

## BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name:

Create Date:

Due Date:

Submitter Name:

UW Email Address:

Phone Number:

Department Head Approval:

Department Head:

Requested Amount:

## Departmental Information

### STUDENT UTILIZATION

These funds will go to the operations of two student-operated publications, the weekly newspaper The Ledger and the annual literary journal Tahoma West.

In short, the Ledger provides a news service for the campus, and Tahoma West provides student writers with a creative outlet, as well as direct experience with a small-scale version of the submission process they would face at a professional operation. The employees of both publications receive a firsthand education in the skills required to see a multimedia creative project to completion--in the Ledger's case, 30+ times a year.

If approved in full, this SAF funding request will pay for:

- student personnel wages,
- weekly printing of 300+ copies of the Ledger,
- subscription to the MailChimp email newsletter service,
- Workday cost allocation
- annual 900-copy printing of Tahoma West (free to students)
- office supplies,
- Adobe Creative Cloud
- UW telephone services,
- professional journalism memberships and contest entry fees,
- copy and postage fees,
- food for Ledger staff training in September and the Tahoma West launch party in May,
- conference travel training for publication leaders (two to Associated College Press national conference, two to Association of Writers and Writing Programs national conference)

A (\$5,000) deficit is included in the budget to account for advertising revenue goals. Additionally, in the past, I've used end-of-year surpluses to purchase promotional goods that are distributed free to students at involvement fairs.

### CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

Student Publications aligns with the Strategic Plan indicators of Students, Scholarship, Culture, and Growth.

#### **Students**

Tahoma West publishes the creative work of students, alumni, faculty, and staff. It is the only publication devoted to publishing UWT Huskies' short stories, creative nonfiction, poetry, and visual art.

As a news service reporting on our campus, the Ledger "increase(s) student awareness of ... UW Tacoma resources, support and infrastructure" [Charting Our Course, page 10]. Just a few of the student-facing programs and subjects the Ledger has covered this year are:

- The return to in-person operations
- The Snoqualmie renovations
- the Anti-Racist Little Free Library
- PAWS
- COVID testing locations
- International student resources and challenges during UWT holidays
- Omicron
- Decriminalize UWT
- BSU Prom
- Student loan forgiveness

#### **Scholarship**

Through the Ledger's coverage of faculty and academic programs, and Tahoma West's mission to publish the creative work of students, Student Publications "increase the visibility of scholarship and creative activity across the campus and in the community" [Charting Our Course, page 10].

## **Culture**

The Ledger is a potent "communication mechanism [to] increase awareness and connection among faculty, staff and students" and public coverage of campus happenings ensures UW Tacoma is accountable to be "responsive to the concerns of occupational and demographic groups" [Charting Our Course, page 11]. Tahoma West provides students the opportunity to add to the public conversation through art. The staff of both publications hold open visitor hours in their respective offices (and Zoom rooms) to respond to questions and concerns from students, faculty and staff.

## **Growth**

Since last year, Tahoma West added an e-book edition for Kindle and other e-reader devices. This was in addition to the PDF edition of the book. The journal created a new website ([tacoma.uw.edu/tahoma-west](http://tacoma.uw.edu/tahoma-west)) where individual submissions are archived, allowing for direct sharing over social media.

The Ledger added an email newsletter and e-book editions of the newspaper at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Print ceased. After a false start in Autumn 2020, the newspaper reintroduced print in Autumn 2021 and has printed continuously since.

The Ledger and Tahoma West combined office space over the summer. Both are now in MAT 151.

## **SAF-FUNDED PROGRAM OR SERVICES GOALS AND OUTCOMES**

Tahoma West's goal each year is to gather as many submissions as possible from UW Tacoma students, alumni, faculty and staff. As of March 1, 2022, Tahoma West has received 23 submissions in advance of the March 26 deadline for the 2022 volume. Some of these were selected to be showcased in a virtual art gallery hosted on Gather.Town. Historically, the vast majority of submissions come in over Spring Break, and staff typically receive around 100 submissions in a given year, with the two pandemic spring quarters seeing slightly fewer submissions.

The Ledger's service goals are to expand readership (print and digital) and maintain a UW Tacoma-focused content base.

