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Tips for the neurodivergent college student

A short compilation of tools and resources to deal with flare-ups and bad days.

By HEIDI ORTIZ CANDELARIA
OPINION COLUMNIST

I think we can all agree that the past few years have been rough for everyone. These have also been the years where mental illness diagnoses have grown exponentially and continue to do so. People are becoming more aware and seeking help for these conditions, we also must accept that modern life tends to take a toll on those of us who are neurodivergent.

According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, neurodivergence is "the idea that people with brains that work differently are part of the normal range in humans." Neurodivergent people are those who have learning disabilities, chronic mental illnesses and/or who are on the autistic spectrum. The truth is, most neurodivergent people find themselves masking most days, which is camouflaging symptoms and behaviors to be socially accepted. This can lead to mental or physical exhaustion and symptom flare-ups. Here are some tools that have helped me cope with the day-to-day as a neurodivergent person myself.

Somedays, simply getting out of bed seems impossible. Showering and eating feel even more impossible. I find that in these moments, meeting yourself halfway is the most realistic and effective method. Tell yourself that even the smallest step forward gets you out of where you were. So, instead of showering, sit down and let the water fall over you. You can also use dry shampoo and wash your face instead if getting in the shower feels like too much. Can't get yourself to brush your teeth? Gargle mouthwash instead. Don't want to change clothes? Put on your favorite pair of sweats and comfortable shoes.

If your appetite is being affected by a flare-up, eat your favorite snacks. I find that sweets are easier for me to taste and digest, so I make myself sweetened coffee. I

eat granola cereal and dried fruit because that's relatively healthy, and I get myself granola bars or cookies for the rest of the day. If the symp-

portant to surround yourself with that energy as well. I downloaded an app called "I am" that allows you to place widgets on your phone, as

ment to stand up, take a deep breath and step outside for a bit. This is especially helpful if you are working on assignments and feel the anxiety building up.

There are others who find themselves taking too many breaks and struggle with concentration; putting behind work until it piles up. In this case, working in intervals or "sprints" is super effective. Giving yourself a designated time during the day to do assignments or work can help your mind understand that time to be specifically for that task. You can adjust how long or short the time is, and how often you do these sprints in a week. Using alarms and timers will also help keep you on task.

Reaching out for additional help and support is one of the most important things you can do as a neurodivergent student. Reassurance coming from these support systems is also extremely important whenever struggles arise. Support can come from your family, friends, school counselors, medical professionals and even pets. After all, help comes in many different forms.

UWT offers a service for those of us who struggle to keep up with school due to our disabilities. The DRS (Disability Resource Center) aims to help students get accommodation for classes so that they can succeed during their academic years. I myself have applied for this service and received help in past quarters but have found it very difficult to keep up with their system.

Documentation and proof of disabilities is required for student accommodations and takes a few weeks to be processed. In certain cases, they'll ask for extra documentation. I was one of those cases, as they asked my doctors for written and signed letters with my diagnoses and symptom descriptions. While waiting for my doctors to find the time to write and send

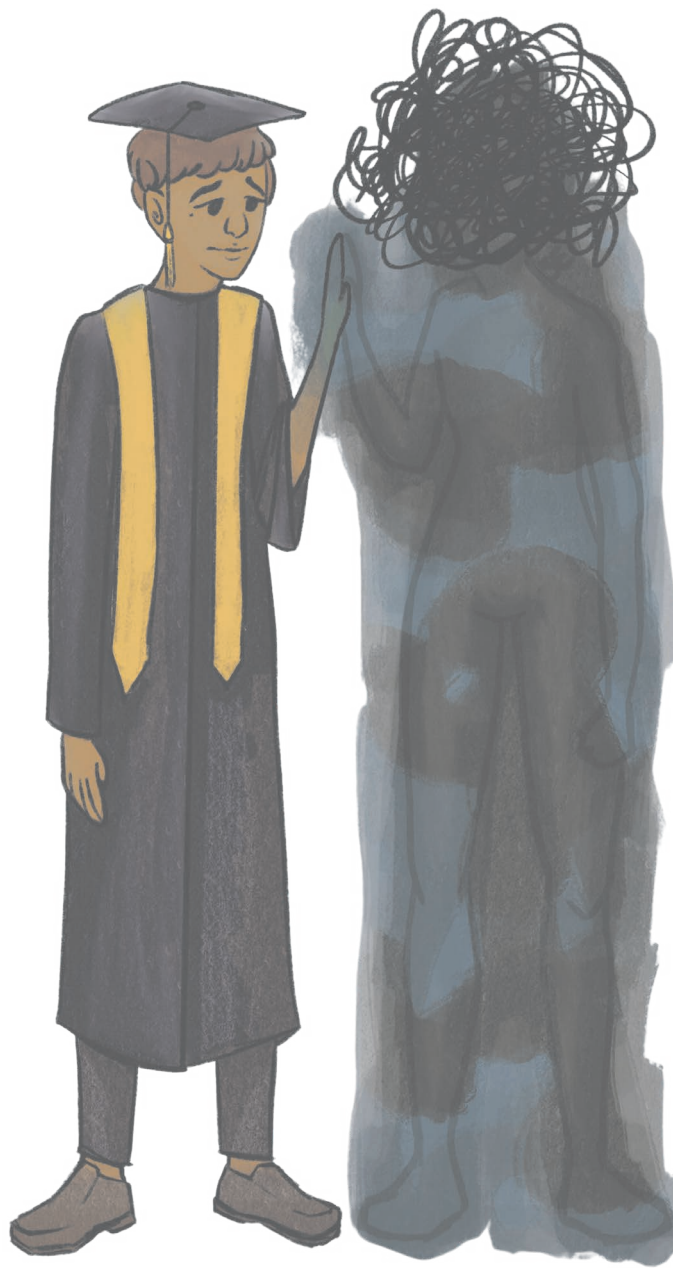


ILLUSTRATION BY STEVIE ESTEBAN

Mental illness has caused countless students to struggle with college studies.

