

# THE WESTERN FRONT

Winner of seven 2013 Society of Professional Journalists Awards

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## Schreiber sets scoring record



Joey Schreiber goes in for a layup Thursday, Jan. 8 in Sam Carver Gymnasium against Montana State University Billings. He set a new university record of 38 points. See page 15. // Photo by Kristin Foster

## Fighting for diversity

*A founder of the Ethnic Student Center continues to promote ethnic diversity education at Western*

**Monea Kerr**

THE WESTERN FRONT

One of the founding members of Western's Ethnic Student Center will continue his legacy of advocacy for multicultural education.

Michael Vendiola, University of Washington doctoral student

and Western undergrad alumnus, will share his research in a presentation about the development of the College of Ethnic Studies at Western.

Vendiola's lecture will take place on Tuesday, Jan. 13 from 4-5 p.m. in the Goltz-Murray Archives Building.

Historically, the effort to create ethnic studies programs came from the community in order to motivate curricular activities beneficial to students of color, Vendiola said.

His motivation comes from society's current struggle with the same issues.

"We still see a lot of conflict in American society based on race," Vendiola said. "I think we owe it to ourselves as an American society to provide an educational process that can help alleviate that issue before it becomes a volatile situation."

see VENDIOLA, page 6

## Health Center to change medical excuse policy

**Angel Laycock**

THE WESTERN FRONT

A note from doctors at Western's Student Health Center for missing a class will no longer be easy to get.

The health center will not provide students medical excuses

for missing class or exams as the result of minor illnesses or injuries.

The health center classifies a minor illness or injury as an absence of less than five consecutive weekdays, Dr. Emily Gibson, health center director, said in

an email.

One of the reasons for the policy change is limited staff and resources, according to the Medical Excuse Policy on the health center website.

The policy states the health center would like to have their staff and

resources focused on as many students in need of care as possible, rather than providing short-term medical excuses for absences.

Students are able to access their medical charts and dates of

see SHC, page 7

## ON THE WEB Rec Center changes

Read More:

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**Monea Kerr**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Wade King Student Recreation Center is ringing in the New Year with renovations to its three-court gym.

The three-court gym, located in the lower level of the recreation center, re-opened on Saturday, Dec. 27 after undergoing a complete refinishing.

Peter Lockhart, assistant director for facility management at Western's Campus Recreation Services, said that the court could be used for many sports including basketball, volleyball, badminton and dodgeball.

Junior Greg Murashige said that he is impressed with how shiny the court is now. He is looking forward to using the newly finished court to play basketball, Murashige said.

"[The court] is really nice," Murashige said. "I haven't played on it yet, but I'm sure that it will help me play nicely."

Larger projects like this are paid for with the maintenance reserve fund, with \$50,800 being dedicated to this specific project, Lockhart said. Product failure was the main reason for the refinishing, he said.

"We had some [flooring] finish problems a couple years ago, so we wanted to get those taken out," Lockhart said.

Reducing the court down to wood was the only way to fix these problems, Lockhart said. The new finishing is water-based, which made it brighter and more natural looking. Fresh lines were also painted, he said.

"We're pleased with the way it turned out," Lockhart said.

The new finish should last at least 10 years, and the court will continue to receive its normal topcoat every year until then, Lockhart said.

The court is now open for regular use.



The newly renovated three-court gym sits empty in the Wade King Student Recreation Center.

// Photo by Monea Kerr



Soul explosion at The Green Frog. See page 10-11



Soccer transfer plans for Western. See page 14



Rains cause flooding in farmland. See page 7



## FROM ONE YOYO TO ANOTHER



Zach Shuttee, senior, during his first week back at Western stands in the sunlight practicing yo-yo. Shuttee has been yo-yoing since elementary school.// Photo by Maddie Takata

# Welcoming in a new quarter

We all have stories. You have a story, I have a story. Our lives are made up of moments worth chuckling about with our grand kids. I have always been fascinated by people's stories. One of my earliest memories is looking down at my grandfather's hands. They were wrinkled, worn, each line representing a moment in time.

Learning other people's stories is what prompted me to become a journalist. And it shapes my view of what The Western Front should aspire to be: an outlet for Western students, faculty and alumni to share their experiences. This is 2015 and the world is changing, and newspapers must change too. It is no longer enough for journalists – whether students or professionals – to tell readers the news. No, our jobs have become more complex. We must reach out to readers and understand the issues and events that concern them.

I firmly believe in a bottom-up approach to journalism.

Journalists may shape the news, but we are only as influential as you, the reader, allow us to be.

The Western Front is certainly not just my newspaper. And it does not belong to the journalism department, or the university administration. This newspaper belongs to you. Simply by reading these words, you take ownership. Over the course of this quarter I plan to change our content in a number of ways. As the quarter unfolds, we will publish more multimedia stories. We also will begin development of a mobile app, in an attempt to follow our audience to their cell phones.

Moving forward, I hope to encourage more reader engagement. Send us emails, write us letters, drop by the newsroom and speak with us in person. This is your newspaper, and we depend on your involvement.

— John Boone, Editor-in-Chief, The Western Front

## Upcoming events

Friday, January 9

### Snowshoe Hike

What: 4 mile snowshoe trip with the Mount Baker Club.  
When: 9 a.m.  
Where: Meet behind the Maple Falls Shell for carpools.  
Cost: Free. Northwest Forest parking pass required.

### Skylark's Hidden Cafe

What: Live music in Fairhaven  
When: 8 a.m. – midnight  
Where: Skylark's Hidden Cafe  
1308 11th St.  
Cost: \$8 to \$12

Saturday, January 10

### Skagit River Bald Eagles

What: Presentation by Craig Romano followed by a guided hike  
When: 11 a.m.  
Where: Depart from Sunnyland School at 9:15 a.m.  
Cost: \$10 suggested carpool fee

### Dead Parrots Society Show

What: Dead Parrots Society Competition Showcase  
When: 8 p.m.  
Where: Performing Arts Center 199  
Cost: \$4

## Cops Box

Bellingham Police

### Jan. 6, 6:45 a.m.

Officers responded to a report of an individual claiming she was being chased. It was determined that the individual had mental problems and was transported to the hospital.

### Jan. 6, 1:17 p.m.

Report of a bicycle that was found halfway down a cliff on Electric avenue.

### Jan. 7, 4:09 p.m.

Verbal domestic dispute between boyfriend and girlfriend.

### Jan. 7, 10:27 p.m.

An officer responded to loud party complaint.

Events calendar compiled by  
Lindy Holmberg  
Cops Box compiled by Paige Heine.

## The Western Front

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## Corrections

The Western Front strives for accuracy and will correct errors of fact promptly and courteously. Please notify us of any factual errors at westernfrontonline@gmail.com.



# New name reflects department evolution

*Change attempt to capture changing nature of department*

**Brenna Visser**

THE WESTERN FRONT

The Department of Physical Education, Health, and Recreation will be known as the Department of Health and Human Development starting Fall 2015.

This is an effort to help prepare students to contribute to the health and development of society, said Charles Sylvester, the chair of the department.

"The present name doesn't do [the department] justice," Sylvester said.

The department consists of three separate programs: Kinesiology and Physical Education, Community Health and Recreation.

Sylvester has worked at Western for 31 years, and said that this change is not something that "burst on the scene," but a series of conversations discussing a name that would reflect the similarities between the programs.

