

the cooper point journal

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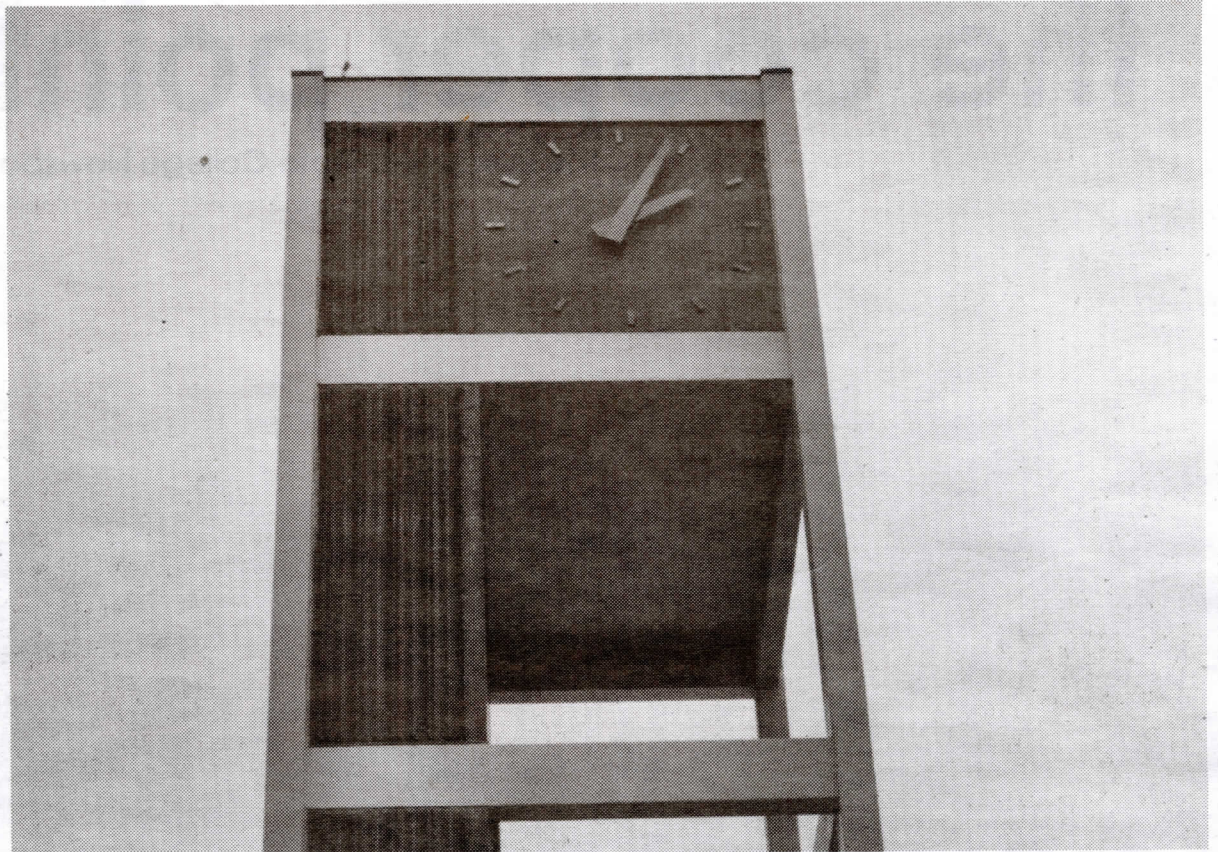
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The Evergreen State College's Clock Tower. Courtesy of Shayna Clayton.

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HOW WE WORK

The Cooper Point Journal is produced by students at The Evergreen State College, with funding from student fees and advertising from local businesses. The Journal is published for free every other Wednesday during the school year and distributed throughout the Olympia area.

Our content is also available online at www.cooperpointjournal.com.

Our mission is to provide an outlet for student voices, and to inform and entertain the Evergreen community and the Olympia-area more broadly, as well as to provide a platform for students to learn about operating a news publication.

Our office is located on the third floor of the Campus Activities Building (CAB) at The Evergreen State College in room 332 and we have open student meetings from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. every Wednesday. Come early if you'd like to chat with the editor!

WORK FOR US

We accept submissions from any student at The Evergreen State College, and also from former students, faculty, and staff. We also hire some students onto our staff, who write articles for each issue and receive a learning stipend.

Have an exciting news topic? Know about some weird community happening? Enjoy that new hardcore band? Come talk to us and write about it.

We will also consider submissions from non-Evergreen people, particularly if they have special knowledge on the topic. We prioritize current student content first, followed by former students, faculty and staff, and then general community submissions. Within that, we prioritize content related to Evergreen first, followed by Olympia, the state of Washington, the Pacific Northwest, etc.

To submit an article, reach us at cooperpointjournal@gmail.com.

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We want to hear from you! If you have an opinion on anything we've reported in the paper, or goings-on in Olympia or at Evergreen, drop us a line with a paragraph or two (100 - 300 words) for us to publish in the paper. Make sure to include your full name, and your relationship to the college—are you a student, staff, graduate, community member, etc. We reserve the right to edit anything submitted to us before publishing, but we'll do our best to consult with you about any major changes.

Olympia Safeway manager (right) and assistant (left). BRITT PIERRO.

Price Check:

UFCW Grocery Workers Negotiate for Improved Contracts

by Brittanyana Pierro

Union representatives from popular chain grocery stores, including Safeway, Albertsons, and Fred Meyer, have recently finished negotiations with their shared company owners Kroger and Cerberus Capital for an improved workers contract. United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) represents grocery store workers all over the nation, including right here in Olympia, in our local 367 chapter.

The formal contract negotiations lasted over seven months beginning April 28 of this year, and ending recently around Oct. 30. Though employees' contracts are updated triennially, oftentimes there is little change in the guidelines of them. When contracts expired earlier this year, UFCW employee members banned together in order to bargain for an improved contract. Each grocery store chain has a different contract with their workers, but many of the regulations regarding pay, safety, and healthcare in each contract are similar, if not exactly the same. Cerberus Capital (C.C.), an investor company that owns Safeway, Albertsons and many other smaller chain grocery stores, is notorious for being tight pocketed when it comes to workers pay and benefits.

During negotiations, UFCW representatives pushed back against the parent company C.C., standing up for workers' rights and demanding that the Tentative Agreements (TA), made in the contracts, put workers' needs first. The updated contracts include major revisions to workers' scheduling options and wages, as well as the implementation of the company's once promised pension plan

and updated safety regulations. With the end of the negotiations coming just last week, workers at each individual store were required to vote to either ratify the contract agreements made by union representatives, or to go on strike in order to get their needs met. After seven months of uncertainty, employees as a whole were satisfied with the contract offered to them on Nov. 1, and voted to ratify it.

The other major T.A.'s that the union has been in negotiations for are: seniority-based scheduling, a 'fair and livable' wage, and the re-implementation of workers' pensions. In addition to this, there is a general concern for workers' safety, especially during heavy rainfall and winter conditions.

One of the more time consuming issues workers were adamant about fighting for was their rapidly disappearing pension plans. When beginning their time with individual companies owned by Kroger & C.C., workers are promised a fully paid pension plan that they automatically have access to after their fifth year of working with each company. This pension gets paid into monthly by each store's parent company and is based upon each individual worker's hours per month.

However, since the 2008 market crash, the pension plan for both Kroger and C.C. employees was essentially being completely overlooked, leaving many long-term employees with little to no pension plan for their retirement.

Tumwater Fred Meyer employee Linda Mullen has been working her job for over 30 years, and, before the latest

negotiation, was in fear of not receiving any retirement benefits.

"Our pension was going in the hole. It was in the red. It wasn't being run. We had more people pulling out of it than what money was going in it. So that was a huge thing for those of us that are getting up there in years with our service, to know that we had a retirement [plan]. I opened at Lacey Fred Meyer's and then I went to Tumwater... I just finished my 30th year in September," Mullen said. "They've been fighting day and night for this contract. Fred Meyer's jumped on board with the pension [issue] and cornered Safeway and Albertsons into accepting it."

The second biggest TA that was ratified in district 367's new contracts was a new company wide policy of seniority scheduling. "The new policy of scheduling by seniority is gonna be huge and it's gonna upset a lot of people in the stores that have been getting favoritism," said Mullen.

At UFCW grocery stores currently, and in the past, scheduling has been in the hands of branch managers. This is a common practice among retail stores, but it is increasingly understood to be very problematic for long-term employees. "Some of the managers are really shallow, you know? They'll just give favoritism to the prettiest girl that they see. [Some] managers will favorite employees who work harder, or whoever's younger and gets more done," said Bill Keyes, a shift manager at Safeway on Martin Way in Olympia.



He went on to discuss the corruption of scheduling by general managers trying to save money in the store at the expense of workers' hours. Keyes stated that managers will often give more hours to employees with the lowest hourly wage.

"If you get paid less, than they want you to work more. So someone else who's paid more and works less [saves the store] money. That's illegal according to the contract and they still do it," Keyes said.

Shifting the control of scheduling out of managers' hands offers long-term employees the right to create their own work schedule, leaving vacation days and weekly hours to be dictated by the workers themselves rather than potentially corrupted branch managers.

