

Recognizing our PACE Community College Risk Management Partners:
Dawn Barth, Interim Manager of Risk and Environmental Health and Safety Programs, Lane Community College

Oregon community colleges have a long-standing tradition of collaboration. This month we want to recognize the collaborative spirit, participation and contribution made by Dawn Barth at Lane Community College (LCC).

Like many of us in risk management, Dawn's path to her current position was not entirely intentional. She has a master's degree in cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation and worked as a rehabilitation specialist. She started at LCC in safety, health and ergonomics. Her position evolved to include risk and emergency management and currently she is the interim manager of risk and environmental health and safety programs and the COVID-19 compliance officer.

Her diverse experience at LCC combined with her academic credentials have made her uniquely experienced for risk management and emergency preparedness, but also all aspects of COVID-19.

When asked to reflect on this past year's changes and challenges, she recalled a statement made to her by LCC President, Dr. Margaret Hamilton. Dr. Hamilton told her "you may not be in an area you thought you would be in, but here you are." Dawn's perspective is that we are here to serve a purpose and it needs to be done well. She received a compliment recently from a staff member who said, "I may not like the decision or guidance you are giving me, but I trust you."

Earning people's trust and having credibility is foundational to risk management success. Dawn's mantra is to be proactive rather than reactive. To that end, Dawn had been working on continuity of operations planning (COOP) when COVID-19 forced remote learning and working. As we move past COVID-19, her future goal is to use the lessons learned from this experience and maintain program development momentum associated with COOP.

Dawn's other priorities post-COVID-19 include achieving a more holistic understanding and control of the compliance issues facing the organization. This is a daunting challenge. These are the types of issues that benefit from peer collaboration, and we will add these topics to our community college conversation agenda for future discussion.

We want to thank Dawn for her ongoing and long-standing participation with community colleges and for sharing her experiences and expertise with us.