the life of the foundation and is continually involved in fundraising and other programs to benefit students.

The board is evaluating search consultants, individuals or firms that could be hired to provide assistance in the search process.

It is expected that the process will take place over the course of the college year. The successful candidate would be introduced to the college and community in spring quarter 2014.

For additional information, contact Julie Ledford, vice president for Human Resources and Legal Affairs, 360-736-9391, ext. 285.

The Centralia College Foundation has set a high goal for its annual campaign for the coming year. The fundraising goal is $512,750, reflecting a three percent increase over last year’s campaign. The foundation wants to award scholarships using all of the money raised.

But there’s a catch: Students need to apply.

Again this year, the applications will be online, available beginning Dec. 1. The applications must be completed and submitted online by March 1, 2014.

“The foundation has been very successful with its fundraising activities,” Julie Johnson, director of Alumni and Donor Relations for the foundation, said. “The generosity of our community has been and continues to be amazing. We fully expect to reach our goal.”

Johnson said that donors, alumni, and supporters need to encourage friends and family who might attend Centralia College next year to fill out the application.

“Each student needs to fill out just one application,” Johnson said. “We have a team to evaluate each application and award scholarships according to how each student meets the criteria.” Announcement of awards is made in the spring and the formal awarding of scholarships takes place in September.

Although tuition rates have not increased for this year, Johnson said that the need to support students remains at a high level.
Travis Kinney benefits from a second chance and a STEM scholarship

“T”ravis Kinney, 28, of Rochester, learned early in life that hard work pays. He dropped out of school and worked as a hard laborer for seven years.

“I had moments when I thought about returning to school,” Kinney, who earned his GED in 2007, said. “It was just so overwhelming trying to think how to fit work and school together.”

Even with a newfound urge to continue his education, it seemed unattainable. Kinney got married, purchased a home and needed to pay bills. He worked in construction and as an ironworker before being laid off New Year’s Eve 2009.

That layoff opened the door to a new future. “I worked for seven years and felt like I wasn’t going anywhere,” he added. “All I knew was hard labor – which motivated me to go back to school.”

When he was laid off, he took advantage of the college’s Worker Retraining Program and enrolled in the Energy Technology – Power Plant Operations program. He earned his Associate in Applied Science (AAS) in Energy Technology, and then returned to Centralia College to wrap up his pre-engineering requirements. Later he was accepted into an electrical engineering program at WSU-Vancouver.

“Attending Centralia College has helped me realize the importance of giving back to the community,” he said. “I am a STEM scholarship recipient and am very grateful for the contributions that directly affect me.”

At the Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy (PNCECE) at Centralia College, Kinney was known for being focused, dedicated and determined. He balanced his time between being a full-time student, working two part-time jobs, and helping his wife with her business. Then in his “spare time,” he led projects to help students and the college.

Kinney led 17 energy tech students to inspect areas of energy inefficiencies within the college’s Technical Building. They examined the building envelope, calculated energy consumption of the electrical loads and lighting, and submitted three levels of retrofits. The college accepted some of the suggestions, including replacing the lighting system.

Kinney worked with former pre-engineering student John Hofman (also a STEM scholarship recipient) and Centralia City Light in coordinating the outdoor clean energy lab, located on the NE corner of the Kiser Natural Outdoor Learning Lab (KNOLL). Kinney assisted with the project design, organized volunteer labor, and finished the project by coordinating the contractor and parts needed to install six solar panels. The panels work alongside the Energy Ball in producing clean energy for the college’s KNOLL.

There’s something personal that drives Kinney’s efforts.

His years of hard labor taught him how to focus and be dedicated. His career pathway will include power, instrumentation and system controls.

“Higher education is important to me because I have experienced life without an education,” he added. “I am determined to finish my bachelor’s degree so I can provide a good life for my family. I want to give my future children a more encouraging environment to succeed.”

Invest in your community, invest in education through your IRA charitable rollover.

Don’t forget to take advantage of your IRA Charitable Rollover before December 31, 2013.

• Maximum limit $100,000.
• Benefit is uncertain for 2014.

For more information, contact us today: 360.736.9391, ext. 290 foundation@centralia.edu
The Bachelor of Applied Science in Management (BASM) will enroll a new class in September 2014. Fifty-seven students are currently in the Centralia College BASM program, including each of the 26 students who were a part of the first cohort. The first class will graduate in June 2014.

If a bachelor’s is in your plans or in the plans of someone you know, please contact Larry McGee, BASM program executive director, for details.

BASM caters to working adults who are intent in furthering their careers by attaining a four-year college degree. BASM offers instruction in a hybrid format: students meet face-to-face each week and continued instruction and student interaction takes place online. Two- or three-year tracks are available. Face-to-face instruction takes place in the evenings on Tuesdays and Thursdays (two-year track) and Tuesdays only (three-year track). Qualifying students who apply before the early March deadline (for consideration for priority status) could have priority for admission, financial aid packages, and scholarships.

The college is still in the planning stages for a Bachelor of Applied Science in Diesel. If all continues according to plans, the degree could be offered beginning fall quarter 2014.
Ralph Olson receives distinguished Trailblazer Award

Ralph Olson, a long-time supporter of the Centralia College Foundation, received the Centralia College Foundation Trailblazer Award for 2013. Olson, who has retired following a long and distinguished career as an attorney, was honored for his 20-plus years as a dedicated foundation board member. He was instrumental in the foundation receiving a number of bequests to benefit students at Centralia College.

Most recently, he was the co-chair of the 2007 capital campaign that raised in excess of $2.5 million.

CC Foundation earns Gold Standard rating

The Centralia College Foundation (CCF) is solid gold. The foundation recently received the Gold Standard rating from GuideStar, a national rating institution for non-profits. Each non-profit in GuideStar’s database has a report—a Web page on the GuideStar site, devoted entirely to nonprofit organizations so people can learn more about the great work of the nonprofit institution. GuideStar maintains a database of just about every non-profit organization and rates each one.

The GuideStar Exchange measures the commitment to transparency, legitimacy of information and reports annual revenue and expense data; the Gold Standard is the highest ranking.

For more information on the Centralia College Foundation’s ranking check out www.guidestar.org.

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Ralph Olson

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