Urban Revival: The View from Tacoma and Olympia

- New Location for Tacoma Campus
- Olympia Art Scene
- The Nisqually Earthquake

Spring 2001
Dream Makers

In Utah, where I lived for nearly ten years, one of the stories told most often about the founding of the state is that each new community built first a place to worship and second a place to dance, sing and teach. My own life was given direction when I discovered dance, theater and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Longings I felt but could not define were suddenly given shape and form. Education gave me the tools to articulate them. I believe that anyone who dreams should be offered the tools to define and articulate their dreams.

My journey to fulfill my vision has led me all over the world. Everywhere I discovered that whatever the culture, whoever the people, creativity, education and vision combine to build community. Unfortunately or maybe fortunately, the left brain isn’t equipped to discuss and integrate dreams and visions. Those things in the human experience that go to the bedrock of existence are often best expressed on canvas or on stage. And one of the best ways to create and clarify community is through the arts.

One of my first experiences with Olympia was the fall 2000 Arts Walk. It was an intoxicating experience. The sidewalks were packed. Every exhibitor, from the traditional to the quirky to the downright outrageous, was enfolded in a rollicking group hug. Olympia celebrated itself and the people of Olympia told me over and over again the story of the rebirth of the community and the hard work it had taken to rebuild. The Evergreen State College was pivotal in this renewal.

A clear and compelling shared vision is the heart of any community. Whether articulated by one visionary who inspires, created by a group, or dreamt and lived by one person alone, vision lets us look beyond ourselves, allows us to see through the dross of daily life to a strand of gold.

Vision isn’t easy. The dream that inspires lasts only an instant, but the hard work of bringing the dream into reality can last a lifetime. Maxine Mimms’ vision of education as a catalyst for change has revitalized a community and enriched hundreds of lives at the Evergreen-Tacoma campus. Just walking into the building is enough to give you energy for a day. The air is charged with dreams fulfilled, with determination and hope. The campus is a place of power and strength.

Vision evolves, as we are witnessing in the renaissance of a dynamic Tacoma and the evolution of a vibrant Olympia. As a dream becomes reality, it develops gravitational pull. When others are drawn into the vision, they bring their own dreams.

All over the world, Evergreen alumni are changing the face of society. As the vision of the college evolves, we become stronger. Renewal and rebirth are at the core of this institution. It’s good to be home.

—Francis C. McGovern, Vice President for College Advancement
Facing: Evergreen-Tacoma Director, Joye Hardiman, in front of the new Tacoma campus building.

Right: Faculty member Willie Parson keeps an eye on the transformations.

Evergreen-Tacoma
Education's Role in the Urban Renaissance

2000 was a banner year for the city of Tacoma. The East Coast public relations firm hired by the city to publicize it as "America's No. 1 Wired City" got more than 100 publications—from Business Week to The New York Times—to respond.

Tacoma's claim is based on the 700 miles of fiber-optic cable laid throughout the city during the past four years, as well as a culturally revitalized downtown with museums, art galleries and nightlife. Yet a city's renaissance is only as strong as its weakest link, perceived by many to be the Hilltop area.

That's where Evergreen's Tacoma campus comes in. "At the time we came to the Hilltop, it was considered a slum, a ghetto. Everybody was talking about the high crime and violence," recalls Joye Hardiman, who began teaching at Evergreen-Tacoma in 1980 and took over as executive director in 1991 when founder Maxine Mimms retired. "When we moved in, people said if [former governor and Evergreen president] Dan Evans' college would come to the corner of 12th and K, then police, garbage and fire service would soon follow. And they did."

This January, the Tacoma campus moved from those cramped quarters at 12th and K to a spacious, 32,000-square-foot building a few blocks away. The move triples the space and will accommodate a growing student population, expected to increase from the current 180 to 350 by 2003. This number includes 100 Tacoma Community College students who, as students of the Bridge Program, will transfer to Evergreen's upper-division program.

Despite the expansion of University of Washington-Tacoma, Evergreen-Tacoma continues to fill a niche on the Hilltop. But the campus also attracts students from King, Kitsap and Thurston counties as well as other parts of Pierce County. "Evergreen is the light of this area. There are so many resources that urban people with kids and jobs don't have access to," says Merciful Allah, a senior who commutes from Seattle.

While many of the 1,100 students who have graduated from the Tacoma campus passed through the storefront location, some started at Mimms' kitchen table. Mimms, who founded the campus in 1972 as part of her doctoral studies, discouraged any social separation between Evergreen and its neighbors. "Maxine made students go to the Shrub Dub for lunch and to chase out parole violators," recalls Hardiman of students from the Department of Corrections who were sent to the tavern across the street from the old campus.

