

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF DANIEL EVANS, PRESIDENT, THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE
PRESENTATION BEFORE THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE January 20, 1983

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the committee, it is a pleasure to meet not only in a new room but to see a good many new faces. There are some old ones back there, like Representative Bond. Yes, he's hiding in the corner.

I think it would be useful for perhaps all of us to review briefly some of Evergreen's history as a prelude to the current bienium and what we hope will be the direction of the college during the new bienium about to start.

Evergreen, as you know, was born in the early 1970's, charged by the State with a responsibility to provide a new approach in education. We did not discover new elements of education but utilized laboratories, lectures, tests; many of the elements that are common elsewhere. They are combined in a new, and we believe more cohesive way, to provide an alternative to education as it was then conducted in other institutions. Students are involved in the direction of their education with appropriate academic advice. Coordinated study programs are carefully constructed, are self-contained, and are structured to provide educational breadth for the students who are in those programs. We believe these characteristics result in an unusual cohesiveness in a student's education and an opportunity for a personal student-faculty relationship unmatched in most institutions - certainly most public institutions. Students at Evergreen are on average in direct contact with their faculty members for more than 19 hours a week which is about 30% higher than any of the other institutions in the state. This is in effect a teaching institution. The core of a program is the seminar which does not allow for passive listening or note-taking and regurgitating what's learned in tests, but a two-way interchange between student and faculty and between student and student.

The freshman core programs have essentially the same 22 to one student to faculty ratio as the more advanced programs. The seminar faculty are responsible for the testing and the writing assignments and the advising of the 22 or so students in that seminar. They work essentially full-time with them. There is more opportunity for serious evaluation of student progress and it does allow measurement of their progress through student evaluations rather than settling for a simple letter grade. The result is more information for the student, more information for perspective employers and certainly more for those graduate schools which many Evergreen graduates attend. It also changes the nature of education from competitive to collaborative. Students help each other rather than compete with one another. Interdisciplinary teams guide programs focused on a central theme which we believe leads to a better understanding of the interrelationships of disciplines in what is increasingly becoming a more interrelated world. Internships and individual contracts allow students to "try-out" careers before the total commitment which comes with graduation. I might say in passing that over the last eight years 35 interns from Evergreen have served the Legislature. Many of them have found permanent careers following graduation. You never know! Walking in the halls or serving you in some staff position there may be a "Greener." They are not easily recognizable. Even you, Rep. Bond, may have received the help of a "Greener" over time.

Let me turn to the 1980's. The Council on Post-Secondary Education as you know has just concluded a new six-year plan. Evergreen has been given an interesting and expanded role as the State's new arts and sciences college. Let me read briefly from one of the major recommendations of that study:

"The Evergreen State College should continue the implementation of the recommendations called for in the 1978 CPE report. The most significant of these involves the assumption of an emphasis as the statewide college of arts and sciences with strong and rigorous programs directed to the needs of a statewide clientele. At the same time, the institution should strengthen its relationship to Olympia and the seat of state government located there including the establishment of a state government policy research/resource center, a subject presently under study by the Council."

Another recommendation stated:

"Evergreen would also assume statewide responsibility for off-campus programming in its particular instructional areas."

We believe this is a new and an exciting charge because it fits so closely with what we believe Evergreen can do best and what the new educational needs of the 1980's are likely to be. We will have a handout which will be given to you a little later which shows the changing demographics of the 1980's. During the decade the decline in the number of 18 year olds will be about 19% in the state of Washington. At the same time the number between 30 years of age and 35 will grow by 21%. Those older potential students will be increasingly seeking job and career changes, and the value of additional education for personal growth. New careers will emerge and old jobs will disappear. The need for higher education for those students of an unusual college age will increase. The off-campus need will expand as more and more potential students will have jobs and families and will find it impossible to move to a residential campus. We have had considerable experience with upper division coordinated study programs leading to degree opportunities in Vancouver for the past seven years and in Tacoma for the past four years.

The on-campus audiences at Evergreen are unusual too. We have an interesting mix of students. 53% of our current undergraduate students are women, the highest percentage of women of any of the public institutions. 8% of our students are minorities, the highest of any campus with the exception of the University of Washington. The average age of our undergraduates is 24½ which is considerably higher than the 20 to 21 years average of the other 4 year undergraduate institutions. It is a rich and diverse mix of students which we believe will increasingly match the rich and diverse needs of education during the 1980's.

We believe we have begun to really respond to the charge to be a special asset to state government. We are engaged now in short term courses aimed a middle-managers in state government and are finding significant response from students from that level. Our graduate program, a Masters in Public Administration has graduated its first class and its second class will graduate this spring. We have engaged in training for state workers in cooperation with the Department of Personnel through its Human Resources division. Many interns serve state agencies and it is our hope that the study of the CPE will lead to the establishment of a state policy research center which can be housed and coordinated at The Evergreen State College.

In this current biennium we, like all institutions, have responded to successive budget cuts. You should recognize that each time a budget is proposed, debated and adopted, two (2) budget adjustments are required for each institution and agency. One to prepare for the session and the other to distribute what is appropriated. Eight times this biennium we have gone through this process. The investment in time and the uncertainty which results, affects all personnel.

