



# Employers say CWE students are hard-working, capable employees

Employers of CWE students responded enthusiastically when asked to share their impressions of the program citing consistently favorable results with CWE in both current and former students.

Production Supervisor Ray Swaney of Intelledex in Corvallis oversees the activities of four CWE students from LBCC. So far, the students have succeeded in learning while performing, Swaney says.

"We can't spend a lot of time training," he explains. "We rely heavily on the instructors to send us people who are willing to work hard and learn fast."

"It hasn't failed us yet," Swaney adds.

And the experience students gain on the production floor improves their prospects for permanent employment.

"Students with co-op experience here stand a significantly better chance of getting hired than an electronics tech with a degree only."

One LB student successfully completed the Intelledex hiring screen, but Swaney said he lost the funding for the position.

Prospective employees interview for six to eight hours before up to four people so that the firm gets an idea of an applicant's personality, skills, attitudes, and compatibility.

"Some of that information, but not all of it, is already in our hands with a CWE student."

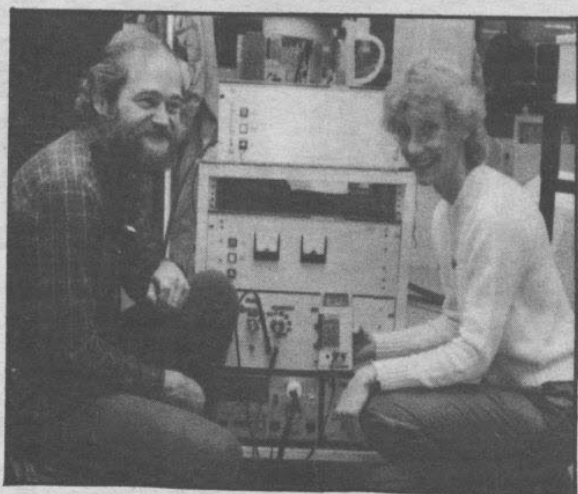
Describing his part of the interview process, Swaney said, "I put together 10 questions that I ask applicants and each question is analytical in nature. No 'yes or no' stuff. I make them think about it before we discuss any answers. Then I can check out the thought patterns they use to solve problems."

Swaney said the shape of the electronics/robotics market will determine the relationship between LBCC and Intelledex in the future. But as business improves he voiced no reservations about using LB students.

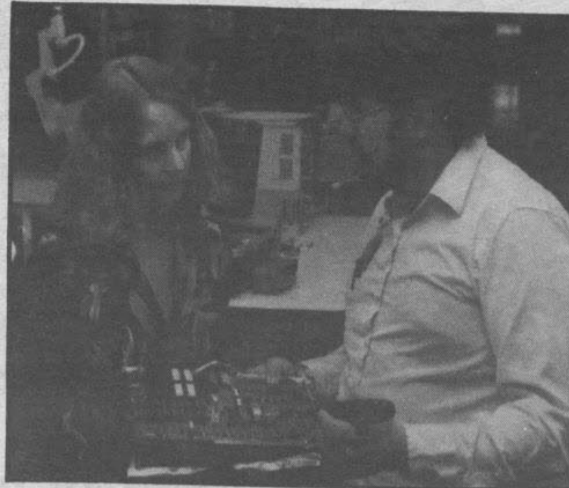
Working six hours per week, the CWE students currently serve as electronic technicians, troubleshooting manufacturing problems with the robotics units under construction and testing.

For two terms, research coordinator Tamotsu Shiroyama supervised LB biology major Marc LeClair at the Corvallis office of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). LeClair worked in wildlife toxicology.

"Marc was very anxious to know what was going on," Shiroyama said. "He worked hard and was eager to learn, although he had no previous experience with the Bobwhite quail."



Kathy Sillonis examines test equipment with Intelledex production supervisor Ray Swaney.



Patti Campbell and trainer Jay Kluth examine printed circuits at Intelledex.