The name change also incorporates more of the value of the study of the human body involved with kinesiology, the most populous major of the depart-

*"Even though it's more broad, the new name will enhance opportunities for Kinesiology students as far as acceptance into medical programs,"*

**Rachel Albert**

Western junior and student of Kinesiology

ment, he said.

The department faculty voted for the name change. Students had no formal vote in the name change, and some students expressed concern about the identity of individual majors being lost, he said.

Through informal feedback, however, Sylvester said he felt the change was well supported by students.

Marisa Sernandez, a sophomore in the kinesiology program, said she agrees that the new name reflects what the department is about.

"I think [the new name] brings in the health aspect of it," Sernandez said. "That's an important part that you wouldn't really

know about with the original title."

Sylvester said all other departmental business will remain the same. The costs of physical changes, such as envelopes and letterhead, will be minimal, he said. The biggest change will be in public perception, Sylvester said.

"It's just going to bring more attention to what we're already doing," he said. "We wanted to convey more than the subjects; we wanted to make it explicit the contribution we're making to society."

Another factor in changing the name has to do with how the department is appealing to the state legislature. Sam Carver Gym-

nasium is on schedule for renovation next summer, but is stalled because of lack of funds from the legislature, Sylvester said.

Sylvester hopes the rebranding will help politicians in Olympia see the value in what graduates from the program are doing for the public, and that might mean greater support for the renovations, he said.

Rachel Albert, a junior in the Kinesiology program, chose the major based on its popularity and the quality preparation it gives you, she said.

Albert is planning to pursue a medical career and become a physician's assistant. She can see why some students in the physical ed-

ucation department could feel the identity of their program is lost, she said. However, the more general name, Department of Health and Human Development, is advantageous to all, and will increase credibility, Albert said.

"Even though it's more broad, the new name will enhance opportunities for Kinesiology students as far as acceptance into medical programs," Albert said.

The department plans to make programs more accessible to students by clearly communicating via course catalogs, the Western website and documents from the Office of Admissions, Sylvester said.

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## JANUARY

- |    |  |    |                            |
|----|--|----|----------------------------|
| 9  | Rocco DiPietro/Cristina Valdes Guest Recital – 8:00 PM | 23 | WWU Opera Scenes – 7:30 PM |
| 22 | Anjani Briggs Junior Voice Recital – 5:00 PM           | 24 | WWU Opera Scenes – 7:30 PM |

## FEBRUARY

- |    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1  | Maria Sampen, Violinist – 3:00 PM                 | 19 | Robert Creigh Junior Guitar Recital – 5:00 PM |
| 2  | WWU Symphony Orchestra – 8:00 PM                  | 21 | Raisa Asriyants – 8:00 PM                     |
| 6  | Sanford Hill Piano Series Beatrice Rana – 7:30 PM | 25 | WWU Jazz Area – 8:00 PM                       |
| 7  | High School Men's Festival – 8:00 AM              | 26 | Wind Symphony – 8:00 PM                       |
| 10 | Concert Choir – 8:00 PM                           | 27 | Contemporary Chamber Players – 8:00 PM        |
| 18 | Heavy Metal Concert – 7:30 PM                     |    |   |

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# Police department revives the beat cop

*New police department program will provide neighborhood presence*

**Kaylee Botting**

THE WESTERN FRONT

Starting this month, Bellingham Police will assign Neighborhood Patrol Officers across Bellingham neighborhoods and around Western's campus, allowing the community closer access to officers.

The Neighborhood Police Officers will not be responding to 911 calls, so they're allowed the opportunity to be fully committed to the neigh-

borhoods, Lt. Robert Vander Yacht of the Bellingham Police Department said.

"The officers will be unattached to direct patrol response so they can spend more focused time when an issue comes up," he said.

Not all problems require a badge or authority, Vander Yacht said. The officers will help people learn to resolve certain problems without contacting the authorities.

"If they can get people to talk to each other in a safe

and progressive way then that's great. We should be able to do that," he said.

Dante Alexander and Eric Osterkamp will be the first police officers assigned to the Bellingham NPO program. Both were chosen based on their experience and effectiveness within the community.

Together, the officers will serve the 23 neighborhoods in Bellingham, with Alexander covering the north side and Osterkamp serving the

south side. A map of the specific areas can be found on the City of Bellingham website.

"For this program to be successful, we need officers who are self starters and have community relationships," Vander Yacht said. "Both officers were chosen for this program because they had the best track record and those kinds of interactions."

The Bellingham Police Department will improve communication with the community by having the two officers dedicated to citizen interaction, he said.

However, for some issues in the community the NPO's will not be the specific answer but they will be able to use their resources to help solve the concern.

"If there is a road that people tend to drive too fast through, the NPO's can contact the public work sign shop," Vander Yacht said. "Then they might be able to put speed sign or speed control devices in an area."

Even if NPO's are not solutions to problems, the community can be satisfied with the fact that there will be an extra set of hands within their neighborhood, he said.

"I am excited about the new program, I think it has the ability to go either way but overall it should help, I don't see why it wouldn't," said sophomore Madison Guillen.

Guillen lives in one of the neighborhoods being monitored by Officer Osterkamp.

"It has the ability to go either way, but overall it should help," she said.

Students at Western students are also a part of this program because many of them live in the neighborhoods and have just as much access to the program as anyone else, Vander Yacht said.

One purpose of implementing NPO's is to provide more opportunities to engage with people. Vander Yacht hopes the new program will strengthen the relationship between the community and the police department with dialogue, he said.

To contact the Neighborhood Police Officers, call the Bellingham Police Department at 360-778-8800 and ask to speak with a NPO. The officers' direct phone numbers and email address will be linked on the City of Bellingham website.



**Bellingham Police Officer Eric Osterkamp**// Photo courtesy of the Bellingham Police Department



**Bellingham Police Officer Dante Alexander**// Photo courtesy of Bellingham Police Department.

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# Western dance instructor receives grant

*Money will help bring international dancers to her Bellingham studio*

**By Nick Belcaster**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Whatcom County is due to receive a taste of international dancing in 2015 following a \$10,000 grant recently awarded to Bellingham dance studio Kuntz and Company.

The National Endowment for the Arts grant will bring three dancers and their companies from across the world to perform in locations around the county in what Kuntz and Company calls the World Dance Project, said Pam Kuntz, founder and artistic director of Kuntz and Company.

Known as the Challenge America grant, the award is offered to smaller organizations in areas where the local population's opportunities to experience the arts are restricted by their location, ethnicity, economics or disability, according to the National Endowment for the Arts website.

Kuntz, who is also a senior dance instructor at Western, said a major inspiration for the World Dance Project is a dance class she currently teaches at Western called Movement and Culture.

In her course, Kuntz brings in guest artists and requires her students to attend an event outside of class, she said. From this, Kuntz said she gained a greater appreciation of the dance opportunities available in Whatcom County.

"We have a lot of dance happening all around us," Kuntz said. "It just takes a push, or a grade, to go ahead and experience some of it."

With the goal of bringing more international flavor to the Bellingham dance scene,

Kuntz applied for the Challenge America grant and received word that the company had been chosen on Nov. 26, she said.

"I was crying and couldn't finish reading the message," Kuntz said. "I was overwhelmed, completely overwhelmed."

