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# THE WESTERN FRONT

Volume 175, Issue 9

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TUESDAY, MAY 24

## Native Student Union requests Longhouse, ending 'ethnic fraud'



Students and community members listen to a presentation by Native American Student Union leaders, Kylie Gemmell, Michaela Vendiola and Tahlia Katachu, at their weekly meeting on Monday, May 22. // Photo by Matt Pearson

**Sara Helms**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Native American Student Union sent a formal letter detailing five requests for Western's administration, including a crackdown on "ethnic fraud," the construction of a longhouse and additional funding for cultural events.

The requests advocated for progress in regard to current and historical issues that Native American students face on campus; these requests were presented by the Native American Student Union, or NASU, on Monday, May 16.

Two of NASU's requests ask for a "Tribal Liaison Position" to be created to work with the

Tribal Nations and for Western to administer training between student governments and the local tribal governments.

Tahlia Natachu, a recent Western graduate and a member of the Zuni Pueblo Tribe in New Mexico, was one of the NASU members facilitating the meeting.

Natachu thinks a Tribal Liaison would help Native American students transition into higher education.

"I think the few Native people on this campus are forced to be our counselors or our mentors," Natachu said. "They want to and they love us, but they are forced by the institution to do it because we have nobody else to turn to."

• See *NASU*, page 3

## ESC to hire new manager, extra staff

*Students say goodbye to Coordinator Nathan Panelo*

**Honey Dubes**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Ethnic Student Center is planning to hire a new manager, replacing outgoing ESC Coordinator Nathan Panelo.

The restructuring of the ESC will include hiring new front desk staff and two new positions funded by the Associated Students, including Panelo's position, which will be renamed to Ethnic Student Center Manager.

Panelo's last day at Western is May 27 and he will be starting his new job as an academic counselor in the Office

of Minority Affairs and Diversity at the University of Washington on May 6.

During his time as the center's coordinator, Panelo worked toward expanding the center's staff, which allowed more support for students and clubs, Panelo said.

Through student initiative and collaboration with the center's staff, the ESC Referendum was passed by students, recommending the current ESC move to a larger and more accessible space.

"We have been wanting to move the ESC to  
• See *ESC*, page 5

## City resumes homeless camps clearings

**Daniel Hart**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

After housing shortages forced the city to pause homeless camp closures, Bellingham is continuing efforts to address the homelessness problem.

In the last four weeks, the Parks Department, Public Works Department and the Bellingham Police Department have restarted a coordinated effort to identify camps and contact the residents and coordinate cleanups, said Vanessa Blackburn, city communications director.

The city will prioritize camp cleanups based on public safety and environmental concerns. This is in



A Bellingham man, who goes by the name of "B," sits in his encampment while his stove burns to keep warm on May 20. B has been at this location for six days. // Photo by Ian Koppe

response to concerns about crime associated with the camps coming from community members and city departments, Blackburn said.

Homeless since 13 years old, Blake is a Bellingham resident who asked to be identified by his first name. He said his camp on

Glass Beach, officially known as Cornwall Beach, was cleared out Saturday, May 7.

• See *HOMELESS*, page 5



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## ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

**Westernfrontonline.com**  
Man on campus with gun prompts gun control discussion

## PEACE BESEECH YOU



Protestors gathered for a peace vigil for the 50th year in a row on Friday, May 20 at the corner of West Magnolia Street and Cornwall Avenue in front of the downtown Bellingham post office. // Photo by Alex Van Valkenburgh

## Cops Box



## EVENTS

### 12:30 p.m., May 17

An unknown person has been calling residents claiming to be Lieutenant Johnston of the Bellingham PD and says that their spouse has failed to respond to a warrant and that they should send money. Bellingham police say that this is a scam and an investigation is on the way.

### 12:23 p.m., May 21

A man became separated from his girlfriend in a park in the 1600 block of Silver Beach Road and needed police assistance to find her since they were unfamiliar with the area.

### 1:24 p.m., May 22

Residents of the 1000 block of North Forest Street reported another person who was causing damage and making threats. He was asked to leave for the night.

### 8:55 a.m., May 23

A man in the 500 block of Grand Avenue heard the police were looking for him so he went into the police department and was served a Temporary Order for Protection.

### 11:31 p.m., May 21

A woman reported her unlocked car had been entered multiple times over the past months and items were taken in the 3100 block of Racine Street.

### 8:40 p.m., May 21

Officers confronted a drunk person who was passed out on the sidewalk in the 1300 block of Railroad Avenue.

### 3:11 p.m., May 22

Police responded between an argument between a couple in the 4200 block of Springcreek Lane. The couple broke up after a three year relationship and disputed over the ownership of the dog they got together.

### 11:52 a.m., May 23

Police arrested a man in the 3000 block of Wilson Avenue who kicked down his girlfriend's bathroom door while she was in the bathroom going through his phone history.

Compiled by Robert Johnson and Evan Elliott

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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.

