

THE LEDGER

University of Washington Tacoma

Acknowledging the Indigenous Land We Stand Upon



PHOTO BY CAMERON J. BERRENS

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UW Tacoma
Welcome Days

10/12 -- UW President Ana Mari annual address
10 - 11 a.m.
@ The Henry Art Gallery Auditorium Seattle campus with livestream options available

10/10 -- Health Resources at UWT Workshop
10 - 2 p.m.
@CP 106

10/12 -- SIAS Open House
10 - 2 p.m.
@WCG 1st Floor
Atrium

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News

ASUWT struggles with funding in the new year



IMAGE 1: Holly Wetzel, ASUWT President, gives a speech at UWT convocation. | Photo by Cameron J. Berrens

Many areas of student life have suffered due to a small budget.

by Reese Ramirez

Student-led organizations and initiatives are being forced to work with restrictive budgets due to low enrollment numbers.

According to the University of Washington website, the “Service and Activities Fee” covers RSO’s, student programs, and activities on campus. With lower enrollment numbers, these programs receive smaller budgets.

Small budgets have impacted many areas of campus life, including ASUWT’s ability to operate and support students.

Because of funding difficulties, ASUWT has struggled to complete initiatives such as putting menstrual products in campus bathrooms and providing campus safety. A brief overview of the 2022-2023 ASUWT initiatives reveals that funding prevented all proposed initiatives.

When student fees support student life activities, those who enroll on a down year are the ones who pay the price. This vicious cycle only discourages future enrollment.

“In a sense, it requires an investment,” said ASUWT President Holly Wetzel. “If you want students to stay and keep enrolling, you need to give them a reason to stay.”

Despite this need for investment by the University, students are not supported.

In a 2022-2023 school year survey, access to affordable food was a primary concern for students. Yet entering the new year, there remains a lack of food options for students who need to eat lunch on a budget.

The Pantry, located in the Dougan building, offers free food for students, but as President Wetzel notes, is often wiped out as soon as it is restocked. This, combined with the lack of affordable food options, such as a cafeteria or food trucks, leaves students with little to no choices.

“It’s one thing to have a ‘poor college experience’,” said President Wetzel. “It’s another when you’re skipping meals altogether.”

While food options are not directly funded by student fees, ASUWT, who represent the student needs, is. With low funding, the organization has fewer hours and resources to fight for the basic needs of students.

To bridge the gap created by low enrollment numbers, President Wetzel has urged students to express their needs directly to the state policy makers.

“We get money from the legislature and from lobbying,” said President Wetzel. “If there is no student input that the lawmakers can see, they are going to send money to schools with a louder student presence.”

Students have the opportunity to voice their needs and concerns to the state legislature at events such as [Huskies on the Hill](#).

Regardless, the baseline budget is still determined by student enrollment numbers. Because of this, it is important that student leaders and school administrators take steps to invite higher enrollment numbers, such as campus events and investing into the student body.

“Unfortunately, it’s either first come first serve or we try to spread the money thin,” said ASUWT Director of University Affairs Roland Heyne in a follow up interview.

The themes are clear. Student life is supported by students who enroll. But with low enrollment comes a lower budget, and in turn it is us on campus who pay the price.



IMAGE 2: The recent Huskies on the Hill annual lobby day where students are bussed to Olympia to meet with legislators and advocate for issues. | Photo via Office of Government Relations for ASUW.

Opinion

Reflecting on land acknowledgements on Indigenous Peoples Day

Acknowledging our history is a great first step towards creating change, but it shouldn't be the last.

by Steph Caronna

When I first started seeing and hearing land acknowledgements a few years ago—at the beginning of college classes or social justice-themed events—it seemed like such an important step toward reparations for Indigenous people. The widespread application of these acknowledgements in classrooms, events and venues across the country normalized a conversation that Indigenous people have been having for decades.

Yet today, I find my mind wandering when these slides come up at the beginning of a presentation. It's not that I don't care, it's just that I have heard these same sentiments expressed, often in the same exact jargon, dozens of times. I find myself thinking, "Yes, we are on stolen land. So what are we going to do about it besides acknowledging it?"