A condition of the grant requires the recipient to provide an additional \$10,000 match to the initial \$10,000 grant toward funding the recipient's project, according to the National Endowment for the Arts website. This additional amount will be funded by the Allied Arts of Whatcom County, the Whatcom Family and Community Network, the Lummi Nation, Kuntz and Company and Western's College of Fine and Performing Arts, Kuntz said.

Kuntz and Company employs many Western alumni as dancers as well as in the background of their productions, Kuntz said. She said she believes that in the same way students can continue their art after college working with the company, the



**Kuntz Grant: Dancers from Brazil perform capoeira, a Brazilian art form. The dancers will be part of the World Dance Project at Kuntz and Company in February. // Photo courtesy of Pam Kuntz**

grant is a huge success, she said. "Funding from the National Endowment for the Arts is incredibly competitive, especially for this par-

ticular Challenge America grant, so this is a very exciting and special opportunity," Mahler said.

The World Dance Project has lined up three dance residencies for 2015, Kuntz said. The first will occur in

February and feature Brazilian dancer Silvio Alexio Dos Reis, a performer who specializes in capoeira, a Brazilian art form. The following two will occur in fall

of 2015 and include West African dancer Etienne Cakpo and a to-be-decided team of bhangra dancers, a tradition from India and Pakistan.

Logistics are still being sorted for each of the dancers' visits, and Western stu-

*"We have a lot of dance happening all around us. It just takes a push, or a grade, to go ahead and experience some of it."*

**Pam Kuntz, founder and artistic director of Kuntz and Company**

World Dance Project is an opportunity for all students to experience dance outside of the classroom.

Western alumna Ella Mahler said she began work-

ing for Kuntz and Company immediately after graduating as a dancer and development director, a position that included applying for fund-raising grants. For her, Kuntz and Company winning the Challenge America

grant is a huge success, she said. "Funding from the National Endowment for the Arts is incredibly competitive, especially for this par-

February and feature Brazilian dancer Silvio Alexio Dos Reis, a performer who specializes in capoeira, a Brazilian art form. The following two will occur in fall

dents are invited to volunteer to help with the residences, Kuntz said. Students who are interested can contact Pam Kuntz at 360-510-4711 or kuntzpam@gmail.com.

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# VENDIOLA: Alumnus, dedicated to education, speaks at Western

*continued from page 1*

Western's Associated Student President Annika Wolters became acquainted with Vendiola during his last year at the ESC when she was a freshman, and she agrees with his assessment.

"In my opinion, the biggest difference is in individuals' attitude. Today it seems like a lot of people are thinking that it's not as bad, it's not the same or the civil rights movement is over. It seems that people think that way, but it's not over."

Wolters uses the analogy of a volcano when describing the civil rights era and the social struggles which contributed to the creation of the College of Ethnic Studies.

"Movements are like volcanoes. They appear to not be doing anything, but they are churning and moving inside," she said.

Part of the solution to these complex problems is cross-cultural education, Vendiola said.

The lecture is titled "Relating to Race: The College of Ethnic Studies at Western Washington State College," and will cover the history behind the College of Ethnic Studies that opened in 1969 alongside Fairhaven College and Huxley College of the Environment.

Vendiola said that the College of Ethnic Studies lost support in 1974 and was ultimately

taken off of the catalogue in 1978, but the other two colleges remain intact today. The idea of these cluster colleges — or smaller innovation colleges — was created to meet the demand of a more diverse student body.

"[Western] was experiencing high enrollment, so they were trying to figure out a way to address the educational needs of all the incoming students," Vendiola said.

As one of these cluster colleges, the College of Ethnic Studies was its own entity, complete with a specific set of staff, faculty and students. Vendiola said. He said that ethnic studies programs at most colleges are embedded in other programs.

"My research focuses on the development, like what the catalyst was, to create the College of Ethnic Studies," Vendiola said.

Vendiola transferred to Western from Whatcom Community College in the late 80s in order to get involved with ethnic student programs.

He became a member of the Ethnic Student Alliance and banded together with such groups as the Black Student Union, the Native American Student Union, the Asian and Pacific Islander Student Union on Western's campus.

"They were a dynamic group

of students who were pretty visionary about their goals and what they determined was needed at Western," Vendiola said.

As a product of the Ethnic Student Alliance's efforts, the ESC at Western was opened in 1991. Vendiola later worked at Western for 13 years as the coordinator of the ESC. He said that an effort to revive the College of Ethnic Studies is something that has been on the minds of students he has worked with, but no action has been taken yet.

Through being involved in

the creation and management of the organization, Vendiola has been a part of the evolution, development and progression of the ESC at Western.

Nate Panelo, the current coordinator for the Ethnic Student Center at Western, said that Vendiola was his mentor when he was a student.

"He set us up for a really bright future for this organization and built it from the bottom up," Panelo said.

Vendiola has always been relatable and sought to help students of color navigate the university system, Panelo said.

Vendiola is highly respected on campus and was one of the first staff people that he became close with, he said.

"He is widely known as a very approachable individual who really cares about the issues on campus, especially surrounding students of color," Panelo said.

Recently taking on a new position as the director of the Office of Native Education for the State of Washington, Vendiola will be working in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction based in Olympia.



**Michael Vendiola speaks at the 2013 Northwest Indian Youth Conference.** // Photo courtesy of Michael Vendiola

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# Record flooding affecting farmland

**Mirabelle Blech**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Heavy rainfall on Jan. 4 and 5 triggered increases in local water levels leading to a flood in some areas around Bellingham, according to The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service.

A combined 2.44 inches of rainfall fell in a 24-hour period, causing a spike of nearly 9 feet of additional water in the Skagit Valley River near Mount Vernon, according to the Weather Service.

Water levels are considered a flood at 25 feet, and the Skagit Valley River peaked at 25.78

feet on Jan. 6.

While there are no flash flood warnings currently issued by the National Weather Service, fluctuations in water level can affect future floodings, said Dr. Eric Grossman, an adjunct research faculty at Western's geology department.

Grossman is leading a project for the United States Geological Survey on coastal habitats of Puget Sound, focusing on local large river deltas.

A researcher for the USGS, Grossman is working with undergraduate students, graduate students and student volunteers from the geology department, as well as the Huxley College of the Environment, to measure

flow and depth changes of the Skagit River and to study a new fork in the river.

Kristina Gustovich, a graduate student under the advisement of Grossman, said the new tributary has quickly widened over the course of about a month, coinciding with the new record rainfall.

"[Students] are being recruited to measure stream flow and sample suspended bed sediment, map bathymetry and submerged vegetation habitats, measure water levels, tides, current velocities, turbidity, temperature and salinity," she said.

Part of this work is studying how land use and climate change are affecting physical

processes, habitats and ecosystem restoration planning in lower rivers and coastal systems, Grossman said.

Researchers are finding high waters are transporting a lot of sediment, which have been filling up channels and making flooding more likely in the future.

Grossman and his team have also been examining the effects of sediment travel. Sediment may be diverted from areas where it is necessary for the environment and that movement can completely change other habitats, such as salmon spawning, seagrasses and shellfish, Grossman said.

Seasonally, the rivers re-

ceive more sediment in the winter when there is more rainfall including more rain on snow, Grossman said.

"This drives much higher river floods," Grossman said. "[The area gets] probably 70 to 80 percent of the annual movement of sediment in one to three winter storm events or rainfall flood events."

In putting information together, Grossman and his team encourage people to plan for flood management and climate change.

