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# THE LEDGER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA



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COURTESY OF UW TACOMA EXTENDED  
Chancellor Mark Pagano’s cabinet provided many updates about the campus, including new trainings, the latest on campus capital projects and an explanation as to why tuition for the online quarters has not gone down.

# Chancellor town hall round up

Members of the chancellor’s cabinet provided updates on what is going on around UW Tacoma in spite of COVID-19.

By MITCHELL FERMO  
News Editor

Chancellor Mark Pagano, along with several members of his cabinet, updated the campus regarding the ways in which UW Tacoma has been moving forward despite COVID- 19’s continued impact on campus operations. Pagano, who had recently announced that he would be stepping down from his chancellorship fully by the start of fall 2021, said that, among many other things, facility upgrades and renovations to the campus had not stopped, and in fact were well underway.

“With regard to Milgard Hall, that continues to be good news,” Pagano said. “Very soon, there will be rough diagrams, whether it’s going to be three stories or four stories ... it will be 54,000 square feet, rather than 50,000 square feet.”

The Milgard Hall will house several new classrooms, as well as the new civil and mechanical engineering programs, labs for those programs and the Global Innovation and Design Center.

The Milgard School of Business will also see their school expand with the construction of the new building.

The Snoqualmie and Tioga Library buildings also have plans for renovation to better accommodate students. This project is near the construction phase of the expansion, and over the winter and spring quarters will provide constant updates as to how the project is going.

Pagano also acknowledged how much of a toll COVID-19 has taken on staff, faculty and students and reminded everyone to make sure they take time for themselves to maintain both physical and mental health.

“I want to encourage you to make sure to keep taking care of yourself,” Pagano said. “We need each and every person to start with taking care of themselves, so that you’ll be healthy to take care of those other people I talked about around you: in your family, your home and our greater community, including our school ... We will get through it.”

Chief Strategy Officer Joe Lawless reminded students, faculty and staff of

the proper protocol for those who might still need to access campus. Lawless also highlighted the improvements made to the campus in providing reservable areas for students to use as safe study spaces.

Included in the town hall were several vice-chancellors, including Vice-Chancellors Mentha Hynes-Wilson, Jill Purdy and James McShay. During her update, Hynes-Wilson — the vice-chancellor for Student Affairs — praised the UWT First Gen program during their recent national recognition during the National First Generation Celebration Week.

“Our First Gen students continue to be highly engaged,” Hynes-Wilson said. “Mentors are providing support to their peers in areas such as goal setting, time management, financial wellness, and learning strategies.”

Hynes-Wilson also praised the new DawgBones reward programs from the Center for Student Involvement, indicating a continued interest in campus activities and events.

McShay, vice-chancellor of Equity

and Inclusion, talked about the progress of the enactment of the UW Climate Survey recommendations.

“I’m happy to announce those teams have been formed and fully populated,” McShay said. “We have 22 faculty, staff and students who are working in a focused fashion, looking carefully at the data in our climate survey report. [They are] working to get additional information.”

McShay also welcomed Gabe Mint-horn into the Equity and Inclusion and UWT family. Working as the Tribal Liaison, Minthorn, an enrolled member of the Yakima nation, will work to help Indigenize curriculum while simultaneously helping to facilitate success for UWT’s Native American staff, faculty and students.

Purdy, Executive Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, in addition to updating the campus about the structural changes between UWT and UW Seattle, also answered a question regarding tuition. More specifically, a student wrote in asking why students in asynchronous and online classes were neither

being compensated for the altered learning environment, nor have they seen a tuition reduction due to the change.

Purdy responded by explaining why asynchronous learning has been more favored by many professors.

“Because of our diverse population of students, we have a number of students struggling with technology and technology access, struggling with childcare ... and we have some of those same challenges on the faculty side as well,” Purdy said. “We have seen a number of faculty adapting to this requirement among many of our students in order to support their learning.”

Purdy, however, did not elaborate as to why tuition has not been lowered or refunded despite the primarily on-line classes.

Finally, Pagano wrapped up the town hall explaining how proud he was of the entire UWT campus — students, faculty and staff — for coming together, stepping up and helping each other out during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I am just amazed and proud of what’s going on,” Pagano said.

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and 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**Wednesday** 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**Thursday** 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
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# SAFC holds first meeting, sets guidelines for new council

SAFC decides how funding from the Service and Activity Fee is distributed.

By LUKE DENUELLE  
News Reporter

The Services and Activities Fee Committee held their first meeting of the year. It was geared mainly towards introducing new members to the council and the ways in which its day-to-day operations are handled, but it also set the tone for the new year. Here is a quick recap on how the meeting went:

SAFC is a chancellor-appointed committee of seven students, four non-voting ex-officio members and a compliance officer. Students of the SAFC set budgets for the student activity fee and recommend what services the fee should fund.

Right off the bat, the council was

introduced to Robert’s Rules as the law of the land for communication. Robert’s Rules of Order is a widely used parliamentary procedure that has been adopted by countless non-legislative committees, such as the Democratic Socialists of America. It loosely follows the rules set down by the House of Representatives.

The entirety of the meeting functioned to help expose those otherwise unfamiliar with the process to its standard, and help refamiliarize those who may need it. The rules are simple, but encompassing, and a cheat sheet can be seen in the accompanying photo.

