

# THE LEDGER

## Campus Security Meets AI



PHOTO BY CAMERON J. BERRENS

### This Edition:

- New cameras aim to reduce campus crime
- Student advice for new voters
- An American student in South Korea
- TAM's newest Native American exhibit
- Tribute to Atsushi Sakurai





PHOTO BY CAMERON J. BERRENS

The cameras are located on top of blue emergency posts and in parking lots on campus.

# New cameras aim to reduce crime on campus

Campus security invested in new cameras with AI technology in response to the increase of car break-ins and related crimes on campus.

**By REESE RAMIREZ**  
NEWS EDITOR

In response to car break-ins and student safety concerns over the previous years, UWT Campus Safety has installed new cameras around the campus. The cameras are said to help improve the security officers' ability to assess risk and provide information in the case of an incident.

Campus Security has equipped several of the cameras with AI technology to assist in gathering information. These cameras can search for people based on the clothes they are wearing, items they are carrying, and more.

The ASUWT Student Safety Committee had the opportunity to meet with Susan Wagshul-Golden, the Campus Safety Director, to discuss many facets of student safety, including the new cameras.

"We are still navigating the new technology and learning how the data can assist us with patrol strategies of peak hours of pedestrians and vehicle traffic in those areas," said Wagshul-Golden.

The new cameras with AI technology can be found on multiple areas of campus. The cameras equipped on blue towers cover north and south Prairie Line Trail. The Whitney Parking Lot Coverage Area stretches from the back of the YMCA down to

the TPS and Dougan parking areas. Together these networks of cameras cover a majority of parking areas on campus.

One student, Calvin Singer, was unaware of the investment, and said they did not increase his confidence in campus safety at all.

"On a 10 scale, a 9 out of 10," said Calvin regarding how secure he felt on campus. "I don't ever really think about it."

The cameras are one more addition to the current security system UWT offers in an attempt to make campus more secure.

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# One year away from the 2024 U.S. elections: Advice for new voters

As we get closer to a major election year, there is a lot to start considering when deciding to vote and who to vote for.

By CELIA WILLIAMS  
OPINION EDITOR

As the local elections of 2023 wrap up, America is setting its sights on the 2024 national races. For many, this is the first time that they will be able to vote, and it can be intimidating and confusing. I know that it was for me when I voted in the 2020 primary elections for the first time. With that, I thought I'd offer some advice and try to layout some of the key parts of election year. From the debates to the many levels of voting throughout the year, there is a lot to try to follow.

First, you have to make sure you are a registered voter. If you are not a registered voter, you won't get a ballot to cast said votes. The UW Tacoma class registration process makes sure that each eligible student has registered to vote in Washington if they choose to. This is the first step in the voting process. It's also important to remember to update your information, like your address or name, to be sure everything goes smoothly. Here is a link to check on all of that information: <https://www.vote.org/>

After you have registered to vote, you await your first chance to vote. You will be mailed a ballot when voting begins and can place it in any of the many ballot drop-off boxes around the Pierce and Kitsap County area. Two of the nearest ballot boxes to campus include the Tacoma Public Library and the UWT campus.

The decision is the most difficult part of this. It's also the main reason that watching debates and having a rough understanding of the legal jargon and topic at hand are so vital. You are voting for the rights of you and those around you, the structure of our legal system, and the environment that you depend on. One great resource available to you is simply the internet. If you aren't able to make it to debates, they are usually posted online within a matter of time. Another resource available to you is the Voter's Guide, which is usually mailed alongside your ballot.

Now that you've registered, gotten a ballot, and gained a rough understanding of the matters you're voting on, what's next?

With most UW Tacoma students having their first chance to vote this next year, I went and asked some of the staff and older students what they have to say on the voting process and what they would have liked to know when they started to vote. I got a variety of answers.

One student wished they had known more about financial planning; this is something that needs to be considered when you vote as it impacts things like your taxes. The other two made a point about the corruption in politics and how that diminishes the value of politicians, saying "corporations are corrupt," disparaging the power hunger that motivates the two parties.

Voting, while it has some issues structurally, is an important part of our lives and has great impacts on us, regardless of who it is directly aimed at. Gay rights, women's rights, sovereignty of tribal nations, education, and protection of human rights are all matters which have been heavily discussed and debated in politics. They are incredibly impactful on many lives, even if voting



Voters have just finished dropping off their 2023 election ballots. | PHOTO BY CAMERON J. BERRENS

might not seem like it has power in certain areas.

The overturning of Roe v. Wade is a prime example of this. Many who were for the overturn of Roe v. Wade whole-heartedly believed that this would only impact cases where they believe women were harming fetuses, which has been found to be untrue. With the overturn of this case in 2021, access to reproductive healthcare, like abortions and birth control, and bodily autonomy have been threatened for many.