If you've yet to have a professor start off their class with a land acknowledgement, here is an [excerpt from UWT's Office of Equity and Inclusion](#):

"We recognize that all of us at UW Tacoma learn, live, and work on or near the ancestral homeland of the Coast Salish people. In particular, our campus is situated on the traditional territory of the Puyallup. And, since we're gathered virtually, we also want to acknowledge the lands of the Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Suquamish, Duwamish, and all other traditional lands we may be on."

I realize that land acknowledgements are not meant to represent a be-all, end-all solution to the aftermath of the genocide and displacement of Indigenous peoples. It's in the name that it is simply meant to *acknowledge* the truth about our history.

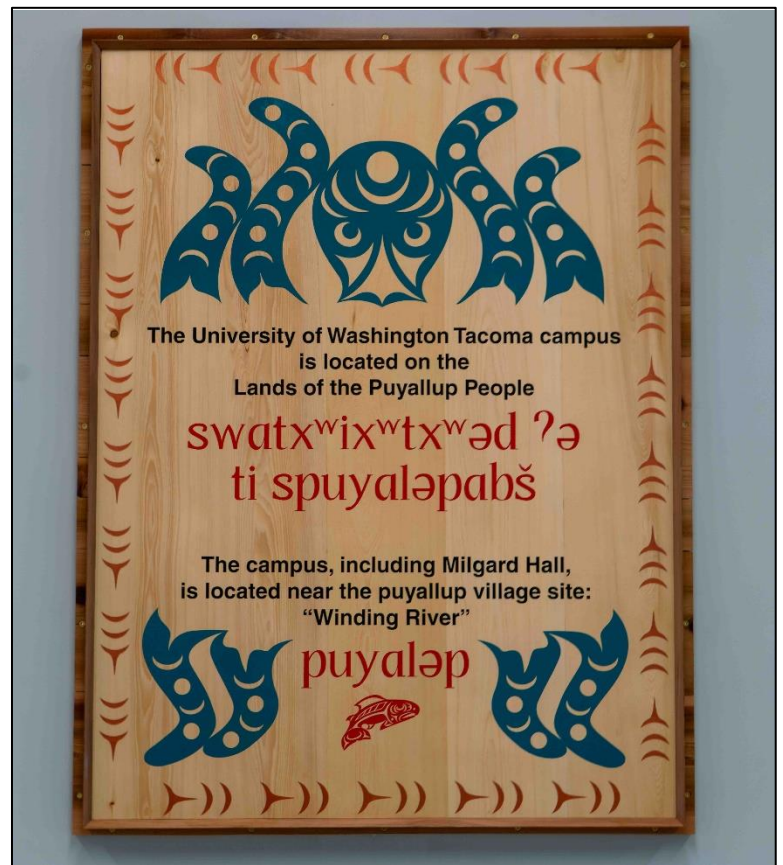


IMAGE 3: A physical version of a land acknowledgement in Milgard Hall. | Photo by Cameron J. Berrens

But oftentimes, these statements feel like an easy way for institutions to continue to get away with occupying stolen land, without having to make any material changes. I do not harbor any resentment or ill feelings towards the concept of land acknowledgement itself, but towards the institutions which take advantage of it.

Indigenous writer Nick Martin elaborated on this problem in 2020, when director Taika Waititi’s land acknowledgement during the Academy Awards ceremony catalyzed a more mainstream conversation about the concept. While he praised Waititi for making such a statement in a room of majority-white, ultra-wealthy people, the audience’s enthusiasm towards the statement created a sort of dissonance for some Indigenous viewers.

“This is Native land, it seems to say, and yet here the colonizers are all the same,” wrote Martin. “The real problem is that we never left. We still live on these lands. Failing to take the next logical step—calling for the strengthening of sovereignty and investment in Native voices—is a choice.”

Martin’s criticism is mainly focused on Hollywood and its history of excluding Indigenous creatives, while allowing white filmmakers to whitewash Indigenous stories. But the lesson he imparts can be applied to any industry or institution: acknowledgements without further meaningful action are hollow.