Keyes has been working at the Martin Way Safeway for about seven years, and he as well as Mullen are considered "stewards," or representatives, of the UFCW at their individual stores. Both Keyes and Mullen have dedicated many hours to working with both the international union representatives and their individual store's employees during these last several months of contract negotiations.

At Olympia's local Safeway, one of the biggest dissatisfactions among employees was their lack of adequate hourly pay. "At my store, the most important concern for everybody is always dollars. Since the minimum wage has gone up, at Safeway especially, we've seen a great deal of price increase.... they've done their best to pass the cost of the minimum wage increase onto the customers,"

said Keyes. "Our contract pay scales are very old. They were decided years and years and years ago, and they agreed way back when that 10 cents would be a minimum amount for a raise. So our contract only pays 10 cents above minimum wage, and then for every 1040 hours [we get] an additional 10 cents."

Unfortunately, the increase of wages and raises was one of the major TAs left behind in the recent negotiations. The 10 cent raise increase will stay the same among most employees at the store, changing only for employees whose salaries already rest at higher rates. Senior employees will now be getting pay raises of about 55 cents every three months, which is about double what they have received up until this point. Though the

pay raise of any kind is a win for workers who are already grossly underpaid, the lack of consistency in raise reciprocity throughout the stores is an issue left to be questioned.

The process of union bargaining can be quite complicated, according to Tarra Reppert, an international representative of UFCW. "We sit down at the negotiation table: We present what we want, and they present what they're willing to give. And then we go back and forth, trying to find that happy middle ground that we both are okay with. With that being said, that can be a very long process," said Reppert. Originally from the Philadelphia, Reppert was brought to the South Sound about six months ago at the beginning of negotiations, and

after a lengthy battle at the negotiation table, will only now be able to return to her home on the East Coast.

As a closing statement, Reppert urged Olympians to become more involved in the ever-increasing union battles taking place among local service industries and their company owners. "[Community support] is extremely important. Because otherwise we wouldn't be months into this, we would have been done and over with. Without that community support it really makes it easier for the employer to push us around. But no employer wants to have a bad public reputation...it's really instrumental to our process," said Reppert.

As consumers, the rights of workers directly affect our ac-

cess to industry. Without public community support, union workers will less often be given the rights they demand, forcing them into strike. UFCW as a union not only represents commercial grocery store workers, but all commercial workers in a range of different job fields, including nurses employed by Providence Health & Services. Recently, nurses at St. Peter Hospital in Olympia went on strike for better wages and more regulated hours. The strike process for these nurses is still ongoing, and the workers claim that their parent company Providence Health & Services does not take workers' needs into consideration, as has repeatedly represented itself as anti-union.

SHAYNA CLAYTON.



Care and Contracts: Providence Nurses Battle the Bosses

by Alice McIntyre

On Oct. 30, nurses at St. Peter Hospital represented by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 21 voted to authorize a strike, after five months of contract negotiations and a June 27 protest. The nurses also voted down a previous contract proposal in 544-1 vote in August. Local 21, representing 1,200 workers at St. Peter, has objected to proposals by management which would affect paid time off, staffing levels, and future pay increases.

Nurses and hospital workers at other Providence hospitals throughout the state of Washington have also voted to authorize strikes. Votes were cast in favor of strikes at Sacred Heart and Holy Family hospitals in Spokane, St. Mary Medical Center in Walla Walla, Centralia Hospital, and Providence Regional Medical Center in Everett. UFCW Local 21 and the Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA) have

undertaken a statewide campaign against Providence under the slogan "patients before profits," holding similar objections to proposed contract changes by management as the nurses at St. Peter.

Hospital workers allege that Providence has utilized threats and surveillance in its campaign against the union. Austen Loudon, a food service worker at Sacred Heart in Spokane, told The Inlander on Oct. 31 "They've been threatening our co-workers saying that if we were to go on strike, they would lock us out," and "You can tell they're scared."

On their website, Providence states that their proposed contract changes will provide "greater financial security and more flexibility when unexpected needs arise," and replace an "antiquated and inequitable extended illness time program with a new employer-paid short-term disability benefit." Anne Piazza, senior di-

rector of strategic initiatives at the Washington State Nurses Association, asserted to The Inlander that "What Providence is proposing is for nurses to give up their earned benefits, including earned illness time and reducing their paid time off," pushing back against management's narrative.

Nurses and healthcare workers' grievances aren't limited to Providence or to Washington State. In California, mental health workers at Kaiser Permanente have voted to strike the week of Nov. 11, citing overwhelming caseloads, excessive wait times for appointments, and inadequate pay and benefits. The strike by the 4,000-strong union would affect more than 100 Kaiser locations throughout the state. Workers at Kaiser Permanente narrowly averted a nationwide strike in September, reaching an agreement with management over staffing levels, benefits, and pay.

The fight at Providence is part

of a national trend of increased labor militancy. From an uptick in education worker struggles to the recent General Motors strike, the organized working class is on the move. Grocery store workers in Olympia and throughout Western Washington are, at the time of writing, voting on a contract proposal with Albertsons, Safeway, Fred Meyer, and QFC.

With The Inlander and other local media reporting that Providence isn't budging on key sticking points in negotiations, it seems uncertain that management will be able to avoid a strike. Nurses and hospital workers, while wishing to avoid a strike, are in their own words determined to do so if necessary. The slogan "patients before profits" makes it clear that UFCW Local 21 and WSNA consider themselves not just to be fighting for their own interests, but those of the whole community.

Evergreen Facing Labor & Industries Fines

Facilities Services Program Set To Restructure

by Allegra Simpkins



The Evergreen State College's Facilities Services program is currently undergoing significant changes within its organizational structure. Many issues have arisen over the last six months, generating massive concern regarding the program's ability to serve its employees and the campus community.

This past September, the college was hit with a number of fines from Labor and Industries (L&I), totaling \$135,000 due to asbestos and safety violations. The fines are the result of two investigations that opened in March of 2019, after a Facilities Services employee filed complaints that include lack of training and exposure to hazardous materials without proper protection. TESC had an opportunity to appeal the fines, but ultimately did not argue the findings.

"This is a journey," William Ward, the associate vice president of Facilities Services, told the Cooper Point Journal (CPJ). "We are addressing things that have accumulated over the years. We're very confident that we're going to get things right." Of the ongoing problems being addressed, the most pressing by far, according to Ward, is the organizational structure of the Facilities Services program itself.

The program underwent a restructuring of its functions in 2008 (which is available via the Facilities' website under "organizational functions chart") and while it includes a relatively straightforward

list of responsibilities, Ward explained that there never was much of a system for how these functions operate in collaboration with its workers.

Matt Lebens, Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) coordinator, has been employed by the college for 21 years, working in various departments and even holds two degrees from TESC. His expertise is an integral part of the development and implementation of the new organizational structure. Lebens has seen firsthand the common problem of miscommunication or even in some cases no communication at all, from the top to the bottom and vice versa. He holds his boss' decisions in high regard, stating, "William has been instrumental in communicating with the folks that we have in the field and making sure that we're doing the right work with the number of staff we have."

Labor and Industries made a number of discoveries during their investigations, one being the issue of asbestos safety. It is now widely known that asbestos is likely present in facilities built before 1970, as it is an effective insulator and used for its extreme resistance to heat. Lebens explained that much of what L&I found was a lack of monitoring systems necessary for a facility the age and size of The Evergreen State College, which was founded in 1967. "We need to elevate our monitoring program," he said. "We

need to make sure that the college has more than one person who's capable of doing this."

The monitoring program would ensure the known location of asbestos materials and the continuous onlooking for changes and safety hazards regarding them. Lebens continued, that because of the short-staffing "it's absolutely essential that as we determine what [these] workloads happen to be, that [the workers] are going to go about it in the safest steps, which is the part that takes time."

Currently, Facilities Services does not have an asbestos worker program, and developing one that is up to date, consistent, and widely implemented is one of those steps that has taken some time. Lebens also says that, "right now we're at ground zero so we're in a position of, for the first time, coming up with the appropriate documents and job files that we can deploy to folks future forward." These documents and job files would outline the hazards of each job, which were not clearly communicated to workers in the past.

According to a previous CPJ article entitled "Structural Issues" from June earlier this year, "one worker said that he was never directly told that there was asbestos or what the exact dangers were," and after seeing emails confirming the presence of asbestos, he stated that "none of this info was

shared widely." Both Lebens and Ward admitted the necessity of a more consistent feedback loop between workers and the senior level.

Albeit a slow process, Lebens now has two certified inspectors that have been properly trained for asbestos monitoring and he is "just a number of weeks away from being able to cut them loose on their own independent work."

The department is also working to create an Accident Prevention Program (APP) that will essentially be an umbrella covering the various areas of Facilities Services that require specific safety training including but not limited to asbestos, confined spaces, chemical hazards, and fall safety (i.e. ladders). Lebens calls APP a "critical leg of our safety and health management program...so what we've got right now is just an overall update of the Accident Prevention Program with the intent of getting it back to the supervisors." He then stressed that the only way a program like this will work for an institution this size is to be sure it is being implemented the way it was intended, all throughout the department.