The Hilltop's renaissance came swiftly once Evergreen-Tacoma's presence was established. Within a year, taverns began disappearing and questionable street activity slowed down significantly. During the same period, Allen AME Church, one of the most socially active in the city, relocated to the Hilltop, and the Upper Tacoma Renaissance Association began revitalizing the area. "We don't know to what degree our presence influenced the neighborhood. There was a confluence of all those factors, and changes happened rapidly."

As a consequence, businesses began to look at that section of K Street," says faculty member Willie Parson, who has taught at Evergreen since 1971 and at the Tacoma campus since 1984.

—Tacoma story and Profiles by Char Simons.
The Hilltop was established as a working-class neighborhood in 1888. It began with craftsman-style homes, small businesses, and churches. The police and the Action Coalition monitor the situation to make sure kids on the playground equipment. Dealers hanging out here," says Wright as we pass the People's Park, describing the neighborhood's renaissance. "I'm just doing what feels right. It's my responsibility to help clean up the area, currently works in Tacoma's solid waste department. "I live on the Hilltop by choice. It's my responsibility to help clean up the area, but within 10 years, you're not going to recognize the place," says Wright, a retired Army non-commissioned officer who lived in Tacoma's solid waste department. "I live on the Hilltop by choice. It's my responsibility to help clean up the area, but within 10 years, you're not going to recognize the place," says Wright, a retired Army non-commissioned officer who worked with law enforcement, landlords and the housing development project," Sullivan says. "Intel and Microsoft hire Evergreen students as summer interns.

Steeped in a tradition of reciprocity, the campus continues to feed and be fed by the community. Computer centers are serviced by a Seattle high school, Seastack Occupational Skills Center. For every 10 computers the high school students repair, their school gets to keep one. At the same time, Evergreen-Tacoma administrators are organizing a junior clubhouse for children of students who need to bring their computers into the clubhouse. "We have the infrastructure. Now we need to bring in the tools," Sullivan says.

Evergreen-Tacoma students, faculty, staff and alumni (a few of whom are profiled in the following articles) continue to live in the neighborhood. "Stuff might someday include a job. That "stuff" could be a job, or it could be a way of life," Sullivan says. "I grew up in America, and I believe it's my right as an American to take a while to revitalize the area, but within 10 years, you're not going to recognize the place," says Wright who is president of the Central Neighborhood Council, one of eight Tacoma neighborhood associations established eight years ago.

"It got to the point where people were disgusted," Wright says. "It's easy to pull up stakes and run. It's harder to stay put," says Wright, a retired Army non-commissioned officer who worked with law enforcement, landlords and the housing development project. "You need to give people ownership of their neighborhood. It will take a while to revitalize the area, but within 10 years, you're not going to recognize the place," says Wright who is president of the Central Neighborhood Council, one of eight Tacoma neighborhood associations established eight years ago.

\[\text{Transforming the City on the Hill}\]

"You need to give people ownership of their neighborhood. It will take a while to revitalize the area, but within 10 years, you're not going to recognize the place." — Maurice Wright '88

Maurice Wright holds his 6'4" frame into a sleek sports car with the license plate frame BMW: Black Man Working. For the next 20 minutes or so, he will give a guided tour of Tacoma's Hilltop, describing the neighborhood's renaissance. "Before, any time of the day and night you could see drug dealers hanging out here," says Wright as we pass the People's Park, which will soon be filled with flowers planting basketball and younger kids on the playground equipment.

On the Hilltop's main drag, Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Wright points out more transformed areas. "There was rampant drug trade from 15th to 23rd avenues. This apartment building here used to be a drug and rat-infested shack. We've still got some hot spots, but the police and the Action Coalition monitor the situation to make sure it doesn't get too hot," says Wright, driving past a nearly painted two-story dwelling.

The Hilltop was established as a working-class neighborhood in the 1880s—home to immigrants from Scandinavia, Russia, Greece, Italy and Germany who found jobs in city mills and lumberyards. The neighborhood boomed: land was cheap, residents built Craftsman-style homes, and small businesses and churches opened. A century later, crack cocaine was the new arrival. By the early 1990s, MLK Way was lined with taverns and boarded-up businesses. Drug dealing and gangs were rampant. Abandoned landlords, who owned 60 percent of the homes, would rent to just about anybody. "It got to the point where people were disgusted," Wright says. Residents formed block watches and a neighborhood council that worked with law enforcement, landlords and the housing authority to clean up the area.

