

Puyallup Tribal Recognition and Indigenizing Environmental Science Education on the UWT Campus with a Native Plant Garden

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The history of Washington State is deeply intertwined with the Coast Salish people. The University of Washington Tacoma is built on the land of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, one of the Coast Salish tribes. While efforts to improve equity and inclusion practices on campus have been made, awareness and education of indigenous culture and history are still lacking in the general student population. A recognition garden, memorializing the traditional stewards of this land and showcasing culturally significant native plants, could promote awareness of indigenous ways of knowing, create opportunities to learn about Washington State's native plants, and expand and diversify green space on campus. The proposed site of this garden, an unused grass plot near the Dougan building, would be maintained by student and faculty volunteers recruited and supervised by a paid student coordinator. Based on a survey of UWT students, 99% believed that campus needs more green space. This recognition garden would provide cultural space for the Puyallup Tribe to use for educating students or other events. The space would also function as an accessible green space which would provide social, educational and "living lab" opportunities for students.