With enrollment at an all-time low, and dropping, TESC has experienced a massive financing problem. This has resulted in program cuts and budget cuts that slice deeply and directly into its student body and staff. Because of these con-

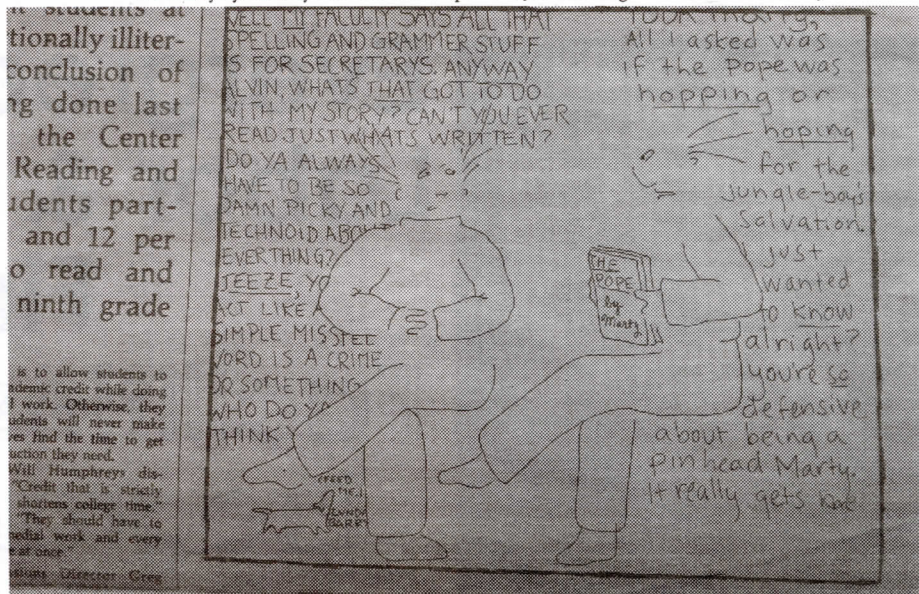
sistent budget cuts, the Facilities Services is functioning with about 50 percent of the number of workers it has typically employed in the past; so on top of all the other changes, they are doing the same amount of work with half the staff, making worker safety a real priority.

Despite the vast array of challenges the Facilities department will face for some time, one worker is pleased with the direction the program is headed. Rickey Lee Haney, who was featured in the previous "Structural Issues" article stated "now that we as an institution are giving more focus and resources to the EHS office it's increased some bandwidth to get out and consult with those working." Haney, who was dramatically affected by the lack of structure of the Facilities department, suffered an inguinal hernia last February while working what would have been a 51-hour shift during the snowstorm that suspended campus operations. "So [yeah] granted," Haney expressed, "more work with less workers; but I can honestly say that we're doing it safer than even just a few months ago, because of the focus and the attention."

Facilities Services acknowledges that this is going to be a long process, and Ward vehemently declared that he "intends to leave no stone unturned."

Evergreen Alumna Lynda Barry Receives Grant for Inspiring Engagement

by Miette Deschenes



Cartoonist, teacher, and Evergreen alumna Lynda Barry has been awarded a \$625,000 grant by the MacArthur Fellows Program. According to the MacArthur Foundation, her award is for “inspiring creative engagement through original graphic works and a teaching practice centered on the role of image making in communication.”

“The MacArthur [is] the biggest thing that’s ever happened to me,” said Barry in a video on the Foundation’s website, “in terms of being able to facilitate chasing this idea down of what images are, why they exist, and what happens when people finally have access to having them be part of their life again.”

Barry, who graduated from The Evergreen State College (TESC) in 1980, has had a long and remarkable career in cartooning and writing. She has published over 20 books and her illustrated novel *The Good Times Are Killing Me* was adapted into a successful Off-Broadway musical. She is currently an associate professor of interdisciplinary creativity at the University of Wisconsin.

“My comics are about childhood and they’re about the kinds of early experiences people have that make them who they are,” Barry stated in a video profile on the MacArthur Foundation’s website. According to an interview she did with David Letterman in the 1980s, Barry’s early childhood experience was a unique one. Born in Wisconsin in 1956, her family moved to Washington when she was young. She is a quarter Filipino and grew up in a diverse neighborhood, which inspired some of the work she went on to create.

When Barry was attending TESC she befriended Matt Groening, the famed creator of *The Simpsons*, while he was the editor-in-chief of the Cooper Point Journal (CPJ).

“He made this announcement saying that he would print anything that anyone submitted,” she

said in “Lynda Barry: Evergreen Cuts Are ‘Cultural Genocide,’” an article published by OLYARTS on June 14, 2018. “I read that and I thought, ‘Really?’ And I tried to come up with stuff that he would not print.” He printed it anyway, and their friendship was born. The two have continually inspired each other throughout their careers, and in 2016 they went on a lecture tour together.

“From the beginning, there was this very friendly, antagonistic relationship that continues constantly,” Barry said in an interview with the Dallas Observer in 2016. “That’s all we do, is give each other shit. It’s our favorite thing in the world.”

While studying at TESC, Barry took classes with Marilyn Frasca, who was a painting and art professor. Frasca was a strong influence in her life. Barry wrote about her admiration for Frasca in her 2008 graphic novel *What It Is*, describing the influence Frasca’s teaching methods still have on her today.

After graduating, Barry began writing a strip comic called *Ernie Pook’s Comeek* which was printed in alternative newspapers like the Village Voice, the Chicago Reader, and the L.A. Reader for over two decades. *Ernie Pook’s Comeek* ran until 2008.

As she was writing and publishing her strip comic, she also wrote and published several illustrated novels, most notably *The Good Times Are Killing Me* (1988), *Cruddy* (1999), *What It Is* (2008), and *Syllabus* (2014).

As stated in an article by Heidi McDonald for Publisher’s Weekly, themes of Barry’s work include childhood and growing up. She has said that all of her work is related to memory, and while not all of it is autobiographical, a lot of it is heavily influenced by her own life experiences. Throughout her career, she has been praised for her creativity and originality.

In addition to writing and car-

toonning, Barry has also been a teacher for many years. “I love teaching,” she said in the video on the MacArthur Foundation’s website. “What I’m doing isn’t even teaching, it’s almost like showing people that they already know how to do this stuff. The thing I love the most is to watch them blow their minds with their own minds.”

She is currently teaching what she calls a Drawbridge program, in which she pairs up graduate students with four-year-old children to work together on a visual project.

“Drawbridge is a program I started at the university that’s based on the joy that four-year-olds have about being alive in the world and the misery that graduate students have about being in university,” she said. “And I had this idea if I could bring those two together that something big might happen. That my university students might feel less miserable and my four-year-olds might feel very excited about helping someone get their Ph.D.”

Barry has also maintained a close relationship with TESC and has taught workshops to students and faculty. Around 10 years ago she taught a workshop based on her book *What It Is*, which Media Arts Professor Julia Zay attended.

“My memory is that it was like a four-hour thing,” she told me when I interviewed her about the experience. “She introduced her whole technique and then led us through maybe four of [her exercises].”

Barry’s writing exercises often include listing something from your past, such as other people’s mothers, and then honing in and getting more specific with a memory that sticks out to you and getting you to capture all of the sensory details of that memory.

“It’s really pleasurable when someone gives you a set of constraints or rules and then you find you can just go wherever you need to go within those parameters, so I really enjoyed that,” Zay told me.

“Then also as an experience about connecting to memories...it was really powerful because I started to go places that I hadn’t thought about in years. Oh, my best friend’s mother, what was her station wagon like? What did we do when carpooling? There were so many details that bloomed out of those moments that she asked us to go to. And it was really clear that it was going to be a powerful teaching tool.”

Zay has used this method of writing exercises since then, and she is currently using it in MediaWorks. “I just love that we have all these amazing alumni who have gone here and I totally have this sense of school spirit,” she said. “There’s just a part of it that’s like, that’s our Lynda! I just think so that students know, I’m actually a part of this really interesting and growing body of people in the world, I’m a part of this club, and we are unusual and fantastic people.”

Barry has continually discussed her experience with TESC throughout her career. In an interview with OLYARTS, she spoke out against the budget cuts that have been taking place over the last few years. “This is happening to small liberal arts colleges all over the country and it should be a national story... It really strikes me as a form of cultural genocide.”

Barry’s latest book, *Making Comics*, was just released on Nov. 5. It is an instructional illustrated novel filled with drawing exercises, similar to her previous publication *Syllabus*. “*Making Comics* is all about everything that I’ve learned from teaching for the last eight years,” she said in the video on the MacArthur Foundation’s website. “They’re exercises that are fast, they’re cheap, ‘cause you only need a piece of paper and a pen.”

Barry plans to go on sabbatical soon to work on her next graphic novel. She can be found on Instagram under the username @theneersightedmonkey.

Evergreen students Callista Lahney and Zoe Chamberlain (left to right) at NWTJSJ conference. KHRISTINE SANDWITTH.