Local residents can refer to the National Weather Service, Washington State Department of Transportation and county websites for flood warnings.



**A field remains flooded beside Sunset Road on Thursday, Jan. 8 in the Bow-Edison area in Skagit County.**

// Photo by Margaret Degman

## SHC: New policy designed to reduce wait times, improve service

*continued from page 1*

clinic visits online if documentation is required from an instructor for an absence, Dr. Gibson said.

In order to access medical charts online, the SHC staff will send all follow-up electronic correspondence to the patients' Western email to log in and view charts including labs and X-ray results.

Dr. Gibson has periodically asked faculty to review the class attendance policy over the last 20 years. Some faculty require a medical excuse for absences.

"As much as 20 percent of

our daily clinic volume can be simply for excuses," Dr. Gibson said.

The wait time at the health center varies depending on whether students have an appointment and what time of day they come in, Dr. Gibson said. For some students who come into the health center after 2 p.m., the wait time can get up to 2 hours long if they don't have an appointment, she said.

Junior Jasmine Gerraty was worried after hearing about the policy change.

"I think that it could possibly be a problem depending

on how strict the attendance policies are for the different teachers," she said.

Many faculty members are willing to alter their attendance policies in order to allow the students to stay home and rest when they are sick, rather than involving the health center just to acquire a medical excuse to bring to their professors, Dr. Gibson said.

She and the rest of the health center staff hope that the new policy will not intimidate students from going to the health center for treatment, Dr. Gibson said.

Students should still contact the health center to talk to a nurse over the phone if they are unsure if they need to go to the health center to seek medical attention, she said.

Western is joining other universities that have already adopted similar "no medical excuses" policies. Washington State University has such a policy, according to WSU Health & Wellness Services.

"The instructor may require the student to submit a written explanation of the absence, but written excuses from health care

personnel should not be required, since these requests frequently put the health care personnel in untenable positions," according to the WSU Health & Wellness Service website.

The policy can be viewed on the Western health center website under "Medical Excuse Policy." Dr. Gibson anticipates no new developments will occur with this policy, but staff at the health center will be listening to feedback from the students, staff and faculty to understand what improvements can be made.

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# Guffa-ha-ha-ingham

*Western alumnus brings local comedians to perform center stage*

Brenna Visser  
THE WESTERN FRONT

One black stool and a microphone stand sit side by side on a green-hued stage. Chatter, laughter and whistles of affirmation fill the air of The Green Frog Acoustic Tavern as the first performer takes the stage. A woman in overalls grabs the microphone and an audience member screams, "We love you! You're doing great!" The crowd laughs. This is the start of Guffawingham, a comedian's open mic night.

It started with a group of self-proclaimed comedians and an overcrowded bar, Guffawingham creator and Western alumnus Timmy Riney said.

"[Comedians in Bellingham] needed another show," Riney said. "The only open mic show was at Glow [Nightclub] and each act was three to four hours long, which was getting ridiculous."

Guffawingham, a local, open mic comedy night held at The Green Frog, will be celebrating its two-year anniversary in March, making it the longest running comedy open mic night in Bellingham.

The name was inspired by guffaw, a synonym for laugh.

"It's like how an old snooty person would say," Riney joked.

Riney found his way into stand-up comedy when a friend brought him to a variety show at Glow about four or five years ago, he said. The show was short an act, and by process of peer pressure and general curiosity, he decided to jump on stage and said whatever came to mind.

That's where he met Neill McLaughlin, a local comedian, who introduced him to other comedians in the area and to the world of stand-up. Soon, after many long shows, a sect of the comedians who performed at Glow started to bond as self-proclaimed comedians with an idea to create an open mic show.

Riney and Dave Schwitz, a friend Riney met through McLaughlin, decided to approach co-owner of The Green Frog, James Hardesty, with an their idea, which Hardesty not only approved, but made a weekly show.

At first, Riney and his friends were a little worried.

On the first few nights, the comedians were performing to a room full of other comedians, Riney said. The group was struggling to fill the time.

"We didn't know how to do a weekly show. When we first started, everyone did 10 minutes and that was ridiculous," Riney said.

But soon, the word started to spread about a

new comedy venue thanks to the steady stream of college students in attendance at the shows. Suddenly, those 10-minute spots shrunk down to five minutes, and that audience of comedians turned into 50 to 60 community members per night.

"The last few times I've been there have been the greatest I've seen it," senior Steven Stilwell said. He has been attending the event for the last year. "We've had the sign-up sheet fill up five minutes after it's posted. We've had standing room only."

Stilwell started going with his friend and stand-up comedian Claire Jones, who is a Western alumna.

Six months later, after much prodding from his friends, Stilwell decided to transition from being audience member to becoming a performer.

"We've got people in the mid- to late 30s who do this for fun, and we've got college students, so it's very much a mix up of all walks of life and all sorts of experiences," Stilwell said.

Jones, a friend of Stilwell, entered the comedy scene in a new and different way because of a not-so-funny reason: a break up.

"When [my boyfriend and I] broke up, I knew he wanted to try stand-up. Out of revenge and curiosity, I said 'I'm going to try it first!'" Jones joked. "Then it accidently went really well, so I tried it again."

After a few awkward silences and stumbles, Jones soon came to love more just than the beer and grilled cheese at The Green Frog; she loved the family-like culture. She started to develop material and The Green Frog became her comedy home base. It was her start.

Jones has moved on to performing at comedy clubs in Seattle and made it to the semifinals of NBC's "Stand Up" in Vancouver, British Columbia. It wasn't her plan to find herself in the semifinals in a national competition, but it nevertheless fed her love for performing even more, she said.

A year and a half later, Jones has grown from a regular to a featured act at Guffawingham. A featured act is someone who is invited and advertised to perform in a 30-minute slot. Jones credits a lot of her success to the welcoming crowd at The Green Frog that supported her in the very beginning.

"I love the challenge of relating to people, and I love making people laugh more than just about anything," she said.

*"I love the challenge of relating to people, and I love making people laugh more than just about anything."*

Claire Jones  
Western alumna

Timmy Riney performs stand-up at the first Guffawingham of 2015 on Monday, Jan. 6, at The Green Frog. Riney, a Western alumnus and Guffawingham founder, has been doing stand-up for three years and bases his "high-energy" comedy off of his mistakes. // Photo by Margaret Degman



# YOGOMAN: The man behind soul night

*Western alumnus spins soul as DJ Yogoman*

**Sierra Tryon**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The lights are dim in The Green Frog Acoustic Tavern as a man puts boxes and boxes

of records onto the table. He hangs a hand-painted sign over a line of guitars and surveys the room. Chatter fades and eyes turn toward him as he spins the first record and slowly closes his eyes.

Western alumnus, DJ and musician Jordan Rain rules the Tuesday night scene at The Green Frog. Rain was born with music in his veins and has

been his lifeline ever since, he said. Raised in Seattle by his father Michael Rain, a rock musician, Jordan began making music at a young age.

“As a baby I would make beats with pots and pans, and sing as I was doing it — kind of like now. I drum now for my band, sing lead vocals, compose and write,” Rain said.

Although his early bands in

Seattle could be identified as emo, hardcore or rock, Rain has discovered new musical influences since moving to Bellingham in 1995. With his band Yogoman — formerly known as Yogoman Burning Band — he’s pioneered a new genre of music that combines brass, soul and Jamaican into an upbeat joyful sound that Rain can only define as Jamaican-New Orleans dance rhythms.