# NASU meets with university administration

• continued from page 1

The letter, addressed to President Bruce Shepard, incoming President Sabah Randhawa and the Board of Trustees, asked the administration for a response by Friday, May 20, and invited them to attend the next meeting, which was on Monday, May 23.

Three members of the administration came to the meeting on behalf of President Shepard.

Eileen Coughlin, the vice president of enrollment and student services, Karen Dade, the associate dean of the Woodring College of Education, and Nick Sanchez, Western's employment inclusion manager, were present in discussing NASU's requests throughout the meeting.

Dade and Sanchez are members of the President's Task Force on Equity, Inclusion and Diversity. All three were supportive of NASU's needs.

On a regular night, there are usually less than 10 students attending NASU meetings and an estimated 70 people were in attendance on Monday, Natachu said.

NASU said many of their members leave the university due to lack of support. Western claims to have the highest rate

of enrolled Native American students in the U.S., according to NASU's letter.

Director of Communications Paul Cocks said he was not aware of any such claim by Western and that the school doesn't appear to have the highest enrollment of Native American students in Washington state. In spring of 2016, there were 49 self-identified Native Americans enrolled at Western and 408 who self-identified as "Native American, as well other ethnic groups," Cocks said in an email.

"NASU's proposals are complex and nuanced, deserving of thorough, thoughtful, and broad-based consideration," Shepard responded in a letter. "That will take time."

Michaela Vendiola, a junior majoring in American Indian health and policy through the Fairhaven College, grew up in the Lummi Tribe in Bellingham.

Vendiola said her mother started NASU when she was a student at Western.

"She tells a story to us all the time about how there was one professor here at Western, a Native professor, who she would go to for advising, counseling, just lunch, whatever," Vendiola said. "One person. One Native person out of the entire cam-

pus that she would cry to, laugh with. We need somebody to do that."

Additionally, NASU is asking for a Coast Salish Longhouse, similar to those found on other college campuses in the Northwest, though it is not clear if this would be on campus.

The University of Washington completed the construction of its longhouse in March 2015, according to its website. The longhouse took about six years to plan and construct.

The 8,400 square foot building cost \$6 million to build and was paid for in part by donations and pledges from private individuals and tribal nations and state funding. UW calls it a "multi-service learning and gathering space," and expects it will "increase Native American enrollment and graduation rates."

Freshman Madeline Brown, majoring in international business, said she has concerns about NASU's requests.

"I think the priority of [the requests] isn't as detrimental as other aspects on campus that could be improved," Brown said. "But I do think that there is a lack of representation of Native Americans on our campus and putting a traditional Coast Salish Longhouse would be very informational and cul-

turally beneficial."

NASU would like to see a requirement for students to confirm their tribal enrollment or descentancy.

Although Western does not currently require students to verify their identity as a Native American, the school will investigate responsible methods that other universities use to verify tribal affiliations, Cocks said.

NASU is requesting its annual Spring Pow Wow to be fully funded by Western, rather than the group's previous fundraising efforts. This year's Pow Wow was canceled due to lack of funding.

"Western's Admissions Office is taking it upon themselves to utilize the NASU's Pow Wow footage as an admissions tactic to attract more students of color," the group said in their letter. "The NASU sees it as Western's obligation to fully fund the Annual Spring Pow Wow."

Cocks said in an email Western followed the standard process of getting release forms for the event before filming.

Natachu said this shows a lack of respect toward Native American social celebrations.

"These are sacred things we hold in our hearts and our spirits," Natachu said. "A piece of paper saying that they legally can take a picture, it's just not

going to work."

The union's letter comes nearly three months after the Student Assembly of Power and Liberation presented its petition to the administration and listed several demands, including a new "College of Power and Liberation."

The Student Assembly of Power and Liberation petition recognized Western occupies Nooksack and Lummi land and said the university must continuously think about the legacy of colonialism upon which we stand.

Although NASU's letter was separate from the demands made in February, a representative for the Student Assembly of Power and Liberation said on Facebook that the group is in full support of the union's requests and they are "nothing less than a claim to their humanity."

Native issues should be considered equally important to school issues because the two are intertwined, such as with economic or environmental issues, NASU member Vendiola said.

"If we support Native students on campus, that works toward the betterment of all students on campus," Vendiola said.



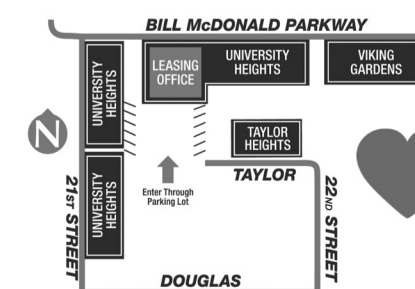
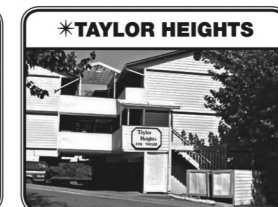
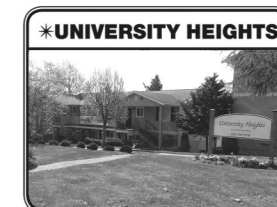
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# Public e-cigarette use under evaluation

Some businesses are more vape friendly than others, Whatcom County can't regulate some aspects of vaping; county health department is still listening to the community about how to alleviate concerns

Anna Edlund  
THE WESTERN FRONT

E-cigarette use and vaping inside public places, including restaurants and bars, may soon be prohibited as the Whatcom County Health Department gathers feedback for a potential expansion of the Smoking in Public Places law.