An essential new rule mentioned by Sean Schmidt, the advisor and compliance officer for SAFC, was that once

an agenda was approved for a meeting, it could not be changed. This is to ensure that guests knew what to expect and could be assured that anticipated topics were addressed.

They went on to discuss other standards for operating, especially in the area of funding allocations. They discussed funding policies, such as special funding allocations and funding rollover. For programs that encounter special expenditures that were not anticipated — such as a higher number of expected students — they can then receive funding based on this principle.

Funds that a program does not use from one fiscal year can be rolled over to the next fiscal year and do not require SAFC approval for usage.

Even though the SAFC provides recommendations for funding, they must first go through the Office of the Chancellor before reaching the UW Board of Regents for the expenditures to be approved. All fiscal year budgets are ultimately approved by the Board of Regents.

According to Associate Vice-Chancellor of Finance Jan Rutledge, historically, fund requests were effectively “rubber-stamped.”

“Over the last three years, there seems to be an increasing amount of oversight,” Rutledge said, explaining how SAFC has garnered more interest and focus from students.

Providing students an open and accessible forum is an important part of the process, and Schmidt explained

that for this reason, every meeting is open and free for students to sit in on, or even ask questions. They plan to hold meetings every Wednesday from 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. until the quarter is over, then will then return at the beginning of winter quarter.

Interested students can learn more about SAFC, as well as seen when the next meeting is, at [www.tacoma.uw.edu/2021-2022-saf-budget](http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/2021-2022-saf-budget)

ROBERTS RULES CHEAT SHEET						
To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decides
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move that we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
The above listed motions and points are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.						
To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Object to procedure or personal affront	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
Ask for vote by actual count to verify voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	Must be done before new motion	No	No	No	None unless someone objects
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question"	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table..."	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	Yes	Yes	Only if original motion was debatable	No	Majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
The motions, points and proposals listed above have no established order of preference; any of them may be introduced at any time except when meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed from the first chart (Motion to Adjourn, Recess or Point of Privilege).						
Page 1 of 5						





Noreen Slease, the Executive Assistant to the Chancellor. COURTESY OF THE UW DIRECTORY

# Staff spotlight: Noreen Slease

A look at the woman in charge of keeping the chancellor on track and organized.

By OLUWASEYI FALEKE  
NEWS REPORTER

Noreen Slease is the executive assistant and office manager to Chancellor Mark Pagano at UW Tacoma. In her role on campus, Slease is an integral part of the chancellor's team. Slease agreed to share insight into some of her passions in her career as well as her roles on campus. When asked what the roles of the Executive Assistant are, Slease mentioned that she provides "direct, executive-level, confidential support to the chancellor."

"This may sound a bit corny, but I am passionate about UW Tacoma," said Slease, discussing why she likes her job. "I am so proud of our students and all of their accomplishments ... I cannot imagine working anywhere other than here."

While talking about her non-traditional career journey before her current position on campus, Slease

**"I am so proud of our students and all of their accomplishments ... I cannot imagine working anywhere other than here."**

tend college. Slease began her career as a receptionist at a New York investment firm and during her journey, she wound up in different positions at various publishing companies, but did not find what she was looking for.

"It wasn't until I visited this beautiful state, and seeing Mt. Rainier for the first time, that I knew my journey would continue here," Slease said. "Six months later, I became a Washingtonian. In 2001, I applied for and was

offered a position at the University of Washington Tacoma as a Senior Secretary in the Office of the Chancellor" "The rest, as they say, is history!" Slease concluded.

When asked about activities that she enjoys, she mentioned that she finds managing the chancellor's calendar to be quite enjoyable.

"In some aspects, it's like putting a puzzle together by ensuring that all the pieces fit," Slease explained.

She also talked a bit about how her son, who is a math major at the Seattle campus and will be graduating in the spring. With this in mind, Slease offered some advice that she hopes will encourage UWT students and that some might even take to heart:

"While I cannot provide advice in the capacity of ever being an undergraduate student, I can provide advice from life experiences. Quite simply, never sell yourself short, and reach for the stars!"

## UWT Study Abroads plans for 2021's program in China

Study Abroad program directors fielded questions concerning the future of the Chinese program.

By LUCAS CASSOL  
NEWS REPORTER

UW Tacoma's Study Abroad hosted an "Ask Me Anything" on their Instagram page with one of their professors, Mary Hanneman, leading the program to focus on their plans to bring students to China during the summer of 2021. The event, which happened on Nov. 18, also helped to answer questions concerning past, along with future, trips that Study Abroad is planning and how COVID-19 is impacting these plans. Study Abroad Manager Courtney Kroll answered some questions regarding the recent trips and the classes being offered to students.

"I believe this is the 12th or 13th time the China: Past and Present study abroad program has taken

place," Kroll said. "Generally, the program courses remain the same every year but the locations change and the content is tailored to fit the culture, history, etc. of the cities the students visit. In the past students have studied both in mainland China and in Taiwan or Hong Kong."

Kroll stated the classes being offered this summer include THIST 215: Global 20th Century History, TPHIL 315: Chinese Religion and Philosophy and TIAS 480: Experiencing China, as well as an optional Chinese language course.

Similar questions were asked of Hanneman and Kroll during the Instagram Live event, but both gave answers to a wider spread of questions as well as providing information about themselves.