Every Tuesday night, Rain DJs under the name Yogoman for an audience of up to 400 at The Green Frog, bringing a Saturday feel to an otherwise drab weeknight, he said.

Rain’s loyal following has enjoyed his talents since 2006, and he’s found a passion in letting his music lift their spirits. Jessica McGuinty, a fan-turned-friend of Yogoman, experiences this every time she goes to a show, she said.

“[Yogoman] is so positive, the lyrics are so positive. The whole combination to the tempo and the lyrics is an amazing experience,” McGuinty said. “There’s a familiarity to their songs, but you can’t pinpoint their style because it’s just so different and it gets to people. It makes them happy and makes them want to dance. I’ve never seen a band like that.”

Rain’s audience in Bellingham is diverse. The audience and community is what drew Rain from his hometown of Seattle — where he first penetrated the underground and independent music scene — to Bellingham in 1995 when he sought a more accepting community with more diverse backgrounds.

Friends from Bellingham represented this open-minded, open-hearted population to Rain.

“I found a group of people in Bellingham who were in a different state of mind. I instantly connected with a wider range of people who were interested in music and art,” Rain said. “People were more inclusive because there was more cross-over in people’s backgrounds.”

As for his own background, music sprung from Rain’s blood. His father rehearsed rock in their basement, which inspired Rain to create his own rhythms.

Rain’s first two bands in Seattle reflected the genres he listened to growing up, he said.

“I would mostly play house shows and all-ages venues [when I started out]. I did two tours like that in the underground and independent

*continued on page 11*



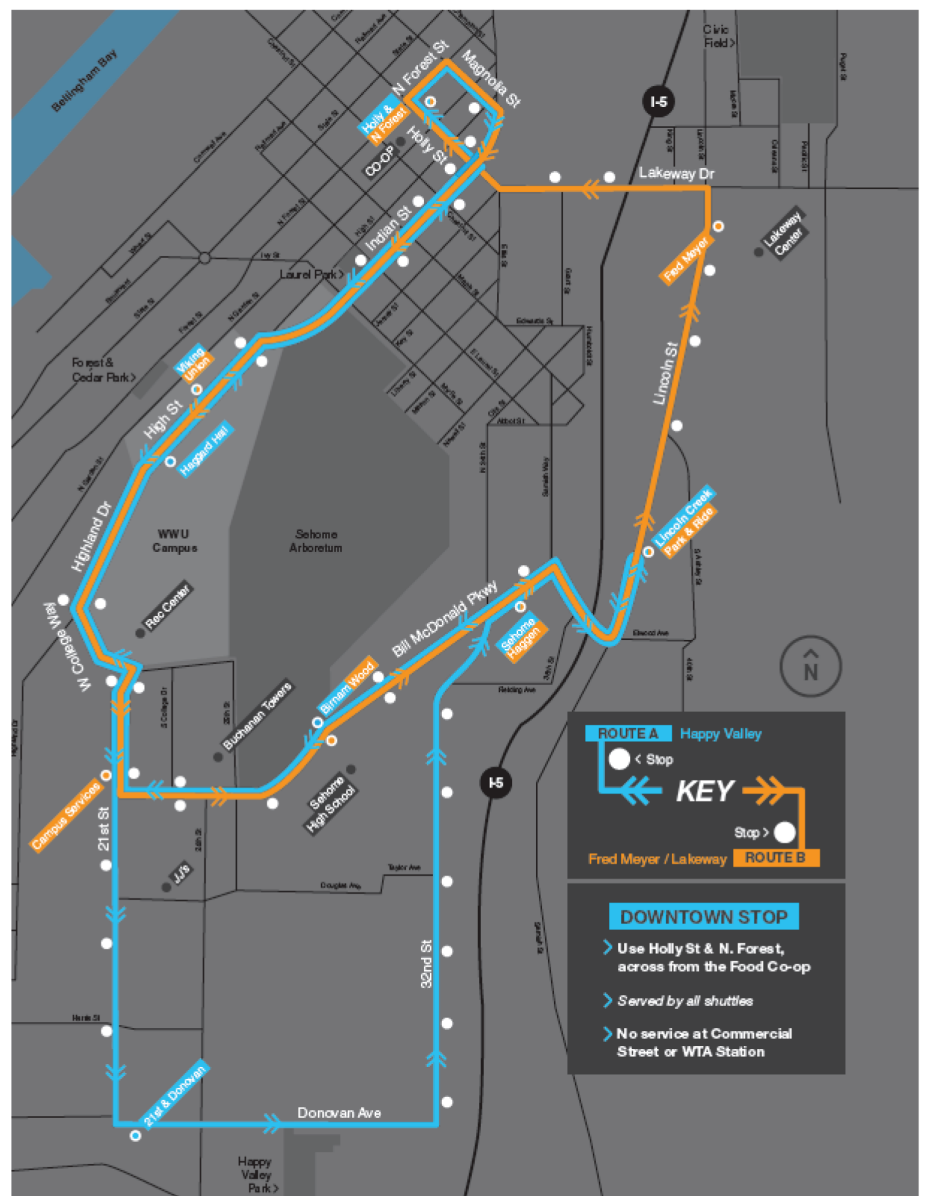
**Jordan Rain, also known as DJ Yogoman, poses for a photo during his DJ set at The Green Frog’s soul night on Tuesday, Jan. 6.**

// Photo by Margaret Degman

**!! NEW !!**

## Late Night Student Shuttle Service begins Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>

- **BROCHURES** with new maps and schedules are available on the WWU Shuttles, at the Bookstore, Western Card office, and VU Info Desk.
- The Student Shuttle **NOW SERVES** the **HAPPY VALLEY** area; 21<sup>st</sup> Street – Donovan – 32<sup>nd</sup> Street.
- **ROUTES will CHANGE**
- **Both Routes will begin service from the Viking Union.**
  - Route A-Happy Valley (the blue line):**
    - Is a 45 minute route
    - Travels through Happy Valley to Sehome Village, reverses direction at Lincoln Creek Park & Ride, travels westbound on Bill McDonald Pkwy, then both directions through campus.
    - Does not serve Fred Meyer/Lakeway
  - Route B-Fred Meyer/Lakeway (the orange line)**
    - Is a 30 minute route
    - Travels eastbound on Bill McDonald Pkwy
    - Does not serve Happy Valley
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  - **Use Holly St & N. Forest for Downtown** (across from the Food Co-op)
  - Buses will not travel through downtown, or to the WTA Station
- **Hours of service remain the same;** Mon-Sat 11pm – 3am, on Sunday, Route A begins at 10pm, Route B begins at 9pm.
- The **Western Wheels app** (which provides WTA bus times) also includes a page displaying the Late Night Shuttle map and schedule. (free on Android and iOS)



Comments or Questions?  
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scene, but I resonated with some of the people I met in the Seattle house shows," Rain said.

In his early days in the Seattle underground scene, Rain performed with Modest Mouse, even drumming for them at a show in Western's own Viking Union.

The population at Western holds a personal connection for Rain. Rain graduated from Fairhaven College in 2007, where he earned a degree in music performance and production.

"I liked my teachers, made lots of friends and learned more about my interests," Rain said. "I got a lot of direct experience with researching crafts that I was interested in."

turning with a few new players.