The public listening session on e-cigarettes and vaping, held on Thursday, May 19, brought together Whatcom County community members and business owners to voice their opinions on expanding the law to include e-cigarette use and vaping.

Joe Fuller is a program specialist with the Whatcom County Health Department and moderated the event.

"We were hearing a lot from retailers — specifically service industry, bar owners, downtown establishments — that were saying, 'As a business, we don't necessarily want it to be on us to say you can't do that here,'" Fuller said. "If something could be standard, so everybody knew this is what the law is, that would be helpful for them."

Western senior Holly Young works at a restaurant where she

has seen people vape and supports the potential expansion of the Smoking in Public Places law.

"It's almost the same thing as a nuisance for people," Young said. "Even if there's no health effects to secondhand vaping, it's still a perception issue."

E-cigarette use in the U.S. has increased over recent years, with 12.6 percent of adults having tried an e-cigarette before and 3.7 percent currently using them, according to 2014 U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention data.

This rise in e-cigarette use is also visible in local youth usage. Although it remains illegal to sell e-cigarettes to anyone under the age of 18, one in four 12th grade students in Whatcom County have used e-cigarettes in the past month, according to the Whatcom County Health Department. Nationally, 13.4 percent of high schoolers have used an e-cigarette in the past month.

Austin Masters owns retail vape shop Master of Vapors in downtown Bellingham and owns a nation-wide brand of e-liquid called Klassik Vape.

"As far as restaurants, bars and different business entities of that nature go, [vaping



Photo illustration by Connor Jalbert

policies] should be left up to the business owner," Masters said. "I know there are a lot of vape-friendly businesses in Whatcom County, but if business owners don't want [vaping], they can clearly post it and it won't happen."

Whatcom Health Department Prevention Coordinator Amy Hockenberry clarified the areas where the law would have jurisdiction, ensuring vape shops would still be allowed tastings in their stores.

"Smoking in public places includes all workplaces, restau-

rants, bars, bowling alleys and non-tribal casinos," Hockenberry said.

Concerns brought up during the listening session included the use of vaporizers to smoke marijuana, the health of individuals who may be elderly or asthmatic and the potential appeal to minors.

Western freshman Ichiro Miyasato supports the motion to ban vape use indoors.

"There's a debate on certain chemicals in e-cigarettes still that could affect other people," Miyasato said. "When it's

breathed secondhand, as well."

The Food and Drug Administration does not currently regulate ingredients or safety claims made by e-liquid manufacturers. These manufacturers are not required to disclose the ingredients and chemicals in their products, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The county does not have the jurisdiction to regulate many aspects of the vaping industry, including fees and licensing, sales requirements, use restrictions and the packaging and labeling of products, Fuller said. These may be dealt with by the Liquor and Cannabis Board or are not formally regulated.

The county does maintain jurisdiction over expanding the Smoking in Public Places act, and anywhere children congregate, such as parks.

With the comments gathered from the listening session, the next step for the Health Department will be to compile them alongside various survey results. This information will then be presented to the Public Health Advisory Board, which will make a recommendation to the Whatcom County Board of Health — or the full county council.

# New ESC manager to be hired in summer

Continued from page 1.

a more common space and bigger space for the past 15 years or so," Panelo said.

Panelo attended Western in 2003 and earned his degree in human services as a first-generation student. Panelo said he remembers taking a sociology course about race and race relations, where he first learned about the ESC and met the center's previous coordinator Michael Vendiola.

"I was pushed into a lot of leadership roles at that point," Panelo said. "I joined [Filipino Student Association] and became their activities coordinator my sophomore year."

Panelo was encouraged to run for AS vice president for activities, getting elected his junior year. After graduation, Panelo worked for the Boys and Girls Club for a year and then went to pursue his graduate degree in higher education and student affairs at the University of Vermont in 2008.

With his master's degree, Panelo worked for two years as a resident director at Seattle University. Two years later, Western's ESC co-

ordinator position opened and Panelo applied for the position. He got the job and returned to Western as the new coordinator in 2012.

"I was still young in my career, but I think what happened was I was really passionate about working here and I really brought that into my interviews," Panelo said.

Erick Yanzon, a desk attendant at the ESC, said he's sad to see Panelo go and a void will be felt with his absence.

"He's done great amazing things and all of the staff is leaving next year, so it's going to be a really different Ethnic Student Center environment," Yanzon said.