IMAGE 4: “All the Rivers in the World” by Seattle artist Vaughn Bell, along Prairie Line Trail | Photo by Cameron J. Berrens

Though UWT has yet to return any land ownership rights to the Puyallup tribe, the university has started initiatives to promote Indigenous voices and create more academic and professional opportunities for Indigenous people. These include the Native American Indigenous Education Symposium, Building Excellence through Science and Tradition (BEST), and Indigenous Knowledge and Community Conversations.

These “investment[s] in Native voices,” as Martin put it, sound pretty substantial. However, their webpages are not up to date, so it is difficult for the average student to learn whether these initiatives are ongoing and how to get involved.

The university has also commissioned several displays relating to local Indigenous people. “All the Rivers in the World” is an installation by Seattle artist Vaughn Bell along Prairie Line Trail. It begins with the Lushooted word for Tahoma (the original name of Mt. Rainier) and ends at the staircase with the Lushootseed word for Puyallup, with various rivers of the world chosen by UWT students in between. The informational displays within Milgard Hall provide basic knowledge about local Indigenous groups.

Sadly, a mural on the side of the Walsh Gardner building that featured Lushootseed was covered up at some point over the summer for unknown reasons. Perhaps it was always intended to be temporary, but the university should not take the impacts of decisions such as this lightly. A student who might have felt welcomed by that mural last year would likely be dismayed to see it has been replaced with a more generic, UWT-themed piece.

We cannot depend on institutions to make the changes we need, as they won’t do so until we put sufficient pressure on them. It is up to us to unite for collective efforts and take individual actions that contribute to a greater shift.

Professors, activists and event facilitators can make land acknowledgements more meaningful by extending the conversation to include what further steps can be taken. Direct students towards resources where they can learn more about the history and traditions of the area's tribes, such as the [Puyallup tribe’s informative website](#). Talk to attendees about the [Land Back movement](#), through which Indigenous peoples across the US and Canada and their allies are advocating to reestablish Indigenous sovereignty. Bring attention to the crisis of and [movement for justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women](#).

Professors should also try to find ways to include Indigenous history, tradition, knowledge and activism into their curriculum. Last spring, Dr. Cassie Miura did so seamlessly in her Writing for Social Change course (TWRT 388). In the class, students examined different genres of persuasive writing through the lens of Indigenous issues. By digging deep into academic writing and poetry about the Indigenous Hawaiian struggle to protect Mauna Kea, my classmates and I built our rhetorical skills while also gaining a deeper understanding of the importance of Indigenous sovereignty.

I believe that, if UWT (and any other institution, for that matter) is serious about following through with the stated purpose of land acknowledgements, it needs to do more as an institution to make reparations to local Indigenous communities. Meanwhile, students and faculty who are passionate about this issue should make their voices heard: attend campus [Town Hall events](#) (the next one is October 30), bring it up in class discussions, and [write to the Ledger](#) to let us know your thoughts.

Land acknowledgements are a contentious issue for Indigenous activists, but many agree they can be a good first step. The problem is when they are the only step.

A reminder of COVID-19 guidelines for this fall quarter



IMAGE 5: Students should mask up in class to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses. | Photo via Shutterstock

Here are some reminders and updates on COVID-19 and the guidelines as of 2023.

by Celia Williams

With school back in full swing, flu season also makes its annual comeback, so it's important to take the necessary precautions to stay healthy and keep everyone safe. After a pandemic that stopped the world for a while, the need to be more conscious of our choices when we get sick is even more important than ever. Here are some reminders of a few tips to keep yourself and others safe this quarter:

Wear a mask when with large and unfamiliar crowds.

Wearing a mask when going to class, work, or grocery shopping is the first step to keeping yourself from getting sick. This seemingly insignificant choice is one of the best ways to stay safe and stop the spread of potential pathogens like COVID-19. I think that this is specifically important when interacting with those you might not see often or are even completely unfamiliar with.

Wash your hands correctly and regularly.

