As a 1959 graduate of what was then Yakima Valley Junior College, Theodore S. (Tim) Hopf, Ph.D., has strong ties to the college. The Hopf Union Building and one of the Student Residence Centers on the Yakima campus were named for his parents, Julia and the late Herman (Bim) Hopf.

Dr. Hopf earned a masters degree in speech from Washington State University and a doctorate in speech communication from Pennsylvania State University. He has taught for 33 years at the college and university level and is currently professor of communication at Washington State University, specializing in organizational and interpersonal communication. In addition to his university-related duties, he has had extensive experience as a lecturer, consultant and trainer in both the public and private sectors.

Recently selected as master teacher by the Western States Communication Association, he has published extensively in his field and currently is vice-chair elect for the Speech Communication Association Commission on Communication Apprehension. His professional memberships include the American Counseling Association, the International Communication Association, and the Northwest Communication Association.

Michael S. Bernazzani, Education Service District 105 superintendent, has far surpassed his initial goal as a beginning student at YVCC, which was to graduate from college. "It was important for me to graduate from college. There weren't many in my family who could go to college, let alone graduate."

A 1965 Eisenhower High School graduate, he earned his Associate Degree from YVCC in 1967 and a bachelor of arts in education from the University of Washington in 1969. He completed graduate work in 1985 with a master's degree in education from Central Washington University. He is currently in the doctoral program at Washington State University.

Upon his graduation from the University of Washington, he came back to Yakima as a history teacher for A. C. Davis High School. After three years, Mike had an opportunity to move into administration as an assistant superintendent of the Yakima School District. This move was motivated, he said, by his belief that he could effect changes for kids on a broader scale than in a classroom setting... and that is what he has been doing ever since.

Through many roles, Bernazzani has been working to affect the quality of education--Administrative Assistant for Superintendent of Public Instruction in Olympia; Assistant Executive Director of the Washington State School Directors Association, working as a lobbyist; in 1979 he returned to the Yakima School District as Personnel Officer and three years later became Superintendent for Educational Service District 105, "and I've been here ever since."

Looking back, Bernazzani noted that his student days at YVCC during the 1960s were an important period in his life. "There was a lot going on to stimulate thought." He fondly remembers the debates that took place in class, especially in instructor Paul Anderson's political science class, where there were often heated discussions over the Vietnam war and the draft. And then there were Gordon Howard and James Newbill, two outstanding lecturers on campus, "who brought history alive."

Bernazzani is a strong supporter of the community college system, where "good academic skills can be developed in a more personalized setting before going on to the larger - and often overwhelming - university setting."

Skeet Schmella of Toppenish represents the Class of 1995 as the student speaker during the 66th YVCC Commencement.

A member of Phi Theta Kappa, with a YVCC grade point average of 3.71, Mr. Schmella has also served as a stage technician for our drama department.

Mr. Schmella attended a number of high schools and graduated in 1987, from South Gwinnet in Atlanta, Georgia. He spent six years in the United States Marine Corps and is attending YVCC on the Montgomery GI Bill. This fall, with a double major in anthropology and geology, Mr. Schmella will continue his education at the University of Washington.