An issue that has made its way into the forefront politics is the ongoing conflict in Palestine. This plays into voters' decisions by bringing in morals; the

beliefs of someone changes from person to person, and often the two parties support opposing sides, making people establish their values. Most of the U.S. government supports Israel in the conflict, while many voters support Palestine. This is playing a major factor in people's decision on who to support in the 2024 election, some of whom are deciding not to vote at all.

Voting is something that can be a bit intimidating when you first start to go through the process, but it gets easier with experience. I hope that you have found some value in this article, and it sparked some interest in the upcoming election.

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PHOTOS BY BENJAMIN FREDELL

Gamcheon culture village in Busan is a popular destination in South Korea (left) while Changdeokgung Palace in Seoul (right) is one of the five palaces of South Korea.

## What does it mean to be an American in South Korea? A UWT perspective

South Korea is an accommodating country with a deep culture.

BY BENJAMIN FREDELL  
OPINION COLUMNIST

There's 18 of us on the study abroad trip to South Korea. An American diaspora abroad in the west. We are Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese, Colombian, Korean, Japanese, Black, White, Mexican, Jewish, Muslim, the list goes on. We are a microcosm of our home country; we take this with us wherever we go. We are all American, whether we like it or not. Never before has our nationality and positionality been so apparent.

### Seoul

I saw the sprawling city from Mount Namsan. It's a jaw dropping view from Seoul Tower. A colorful array of massive Buddhist temples and restored historic palaces sandwiched between towering shining skyscrapers.

It seems like the city goes on for miles until the mountains meet the horizon. There's a deep and proud history here of a culture and country persevering for hundreds of years, despite the world's biggest powers surrounding them on all sides. Seoul is proud of Korean culture. To see so many smiling faces wearing Hanboks and strolling through the beautiful Gyeongbokgung palace is like stepping through a time machine.

When the autumn leaves block the surrounding metropolitan area, rows upon rows

of brick walls and painted red and green roofs are all you can see. The city quiets for a moment and erupts into a celebration of color and architecture.

Seoul is very accommodating. English is on all the subway systems and most locals speak or understand English, especially the younger generation.

### Pusan National University

I was sweating bullets preparing to meet the Pusan National University students. Luckily, they were even nicer than I anticipated. We split off into groups and got coffee and fried chicken on campus.

In my group of six, made of four PNU students and another UWT student, we talked about everything: school, nightlife, family, our pets, spots to check out and foods to try.

I wanted to know what they thought of the Flower Boy aesthetic, a growing trend in South Korea where men wear makeup and go for a pretty boy look. They were overwhelmingly accepting of other people and, though they weren't personally invested in the style, they could understand and respect it.

For the first time in my entire life, I felt a connection to my generation. Through the language barrier and hundreds of miles between our homes, we could agree on this. The older generation are

the ones falling behind. The future is bright and accepting because we are the ones that choose for it to be so.

### Busan

Busan was quite different. Glares were not uncommon in Seoul, but Busan was something else entirely.

Gwangalli Beach was incredible, especially at night. The whole beach is lined with towering skyscrapers and a bridge across the water. We got stuck in traffic on Gwangandaegyo bridge, and even that was beautiful, to watch the sun set on the water and light the glass in gold. There were hundreds of chairs set up on Gwangalli beach as preparations began for the 18th annual Busan fireworks festival.

"Busan is ready" was plastered across the entire city. The city is a candidate for the World Expo for 2030. They're in competition with Italy and Saudi Arabia. The World Expo has been held every five years since 1851, and Busan is pushing really hard to host this event. You can't go on any public transportation without seeing that same slogan printed on bus exteriors or inside a subway car.

There's a ferocity and a permanence to these signs that symbolize to me something more than just a technology expo. Busan wants to be globalized.

There's a disconnect here though, between what the streets are saying and what

our group experienced while traveling around Busan.

A group of us went out one night. We were recommended this spot near Haeundae by our waiter at the restaurant where we ate. We were then denied entrance from the next five bars we tried.

"Korean only" they said. "No foreigner."

On the subway back to the hotel in Busan, one member of our group was groped multiple times by different men. She had to move and stand by the others in the group just to be safe. Later that same night, a man kicked a bottle at one of our group members and hit her in the leg. It was a lousy night that only got worse. It doesn't appear that Busan is ready, and it might be quite some time before it truly is.

We reflected on it as a group during class, what it must feel like for your home to become a vacation hotspot. We can understand the frustration and exhaustion that comes from foreigners entering another country. We are strangers and guests here and we were prepared and expected to be treated as such. It sucks, because it feels good to be welcomed, but in the same light we can understand where some of this aggression is coming from.

