Warner Pacific College

Warner Pacific College opened in 1937 as Pacific Bible College in Spokane, Washington. Within three years, founding President A.F. Gray moved the growing college to the south side of Mt. Tabor in Portland. As the curriculum embraced a liberal arts focus, the institution was renamed Warner Pacific College in 1959. Gray believed that the true value of Warner Pacific was “expressed . . . in the kind of contribution the college has made to the spiritual and intellectual development of its students, and its contribution to the well being of society.”

The name honors Daniel Sidney Warner, who helped lead a reform movement establishing the Church of God (headquartered in Anderson, Indiana). The college continued under the leadership of Otto F. Linn (Ph.D., University of Chicago) and Milo Chapman (Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union). The mission of the school was to “be Christian, an accredited liberal arts college, with programs oriented to careers of service and true to the founding church.” In recent years, the college has moved toward recognition of its urban identity, its commitment to diversity, and its responses to social challenges. These characteristics match the institution’s theological heritage within the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition.

Warner Pacific College is the only Church of God institution on the West Coast, and as of fall 2009, it served approximately 1,300 students. Warner Pacific grants two associate, four bachelor, and five master’s degrees. Significant alumni include State Representatives Vic Gilliam and Bill Kennemer; State Senator Rod Monroe; Lyla White, executive director (retired) of the Pasadena Playhouse; Dean Senner, CEO of AOptix Technologies; Jay A. Barber Jr., former executive director of the Oregon Health and Science University Foundation and president emeritus of Warner Pacific College; and Brian Jean, member of the Canadian House of Commons.

Written by Sue Kopp

Further Reading:

Warner Pacific College. www.warnerpacific.edu

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