Hanneman has led upwards of a

dozen study abroad trips, but the China Program is unique in UWT's partnership with Tacoma Community College, where their program lead Yi Li teaches.

There were a handful of different subjects Hanneman and Kroll touched on, but one of the most important topics revolved around the financial side of study abroad.

"Don't let the dollar signs make you say 'no that's not for me,'" Hanneman said. "There's no better time to travel than during your school years and there are so many financial aid opportunities."

Hanneman made note of the handful of scholarships available to students on their website, as well as a handful of online meetings focusing on the subject.

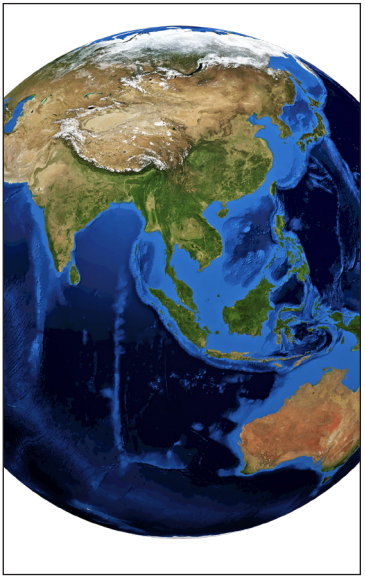
Hanneman also asked students to

just apply, even if they are not sold on the trip.

"Go ahead and apply, and you'll have the option open," Hanneman said. "You can always have a spot and cancel later."

Kroll also noted that there are usually only 18 to 22 openings in the program itself, and echoed the same sentiment that students should hop on if they are just considering it and will have the ability to cancel later.

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*If you are interested in applying for the program in China, check out UWT's Office of Global Affairs website at <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/node/37705> for information on application and financial aid as well as important dates and deadlines.*  
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UWT Study Abroad plans on another summer of travel despite cancellations last year.



We are all human.

ILLUSTRATION BY LORE ZENT

## ISIS is not a representation of Islam; know the difference

Muslims are often portrayed in the wrong context. Could this be from lack of knowledge on the religion Islam? Or could it be resistance to Muslims from recent terror attacks?

By BENGISU CICEK  
OPINION COLUMNIST

What are some thoughts that come to mind when you hear or see the word Islam or Muslim? Barbaric. This is the term that we see and hear being used in regards to the actions of terrorist organizations and those who attack in the name of God. We have seen and heard it against terrorist organizations who twist and warp the words taught in the religion Islam — such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. But this term is also being associated with Muslims, followers of the religion.

Such terror groups use Islam as a tool to bring more people together, hence how ISIS was able to build their caliphate in Raqqa, Syria. They misuse the verses from the Quran to justify their terror attacks. "O believers! Do not insult what they invoke besides Allah," 6:108 Surah Al-An'am, The Holy Quran. Islam teaches us to be kind to our brothers and sisters from other faiths and backgrounds, not to kill them.

From an American, non-Muslim

perspective, the fear and tension ignited in people stems from what they see on television, and this fear is normalized. At least this is how a lot of Muslims feel, only it's much worse as they know that instead of the perpetrator, they will be the ones facing the consequences.

Terror attacks such as 9/11, the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing and IS led attacks in Europe are labeled as radical Islamist attacks, which becomes the leading cause of the affiliation of the religion with these attacks. This generates more tension against those who are visibly Muslim. For example, these tensions led to the banning of the Burkini and Burqa in France where women caught wearing the garment that covers the body and face, excluding eyes, will be fined 150 euros This fear, hatred and prejudice against the religion of Islam along with those who practice it is called Islamophobia, which only creates more suffering.

Chances are you have a Muslim in your or in your loved one's lives. You either know one from work, school, a friend group or community. Now, how

much do you actually know about Muslims and our religion?

"Whoever takes a life — unless as a punishment for murder or mischief in the land — it will be as if they killed all of humanity; and whoever saves a life, it will be as if they saved all of humanity," 5:32, Surah Al-Ma'idah, The Holy Quran.

Salam means peace in Arabic. Salam originates from the word Islam. Islam is a religion of peace, a way of life. It teaches and civilizes its followers through its verses and through the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) sunnahs, which refers to his way of living. Despite what many people think or are led to believe, Islam also empowers women; the entire chapter Surah Nisa — literally translated as "The Women" — in the Quran is dedicated to them.

Islam teaches us respect. "For your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And honour your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them even 'ugh,' nor yell at them. Rather, address them

respectfully," verse 17:23, Surah Al-Isra.

Islam teaches us how to peacefully and rightfully live in this world no matter the year nor generation we are in. But, a lot of people don't know this, instead they interpret our religion in a completely disparate context and spread this false ideology in society. When leaders and people with large audiences do this, their words permeate and impact vast amounts of people.

With Muslims being labeled as barbaric and uncivilized, offensive stereotypes originate and escalate. These stereotypes include: anyone with a beard must be a terrorist, women who veil are oppressed and were forced to do so, Muslims hate Jews and Christians, Muslim men have many wives, all Muslims are Arab, Muslims don't believe in Jesus and Muslim women don't have hair under their scarves.