ESC Programming Coordinator Giovanni Milan said Panelo's new job allows for Panelo to stop having to commute to Seattle on the weekends to see his family.

"He had a baby not too long ago," Milan said. "I'm excited for him to be closer to his family and in a more relaxed environment."

Hiring for the ESC manager position will be starting this summer to complete a new ESC staff for fall 2016.

# Homeless Bellingham residents offer first-hand perspective

City wants to address larger issues of homelessness, while those currently homeless envision mutually-beneficial alternatives

Continued from page 1.

A friend camped beside him was notified beforehand, but didn't tell him. The city's outreach team gives camp residents up to five days' notice before the cleanups.

"Luckily, I was home," Blake said. "They were like, 'Grab what you can. You got 10 minutes.'"

In the cleanup, Blake lost his mattress, sleeping bags and cooking supplies. He retained a backpack full of clothes, his cell phone and his bike.

"My camp was spotless," Blake said. "My tarps were immaculate, strung up with tent poles. I took pride in where I lived, and they had no right to do that. The police shouldn't be able to just push anybody out of anywhere, especially public property."

Blackburn said homelessness is an issue throughout the West Coast and the city is addressing symptoms of the larger issue. This has meant seeking a low-barrier shelter for the city that wouldn't turn away people who are intoxi-

cated, high on drugs or have pets, Blackburn said.

"Long-term success will be fully funding mental health and drug addiction programs, having enough affordable housing and supportive housing for people who need homes," Blackburn said. "We would view success as a much larger system that prevents homelessness in our community."

Scott Browning also grew up homeless in Bellingham. He said little of the city's anti-homelessness efforts have worked.

"They've got quite a few of those shelters for the meals, and that does work, but as far as the city doing away with homelessness like they said they were going to, they've failed," Browning said.

Temporary, out-of-sight sleeping spots shouldn't be seen as problems, Blake said. He said the city could make life for the homeless much easier.

"Quit covering up the power outlets everywhere," Blake said. "That way we don't have to break open power boxes

so we can charge our phones. How are we supposed to have resumes or email contact with any potential employer if we can't have our phones charged?"

Bellingham could also provide homeless people with jobs, such as mowing the lawn and trimming bushes in the park, Blake said.

"Hire some homeless people. Give them a paycheck, and then they get to eat for a couple days, take a shower, get into a motel room and feel better about themselves. They feel more human," Blake said.

Blake said he currently fixes bikes, dumpster dives and trades for parts — offering his services in exchange for cash or camping supplies.

"Instead of being mean to us, talk to us like you would your neighbor," Blake said. "Because whether you like it or not, we are your neighbor."

Lighthouse Mission Ministries, The Opportunity Council and Northwest Youth Services are a few sheltering options for individuals experiencing homelessness in Bellingham.

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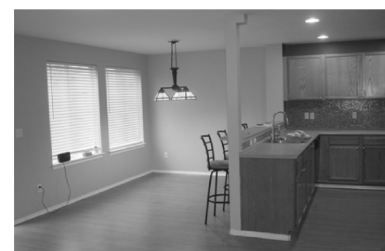
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# WESTERN GETS

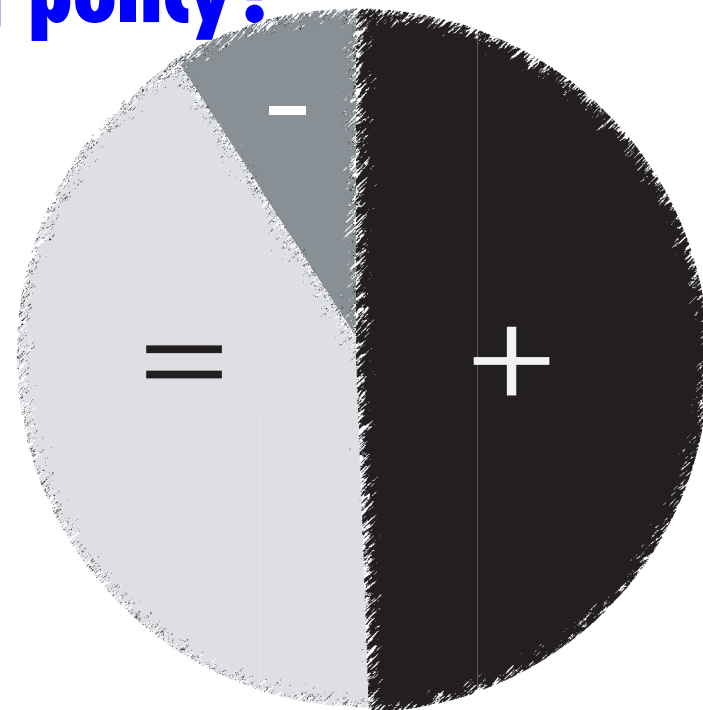
## High St.

The Western Front put together a survey on social media to explore Western's drug use. 450 Western students responded to a survey inquiring about their experience with drugs.