Shiroyama was also pleased with the progress LeClair made during his two terms of CWE in animal research.

"He started out at the low end of the skill ladder, cleaning cages and checking incubated eggs. He gathered and identified eggs from the specimens and assisted with the paperwork as he advanced in training."

"Towards the end of his program, he began necropsy, which is the equivalent of an autopsy of lab animals. This involved removing organs and other dissecting activities that we use to determine levels of toxic materials in the birds."

LeClair worked a maximum of 20 hours per week. He had been hired as a federal employee before he entered CWE, and then qualified under CWE guidelines.

LeClair was not the first CWE student to work in the Corvallis EPA office. One other student worked in the Fresh water division three years ago, Shiroyama said.

"And if a person were interested in the same arrangement, I'd do it again if I had the need and the funds."

Shiroyama also said that if LeClair applied for a lab tech opening in the wildlife toxicology section, "his work here would definitely give him an upper hand."

He added that the use of more CWE students in the future would depend upon "what the person could do for us and what our needs are at the time."

"Marc got some valuable experience that told him just what research is all about. It's not a glamorous field. In fact, it's quite tedious at times."

Overall, Shiroyama said he was "very pleased" with the ease of setting the CWE arrangement in place. Employers of LB Criminal Justice majors also.

Gail Newman, Benton County Corrections volunteer coordinator, is currently supervising three CWE students from LB's Criminal Justice division who work both in the office and in client contact.

"They provide the office with a variety of services," Newman said, "including some of the paperwork functions here and visitation functions in the community."

The corrections department makes home visits to people on parole and probation.

"We check to see how the client is doing, if he has any problems or changes we should know about, any citations or arrests, and just basically how they're doing."

"A face-to-face meeting yields information that we wouldn't see in a report or a phone conversation," she added. "The students are bringing new ideas with them, and they're finding things in the field that we (full time probation officers) might miss."

In exchange for volunteering their time, the students receive supervision and training in the field which applies directly to the skills needed to be probation officers, Hansen added.

## Career Exploration can apply in many situations

Career Exploration is a special program for the students who, for a variety of reasons, can't enter CWE through a major degree program.

Rich Horton explained that there are several types of student who could qualify for employment under career exploration.

Students who are unsure of their career direction can use this form of CWE to experience the work environment of a given industry. In career exploration, students experience the realities of a job in a field they think they might like to pursue.

Horton said the program also fits the needs of students returning to school after an on-the-job injury. The vocational rehabilitation student "can evaluate new fields of employment that don't conflict with the physical limitations caused by their injuries."

For another example, Horton cited the former secretary who became a homemaker for several years and wants to return to the job market.

"Her skills are rusty and she wants to know how the job market has changed since she was working," Horton explained. This student differs from the usual CWE student because she already has job skills and experience.

"She needs a job, but the kind of training she needs is less basic than the usual CWE placement."

Horton added that any student who had trouble entering CWE through the normal channels could ask to be considered for placement as a career exploration student.



Mimi Wong is a CWE student employed at Benton County Corrections in Corvallis.

## Winners abound in CWE program

Think of a contest in which everyone who plays wins. Each player seeks to benefit himself while benefiting others, and each player succeeds. This is Cooperative Work Experience (CWE).

When students enter a work environment related to their major field, giving their time in exchange for academic elective credit, they participate in CWE.

The students win as the real-world experience adds a practical dimension to the information they learn in class. In addition to becoming more experienced, they can determine if their picture of the field compares to its real form.

The employer wins when these part-time employees give their time in exchange for experience. CWE screening processes offer the employer a quality employee while holding recruitment, hiring and labor costs below the norm.

The faculty wins when the student's academic performance shows the effect of the extra-curricular exposure. CWE students offer a view of classroom discussions which reflect today's employment world.

The school wins a friend in the community every time an employer has a favorable experience with a CWE student. If the employer hires the student as a full-time employee, everyone's winnings increase. And this often happens.

