

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: Center for Student Involvement

Create Date: 01/31/2025

Due Date: 02/07/2025

Submitter Name: Conor Leary

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Department Head Approval: ✓

Department Head: Bernard Anderson

Requested Amount: **\$253,537**

Departmental Information

STUDENT UTILIZATION

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

In short, the Ledger provides a news service for campus, and Tahoma West provides student writers and artists 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 firsthand education in the skills required to see a multimedia creative project to completion. The Ledger produces 30+ small projects each year in the form of weekly print and online issues, while Tahoma West completes on large project in the form of its book.

If approved in full, the SAF Funding request will pay for:

- Student personnel wages
- Weekly printing of 300+ copies of the Ledger
- Workday Cost allocation (unavoidable when employing students)
- Annual 900-copy print of Tahoma West
- Office Supplies
- Adobe Creative Cloud
- UW Telephone Services
- Professional journalism membership and contest entry fees
- Copy and postage fees
- Food for the Ledger Staff Training in September and the Tahoma West Launch Party in May

Additionally, in the past, end-of-year surpluses to purchase promotional goods that are distributed free to students at involvement fairs and tabling opportunities to further promote the student publications

CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

Students

Our current strategic plan advises UW Tacoma programmers to “ensure every student has opportunities to engage in high-impact practices”

The American Association of Colleges and Universities identifies collaborative projects and writing-intensive courses as two practices with a high impact on student learning. The Ledger and Tahoma West are both intensely collaborative environments and the Ledger is certainly writing-intensive if not a course per se. Reporters who work for an entire academic year will write 24-30 articles on top of their coursework. Section editors produce the same amount of work, an additionally edit the writing of the reporters they supervise

In terms of collaboration, the students of the Ledger rely on each other to bring the newspaper to print each week, whether writers or editors polishing an article, writers and illustrator brainstorming artwork for a topic, or editors and designers deciding how the week’s newspaper will look. Meanwhile, the editors of Tahoma West must work together to select and edit contributions to the journal before collaboratively designing a 120-page book on a tight deadline for spring launch.

Scholarship

Goal 7 advises programs to “Foster a climate of creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation.” In recent years, the Ledger staff rapidly innovated in the areas of email newsletters by cutting costs, ditching Mail Chimp for an on-campus service through DubNET to ensure mass distribution of content. The editorial team has also had to assume a greater role in hiring students as staff members.

Vitality

Goal 10 advises us to “create spaces, programs, and activities that encourage engagement” with UWT. Ledger reporters must engage with news and unfamiliar areas of campus to produce interesting work and perform their jobs. Readers are engaged when they read about topics relevant to their campus experience, such as available childcare services, the Husky 100 program, and the opening of Milgard. Tahoma West provides engagement opportunities offered nowhere else on campus—the opportunity to go through a creative editing process and have their story, poem, artwork, song, video, or 3-D Creation accessible through the book (and beyond).

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 January 30, 2025, Tahoma West has received 39 submissions in advance of the March 30, 2025 deadline for the 2025 Volume. Delays in hiring have only motivated the team’s effort to meet and exceed the goal of 160 submissions submitted for the 2024 volume.

The Ledger’s service goals have been to expand and extend readership across campus and beyond. Without the ability to print the newspaper and continue in the format that the newspaper has grown in, the newspaper continues to promote news, opinion, and arts & entertainment articles online.

Web Traffic to thetacomaledger.com has remained steady, even with reductions affecting the number of newspaper staff who are able to write articles each week. Currently, two articles are written per section each week and even with the reduction from 4 articles per section, the Ledger maintains strong numbers in number of views per article and per section. 2024 has excelled in particular months over previous years number. Although it does fall less than 2023 and 2022 numbers, the Ledger team has emphasized the adaptability of the newspaper to its online format by increasing social media presence and promotion throughout campus activities. Currently, the total number of views for this year is 58,349.

