

# THE LEDGER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA

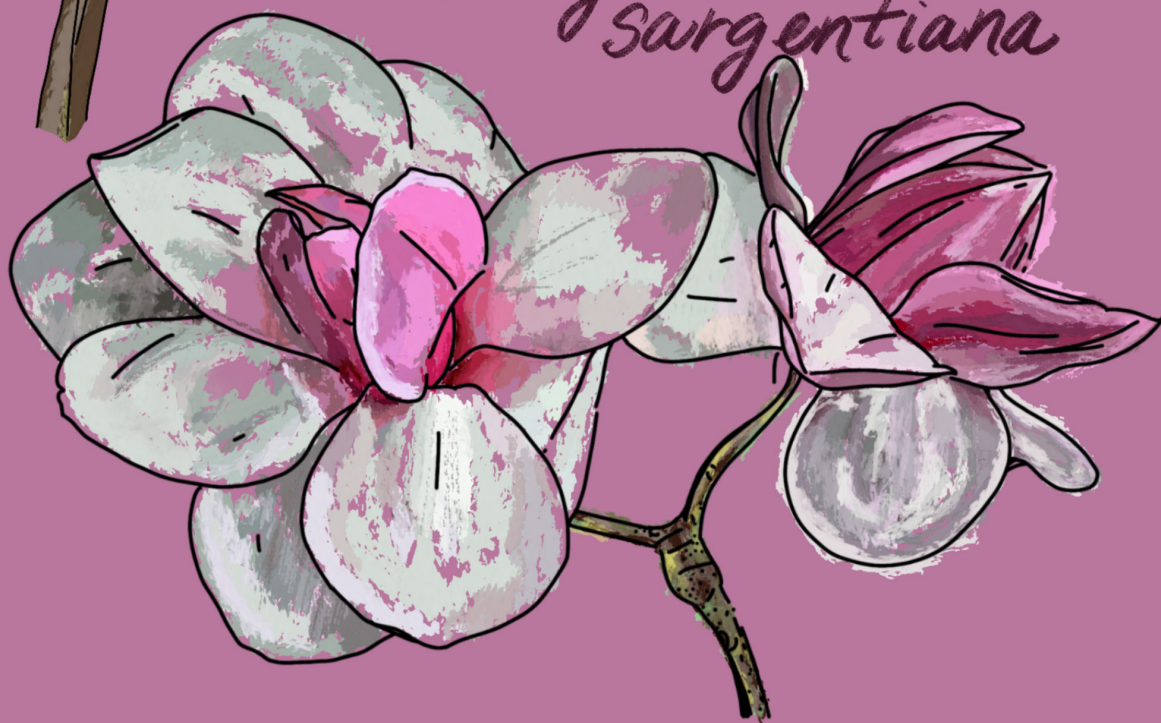
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# ASUWT mid-quarter update

ASUWT President Vincent Da speaks on plans for future quarters and progress made in student engagement.

By **GARRETT YAEN**  
NEWS EDITOR

The Associated Students of the University of Washington Tacoma President, Vincent Da, explained his optimism regarding the ways in which ASUWT has progressed in its mission of helping its students, programs students can look for and the school's plans for the spring quarter.

Pointing at the country's state, Da said there are talks of possibly increasing in-person or hybrid services on campus by 25% and finding more ways to deal with campus inequities.

"I feel at this point that the campus is feeling more hopeful and optimistic about things changing for the better," Da said. "We are so close to the 1-year mark since this began last year in March, and there are many things we have learned since then."

In preparation for the upcoming spring and summer quarters, Da explained that a cautious return to campus could help more students who have been inequitably affected by the pandemic. Though the spring quarter will likely be hosting events online, summer is yet to be decided.

"We are hoping that we may be able to transition back to campus to hold hybrid events if deemed safe to do so by healthcare officials," Da said. "The pandemic has highlighted the inequities our students face, and with that being said, we have a more focused direction on highlighting key resources such as the pantry, psychology and counseling services, and emergency aid."

Earlier in the quarter, Da explained that the ASUWT set goals for improving the campus climate via the three pillars of advocacy, engagement and student resources. Now, he said they're starting to see good results.

"I would say that we have progressed really well with our objectives and specifically advocacy and engagement," Da said. "We were able to host the annual Tri-Campus Huskies on the Hill event [and] bring the three campuses together to advocate on legislative initiatives that support the

success of our students and campus."

Da said that for the pillar of student engagement, the ASUWT and the Center for Equity & Inclusion hosted a RealTalk discussion dedicated to honoring Black History Month by highlighting prominent African American civil rights and social justice movements.

Da explained that the virtual events help bolster student engagement, have been successful and that the ASUWT is looking forward to returning to campus at some point.

"We have heard that our partnerships have been great and that awarding students with free swag prizes is a great way to bring more people to attend," Da explained. "This quarter [compared] to previous quarters, we are hearing more positive news from our administration that a clear road map to a return to normal on campus is forthcoming and that we must do our part to decrease and slow down this pandemic through community efforts."

Despite being off campus with many eager to return, students are still paying fees for many initiatives and programs. Da urged students to utilize as many of these resources as possible to improve their mental, physical and emotional health.

"I always like to connect students to use our resources that are available and free on campus since they pay a student fee to fund these initiatives," Da said.

Da urged students to utilize the student food pantry, attend student activities board events, and try out psychological and counseling services. Other than the Counseling and Psychological Services, he also pointed to Registered Student Organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness, or NAMI, who dedicate their time to improve mental health and support for students on campus.

Up next in the ASUWT's mission of improving the campus climate, Da said the Campus Climate Task Force would help collect data and prioritize the programs or events students would like to have on campus. This way, funding is utilized efficiently and done in a



PHOTO COURTESY OF VINCENT DA

ASUWT helps improve campus climate without being on campus.

way where everyone can benefit.

"The Campus Climate Task Force has spent the whole winter quarter analyzing and gathering feedback from constituent groups to form recommendations and action items that will be presented to the whole campus through community forums in spring," Da said.