Melissa McCarthy  
The Western Front

### What is your stance on drug policy?

- 41.3% Things are fine the way they are
- 49.6% More drugs should be legalized
- 9.1% Less drugs should be legalized



**On a psychadelic trip, people saw...**

- Colors & Kaleidoscope effect
- Patterns
- Lion as spirit animal
- God
- Love and happiness
- Walls melting
- Nature coming to life
- Personalities and egos
- Cats



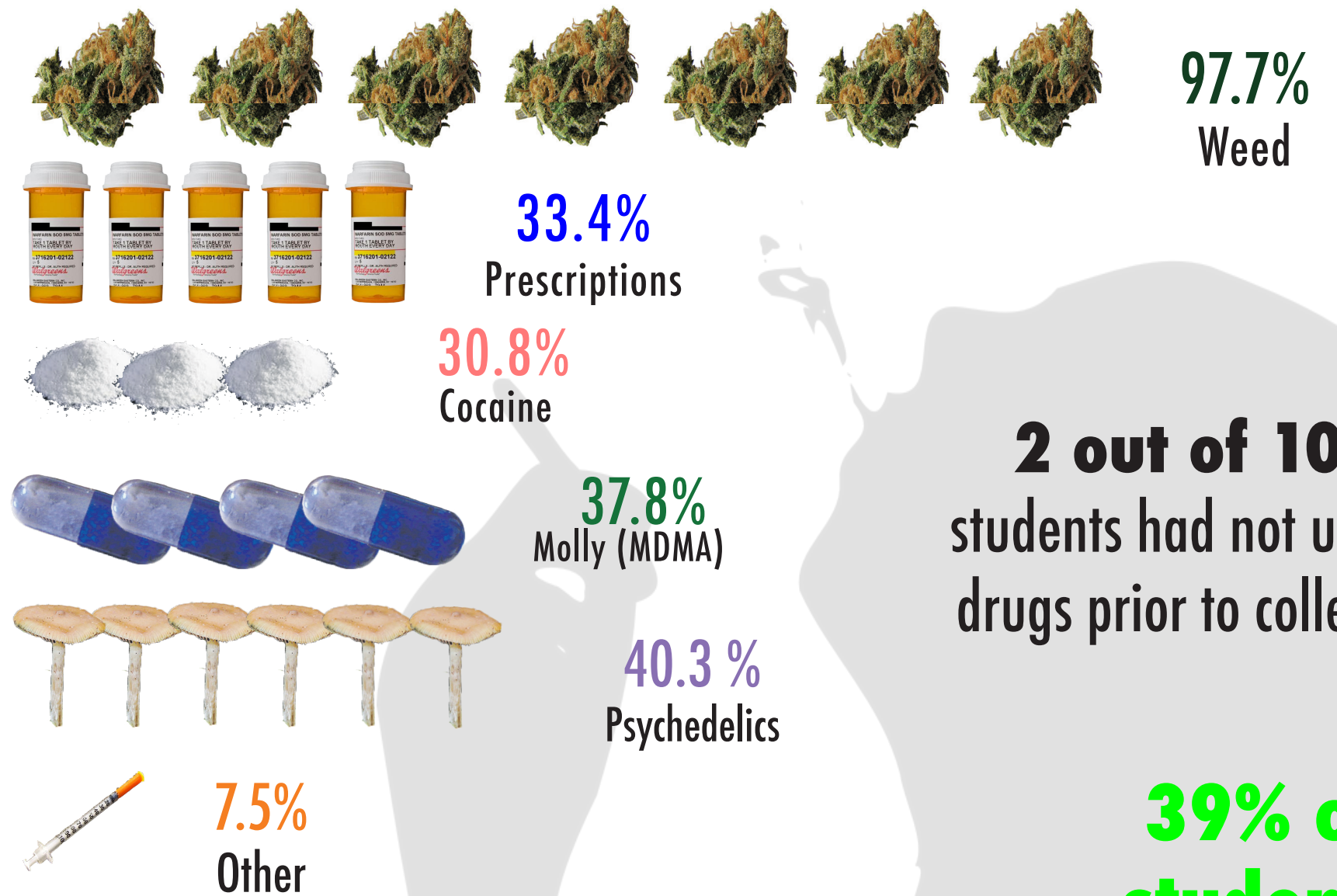
### 3 out of 4 students said that they use marijuana

Out of the students who use it...

- 90% smoke it
- 70% consume edibles
- 30% take dabs

Most students use marijuana either less than once a week (36%) or almost every day (5-7 times a week with 37%).

### Students selected all drugs they have used recreationally.....



**2 out of 10** students had not used drugs prior to college

**39% of students**

do not think drugs interfere with their studies.

**9 out of 10** see Western as a drug-friendly institution compared to other universities

# DOWN BY THE RIVER

## TWO BROTHERS, FOUR COUNTRIES AND ENDLESS WATER

Alex Van Valkenburg  
THE WESTERN FRONT

There's a feeling one gets when riding the fine line between what they shouldn't be doing and what they should. The fear-inspired pit that pulls someone back from adventure can ironically fuel the passion that drives them. The Wells brothers are not keen on backing down from that gamble, and sometimes it costs them.