These stereotypes are harmful and something that many people have been led to believe due to the rampant misportrayal of Muslims in the film and media industry. Anyone that reads the Quran and learns about Prophet Mu-

hammad will know that Islam promotes peace and unity. This is why during Ramadan we have interfaith iftars, where we break bread with people from all religious backgrounds and races in order to understand and learn from one another.

As Muslims, we should not have to continually prove that we are not primitive people, that we have the same interests, hobbies, movies, foods and books as you do. That we think and love the way you do.

It's time people stop downgrading Muslims based on your own misunderstandings, and seeing Muslim women as oppressed and needing to be "saved."

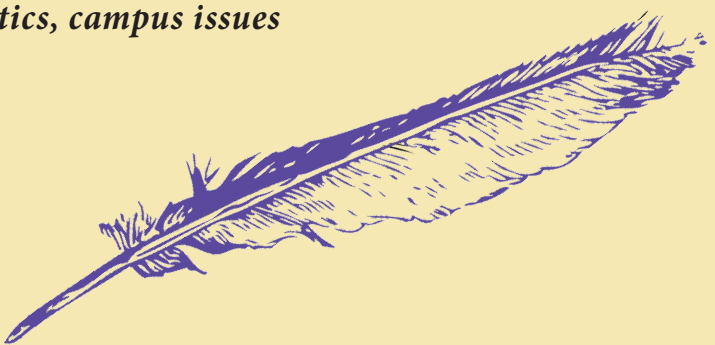
"Let there be no compulsion in religion," 2:256 Surah Al-Baqarah, The Holy Quran. Islam and the headscarf must absolutely not be forced onto anyone. Muslims are not oppressed and their children are not either. It's time to break down the walls that the media and film industries have built in order to truly begin to learn about your Muslim peers, to not fear them, to know that they are just as human as you.

## THE LEDGER IS NOW ACCEPTING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR!

*Do you want to voice your issues of concern related to news, politics, campus issues and more? Then we invite you to write a Letter to the Editor. Letters submitted to the Ledger may be published through both TheTacomaLedger.com or our printed editions.*

**SEND YOUR LETTERS TO: LEDGER@UW.EDU**

- Your first and last name
- "Dear Editor," as the opening of your piece
- Respond to one of our articles or happenings on campus





# State sanctioned terror

The U.S. human rights violations against migrants and the immigrant experience in the “Land of the Free.”

By **ANDREA NADAL**  
OPINION EDITOR

The United States of America. “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free . . .” The promise sold but never delivered. Our corrupt immigration system has denied those most in need of the opportunity to find a better life for themselves on this soil. To create a home, and to find safety. People fleeing any number of circumstances from violence to war, to environmental disaster to political persecution — many things which the U.S. has a hand in creating or exacerbating — are criminalized for the methods in which they seek their liberation.

In the article “What 8 People Want You to Know About Immigration in America” from Repeller, we gain some insight into the individual experiences of immigrants.

Zarka Shabir, who immigrated to the U.S. from Kashmir, India in 2013 recounts her experience entering the U.S. “You are a brown woman waiting in line at JFK, fumbling to make sure your papers are in order, wondering whether your name is too jagged, too Muslim, that it won’t roll off their tongue. You watch as people with fairer skin pass you by. Global Entry, they will say, for the

‘pre-approved, low-risk.’ Remember: They said global, not equal.”

Shabir sheds light onto the unjust ways in which immigration and travel are restricted for some while also highlighting the ways in which even those who have done all of the “right” things are still made to feel unsettled and unwelcome by this system.

Jennifer Chavez-Petrou, whose parents immigrated from El Salvador around the 1980s, describes her experience growing up in New York. “I felt like a tree that got planted in someone’s backyard 10 years after the original trees had been planted. The grass around me was freshly sowed; the distinction was pointed out to me sometimes, in case I forgot . . . In the midst of my teen angst, I generally accepted the conflicting duality of both feeling American and being made to feel un-American just because I couldn’t trace my roots to the Mayflower.”

An experience that many children of immigrants share; having only been planted in this soil themselves and having little to no connection to the land your parents come from, yet still being the “other.” Recognizing and accepting that despite your roots being here, they are not enough. You do not have claim to this land or that of your parents. Your roots are tangled, and messy, and unsure.

These feelings of unrest and of being labeled the “other” within the individual are created by a system that refuses personhood to some while granting it to others. A system that treats immigrants from some places as less than human and a danger to those within its borders. This “othering” is not just reserved for those who immigrated here recently though, but rather it is a label which is forced on anyone who is not of European descent, even those whose ancestors are from this land, and those whose ancestors were forced onto this land.

With things like the “Remain in Mexico” Policy meant to curb the flow of migrants entering the country from South and Central America seeking asylum within our borders. And Executive Order 13769 titled “Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States,” more commonly known as the “Muslim Ban,” which lowered or even suspended all together the acceptance of refugees from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Hundreds were detained, and tens of thousands of visas were “provisionally revoked.” But refugees seeking freedom and safety within our borders are not a danger, the only danger to be found is from the very system which sows these divisions.

The very system that rips children from the arms of their parents with the Family Separation Policy, a so called “Zero-Tolerance” approach to immigration. The very system that has “lost” thousands of these children and is forcing women in their custody to get hysterectomies unnecessarily and without proper consent. The system where I.C.E. has a budget of \$8.3 billion and C.B.P. has a budget of \$14.2 billion, yet the people detained in their custody are sick, overcrowded and are given inedible food.