The task force is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of Equity & Inclusion, Dr. James McShay, and Social Work Staff Dr. Marian Harris. Da said that with the data gathered from analysis, the Campus Climate Task Force will work with what the community of students, faculty, and staff want to prioritize in the future.

The ASUWT is also trying to im-

prove the experience of this year's graduation ceremony. Da said preliminary talks with campus administration are underway to make the ceremony more enjoyable and meet safety guidelines.

"Last year, we collected great feedback that the ceremony did not fulfill the student experience," Da said. "We want to make sure that this year, there is an emphasis on the student experience and that if things progress well with the pandemic, a possibility of hosting a hybrid format of graduation."

Da explained that it's impossible to implement every single event or program recommended by students due to financial constraints caused by the pandemic. He said they hope

that the community's feedback will help them narrow and invest in things that are most important to everyone on campus. Da then gave the words of encouragement to anyone dealing with the pandemic's repercussions as he does with his team.

"Our team preaches to one another is to always make sure to take care of yourself, physically, mentally, and emotionally. It's okay to take a break, ask for an extension or reach out to services," Da said. "We are all going through different things together, and that we are here to support you in any way possible."

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Office: MAT 151

Phone: 253-692-4428

Email: [ledger@uw.edu](mailto:ledger@uw.edu)

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# Campfire Coffee: A story of success amidst the commotion

Get to know one of the many small Black business owners in the Tacoma community.

By **ROSIE MENDOZA-BAUTISTA**  
NEWS REPORTER

The Ledger got the privilege to speak to the Co-Founder of Campfire Coffee, Quincy Henry, as he shared some insight into what Campfire is all about.

"We exist to increase access to outdoor activities and the specialty coffee industry for underrepresented groups," Henry said. "We also exist to inspire people to really live and thrive in those spaces."

Campfire Coffee is a small, Black-owned business that wants to bring the great outdoors to those around them. They fire-roast their coffee beans with an aim to inspire people to connect with not just the outdoors, but brewed coffee as well.

He continued the conversation by speaking about the road they took to get where they are today. Henry shared the reasons and circumstances for starting this business, which he said were unlike many others.

"Campfire really came out of necessity," Henry said. "This definitely wasn't one of those situations you hear about where an entrepreneur has a great idea and just decides to build something because they want to do it, or we saw some glaring need in the marketplace and wanted to capitalize. Campfire really came about because we needed jobs."

Henry spoke about the specific incidents that caused this necessity to begin to grow, the incidents that really began making them look towards beginning a coffee business.

"I had just been recently 'bought out' at the marketing agency I only

recently became a partner in and not 3 months later, my wife Whitney who is a disabled military veteran suffered a pretty serious concussion at her job when she was attacked by a patient. When she got hurt, one thing became painfully clear in that neither of our career paths were providing stability physically or financially," he said.

With their goal decided, the couple began work to get their business off the ground. However, their share of problems did not end there but grew instead.

"The circumstances even before the pandemic hit were challenging in that the space had issues in terms of being able to build out and then we had issues with the contractors and issues with the inspector we were assigned. Without going into too much of it, we signed the lease in August of 2019 and what was supposed to be a 6-week buildout took almost a year," he said.

However, these circumstances made it so they had to improvise and change their plans for how they would initially open their business.

"Had we opened up in the fall of 2019 like we had believed we were going to do, there's a chance we wouldn't have even been roasting our own coffee. We definitely wouldn't have had an online store. The pandemic coupled with the circumstances we were facing forced us to get serious about roasting our coffee and forced us to give e-commerce a shot which have proven to be the two things that are most valuable to our business structure and our survival," Henry said.

Rather than see their small business crumble with the introduction of COVID, they managed to thrive despite the

issues they had faced.

"When things shut down, our online store boomed, when our online store slowed, bulk orders picked up. When we got the shop open in August of 2020 we saw a glimpse of what our business could look like in an open and fully functioning economy," he said.

He then spoke about how the Tacomans in particular did not let this business crumble. As a community, they provided as much support as they could for Campfire Coffee, and word about the store spread past just Tacoma.

"Tacoma would not let us fail and that spread pretty fast across the country and across the world. By Sep. 2020, we had shipped to every state in the country and two foreign countries. The community now extends well beyond Tacoma," he said. "It feels like we're just tapping into a larger community that cares about the same things that Tacomans care about; that is preserving small businesses that provide value to their everyday lives."

Throughout the rise of Campfire Coffee, there were some individuals in particular that contributed to their success. To these individuals, they would like to express their sincere gratitude.

"He doesn't want to be mentioned by name but there is a guy — he's a friend's dad and I'll call him Mr. R — who guided us through the buildout when things got really ugly. I believe that God puts people in your path for various reasons and when I think about the path that led us to Mr. R, it's just as incredible of a story as the story of us getting Campfire

open. Without him, we wouldn't have gotten Campfire constructed and open," Henry said. "My parents who support us and continue to help out. Gave us a place to stay after we sold our house to try and get this coffee business going. And all the individual donors to our gofundme we launched back in May of 2019."

With their business thriving and the support of many behind them, Campfire Coffee looks ahead to the future with a clear goal in mind.

"I really believe our future is as an experience based lifestyle brand where coffee and outdoor rec. become a way of life for people in the cities we're in. We're opening up in a second location here in Tacoma where people can view the roasting process and have an 'urban campground' experience right here. I think this is a way for us to continue to spread our brand with intent and in a meaningful way without having to try and be as ubiquitous as say Starbucks," Henry says.

He then noted that Campfire Coffee is a unique place to grab a cup of coffee and realize the importance of helping community small businesses thrive amidst everything going on.

"We're the only Black/Woman/Veteran owned coffee roasting company in the state of Washington. We're the only open flame roasting company in the country. Where most 3rd wave coffee companies aim to really help the coffee farmers through various fair trade programs, we go a step further and do that plus look to make a difference right here in our own backyard."