Washing your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap can also help slow the spread of germs. Again, I know that it probably sounds redundant and common sense, but you would be surprised by how many people don't do this. Hand sanitizer is also another great way to keep your hands clean and germ-free if there is no sink nearby.

Stay home if you are sick or test positive for COVID-19.

As unfortunate as it is, COVID-19 and other sicknesses are a normal part of life. That also means several resources around COVID-19 and general health are usually available. At-home COVID-19 tests are available at any Pierce County, Tacoma, or Puyallup library branch. UW Tacoma also has a 24/7 virtual healthcare service available to treat you for several ailments, similar to urgent care. The government has also restarted their program that gives 4 free COVID-19 tests.

Follow COVID-19 guidelines and quarantine suggestions.

If you test positive, regardless of symptoms, you should take the necessary precautions to keep those around you safe. That means following the guidelines that will stop the spread because even if you are asymptomatic, you can still pass those pathogens onto someone else. The CDC recommends quarantining for at least 5 days and a negative test before returning to normal activities.

While we all don't feel like there is time to stop our lives and take the time to care for ourselves, it's important to make time for that. It will all be there after you get better. Not only is it good for you to recover, but it's also for the safety of those around you. COVID-19 and other illnesses can be life-threatening to some. Keep yourself and your other huskies safe and healthy this fall quarter.

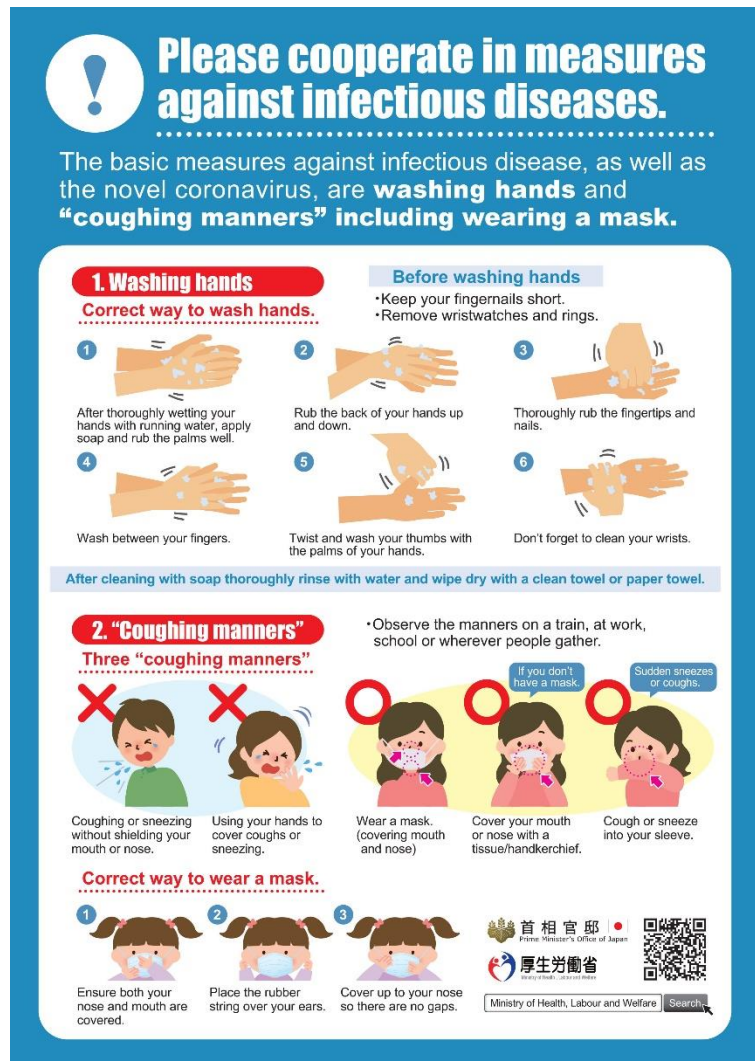


IMAGE 6: COVID-19 rules and regulations. | Educational poster published by the Prime Minister's Office of Japan and the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare



IMAGE 7: A shared bike lane in Tacoma, parked cars line the shoulder. | Photo by Benjamin Fredell

Biking and accessibility in Tacoma

Biking in Tacoma is neither safe nor accessible, but it has room for improvement.

by Benjamin Fredell

A city swallowed in glass. One rolling hill after another. On my bike, I can watch the whole world go by. There's another apartment complex being built off Broadway, a jackhammer sound fills the empty Tacoma streets. Vines cover the brick-faced apartments, brown leaves scatter across the street. There's art on some of the walls here. Two chained arms meet, the bread in their hands covered by graffiti, paint chipped and decayed.