I.C.E. and C.B.P. are state-sanctioned terrorists. They implement methods designed to dehumanize, criminalize and harm those seeking a place within our borders. From their agents slashing water jugs left in the desert to aid those traveling from Central and South America on foot to the abuse of human rights imposed on those in their custody. The only purpose they serve is to uphold the system built on White Supremacy while simultaneously “othering” those they deem not worthy of a legal pathway here.

Those living here illegally are under constant threat from these agencies of detention or deportation, a sure death sentence for some. The watchful eye of the state will gladly strip them of their lives here and send them away, refusing to acknowledge the humanity of these



COURTESY OF PXFUEL.COM  
The statue of liberty, a gift from France to the United States, seen as a symbol of freedom and democracy by many.

same individuals.

A “Zero-Tolerance” approach to immigration is inhumane and unjust. These kinds of tactics only create more suffering for those seeking peace. They are applied only to some and are used to uphold a colonial white supremacist system. The criminalization of immigration in this way runs counter to what this country claims but fails to stand for, the things that people are seeking when they look to our borders as a new home.

# Rest in peace Alex Trebek

The beloved host of “Jeopardy!” that will forever be in our hearts.

By **MADELINE HILLER**  
A&E EDITOR

2020 claimed another beautiful soul on Nov. 8. “Jeopardy!” host George Alexander Trebek, more commonly known as Alex Trebek, passed away at the age of 80. He had been fighting stage four pancreatic cancer for 18 months and, unfortunately, has succumbed to the grievous illness.

Trebek hosted the TV game show “Jeopardy!” from 1984 all the way up until his death in 2020. This added up to 37 seasons. In July, his autobiography “The Answer Is . . . : Reflections on My Life” was published. In this book, he discussed his life, his career on tv and the relationships he has made. The book couldn’t have been written and published at a better time.

Many people have paid tribute to Trebek in these last few weeks. “Jeopardy!” being one of them, paid tribute to Trebek airing their first episode

since his death and other stars offered words of kindness including Ryan Seacrest, Jimmy Kimmel and Ellen DeGeneres.

“Alex Trebek was like a family member who I watched every night. I remember going to the set to watch him tape a show before I started my TV career. He was a big influence and one of a kind. Rest In Peace, Alex,” said Seacrest on Twitter.

Along with the many stars that posted beautiful words, some past “Jeopardy!” contestants chimed in.

“Alex wasn’t just the best ever at what he did. He was also a lovely and deeply decent man, and I am grateful for every minute I got to spend with him,” said Ken Jennings, a record-holding “Jeopardy!” star. “Thinking today about his family and his Jeopardy! family — which, in a way, included millions of us.”

James Holzhauer, another well known “Jeopardy!” star, posted to

Twitter, saying, “Alex was so much more than a host. He was an impartial arbiter of truth and facts in a world that needs exactly that. He was someone you could count on to entertain you every weekday, even when his health barely allowed it.”

Trebek is survived by his family, his wife of 30 years — Jean Curriivan Trebek — and his two children, Emily and Matthew Trebek. Curriivan Trebek posted a wedding photo on Instagram with a caption expressing her thanks to everyone who has been supporting them through this hard time.

“My family and I sincerely thank you all for your compassionate messages and generosity. Your expressions have truly touched our hearts. Thank you so very, very much,” Jean wrote.

While there is no confirmed replacement host for “Jeopardy!,” the show will continue to air every weekday. Whoever is chosen as host has some big shoes to fill.



COURTESY OF JEOPARDY.COM  
The beloved host of “Jeopardy!” that will forever be in our hearts.

# 15th annual Tacoma film festival

The Tacoma Film Festival goes virtual and brings itself to your home theater this year.

By **HENRY NGUYEN**  
FILM CRITIC

With COVID restrictions, the Tacoma Film Festival took a hybrid approach this year to its film festival, and while it did host a few select ‘experimental’ screenings in theatres for special release feature length films, most of the festival took place in a virtual screening room.

Each year the festival is meant to bring light to independent films and filmmakers and to celebrate the art of film as a whole, The Grand Cinema is one of the only places possible to see obscure independent films in the Tacoma area. It is the passion and love for film that keeps The Grand and its festivals active every year, even in the worst of times.

The beloved film festival is now on its 15th anniversary and according to the festival, it comprised over 125 plus films including 17 feature length, three of which highlight local Pacific Northwest filmmakers. Here are some highlights from the festival.

## “SINCE I BEEN DOWN”

The headlining film for the festival this year was a documentary taking place right here in Tacoma and is centered around the racial and economic injustices that plague the Pacific Northwest. If you’ve lived here long enough, you might have heard a multitude of stories about neighbor-

hoods, such as Hilltop, which is where the film captured their backdrop for its message.

The film documents past gang violence that ran rampant through the neighborhood of Hilltop in Tacoma and how that affected the community. The main purpose of the documentary is to show how the prevalence of systemic racism created a community that is neglected and often violent. It features interviews with past gang members and their families to highlight reflections on their past.

The film then ventures to the prison system and interviews several inmates to discuss the neglect and dehumanization that they face while serving their time. They portray inmates having to provide education and basic needs for themselves while also suggesting ways in which prisons can be reformed into a place that nurtures, rather than punishes.

