

April 10, 2019

Co-Chair Roblan, Co-Chair Smith Warner, Co-Vice Chair Knopp, Co-Vice Chair Smith and
Members of the Joint Committee on Student Success

Subject: Don't Leave College Students Behind in New Education Funding

Legislators have a once-in-decade opportunity to invest in Oregon students and reform Oregon's tax system, but the current plan laid out in House Bill 2019 leaves college students behind.

By 2020, 65 percent of new jobs are expected to require education and training beyond high school. To provide Oregonians the opportunity they need to thrive and for businesses to help grow the economy, we need to support students from cradle to career. Since Measure 5, Oregon students have seen tuition increases vastly outpace inflation while programs and services have been cut because state investment fell further behind. Student debt is higher than it's ever been.

After nearly 18 years of service in Marketing and Business Development at Tektronix, I was laid off. They had provided my livelihood, and the friends I made there had become a part of my family. The job was part of my identity.

The worst part was that it took me completely by surprise. When I began to contemplate a new career path, I decided I didn't want to return to a large corporate setting. My husband and I had children late in life, and I was looking for a job where I could have greater flexibility. I noticed a number of part time accounting and payroll openings.

I completed my undergraduate degree in Business Management from Cologne University, Germany, and got my MBA from Marylhurst University. To become more marketable, I needed to return to school and complete specific training. I enrolled in PCC's Accounting Certificate program.

After completing the Accounting Certificate, my goal is to first gain hands-on experience with just a few small clients. From there, I hope to eventually start my own small accounting firm, assisting small to medium-sized businesses in the non-profit sector. Learning has been a life-long passion and I look forward to the challenges ahead. Community colleges play a huge role in helping students like me get the training we need to re-enter the workforce.

We urge you to support Governor Kate Brown's call for including post-secondary education in the spending proposal before this committee.

Livia Castrucci