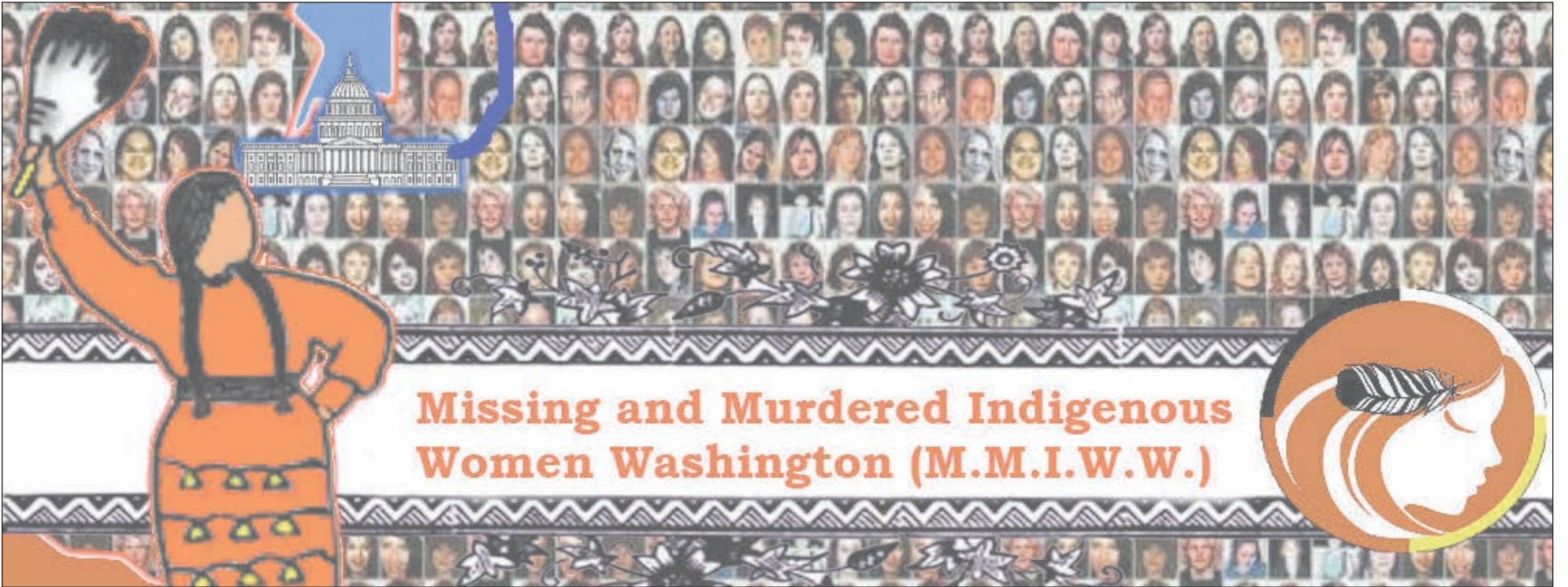
toms are really bad and you have no appetite, Ensure and other nutritional shakes are extremely helpful. Smoothies are also great. I find it helpful to think about whatever meal you've been craving before today; treat yourself to something you know you'd enjoy. Remind yourself that you deserve to enjoy your meals, and not feel guilty about eating. Your body is worthy and deserves to be healthy.

Words of affirmation are also extremely important. Something as small as validating yourself with a "good job" or "you look great" can go such a long way. It's im-

well as send you notifications with comforting messages throughout the day. Even if you don't actively sit down to read through them, they're always there in your peripheral vision. When you find yourself needing those words, you can simply click on a widget and read through the quotes of your choice.

Another tool I find myself using whenever I'm feeling anxious or uneasy is changing my environment. Sometimes, you might not be able to control what you are feeling so you can find that control outside of yourself. Stop whatever you are doing at that mo-

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WA state leads in Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women/People case rates

Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women and People cases still at alarming number, despite an uptick in systemic prevention efforts.

By **KATIE SCOTT**
NEWS REPORTER

President Biden has declared May 5 to be Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day. Though, in the wake of this presidential acknowledgement, Washington State still ranks as one of the highest in the nation for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP).

The Washington State Patrol reported that, as of May 1, Washington State has 142 cases of missing Indigenous individuals, 62 of those cases being juveniles.

Washington State has the second highest number of Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) in the nation. Further, Washington State is the only state with two major cities, Seattle and Tacoma, in the top ten list for the highest MMIWG rates in the nation.

Gabe Minthorn, UWT Tribal Liaison and member of the Yakama, Umatilla and Nez Perce Tribes, said “MMIWP is something that has been an issue for a long time but is only now beginning to get attention from the public and media. Seattle and Tacoma has some of the highest rates of MMIWP in the country. Social media has been a tool to help let the public know when someone is missing, we have had friends and family have someone missing and social media is where we learned about the missing person first. Native people usually go missing on federal lands, and state

and local authority have little or no jurisdiction.”

According to research from the Urban Indian Health Institute, Indigenous women go missing up to four times more often than white women in Washington state. Often, these cases are under-reported or buried in systemic bureaucracy, garnering little to no media attention or public knowledge of the crisis.

Joseph E. Thomas, UWT Senior and member of the Puyallup Tribe, said “Personally, I feel just general awareness helps to some degree. Having it float around, even in the back of someone’s mind, that there is a disproportionate rate of murdered and missing people among Indigenous groups, then I feel it can be approached more readily by society at large as opposed to being seen as a random case that could happen to anyone.”

