

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Reporters interested in a speaker interview or covering the event with a media pass may contact Noel Sandberg at [noel@wohesc.org](mailto:noel@wohesc.org) or 503.226.2377.

## **Prominent Female Activists and Change-Leaders to Headline Sustainability Conference for Higher Education**

*February event will also feature Rahmat Shoureshi, new President of Portland State University.*

**November 29, 2017 (PORTLAND, ORE.)** – The Washington & Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC), taking place **February 6-8, 2018**, will bring together educators, administrators, students and faculty to collaborate and promote sustainability in regional institutions of higher education. Attendees will have the opportunity to workshop action items and share ideas, and will leave equipped with next steps to reach their sustainability goals on campus.

“WOHESC amplifies sustainability in our region by bringing together all the pieces of the sustainability puzzle—students, staff, faculty, and community—and allowing them to work and think collaboratively in a way that fosters real and lasting change upon returning to our home institutions” said Jim Simon, Director of Sustainability at Gonzaga University and WOHESC 2018 Advisory Committee Member.

Focusing on diversity and inclusion in 2018, the conference will feature expert leaders who will share their experiences within their respective specialties on topics ranging from meaningful projects that impact the community and the environment, climate resilience, social permaculture and more. Students and attendees will learn proven best practices first-hand, and will leave with actionable takeaways as these speakers set the stage for a conference that inspires change.

The first day of the event will also feature a **Career Fair**, where attendees can break into one of five tracks of programming focused on **Advancing Your Career in Sustainability**, **Preparing the Global Workforce for a Sustainable World**, and **Diversifying the Clean Energy Workforce**. There will also be a facilitated networking and poster session in the main hall.

### **WOHESC 2018 – Keynote Speakers**

**Rahmat Shoureshi | President, Portland State University.** A mechanical engineer, Mr. Shoureshi (pronounced Shoe-re-she) has been a university administrator, researcher and academic for 38 years. He joined the New York Institute of Technology in 2011 as its provost and vice president for academic affairs and was appointed its interim president in January 2017. He was recently named the ninth Portland State University president.

**Jessica Finn Coven | Chief Resilience Officer, City of Seattle, Office of Sustainability & Environment.** Jessica Finn Coven is Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) for the City of Seattle, a new position created to lead citywide resilience building efforts to help Seattle prepare for, withstand, and bounce back from “shocks” – catastrophic events like heat waves and floods – and “stresses” – longer term pressures like climate change, income inequality,

and impacts from Seattle's unprecedented growth. Finn Coven currently also serves as Director of Seattle's Office of Sustainability & Environment.

**Brian Gibbs, Ph.D., M.P.A. | Vice President, Equity and Inclusion, OHSU.** In his position, Dr. Brian Gibbs serves as the chief diversity officer for OHSU, overseeing the Center for Diversity & Inclusion (CDI) and is responsible for institutional diversity and inclusion initiatives within the clinical, educational, and research missions.

**Pandora Thomas | Teacher, Speaker, Writer, Designer.** Pandora's work emphasizes the benefits of applying ecological principles to social design. She is an expert on topics ranging from diversity, social justice, youth and women's leadership, social entrepreneurship permaculture, and sustainability.

Ticket packages are available for university faculty, staff and students, and students may be eligible for a Conference Scholarship. Tickets range from \$50-\$250, and Early Bird pricing ends December 19. Tickets available at [wohesc.org/register](http://wohesc.org/register) or via phone at 503-226-2377.

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### **Event Details**

WOHESC 2018, presenting host Portland State University

**Tuesday, February 6 – Thursday, February 8, 2018**

Portland State University | Smith Memorial Student Union

Tickets available at [wohesc.org/register](http://wohesc.org/register) or via phone at 503-226-2377.

### **About WOHESC**

The Washington & Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC) is produced by Social Enterprises, Inc., a social impact event organization committed to enhancing local communities by creating high-level, revenue-generating, innovative events that educate attendees and help create a socially-driven, sustainably minded world. Social Enterprises is a proud B Corporation committed to producing sustainable events that minimize environmental impacts and make positive economic and social impacts on the communities we touch. More at [wohesc.org](http://wohesc.org).