His band, Patterns Make Sunrise, played from 1994 to 1996. His other band, Behead The Prophet No Lord Shall Live, played 1995 to 1998, he said. While some of the shows were played in Seattle, each band had the opportunity to travel across the country and share their music on tour.

"I loved touring because those shows were all ages and it was a unique experience. Shows were community based, so it wasn't about selling tickets or making a profit, but more about the action of getting out there and seeing the shows," Rain said.

One thing that's very important to Rain is hosting all-ages shows, which are fre-

because parents love having an activity to get their kids out to. He lets them come up and bang on their drums while the parents can dance in the back. It's so important to get kids interested in music early, and to teach them to dance without being insecure."

While on tour Rain learned about the national community of people making their own music, publications or records. Like Rain, instead of relying on the established industry, they prefer to manage themselves, many in lieu of a day job, which can be a struggle for Rain.

On tour Rain played in many large cities, gathering audiences of up to 100 while sticking to their house-show scene. However, some of Rain's favorite shows were in cities he'd describe as being in the middle of nowhere.

"My favorite shows were actually in small cities like Fargo, North Dakota. There was major flooding the day before and after we played and all those kids came to a show in a basement," Rain said. "They were ecstatic to take a break from sandbagging and pulling together the city to make it through the flood. A lot of times it's those smaller towns that don't get as much live music that can be the best crowds."

After deciding to retire from the Seattle music scene, Rain found a large number of opportunities to grow musically in Bellingham, including his introduction to the Jamaican genre, which heavily influenc-

es the music he plays today.

"When I came to Bellingham I had a friend who knew

ready had familiarity with Bellingham for his Yogoman band. Not all the musicians in the



**DJ Yogoman changes records every soul night on Tuesday evenings at The Green Frog.**

// Photo by Margaret Degman

a lot about Jamaican music, who influenced me to investigate the history of that genre. I heard what he was playing and started researching Jamaican music and history, reconnected with some of the music I heard as a kid and I've been exploring more of that music during the last decade," Rain said.

The Yogoman Burning Band developed out of Rain's collaboration with various local artists and officially became a band in January 2006. Rain intended for the band to bring an upbeat, positive twist to the local music scene, which he describes as having dark, depressing tendencies.

Rain pulled artists he al-

band have been there from the start; as life pulled some away Rain pulled others in.

The dimly lit room covers a crowd of people as Rain spins records and plays notes from his trombone. As the music plays, people move to the rhythm that DJ Yogoman plays from his station in the corner of The Green Frog.

## SOUL NIGHT

Soul night is at 9:30 p.m. every Tuesday at The Green Frog, located at 1015 N. State Street.

*"As a baby I would make beats with pots and pans, and sing as I was doing it — kind of like now."*

**Jordan Rain**

Western alumnus and DJ

Rain hopes to return to play for Western this spring or summer as an opportunity to reconnect with the Western community after diverting from the Bellingham scene. Rain is planning to explore music in New Orleans in hopes of bringing a chapter of their genre to the south, or even re-

quented not only by the under-21 crowd, but by parents and families. McGuinty sees immense value in these shows.

"Kids have an inherent love for music and rhythm, but don't get music concert performances like adults do," McGuinty said. "Rain started doing all-ages shows for families



**DJ Yogoman spins a record at soul night at The Green Frog on Tuesday, Jan.6. // Photo by Margaret Degman**

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## FRONTLINE

Opinions of the Editorial Board

### *Je Suis Charlie*

Freedom of speech is critical to the continuation of a free and just society, even speech that some may consider offensive.

As we here at Western return to campus after a long winter break, let's take a minute to remember the 12 people who were murdered in Paris this past Wednesday, Jan. 7, for attempting to uphold this most fundamental of human rights.

These 12 individuals, who include 10 employees who worked for the Paris based satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and two police officers, were gunned down in retaliation for creating comics that poked fun at Islam. Storming into the Charlie Hebdo offices as the staff sat down for their first morning meeting, two gunmen took the peaceful ideals of that religion and twisted them into something sinister.

Nobody has a monopoly on free speech, but that doesn't stop some from attempting to stifle the opinions of others anyway.

This isn't the first time that Charlie Hebdo, which has been producing its weekly magazine since the 1970's, was the target of violence. In 2006, it gained notoriety for publishing car-

toons depicting the Prophet Mohammed.

Undeterred by the worldwide outrage gained from those actions the magazine continued its satirical quest to write and draw about not just Islam but Christianity, Judaism and more French politicians than anyone would care to count. These actions led to their offices being fire-bombed and destroyed in 2011; thankfully with no one injured.

Enduring criticism of the political and religious institutions that each of us hold dear is part of living in the Western world. Freedom of speech either exists in full, or it doesn't exist at all. The men who carried out this attack apparently couldn't grasp that this concept is central to living in a free society. While the cartoons and articles written by Charlie Hebdo may have been seen as vulgar and offensive, the response should never have been with violence.

As we here on campus reflect on a tragedy that took place on the other side of the planet, let's be thankful that we live in an area that's so tolerant of other's beliefs and ideals. The massive diversity rally that

took place this past April is one of the first things that comes to mind. But as the common arrival of religious zealots on campus reminds us, positive freedom of expression like the rally isn't the only type we are bound to uphold.

There's a certain beauty in watching a man scream at students that they're all sinners. Once you get past all of the hateful and disgusting messages that he hurdles, the fact that he even has the ability to talk without fear of being forced to stop speaks to the tolerant nature of our community.

So next time you think about picking up a rock to throw at Brother Jed when he starts screaming in red square, or kick down one of the anti-abortion crosses staked into the grass on campus, just remember that having tolerance towards individuals that offend you is just the price of admission for living in a free society.

*The editorial board is composed of Brian Adolfo Traverso, John Boone and Brandon Stone.*

## Viking Voices

*Did you make any resolutions for the new year?*

//Compiled by Sarah Climaco



**Rosa Tobin**  
sophomore, English literature and Spanish

“My New Year's resolution is just to to maintain a healthy lifestyle all year”



**Jennifer McDowell**  
sophomore, Psychology

“Figure out where my major is going to lead me and where my next two years at Western is going to lead me.”