In an effort to bring light to the alarming numbers of MMIWP in our state, Maria Cantwell, Washington State Senator, wrote in a letter to President Biden, “This data is just a glimpse of the crisis. The Urban Indian Health Institute could not report on all MMIWP cases, and examining this epidemic has suffered from significant underreporting and data misclassification. It is clear the MMIWP crisis in the State of Washington is worse than we can accurately calculate.”

In 2021, the WA State Attorney General’s office comprised a task force to evaluate the systemic factors that impact MMIWP in an

effort to better determine how to address and prevent Indigenous individuals from being harmed, or worse.

The task force is composed of 25 individuals who represent Indigenous communities in an institutional and cultural context. Tribal nations and state representatives work in partnership with survivors and families to maintain a clear, focused approach to MMIWP issues, while keeping the work centered in Indigenous values.

In 2022, the task force identified and announced key factors in the systemic and institutional participation of MMIWP. Those factors include:

“Inter-jurisdictional issues creating gaps in communication between families and law enforcement; Cross-jurisdictional rules that limit tribal law enforcement access to valuable investigative tools to combat violence; Racial misclassification of Indigenous people in data; Limited access to service programs for families, who often do not know what services are available to them; and limitations on what survivor service organizations can provide to MMIWP families.”

In August 2022, the task force released their first report, announcing a list of ten recommendations for actionable next steps the governor and the legislature can take to participate in the recovery and prevention of MMIWP cases.

Those steps are:

1. Establishing a fully funded MMIWP-focused cold case unit within the Attorney General’s Office
2. Standardizing the use of the National Missing & Unidentified Persons System
3. Expanding the scope of MMIWP data and research to all genders
4. Working with law enforcement agencies to expand coordination
5. Promoting inclusive language
6. Improving communication and transparency in MMIWP cases
7. Updating the Missing Person’s Resource
8. Reducing or waiving fees for MMIWP public events
9. Continuing to support sovereignty and self-determination
10. Extending the MMIWP Task Force timeline through June 30, 2025

*Currently the task force is funded through 2023.

In April 2023, Governor Jay Inslee signed into law the Substitute House Bill 117. This bill created a new cold case unit for MMIWP cases in Washington State. This unit is responsible for investigating and solving MMIWP/MMIWG cases in Washington State that were previously closed due to lack of information or leads.

In a heartfelt message released through the Office of the Attorney General, Anna Bean, Puyallup Tribe council member and MMIWP Task Force Executive Committee Member, said “This work is necessary. Most of all, our missing and murdered relatives need us. That goes for anyone in attendance, listening or reading about this work. Someone needs you, you can help. This epidemic has to stop.”

To offer tips on Indigenous individuals who are missing, please visit <https://www.bia.gov/service/mmu/submit-tip-or-case-information>

Tips can be provided via text, email, or phone call and can be sent in anonymously.

To learn more about MMIWP/MMIWG and how you can help, please visit:



<https://www.missingand-murderedindigenouswomen-washington.org>

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UW Tacoma will remember the fallen this Memorial Day

UW Tacoma is hosting an enlightening Memorial Day event that focuses to educate, inspire and honor our fallen service members.

By **SJ WIENHOLZ**
NEWS REPORTER

This year, to honor those who have fallen, UW Tacoma will be holding a Remembrance Ceremony for Memorial Day. The event will take place on May 25, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., in Tioga Library Building Atrium 307B.

The event aims to educate people on Memorial Day observances and also campus traditions. It will offer insight on topics such as sacrifice, self-improvement and navigating life after the loss of a family member or friend who died in service to our nation.

"A lot of people get confused," said Juanita Murillo Garcia, Director of the Veteran and Military Resource Center on campus, "Veterans Day is for the veterans, Armed Forces Day is for active duty and Memorial Day is for those who have passed."

The first national observance of Memorial Day, originally known as Decoration Day, occurred on May 30, 1868. It was proclaimed as a day to honor the Union soldiers who had died in the Civil War.

Now Memorial Day has transformed into a holiday to recognize those who have died in our nation's wars. It serves as a dedicated day to reflect on the sacrifices required for our nation's freedom.

At the Remembrance Ceremony, Dominic Jay "DJ" Leon Guerrero Crisostomo, who serves as the Assistant Director of First Generation Student Initiatives at UW Tacoma, will be featured as the keynote speaker. He will be sharing his experience as a Gold Star Son.

Garcia explained that both Gold Star and Blue Star families have a deep-rooted history that dates back to World War I. At that time, families would display a blue star to signify that they had a loved one in active military service, making them a Blue Star family. If a family displayed a gold star, this indicated the loss of a loved one who died while serving in the military, making them a Gold Star family.

Crisostomo's father, Army 1st Sgt. Jose Crisostomo, was killed in a roadside blast in Afghanistan on August 18, 2009. Jose Crisostomo, who served in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, is remembered as being an outstanding leader and having a heart of gold.

Crisostomo will speak on his journey of finding solace and embracing resilience following the loss of his father. By sharing his personal experiences, he will help the audience learn to navigate the complexities of grief while still finding ways to honor and remember those who have passed.

The event also aims to inspire individuals to expand their Me-



PHOTO BY ALEXA CHRISTIE

In past years, UWT has planted flags in honor of the men and women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation.

morial Day observance, moving beyond normal activities and embracing new ways to honor the fallen service members.

"This year we decided that we should explain other ways you can celebrate Memorial Day," Garcia said.