Teaching for Social Justice Conference: Students and Faculty Share Their Thoughts

by Kristine Sandwith

On Oct. 19, 2019, Evergreen students attended the Northwest Teaching for Social Justice (NWTJSJ) conference in Seattle, Washington. The conference ran for its 12th year at Chief Sealth International High School, teaching and inspiring educators to get involved in social justice through the education system to strengthen their schools, students, and community. Educators around Washington and Oregon at different education levels came together to become more supportive of their students, schools, and the overall community.

The conference held workshops created and presented by educators, with each workshop's intention being to provide multiple social justice outlets and create diversity amongst students, educators, and community learning. One sample of the workshops includes Breaking Out of Gender Boxes, taught by Blair Hennessy and Ben Malbin from Lincoln High School in Portland, Oregon. The main goal of their workshop was to visualize what people wanted gender equality to look like in their daily environment. This was done by understanding how gender affects personal and social development. Malbin and Hennessy used a discussion setting to ask participants their experiences, in which they noticed patterns of shame for not wanting to follow gender roles. Overall, most people reflected back on gender roles they were told when they were kids, while they were growing up, and how gender roles changed over time.

Students from Evergreen's Diversity and Dissent in Media and Education program (taught by professors Leslie Flemmer and Grace Huerta) attended this conference. The program itself studies representations given in media and

education, both modern and in the past. Throughout the fall quarter, students have studied Latinx and Native American representation in media through films and readings. At the NWTJSJ conference (a conference on modern political and cultural issues incorporating education and media), students learned about different issues and perspectives that open more opportunities for representation in education.

During the conference one of Huerta and Flemmer's students, Merina Fatherree, was surprised by the historical lack of diversity and inclusiveness in the education system. She studied these injustices during the workshops: Gender and Reproductive Justice: A Key Part of Sexuality Education, and It's Not Enough: Bringing Women Back in American History. From those workshops, she learned about historical female figures that aren't traditionally taught about in education systems. The first workshop she attended discussed how women broke gender roles in the Civil War by participating as soldiers through cross-dressing. Her third workshop taught gender and reproductive justice from the 1630s to 2014. She questioned how education limited, and continues limiting, its gender and racial representation. She remembered when historical figures of color were mentioned in her school and realized that they were only mentioned once or twice in the whole curriculum.

"Even though I'm not an educator, I think it's important for people who are educators and aren't going to education fields... to attend these things and see the plight teachers and educators are facing so that they can be allies for movements,"



Fatherree said.

Students and teachers had varied experiences regarding diversity at the conference. As a Latinx advocate and teacher at Evergreen, Grace Huerta was eager to attend the conference. Huerta has a background working with Latinx students and their families, and she's always finding more ways to support students overall. Currently, Huerta is working with and supporting Evergreen students in the Latinx studies or those who want to study in that particular field. She's also helping potential educators who are involved in helping undocumented students. Regarding her connection to helping Latinx people, Huerta said: "What I learned over time is that we have so much work to do and it never gets old. I've been teaching for nearly 34 years at the high school and higher education levels and they're always new problems, they're always new challenges, but there's also just wonderful opportunities for solidarity and to support folks."

To Huerta, the conference offered an opportunity to understand educators from different levels of education. "As a college professor today, I don't get to spend a lot of time with high school teachers, other than with brief supervision of student teachers. But during the conference I got a wonderful opportunity to sit with English teachers, ESL (English as a second language) teachers who are working with students and families...in very different ways from what I do today at Evergreen, at the college level. It was great seeing and meeting young new teachers who have such great energy to support students," Huerta

said.

I joined professors Huerta and Flemmer in the session Ethnic Studies Block: Decolonizing Your Classroom: Students and Teachers. While sessions were aimed towards educators, I was able to reflect on my personal experiences from school. Informing educators about the struggles that I had during high school allowed me to open up more throughout the day. As a student, my voice also provided schools with an opportunity to reflect upon the education system.

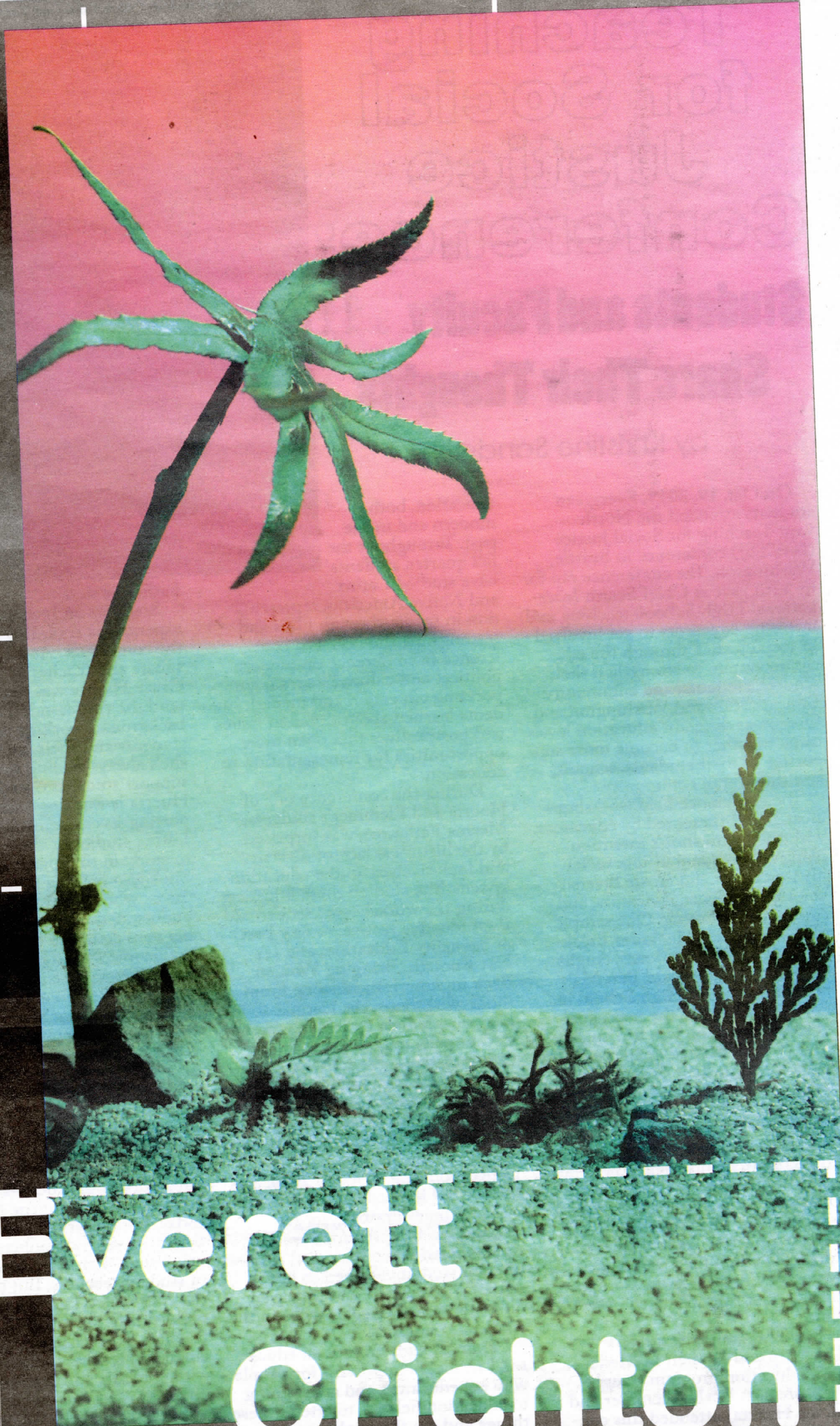
The second session of the Ethnic Studies workshop mainly created a discussion of the desired image of the ethnic studies class in the high school curriculum. Educators got a chance to listen to the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) Youth Council, and Edmonds School District student leaders about this image.

While some of the students didn't attend the program, they still advocated the importance of the ethnic studies curriculum, which dives into how cultural power impacts people of different identities and explores social justice. To them, it was about bringing awareness of uncomfortable topics in our global climate, but also being okay with the uncomfortable.