Also, students bring experiences from the modern job market back to the classroom, allowing their degree program to reflect current job market needs and conditions.



Program Coordinator Rich Horton does double duty as the CWE program and business department coordinator.

## Students seek best use of CWE time

In order to get the most out of the CWE experience, students should start early to consider how they want to use this pre-graduation employment time.

Even though jobs are scarce in the region, CWE Coordinator Rich Horton stresses the importance of having the firmest possible grasp of exactly what type of work the student wants.

"The more fully a student understands what he wants, the more effective I can be in seeking out the best possible job for him if he's not already employed" says Horton.

"A student may have to take 'just anything' in order to break into his career field, but it's best not to approach a career decision with just an 'I'll take anything' attitude."

Once students have identified the particular aspect of their major field they want to work in, they should contact their counselor, major faculty advisor and a CWE coordinator.

Planning at that stage involves picking the best term to register for CWE in light of the training site selection process. Students already employed in a job related to their major can register for credit during the term up until the last two weeks.

CWE credit is variable from two to 14 credits per term, with credit limited by the amount of time the student spends on the job. A student can earn one credit for every 30 hours per term spent at work. Horton recommends that students sign up for regular classes first, so that their CWE schedule can be planned around academic commitments.

Horton adds that CWE credits are graded either on an A-F scale or pass/no pass, with the employer, CWE coordinator and student discussing the experience to determine an appropriate grade. The employer and coordinator discuss how well the students deal with learning objectives from the employer's viewpoint, and the students evaluate themselves in terms of achievement of learning objectives. In effect, the employer and student both offer the coordinator a recommended grade, Horton said.

Since CWE courses, and the required seminar are approved college courses the student pays for each credit hour at the same rate as other credits, Horton said. However, full-time status is 12 credits and students will not have to pay overload cost if CWE credits take them over the 20-credit maximum.

## Program has room to expand in future years

With 145 students employed through CWE positions this term, coordinator Rich Horton says the program is functioning at about 50 percent of its potential.

Horton sees the program expanding next year in response to a major advertising campaign promoting cooperative education. Ad Council, a national public service advertising organization, is sponsoring the promotion.

"The campaign is scheduled to begin in September, and the Ad Council expects a 30 percent increase in cooperative education participation," he said.

Horton added that CWE could expand to 180 students without changing staff levels, and that "if the demand increases beyond that, we could justify seeking additional staffing."

Expansion is not new to LBCC's CWE program.

The college established a CWE program in 1972, limited to the vocational/technical programs. Just before Horton was hired in 1978, the program was reorganized to allow expansion into each of the divisions on campus, he said.

Federal Title VIII grants provided funding to hire part-time coordinators from the faculty in each division. The grants provided decreasing funding for five years, and then the college began funding the program unassisted.

"This is the first year the institution carried the financial commitment to CWE across the campus without federal funding help," Horton said.

About the faculty coordinators, he noted that their function is to recruit students for the CWE program within their division.

"They make the students aware of opportunities within the division to work for credit," he said. "The coordinator screens students to find the best available applicant for a given job."

In addition to conducting student interviews, the part-time coordinator also advises the other faculty members and CWE office of any changes that occur in the potential for CWE students within their division, Horton added.

## Students should look for ideal field to study

In Oregon's soft economy, one of the secrets to finding a job is to know which fields are expanding and which are contracting in the job force, according to LBCC placement specialist Marlene Propst.

The wood-products industry is among the hardest hit in the according to statistical information compiled by the Oregonian, comparing 1979 and 1982 figures.

The recession in wood products caused a drop of at least one third for the logging faller-bucker work force, and similar losses of employment opportunities for mill workers operating cutoff saws and laminated wood product workers during the survey period.

The homebuilding profession was also down from better years, with almost 80 percent fewer bricklayers employed in 1982 than 1979. Cement masons employment was down by just over half. The carpentry field suffered a loss of over 40 percent in the same period.