Some of the new ways people will be encouraged to celebrate Memorial Day include planting flags or flowers as symbols of remembrance, participating in Memorial Day walks or runs to honor fallen heroes, expressing

gratitude to Gold Star Families for their sacrifice, watching military movies that depict the valor of service members or attending Memorial Day ceremonies to pay respects to those who died in service to our nation.

According to Garcia, the event hopes to convey the message that by partaking in these new ways of celebration, not only does it offer respect to the fallen, but also offers support and validation to grieving families.

She emphasized that they want

to encourage people who may not be directly suffering from the loss of a loved one to still engage in these new forms of celebration. This is because the unity presented offers comfort to those who are personally grieving. She explained that this collective participation reminds families that their loved one's sacrifice is not forgotten.

"I think Memorial Day, for me, is not just about the service member, it's about the family," Garcia said, "It is about the family mourning the loss of their loved

Drag brunch, tie-dye, queer positive discussions to be held on campus

Pride Pack and the Student Activities Board to host a range of fun events to celebrate Pride

By **DESTINY VALENCIA**
NEWS EDITOR

Get ready for some fun events this upcoming week to celebrate Pride here on campus. In a collaborative effort, Pride Pack is teaming up with the Student Activities Board (SAB) to host a series of events in celebration of Pride.

Students can partake in Tie Dye in the Plaza Tuesday, May 30, 12:00-2:00 p.m.. Expect to see a drag brunch catered with Krispy Kreme donuts and orange juice, Wednesday May 31, 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the UWY 303/304. Lastly, on Thursday June 1, a queer discussion group will take place along with flag painting at the CEI, 12:30-2:30 p.m..

Students can expect to see some performances from drag artists and queens: Velvetten, Shenanigans, Alpha Q and Valerie Veeta.

Valerie Veeta, describes their drag persona as "your fun, funky, crazy, cool aunt who you definitely want to hang out with a bit at the party...I'm not far from Val in real life, maybe [I] just hold my tongue and crudeness a bit more, but she always has the best of intentions and loves everyone! She wants to see love and fun put into the world!"



PHOTO BY DESTINY VALENCIA

Drag queens Valerie Veeta and Alpha Q at Drag Bingo at UWT

Veeta who is also an alumni of UWT, class of 2018 is looking forward to performing for current students during Pride and returning to campus.

"I had so many great days and made so many incredible life long friends at UWT that it just feels like I'm coming home! The student body is incredible at UWT, the staff is extraordinary and I just truly love everything about this school so thank you so much

UWT for welcoming me back!" Veeta said.

Roland Heyne, a re-founding member of Pride Pack, is excited to get these events off the ground as Pride Pack has not been as active this past year. Fortunately, Heyne was able to get everything set up and ready for this year's upcoming Pride events.

An event that Heyne is looking forward to is the Queer Discussion that will be held at the CEI.

This discussion will be on a range of topics such as queer history, but Heyne hopes to focus on queer representation in the media.

Reflecting on an event that Pride Pack hosted back in March, there was a great turnout of people from a range of backgrounds who held a discussion and shared what kind of queer spaces they would like to see on campus or take part in.

"You might walk into a room and know exactly who has similar experiences to you. But when you're queer, you could walk into a room and not know that there's five and six other people in there who have had a really similar history as you and different events that are common. So it was nice to be in a room with people that looked different and came from all different walks of life and heights and weights, different ethnicities and cultures," said Heyne.

For those who wish to be involved with Pride Pack or may be hesitant because they are either questioning their sexuality or may think they shouldn't attend if they are straight, Heyne says that all are welcome.

"I really realize that inclusivity can oftentimes become exclusive and I don't want that to happen. So I've oftentimes, at tabling emphasized that it is for everybody to be proud of their sexuality... Celebrating sexuality and safe sex and just embracing sex in our culture is really important," Heyne said.

If you would like to find out more about the Pride events going on at UWT, you can follow the SAB at @sabuwt on Instagram and @uwtpridepack.

Tips for the neurodivergent college student

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COVER ▶

the letters, it only prolonged the waiting period to have accommodations in my classes.

When it comes to testing accommodations, you are required to schedule these tests days or weeks in advance. These allow

for about an extra half hour to an hour of testing time (depending on your disability). You also have to take tests inside the testing center, not in the classroom. This extra work – for me – made the situation even more stressful, especially when I found it difficult to even write emails.

I feel it fair to mention all of this because our students deserve to know about the experience of our campus's main disability resource. Me and many of my peers have agreed that this service needs to be updated and refined, as many students prefer to simply deal with things themselves or talk to teachers directly.

Honesty is the most effective way to find help. For the most part, teachers and others can be understanding. If they're not (or decide to be rude about it) there are options to help you navigate that such as counseling and therapy. No one should have to struggle more just because they have a disability. I encourage ev-

eryone to be more open about the way they work or study, how things work and don't work for you. Seek help inside your own community during bad days. Most of all, be kind to yourself. We are all doing our best and going at our own pace. Ultimately, that is what matters.

Reflections of a first-generation college student

I was so focused on doing everything “right” that I didn't stop and smell the tulips.

By RUTH OGDEN
OPINION COLUMNIST

When you're a first-generation college student, there's immense pressure to achieve as much as possible. I am financially independent, neither of my parents have college degrees, and the only jobs I've held were food service and retail. When I transferred from TCC to UWT in 2020, I was ready to do everything I could to change my life trajectory. I worked hard, joined the Global Honors program, participated in student government, and got a Dean's List letter for every quarter I've been enrolled. On paper, I did everything right. In retrospect though, this was not the best use of my time at UWT. If I could go back, I'd do a lot of things differently.