**Tyler Beckley**  
junior, special education

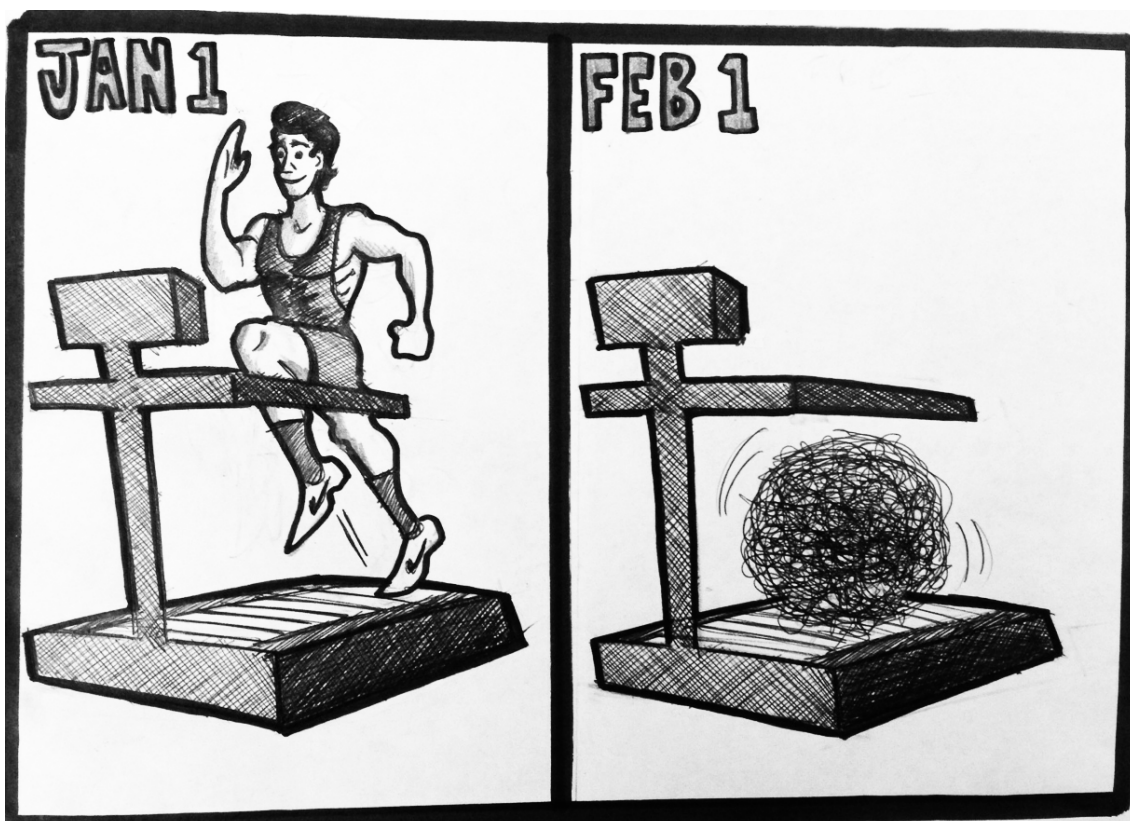
“If you want to change, you can change any day without having to wait an entire year.”



**Spencer Carlson**  
sophomore, undecided

“Procrastinate less and be a better student.”

## Front Funnies



//Cartoon by Max Singler



**Nick Emard**  
senior, Fairhaven, community arts and music

“No. Time is a social construct, man.”

### Submission Policy

The Western Front publishes submitted opinion items on a space-available basis. Submit letters to the editor and guest columns, along with your name, title (such as “Western sophomore”) and major to westernfront.opinion@gmail.com. Anonymous letters or those containing hate speech will not be published. The Western Front reserves the right to edit for length, spelling, style and grammar.

Word count limits: letters to the editor: 250 words, guest columns: 400 words



# Men's basketball welcomes 2015 with optimism

**Monea Kerr**

THE WESTERN FRONT

The Western men's basketball team is gearing up for the rest of their season with optimism and passion.

After two extremely close losses a against University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Alaska Fairbanks, Western will continue to fight for a spot in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference playoffs.

The team has undergone a tremendous amount of adjustment this year with so many new players, head coach Tony Dominguez said. Having a brand new team requires a lot of time to learn how the players work together, he said.

"We've gained a lot of confidence," Dominguez said.

The team has worked very hard this season and has been listening and trying to do the right things, he said. He would like to see improvements on the team's free throws, shooting and defense, he said.

The Vikings rank second in the GNAC in points per game, but are middle of the pack in team field goal percentage and points against per game.

"We are just looking forward to continue to grow as a young team," Dominguez said. "I think we're coming together nicely."

Forward Jeffrey Parker said that he is excited to play more conference games and for ultimately trying to earn a spot in the GNAC tournament.

"We just have to keep working hard in practice," Parker said. "We have to make sure our team chemistry is together and that we are very cohesive once we get out there on the court."

Going forward with the season, he said that team unification and defense are focal points that he would like to see the team improve on.

Parker is a sophomore and has taken on more of a leadership role on the court,

he said. He has been scoring more and has been more vocal with his teammates this year, he said.

For the Vikings, Parker ranks second in both points per game and rebounds per game, with an average of 15 and 5.8, respectively.

"I know guys on the team look up to me," he said. "I have to make sure I lead by example."

Mark Hartley, a junior at Western and Vikings basketball fan, said that being involved in Western's sports teams is a part of the college experience. He enjoys the culture that surrounds going to basketball games, he said.

"I love how electric the atmosphere in Carver Gym is," Hartley said.

With the absence of a football team, Hartley said that he likes being able to come together with his friends in the atmosphere that the Vikings create.

The Vikings are 7-6 overall and 0-3 in conference standings. Their next game is Saturday, Jan. 10 against Montana State-Billings at Sam Carver Gymnasium.

*Editors note: Mark Hartley wrote for The Western Front in Fall of 2014*

## GNAC STANDINGS

### MEN'S BASKETBALL

	W	L	.Pct
Seattle Pacific	3	1	.750
Western Oregon	3	1	.750
Alaska Anchorage	3	1	.750
Central	2	1	.667
NW Nazarene	2	1	.667
Saint Martin's	2	2	.500
Alaska	2	2	.500
Simon Fraser	1	2	.333
<b>Western</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>.000</b>
MSU Billings	0	4	.000

### WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

	W	L	.Pct
Alaska Anchorage	3	1	.750
Seattle Pacific	3	1	.750
Simon Fraser	2	1	.667
Central	2	2	.500
Alaska	2	2	.500
NW Nazarene	2	2	.500
<b>Western</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>.333</b>
Sain Martin's	1	2	.333
Western Oregon	1	2	.333
MSU Billings	1	3	.250



Western beat Quest University, 88-68, on Dec. 2

// Photo by Bailey Barnard

# Women's basketball beats Central

THE ATHLETICS  
DEPARTMENT

Forward Taylor Peacock scored a team-high 20 points, lifting Western to a 76-68 victory over Central Washington University on Thursday, Jan. 8, in a Great Northwest Athletic Conference women's basketball game at Nicholson Pavilion on the CWU campus.

Guard Katie Colard added 14 points for the Vikings, who improved to 8-5 overall and 2-2 in the GNAC.

Central fell to 7-6 overall and 2-3 in the GNAC despite a game-high 21 points by guard Jasmin Edwards. Courtney Johnson added 15 points for the Wildcats, who lost for the first time in their last six home contests.

Western used a 9-2 run

to take an 18-15 lead with 11:34 left in the first half and later scored 10 straight points, four by Peacocke, for a 13-point advantage, 34-21, with 3:41 to go. A 3-pointer at the buzzer by Kiana Gandy gave the Vikings a 36-27 halftime advantage.

Western never trailed in the second half, although the Wildcats got as close

as two points, and were down by just three, 70-67, with the ball, but Johnson missed a potential game-tying 3-pointer. The Vikings then hit six straight free throws in the final minute to preserve the triumph.

Colard entered the game tied for the school record for consecutive successful free throws, but missed her first attempt of the game on

the first possession of the second half, leaving her at 27, tied with Erica Porter and Corinn Waltrip.

The Vikings now lead the series with Central, 87-10, winning the last 14 meetings and 22 of the last 23.

Western is at Northwest Nazarene University on Saturday, Jan. 10, for a GNAC contest.



# Vikings plan to welcome transfer

*Soccer transfer brings 20 goals after tremendous season for NIC*

**Brenna Visser**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Western men's soccer team plans to add Adam Talley, forward and current Northwest Athletic Conference Athlete of the Year, to the roster this fall.