There's a bike lane here, one of the few. It's hard not to feel like you're in the way

when biking these winding roads. As green as it is, it will never be our sustainable future, not in this city, not in this weather. But that doesn't mean we can't make it safer for those that do.

In Washington state, you are allowed to bike on the sidewalk. You're allowed to bike on any street besides state highways, regardless of whether or not the pavement has a picture of a bicycle on it.

In Tacoma, every street is a bike lane. That being said, demarcations in the road can go a long way in promoting safer streets for bikers and pedestrians alike, but it can also cause confusion. Marked bike lanes in Tacoma are intended to outline a preferred biking network for bicyclists rather than represent the only roads you are allowed to bike on.

The city of Tacoma doesn't need to spend a lot of money to make biking safer. Extra lines of paint for bike lanes or more signs for shared streets wouldn't cost the city a fortune. Some ideas like bike boulevards or an increase in sidewalk size to incorporate a shared bike lane would be a bigger investment for a city where less than 8 percent of the population rides a bike for commutes. But perhaps these changes would lead to more widespread bike adoption.



IMAGE 8: A biker in the middle of the UWT campus. | Photo by Cameron J. Berrens

In the City of Tacoma's [Transportation Master Plan](#), which was amended in 2018, a heavy emphasis was put on South Downtown near UWT and the Prairie Line trail. I have been biking to campus for two years now through the hills of a downtown deep in construction. You can add lanes and paint, you can try to stretch and bend these concrete streets, but that ride will never get easier. It's a tough five mile climb back up Hilltop, down Sixth Ave, through Stadium and Proctor. I won't say you can't do it, but I can't tell you that it's easy, no matter where you live in relation to campus.

Bike lanes are few and far between and will end abruptly or trail off into a busy freeway. Many motorists don't understand the concept of a shared lane and will often not see you biking. Signs can help, but this cannot be our only solution. Not to mention, it gets worse in the rain with wet tires and steep hills.

I love to bike. I love biking to class and watching the city change and morph from old brick to shiny glass. I'd love for it to be safe and easy for everyone, but it isn't yet, and I would just recommend taking the bus until it is.

Arts & Entertainment

Alternative Dance Theatre Troupe Hosts a Dracula themed Dance Show

Tacoma Dance Studios set to host a live, contemporary goth dance show based on the spooky literary classic: “Bram Stoker’s Dracula.”

by Heidi Ortiz Candelaria

Spooky season is finally here, and we at the Tacoma Ledger could not be more excited. With so many events leading up to the fang-tastic day of Halloween, you might be a bit overwhelmed. Luckily for you, I have just the recommendation that is sure to get your blood pumping.

As a relatively new dance studio to the area (established in 2017), Tacoma Dance Studios has made it their mission to: “Provide an open and accessible dance space for all shapes, sizes, genders, and ages.” Kat, the owner of this establishment, saw the need in Tacoma for spaces that allow adults to be comfortable enough to express themselves without judgement.

As a professional dancer herself, she teaches the most popular class in her studio: belly dancing. There are seven other course offerings, such as Yoga, Zumba, Ballet, Salsa, Burlesque, and wedding dancing. Kat encourages drop-ins, and there are also pre-pay session packs in case you’re planning on taking classes long-term.

Their latest event: “Dracula: Alternative Dance Theatre.” It is a gothic dance show that aims to embrace the original Bram Stoker’s Dracula story and enhance it with what they describe as “dark alternative music from the 70s.” Surely this means that we can expect some post-punk, dark wave, shoegaze, and goth bangers as part of the set list.