First, I'd find campus resources and would ask for help the moment I realized I needed it. As many first-generation college students know, there is an intense need to prove that you belong here and that you deserve your spot on campus. I didn't want anyone to see my problems, and I felt too shy to utilize resources that I desperately needed, like the Pantry or the Psychological and Wellness Services (PAWS). Because of this, I struggled deeply in ways that were totally unnec-

essary. There were plenty of people who wanted to help me, and it took me overcoming my own stubbornness to see that.

Secondly, I'd actively seek out mentors and role models. These can be academic advisors, professors, campus staff or even other students. The sooner you find people you aspire to be like, the better off you'll be. Having a mentor is so important because they can encourage you to take risks, like applying for an internship or applying for competitive programs. They can even give you the lowdown on which professors to avoid or how to study for specific courses.

Thirdly, I'd attend more fun campus events, not just networking ones. UWT has an incredible campus community that puts on numerous cultural events, volunteer events, documentaries, panel discussions and more. A lot of them have free food, too! Unfortunately, I couldn't afford to live on campus (Court 17, you are so expensive!) and I was too shy to attend events on my own. Had I started attending campus events earlier on, it would have been easier to make friends.

Finally, I'd explore my academic interests more. I was so fixated on taking the most competitive courses I could find and getting good grades that I didn't take the

time to consider if my major was the best fit for who I am. I majored in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics (with an Econ emphasis) and took minors in Innovation and Design and Global Engagement. I had an insane course load and hyper-fixated on whatever I thought could get me closer to law school. Sadly, because of this, I never took a single art or literature course just for fun. It actually wasn't until my senior year that I realized I actually loved creative writing. I wish I had given myself the opportunity to discover this earlier on in my academic career.

In sum, college is what you make of it. It seems obvious to others, but it took me three years to realize that an undergraduate degree is not an immediate key to success or even a good job. My advice to you is to use college as a time to meet like-minded individuals, build community and explore new interests.

The point of college is to teach you critical thinking skills, help you network within your community, and challenge your perceptions of the world. In those ways, UWT has absolutely succeeded. Despite my regrets, I'm so proud to be a first-generation Husky and I wouldn't be the person I am today without UWT.



Writer's block and how to overcome it

With finals season coming up, here are some tips for beating writer's block.

By CELIA WILLIAMS
OPINION EDITOR

As many writers will tell you, writer's block is inevitable. Every so often, I just cannot seem to get anything down on the page. I have no inspiration or motivation to try to come up with another essay or article. I have found a couple of things that help when I think I have no more words.

Doing something else

One of the first things I do when I feel myself getting blocked is do something else to try to spark something creatively. This could be cleaning, crocheting, going for a walk, listening to music or anything else but writing. I have found stepping away, doing something else and

coming back to the piece is one of the best ways for me to see where I could further improve or add thing.

Free writing

Another practice I use in my writing is free writing. This could be journaling or typing something on a computer, but it should be judgment-free and without any real purpose. I think sometimes the block can come from the other parts of our lives. Getting those thoughts and emotions out on the page or whatever is taking up space in your mind can clear that block.

Reading another piece of work

Every piece of art has been inspired by other pieces of work, so reading another piece of literature, whether it is your own or

someone else's, can help spark creativity. I am personally a huge fan of fantasy, mystery and somewhat dystopian fiction. When I take a break and look at my old work or find someone else's work to analyze, I find myself with more inspiration than before.

With finals season approaching, writer's block is something everyone will deal with, especially for English and other writing majors. These are just a few of the things I do to not let writer's block keep me from conquering finals week and ending the quarter right.



Reading another piece of literature can help spark creativity.

PHOTO BY ALEXA CHRISTIE



PHOTO BY ALEXA CHRISTIE

Writers from across the country are joining in the strike to give writers better wages.

Writers' Guild of America strikes for the first time since 2008

Changes in the media landscape have made it difficult for the average writer to make a living wage.

By **STEPH CARONNA**
A&E COLUMNIST

Many people outside of the film and television industries imagine anyone who works in Hollywood to be wealthy and lead a glamorous life. But the current writers' strike is shedding light on the many who are struggling to make ends meet.

"Working as a staff writer, I was still broke, still on Medicaid," writer for FX's hit "The Bear" Alex O'Keefe tweeted last month, "The studio wouldn't fly me out to the writers room in LA, so I worked from my Brooklyn apartment. My heat was out that pandemic winter, my space heater blew out the lights. I worked on episode 8 from a library."

Sadly, O'Keefe's story isn't rare. The situation is so dire that at the beginning of this month, the Writers' Guild of America (WGA) authorized a strike after six weeks of attempted negotiations with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP), who represent the major Hollywood studios. Over 10,000 television and film writers who belong to the union are refusing to work until their demands are met. Reactions have ranged from supportive, to confused, to hostile.

During the last WGA strike in 2007-2008, one of the main issues writers fought for was fair compensation for online distribution. However, because this was before now-giants like Netflix and Amazon began producing content, the gains of that strike were mostly related to purchased downloads (such as through the iTunes store) and ad-supported streaming.

Today, with the ubiquity of streaming services, production studios now have a completely different model of turning a profit. Rather than primarily making money from movie tickets, DVD sales, digital downloads and ad revenue from television and the internet, studios now heavily rely on customers paying subscription fees for each streaming service. Writers today don't get much of a cut from this revenue stream

(if any), no matter how popular the show or film ends up, because studios have refused to include updated compensation models in new contracts.

This shift in monetization has also caused studios to change their strategies in how they produce and release media. New films are made available on streaming services much more quickly relative to physical releases, in order to incentivize subscriptions. Some have argued that this leads to a decrease in ticket sales, a form of revenue which writers are more likely to get a cut of than subscription fees.

