To fully understand the life of Linus Carl Pauling, one would have to be an acclaimed chemist. And a physicist. And a tireless humanitarian. A nutrition expert. An author. An educator. And, of course, a loving family man. Linus Pauling was all of those things and more.

The world has never seen an individual win two unshared Nobel Prizes—except for Linus Pauling. That is one reason why, a hundred years after his birth in 1901, his legacy still shines brightly at Oregon State University.

The Valley Library houses Pauling’s Nobel medals, scientific papers and other memorabilia in the vast Pauling Collection that includes more than 500,000 items. The Linus Pauling Institute, which relocated to OSU from Stanford University, has a growing international reputation for its research into the health effects of vitamins and micronutrients. The Ava Helen and Linus Pauling Lecture in World Peace annually draws world-renowned speakers to campus. And the list goes on.

Born February 28, 1901, in Portland, Pauling came to Oregon Agricultural College where he excelled as a student. The precocious Pauling taught chemistry classes as an undergraduate and met a young student named Ava Helen Miller, whom he married in 1923, one year after graduating with a chemical engineering degree.

Pauling joined the faculty of Cal Tech and remained there for 40 years. He later headed the Linus Pauling Institute, and established laboratories for the study of vitamin C and micronutrients that eventually moved to OSU.

Much of Pauling’s early research dealt with how atoms bond. He developed the “valence bond” theory of chemical bonding that defined chemistry. In 1948, he discovered the alpha helix, which helped lead to the description of the double helix structure of DNA. His application of chemical bonding theory to biology led to advancements in fighting sickle cell anemia and mental diseases.

Pauling’s knowledge of chemistry and biology led him to become a passionate opponent of nuclear testing. He set in motion a petition to ban nuclear weapons testing that was signed by more than 11,000 scientists around the world. That success led to his Nobel Peace Prize.

Later in Pauling’s career, he became fascinated with vitamin C. He was convinced that it could help combat and prevent the common cold and flu, and could be effective in improving conditions for some cancer patients.

“Pauling had this encyclopedic knowledge of chemistry, physics, and biology,” said Stephen Lawson of the Linus Pauling Institute. “His range of knowledge was truly incredible.”

Many scholars believe that Linus Pauling and Albert Einstein were the two greatest scientists of the 20th century.
About the Pauling Collection

In the spring of 1986, Linus Pauling announced he would give all of his scientific papers, books, letters, awards and memorabilia to his alma mater, Oregon State University. The gift was extraordinary because Pauling had kept virtually everything related to his brilliant, multi-faceted career.

Today the Pauling Collection, which includes about 500,000 items, is housed in The Valley Library at OSU, where it is studied by scholars of science, history and peace studies.

Among the collection's notable items:

- The original petition for nuclear disarmament that Pauling circulated, containing the signatures of 11,000 scientists and Nobel laureates around the world.
- All of the original research notebooks Pauling ever wrote, recording his ideas, scientific theories, personal notes to himself and an occasional love note to or from his wife, Ava Helen Pauling.

More information on the Pauling Collection is available online at: oregonstate.edu/ dept/Special_Collections/

Film and Culture

With wry wit and an academic’s analytical mind, Jon Lewis has been teaching film and cultural studies in the English Department at OSU since 1983. He cheerfully admits that he’s got one of the best jobs at Oregon State University, teaching courses on film and culture. His research interest is focused on Hollywood. And he has a growing reputation as an author and a critic of the film industry.


In his new book, Lewis points out the absurdity of the Hollywood rating system, and argues that the studios devised the system as a way to control the profits of films more than their content. But despite his cynical view of how Hollywood regulates itself, he still is an unabashed film lover.
Black Poets Society

Melvin Young isn’t out to change the whole world, just one little piece of it. And he wants to do it one verse at a time.

A junior in English, Young is fascinated with poetry. When he arrived at Oregon State, however, he couldn’t find a natural outlet for his artistic side. So he took matters into his own hands.

Young created a new organization on campus, the Black Poets Society, devoted to reading, writing and sharing poetry. The group is inclusive—for one, you don’t have to be African American to participate. “Actually,” Young said, “we encourage anyone who loves poetry to join in.” And jazz music and free verse have been added to the group’s lively monthly meetings, which are held at Corvallis-area coffee shops.

Young hopes to continue his poetry after graduation, when he plans to pursue a career in law. In the meantime, he may become a messiah for poetry.

“I’d like to start a poetic revolution and get young people more interested in poetry.”

In this photograph, Melvin Young, at the microphone, and Kalup Alexander energize the audience with freestyling poetry expression, while Jim Ku and Belton Lubas provide the backup.
Making an Art of Precollege Programs

An increasing number of high schools throughout the Northwest are reluctantly shutting down their programs in the arts to save money. These cuts have left a number of talented students without the specialized training in the arts that they need. Oregon State University is taking a leadership role in filling that void.

The Jumpstart program offered by the OSU Department of Art is the prototype for these new efforts at offering quality curriculum in the arts. Begun in 1994, Jumpstart is a three-week pre-college visual arts workshop aimed at talented teens from ages 15 to 18.

Students get specialized instruction in traditional art forms, including drawing, sculpture, photography and printmaking, and in non-traditional forms, from digital communication to graphic design. Students also attend seminars on dance, music and theatre, and meet professionals in the field. During their three-week stay, they will produce a portfolio of work that is critiqued and exhibited.

“Jumpstart cannot replace the programs lost in high school budget cuts,” said program director John Maul. “But we can offer professional instruction and a three-week ‘immersion’ in specialized topics that high schools would be hard-pressed to emulate.”

The program has grown in size and reputation each year. The Coca-Cola Foundation and the Department of Art co-sponsor workshop scholarships, which help attract low-income students, and the department also offers full scholarships to two Jumpstart students each year.

A similar program in the Department of Music is aimed at talented high school vocalists. This six-day residential music camp has been offered for the last 10 years and it, too, grows each year. Students study singing and stage performance with OSU faculty, taking small group and solo lessons. At the end of the week, they create an energetic final public performance.

OSU’s University Theatre is also taking the plunge. It now offers a unique pre-college summer theatre camp for high school students, teaching them skills in period-style work including Shakespeare, Molière, and Greek tragedies and comedies.

“To my knowledge, this is one of the only summer theatre camps around for kids that focuses on classic acting,” said Marion O. Rossi of the University Theatre. “One of our goals is to encourage students of all ages to study, understand and truly appreciate the value of classic texts, particularly Shakespeare.”

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Singer and the Stage

Jumpstart

ClassicQuest