**"I'm a big fan of the Toasted Marshmallow Cream Cold Brew which is made with our Mountain Espresso Blend coffee and house made toasted marshmallow cream. I'm also a big fan of the Gingerdoodle which is a gingerbread flavored latte that is made with cubano (brown sugar and espresso) shots," Henry says.**

*Campfire Coffee is located in Downtown Tacoma and is open from 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays.*

*You can find Campfire Coffee online at: [www.welovecampfire.com](http://www.welovecampfire.com)*

## Progress in the PSU

How this student RSO is focusing its efforts during Covid, and concerns are amongst its members.

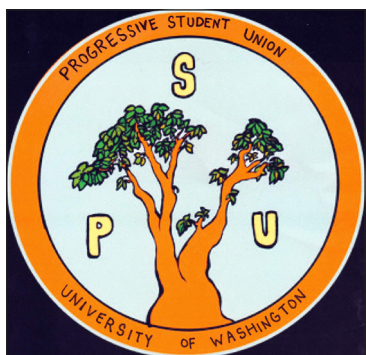


PHOTO COURTESY OF RONAN HOUSTON

By **LUKE DENUELLE**  
NEWS REPORTER

This week, the Ledger focused on the Progressive Student Union, a political Registered Student Organization on campus. We spoke with Ronan Houston, a Co-Chair of the PSU, and Ruba Shahbin, the Outreach Officer. We discussed their roles, the future of the PSU and its politics.

"The PSU is a group of students interested in collectively organizing for more progressive policies and providing mutual aid in the Tacoma Area," Houston said.

Shahbin explained that one of the main goals of the PSU is to bridge connections between the school and community of Tacoma. "Our organizing isn't solely with our students because our students also belong to a larger community," she said.

When discussing who is involved with their efforts, Houston said the "Progressive" in Progressive Student Union referred to anyone who supported the people, not the rich or powerful.

Shahbin had more to say on the matter. "Progressive referred to an all-encompassing label for anyone wanting to progress and move society forward," she said. She then explained that the title was generic and the pit-

falls of having one, "[Progressiveness] isn't sustainable ... there is no theory behind progressiveness."

While they aren't organizing many of their own projects right now, they have become increasingly plugged into local aid networks, such as the Tacoma Mutual Aid Collective.

Shahbin told us that, "A couple of projects will come out of that coalition, including hosting laundry days for our homeless folks (as well as students) ... within our community is a top priority."

Houston explained that as a student organization, campus issues are important. Especially making students feel safe on campus. "This includes changing the place of Campus Police," Houston said.

Houston then explained how the club works from a political perspective. "Progressiveness only seeks to question the status quo, not abolish." Ultimately the PSU's underlying focuses to Shahbin,

are "Anti-racist work, Land Back, fighting for our undocumented folks, and much more."

According to Shahbin, the PSU became a Youth Democratic Socialists of America chapter roughly a year ago. "Progressiveness is very limited and we wanted to work with a group we aligned more closely with," she said. Houston emphasized that, despite being a YDSA Chapter, they have a lot of different leftist views.

Shahbin expanded on this to note that despite the YDSA having issues, especially around class reductionism, they have elected to stay together because of their shared goals in unionization.

Houston says they see the ideology of Democratic Socialism as compatible with American values. "Leftist policies have long been focused on investing in working people," Houston said "Not people who have

more than what they know what to do with."

Shahbin offered an alternative conceptualization. She explained that America at its core was founded on capitalist and racist values.

"Of course Democratic Socialism is at odds with American values," she said "The very foundation of America is undemocratic," she said. Shahbin holds America's capitalist economy as a culprit. "[America] grew as a global superpower by exploiting and murdering Black, Brown, and Indigenous bodies home and abroad," Shahbin said.

Shahbin said that the classic American values of capitalism and racial discrimination, are not ones worth maintaining. "Do we want to continue as a country with these values?" she asked. "Is that what we pride ourselves on?"



# What does Biden's presidency mean for West Asia and North Africa?

During the Trump Administration and before, the Near East has been dismissed and degraded for its politics and conflicts. Will the Biden Administration change this?



COURTESY OF ANNIE SPRATT

During the Trump Administration and before, the Near East has been dismissed and degraded for its politics and conflicts. Will the Biden Administration change this?

**By BENGISU CICEK**  
OPINION COLUMNIST

The Middle East, also known as West Asia, is comprised of countries such as Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, Iran and the Arabian Peninsula. While it is usually referred to as the Middle East, it is actually a term invented by American historian and lecturer Alfred Thayer Mahan.

This region is known for its beautiful attractions, scenery, culture, lifestyle, architecture, food and much more. It has, however, been portrayed as something far less than this. Too often the images we are shown are of a war zone, it is painted as a region that people should avoid. And even worse, because of this, some believe that we should not let people from these countries into the United States or Europe.

During the Trump Administration and long before, the media has portrayed countries from this region as terrorized and threatened by conflict and violence, this portrayal is what excused U.S. interference in the region for

all these years. For those of us in our 20s, seeing the United States in multiple countries in Asia and North Africa is something we have grown up with, and with minimum recognition from the actual situation of the countries. The amount of bombings committed by the United States and other western powers in this region resulting in the deaths of thousands have resulted in a lack of responses, and some people see these deaths as “casual” due to their placement in war zones.

These countries are sometimes portrayed as a lost cause because of the amount of conflict that is occurring or the amount of places destroyed. With these wars, and the Iraq war especially, the United States is painted as a hero. With Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates being some of the top oil producers from the region, the region itself has been portrayed as a source of oil for the world.

From the 2017 ban on Muslim majority countries entering into the United States to the countless bombs dropped in Syria in an attempt to drive out the Islamic State resulting in the loss

of 10,204 civilians in 2017, West Asia is seen as an unprogressed place in the eyes of many.

In 2017, the U.S. dropped 32,801 bombs across Iraq and Syria during their fight against ISIS, in 2016 that number was 30,743.

Now in 2021, with the civil war in Syria waging on, malnutrition an ever present problem for children in Yemen, Israel still committing human rights violations against Palestinians and more refugees fleeing from countries, the question becomes: what is President Biden's plans to change this or at least begin to solve the problems the United States created in the past?