The cinematography in the film is one of the film’s many strengths. Drone shots that overlook a vast never-ending scene of trees and dense forests followed by slow and brooding shots of urban Tacoma landscapes highlight some of the best scenes of Tacoma and surrounding Pacific Northwest area.

While the shots are beautiful and the situations that the film documents are fascinating as a Tacoma



COURTESY OF THE TACOMA FILM FESTIVAL  
The headlining film this year, “Since I Been Down,” takes place right in our backyard.

native, the film’s weakness lies with-in trying to fill that hour and 30 minute runtime. As a result, the documentary gradually starts to drag on and become repetitive, especially during scenes that took place within the prisons.

This is definitely a must see if you want to know more about Tacoma’s more recent history and how social injustices are involved in impacting communities in the area. It’s also a good film to learn about the prison system and how it should be improved in a way that truly provides reformation and rehabilitation to help inmates.

## “WHY SLUGS HAVE NO LEGS”

“Why Slugs Have No Legs” is an 11 minute animated short film showing the lives of snails struggling to keep up with the extremely fast paced work environment that the flies are currently involved in. The slugs’ failure to assimilate in society causes

them to find joy in small things — such as a slowly growing plant.

The visuals are trippy and unique, the film clearly isn’t afraid to go to strange places while continuously stretching the reality of the world it creates. Even the darker moments of the film are made light by its whimsical, almost joking, explanation as to why slugs have no legs while flies have wings along with multiple arms. This short film critiques capitalism and the mentality that one has to be constantly working no matter what, or else those who conform to the economic system will take advantage of you. It makes you feel good knowing that it’s perfectly normal if you need to slow down in life sometimes.

This is a great animated film to check out if you enjoy whimsical animated films about creatures living like humans. It delivers a unique way of critiquing capitalism and deserves

a watch.

## “UNION COUNTY”

The beautifully shot and melancholic film, “Union County,” is about a recovering drug addict and his journey to navigate the drug court recovery program. His ex-girlfriend visits him but he knows that in the end, he must let her go.

This was a standout film among the narrative shorts category with this film’s beautiful shots of rural Ohio that call for introspection and reflection. The repetition and routine of the main character in this film plays heavily into themes of self improvement and developing new habits that foster positive change.

This short will be for you if you enjoy introspective journeys and slow brooding films.

# Recognizing the importance of self-care during the holiday season

It’s okay to not spend the holidays with family, with or without COVID restrictions.

By **MADI WILLIAMS**  
OPINION COLUMNIST

The holiday season is traditionally viewed as a happy time for families to get together and celebrate, but for some, this is not always the case. For some individuals, dealing with copious amounts of stressors makes the holiday season unenjoyable. In other words, “the most wonderful time of the year” becomes archaic and difficult. Instead of having another year of unhappy holidays, recognize that it’s perfectly okay to spend the holidays with people who make you happy, even if they’re not your family.

For some, the holidays can lead to feelings of depression, making a time that is supposed to be happy into something they dread. “What is there to be depressed about during the holiday seasons?” some might wonder. Oftentimes families bring forth memories and discuss goals for the upcoming year, but these types of conversations can be overwhelming for people who have depression.

In their article “The Seriousness of Depression During the Holidays,” the Neuro Wellness Spa explains that this season may “ . . . cause feelings of dread,

despair, and disappointment. While severe depression may occur any time of year, the winter holiday season can be especially difficult for individuals suffering from clinical depression.” If you are having these feelings, know that you are not alone and it is totally okay to feel this way during the holidays. Know that it is okay to know your limits and excuse yourself from the festivities to take some time for yourself.

For others, the holidays mean having to deal with family that may not accept their lifestyle and identity, which can make holidays awkward and uncomfortable. Knowing that you are going to be around those who refuse to accept or even know who you are can be incredibly anxiety provoking.

From the fear of being misgendered, intentionally or not, in front of family to comments about your sexuality — for those that are out or those who are not — holidays with family means read-dressing these identities internally and externally. These experiences can be embarrassing and traumatic, something no one ever wants to feel, especially during the holidays.

With recent events that have hap-

pened in Washington State due to COVID-19, Inslee has placed a ban on gatherings exceeding groups of five people from outside of the household, which so far will affect Thanksgiving. This, in a way, provides an excuse to avoid the anxiety-provoking holiday season.

The ban has been implemented as a means to stop the spread of the virus, so by not accepting the invitation, you are doing your part. Stopping the spread of the virus is extremely important, but taking care of your mental health is just as valuable. Yes, this virus gives an out for individuals who don’t feel comfortable with their families, however, it is important to realize that even if there wasn’t a virus going around, staying away from people that make you uncomfortable is just as valid of a reason not to go to an event.

Some people may not want to spend the holiday season with family but have instead decided to see the friends they have made that accept them for who they are. Spending time with family — either by blood or not — is so important during this season. But, in this new COVID-19 world, it’s imperative we find creative ways to make this work.



ILLUSTRATION BY LORE ZENT

Remember to care for yourself over the holidays.

Thankfully we live in a time where technology makes it easier and more accessible to stay in touch with others and have “face to face” time. Make time with some close friends through a virtual holiday, get together, eat and drink holiday themed foods and provide holiday music in the background.

