NEWS RELEASE

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RCC student will give commencement address

Rogue Community College student Julie Townsend will describe her “recipe for success” when she gives the commencement address June 15.

Townsend, who recently completed the RCC Nursing program, will serve as the student speaker for the 42nd annual graduation ceremony. The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Marjorie Holzgang Concert Bowl on the Redwood Campus, 3345 Redwood Hwy., Grants Pass.

Townsend’s address will explore how following a complex recipe correlates to building expertise in life and how certain elements result in success. “You have to go through awkward stages and work your way to mastery,” she says. According to Townsend, that formula includes the following: “Consistency, clear communication, do what you love and love what you do, never stop learning, stay open to change, learn from mistakes and develop mastery in everything you do.”

These guidelines could describe Townsend’s own journey from nursing school, where she earned a 3.9 GPA, to her new profession.

“Once you have mastered a technique, you barely have to look at a recipe again,” said Townsend, a culinary arts devotee, quoting Julia Child. Townsend plans to end her commencement speech with another quote from the famed chef: “Savor life each day, just like a great meal! Bon appétit!”

Originally from Illinois, Townsend earned a bachelor’s degree in communication and theater arts from the University of Iowa. She went on to work in Colorado public radio for 10 years. Townsend and her husband also have owned a landscaping business.

Townsend was drawn to RCC’s Nursing program while looking for a new career path. She was motivated after helping an 85-year-old friend who asked her opinion about health issues and also by the program’s reputation and curriculum.

“The nursing program is amazing,” Townsend said. “I really couldn’t have done it without the help of all the incredible instructors and my fellow students. The faculty have many years of experience, and they all bring their expertise of certain areas of nursing,” she noted. “And I thank the very generous nurses who were willing to take us under their wings for our clinical placements.”

Townsend’s clinical experiences ranged from Head Start to hospital sites. She especially enjoyed working with elders and in intensive care units. She also volunteered with La Clinica del Valle’s mobile unit, traveling to orchards, packinghouses and homeless shelters.

Townsend plans to pursue a bachelor’s degree with a major in nursing from Oregon Health Sciences University while working in a healthcare setting yet to be determined. One possible goal is to become a family nurse practitioner.

“I’m really excited about my future,” she said. “I feel very confident about moving on to the next stage.”

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