It's a beautiful place with amazing vistas, and I feel so lucky and grateful that I'm able to see it for myself, but as foreigners, we were not welcome there.

I'm pretty happy to be back in Seoul. It finally rained here, and the streets reflect the flickering billboards in the most fantastical way. The city comes alive at night with neon signs through puddles of water.

I am just one of the 18. My experience has been different from every single other person on this trip because we all have different cultures and ethnicities that we carry with us. It also varies by gender and sexual orientation. I am just one perspective of the many we have with us, and it's been so interesting to talk with everyone and see how it's been different. For now, this has been my experience and I'm so grateful that the reception has been mostly warm and inviting. It has been genuinely life changing.



## As Thanksgiving Holiday nears, 'Native Lands' exhibit encourages reflection

This new exhibit at the Tacoma Art Museum explores American landscapes while acknowledging colonialism.



PHOTOS BY RACHEL MEATTE

"Native Warrior with breastplate" by artist John Nieto (left) and "The Meeting of Tecumseh and William Henry Harrison at Vincennes" (1851) by Junius Brutus Stearns (right) can both be seen at the TAM.

### BY RACHEL MEATTE A&E EDITOR

Efforts to acknowledge Native land are becoming more widely practiced. In many university classrooms, including at UWT, some faculty will take a moment to acknowledge the Indigenous peoples' land they are on. To recognize and honor people who were there first, it is a way to respect other communities who were often mistreated by the government and mainstream public. In an attempt to right the wrongs of the past, this stance is often seen as a positive reflection of how our communities can heal and evolve.

Currently, the Tacoma Art Museum is presenting an exhibit called "On Native Lands." Featuring paintings of open landscapes and colorful portraits of Native Americans during the 1700s to 1800s, the exhibit challenges viewers to consider the works through the lens of a Native American as opposed to a colonial perspective.

The lands in the paintings were owned by Native Americans. From the sixteenth through the twentieth century, the majority of their lands

were stolen, claimed by colonizers. This exhibit aims to honor and acknowledge the land ownership of the original inhabitants. Next to each painting, they have a land acknowledgment and the name of the associated tribe. This exhibit recognizes more than 75 Native American tribes and their relationships to the lands depicted.

This is a significant point for Native American communities who feel that not enough has been done to rectify the past. For people interested in Native American history and their land appreciation, this exhibit offers a multitude of artwork reflecting their past and cultural significance.

Many of the artworks are vast western landscapes with incredible depth and perspective. They are mesmerizing pieces of artwork that capture the magnificence and essence of nature. The painting "Supreme Moment of Evening" is a clear example of this boldness and beauty. The painting is a wide shot of the Grand Canyon during the mid-evening. You can see the light hit the tops of the canyons and orange-yellow trees. The light illuminates all the brick red-orange colors of the can-

yon's sedimentary rock, the multiple ring layers peering through and steep hills below them. The artist, Curt Walters, used a color palette of reds, oranges and yellows. He creates depth with his dark shadows and strong use of red in the painting.

The painting gives acknowledgment to the Hopi Tribe, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, Navajo nation and San Juan southern Paiute Tribe. It is one of the 14 landscape artworks that recognizes Native lands.

The museum also showcases several portraits of Native Americans as well. One called "Native Warrior with Breastplate" features an Indigenous person posing in a colorful garment. It's painted with vibrant tricolors of yellow, red and green to paint his face and scarf. In comparison to many ancient breastplates, Native American breastplates were often used more symbolically. They were used as protection against arrows and spears in battle but also for their decorative or medicinal qualities. Native Americans used them for Native dances and ceremonies, which many tribes still do today.

Some of the paintings showcase moments between indigenous people and Europeans dating back to the 1700s and 1800s. The painting "The Meeting of Tecumseh and William Henry Harrison at Vincennes" (1851), depicts a meeting between two military leaders, Tecumseh of the Shawnee Tribe, and William Henry Harrison, who was the ninth President of the United States.

The meeting was to address the fact that Native lands were being treated as common property and not the fact that they already lay ownership to the Indigenous peoples. Tecumseh told Harrison that the U.S. was not justified in drawing up treaties that assumed rightful ownership to anyone. "This piece of land, we do not wish you to take it," said Tecumseh. It should be noted that this conversation was recorded by Harrison and is his interpretation of the events.

At the time, many of the Natives' lands were being taken by colonizers like Harrison. Native Americans like Tecumseh and his people (Tecumseh's Confederacy) eventually fought back but ultimately lost. This painting

depicts one of the many interactions Indigenous people had with colonizers.

