



Request for 2020/202 Funding Services and Activities Fee Committee

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: SAF Student Publications

Create Date: 02/03/2020

Due Date: 02/07/2020

Submitter Name: Daniel Nash

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Department Head Approval:

Department Head: Bernard Anderson

Requested Amount: **\$229,029**

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 (free to students)
- annual 900-copy printing of Tahoma West (free to students)
- office supplies,
- 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. More on that in Q7.

CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

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

Students

Tahoma West's mission is to publish students' creative work. Tahoma West is the only campus publication devoted to publishing UWT members' short stories, creative nonfiction, poetry, and visual art.

As a news service that reports on the campus, the Ledger endeavors to "increase 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:

- Tri-campus climate survey
- City parking changes
- Food options on campus
- Legal Pathways
- CSL funding/space
- Campus budget and the School of IAS class cancellations (3+ part series so far)
- Campus crime statistics tracked by Campus Safety
- Husky Closet

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 is encouraging "socially engaged" submissions of art tackling societal issues in its 2020 volume. The staff of both publications hold open visitor hours in their respective offices to respond to questions and concerns from students, faculty and staff.

Growth

Tahoma West has sought to expand student access to the journal by supplementing its annual print paperback with a quarterly online edition. The Autumn 2019 online journal was posted online just after winter break at tahomawest.org/online-publication/

The Ledger staff have sought to become more public-facing, hosting a presidential debate in the Spring 2019 ASUWT Elections and frequently over-staffing tabling events such as the Involvement Fairs so that students are able to meet a greater cross-section of the students who create the newspaper--not just editors, but reporters, designers and distribution managers.

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 February 6, 2020, Tahoma West has received 26 submissions in advance of the March 27 deadline for the 2020 volume. Some of these were selected to be showcased in the first quarterly online edition of Tahoma West at tahomawest.org/online-publication/. Historically, the vast majority of submissions come in over Spring Break, and staff typically receive ~120 total submissions by deadline. (2018 saw a startling uptick to 225 submissions, which you'll see in Q4, but this seems to have been an outlier year driven by a small number of submitters who sent in large quantities of poetry and visual art; long-form submissions of fiction and creative nonfiction remained comparable to previous years)

A relatively new service goal for Tahoma West is an added emphasis on events that engage students with the arts. Student attendance of Tahoma West events grew over the course of the Autumn Quarter. A more detailed report of events is attached.

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

Print issues are tracked with a hand-count sheet by the distribution manager Mitchell Fermo every Monday. 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, so we have occasionally received as many as 250 extra copies of the paper. I've attached the distribution manager's weekly reports for the year, and Mitchell has helpfully provided a letter providing some context to the raw data. The first three issues of the newspaper were 100-percent distributed, which means every last copy made it into a reader's hands. That's virtually unprecedented in our distribution history, and very exciting.

Web traffic to thetacomaledger.com has likewise grown--dramatically. Prior to April 2019, staff decided to try putting out a small April Fools Day issue containing joke articles. The experiment proved a success. Not only were print issues "sold out," but the issue provided a lasting boost to the newspaper's website traffic. The website has had 39,825 views in the current school year (A more than 50% traffic increase over 2018-2019) and 29,043 visitors (double the number seen in 2018-2019).

Content counts are attached for both the 2018-2019 school year and 2019-2020. You'll notice a bump in arts-and-entertainment article counts for the current year--the sports column, introduced in spring, is currently placed under A&E.

Ad revenue is \$3,437.40 as of Feb. 6, 2020, more than tripling the \$947 earned this time last year.

STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

Tahoma West events saw attendance from 24 unduplicated students in Autumn 2019. This is identical to the number of unduplicated student NetIDs we had in Autumn 2018, the first quarter that Tahoma West pursued arts events other than its end-of-year Book Launch Party, and the first quarter it began to collect sign-ups.

The Spring 2019 Book Launch was attended by 29 students, and adds 27 unduplicated students to the Autumn 2019 count.

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

- The 2019 issue of Tahoma West 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 2018 issue saw 225 total submissions (63 visual art, 21 creative nonfiction, 114 poetry, 30 fiction)
- 2017 saw 120 total submissions (28 visual art, 13 creative nonfiction, 53 poetry, 26 fiction)

The Ledger primarily tracks service use through distribution and readership, covered above in Q3. However, I'll add that we've seen growth in the number of "sell out" weeks--that is to say, weeks in which every single print issue has been picked up by readers.

- We have had three "sell out" weeks so far this year: the orientation issue, issue two, and issue three.
- We had two "sell out" weeks in 2018-2019: the orientation issue and the April 1, 2019, issue.
- Only the orientation issue "sold out" in 2017-2018.

COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

Tahoma West and the Ledger use sign-in sheets to track attendance at events and purposeful visits to the Ledger office (visitors asking for directions to other offices in the Mattress Factory are not counted). The Ledger uses distribution sheets that include a column for evaluating the efficacy of individual newspaper racks on campus. This feedback changes the way the Ledger distributes its newspapers--racks that don't move papers get moved to new locations.