Talley, who currently attends North Idaho College, will officially be signed for fall 2015 in February of this year, pending his admittance into Western.

Western men's soccer coach Greg Brisbon was contacted, but was unable to comment until the decision was made official.

Known as a scorer, Talley finished his season at NIC 12-2-2, placing second in the NWAC.

This year, Talley was named the West Region Most Valuable Player and broke the old NIC scoring record of 18 with 20 goals in his final season. This is the second scoring goal he has broken, his first being at East Valley High School.



// Photo courtesy of Adam Talley

His speed and striking skills fit what Western was looking for, Talley said. It was a deciding factor in bringing him to Bellingham.

"[Western] said they needed a person to score; I really liked that," Talley said. "My coach also said it would be a really good fit for me."

His former NIC coach Ken Thompson said out of the 18 forwards in NWAC, only

four or five score more than 15 goals. This would put him in the top 3 to 5 percent of players in the conference. Along with keeping consistent with possession and his extreme speed, Thompson thinks that Western has an opportunity to optimize the team with such a dynamic athlete.

"When he closes down the ball," Thompson said. "I

think one of the keys is that he hasn't been a specialist in soccer until college and he's going to continue move forward in a way most guys don't."

Talley looks forward to getting experience in a higher level of play, becoming a part of the Western community and of course, scoring more goals. He plans to pursue a degree in criminal

*"You can always find a talent, but you have to have the right personality too. Adam's a guy you want on your team either way."*

**Ken Thompson**  
NIC soccer coach

justice under the sociology department when he starts in the fall.

"He's really coachable and he really respects his coaches," said Thompson. "He's looking to improve on things."

Thompson is excited for Talley, but said it will be hard for the team to replace 20 goals. As one of the team captains, Thompson saw his ability to be a good leader as well as a good role model on and off the field.

"You can always find a talent, but you have to have the right personality too," Thompson said. "Adam's a guy you want on your team either way."



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# Viks roll MSUB, Schreiber breaks record



Jeffery Parker goes to the rim on Thursday, Jan. 8, in Sam Carver Gymnasium against Montana State University Billings. // Photo by Maddie Takata

**Ben Goldstein**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Western Vikings men's basketball team blew out the Montana State University Billings Yellowjackets, 88-68, behind an impressive performance from sophomore forward Joey Schreiber and the rest of the team.

Schreiber finished the game with a university record 38 points. He also finished with 12 rebounds, even though he came off the bench and was battling an illness.

"I was feeling sick all game," Schreiber said. "But everything was going in and I can't even explain how."

At the end of the first half Schreiber had scored 19 points. But at halftime, Schreiber threw up in the locker room, he said. That didn't stop him from scoring another 19 points in the second half.

Schreiber was also efficient. He was 13-21 from the field including 6-9 from the three-point line and 6-6 for free throws.

At the end of the game Schreiber was still ill, but very emotional about his game.

"I think this will spark some confidence in my game and I can help the team out whatever way I can, even if it's off the bench," Schreiber said.

Head coach Tony Dominguez was impressed with the 38 points, but was more impressed by something else.

"His focus was what made him play so well," Dominguez said. "When Joey focuses he can be a really great player."

Another player that had a solid game was junior center Mac Johnson. He was a force down in the paint, finishing with 15 points and nine rebounds. Sophomore forward Jeffrey Parker also finished with an impressive stat line, scoring 17 points and grabbing six rebounds.

Dominguez was impressed by the focus from the entire team. Senior forward Anye Turner filled the stat sheet

with five blocks, two steals, four assists, and 11 points in 26 minutes. The increased focus came from a team meeting earlier this week, Turner said.

"The team meeting really brought us together," Turner said. "We aired things out and figured that we just want to be the best we can be no matter what."

Turner, who is described as the team leader by Dominguez, said he was very proud of his teammates after the game and he loved to play with them.

On the team's recent road trip to Alaska, the Vikings lost both games, but Dominguez said that they had played very well and the small things were killing them.

"The biggest thing was free throws," Dominguez said. "But now that we're focused as a team those little things are going to smooth out."

Dominguez also added that the team has been a lot more focused in the last two weeks.

Another step towards being the best team they can be is confidence, which was mentioned by both Schreiber and Dominguez.

"There was lots of anxiety at the beginning of the year to win and for players to play well," Dominguez said. "But now we're building up our confidence and it's helping."

The Vikings will look for another win this Saturday at home against in-state rival, Seattle Pacific University.

The game will be televised across the state on ROOT Sports, and the team is feeling confident heading in.

"We're playing really inspired basketball," Schreiber said. "I feel like we're going to go on a run."

## UP NEXT

SEATTLE PACIFIC  
at WESTERN

**When:** 9 p.m. Jan. 10

**Where:** Sam Carver  
Gymnasium

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# Ogwoaba and Bjork win MVPs

*Named offensive, defensive MVPs for Bellingham United*

**Yaelle Kimmelman**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Uche Ugwoaba, a 21-year-old junior on the Western soccer team, was awarded the defensive MVP for his role on Bellingham United Football Club in 2014.

Ugwoaba was given the award in early August, around the time that the Bellingham United season came to an end and the Western soccer season began. The awards were recently announced with a post on Bellingham United's Facebook page.

During the off-season, Ugwoaba and many other Western soccer players and alumni

*"[Bjork] made a bicycle kick 13 or 14 yards out – one of the most impressive goals I've seen"*

**Lance Calloway**  
Bellingham United head coach

join Bellingham United, an elite men's soccer team. The team, a part of the Evergreen Premier League, begins play at the end of April, with competition lasting through the end of July.

"I was honestly surprised I had received the award," Ugwoaba said. "But besides being surprised, I was very honored."

Aside from receiving defensive MVP for Bellingham United, Ugwoaba has many achievements playing for the Vikings as well. Considered a key returner to the Vikings, he has earned letters all three years playing for Western.

Bellingham United head coach Lance Calloway offers his praise for Ugwoaba.

"He is a strong, physical player," Calloway added. "He rarely makes mistakes and when he does, he is very quick to fix them. It's very rare to see him make two mistakes in a game."

In November 2014, he was named one of the Great Northwest Athletic Conference Academic all-stars, winning the award two years in a row.

Ugwoaba finished his season at Western with a total of six shots, with four of them on target.

Ugwoaba was not the



**Uche Ugwoaba strikes the ball in a match against St. Martin's University on Oct. 16. // Photo by Paul Bikis**

only player awarded with an MVP award. Tyler Bjork, a 2011 Western graduate, was awarded as offensive MVP.

Bjork has been playing for Bellingham United for three seasons, but this was his best season yet, Calloway said.

"Tyler made six goals in 35 minutes in a game against Yakima United Football Club," Calloway said. "He made a bicycle kick 13 or 14 yards out—

one of the most impressive goals I've seen."

Aside from impressing both peers and coaches, Bjork led the league with 13 goals throughout the season.

"Many of the players on Bellingham United are Western alumni or current Western players," Ugwoaba said. "It makes it easier to build the chemistry and know what strength and weaknesses oth-

er players have."

While the two teams are not officially related, joining the league during the off-season helps keeps the players in shape and ready to go for the college season, Western men's soccer head coach Greg Brisbon said.

Bellingham United finished the 2014 season with a 6-6-2 record, good for a fourth place finish in the EPL.

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