There are many more pieces on display at this exhibit, which will be on display until January 14, 2024. If you are interested in attending, you can visit the Tacoma Art Museum from Wednesday to Friday. On Thursdays from 5-8 p.m., the museum is open to the public for free. For more info about this exhibit or the museum click here:

<https://www.tacomaart-museum.org/exhibit/on-native-land/>





ILLUSTRATION BY COLE MARTIN

## Paying tribute to Atsushi Sakurai: One of the primary founders of Visual-Kei

Visual-Kei, J-Rock, goth icon and leading man of the band BUCK-TICK passes away at only 57 years old, right after giving the performance of a lifetime.

**By Heidi Ortiz Candelaria**  
A&E Columnist

During this quarter's Arts & Entertainment issues, we have deep dived into several diverse genres of music that perhaps many of you hadn't heard of before. But today, I have decided to pay tribute to perhaps one of the most talented vocalists in music history, and an undeniable inspiration for Visual-Kei and J-Rock bands to come.

Atsushi Sakurai was born on March 7, 1966, in Fujio-ka, Japan. Little is known about the artist's childhood, but Atsushi had a clear vision of becoming a musician and songwriter as early as his high school years. Starting as the drummer for the band BUCK-TICK, he later asked one of his future bandmates, Toll Yagami, if he could become the lead vocalist for their other band, SP. But was rejected on the spot.

Still convinced that his calling was to sing and write songs, he insisted to his band mates in BUCK-TICK to let him sing, and after try-outs, was accepted openly. Ironically, Toll ended up leaving his post in SP and became the new drummer for BUCK-

TICK only a few months later, forming the band that would soon revolutionize the J-Rock scene as Japan knew it.

BUCK-TICK grew to quick acclaim for their first debut album, "Sexual XXXXX!" Their song "Just One More Kiss" -- released in 1988 -- reached number six on the Oricon Singles chart only a few days after its release. After their fourth studio album, "Taboo," they performed live in the Tokyo Dome, a great feat for an up-and-coming band. After their 1990 album "Aku No Hana" though, they reached number one in their respective genre Oricon charts.

They have continued to stay on the top for more than 30 years, known as the "Gods of Visual Kei," a music genre and subculture greatly influenced by glam rock with European gothic aestheticism. Think long hair, rosettes, avant-garde velvet suits, heavy makeup and layered fabrics (lace, tulle, pleather, frayed fabrics, etc.). A key component of this subgenre is androgyny, where most band members could easily be mistaken for femme idols despite their dark, gothic appearances.

Mixing makeup techniques used by the goth sub-

culture and applying it to Asian traditional makeup, which accentuates the aegyo sal (or flesh under the eyes), Atsushi was able to single-handedly become the face for an entire generation of alternative rock fans. He never shied away from the use of makeup and excelled in putting together the most perfect androgynous looks. He was voted one of Japan's most beautiful celebrities and was later acclaimed worldwide for his looks during the late 90s.

As a new wave of media swept the nation of Japan, many artists began to look for inspiration in the real world. Atsushi Sakurai became the main inspiration for several anime characters during this time, such as Kouji Nanjo from Zetsuai 1989, D from Vampire Hunter D: Bloodlust and perhaps his most similar looking character, Takumi Ichinose from Nana. He became the standard look for the "aloof, mysterious yet alluring" anime male characters; even though he himself was an extremely warm and charismatic person. This won him the love of so many fans, for despite his looks and his extreme vocal prowess, he remained humble.

Earlier this year, BUCK-TICK announced a tour to celebrate the release of their newest album, "Izora". On October 19, during a live performance on this tour, Atsushi began to feel ill. By the third song, he was escorted out by his band members and security and promptly rushed to the hospital. He later died in that same hospital at 11:09pm. On October 24, the members then took to X to announce the news of Atsushi's passing, as well as the cause: a brainstem hemorrhage. The tour was therefore canceled, and the rest of the month has been a time of mourning for his family, friends and fans alike.

By October 25, memorials surfaced globally in Atsushi's name, made for those who weren't able to attend the public memorial held later on November 4 in Japan. Atsushi had a profound impact on not just his main Visual Kei community, but also in pop culture and the 80s goth rock scene. Alongside his bandmates he built a community that appreciated genderfluidity when it was still considered a taboo in Japan during these times, inspiring bands such as Gackt, Dir En

Grey, Moi dix Mois and the Gazette.

It's with a heavy heart that we must bid farewell to such a phenomenal human. Atsushi Sakurai was a pivotal figure in this writer's journey to falling in love with the goth subculture and taught me all I know about Visual Kei today. I encourage readers to listen to BUCK-TICK's new album and support them during this trying time, as this might be the last album they ever record. "Izora" is currently out on all streaming services.

If you're looking to learn about the classics, here are my personal favorite tracks throughout their entire discography: "Romance," "Dress," "Just One More Kiss," "Romanesque" and "Victims of Love." They're all out on Spotify and Apple Music. So, if this article piqued your interest, go give them a listen.

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

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