The Ledger has averaged a 52.5% open rate for the weekly newsletter and has reduced its reliance on a paid service. The team is now using the DubNet system to disperse the online editions of the paper, which allows for the newspaper to be distributed to the most updated numbers of students as it receives daily feeds of students who enroll throughout the quarter and year. Although this may be a means of how students are receiving the newspaper, web traffic has remained consistently strong, so it’s possible more students are visiting the website directly.

STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

The Ledger primarily tracks service use through distribution and readership, covered above in Q3 and supported by supplementary attachments to this application.

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

- The 2024 issue of Tahoma West saw 160 total submissions (52 visual art, 14 creative nonfiction, 64 poetry, 30 fiction)
- The 2023 issue of Tahoma West saw 63 total submissions (21 visual art, 10 creative nonfiction, 21 poetry, 11 fiction)
- The 2022 issue of Tahoma West saw 105 total submissions (21 visual art, 7 creative nonfiction, 73 poetry, 4 fiction)
- The 2021 issue of Tahoma West saw 86 total submissions (47 visual art, 10 creative nonfiction, 25 poetry, 4 fiction)

2024 saw a substantial increase in submissions and the goal is to keep the energy growing, especially with the inclusion of a category for Audio and Video Art submissions. As of January 31, 2025, the journal has received 39 early submissions, and this number being lower than the previous year may have to do with the hiring of student employees later in the year, due to the vacancy of the Student Media Specialist. This professional staff member has remained vacant since Daniel Nash was promoted to Assistant Director for Student Involvement and responsibilities have been added to the workload of the Director of Student Involvement and Leadership, as search attempts have been made to fill the role. Since the team was established in December 2024, they have already gone to work to increase submission potential and will work hard towards the goal of involving as many students as possible in the submission of their creative work. Submissions will be due on March 30, 2025, at the end of Spring Break.

COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

Tahoma West and the Ledger are both located in MAT 151. Both editorial staffs hold combined Student Publication office hours to take feedback and answer student questions. They have returned to in-person and work to connect with campus through engagement opportunities, surveys, and open office hours.

Tahoma West maintains three updated social media accounts to interact with UWT Students interested in submitting submission and attending events. We have a university-hosted website tacoma.uw.edu/Tahoma-west where users can find submission guidelines, contact information, and online editions of the past two years' journals. The editor-in-chief interacts with interested submitters and campus partners via tahomaw@uw.edu.

The Ledger 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, with responses to DubNet surveys and polls on Instagram also providing feedback, story ideas, and content. If the feedback comes in the form of a correction of a story, the staff fact-check the point brought up and if they determine the story goes the fact wrong, they run a correction online.

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 student like them. One tool we have to see this in action, and examine whether the paper is hitting the mark, is to review thetacomaledgers.com's story analytics on the day new stories are released. Stories about co-curricular programs, support resources, health services, or local business—in short, stories that directly affect students' daily 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 causal readers—all on a deadline that repeats week to week—prepares students for managing the ambiguity and demanding schedule of a full-time workforce.

Daniel Nash tracked the former Ledger employees and their levels of success that they've been able to achieve since after working on the student publications. Many have gone to wonderful and varied careers, further exploring publications beyond the campus. Managing Editor Josephine Trueblood (2022-2023) is the social media manager for Guitar Maniacs here in Tacoma. Editor-in-Chief Talia Collett (2020-2021; Arts Editor 2019-2020) served as a program assistant in UW Tacoma's Office of Community Partnerships. Managing Editor Alyssandra Goss (2019-2021) is a project coordinator for Belshire Environment in Southern CA. Opinion Editor Remi Frederick (2021-2022) has contributed articles about local theater to the Seattle Times' Company Event calendar website, the Ticket. Former Tahoma West Nonfiction Editor Tiera Nhem (2019-2021) is an assistant editor for the same publication. Layout Manager and Designer Morgan Morgans (2019-2022) provides costuming services for community theatres through Western Washington

Tahoma West benefits students by providing them a manageable first step towards becoming a published author/artist. 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. It leads along an introductory path towards pursuing authorship. Creative arts majors are far from the only group of contributors and the journal has been representative of many diverse majors from year to year. The goal of this year's team, and teams before, has been to involve anyone who demonstrates their creativity to find a place in the journal to show who they are, proving that creativity is for everyone, regardless of major.

Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Student Staff ³	One Editor-in-Chief Role to lead the efforts of Tahoma West at \$17.66/hour and 19.5 hours/week for 40 weeks E001	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$13,775
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$3,168
Student Staff ³	Four (4) Genre Editor positions for Tahoma West at \$17.16/hour and 10 hours/week for 40 weeks E002	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$27,456
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$6,315
Student Staff ³	Summer hours for one (1) Editor-in-Chief Role for the Ledger to prepare for team training and develop the team plan for the year at \$17.66/hour and 5 hours/week for 12 weeks E003	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$1,060
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$244
Student Staff ³	One Editor-in-Chief Role to lead the efforts of The Ledger at \$17.66/hour and 19.5 hours/week for 40 weeks E004	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$13,775
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$3,168
Student Staff ³	One Managing Editor Role to lead the efforts of The Ledger at \$17.66/hour and 18 hours/week for 40 weeks E005	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$12,715
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$2,925
Student Staff ³	Six (6) Reporter roles to write articles for the Ledger weekly at \$16.66/hour and 9 hours/week for 40 weeks E006	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$35,986
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$8,277
Student Staff ³	One (1) Advertising Manager Role to develop relationships with advertising partners to run marketing and promotional material in the Ledger at \$16.66/hour and 8 hours/week for 40 weeks E007	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$5,331
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$1,226
Student Staff ³	One (1) Layout Manager to organize the layout design for the newspaper weekly to the Ledger at \$17.16/hour and 19.5 hours/week for 40 weeks E008	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$13,385
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$3,079
Student Staff ³	Two (2) Art Team members: Photographer & Illustrator to support content development for The Ledger at \$16.66/hour and 8 hours/week for 40 weeks E009	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$10,662
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$2,452

Student Staff ³	One (1) Content Assistant to assist the Layout Manager in designing the newspaper and organizing the publishing process at \$16.66/hour and 10 hours/week for 40 weeks E010	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$6,664
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$1,533
Student Staff ³	Three (3) Section Editor roles to review reporter's content and write articles to lead the efforts of The Ledger at \$17.16/hour and 19.5 hours/week for 40 weeks E011	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$30,888
	Fringe @ 23%:	\$7,104
PERSONNEL TOTAL:		\$211,187

Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Other Services	Phone lines for the use of the Student Publications in their MAT 151 combined office space S001	\$350
	The Ledger: 30 Issues of the Ledger in Full Color at the most recently quoted price of 900.00 (27,000) Tahoma West: Estimated Cost of printing 900 issues of the 2026 Tahoma West Book, based on 2024 c S002	\$37,500
	Professional memberships and contest entries to the Associated Collegiate Press and Association of Writers and Writing Programs S003	\$300
	Postage fees for the mail center for mailing Tahoma West Books to contributors S004	\$200
	Workday Cost allocation; unavoidable when hiring student employees S005	\$650
	Four adobe creative cloud licenses for the Ledger and Tahoma West S006	\$1,350
	Webhosting cost for The Ledger S007	\$100
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Office Supplies, including notebooks, pens, printer ink, paper, and other needs supplies throughout year) S008	\$1,500
Food	Food for Ledger's Sept Training (\$100) Food for Tahoma West's Annual Launch Party in May 2025 (\$300) S009	\$400
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:		\$42,350

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$211,187
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$42,350
COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:	\$253,537

Supplemental Documents



VIEWERSHIP DATA FOR THE LEDGER

Viewership data from the beginning of the school year through the time of application for FY 25, with information regarding FY 24 and FY 23 included



STUDENT PUBLICATIONS BUDGET

Budget proposal for the Ledger, UW Tacoma's student newspaper including wages for student positions, physical and digital publication, and Tahoma West, UWT's Literary Arts Journal



LETTERS OF SUPPORT_THE LEDGER STAFF

Letters of Support from currently employed students, advocating for print and increased hours to provide the UW Tacoma campus with their student newspaper