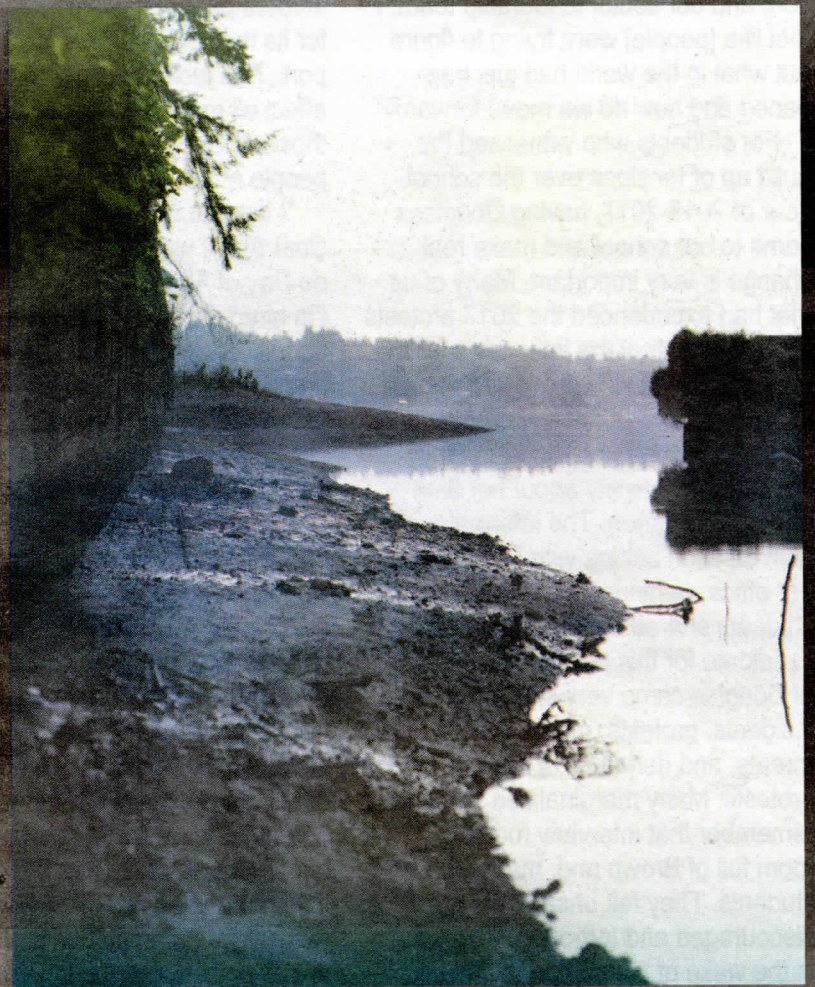
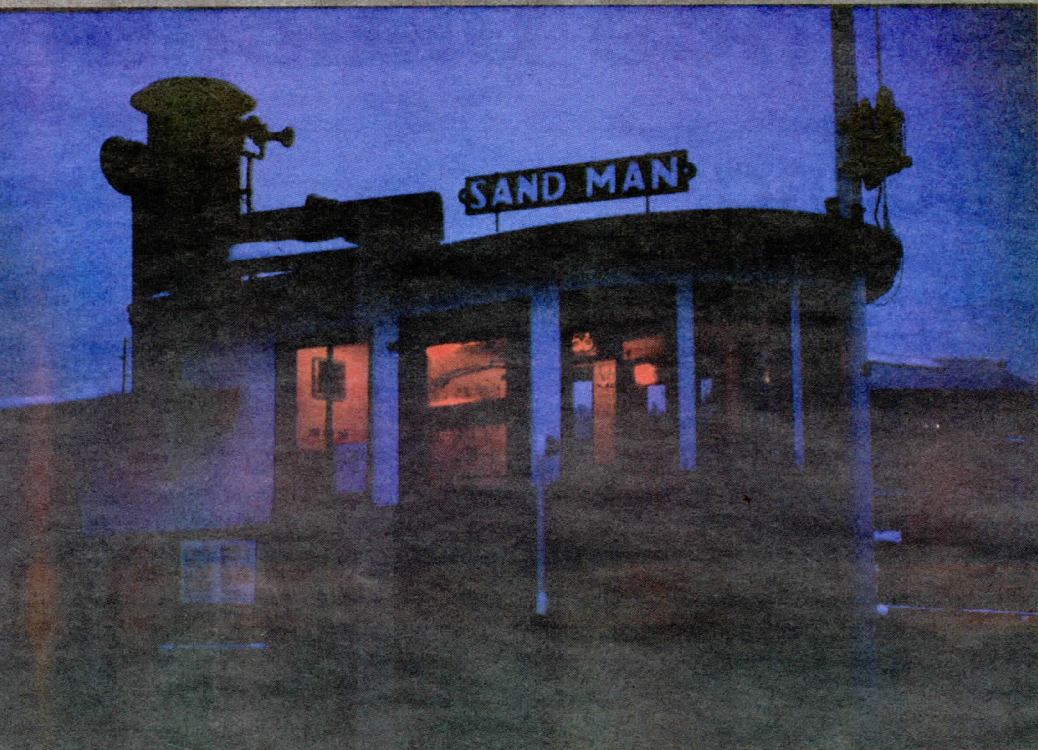
Overall, the NWTJSJ conference motivated Evergreen students to make a difference in their community. While there is no one way of doing so, finding the passion in a specific field is the first step in making a career of enriching your community.

Arts & Culture

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Everett Crichton



@rainier_tallboy

Inclusive Excellence Dialogue

Featuring:

Chassity Holliman-Douglas

by Talia McCaw

In the wake of the protests of 2016 through 2017, The Evergreen State College created the vice president and vice provost for Equity and Inclusion position. This position inevitably brought Chassity Holliman-Douglas to our school. Throughout her time here, she has worked to implement equity and inclusion for the entire student body. As of this month, Cassity will be leaving this institution; taking with her a new-found Evergreen family she can always come back to.

"Leaving the institution is so bittersweet for me because there was so much more I wanted to do. I was only here for two years and one can't accomplish everything in that short amount of time. When I came to Evergreen I must say that the community was in a traumatic state and it wasn't just students but also staff, administration, and our senior leadership team. I feel like [people] were trying to figure out what in the world had just happened and how do we move forward?"

For students who witnessed the build up of tensions over the school year of 2016-2017, having Douglass come to our school and make real change is very important. Many of us that had experienced the 2017 protests attended each of the interviews for the new position of vice provost, because a lack of action was not a choice.

Senior, Mia Milton, and I recently spoke with Chassity about her time here at Evergreen. The informal conversation setting with Douglas in her office, reminded us of the first time students shared space with her, as a candidate for this position. The hiring of Douglas came very shortly after the incidents, protests, media coverage, threats, and demands of the 2017 protests. Many marginalized students remember that interview room, a room full of Brown and, mainly, Black students. They felt unsafe, unheard, discouraged and forgotten. This was in the wake of various protests which

were traumatic incidents that communities of color on campus were having to endure.

"[Before Douglas arrived] we had a community debrief but it felt like a cover-up. So in the midst of everything happening [Douglas] making new things as far as replacing Day of Absence/Day of Presence, that was really big for students...As far as attendance, there are a lot of students from that spring [of 2017] that took off," said Milton.

Many students of color left Evergreen after losing access to Day of Absence/Day of Presence, the two voluntary days during which our school hosted a community custom to discuss race relations, based on a play by Douglas Turner Ward. This was during and after a strenuous and still tense political climate, following two peaceful student protests calling out Evergreen for its lack of institutional student support. This lack of support continues to affect all marginalized people, including those who are undocumented and people of color.

"I want to make sure that I'm being clear that it was not my decision to not do Day of Absence/Day of Presence. If I'm hired and a decision is made to not do this event that has been a standing tradition for the community and then I'm told that the expectation is that I will create something else...that's what I have to do," Douglas shares.

In the fall of 2016 through the fall of 2017, retention rates were down roughly 4 percent for all undergraduates from the previous school year. According to the Evergreen Retention Trend Web of 2018, retention rates were down 4 percent for Hispanic/Latinx & White students, 10 percent for Black students, as well as down 15 percent and 3 percent for multiple demographics of our Native students. On the other hand that same year, retention went up 5 percent for Asian students. While these are all umbrella terms for a wide range

of identities, it reminds us that there's still multicultural, diverse, black and brown students here despite everything. But also that many have left the student body, and not by choice.

During our conversation, Milton spoke of the transition from Day of Absence to Equity Symposium, and what it means for many POC students at Evergreen. "They're telling you, 'you can't do this,' but the students really want this. Call it by a different name but bring back what we did. I think that's why it was so hard and why attendance was so low. I think at [the first Equity Symposium] people didn't feel like their work really mattered," Mia said.

Douglas responded saying, "It does [matter]. There's no way I can know exactly what y'all went through. Even now, I'm still hearing different things about it and I'm like that really happened?... It's just unbelievable to me. If I would have been here I would have had a different experience in this role."

In the wake of the 2016 through 2017 protests, students were asking for accommodations that the institution could not provide. Student demands were never fully met and the institution never allowed time to hear from the student body before taking steps forward. The students demanded that the institution protect them in the same way it currently works to retain it's first-year students.

"I think there are people like me and other students who have so much trauma from spring [of 2017]. There's a lot of things that people don't know ... happened, I think you've done the best you can in your amount of time," said Milton.

It is beautiful who has come in and left a remarkable impact on our lives at Evergreen. Raquel Salinas, a previous coordinator of Student Support Programs, First Peoples Multicultural Advising Services, helped lead a focus group with students of color, to see what was working for them and what

wasn't at Evergreen. They wanted to investigate why some students of color stay at Evergreen and why some leave. They wanted insight as to why they chose Evergreen, stayed here, and recommendations for how to support the retention of students of color. Student Support Services heard from students about what was working for them and what wasn't.

Some of the recurring complaints were that in on-campus housing: there were students who had never encountered the concept of privilege, few or no Resident Assistants (RAs) of color, and a general lack of community. Student voices led Jonathan Leggette, a senior activist, and First Peoples staff to create Legacy Hall. This housing space for students of color creates community and shares collective space across significant differences. In this endeavor student input and action was able to be backed up by the institution. This year Evergreen has removed Legacy Hall and other community-based housing. The tensions in housing only illuminated where the institution could do better and showed when student input is given, the campus' culture shifts. Multicultural, Trans, and Queer Support Services has a history on this campus of valuing student creativity and knowledge. The recently established Student Equity and Arts Lounge (SEAL) was created, due to student input.