In his first two weeks in office, President Biden announced an end to U.S. support of Saudi-led operations in Yemen, pausing Trump's foreign weapon sales in the region, according to Natasha Bertrand and Lara Seligman on Politico in their article “Biden deprioritizes the Middle East.”

With Saudi Arabia's human rights violations against Yemen and thousands of civilians killed, these countries must be prioritized when it comes to the

United States' involvement, because there is a lot of neglect occurring towards these issues.

The United States gives Israel 3 billion dollars annually, despite the Israel Defense Forces human rights violations against Palestinians and occupation of Palestinian homes. The Biden Administration announced that they will restore U.S. relations with Palestinians and renew aid to Palestinian refugees.

“The acting US envoy to the UN, Richard Mills, told the Security Council that Mr Biden supported a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” said BBC News on their article “Biden administration to restore aid to Palestinians.”

Despite the United States' strong relations with Israel, I am hoping that during his term President Biden will encourage human rights practices that align with the United Nations to increase aid to Palestinians and restore what Israel destroyed in Palestine, giving back the rights to Palestinians that were violated by the Israel Defense Forces.

There is still so much to be done in the beautiful countries of West Asia. In

the cities Aleppo, Homs and Raqqah in Syria, I am hoping to see them become rebuilt in the near future so civilians who became refugees as a result of the conflict can one day return to their homes in which they had to flee.

Yemen should be prioritized more and any threats towards it should be worked on, especially with sending aid to the innocent civilians there. Abusive governments in West Asia must be put to a stop as soon as possible, because this will impact President Biden's relations with the countries moving forward in the coming years.

I hope the beauty of Syria from Aleppo to Raqqah will be restored. I hope that Palestinians are able to freely pray at the Al Aqsa Mosque without harassment from the IDF. I hope that Yemen's children will be taken care of so they can enjoy a happy trauma free childhood. I hope that whoever wants to visit our countries in this beautiful region will be able to do so and truly indulge themselves in the culture, food, artwork, architecture and experience the hospitality of the people.



# Gun Control: Misguided attempts to curb gun violence

Community protection and a nuanced understanding of firearms.

By **ANDREA NADAL**  
OPINION EDITOR

Gun control is a controversial issue in the United States of America. Firearms are a crucial part of American Culture and have been since our founding. After gaining independence from the British crown, the founders wanted to ensure that the newly independent nation would be able to defend itself, and that desire is reflected in the second amendment to the constitution.

The second amendment reads “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed.” These words and what they protect are often at the heart of the debate, the meaning of these very lines are often picked apart in an attempt to decipher what exactly the founding fathers would have intended to protect with them.

My interest, however, lies beyond what a group of wealthy, white, colonizing, slaveholding men may or may not have intended to protect. My interest is in understanding what gun control would really mean for those most at risk

of violence by both state and non-state actors, and specifically in advocating for the right to community protection. My interest is not in what the intention was, but rather what our intention ought to be moving forward.

Gun violence is a serious problem in this country. According to the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, as of 2019 the U.S. is ranked as the 28th-highest in deaths by firearms in the world. And according to the Gun Violence Archive, a total of at least 19,223 people lost their lives due to gun violence in 2020, an almost 25% increase from the previous year. This year, 6,503 people have died so far as a result of firearms according to the same source. It is clear that we need to work towards a solution to this issue, but too often the proposed gun-control measures are ill-informed, ineffective and even harmful.

President Joe Biden has proposed a number of executive orders, legislative restrictions and programs amongst other things with the intention of curbing gun violence. Banning “assault weapons” and high-capacity magazines. Enforcing more stringent background checks. Ensuring that all

firearms sold in America are “smart-guns,” or firearms with technology that requires a fingerprint match before it can be fired. Stopping “ghost-guns,” or firearms that you assemble yourself, thus making it untraceable. Any of these “ghost-guns” can be obtained in two major ways: either buying a kit with the pieces to assemble a working firearm, or 3D printing the pieces yourself after downloading the plans.

These propositions fail to understand not only the root of the issue but the very thing they attempt to regulate.

The word assault weapon is often thrown around by those that advocate for stronger gun-control. Typically people are referring to semi-automatic or fully-automatic rifles when they use this term. However, this does nothing to actually help distinguish what kind of weapon is being described, so it is not a useful term when discussing firearms in any context. It only works to create a shroud of fear around the weapons, thus leading to greater misunderstanding. This contributes to the other sorts of proposed gun-control that we see based around scare tactics rather than knowledge.

Another commonly introduced gun-control measure are bans on “high-capacity magazines.” This is another term that often is not helpful nor accurate in its usage. Many of the current definitions of “high-capacity” include standard magazines in their definition, thus making some common firearms illegal. This is another practice that makes guns less accessible with little to no tangible benefit or increased level of safety.

The new fingerprint technology included in these so-called “smart guns” is expensive and ineffective. It only works to make weapons inaccessible and unreliable. Firearms would only be accessible to those that can afford the inflated cost associated with this technology, while also not being a reliable means of protection. The push for this technology to become standard is based on the fear of weapons “falling into the wrong hands,” which is problematic in and of itself and leads into another common problem with many gun-control measures.

The state is given a huge amount of power and discretion in the way that it decides who should be allowed to have a firearm and who should not. Background checks are a common tool

for enforcing gun-control. This has been yet another tool of the state that is enforced inequitably. It has regularly been used as a means to over-police and disarm communities of color and also to discriminate against LGBTQ+ individuals.

Real, informed solutions to gun violence in America must take into account the inequality that exists, the need for protection and the overreach of the state being used against already disenfranchised groups that continues to be used against these groups to this day. The right to bear arms is especially important for disenfranchised communities.

Police cannot be trusted to protect the communities that they were created to eradicate. As such, we need access to a reliable means to do it ourselves, many of these forms of gun-control are not only ineffective but actively work to disarm the communities most at risk in our society. Gun-violence is a real problem in this country, but disarming those most at risk only creates vulnerable targets for this violence. We need solutions that are equitable and account for the need for protection.