Scripted television season orders have been reduced, in most cases, from the former standard of twenty or more, to a meager six to ten episodes. This has led to much smaller writers' rooms—referred to as mini-rooms—with shorter durations, meaning fewer writers are being paid and given less time to create our current favorite shows.

All of these changes, compounded by the looming threat of advancing AI, have created a landscape in which it is increasingly difficult to make a living as a writer. For every well-known, well-paid, continuously employed Hollywood writer, there are hundreds more struggling to make a decent living.

"The great news is that, thanks only to our union, we have incredible health insurance. If you make a little over \$40,000 a year in writers' guild money, you will get access to that healthcare," said writer Sasha Stewart in a recent TikTok, "The problem though, is that writers now are having longer gaps in employment. They are having a harder time because the rooms are so small, and for such a short period of time."

"This is what the writers' strike is fighting for," Franchesca Ramsey, a writer, actor and producer, explained in a video to her followers, "fixed residual income based on streaming viewership, and restrictions on mini-rooms so that you aren't overworked and you aren't underpaid."

Some have voiced online that they cannot sympathize with these writers while other professions, such as teachers and healthcare workers, continue to go underpaid.

"We are not in competition with each other," Ramsey pointed out to one such detractor, "We're all being taken advantage of by corporations and the monster of capitalism."

Even within the film and television industry, there are many other workers who are arguably underpaid and deserve fairer compensation. Though some are upset by the strike disrupting their own ability to work and get paid, others recognize the importance of this fight, and have joined the strike in solidarity.

The strike has led to a hiatus on productions such as *The Tonight Show* and *The Daily Show*. Other shows and films currently being shot have shut down in solidarity with the strike, or have been forced to shut down by striking writers and their supporters. This is being done in order to draw attention to the importance of having writers present during the entirety of production, not just in the writers' room. The longer the strike continues, the more of an impact these shutdowns will have on future releases.

The Writers' Guild of America summed up this battle in a statement to *Insider*: "When the studios invest millions into producing a certain film or series, they can find it in their budgets to pay us for the value we create."

For many of us in this age, films and television are the main way we consume art. That's why the few at the top of the industry make millions—because so many of us value what is being created. But these productions require the work of hundreds, sometimes thousands of people to reach the standards we have come to expect. All of these people, including the writers, deserve a higher return on the value they had a hand in creating, not just the executives who have the final say.

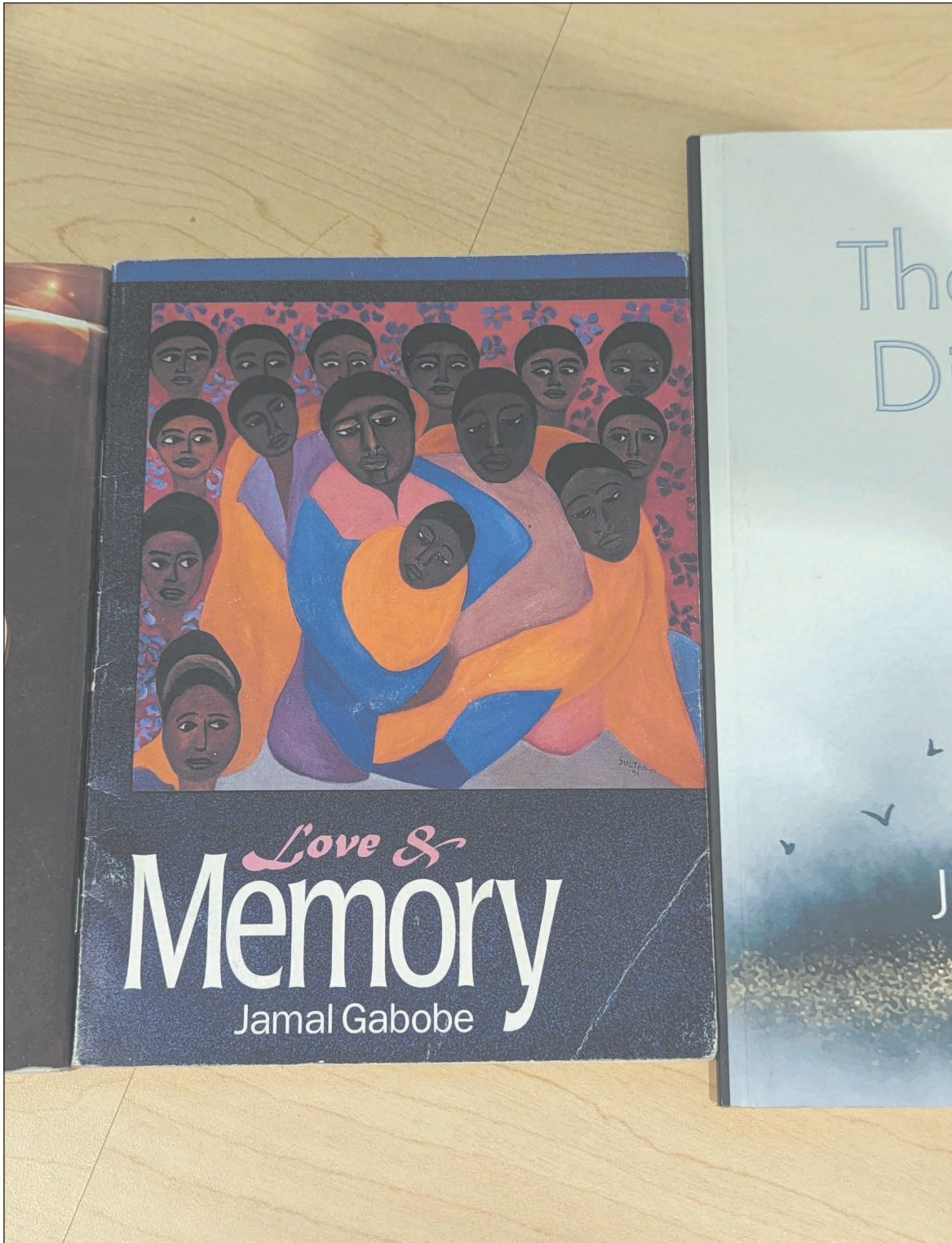


PHOTO POSTED BY @NAZANINNOUR ON TWITTER

One of the more entertaining aspects of following the strike are the humorous picket signs writers are bringing.