Send each other gifts through the mail or drop some off at their house to coordinate a gift exchange together over video chat. Even though it isn’t happening in person, you still have the chance to experience moments of seeing others

open gifts while spending time with those you care about.

While this year looks a lot different compared to past holiday seasons, this doesn’t take away the stressors that come with it. If you feel depressed and know that your family is not going to support you as you are, remember that it is okay to not spend the holidays with them. The holidays are supposed to be a happy time for everyone and if being with friends brings you that joy, then it’s perfectly okay to spend time with them instead.



# Female-fronted indie comics

Are you tired of seeing stereotypical portrayals of women in comics?

By **LORE ZENT**  
A&E COLUMNIST

While women in comics isn't necessarily a new thing, more often than not readers are given token, one-dimensional female characters. To avoid this, it is very important to have a woman involved in the creative process. Each of the comics below have a woman on their creative team as well as a featured female protagonist, each of which possess different backgrounds so the burden of representation doesn't fall upon one story.

## SNOTGIRL

"Snotgirl" is a series published by Image Comics and written by Bryan O'Malley, the creator of "Scott Pilgrim vs. The World." It is a notable work despite it being the first comic O'Malley hasn't drawn for, instead, Leslie Hung's charming use of vivid color and style is used. The comic currently has 15 issues out, totalling three completed volumes.

This comic centers around Lottie Person, a white-passing bisexual woman, while she and her circle of friends are fashion influencers. This comic, however, has more to it than what is shown on its valley girl surface. When Person gains a new friend, Caroline, who is much more than she seems, things start to take a turn. As her new

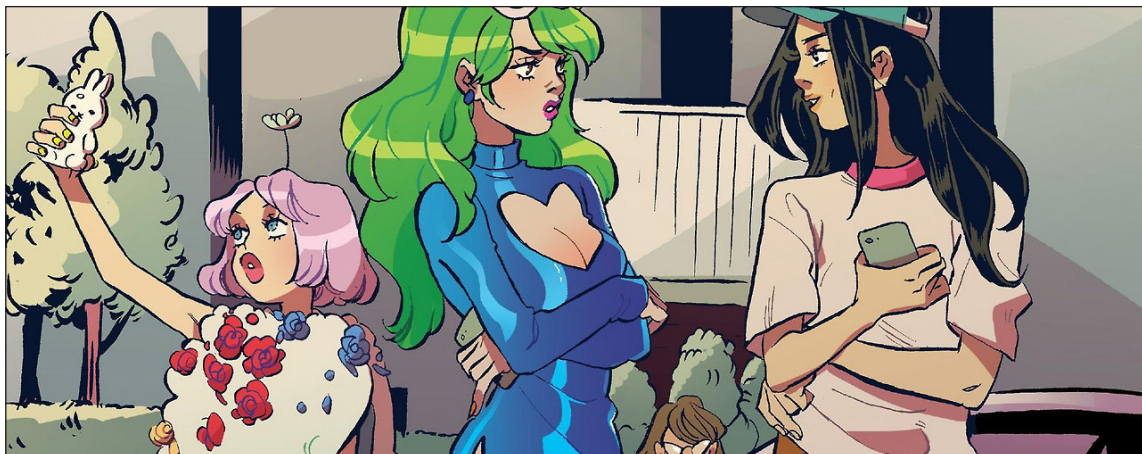
allergy medications seem to be taking a toll on her life and sense of reality, this story becomes a tale of immortality, murder, blood, snot and tears.

## MOTORCRUSH

Also published by Image Comics is "MotorCrush," written by Brenden Fletcher and illustrated by Cameron Stewart and Babs Tarr. In "MotorCrush," Domino Swift is a motorcycle racer competing for fame and fortune by day, and by night brutally fights off rival gangs in bike wars to gain control of rare, valuable contraband: a "machine narcotic" known as Crush. This comic incorporates subtle diversity with a black lesbian lead and characters of various body types, it also features an interesting color profile, balancing blue cool undertones and neon pink highlights.

## HEAVY VINYL: RIOT ON THE RADIO

Originally starting as a webcomic on Tapas.io, "Heavy Vinyl" is now published in print by Boom! Studios. The comic, written by Carly Usdin and drawn by Nina Vakueva, hones in on some nostalgia set in New Jersey back in 1998. The main character, Chris, is a young queer girl who lands her dream job working at the local record store. Little does she know, it's a front for a teen girl vigilante fight club. Chris, with the help of her friends, will fight through the patri-



COURTESY OF IMAGE COMICS

Snotgirl is a comic by Bryan O'Malley and Leslie Hung.

archy, corporate interference and possibly find where she belongs. This coming-of-age tale is definitely one for the ages.

## JADE STREET PROTECTION SERVICES

Written by Kathy Rex and published by Black Mask Studios, the magical-girl genre gets revamped in "Jade Street Protection Services." This comic centers around a group of five rebellious students who met in detention and consequently started skipping their classes at Matsdotter Academy, an elite boarding school for magical girls. They soon uncover that their school is more dangerously sinister than they originally thought. It features a well-rounded diversity of girls from different ethnicities, reli-

gious beliefs, neo-divergences and sexual orientations.

