Nomination of Larry Mosqueda for emeritus faculty, Peter Bohmer, May 20, 2015

Let us honor Larry Mosquda for his 26 years teaching at Evergreen and for a lot more that he has done and will continue to do. The first of many political economy programs we taught together was in 1990-1991. It was a yearlong political economy program with five faculty and 120 students. What Larry brought to his teaching and continues to bring is a strong and devastating criticism of U.S politics, economics, especially its imperialist role. His lectures on the media, on U.S. foreign policy and intervention, on U.S. militarism, on racism, on political and social theory, on social movements and the future are based on solid research, in-depth historical knowledge and a developed Marxist framework. In programs Larry taught on Marxism, on Noam Chomsky, on making social change, on the media, and others, he contributed profoundly to the learning and deepening of a radical political economic analysis of over a thousand students.

Larry has the ability to explain radical perspectives and concepts in an organized and accessible manner, simply but not simplistically. Students have been very inspired by his analysis, integrity and commitment to combine political economic theory and practice. Larry has been a long-distance runner against U.S. aggression and in solidarity with liberation movements and with revolutionary societies such as Nicaragua in the 1980’s and Cuba since its revolution.

Larry has been a mainstay of the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace (OMJP) since its founding to oppose the first Gulf War in 1991. What has stood out about Larry has been not only his persistence and consistency in organizing against continuing U.S. wars and militarism, in support of military resisters such as Ehren Watada, against homelessness and white supremacist groups, against police brutality, and against the Israeli occupation of Palestine but also his non-ego involvement. He doesn’t have to be the star. I have seen Larry at hundreds of community meetings and protests. He has never tried to promote himself but has consistently been willing to put up flyers, to help set up and clean up for OMJP, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and the Rachel Corrie Foundation, to do what is necessary. How many other faculty is willing to do these tasks? He is an inspiring role model for students and faculty. His research has also been motivated by his commitment to furthering justice and social movements.

Perhaps most importantly, Larry has always been willing to stand up to and challenge illegitimate authority and advocate for Evergreen being a school that walks the talk, where anti-racism, inclusivity, accessibility and justice and peace are not just empty words. Larry has consistently used logic, evidence, research, and humor to challenge administrators such as our campus President and Provost, and also to challenge mainstream and easily intimidated faculty to support the Evergreen State College taking a public stand on major issues. These include urging Evergreen to oppose U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to support the Quisney project, to support Evergreen divestment from corporations profiting from the Israeli occupation of Palestine, and for Evergreen non-collaboration with the Patriot Act and police surveillance. Larry has also organized for and spoken up against the arming of the campus police. He has effectively challenged attempts to pass “civility guidelines’ that could be used to muzzle opposition to the powerful. He has worked with students so political prisoners, Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu Jamal, where chosen as graduation speakers, and against the campaign to rescind the invitation to Mumia.

More than anyone else in Olympia when I have been under attack by white supremacist organizations, right-wingers, the Evergreen administration and a few legislators, I can always count on Larry Mosqueda to speak up and support me. He is a true friend and comrade for so many of us.

We can show our appreciation and deep respect we have for Larry by each of us standing up a little more than we have, even if it is a stretch, by being a little bit more brave, to make Evergreen a place whose purpose is to face up to and confront the economic and environmental crisis in words and action, a school that furthers anti-capitalism and social transformation. Larry’s behavior in the classroom and out, in Olympia and globally has been exemplary and cannot be replaced. But we can all learn from Larry’s praxis.

Thank You Larry!