Feb. 19, 2018 demonstration organized by teens in the D.C. area for gun reform in the wake of the Feb. 14 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



# Hemp hope: it can help

The stigma around cannabis is keeping people from accessing possible treatment options.

By MADI WILLIAMS  
OPINION COLUMNIST

When people think of cannabis there is often a stigmatized accusation of it being a gateway drug. However, this stigma does not reflect reality. There are many different uses for the plant, both recreational and medical. Cannabis is slowly being legalized or decriminalized across the U.S., but this is not happening fast enough, particularly when it comes to medical cannabis.

The positives that CBD can bring to people is sometimes life changing and has the ability to help them get back to living everyday life as they were before. Some will not be in pain and over time can rely on CBD in order to stop taking medications that have harsh side effects.

**The positives that CBD can bring to people is sometimes life changing and has the ability to help them get back to living everyday life as they were before.**

The important thing here is to understand the difference between cannabidiol, more commonly known as CBD, and tetrahydrocannabinol, better known as THC, which are both found in the plant.

The commonly known uses of mar-

ijuana come from THC, which has a psychoactive compound that gives people what is known as a head high. A head high provides the feeling of “an altered state characterized by euphoria, pleasure, or heightened sensory perception,” as stated in the Healthline article, “Can You Get High from CBD or CBD Oil?”

CBD on the other hand does not give you this same feeling. Instead, it provides a body high, or feelings of extreme relaxation throughout your body, but still enables users to function mentally and physically the same way before taking any CBD.

Another thing that people should understand when dealing with CBD is knowing what the difference is between hemp and marijuana. While they both come from the same cannabis plant, the difference between CBD and THC levels are drastic.

An article titled “Are Hemp and Marijuana the Same?” from websiteministryofhemp.com explains the difference between the two. Hemp can be used in items like dietary supplements, skin products, clothing and accessories. The reason for this is due to the very high CBD levels and the contrastingly very low THC levels. In hemp, the THC level is less than .3% compared to marijuana, which can have levels anywhere between 5 to 35%.

In WebMD’s article, “Health Benefits of CBD,” which was reviewed by M.D. Dan Brennan, Brennan explains that CBD can help “treat conditions such as

chronic pain, inflammation, migraines, epilepsy, autoimmune diseases, depression and anxiety.” It’s crazy to think how this one compound from a controversial plant can have such a positive impact on people’s lives, yet it is still not federally legal due to stigmas and a lack of understanding of the plant.

The ways that CBD can help people is so amazing. One of the most remarkable examples I have seen is how it can help kids with epilepsy try and live a normal life. I have seen videos of these kids having really bad seizures before their parents administer the oil, and once the CBD gets absorbed into the child’s system, the seizures start to become less violent in just a matter of seconds.

Then within a couple of minutes the child returns to the activity that they were doing as if nothing happened, the CBD helps reduce the length of the seizures making the recovery time quicker. CBD can be a much more natural route to help those with epilepsy compared to medications that take longer to work and often have severe side effects.

I use CBD based products to help with joint pain and migraines. Before I started using it for my migraines, trying to concentrate on anything was incredibly difficult during an episode. Since I deal with pain behind my eyes and around the front of my head, all I wanted to do was be in a dark room away from bright lights or a computer that only make the symptoms worse.

Since I have started using CBD I have

seen a difference. I am able to do more work on class assignments with only a mild headache compared to not being able to concentrate on anything. So, not only have I seen the benefits that CBD can do for others, but I have also experienced what CBD can do for myself. I have also witnessed individuals who have struggled with addiction to pain medications slowly wean off of them due to CBD’s help with not only making them feel better, but also curbing the side effects that the medications often come with.

The article “4 Different ways to Consume CBD for Natural Health” on theislandnow.com goes into detail about the different ways to use CBD along with the pros and cons of using it in each.

The first way to use CBD is through inhalation by smoking or vaping it and is the quickest way to get the effects since it goes straight to your lungs and into the bloodstream. The main difference between the two is that vaping is less harsh on the lungs and throat.

Another way to use it is by topical creams or balms. This method works best for sore muscles, skin conditions and migraines by rubbing the cream in the area that has pain. Another way of taking CBD is in the form of edibles, which is usually a candy that has a percentage of CBD put into them, the only downside to this method is that it can take a while to feel the effects since it needs to be digested first.

