

April 3rd, 2013

Dear Madam Chair, Mister Co-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

For the record my name is Guillermo Froylan and I live in Salem, Or.

I attend Chemeketa Community College, I volunteer with student government, I'm a mentor for the AVID students at Chemawa Indian School, and I'm pursuing a career in Engineering. I am here today to talk to you about the value of community college and share with you my own experience.

During high school I was oblivious to the kind of effort, commitment, and dedication that I would need in order to succeed in college. In high school I never really took an interest in my education. I rarely studied for tests and I hardly ever read. I graduated North Salem High School in 2005 by performing the bare minimum.

As a result, when I attended Western Oregon University for the 2005-2006 academic school year I was completely unprepared. I didn't have any study skills whatsoever. On my first day of class I was surprised and overwhelmed when I was assigned 300 pages of reading for homework. Unfortunately, that year I flunked out of Western. But reflecting on the experience now, I can see that I lacked the motivation to try harder and the ability to hold myself accountable.

Several dead end jobs and years later I found myself attending Chemeketa. It was convenient, affordable, plus I could use public transportation or ride my bike to and from school. Slowly, I began taking an interest in my education and I also started getting involved with the school. Subsequently, I started developing the skill set necessary to be successful in an academic environment. For me this was a long process and over the years I've learned that my involvement with Chemeketa and the community is crucial to my success. Being involved keeps me focused on my goals and it holds me accountable. When I first started attending Chemeketa my GPA was very low, around a 1.5. Now, I am proud to say my GPA is at a 2.5 and I will soon graduate with a transfer degree. In all honesty, I owe my success to Chemeketa for providing me with the resources that have helped me become a successful student and ultimately a successful person. Invaluable resources like the tutoring center, library, computer labs, counselors, faculty, and peers all have had an immeasurable impact on my education.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I strongly encourage you to fund community colleges at 453 million in order for future students to have an opportunity to gain the necessary skills to accomplish their educational goals and be able to give back to their communities.

Guillermo Froylan
275 23rd Street SE
Salem, OR 97301