

NEWS

The Evergreen State College
Olympia, Washington 98505

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 14, 1973

They've been studying the individual in contemporary society all quarter. They've been reading books, discussing theories, examining ways modern man copes with problems of individual freedom and organizational planning in twentieth century America.

But 14 students from The Evergreen State College had questions about the "real world of work;" about what it's like to work, say, on an assembly line production unit all day; about how labor and management really get along.

So Evergreen Faculty Member David Barry led them on a tour of the Olympia Brewing Company where they could examine assembly line production first hand, talk with Personnel Manager Bob Heath, and come up with some answers.

They found out that, for example, the Tumwater company has been using "an innovative" means of varying routine tasks for more than 40 years. They found that the \$125 million-a-year company has a low employee turnover rate, and that Heath was willing to answer any and all of their questions.

Expressing interest in business management careers, some of the students quizzed Heath on the brewery's job trade system employed in the bottling plant.

The idea, described as "innovative" in a recent national magazine, calls for rotating employees from one routine task to another every hour, rather than having one person do one routine task for an entire eight-hour shift. The system was initiated by the brewery in 1933.

For nearly two hours, students discussed management problems, marketing procedures, employment practices, and the history of the Tumwater plant. They quizzed Heath on ways to improve the plant and, as a parting question, asked, "What's the best preparation for a business management career?"

Dick Nichols, Director
Information Services

"Get a good liberal arts education," Heath answered.

Pleased with their attempts to do just that, students thanked Heath and their company tour guide, Joe Stamey, and headed back to class.

####