In a related field, the number of real estate brokers employed in 1982 was cut almost in half from the higher levels of 1979.

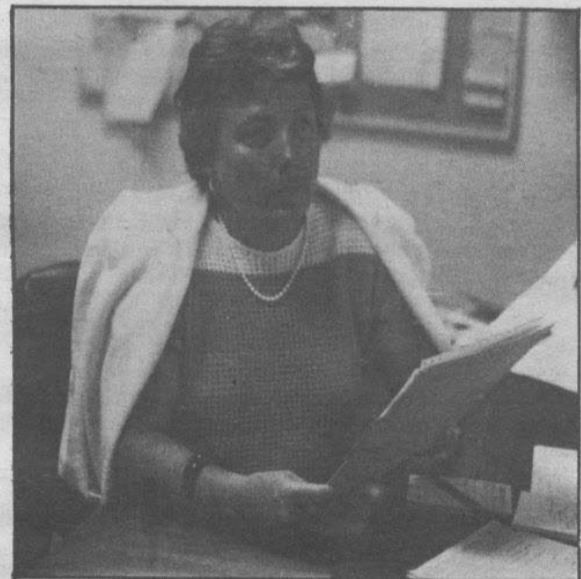
Not all fields of employment suffered at the hands of Oregon's hard times, according to Propst.

One fast-growing field during this period was the food preparation/fast food industry, which showed a 71 percent gain between 1979 and 1982. Along with this, the broad, general category of "counter attendant" rose 55 percent. Restaurant managers also increased in number by 26 percent.

The computer technology field in Oregon showed expansion during the comparison period, with computer operator, computer programmer and data entry employment showing improvement. Electronic technicians and engineers also saw a technology boom improve employment in their fields.

The health care field also showed improvement in employment during the survey period. The number of employed doctors, surgeons, nurses, occupational therapists and psychiatric aides all increased during the survey period.

Perhaps reflecting changing times, the survey indicated an increase in child care attendants, although relatively few are employed according to the survey.



Marian Cope coordinates CWE activities in LBCC's education and transfer program.

### Who's Who at the Student Employment Center

Rich Horton	Program Coordinator	ext. 102
Marlene Propst	Placement Specialist	ext. 155
Marian Cope	Education and Liberal Arts	ext. 321
Pam Buckman	Secretary	ext. 189

### Program Coordinators

Angie Aschoff	Placement Assistance	ext. 135
Gina Vee	Arts, Humanities, Soc. Sci.	ext. 434
Jerry Philips	Criminal Justice	ext. 204
Jean Irvin	Health/Recreation, P.E.	ext. 250
John Wooley	Science, Technology Industry	ext. 338
Rich Horton	Business	ext. 505

## Computer boosts speed in Placement Office

The LBCC Student Employment Center (SEC) has begun using a computerized placement system which makes the job matching process more efficient, according to Placement Specialist Marlene Propst.

Before using the computer system, the SEC processed the student applications and job searches manually. The computer system adds considerable speed and flexibility to the center's coordination activities, Propst said.

Applicants now fill out forms identifying up to seven job preference areas, plus hours they can work and their academic major. Under the manual program of the past, students normally selected only two job categories for the employment center's job search.

"We need more applicants," Propst said, "and the more variety they use in job preference areas, the better their chances for placement through us."

The time required to place a given applicant depends on the student's flexibility, she added. "We advise the students during screening about their chances of being hired with the categories they select."

The SEC lists jobs in the private sector of Linn and Benton Counties plus local, state and federal govern-

ment jobs.

"We concentrate on jobs in Oregon, but we get word on many jobs in California because it's the Mecca of the electronics industry," Propst added.

Many jobs offered through the SEC feature wages at or above either the federal minimum wage (\$3.35 per hour) or the state minimum wage (\$3.10 per hour). Many jobs pay commission, and skilled jobs referred through the office sometimes pay up to \$8 to \$9 per hour, Propst said. Some jobs list the pay as negotiable, usually depending upon student experience in the particular field.