You don’t have to be a part of the goth, punk, or alternative scene to enjoy this thrillingly macabre show. If you find yourself fascinated by the different renditions of Dracula throughout history, or simply have a love for anything spooky; this might be the perfect event to jump start October.

“Dracula: Alternative Dance Theatre” will be opening its curtains on October 14, starting at 7:00 p.m. and ending at 10:00 p.m. It will be taking place in the Urban Grace Church on 902 Market Street. The venue is wheelchair accessible and smoke-free, but please keep in mind that this is not a kid-friendly show!



IMAGE 9: The live show for this Dracula themed dance takes place on October 14. | Photo by Tacoma Dance Studios LLC

Prices start at \$25, so I'd suggest you snatch that ticket as soon as you can. This goth, vampire-fanatic reporter will be attending this event herself. In case you can't make it but are still interested in the local goth dance scene, I will also be writing a review after the event. Please stay tuned for that! And for those of you who plan on going, start thinking of that fearfully snatched outfit you'd like to wear, crawl out of that coffin, sharpen your fangs. I'll meet you there!



IMAGE 10: Tacoma Dance Studios Group Photo from Public Website | Photo by Tacoma Dance Studios LLC

Link to buy tickets: [Brown Paper Tickets \(bpt.me\)](https://www.brownpapertickets.com)

Enjoy Japanese food and Asian rummage sale at the Tacoma Buddhist Temple's Fall Bazaar

Tacoma Buddhist Temple holds annual Fall Bazaar event where people can enjoy Japanese food and culture.
by Rachel Meatte

The Tacoma Buddhist Temple will once again hold its annual Fall Bazaar, happening on November 12th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. A special tradition, the temple will prepare Japanese style food items like beef curry, udon noodles, and more while using secret temple recipes for some dishes.

The Reverend of the temple Tadao Koyama said it's an important event that the temple looks forward to every year.

"Members of our temple make nearly all of our food from scratch in our temple kitchen," said Rev. Koyama. "We spend hours the day before and day-of cooking and preparing for this big event. People who have been here for several years, even decades, come by to create a delicious Japanese dish that people will love. It's not easy and requires a lot of dedication and hard work to put on this event. Together, we are able to come up with a day that supports both the temple and Japanese culture."

The main dishes at this event are Japanese beef curry and udon noodles. Japanese beef curry is similar to Indian curry but has a thicker consistency. It's much sweeter in taste and usually uses beef or pork as its meat of choice. They tend to use curry powder with less spices and is not as spicy as many Indian curries. The thick delicious sauce is a classic Japanese favorite that is beloved by many people.



IMAGE 11: Tacoma Buddhist Temple member making Japanese "Daifuku Mochi." | Photo by Rachel Meatte



IMAGE 12 and 13: Beef Curry (left) and Udon (right) are some of the meals made and provided at the event. | Photos by Rachel Meatte

Udon is a famous Japanese dish that is similar to ramen but has thicker chewy noodles. Ramen tends to have a rich salty flavor while udon is simpler and lighter in taste. They use a secret temple recipe for all their noodle broths that make it a delightful flavorful dish recipe.

The event also celebrates Asian culture with its famous temple rummage sale.

“We sell all kinds of Asian décor like, dishes, home supplies, Japanese dolls and more” said Rev. Koyama. “It’s a great way to showcase ourselves to the public show our temples culture. Tacoma has been a loyal group of people who continue to stop by and enjoy themselves at our events. Obon and Sukiyaki dinner are the biggest events we have, however, I always happen to see familiar faces at our Bazaar event which is nice. We welcome them once again and urge anyone new to stop by the temple and pick up a beef curry or Udon dish! You will not regret it!”

The temple holds this event inside, where people can stop by and sit down to eat their dinner downstairs in the social hall. However, the temple will hold its annual Bazaar through take-out this year. People can order their food from the Tacoma Buddhist Temple’s website and then pick it up in person downstairs in the social hall at the temple.

The event will be held on November 12th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. To order your meal or learn more about the Tacoma Buddhist Temple, visit their website:

<https://www.tacomabt.org/>

Thank you for reading and we'll see you next week.

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