



CAMILLE PREUS, PRESIDENT  
BMCC PENDLETON  
2411 NW CARDEN  
PO BOX 100  
PENDLETON, OR 97801  
541.276.1260

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 10, 2015

Contact: Casey White-Zollman, Vice President Public Relations  
541-278-5839, [cwhitezollman@bluecc.edu](mailto:cwhitezollman@bluecc.edu)

## BMCC commencement to feature largest class ever

PENDLETON, Ore. – The 53<sup>rd</sup> annual Blue Mountain Community College Commencement Ceremony will take place Friday evening (June 12), and will honor 440 graduates – BMCC’s largest graduating class ever by 45 students.

The Commencement Ceremony will take place at 7 p.m. in the McCrae Activity Center, and is open to the public.

The 2015 Commencement speaker is a voice that’s been heard all over the region almost daily for more than three decades. Butch Thurman, operations manager for Capps Broadcast Group (which owns six radio stations in the region), credits BMCC as a major factor in his successful career in radio. As a student at BMCC from 1979-1981, he studied radio broadcasting under the helm of instructor Blaine Hanks, who served as Butch’s mentor up until his death two years ago. Butch earned a job with KUMA AM and FM almost immediately after starting classes at BMCC in 1979. He attended BMCC and worked at KUMA until 1981, when he dropped all but his radio classes – which he took in the mornings – and worked at the radio station in the afternoons. He has now worked in local radio for a total of 21 years, and has spent 35 years in the industry.

In addition to Thurman, President Cam Preus will address the graduates, as will two student speakers: Ashley Clark and Kevin Hawman. In a special twist, Clark’s mother Tammi – a 2009 graduate of BMCC and current BMCC employee – and Hawman’s father Mike – a 1980 graduate of BMCC – will serve as honorary marshals to lead the students into the ceremony. Two additional honorary marshals will lead BMCC faculty and staff into the MAC: Crystal Patton-Doherty, a dental assisting technician instructor and program director at the College, and James Richardson, a mail/freight handler for BMCC.

This year’s graduates came to BMCC from all over Oregon, as well as California, Idaho, Nevada, North Dakota and Washington. Fifteen are veterans, and 125 students will graduate with honors. Early college credit played a prominent role for many, with 153 students graduating with some form of early college credit. In addition, there are six students who will have earned an Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer (AAOT) degree while still in high school.

In addition to Friday evening’s Commencement Ceremony, BMCC’s inmate education program will host a commencement for its graduates at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution at 9:30 a.m. Friday. The program leads the state in the number of GED completers. Also, BMCC’s nursing program will host its pinning ceremony for graduates of the Associate of Applied Science degree in nursing at 3 p.m. in the Bob Clapp Theatre.

###

**BMCC BAKER COUNTY**  
3275 BAKER STREET  
BAKER CITY, OR 97814  
541.523.9127

**BMCC HERMISTON**  
980 SE COLUMBIA DRIVE  
HERMISTON, OR 97838  
541.567.1800

**BMCC MILTON-FREEWATER**  
311 N COLUMBIA  
MILTON-FREEWATER, OR 97862  
541.938.7176

**BMCC MORROW COUNTY**  
PO BOX 939 / 300 NE FRONT STREET  
BOARDMAN, OR 97818  
541.481.2099

BMCC is an equal opportunity educator and employer.