The SEC office can also coordinate student contact with the Cooperative Work Experience program (CWE). These positions can be either with or without pay, but offer academic elective credit to the student for job experience related to the student's major.

"One of our primary jobs is to answer questions," Propst adds. "We hear rumors quite often, and we know who to call to get a definitive word on the validity of scuttlebut." When students say they hear that someone is hiring, Propst calls the employer and gets the facts.

## Participation in CWE provides winners

While the student is among the big winners in the Cooperative Work Experience (CWE) program, employers who use CWE students come away with benefits seldom found in the traditional hiring techniques.

"CWE appeals to the most motivated student on campus, as he looks for ways to push into a tight job market with his newly acquired training," says CWE Coordinator Rich Horton. Consequently, CWE students are seeking the experience offered by a part-time job in their chosen fields.

The student hired through CWE works in job slots that can be either paid or non-paid. He receives academic credit toward his graduation.

Horton added that he sends only students he feels will meet the needs of the specific employer and who will succeed in both his program and the job setting.

These factors combine to effectively reduce both recruitment and labor costs for CWE employers, Horton said.

Horton also feels the program can reduce turnover. "Nationwide, large and small businesses report that up to 75 percent of their employees first placed as cooperative students are still with their firms five years after graduation."

Before coming aboard with the employer, CWE students have enough coursework behind them to accurately demonstrate their abilities. Judging a potential employee's future with the firm costs less when the arrangement is part time.

A CWE student works for weeks or months with the employer before either party commits to permanent placement. The employer can gather information from line supervisors about a student's attitudes and abilities to fit in with the team as well as his job competence, skill levels and ability to learn.

Since Horton takes job orders from the employer to fill special needs, Horton said the program can help meet the firm's affirmative action goals.

"We don't charge a fee to either party," Horton notes. "When the need of the employer is critical or highly specific, the absence of a charge eliminates that money matter as a hurdle. An employee fee might cause a student to hesitate to take the job, and charging the employers might prevent them from checking with us at all."

Employers wishing to contact Horton should do so by calling 967-6102. Or write to Horton at Linn-Benton Community College, Cooperative Work Experience, 6500 SW Pacific Blvd., Albany, OR 97321.

## Misconceptions, myths deter qualified students

Student participation in Cooperative Work Experience (CWE) is not as high as Coordinator Rich Horton would like to see because many students have misconceptions about various aspects of the program.

"People don't understand that CWE credits are transferrable," Horton said. "All four-year public colleges and universities in Oregon accept work experience credits as free electives as long as they carry the LBCC course number. A transfer number."

He adds that many colleges will allow students to transfer CWE credits on a class-waiver basis or "by need." Horton asks that students contact him for more details on these applications of CWE credits.

Some students believe they must be enrolled full-time to qualify for CWE. But that's not true.

A one credit load at LBCC qualifies a student for CWE. We welcome part-time students to contact us," Horton says.

Because CWE gives college credit, another misconception has arisen—that CWE jobs offer no pay. Horton points out that many CWE jobs offer both credit and income to the participating student.

"Students who already work in a job related to their major field sometimes think that they don't qualify because they didn't contact us first, while others think they don't qualify because they aren't currently employed at all. Neither is necessarily the case," he explains.

"The key to a student's current job as a CWE position lies in the learning objectives and evaluation of them," Horton adds. "This is a case-by-case question."

"And a student without a job can begin CWE work if I can work with him to find a suitable and qualifying training site, although until a student is placed he cannot register for CWE."

All LBCC degree programs qualify for CWE.

"Just because a student has never heard of anyone working for credit in his major doesn't mean that it can't be done," Horton said. "Anybody who stops in and asks about it will get an answer from us and an explanation."

This is a paid advertising supplement of the LBCC Student Employment Center.

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