The last method is getting sublingual CBD oil, with this, it is placed under the

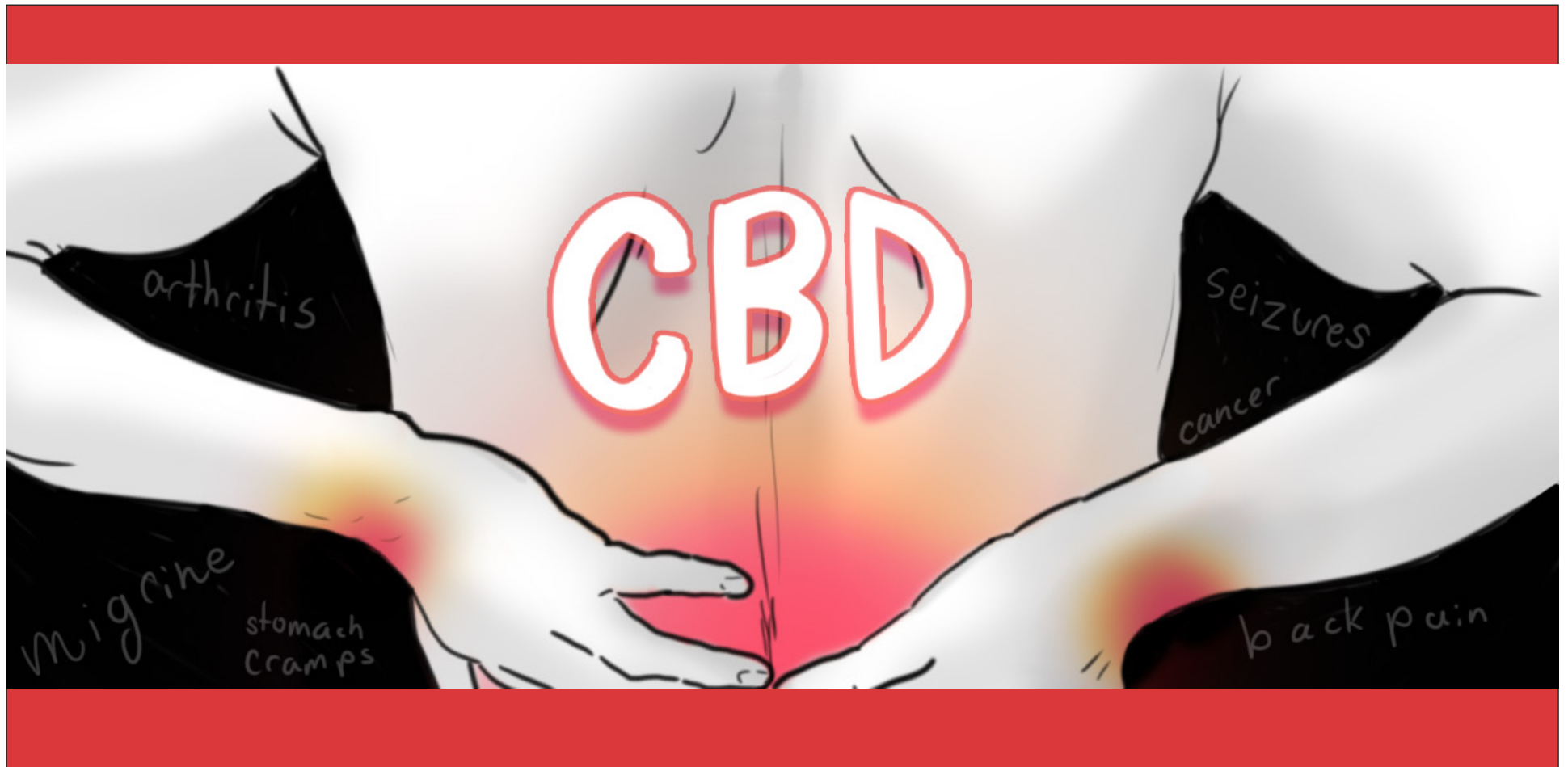
tongue for a few seconds and then swallowed. This method allows one to control the dosage much easier. It can take some trial and error to find which method works the best and knowing what percentage of CBD you need, but

**People should be able to use CBD products for medical conditions or physical pain.**

once you know it truly is a life saver.

People should be able to use CBD products for medical conditions or physical pain without much hassle, yet we are not there as a society. Some states make it easy for individuals to be able to get the products that they need, while others are still making it hard. At the federal level it is still illegal which is keeping a large number of individuals from being able to access this medication that can be a much better alternative compared to pharmaceutical prescriptions.

We all need to come together and understand that this part of the plant can help so many people who are living in pain everyday or are struggling with addictions to opioid medications that help with severe pain. If this taboo over a plant would just go away and it was made fully legal, many people would be living pain free lives. This would then give everyone an opportunity to be able to have access to natural treatment which can lead to a better life.



From migraines to joint pain, CBD based products can help with a multitude of medical issues.

ILLUSTRATION BY LORE ZENT



# Celebrating Black artists in Tacoma

The inclusion of black artists is essential to expanding our community's narrative.

By **LORE ZENT**  
A&E COLUMNIST

Art is a powerful force. It has the ability to share our stories and shift narratives. However, throughout history, Black and other marginalized communities have been erased from the art world. Their presence is lacking in major auctions, museums, galleries and art circula. While artists of color are slowly being integrated into local scenes, many are still fighting for their place in the fine arts. Supporting artists of color is vital to providing a full narrative to the human experience and understanding one another.

Listed below are some of the Black artists residing in Tacoma that you can support.

## Adika Bell

Adika Bell is a mural and traditional painter. His style fluctuates between portrait realism, surrealism and pop art and despite the style, he always uses vibrant colors to catch one's eye. He is one of few mural painters to have worked on "Justice For Manny" on S. 11th St. in Hilltop. His work can be found at <http://adikabellart.com>.

## Jeremy Gregory

As a puppet maker, stop-motion creator and illustrator, Jeremy Greg-

ory produces whimsical art. Between volunteering as an art mentor for a Seattle At-Risk Program called "Urban Art Works" (formerly "Panels For Progress"), City of Tacoma's "Public Art: In-Depth" program and teaching graphic design to high schoolers at Tacoma School of the Arts in the past it is clear he is well connected with the community. He also hosts a podcast called "Candy Teeth Radio" where he and his friend Geoff interview various artists and musicians across the PNW. Gregory's website hosting their podcast and art showcases is <http://candyteethcreative.com>.

## Tiffany Hammonds

Born in Oakland, California and raised in Hilltop, Tiffany Hammonds is a mural artist and painter who focuses on community-based projects. She began her career in mural work at age sixteen. She has participated in collaborations with the Fab-5 HQ, a nonprofit organization empowering youth through artistic expression located here in Tacoma. In 2019, she created a "faces of the nation" project, in this she draws brightly colored faces repetitively but never the same. You can find her art at <https://tiffanyhammonds.com>.

## Darrell McKinney



COURTESY OF PERRYPAINTS.COM

Porter is a songwriter, fine arts and mural painter located here in Tacoma.

Darrell McKinney is an agricultural designer. His art speaks on the complexities of race, politics and social structures through interconnectivity. His work has been featured in numerous exhibits such as Salone Del Mobile in Milan and Venice Architecture Biennale in Venice. His work can be found at <https://www.darrellmckinney.com/>.

## Perry Porter

Porter is a Tacoma-raised songwriter, fine artist and mural painter whose paintings primarily focus on women of color in a surreal or manga-

influenced setting using watercolors. For his newest album, he collaborated with OldMilk to create "Grey." This album is available through his website for ten dollars. His work can be found at <http://perrypaints.com>.