"I continue to be proud of the space that students [had the chance to] create with the Students Equity and Arts Lounge. We can always identify more spaces for students to be able to gather and congregate and enjoy one another...We need spaces like The SEAL, like First Peoples, like our previous Trans and Queer Center. We need all of those spaces and we also need campus where our students can move freely, see one another and feel like Evergreen belongs to them and they belong to Evergreen," Douglas said. "One of the things I said I wanted to do

...was create space for sharing experiences and actually learn to hear one another, and move forward and share what our truths were. We were striving to understand what our experiences were in spring 2017 and what we really need from the college in order to move forward together.”

“Institutions must change to better support people of color, to hire more people of color, to recruit more students of color and then come up with plans and real strategies for how we can retain them”

There were many protests throughout the year of 2016-2017. Each protest was directed towards marginalized students: especially Black and Brown students. In spring quarter of 2017, students planned to visit various classrooms that students had shared their experiences of discrimination within the community. In support of these students, they made fliers to explain why they were there and asked teachers for consent before they entered the buildings. They only made it to one of the teacher's classrooms, Bret Weinstein's, where they were invited in for their peaceful protest that led to student demands.

Many marginalized students remember that room full of students. They felt unsafe, unheard, discouraged and forgotten. That was in the wake of various protests and traumatic incidents, which communities of color on campus were having to endure. These students were terrified. Black, LGBTQIAA+ and disabled students were banned from the school. Incidents with Police Services, Residential and Dining Services, the Conduct Code, Student Wellness Center and the Title IX office were just the beginning. Douglas's arrival was an opportunity for someone to hold the institution accountable, but how can one person do all that?

Douglas has allowed us to create a more informed space, despite so much

confusion around her position. There wasn't a clear understanding of what her position would do or achieve for the student body. Despite all of that, she has been a strategic leader for the college and worked to administratively push Inclusive Excellence. She did this by instilling policies and goals to advance Inclusion and Equity. Douglas was overseeing First Peoples, Access Services and TRIO that worked directly with students to confirm they're receiving support. After meeting with directors and hearing from students, Douglas would take their concerns to the higher level.

What's difficult is building that trust when positions here are so confusing to navigate. A lot of people are uncomfortable with Police Services, but the Police Services community review board that had staff, faculty and student voices was disbanded. A committee built to review police conduct on campus and their relationship with the student body. Students realized they didn't have enough student voice involved because the board wasn't serving or protecting them. The board was disbanded and they recommended that it be reformed with student input. We currently have cops on campus in riot gear. “To us that's unnecessary but it's happening, it's getting enacted. Students aren't gonna feel safe to talk about it unless someone is outreaching or there's a person for that,” Milton said during our group conversation.

“What you're describing to me reminds me of the Equity Council. When I came here I was excited to see that we had a body of people already doing this work. After all of the trauma that everyone went through, the people of color [and] the black people who were on that Equity Council aren't even here at the institution anymore. When I came on board they were all traumatized,” Douglas responded.

Despite having a physically and socially disconnected campus, the labor Douglas has done with the Native Pathways Program has allowed her to continue the connection between our programs and campuses.

“I would say that the work that I've done with the Native Pathways program has really been in support of the work that Glenda Breiler, Tina Kuckkahn-Miller, and Dawn Barron; the work that they lead on a daily basis with our Native students. I work to help support the innovative work that they're doing. We find ways to connect our work together and [they] support much of my

work as well,” Douglas said.

Douglas has also done work to bridge Evergreen's Tacoma campus and Evergreen's Olympia campus throughout her endeavors. “We always find ways to include our Tacoma students. Sometimes they prefer live streaming or sometimes they prefer for us to send a van down to pick them up and we do that too. So I've enjoyed making sure they can make it to our campus,” Douglas said.

Throughout her time here in her position, Douglas pushed for various initiatives to make sure all student voices and historically underrepresented voices feel heard and protected on campus. One of the struggles that has been expressed by students was that after the various policies and initiatives implemented are adopted, they don't actually affect every single person here.”

“There will always be people who are resistant to treating people the way they deserve to be treated. Treating people with respect, and honoring who people are and how they prefer to be treated...We still have to keep moving forward, we can't let that stop us,” Douglas shared.

The marginalized communities on our campus have always shown resilience. Evergreen gives access, but that doesn't mean there isn't a need for growth. Our black students, staff and faculty have repeatedly received threats based on their skin color, gender and/or sexual orientation. Many of our black staff and faculty have left the school leaving marginalized students with less representation and at many times with significantly less institutional support.

“Institutions must change to better support people of color, to hire more people of color, to recruit more students of color and then come up with plans and real strategies for how we can retain them and help them to graduate and succeed within the institution,” Douglas said.

Black students and staff of color have had to reach out for community support instead of institutional support systems in this political climate. They've asked the institution to protect and support them as they have had to navigate a constantly changing support system.

“We cannot wait for these [institutional] changes to happen, while we're trying to live and survive within these institutions we have to create ways that as communities of color we have to

come together to support one another,” Douglas declared.

Douglas has started campus wide conversations around race and equity based on student success. In the spring of 2018 she gave us the first Inclusive Excellence seminars, featuring Dr. Damon Williams and went on to host two Summer Institutes. She worked to establish and implement the Inclusive Excellence Division, as well as the first Shining Star Awards in 2019, to acknowledge the staff and faculty leaders working to create an inclusive environment for students.

Not only has she worked to dismantle oppression and develop safe spaces at Evergreen, but also in the outer community. She has collaborated with the Senior Leadership team, Washington Center and Deanery. She also coordinated the first Juneteenth celebration in spring 2019 celebrating black history and elders.

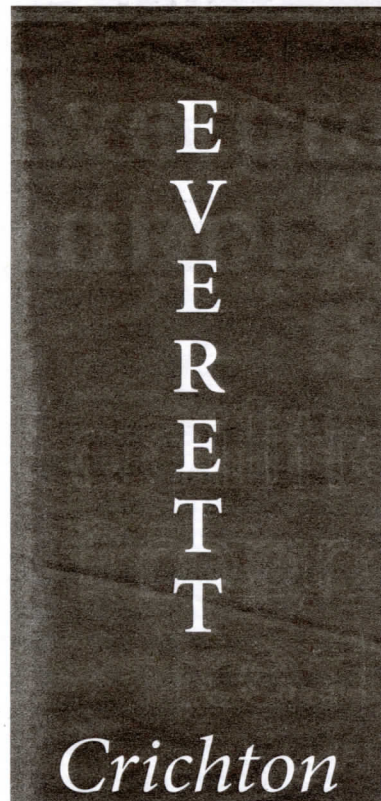
Because of Douglas's work each vice president as well as the president will develop an Inclusive Excellence action plan for each of their divisions. The first draft of these action plans will take place during winter quarter of this year. The institution should also make Douglas' previous position permanent as a vice president and should have transparency, including student input for her replacement.

“I hope to pass the baton... maybe they have a new innovative approach that inspires different groups of people to keep moving and to keep making changes. My job was to do what I could in the time that I was here and now the next person will be even more energized, even more creative, even more of a relationship builder and they will do even better work,” Douglas reflected.

Chassity Holliman-Douglas has expanded our tunnel vision intention for student support services on campus: Student and Academic Support Services went from S.A.S.S. to I.E.S.S. Inclusive Excellence Student Support Services. She's been adding color in spaces students used to avoid with student-led initiatives. Douglas, thank you for what you've left behind. The Evergreen Tacoma Program has a saying, “Sankofa, to go and fetch [as in to come back to the community and share knowledge and resources],” we hope you carry that with you. Hopefully student input will be used to decide the steps going forward, but in the meantime let's call out, let's call in, and let's call on each other.

Artist Interview

Photographs courtesy of Everett Crichton.



Interview by Jacob Anderson-Kester



Everett Crichton is a photographer specializing in nature, photography, and portraits. As a senior at Evergreen, he has had multiple years to capture what makes Olympia special—and based on the extensive nature of his portfolio, has taken every opportunity to do so. His move from Seattle doesn't mark a significant distance travelled, but it does signify a major shift in his environment. Once locked into the humdrum alleys of sprawling cityscape, his new natural surroundings have provided a different perspective to frame and freeze in time. The following conversation is a glimpse into the framing of Everett's artistic mind.

What is it about photography that makes it special to you, as a means of artistic expression?

"I have a background in two-dimensional art and drawing; that's what I did in high school. Composition as a still image is something that I think about a lot. In high school I was taught about the elements and principles of design for three years. I think about those concepts and ideas and I try to apply them to reality."

Enlighten me on what that transfer process is when you see a subject. What goes through your mind that allows you to transfer real life into those design principles?

"Well, I notice the light quality in relation to the spectrum a lot. I think about tone. I think about the way the colors mesh, and how they contrast or conflict with each other."

