Jean Kim looks forward to collaboration with Puget Sound students, faculty, and staff

Reflecting on her first couple of months on campus, newly appointed Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students Jean Kim states, “My first few months have been a confirming experience of initial impressions I had of the university as a very student-centered and collegial community of learners and educators. I look forward to continuing the good work of creating and maintaining an inclusive, welcoming, and diverse living-learning community.”

Kim is a first-generation Asian American who immigrated to the United States from Korea at age 12. She received her doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and had a 25-year career as a senior student affairs administrator at five universities including Stanford University, University of Hartford, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of Colorado at Boulder, and Western New England College.

She took a five-year sabbatical from the academic world and worked as a private management consultant, where she focused on strategic planning and fostering diversity in the work place. Kim is a member and a former director of the board of the National Training Laboratory Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences. She also has served on the board of directors of Boulder County Aids Project and Community Food Share.

Princeton Review ranks Puget Sound among best colleges

University of Puget Sound is once again ranked as one of the nation’s best institutions for undergraduate education, according to The Princeton Review. The New York-based education services company features the college in The Best 361 Colleges (Random House), the 2006 edition of its annual “best colleges” guide. This is the 12th year Puget Sound has been included in the ranking. Only about 15% of the four-year colleges in America and two Canadian colleges are in the book. The book features two-page profiles on the schools and student survey-based ranking lists of top 20 colleges in the book in various categories.

In its analysis of the university, the editors of Princeton Review cite Puget Sound’s strong liberal arts education; highly qualified faculty committed to teaching; small class sizes; high expectations for students; and curious, open-minded student body with a high rate of participation in community service.

If you think “Romeo and Juliet” is all about feuding families and heartbreak, Associate Professor Jacalyn “Jac” Royce wants you to reconsider the classic.

Royce, a seven-year veteran of the University of Puget Sound theatre faculty, is directing the William Shakespeare masterpiece this fall. It’s the first in a series of three Shakespeare penned – or inspired – productions to be mounted at the university.

“We’re informally calling it ‘Three by Bill (More or Less),’” says Royce. “People think because it’s Shakespeare it has to be uptight and outdated. The truth is, ‘Romeo and Juliet’ has some very current messages about two young people whose community fails them.”

Royce says she was drawn to “Romeo and Juliet” because of the opportunities it provides Puget Sound students. All roles were traditionally played by men, so many parts are gender neutral.

“That was huge for me because we’ve had a very strong stage combat class here and this play gives me the freedom to cast women in some of those soldier roles,” she says. “I love how we’re going to be able to meld the ancient sword play with the modern aspect of having women doing the fighting, or, as I call it, ‘babes with blades.’”

Puget Sound theater auditions are open to all students, regardless of experience, but Royce knows Shakespeare can be a bit daunting to the uninitiated. That’s why she held a two-day “Shakespeare Boot Camp” prior to auditions to help students with “some basic concepts about how to get your mouth around all those words.”

“It’s not a foreign language but it’s not the way we talk today, so the grammar usage takes some work,” says Royce. “We’ll work in rehearsals and in one-on-one sessions to make sure every actor knows what he or she means when they speak. That’s what makes or breaks Shakespeare. If the actor knows what she’s saying, the audience will know what she means.”

Curious about those other two “Bill” productions? In spring 2006 John Rindo will direct “Kiss Me, Kate,” which takes its inspiration from Shakespeare’s comedy “The Taming of the Shrew,” and in fall 2006 Geoffrey Proehl will direct “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

In the meantime, the curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 21 for “Romeo and Juliet.” Subsequent productions will be: Oct. 22, 26, 27, 28, and 29 at 7:30 p.m. On Oct. 29 performances are at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets will be available 30 days prior to the opening at the Wheelock Information Center—$11 general, $7 UPS student/faculty/staff/senior citizen/student. Remaining tickets will be available at the door. Call 253.879.3419 to pay by credit card.

—Mary Boone

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