Like missing a step down the stairs, missing the correct paddle down a waterfall opens the door for devastating possibilities; possibilities that became a reality for kayaker Brendan Wells.

With 18 months and four countries worth of river at their disposal, Brendan and Todd Wells took to the wild with their kayaking family to produce a feature-length film documenting their adventure. "For the Love" showcases breathtaking scenery, masterful cinematography and daring ventures through jungle, mud and white water.

Brendan Wells, a Fairhaven alum, specializes in film and environmental studies and put both to good use in the making of the film.

The film was edited using multiple camera angles for each scene, drones



**Brendan Wells runs Spirit Falls on the Little White Salmon River, Washington. Brendan decided to run this waterfall backwards, or "switch" during the 2016 Spirit Falls Freeride Competition.** // Photo courtesy of Brendan Wells. Taken by Ali Champan



**Brendan Wells after running 70-foot Outlet Falls, Washington. Wells hit his head on the cockpit of his kayak during the freefall.** // Photo courtesy of Brendan Wells

for breathtaking aerial views and perfect cuts to the beat of the well-matched music. Much of the footage taken was done by the brothers themselves using tripods, DSLR cameras and an assortment of lenses.

One group of three would go down stream to set up video cameras, followed by the next group of three who would go down stream filming each other, like a game of leapfrog with cameras. Todd called it a "grass-roots" style of filming.

"Their cinematography throughout the whole film was really well matched with the music and the energy of the crowd," said Peter Stone, a cinematographer who focuses specifically on skiing. "If you are at all interested in kayaking, this is one of the best films you

will ever see."

The kayakers in "For the Love" conquered rapids in Ecuador, Colorado, Iceland, Alaska and Canada. Some locations had never been kayaked before, adding yet another dash of challenge to the untamed river terrain.

In the middle of a scene in Iceland, Brendan Wells was seriously injured after a botched 30-foot drop off a waterfall. His kayak drifted too far right, missing the stepping falls and breaking his back.

Untouched Icelandic river runs at times have unpredictable terrain, making their possibility unknown, Brendan Wells said.

His injury rendered him unable to paddle further in Iceland and, due to the remote and inaccessible location, an emergency helicopter was needed.

"Definitely the hardest [scene] to edit was the section of film where Brendan breaks his back," Todd Wells said. "My brother and myself actually have matching compression

fractures now."

Brendan Wells experienced a full recovery and is now able to pursue his passion for kayaking and film. He now has an inflated anxiety when kayaking a new river, he said.

"Going down something new, you have no idea what to expect," Brendan Wells said. "Especially the trips in Ecuador, we had no idea if it was possible to get down stream."

The kayakers often had to hike multiple miles, lugging all their gear which included video cameras, tripods, paddles and kayaks. Together they'd camp deep in the wilderness, sometimes experiencing safe encounters with nature.

Some locations were even harder to get to, requiring the kayakers to repel down steep cliffs with their kayaks and camera equipment.

"That is what it's all about to me: getting your friends together for a trip and going somewhere exotic like Iceland," Brendan Wells said.

The production of the movie was done by a group of like-minded individuals who all share a love for exploring new rivers and water falls. The people they traveled with became something like family, the Wells said.

"We never had additional people up there just to film. We are all kayakers," Todd Wells said.

In the last scene of the movie, the brothers strapped on LED line lights

to their clothing, paddles and kayaks. The LEDs lit up the surrounding water, as if a cloud of bioluminescent algae were following them down the waterfall and dancing underneath them as they floated down the calm water. It took five to six days to take the footage of this scene, replacing danger with patience as the barrier between adventurer and accomplishment.

**"GOING DOWN SOMETHING NEW, YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TO EXPECT."  
BRENDAN WELLS, KAYAKER**

## Viking Voices

How do you feel about university communication and transparency in the past year and in dealing with recent issues on campus?  
Compiled by Xander Davidson



"I think Western Alerts could be sent out sooner. Sometimes they send them out an hour after the event has happened. Also, sometimes they block out parts of the issues, like they'll tone it down to not get students crazed about it, but it's good to know more detail so you know what you're dealing with."

**Sara Meadows**  
Freshman, psychology



"I like being informed and I appreciate them taking time to email and text us about serious things that happen, but the one thing I would change is more detail when they do. Information tends to be broad and I feel people get anxious and worried about what's happening. It causes more harm than good sometimes."

**Bri Leslie**  
Sophomore, sociology



"Maybe getting a faster response. If it was a big deal, I'd like to know 5 to 10 minutes after it happened. Last week, there was someone with a gun on campus, and I didn't find out until hours after. If he wanted to do something, he would have done it and I wouldn't have heard until two hours later. I think that is the biggest issue communication-wise."