We have postponed a graduate program in energy and environmental studies leading to a Masters degree in Environmental Studies which has been approved by the CPE and which was funded by the last biennium of the Legislature. Instead of continued undergraduate growth we have had to deliberately restrict enrollment as the number of faculty available to the college was reduced. We have imposed additional health, application, and graduation fees to maintain quality levels. I am very proud to say that in the face of sharply increased tuitions and new fees, students at the college decided on their own initiative to offer to the college from their own S & A funds more than \$100,000 to maintain faculty strength. This was proposed to keep faculty availability in areas they felt were of critical importance to their own education. That initiative is a rewarding one which I think deserves considerable praise from all of us.

All reductions are not bad. Many of those we have made will be permanent as new efficiencies are identified and achieved. A restored budget would result however in some different priorities. We have a drastic need to enhance academic support and library resources. Facing the 1983-85 biennium, I feel more optimistic now than I have at anytime in the last year. Not because our problems have diminished but because I feel a new mood toward the resolution of those problems. As far as Evergreen is concerned, I sense an increasing sense of worth reflected in recent major articles, in The New York Times, Seventeen magazine, one soon to come in the Christian Science Monitor and others, all of which detail the progress of this college.

The Governor's budget basically restores support to a level approximately equivalent to that of the beginning of the current biennium. It will allow us to start restoration of growth in enrollments and to eliminate the mixed enrollment signals of the past several years. The formula restoration will be of significant help to us in restoring the number of faculty and support for faculty and students. We all ought to remember that the 71% of formula which is being suggested is down from 87% which was the level of formula support 15 years ago in this state and which gradually eroded during that period of time. Specifically, we need a response to the increasing emphasis on computer literacy and computer specialties. An academic computer is a significant need for Evergreen, and is not in the proposed initial budget. Our graduate program in environmental studies is ready to start but has not been presented by the Governor. We hope that you will add approximately \$240,000 to our budget which will allow us to embark upon that program in the second year of the biennium and serve a clearly identified need.

Let me speak to one capital project which always is difficult to sell but which I think is exceedingly important to us. We are the only residential campus, public or private, in the state of Washington which does not have a large floor gymnasium. It is not just for a playground but it also represents the only potential space on our campus available for large scale meetings of students or major performances. We have no place under cover that is readily available for large performances or gatherings and in fact, only a relatively modest shed without walls available for graduations when the weather is inclement. It is a necessary element of a campus like ours. We share our current facilities with OTCC and with the community and would do so with an expanded facility. The design is completed as a result of your authorization two years ago. We can proceed with construction within 30 days of authorization. I believe it can qualify quite clearly, not only as a response to a need, but also, as an economic recovery project for this community.

We are the only four year school without access to trust fund revenues for capital purposes. We do not have the opportunity, as all other four year

institutions do, to plan more regularly for capital projects. We believe that fairness requires equal treatment and we will present to you later some ideas on funding and potential suggestions to avoid adding to the bonded debt burden even when authorizing this gymnasium.

Faculty salaries are important. I think that you know as well as I that the growth in faculty salaries over the last decade in this state has far lagged the growth in salaries for other public employees including our own state employees. You wisely and generously last biennium authorized a 3.1% merit increase. It was exceedingly well received and I think wisely used. I strongly recommend the continuation of that 3% merit increase for faculty at our institutions in each year of the coming biennium.

Finally, if I may take a moment or two to speak not just for Evergreen but on the importance of the role of higher education in Washington today. I am not sure there is a clear recognition of the vital part higher education can play in economic recovery. Many elements make a strong economy. Some we can effect and some we cannot. We cannot change the geographic location of the state of Washington, we cannot change the natural resources we are blessed with or that we lack. We cannot change the land characteristics of this state but we can change some things. One of the most important is to create a productive and competitive work force. We must provide leaders in science and technology as well as the liberal arts to staff tomorrow's industries. The investment which can bring the greatest economic return to our state is education. Of particular value is a high quality, accessible higher education system. We simply cannot wait for economic recovery in order to provide money to improve higher education. That is backwards. An investment now will be a major factor in stimulating long term economic recovery.

We hear today loud cries for special emphasis on high technology. Requests rain in on you for special help to train technicians and to educate scientists and engineers. These cries are certainly valid but unless we are careful we are in danger of seriously distorting our education priorities. We simply cannot just focus on the machine. Of what value is the most sophisticated computer or communication device if we ignore the education of those who would use the machines. What of the literacy, the analytical ability, the logic or the philosophy of those who put information into the machines? What of the morality, the sense of history, the communication skills, and wisdom of those who will use the power of machines to make future decisions? We cannot and should not veer crazily from one priority to another in education.

We spend currently about \$25,000 a year per capita for those in our juvenile institutions. We spend about \$24,600 for those in our mental health institutions. We spend \$14,800 per year for each of the people in our prisons and as taxpayers we spend between \$4,000 and \$5,000 for each student in higher education. All are likely necessary but which of these investments will affect our future most? It is important to realize that long term consistent and adequate support of a comprehensive, accessible higher education system is the single best investment we can make in Washington State's future.

Thank you.