## PERSEPOLIS

Marjane Satrapi tells her autobiographical tale in the french comic "Persepolis" published by Pantheon Books. It depicts her life beginning in childhood progressing to her early adult years living in Iran and Austria during the post-Islamic Revolution. Throughout the story her family is involved in the political unrest of Iran and are depicted attending numerous protests while her father dangerously takes photos of riots. To escape the dangers of home, her family decides to send her away to an academy in Vienna. Despite gaining maturity throughout the novel, she retains her

rebellious streak, often getting herself into trouble.

## KIM & KIM

This sci-fi comic written by Magdalene Visaggio, illustrated by Eva Cabrera and published by Black Mask Studios follows the story of two 20-something best friends — Kim Quatro and Kim Dantzler — who are in the trade of international cowboy law enforcement. They always seem to be one bounty away from getting by, but when they see the opportunity to hijack a high stakes bounty, they take it hoping to prove something to their displeased parents. However, they soon learn they are in way over their heads.

# 2020 UW basketball season preview

The Huskies will lose two of their top players going into 2020. Who needs to step up to bring this team back to the NCAA tournament after missing out last season?

By **BROOKS MOELLER**  
SPORTS COLUMNIST

After originally canceling all athletic activities in 2020, the Pac-12 conference has now changed its course and the basketball season is scheduled to start just two weeks after the original date. The Huskies will be playing this Wednesday, Nov. 25 against Portland State for their opening contest.

With how the conference football season has gone thus far — with four games canceled in a span of two weeks — I would expect the basketball season to go about the same, with games having to be moved around, canceled and rescheduled. However, I am going to pretend as if this will be a normal season and give my thoughts on where this team stands and what I am looking forward to this season.

The Huskies lost two impact players to the NBA draft, Isaiah Stewart and Jaden McDaniels. Since they were the top two scorers on the team with an averaged combined 30 points per game, their biggest task will be replacing the offensive output of those two.

The obvious answer to who should be next to lead the offensive attack would have been senior guard Nahziah Carter, however, his status remains uncertain after being indefinitely suspended from all team related activities for violating team rules. This will be a huge loss if he is unavailable for a team that is desperate for scoring options.

However, if this is the case, there are a few breakout candidates that could step up for the Huskies. One is senior guard Quade Green. Green is a transfer from Kentucky that showed audiences why he was a five star recruit coming out of high school last year. But, before it was announced, he was academically ineligible and missed the second half of the season. He averaged 11.6 points along with 5.3 assists per game and also shot 44% on three point field goals.

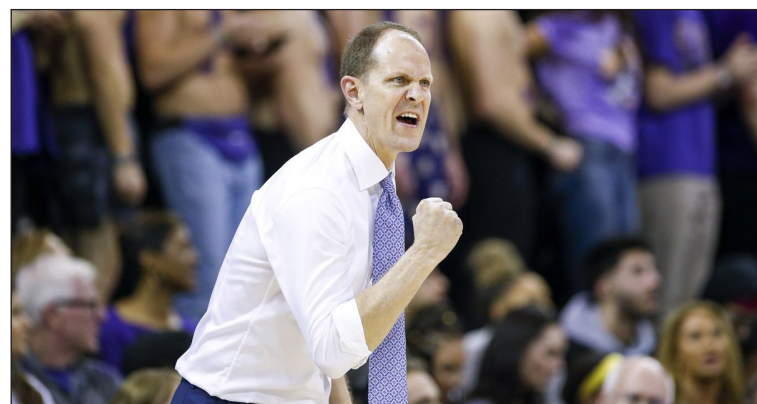
After losing Green, the team almost seemed completely lost for the remainder of the season, poorly finishing with a 4-14 in their last 18 games that concluded with a first round exit in the Pac-12 tournament.

Two more returning names to watch out for are sophomores Marcus Tsohonis and RaeQuan Battle. Both were originally planned to be red-shirted for the season but injuries and suspensions threw them into battle earlier than expected.

Tsohonis gained valuable experience as the starting point guard in the final stretch last season filling in for Green, and I really liked what I saw. In his limited action, he averaged seven points per game and also shot 41% from behind the arc. He could be a huge asset coming off the bench.

Battle on the other hand is a pure scorer and will most likely serve as the sixth man coming off the bench. While he needs to put more work in regarding his game, Battle is known for his shooting, which I expect to see improved for 2020. With the potential loss of Carter, it is important for him to step up and bring a spark to the offensive line.

The team also welcomes four transfers who will most likely all be eligible to play in 2020. Someone I am most excited about is combo guard Erik



COURTESY OF UW DAWG POUND

Mike Hopkins begins his fourth season as UW's head coach looking for his second NCAA tournament berth in the last three years.

Stevenson. Stevenson is a local product out of Timberline high school but spent his first two seasons of college at Wichita State, where he was the Shocker's second leading scorer. He has the potential to be a pure scorer and lead the Husky offense while also bringing valuable length in the zone defense UW is known for.

I don't see this team competing for a conference championship but there is no reason they cannot be in the top half of the conference to earn an at-large birth to the NCAA tournament.

The key will be the hopeful return of Carter as well as seniors Quade Green and Hamier Wright playing up to their potential in their final year in Seattle.

The conference overall is loaded with talent and extremely balanced outside of the top three in Oregon, Arizona State and UCLA. My best guess would be a sixth place finish if Carter can play and we see the emergence of the younger players along with the transfers. Now let's all pray the season goes smoothly with limited cancellations.