**Gary Wiley**  
Senior, kinesiology

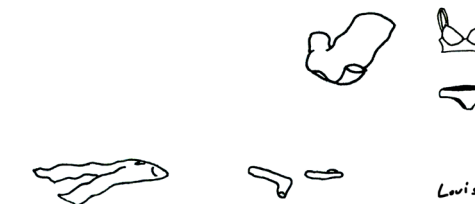


"I believe that it's relatively transparent and feel I am being informed on the issues happening on campus in a way that is unbiased. Information is presented in a way that allows for everyone to feel like it's addressed, but without going into too much detail as to invade any privacy."

**Alex Hill**  
Sophomore, vehicle design

Why transparency is a good thing:

1. Will be mistaken for ghost
2. Repercussion-free cavedropping
3. Public nudity



## FRONTLINE

Opinions of the Editorial Board

### This just in: knowledge is power

A question unanswered is like an itch unscratched.

This is especially true when it comes to university transparency. The ability for students and faculty to have access to information pertaining to their educational environment is chiefly important in protecting the safety and promoting the wellness of a university's community.

Here at Western, communication between the ruling boards and the student body seems to be, for the most part, decent. However, many students report they are seeking more information when it comes to alerts and emails regarding potential dangers, controversial issues or unsettled happenings.

Most of us are part of the Western Alert system and we know how alarming it can be to get texts or emails stating there is something happening on or around campus that could be perceived as a possible threat.

The Emergency Frequently Asked Questions page on Western's website says that 94 percent of students, 64 percent of staff and 57 percent of faculty have provided their cell phone numbers in order to receive emergency-related text messages. This shows people are concerned about the events taking place on campus, but the question is whether or not these alerts are more confusing than helpful.

"The university is committed to a working and educational environment that is free from violence

and threats of violence by and against university students, faculty, staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors," Western's Policy U5615.01 states.

Freedom from all violence seems like somewhat of a lofty aspiration, but it remains a responsibility central to the success of our community.

Looking at the events of last fall's Yik Yak disaster, one may consider how Western's transparency could have been stronger.

Initial alert messages were vague and lacked information, and the emails that followed left out critical details on the other acts of anti-Semitism that were taking place at the dorms and around campus facilities.

Surely the alerts were beneficial, but a greater understanding of the issue would have been made possible if students were allowed access to other critical pieces of information regarding the issues.

While danger prevention is an important aspect of transparency, it is equally significant to other decision-making processes that impact our lives as students, faculty and staff.

The more we know, the more we are able to make informed decisions that promote social change.

The process of electing a new university president was one where students could have benefitted from increased transparency. The names of other candidates were not announced and students had very limited time to weigh in on the election of Pres-

Why transparency is a bad thing:

1. Will be mistaken for ghost
2. Birds and flies will attempt to fly through you
3. Children will put their dirty hands on you

ident-elect Sabah Randhawa.

It's understandable that the privacy of potential candidates is important, especially if they are holding positions elsewhere that could otherwise be compromised. However, students are so greatly impacted by the president of their university and should be aware of the options.

And speaking of student awareness, we cannot disregard the fact that the gatekeepers of information on campus – University Communications and Marketing, Human Resources, etc. – hold the responsibility of answering the questions brought up by students. It is these members of our community that hold more power than students could possibly understand. We cannot deny the importance of these positions, and we must rely on these people to answer questions and concerns that directly affect our lives.

A call for action is necessary in making sure students demand that their questions get answered in full and with responses that are not sugar-coated-public-relations, what-they-want-you-to-hear-but-not-the-complete-story-bologna.

So, ask those questions, students. Make public records requests, seek the answers to important issues. Ask for more information and do not stand down until you have the full story. Knowledge, my friends, is power.

The Western Front Editorial Board is composed of Halee Hastad, Kara Spencer and Elizabeth Kayser.

### 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

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## Women's Ultimate Frisbee to pay own way to North Carolina

**Bryn Yasui**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western's women's Ultimate Frisbee team will be paying its own way to the Division I College Championship in Raleigh, North Carolina Friday, May 27, to Monday, May 30. Western's team, Chaos, plans to protest the state's controversial bathroom law while competing in the events.

On March 23, North Carolina passed House Bill 2, a law stating people must use the bathroom matching their biological gender. Under the law, people who identify as transgender must use the bathroom of their assigned biological gender unless they change their biological gender on their birth certificate.

Western is not required to pull funding for the trip but chose to in solidarity with Gov. Jay Inslee's decision to ban non-essential travel to North Carolina. Director of Communications Paul Cocks said in a statement given to KIRO News.

As a result, Chaos cannot use any funding or representation from Western. This means the \$20,000 necessary to attend nationals will have to be raised from other outlets such as family, friends, businesses and private supporters, said Chaos Fundraising Committee Chair Kaitlin Webster.

USA Ultimate, the national governing body for Ultimate Frisbee, was unable to change the location of nationals.