"I also think about lines; they're more important than one might think. They separate things from other things, and that's a big part of art: different subjects and how they relate to each other."

Many of your photographs involve nature to some extent. Can you explain to me the components that you find compelling about nature as a subject?

"The fact that it has been there before me and will be there after me—and is here with me now."

"Reading Henry David Thoreau has had a huge influence on that in particular. I find a lot of inspiration from his works, as well as transcendentalism in general."

Who do you see yourself growing into as an artist? What are some of your future aspirations?

"I see myself shifting from a realm of imagination into a realm of reality. My shift in focus towards the hard sciences and employment has made me shift more towards reality, the hardships of life, and the value of community."

"As an artist I see myself moving towards more of the 'realist' camp as opposed to romanticism. I still find myself imagining scenes that I want to emulate, but just can't. So instead I have tried to focus on capturing real life."

What sorts of things do you wish you could capture, but you haven't been able to?

"I would really like to capture aspects of urban life, and just more humans in general. I want to capture people's lives—capture people's realities."

"As I've gotten older, I've begun to see more and more of the patterns of reality. As a result of that, I can empathize with people better; especially the adult condition. Historically, that's been something I've always struggled with. But as I've shifted towards being an adult and understanding everything involved, I've been able to empathize with it a lot more. That increase in empathy has led me to being more interested in capturing those sorts of elements."

It's interesting that you talk about growth as a means of understanding the world differently. What are some of the transitions that have allowed you to perceive those patterns in a new way?

"The biggest transition involves me traveling to less privileged parts of the world—Guatemala, Belize, even parts of rural Washington."

"I volunteered at an orphanage in Belize and that really opened my eyes. It made me realize the amount of things I just expected to be universal but are not. Seeing it first hand really hammered in that not everywhere has good living conditions, or plumbing, or healthcare, or good

school systems—or education at all.

"That's in contrast to my background, where education was not only given to me, but expected of me. It really puts things in perspective."

In photography, there are many different mediums to choose from. Why is that?

"At the risk of sounding pretentious, I prefer film because I find that the hues, tones, and the colors are unlike what you can get from a digital camera. In most cases, I prefer using film for its color profile."

"I don't like to work with digital photography because I feel like it looks too perfect. Additionally [digital] doesn't force you to look for the shot as closely or carefully. With film, all of the features of digital photography aren't there. It forces you to be more conservative and hone your technique. Plus, there's something about the process that I feel is lost when using digital."

Everett is holding true to his goal of trying to capture people's lives right after our interview concluded he invited me to have my photos taken. The binders upon binders of his photos he showed me—exemplifying a dedication to the craft—strike me as the marking of a great artist in the making. You can find him on Instagram @rainier_tallboy.

Life After the Intellectual Dark Web

by Dan Mootz

Professors have always paved the way for discussion—for debate, doubt, and dialogics. It is what makes them invaluable to the learning process. They assert, assess, and ascribe to reason and reflection, at least until that reason or reflection is challenged, or until they become complicit in the knowledge-power nexus they have agreed to expose. Such is the case of the privileged contrarians, the exiled academics who have sloppily formed the vestiges of an "Intellectual Dark Web;" a neoliberal enclave of "public intellectuals" determined to reduce the progress of pedagogy to the sterile hierarchy of pedanticism.

The term "Intellectual Dark Web" (IDW) was first used by Eric Weinstein, brother of Bret Weinstein, in 2017. Bret, a former biology professor at The Evergreen State College (TESC), received national attention when he opposed the Day of Absence, a social awareness holiday created by faculty of color in the early 1970s. The two-day event was based on a play by the same name, written by Douglas Turner Ward in 1965. According to Chloe Marina Manchester of the Cooper Point Journal (CPJ), a follow-up Day of Presence was added in 1992 to "bring the Evergreen community back together to honor unity and difference as a whole campus."

A series of administrative developments at the college, as well as the introduction of some experimental initiatives, helped transform, or invert, the idea of the event following the 2016 election. Social unrest in Olympia, and the merger of activist groups on campus precipitated a newer, more effective, design for this unique day of advocacy.

The protests on campus were the result of an infantilizing and inconsiderate approach by Mr. Weinstein, to dismantle the objectives of student groups such as the First Peoples Multicultural Advising Services (now the First Peoples, Trans, and Queer Support Services) and their allies. This was done beneath the banner of free speech, a democratic concept that has long invoked peaceable assembly and the right to organize against injustice. However, as of late, the idea has been reconstructed to optimize the position of a vitriolic and self-serving status quo.

For the past decade, this small, yet influential faction of self-styled iconoclasts have vehemently opposed political correctness, social justice theory, and postmodernism

in academia and professional settings. While the sordid platformism of IDW personalities is somewhat nascent, their rebuke of contemporary modes of thought—their distaste for the panoply of pluralism—dates back to the early 2010s, and even the mid-aughts.

For example, in 2014, Jordan B. Peterson, a psychology professor at the University of Toronto, made a name for himself, while publicly opposing trans-rights legislation, and the codification of non-binary pronouns. Here is a man who refuses to honor his students' preferred gender-identity, who rails against women's rights in the workplace, and who defies social activism on the basis of personal hygiene. He supports enforced monogamy and thinks equity means equal outcome, which, assuredly, it does not—it is deeper than that. By and large, students and scholars repudiate Peterson's views in due to their grandiose, esoteric simplicity. Michael Eric Dyson, a Professor of Sociology at Georgetown University, may have said it best when, in a 2018 debate with Peterson, he called the visibly seething YouTube sensation an "angry white man."

Similarly, Sam Harris, a "New Atheist" and IDW apologist, has long opposed Islam on the basis of what he perceives to be a causal link between belief and behavior. He fails, however, to reconcile the long history of destruction, deceit, and dehumanism levied against our Muslim neighbors, pointing instead to their combative, however legitimate, disdain for Western imperial incursion. His insatiable concern is rooted in scientific jargon, yet he conveniently neglects the social science of generational trauma and the inherited psychology of the oppressed.

Understandably, race is a delicate issue for these outspoken philosophers of "deep (or anti-) equity." They are triggered easily, and through their frailty they find common ground amongst like minds, regaling in a caveat of internet charlatanism and classic liberal cultism. Bret Weinstein, a faux progressive, has become a mouthpiece for structural conformism. He's made a name for himself by repelling student activism through a complicated sport of holier-than-thou lecturing as well as a slew of complex paradoxes associated with identity politics. Bret's appearance on Fox News occurred around the same

time Jordan Peterson was championing binary patriarchy and Sam Harris was scapegoating Islamic ontology. Their informal alliance could not be more expected. This outfit of reactionaries kicked off a massive uptick in conservative, white-male grievances aimed, ironically, at so-called "grievance studies," or "oppression studies," which now exist in a number of historically marginalized fields throughout education.

One of the mainstays embedded in IDW discourse is the question of the evolutionary relevance of religion. In 2018, Weinstein, Peterson, and Harris debated the usefulness of the conceptual belief in God. The conversation, while popular on YouTube, serves only to demarcate the loose theological divide of "act as if it were true" vs. "religion has evolutionary benefits, ad hoc." Interestingly, Weinstein moves toward the latter view. He argues that religion has historically benefited social evolution, although it is now less necessary and more toxic than, say, biology. But what he seems to forget is that the evolutionary "right" of free speech, surreptitiously employed by those in power to demean and undermine minorities, has mustered a sort of religiosity of its own. As an example, when Weinstein was confronted by student activists imploring him to reconsider his stance on the Day of Absence, he responded with a trenchant "thou shalt not silence me" ambrosia. The resulting mayhem brought about by his appearance on Fox News invited a significant contingent of alt-right hooligans, as well as a squad of riot police, to campus on May Day. This threat of violent Western chauvinism spurred a mass exodus of students from Evergreen, disenchanted by the administration's lack of action. It also dissuaded an unprecedented number of new students from enrolling.

Without a doubt, Bret's affront to the Evergreen community quashed what little chance there was to cultivate a new model for campus safety, resilience, and respect. Weinstein, and the imaginative wing of the IDW, continue to deride postmodern, social justice activism in higher education, despite proclaiming that religion may have evolutionary benefits for humanity. Given the history and founding principles of Evergreen, how is this not hypocritical, and how can anyone call themselves progressive when they are unwilling to participate in, or even

just observe, contemporary forms of grassroots empowerment?

One cannot claim to be an expert, without also proving their ability to be flexible. A teacher has no reason to teach if they are unwilling to learn from their students. The filter-bubble emanating from the IDW is a consequence of 20th century academia with its back against a wall. The price paid is in actual violence threatened by disturbed ideologues against truly progressive outlets for growth.

Another argument consistently alluded to by IDW proponents is the supposed coup by leftists in higher education. This strange, conspiratorial fixation fails to factor in a sound understanding of history, which, like a wave, must rise before falling. Yet some water never settles, and while the vociferous charge of "academic Marxism" makes zero sense (Marxism is based on the perpetual inquiry of power, which is exceedingly academic), to actually deny a budding form of intellectual praxis is, at bottom, a rejection of the slow, collective methodology and drive to create a bright future. The defense these antagonists like to use is that the conversation (on reparations for slavery, for example) is the right one to be having, but that somehow their negative, outside contributions to the dialogue are especially helpful, or that, in their great and unmatched wisdom, they're somehow beyond reinforcing the desperate ideology of vertical dominion politics.