Poetry is slowly growing at UWT

The hidden poetry scene on UWT's campus has been springing to life on campus.



Jamal Gabobe books, a speaker at UW Seattle.

PHOTO BY COLE MARTIN

By **COLE MARTIN**
A&E COLUMNIST

With the first annual UWT poetry festival occurring in April, as well as some amazingly dedicated creative writing faculty, poetry has begun to make a name for itself on campus lately! It's sometimes hard to spot the art groups on campus, but the active efforts from hobbyists and professional poets at UWT have really shown.

UWT is lucky to have a few strong voices involved in the poetry field, including poet Jamal Gabobe. Gabobe is an accomplished poet with three poetry books under his belt, a PhD in comparative literature and a local staff member at the UWT library.

Gabobe's poetry is filled to the brim with particularly unique cultural insight; coming from a Somali family in Yemen and going to a private English-speaking school, Gabobe has a culturally rich background. He spoke Somali at home, Arabic out and about and English at school, which led to a lot of linguistic understanding and cultural diversity that appears in his work.

"They go to questions of identity; as a Somali person, as a Muslim, as an Arabic-speaking. This directs you to certain areas... the critical issues. So, they have a bearing on what I write," says Gabobe, "In a way, they're somewhat like avenues of escape from one to the other. If you're stuck on issues here, you can move to the other one. It opens horizons for you... The availability of other cultures gives you leeway."

The link between culture and art is really strong, and Gabobe is a great example that poetry is no exception. Gabobe's work,

both creatively and academically, delves into critical cultural issues. His poetry books cover topics of identity, memories of the past, love stories and more.

His latest book, "The Path of Difference," which is available to purchase online, goes deep into Gabobe's multicultural life. The topic of identity is broad and interdisciplinary, and Gabobe craftily weaves these many ideas together.

"Truth revealed in movement, in the agony of falling, not in speech," Gabobe writes in "The Path of Difference."

He's also currently studying early European travel documents from explorers around the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa, diving into the controversial old texts to paint a bigger picture for both sides.

Gabobe has been keeping up with the recent poetry progress at UWT. While recent successes have been great to see, the efforts to bring poetry to campus has been a little scattered.

"The poetry scene at UW Tacoma could use more input and resources. Things would also be better if the various individuals, groups and academics who are interested in poetry would communicate with each other and coordinate their activities," says Gabobe.

Events like the UWT Poetry festival give a bright outlook to the poets on campus, and there is hope for the continued growth and interest in the art. Gabobe's three books, "The Path of Difference," "Love & Memory" and "Restless Heart" can be found up in the TLB library alongside other poetry works.

UWT's DawgDen has returned for another year and new items

Students can redeem the Dawg Bones they've collected by attending school events throughout the year for items ranging from keychains to hoodies.

By **ANDREW ANDERSON**
WEB & LAYOUT MANAGER

The end of Spring Quarter and the '22-'23 school year sees the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) opening their Dawg Bones shop for students. Dawg Bones is a point system that allows students to accumulate points by attending school events often sponsored or held by the CSI and then spending them on prizes and items.

The end of each school quarter sees the Dawg Bones shop opening for students and allowing them to redeem their points for various items that range from stickers and keychains to limited quantity items such as beanies and hoodies.

Items are often on a first-come, first-serve basis and the quantity of an item can always be inquired about through CSI. Students unsure of their cur-

rent Dawg Bone count can also email the CSI to see their total point count.

This quarter introduces new prizes in the shop such as a reusable tote bag and a 3D printed Husky keychain. While Dawg Bones carry over through quarters, they expire at the end of the school year. These next few weeks are the last chance for students to exchange the points they've earned throughout the year. The shop currently has a 50% sale for old prizes from the last couple of quarters which prices currently reflect.

As CSI no longer has the DawgDen portal, students are instead able to order through a form that lists the items, the amount of points they cost and further information. The CSI also allows for the option of students coming into the office in person to order and spend their points. Items, once ordered, can

be picked up at the CSI office located on the first floor of the University Y.

Dawg Bones will be reset at the beginning of the next school year, but students can always earn points once again by attending events and scanning the QR codes available at the tables and booths.

Order Form



CSI email: uwtsi@uw.edu

Further Information:

<https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/involvement/dawg-bones>



The CSI hosts multiple events for students throughout the year.

PHOTO BY ALEXA CHRISTIE

Jena Malone's intriguing theme of critique of religion in film

How do these three films tackle religion and the surrounding culture, and why did Jena Malone star in all of them?

By EMILIA BELL
A&E EDITOR

Religion is a subject that is often discussed, critiqued or praised in films; it just depends where you look. Many films opt to critique it, which tends to yield an intriguing and thoughtful movie. Interestingly enough, actress Jena Malone has starred in three films that do so. Jena Malone is an underrated indie actress, though she is known for some larger films like "Donnie Darko" and "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire," along with its subsequent sequels. Malone's filmography stretches from her childhood in 1996 to the present; she has managed to snag a mixture of blockbusters and smaller, more off-beat films.