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 a dedicated email address (ledger@uw.edu), to communicate with students, accept press releases, and otherwise conduct business. Office hours have provided another avenue for the Ledger to collect feedback and answer students' questions in person, though visitors to the office almost exclusively ask for directions to other offices in the MAT, such as the Copy Center, Admissions, or the Registrar. Two visitors in Autumn Quarter inquired about available jobs, and eventually joined the staff, which is typical for the beginning of the year.

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 Workday, parking, food options on campus, snow day policy and the ASUWT agenda--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. Former Editor-in-Chief Kelsie Abram (2017-2019) is continuing her journalism career as a freelance reporter. Monica Marchetti (nee Cysensky), a former news editor, recently became director of marketing and communications at Solid Iron Works in Tacoma. Former film critic Seth Jans publishes an independent comic book and is working on several novel manuscripts. Arts reporter Alex Alderman became an outreach and education specialist with Pierce Transit. Current Editor-in-Chief Ella Lucente has been accepted to her top-choice master's program at Pepperdine University.

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 2019 journal came from 14 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.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OF FUND UTILIZATION

First, I have an overage in Account Code 05 "Supplies and Materials." This was caused by a charge from 4imprint for \$3,202.07, which appears in MyFD in January as part of my December ProCard charges. As I mentioned in Q1, I purchase logoed promotional goods as free handouts to students at the end of each budget year, after I've gauged whether there's an available surplus in the budget. I order these goods in June and ask the vendor to invoice immediately so the amount can be paid before the end of the budget year. Representatives from 4imprint acknowledged my request, but only invoiced half the order at the time I requested. I failed to notice the other half was missing until the invoice arrived months later. However, our ad revenues have been good and our overall financial state is healthy--we're halfway through the year and barely a third of our total funds have been spent.

Second, you may notice some monthly charges to MailChimp, the email newsletter service. These are used for the Husky 411 weekly newsletter. This is a service I oversee that's funded by STFC, but I don't have access to the STFC account from my UW Procurement Card. So I assign the charges to the Student Publications budget, where I can then use MyFD to transfer them to the proper budget.

Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Student Staff ³	This request is slightly less than what was granted to us by last year's committee, the members of whom were shockingly generous with the amount of labor dollars they granted the publications. Even accounting for the new minimum wage and making generous assumptions for weeks worked, I haven't been able to establish a justification for a wage budget line at the level of last year's amount. I've attached the Excel worksheet I used to calculate this amount so you can see my work.	E001
	Student Staff Wages:	\$162,100
	Fringe @ 20.9%:	\$33,879
PERSONNEL TOTAL:		\$195,979

Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Contracted Services	Honoraria for guest speakers or incidental costs at reading events. 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 1x/year and charges ~\$10,000 in one bill. S002	\$29,000
	UW Telephone Services S003	\$350
	Professional journalism memberships, conference, and contest entry fees. The Ledger belongs to Associated Collegiate Press. Tahoma West belongs to the Association of Writers and Writing Programs. S004	\$500
	Copy and postage fees, used for poster and flyer printing at the Copy Center. S005	\$200
Travel	Registration, transport, lodging for students to attend professional conferences. 2 Ledger editors attended the ACP national conference in Autumn 2019. 2 Tahoma West editors will attend AWP in March. S006	\$4,000
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Office supplies (paper, notebooks, pens, printer ink, etc.) S007	\$3,500
Food	Food for Ledger's September staff orientation and training. S008	\$100
	Food for Tahoma West Spring Book Launch recognition event. S009	\$300
Anticipated Revenue	Anticipated advertising sales S010	\$-5,000
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:		\$33,050

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$195,979
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$33,050
COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:	\$229,029

Supplemental Documents



STUDENT PUBLS 2018-2019 FACT SHEET

A two-page primer on Student Publications' operations in 2018-2019.



TAHOMA WEST ATTENDANCE DATA

A PDF presentation detailing demographic breakdowns of contribution/attendance to Tahoma West's 2019 journal, spring launch party, and Autumn 2019 events.



LEDGER DISTRIBUTION WORKSHEETS 19-20 SO FAR

The distribution manager's worksheets for 13/15 issues distributed this year. The orientation issue was handed out entirely at orientation, and one other week was missed when a sub filled in.



DISTRIBUTION MANAGER LETTER

A letter providing an overview of the distribution process and some context to the worksheets.



LEDGER STORY SURVEY 2018-2019

A tally of the categories of 2018-2019 Ledger stories--whether they were news, opinion, or arts and entertainment, and whether they were UWT or non-UWT related.



LEDGER STORY SURVEY 2019-2020 SO FAR

A tally of the categories of 2019-2020 Ledger stories so far--whether they were news, opinion, or arts and entertainment, and whether they were UWT or non-UWT related.



LEDGER WEB VIEWS "HEAT MAP"

A heat map representation of monthly views on thetacomaledger.com from Jan '18 to Feb '20, using color to signify higher and lower traffic months. Note change beginning at April '19.



LEDGER WEB VIEWS BAR CHART

Bar chart representation of web views to thetacomaledger.com from March '18 to Feb '20. Note the lasting bump in views and visitors that begins at April '19, the month of the first April Fools issue.



STUDENT STAFF WAGES WORKSHEET

An Excel worksheet showing how I arrived at my wage request for 2020-2021.