The alternative to this kind of rhetoric is clear. It is what all institutions increasingly crave; a social and scientific consciousness, undivided by the mistakes of science, unphased by the measures of multiculturalism.

There is a particular trait evoked in a kind of playful teasing that actively counters intuition. It is not deprecative, as such, but is imperfect, from the heart. It is the recognized life of inner mastery, which allows for a certain agency of repose. It is a check, a balance, a limit on self-longing. There is, decidedly, a lack of this exhibited by those who fall under the moniker of the IDW. Their lucrative, "free reach" populism, set on debasing the truest forms of free speech, and on dictating the parameters of cultural relativism, can only be countered through utmost vigilance, in media and beyond.

SPOILER WARNING

Joker: A Review

by Alice McIntyre



Incel panic swept through the media in the days before the release of *Joker*. Some argued that the film, directed by Todd Phillips and starring Joaquin Phoenix, would inspire real-world harm. The film's depiction of the descent of a mentally ill clown-for-hire into violence recalled for many the 2012 shooting in Aurora, Colorado, which occurred during a screening of *The Dark Knight Rises*. Others have pointed to the misogynist killing spree committed by Elliot Rodger in 2014, which killed six people.

At the time of writing, no violence has occurred as a result of the film. The reader might then be prompted to ask if the movie is any good. My answer? Absolutely.

Joker's cinematography is excellent, giving the viewer a subtle sense of being "boxed in" early in the

film. Lighting changes make quiet but noticeable distinctions between moments of delusional fantasy and the grim psych-thriller realism of the film overall. Location and set design combined with camera choices immerse the viewer in the filth of 1970s Gotham, one of *Joker's* core motifs.

Joaquin Phoenix's portrayal of Arthur Fleck (the man who becomes the Joker) is deeply uncomfortable yet engrossing. Described as a "virtuoso of unleashed id" by Peter Travers in *Rolling Stone*, Phoenix commands the audience's attention. His laughter throughout the film makes the viewer uneasy, conveying a dissonance between the external self and the reality felt within. In one of the final scenes, Phoenix's character delivers a scathing condemnation of a society which doesn't care for those it invisibilizes, inciting a compelling blend of empa-

thy and fear.

The film's portrayal of the "Kill the Rich" movement inspired by Fleck's murder of three businessmen on the subway unfortunately seems to be a not-so-subtle negative commentary on contemporary anti-fascist protests. Protesters, donning clown masks and carrying signs such as "Wayne = Fascist" (referring to the father of Batman, Thomas Wayne), express their anger at society through property destruction and confrontations with police. The image of a masked mob smashing windows is very much aligned with the dominant caricature of individuals who aspire to take direct action against racist and fascist groups, known colloquially as "anti-fa." Removed from the implicit angle of the film's presentation, however, the "Kill the Rich" masked protesters point towards a clear reality of disaf-

ected and impoverished people being driven to disorganized, spontaneous violence out of desperation.

Joker is above all else a tale of social alienation, the negative effects of austerity policies, and how traumatized people can be driven to the edge where deprived of support systems. The story of Arthur Fleck's descent into the role of a villain stands in contrast to *Taxi Driver* (cited by Todd Phillips as an inspiration) in that whereas Travis Bickle wished to "stand up against the filth" of New York, *Joker* depicts the filthy and forgotten desperately clawing against their environment. Minor issues aside, the film is a compelling and immersive experience I would highly suggest.

Verdict: 8.5/10



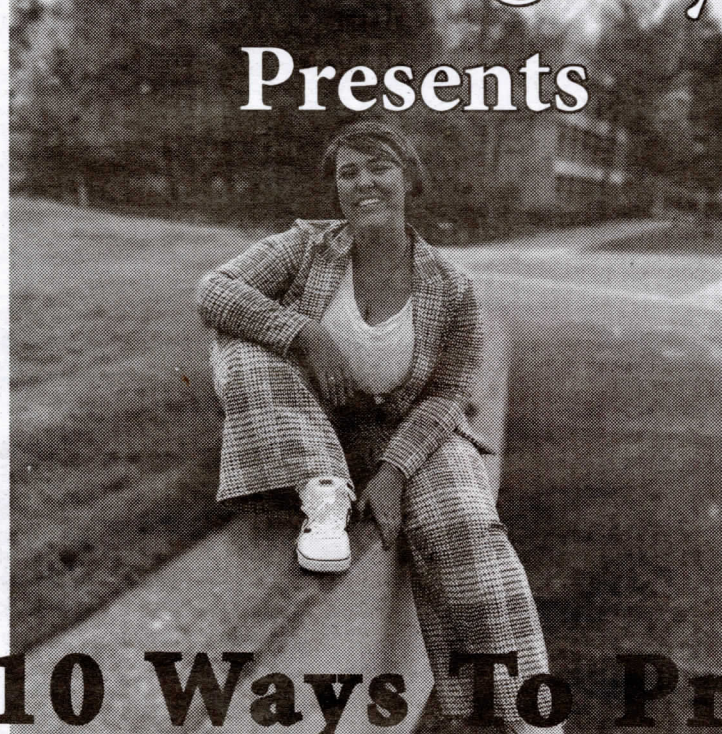
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Presents

Top 10 Ways To Practice Self-Care for the Rest of 2019

We have less than two months left of this entire decade! This entire century too, I guess.

That kind of information can be stressful along with normal everyday life. I wanted to share my top 10 best self-care practices to get you through 2020.

1. Don't hide from your feelings.

As a human, you have the right to feel the full spectrum of human emotions. It's okay if you don't feel great. We live in a time where the phrases "positive vibes only" and "no bad days" are BEYOND popular. But they are also destructive. If you only let yourself feel "positive vibes," you kick out all other feelings. That is not loving yourself, that is lying to yourself.

2. Don't live in every negative emotion and thought you have!

Someone wise I know asked me this question recently: "Did you have a bad day or did you have a bad 20 minutes that you obsessed on the rest of the day?" The practice of thinking about my thoughts instead of letting my thoughts run my world has changed my life.

3. Do something you love.

If your life is filling up with only necessities, you will burnout. Do one thing a day or one thing a week that

you truly love!

4. Go outdoors!

Nature is amazing. The air outside in Washington state is exceptional and we should take advantage of it. Even if daylight saving time is trash and it's dark at 3:27 p.m. now.

5. Stop following people on social media who make you feel worse about your own life.

This is the electronic version of say goodbye to people who are toxic. Self-care at its heart is about taking care of yourself, and following people on social media who make you feel worse about any aspect of yourself, is a person you need to hit the "unfollow" button on.

6. Forgive.

Taking care of yourself looks different for every person but learning to forgive yourself and others is freeing. Whenever I hear someone say "never forgive people who hurt you!" I want to ask why? What is their definition of forgiveness? Because forgiveness is about not holding on to anger and pain longer than you need to. Forgiving another person does not mean ignoring their bad behavior. By definition, if they need to be forgiven that means they have wronged you. Forgiveness is not condoning or ignoring bad behavior. It's choosing to let go of that bitterness so that YOU

can be okay again. Maybe you never talk to that person again, maybe you set up stricter boundaries with them and how they interact in your life. But working towards living a life free from holding onto pain and anger towards others is the mood. Softening your lens when it comes to yourself is an even bigger mood for the end of 2019.

7. Plan the joy — pursue the joy.

Do you hate your life? If you answered yes, my first question is are you doing anything that brings joy to your life? If you love drawing but you haven't picked up a pencil in months, I think we found the solution. The hot tip here isn't wait for the burnout to find joy again but build it into your life! Put it in your planner and set alarms on your phone. If you love walking along the water, plan it. If you love hearing live music, pursue it. If you get joy from being alone and you're constantly surrounded by others, schedule it.

8. Pray.

Something that happens when you quiet your mind. Hello, there is a reason that there has been a HUGE increase in mindful meditation apps in 2019. Learning to quiet your mind takes a lot of practice but it's worth it.

9. Get a good night's sleep.

Self-care isn't all about indulging

every single urge and desire that you have, it is about helping you restore your energy and life (so you can live a better life). Think about getting a good night's sleep as waking up with a phone battery at 100 percent. If you start your day on 29 percent, you already know it's not going to go well for you.

10. Bless your friends.

This MUST be said. Loving yourself, taking care of only yourself, and ignoring those around you is empty. Blessing other people means doing an act of kindness for one of them. These can include: helping them move, buying them lunch, and/or listening to their stories when they've had a bad day. The next step is helping others who can't or won't help you back. The really tough one is being there and blessing your family, but hey, one step at a time (LOL that was a joke, I'm sure all of your families are wonderful and perfect).

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 @HeyMariah is a student at The Evergreen State College. Her hobbies include making TikTok videos for her 63 thousand followers and drinking hazelnut lattes. She loves that Evergreen's mascot is a geoduck who wears a shiny glitter shell because she's never met a glitter-anything she didn't love. You can catch her in the morning listening to NPR on the daily and flying to Hawai'i as much as possible.