Malone's three films that are relevant to religion are "The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys" in 2002, "Saved!" in 2004, and "Consecration" in 2023. They are all fairly distinct films in their own right, but all focus on religion and the harm that the church (as an organization) can cause. This article explores how religion is depicted in these three films, so spoilers await anyone who chooses to read further.

In February of 2023, Malone stated in an interview with Deirdre Crimmins for the publication Rue Morgue:

"I had a sort of non-denominational Christian-ish upbringing, but with lesbian parents," and that she had always been interested in things that were mysterious to her as a child— religion being one of those mysteries.

"The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys" is an indie comedy-drama starring Emile Hirsch, Keiran Culkin and Jodie Foster, with Malone as a secondary charac-

ter. Her character is plagued by guilt because her brother molested her, something she thinks is a sin because of the religion she was raised in. The altar boys also struggle with this relationship to religion, and find themselves coming of age with a confusing religious backdrop, but Malone's character is where religion is really explored. She blames herself for what happened to her, and fears she is going to hell because of it. The film is a clear critique on this type of culture that can perpetuate harm to children and young adults, though it does not condemn nor demonize religion.

Malone explained in an interview with Bill Chambers for Film Freak Central in 2002, "[...] it's such a beautiful depiction of what it's like to be young."

That is really what the film aims to portray, with the added flavor of religious criticism thrown in. Religious guilt is a serious topic addressed, but it's most prominent with Malone's character, and less of a concern with the male leads who prefer to steal a statue of St. Agatha and laugh about it instead.

"Saved!" is a lead role for Malone, where she stars alongside Mandy Moore, Eva Amurri, and funnily enough, Macaulay Culkin (among others). "Saved!" is a clear-cut comedy. It satirizes religion with Moore's character who is wholly devoted to Jesus. Malone's character finds herself pregnant after sleeping with her gay boyfriend in an attempt to turn him straight, all influenced by her proximity to Christianity. Throughout the movie, Malone's character becomes disillusioned with religion and finds herself a supportive group of outcasts who are quite the opposite of the religious fanatics Malone's character



Still from "Consecration" (2023).

PHOTO BY IFC FILMS

is used to. The film is a direct criticism of religion, though it does so in a humorous way. It shows how misinformation based on religion can be confusing and ultimately damaging not only to teens, but to everyone.

About the film, Malone was quoted in 2004 by Rob Blackwelder for SPLICEDwire, saying, "Belief is such a powerful thing. But because it is, it can also be very destructive and it's very easily manipulated."

"Consecration" is far different from the other two films, and admittedly is an odd choice to include in the same breath as them. It is a horror film, and does not critique religion, but rather the Catholic church as an entity.

In regard to her interest in the film, Malone explained in her interview in Rue Morgue, "I think the beauty of Catholicism

that really sets it apart from a lot of other religions is the austerity of its rituals. How much it's open about how much it keeps behind closed doors. It's very upfront about that."

The film takes an almost fantasy-based approach to Catholicism. The film is mythological, mysterious and very moody. The story itself focuses on Malone's character learning she has supernatural powers associated with religion, ones that the church fears. The film's message is a positive one about her powers, likening her to a guardian angel, but it certainly villainizes the nuns and the priest who attempt to contain her. The film highlights hypocrisy in Catholicism, and doesn't shy away from dark subject matter.

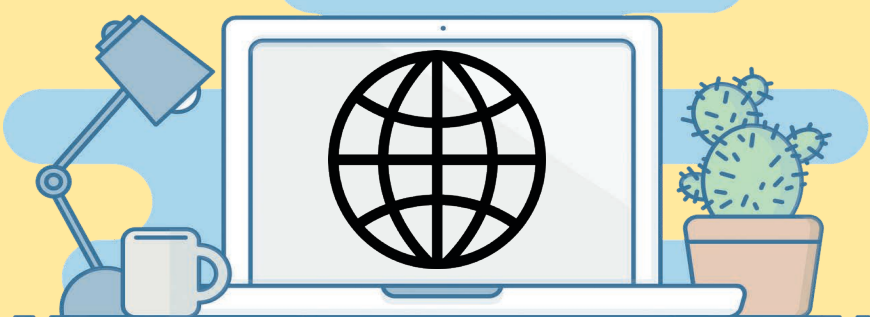
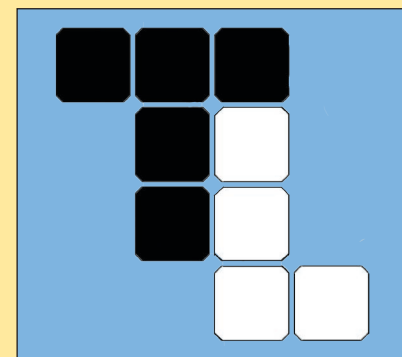
In the aforementioned interview director Christopher

Smith explained, "Ultimately, it's about guilt."

It seems a lot of religious themes can be boiled down to guilt or fear, and though "Consecration" is a far cry from "Saved!" and "The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys," all of them share these undertones. Whether Malone is pregnant due to a well-meaning mistake and poor education thanks to Christianity, feeling guilt because of her brother's actions or taking on a nearly angelic role, the guilt and the fear remain—in different amounts, of course. The films all offer differing perspectives on religion and are all valuable in their own right.

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TAHOMA WEST'S 2023 BOOK LAUNCH

Join us on May 26th for the launch
of Tahoma West's 27th Volume.

We will have live readings, food and drinks,
and free books for all that attend.

Friends and family welcome!

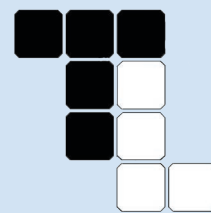
We will be celebrating in Keystone 201
from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

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