WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees
FROM: Laural Ballew, Executive Director of American Indian/Alaska Native, First Nation Relations and Tribal Liaison to the President
DATE: February 11, 2022
SUBJECT: WWU Tribal Relations Update
PURPOSE: Discussion Item

Purpose of Submittal:
In this interactive session, Laural Ballew will provide an update on initiatives underway of the office of Tribal Relations since April 2021, including progress on the Native American Student Union’s “letter of urgent needs” from 2016. The discussion will also include an update on the Coast Salish Style Longhouse project and other internal and external activities to advance tribal and university policies and practices that serve the needs of Western’s Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

Background:
The position of executive director of American Indian/Alaska Native and First Nations Relations & Tribal Liaison to the President is a relatively new position at the university and is part of Western’s division of University Relations and Marketing. The position has both external and internal-facing leadership responsibilities. Externally, Laural represents the WWU president and Board of Trustees as a liaison and envoy to American Indian/Alaska Native and First Nations governments. Internally Ballew advocates for the support and success of Indigenous students at Western.

Strategic Questions:
1. What are the greatest barriers to access and success of Native students at Western and what can we do to address them?
2. Once the longhouse project is complete, what are the goals for programming in the space that will make it an active, community-engaged center?
3. What are some examples of how tribal liaisons at other universities have created sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships between their institutions and tribal governments in serving AI/AN students, and how can WWU Trustees support this work?
Laural Ballew
Ses yehomia/tsi kuts bat soot

Executive Director of American Indian/Alaska Native, First Nation Relations and Tribal Liaison to the President
Tribal Relations History – NASU Letter of Urgent Needs

- Implementation of a Tribal Liaison – position filled followed by Resolution 2019-01
- Traditional Coast Salish longhouse
- Verification of tribal enrollment or descendence
- Full funding for the NASU Annual pow wow
- Government to Government facilitated by the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs
Goal #1 – Western will provide a transformational education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity.

Goal #2 – Western will advance a deeper understanding of and engagement with place.

Goal #3 – Western will foster a caring and supportive environment where all members are respected and treated fairly.

Goal #4 – Western will pursue justice and equity in its policies, practices and impacts.
Coast Salish Style Longhouse

• Capital Project Approved $4.5 million FY 21-23
• Plans for fundraising for $500
• Potential location to be confirmed
• Project Planning Committee
  – Elders Committee
  – Planning Committee
Developing Supportive Relationships

- Food Sovereignty
- Indigi-kitchen presentation for NASU
- Gifts of Gratitude – food baskets
- Dr Robin Wall-Kimmerer panel with students
- Swinomish 13-Moons Garden