## Christopher Paul Jordan

Christopher Paul Jordan is a sculptor, designer and painter whose pieces serve — as stated on his website — as "time-capsules for displaced folks to hold, bury, connect and reintegrate our stories." In his paintings, he merges digital art with photography and paints

to create unique pieces. He has been featured in exhibitions across the coast and his public art projects can be found among Seattle's sound transit stations as well as the Washington State Convention Center. He is currently the Community Integrated Design Lead for Fab-5. His work can be found on <http://chrispauljordan.com>.

While these are just a few of the black artists in our Tacoma community, there are numerous other Black and other ethnic artists whose stories are ready to be heard.

# A bittersweet revenge tale in "Promising Young Woman"

Carey Mulligan stars in an exciting new revenge thriller.

By **HENRY NGUYEN**  
FILM CRITIC

The film industry has for a long time been a place where women are clearly objectified and pushed to the side to fill the spots of secondary characters. Thankfully, films are evolving for the better and letting new and important topics take center stage.

In the backdrop of a sleazy, neon soaked, candy-coated city, "Promising Young Woman," directed by Emerald Fennell, features Carey Mulligan as Cassandra Thomas as she takes revenge on those who have hurt her.

Thomas is first introduced to the audience as a true femme fatale. Every night she'll go to clubs and act like she's drunk and every night some guy will act like a "nice guy" to take her back to his apartment only to find out that he's in for a humiliating surprise.

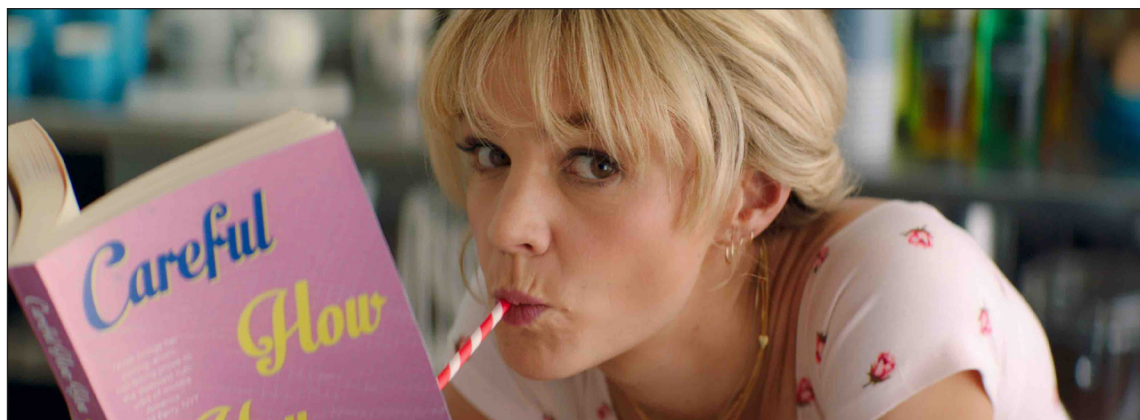
The viewer then comes to learn that she works at a coffee shop despite going to medical school. She then runs into a past colleague, Ryan — played by Bo Burnham — who she starts to develop a serious relationship with. This event leads her to uncover the truth about her past colleagues and what they did to her best friend, Nina Fischer, which begins

her revenge story.

Overall, the movie's shining aspect is it's way of portraying the revenge story. There are a lot of twists and turns that don't appear in many other films aside from older hits such as "I spit on your grave" (1978) or even "Kill Bill" (2003).

However, some elements, such as the love story between Cassandra and Ryan, were as cliché and lackluster as they get with montages between the two that many would come to expect to see in any movie that features two lovers. Without giving away too much, they do attempt to skew the audience's expectations near the end but Ryan's purpose as a character gets lost in the final stretch of the film as he becomes more of a bystander. It doesn't help that I personally don't find Burnham's comedic work to be funny, which is something that the film rides on that causes these scenes to be painful at times.

One of the only aspects that saves these scenes is how they look. The movie itself looks amazing with a lot of attention to detail when it comes to colors and lighting. Key objects and areas of each frame look as though they are coated in candy while the lighting itself is drenched in a tasteful 80s neon. Usually the 80s aesthetic is overdone, but



COURTESY OF FOCUS FEATURES

Carey Mulligan takes center stage in this exciting new revenge thriller.

here it serves a real purpose other than just looking cool. It coincides with the overall look of the film and is a possible allusion to it's exploitation predecessors.

There are some very serious themes and topics that this movie touches on relating to rape culture. The direction that Fennell took in this movie was great. The topics, as serious as they are, are handled with a lot of care and attention. The film doesn't get too explicit but there are some very heavy scenes in which very serious topics, such as sexual abuse, are either implied or heard.

Even though this movie clearly takes a more pessimistic approach to it's themes, the film lacks any type of real

catharsis towards the end. It seems that the film's ending has garnered a lot of controversy ranging from praise to outright hate. Whether or not "justice" is served towards the end could vary depending on whether the viewer is convinced that law enforcement will be competent enough to do the right thing. Everything in the movie works towards pointing at them being unable to carry out any deserved justice.

Overall, despite some of its flaws, "Promising Young Women" is a great take on its themes and deserves at least a watch even if you may or may not agree with the ending.

## REVIEW

### "Promising Young Woman"

★★★★★

#### The Good:

- Nuanced take on relationships today
- Art direction and overall cinematography
- Allusions and motifs are portrayed with care

#### The Bad:

- Lackluster love interest and story
- Lacks catharsis



# Tacoma Little Theatre presents "Skin"

A story about the origins of tattooing and how people relate tattooing to skin color.

