

Lane Community College is a community that is continually transformed by the radical embrace and active influence of every member; thereby transforming lives through acts of learning.

When I think about Lane's vision of "transforming lives through learning" I see it as a charge to educate and support the whole person, no matter where they come from or their background. I see it in the kind of spaces we are building together. The Multicultural Center, the Gender Equity Center, and the Longhouse are living, breathing demonstrations of our promises to our students that they are worthy of success – every one of them. The centers are a place where students and employees, who come from low-expectations or are mis-represented, can walk in, look around, and know that: *I am not less than, but equal to.*

The Office of Cultures and Belonging oversees these centers and promotes belonging as foundational to every Lane experience. We champion their lived experiences, connect them to enriching activities, expose them to thoughts and ideas outside their framework, and affirm positive cultural habits of character that buttress their academic and intellectual development. Every culture has seeded dignity and value. Every person deserves to be seen, heard, and respected. And we must also be honest about history, power, harm, and joy, because true belonging requires a chance to repair and rebuild – together. We are building a Lane where belonging is how we engage, who is engaged, and how we W.A.L.C.C. forward together.

Decades ago, the University of Oregon's Bureau of Educational Research spoke of the "clear need" for a community college to meet workforce demands and to help young people "maximize their potential both for themselves and for the society of which they are a part." That charge continues to be true today. Maximizing potential means preparing students for careers and economic stability by nurturing and cultivating their development of self in responsibility to others. We grow the whole person, because a strong community is built on a highly skilled thinkers who respect each other, seek to understand each other, and operate from a place of personal value and pride.

The heart of our work is to "transform lives through learning". We must nurture the "lives" as they learn. Some may come here with experiences of being "less than", but they'll experience knowing they are "equal to". That is what a community college does best!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Pierre VC Morton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Pierre VC Morton
Associate Vice President, Office of Cultures and Belonging
Lane Community College