

Enrolled

Senate Concurrent Resolution 12

Sponsored by Senator BURDICK, Representative REYNOLDS; Representative ALONSO LEON
(Pre-session filed.)

Whereas after World War II, veterans returning home needed access to higher education and opportunity; and

Whereas one of those veterans was Stephen Epler, who in 1946 founded the Vanport Extension Center, which later became informally known as Vanport College; and

Whereas Epler secured a location, facilities, faculty and staff in only three months in the city of Vanport, a wartime housing project for shipyard workers that was located between Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, Washington, on reclaimed lowlands along the Columbia River; and

Whereas Vanport was the home of the largest Black community in Oregon at that time; and

Whereas Vanport flooded and was destroyed on May 30, 1948, when a hole in a dike turned into a surge of water; and

Whereas it was students and faculty from Vanport College who first warned the community of the flood; and

Whereas Vanport College refused to close after the flood and instead relocated to Grant High School in Portland for the summer of 1948, before moving to a hastily converted building in the Oregon Shipyard that became known affectionately as “Oregon Ship”; and

Whereas this spirit of resilience led to Vanport College being dubbed “the college that wouldn’t die” in the *Christian Science Monitor* by student Lois Hennessy, a motto which soon appeared on the masthead of the student newspaper, the *Vanguard*; and

Whereas in 1952, Vanport College was renamed the Portland State Extension Center, and the following year it moved to the old Lincoln High School building, which had been purchased by order of Governor Douglas McKay to give the college a permanent home in the heart of downtown Portland; and

Whereas many students and community members campaigned for the establishment of a permanent four-year college in Portland, which at that time was the largest metropolitan area in the United States without a public four-year college; and

Whereas on February 14, 1955, Governor Paul Patterson signed the legislation that made Portland State College a four-year institution; and

Whereas Portland State College officially became Portland State University (PSU) in 1969; and

Whereas Portland State University remains the only public-urban university in the State of Oregon that is located in a large city, and it has grown into Oregon’s most diverse urban public research university, with more than 26,000 students and more than 200 degree programs that serve more low-income, first-generation, transfer and diverse students than any other university in Oregon; and

Whereas Portland State University’s motto is embraced by its students and community to “Let Knowledge Serve the City” and to let knowledge serve the State of Oregon; and

Whereas in 2021, Portland State University will celebrate 75 years of service to the Portland community, offering the opportunity to recognize their achievements, tell true and complicated stories, reflect on challenges and renew its commitment to putting students first; and

Whereas Portland State University’s 75th year comes during a renewed anti-racist movement, making it critically important to keep PSU’s past, present and future community embedded in social justice and service; and

Whereas Portland State University's milestone comes at a turbulent social and political time, amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas Portland State University's community works to embolden each and every person, helping them to create an impact in their own lives and the lives of those around them, empowering people to collectively aim higher, rally around each other and stride into a more meaningful future for everyone; and

Whereas Portland State University started from nothing to become a world-class research university and a recognized leader in making social mobility a reality in Oregon; and

Whereas Portland State University officially recognizes its 75th anniversary on February 14, 2021; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

That we, the members of the Eighty-first Legislative Assembly, commemorate the 75th anniversary of Portland State University and we congratulate PSU, more than 190,000 PSU alumni and all Oregonians on this significant public milestone of service, leadership and contributions to the State of Oregon. Go Viks!

Adopted by Senate April 5, 2021

Lori L. Brocker, Secretary of Senate

Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Adopted by House May 25, 2021

Tina Kotek, Speaker of House