TLT PRESENTS A PAGE TO SCREEN LIVE VIRTUAL READING

**written by**  
anamaria guerzon

**directed by**  
darryin cunningham

**Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 7:30pm**  
**FREE and LIVE via YouTube (donations gladly accepted)**  
**For more information call 253.272.2281**  
**or visit [www.tacomalittletheatre.com](http://www.tacomalittletheatre.com)**

By **MADELINE HILLER**  
A&E EDITOR

Live theater, like many other industries during this pandemic, has been hit hard and forced to adapt to these hard times. In the beginning, theaters all over the world had closed down for the safety of their patrons. Throughout the first few months, there was no live theater. No musicals, plays or onstage performances could happen with the state mandates. After a while, theaters started to evolve and become more accessible to the public at a safe distance.

Tacoma Little Theatre is one of these theaters. TLT is located near the stadium district across from Wright Park. The theater hosted their page to screen event — an event where a local playwright can see their work performed by a cast — virtually this year on Feb. 20. This year, the TLT put on "Skin," written by Anamaria Guerzon and directed by Darryin Cunningham, both of whom are puget sound locals.

"Skin" is a story that deals with tattooing as an art form. The differences between being an artist for fun and creating tattoos as a job are discussed. This script intertwines two

stories: one true and one fiction.

The true story delves into the story about a Filipino man and his mother who were captured and sold into slavery. Jeoly — the son — was covered in markings and designs that people saw as freakish or odd. His slave owner would parade him around to make money off those who would like to examine this taboo thing. These markings, or what we now call tattoos, were like nothing the people had ever seen before.

**"Skin" is a story that deals with tattooing as an art form. [...] The script intertwines two stories: one true and one fiction.**

The fictional element takes place during present day and revolves around the story of a Filipino girl trying to apply to become a tattoo artist. Despite getting denied, she doesn't give up on her dream until she receives an internship.

TLT used YouTube to stream their show while the actors used Zoom to

perform it. Digitally, it was a bit messy, but since we can't use a stage at this time it worked for what they needed.

This was the first time I had seen a show streamed on YouTube and due to technical issues, it could have been done better. There were a few lagging problems but with virtual streams, there always will be. Moreover, the production itself was unique. There was a narrator to read stage directions so you could hear scene changes rather than see them, and all of the actors performed from their own homes or spaces.

"Skin" was really well done and appropriately assessed the idea of tattooing and race. The Filipino girl related her generic history to tattooing since tattoos originated in the Philippines. Later in the show, the fictional story discusses how people of color are often rejected by tattoo artists because many people don't know how to deal with dark skin. The Filipino girl remembers her heritage and how she descended from the origin of tattoos.

The idea of tattooing as an art form is nothing new, but the idea that it should be an art form for any skin color is one that should not be ignored.

## 3 moves the Seahawks need to make this offseason

After a disappointing first round exit in the playoffs, where do the Seahawks need to go from here to build back the momentum they once had?

By **BROOKS MOELLER**  
SPORTS COLUMNIST

It was a more than familiar outcome for the Seahawks as they were once again eliminated in one of the first two rounds of the NFL playoffs, this year at the hands of the Los Angeles Rams in the first round. Since their Super Bowl loss in 2014, they have not played in the conference championship once. What was thought to be the next dynasty has now turned into a question of whether head coach Pete Carroll will be able to bring his team back to the promised land of a Super Bowl championship.

The window is not closed just yet. Although most of the core from the two Super Bowl teams are gone, Russell Wilson still leads the offense with Bobby Wagner on the defensive side. I say the window is not closed, however it is closing fast. With recent comments made by Wilson, if this team doesn't take a significant step within the next couple of years, he could be on his way out of Seattle at the end of his current contract in 2023. Here are the moves I believe the Seahawks need to make to be able to make one more run at a Super Bowl.

### DO NOT TRADE RUSSELL WILSON

It is sad that I have to even address this topic. There are people out there

who are legitimately open to trading the best quarterback this franchise has ever seen. This all stems from some comments he made on the Dan Patrick show a few weeks ago, where some would say he threw his offensive line under the bus after stating that he "needs to be protected better." He also went on to say that he wants to be involved in team decisions with Carroll and general manager John Schnider.

Although these comments might have rubbed some people the wrong way, and should probably not have been said in a public interview, Wilson is not wrong one bit. Throughout his career, he has been sacked the most out of any quarterback in that respective timespan, and this is not even counting QB pressures. The offensive line seems to have been this team's weak spot for the majority of the past eight seasons.

All of this led to trade rumors surrounding Wilson. However, he never made an actual trade request as far as the public knows, and I doubt that there was one behind the scenes. The team is better with Wilson at quarterback and with how hard it is to find a franchise QB like Wilson, trading him would be a massive mistake by the Seahawks and set them back even farther from another

championship. With the emergence of DK Metcalf, the offense has the potential to be great through a whole season like they were in the first half of 2020.

### SIGN VETERAN OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

Building off of what I said in the prior section, the Seahawks NEED to protect Russell Wilson better. The Rams dominated the Seahawks up front in the playoff game and this was done without defensive player of the year, Aaron Donald, for the majority of the second half.

Luckily for many teams in the NFL, the salary cap will increase by \$5 million despite original thoughts of reductions due to the ongoing COVID-19 pan-

demic. This should give Schnider and Carroll some room to work with to bring in experienced linemen to improve that area of the team. Guard and center should be the primary focus with the likely departures of Ethan Pocic and Mike Iupati, who were both inconsistent throughout the season.

### RE-SIGN JARREN REED & CARLOS DUNLAP

Even with the salary cap increase, this might be tough to do with their current situation and current cap room. At the minimum, they need to bring at least one of them back as they are forces on the defensive front and made a large contribution to the de-

fense's emergence in the second half of the season.

Dunlap finished with six sacks on the season while Reed finished with six and a half while also contributing to a solid rush defense on the interior throughout the season. Together, the two would be a perfect one-two punch to begin the season on the defensive side and would help keep the momentum they gained at the end of the season.

If the offense is able to fix their problems with protection as well as play calling and if the defense continues its improvement, then this team will have the chance to get back to the top in 2021.



COURTESY OF SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Wide receiver DK Metcalf made massive strides in 2020 cementing himself as one of the top players at the position in the league.