For senior and team captain Alea Clymber, this game will be the last chapter in her collegiate career.

"I didn't expect this at all, of course. I wanted to go to nationals,



**Chaos, Western's Ultimate Frisbee team, holds hands before the Northwest Regional tournament in Walla Walla, Washington April 30-May 1. // Photo courtesy of Annie Paden**

but who knew that this was going to be the situation we were in," Clymber said. "It's an amazing opportunity as a qualifying team who's aware of what's going on and who's passionate about it. I think we can make a big difference."

Chaos decided unanimously to attend nationals despite the bill, junior Tiffany Phan said.

"We had to think about what was the best way we could make the most impact," said Phan, who has been on the team since her freshman year. "We decided it would be best to just go there, play the sport we love and support the community there."

To make the trip, the team

will need to raise \$20,000 before Memorial Day weekend.

The cause is worth the effort, said Clymber and fellow team captain junior Jessie Thoreson.

The team decided that raising its own money would be important for the team to show it respects the university's decision to pull funding, Thoreson said.

The club has been doing everything from selling baked goods to reaching out to other organizations that oppose the bill, such as Bellingham Ultimate. The team created apparel signifying their support of the LGBT community, such as shirts with their team name

in rainbow lettering.

In North Carolina, Chaos will be competing against 80 teams from across the nation. The team plans to spread awareness by talking to the other teams about the legislation. The team hopes this will give the issue a voice, Webster said.

"I think when you get 80 teams behind this one effort, that's a huge group of people that can make a really big difference and really stand up for this," Thoreson said.

The law could cause the event to be moved next year, Thoreson said. "[USA Ultimate] is taking action to not hold it there in the future," Thoreson said.

## Women's rowing members receive all-region honors

Head coach John Fuchs selected as WIRA Women's Coach of the Year for second time

**Xander Davidson**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Five members of the women's rowing team and head coach John Fuchs were recently honored for their performances during the regular season.

The team will return to Lake Natoma in Gold River, California for the NCAA Division II National Championship, Friday, May 27, through Sunday, May 29.

Seniors Kristin Foster and Alexa Thompson, sophomore Karisa Stapp and freshman Rachel Dalthorp were All-WIRA team selections. Junior Emily Bartlett was selected to the College Sports Information Directors of America's Academic District 8 team.

Fuchs was chosen as the WIRA Women's Coach of the Year for the second time in his career, the first coming in 2011. Fuchs has also been selected as the Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association NCAA II National Coach of the Year three times.

The team swept the All-Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association Championships on April 30 through May 1 at Lake Natoma. Both the varsity 4 and 8 boats secured wins in the Grand Final.

**Karisa Stapp – All-WIRA first team selection**

Stapp said her selection lends itself to a bigger message for the team. "As a team we're all doing



**Sophomore two seat Karisa Stapp poses for photo. // Photo by Matt Pearson**

better and we can see our progress [individually]," Stapp said. "It's a good feeling."

Stapp has been rowing since her freshman year, and currently rows the two seat of the varsity 8 boat. In her time with the team, she has learned a few lessons.

"You don't actually know how far you can push yourself until you see it," Stapp said. "I think rowing has taught me that I'm a lot more capable than I originally thought."

**John Fuchs WIRA Women's Coach of the Year**

Fuchs has coached Western's women's rowing team for 18 years. During his time as head coach, the team won an incredible seven consecutive NCAA Division II National Championships from 2005-2011. Last season was the first season

Western was not selected to compete for the national title since the Division II National Championship was created in 2002.

Before becoming Western's head coach in 1999, Fuchs served as assistant coach and head coach for the men's team. In total, he estimates he's coached rowing for around 28 years.

Fuchs appreciates the award but thinks the credit belongs to the team. "It feels great. It's a reflection of the athletes," Fuchs said. "It should be the 'Team of the Year' award instead of the 'Coach of the Year' award, really."

Fuchs is most proud of the training and dedication from the rowers this season.

The team isn't changing much as it looks ahead to nationals, Fuchs said.

"It's just business as usual. It's just polishing and rest," Fuchs said. "A lot of teams will overwork [their rowers] this time of year, and we do the opposite. We let them rest and get ready to go."

**Rachel Dalthorp – All-WIRA first team selection**

Freshman Rachel Dalthorp may have joined the team in the middle of winter quarter, but she's not new to the sport. Dalthorp rowed for over two years prior to joining Western.

Dalthorp is aware of Western's past success.

"We've kind of been in a lull the past couple of years and right now our team is definitely on the rise,"

Dalthorp said. "It's helpful that we've already been down to the Nationals' race course [for WIRA]."

As a coxswain, Dalthorp's primary role is to help guide the rowers to victory by shouting directions to them. This can include steering and helping coordinate the rhythm of the rowers.

"I'm definitely proud of all of us for what we've done so far this season," Dalthorp said.



**Freshman coxswain Rachel Dalthorp poses for photo. // Photo by Matt Pearson**

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