The newspaper reestablished its print distribution after roughly a year and a half of online-only work. Print issues are tracked with a hand-count sheet by distribution manager Raj Kumar every week. The manager distributes new issues and counts the remaining issues from previous weeks. Accurate counts demand consistency in week-to-week tracking, and are helped by consistency in the supply of papers. This can be tricky as the number of issues we receive from the printer fluctuates--we always receive the 300 we pay for, but the printer gives us its extras when it has trouble calibrating the inks on the press. **I've attached the distribution manager's weekly reports for the year so far.** Distributions have been low, which we expected with in-person operations at lower capacity.

Web traffic to [thetacomaledger.com](http://thetacomaledger.com) grew. 2021 traffic was more than double 2020 traffic in terms of views and visitors. Significant spikes occurred in March and April 2021. Outside of those spikes, regular traffic has remained stable. Views were slightly lower in Autumn while we had open positions, but since filling staff in December, every month has seen modest growth over the previous year. The website has had 45,843 views in the current school year, through Feb. 5, 2022 (6% decrease over previous year) and 45,238 visitors (a more than 22% increase over the previous year).

The Ledger newsletter averaged a 32.64% open rate. Unsubscribes average 0.1%. Our average click-through rate from the newsletter to the website is 1.28%. These figures fluctuate week-to-week with the busy-ness of the quarter. The open and unsubscribe rates are on par for a typical email newsletter, but our click-through rate is lower than average. However, typical clients of MailChimp use the service for targeted marketing of commercial products and not news delivery, so it's possible our rate is normal for the content.

Ad revenue generally suffered during the pandemic, and this year we did not have an advertising manager until winter quarter. This was a matter of priority: the majority of last year's Ledger staff graduated in Spring 2021, and we had a more pressing need to hire writers, editors, and designers. Nevertheless, we've had some sales. Paid and open accounts total \$285.

## **STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)**

The Ledger primarily tracks service use through distribution and readership, covered above in Q4. The bar chart of web traffic to [thetacomaledger.com](http://thetacomaledger.com) provides raw readership numbers (including non-student readers) by month over the past two years. The MailChimp data, which was brand new last school years, provides a gender and age breakdown of students using the mailing list.

Tahoma West tracks the total number of submissions received by the Spring Break deadline for its annual volume:

- The 2021 issue of Tahoma West saw 86 total submissions (47 visual art, 10 creative nonfiction, 25 poetry, 4 fiction)
- The 2020 issue of Tahoma West saw 79 total submissions (22 visual art, 12 creative nonfiction, 43 poetry, 2 fiction)
- The 2019 issue saw 130 total submissions (37 visual art, 20 creative nonfiction, 50 poetry, 17 fiction + 6 additional art submissions for a new Tahoma West logo)

The 2020 and 2021 issues were both produced and released during the pandemic, and we suspect that this suppressed submissions, due to the general lowered involvement seen during remote school, and fewer opportunities for students to pick up copies of the book and otherwise learn about Tahoma West by encountering the program on campus. However, the numbers remain within throwing distance of our pre-COVID levels, and it was pleasing to see that submissions for Volume 25 (the 2021 issue) grew over the previous year.

Demographic data for submissions to the 2021 Tahoma West is attached.

## **COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS**

Tahoma West and the Ledger combined office space over summer and are now both located in MAT 151. Both editorial staffs hold combined Student Publications office hours to take feedback and answer student questions. These have been held primarily over Zoom due to fluctuations in COVID rates during Autumn and early Winter, however some staff--primarily layout designers and senior editors--have maintained in-person office hours. Office hours visits have been negligible this year.

Tahoma West maintains three regularly updated social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to interact with UWT students interested in submitting or attending events. The staff also maintain the Tahoma West website, which the editor-in-chief updates with blog posts about upcoming

events. The editor-in-chief interacts with interested submitters or campus partners via tahomaw@uw.edu.

The Ledger likewise maintains social media and a dedicated email address (ledger@uw.edu), to communicate with students, accept press releases, and otherwise conduct business. Email has been the most active source of qualitative feedback. Usually this takes the form of story ideas, in which case the editors evaluate the content for newsworthiness. If the feedback comes in the form of a correction to the story, the staff factcheck the point brought up and, if they determine the story got the fact wrong, they run a correction online and in the next possible print issue.

### SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

The most significant way the Ledger benefits students is that it gives them a chance to read about issues that impact the student body, in articles written by students like them. One tool we have to see this in action, and examine whether the paper is hitting the mark, is to review thetacomaledger.com's story analytics on the day new stories are released. Stories about cocurricular programs, support resources, health services, or local businesses--in short, stories that directly affect students' day-to-day lives--rise to the top of the "Most Viewed" list when they're published online. We believe that it is essential for universities to have an independent paper that reports and critiques topics that are relevant to students.

It's important to gauge the paper's impacts on its student employees as well. The Ledger's staff develop professional skills that carry over after college. The process of handling unfamiliar information, making quick sense of it, cooperating with peers, and transfiguring raw material into a narrative product that will make sense to casual readers--all on a deadline that repeats week after week--prepares students for managing the ambiguity and demanding schedule of a full-time workplace.

I like to keep track of former Ledger employees; many have gone on to wonderful and varied careers. Editor-in-Chief Talia Collett (2020-2021; arts editor 2019-2020) is now a program assistant in UW Tacoma's Office of Community Partnerships. Managing Editor Alyssandra Goss (2019-2021) is a project coordinator for Belshire Environmental in Southern California. Sports Reporter Brooks Moeller (2019-2021) is working on a graduate degree in Sports Enterprise Management at Seattle University, while also working for 710 ESPN Seattle. Advertising Manager Elijah Freeman (2019-2021) is a software engineer for Intel.

Tahoma West benefits students by providing them a localized means to become a published author. And not just students in creative arts majors, but students from many academic programs. I know the publication is accomplishing this when I check the academic majors of contributors and see many majors represented--contributors to the 2021 journal came from 9 different major programs. Art is, and should be, for everyone. Students who submit to Tahoma West are exposed to the same publication process they would encounter at a professional publisher, but scaled down to the size of our campus, making it a manageable first step for someone interested in pursuing authorship.

## Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Student Staff <sup>3</sup>	See attached spreadsheet of jobs, hours, number of students, and wage rates. E001	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$164,228
	Fringe @ 20.4%:	\$33,503
	PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$197,731

## Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Contracted Services	Honoraria for guest speakers or incidental event costs. S001	\$100
Other Services	Printing costs for the Ledger and Tahoma West. Pacific Publishing Company prints the Ledger weekly and bills week-to-week. Johnson-Cox prints Tahoma West once per year and charges ~\$10,000. S002	\$29,000
	UW Telephone Services S003	\$350
	Copy and postage fees, used for poster and flyer printing at the copy center. S004	\$200
	Subscription fee for five Adobe Creative Cloud licenses for the Ledger and Tahoma West. S005	\$1,350
	Annual subscription cost for MailChimp, an email newsletter service the Ledger uses to distribute story links directly to students. S006	\$1,200
	Workday cost allocation. S007	\$650
	Web hosting fees for thetacomaledger.com. S008	\$100
	Professional journalism memberships, conference, and contest entry fees. The Ledger belongs to the Associated Collegiate Press. Tahoma West belongs to the Association of Writers and Writing Programs. S009	\$300
Travel	Registration, transport, and lodging for students to attend professional conferences. S010	\$4,000
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Office supplies, including paper, notebooks, pens, and printer ink. S011	\$2,050
Food	Food for Ledger's September 2022 staff orientation and training. S012	\$100
	Food for Tahoma West Spring Book Launch recognition event, assuming in-person operations in Spring 2022. S013	\$300
Anticipated Revenue	Advertising revenue target. S014	\$-5,000
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:		\$34,700

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$197,731
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$34,700
<b>COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$232,431</b>

## Supplemental Documents



### TABLE OF JOBS, HOURS, AND WAGES

All jobs, hours, wages, and weeks worked for student employees of the Ledger and Tahoma West.



## **LEDGER WEBSITE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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A performance report of the past two years of visitors and views on the Ledger's website, thetacomaledger.com.



## **LEDGER EMAIL NEWSLETTER SNAPSHOT AND DEMOGRAPHICS**

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The opens, click-throughs, unsubscribes and demographics of a Jan. 31, 2022 Ledger newsletter.



## **PRINT DISTRIBUTION TRACKING, 2021-2022 SO FAR**

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Print Distribution for the Ledger. Covers issues 7-21, with issues 13 and 18 absent. The absent sheets reflect the period before hiring our current manager and sick days, respectively.



## **TAHOMA WEST VOL. 25 DEMOGRAPHICS**

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Breakdown of the gender identity, grade level, and academic programs of study of Tahoma West contributors.