"Our dream for a gift to Tacoma and to the Hilltop is a campus that's resource-rich and a teaching tool, both internally and externally." — Joe Hardiman

"We teach our Indian people to be the living speakers of the Lushootseed language. Beneath a spotlight, Hilbert urged the student Abdul Qadir Muhammad says. "Yet we have a homeland and we must not walk with a bitter heart."

Evergreen moves to its current Sixth Avenue building will only strengthen its presence in and ties to the Hilltop. A steady stream of visitors, ranging from alumni of the early days to federal judges, come to offer congratulations. "When an institution makes an investment in the community, the community begins to claim ownership of it. In the case of the faculty, we've always been involved. And that's how it should be," says Fason, a member of Allen AME and former director of the Tacoma-Pierce County Mathematics and Science Achievement summer program. "Students don't come here just to get something for themselves, but also to give back to the community and the places where they live, work and play."

Which brings us to fraxiats. Hardiman envisions the geometric shapes used in some African art as becoming city icons, such as the Tacoma Dome. She hopes that a member of the Ndebele tribe from South Africa will work with Evergreen students to paint murals on the outside of the building. Then students will build a Web site for K-12 pupils based on cultural symbols including Ndebele fraxiats.

The campus has also developed a partnership with Pierce Transit to design-a-web site of covered bus shelters, which the Hilltop currently lacks. Finally, there are plans to convert parking spaces into an outdoor classroom for the campus with a sweeping view of Mount Rainier. A new external presence for the campus is a computer clubhouse, open after school and after school hours to eight to 18. A partnership with Intell, the Urban League and Allen AME, the clubhouse is helping to bridge the digital divide in which low-income children of color, like those on the Hilltop, are 10 times less likely to have a computer at home than more affluent kids. Stacked with educational software, such as Sim City, Photo Shop and Final Draft, the clubhouse houses 18 computers where children learn computer skills. "We want the clubhouse to be an environment where kids can come to create, not to do homework. We want them to experience being in a club. If they want to play a game, they have to create it," explains Luversa Sullivan, adjunct faculty member and clubhouse director.

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Loving the Tough Kids

"We try to give students as well as teachers intervention strategies so that everyone will be more successful."

— Kathleen Larson '93

There are tough kids in Kathleen Larson's world. They're the ones with behavioral problems. They get into fights, disrupt the classroom, and are generally disruptive. They might be emotionally disturbed or substance abusers—or their parents are. Some are exceptionally bright but with a penchant to constantly challenge authority. All have caused teachers to throw up their hands in distress.

This is the world of Larson, who teaches at the Behavioral Diagnostic Center of the Tacoma School District. It is here that behaviorally disabled students come from all over the city for a few months' respite from their regular classrooms to learn new strategies and coping skills.

Allowing students to look at the challenges they have brought them to a more successful place in life. “The growth comes from within,” Larson says.

What drove her to choose to work with the tough kids? “This is a population with whom I could really give back to the community. There were many people who helped me throughout my life. I always wanted to be a teacher, but working with these kids is taking my dream one step further,” says Larson, who grew up in a self-described welfare family.

Larson’s dad died when she was young, leaving her mom with six children to raise on a small farm outside Milton, Wash. Married at 18 and mother of the first of her four children at 19, she started college age 41. Working as a teacher aide in an elementary school, Larson wanted to learn to work with children of diverse backgrounds. Her mentor, teacher Jon Hepfer ‘86, an Evergreen-Tacoma alumna, suggested his alma mater.

“I had no experience with diversity. Jon said Evergreen would teach me to help my students be successful. It was so important to experience being in the minority. The collaboration at Evergreen brought people together to solve common problems. There were no ethnic or gender boundaries,” Larson notes. “How I interact with students makes such a difference. I try to walk as much as possible in my students’ shoes. I’m not the teacher; I’m just another student. I try to learn from them.”

Her typical teaching day begins before 7 a.m., when Larson arrives at school in time to meet her students at the bus stop. “Greeting them and seeing them leave are two of the most important things I do all day. I can talk with the kids who are bubbly, and I can talk with those who look worried or concerned. For those kids, it may be a simple thing, such as not having lunch money,” she says.

The first half-hour of school is devoted to social skills, with students reading and playing games in the classroom or on the gym. The rest of the day is instructional time for Larson, her co-teacher and 18 middle and high school students. “I’m not the teacher; I’m just another student. I try to learn from them.”

To foster healthier development, Larson hooks up students and their families with social services and other community groups. She also encourages the students’ regular teachers to come and observe them doing well. That way the teachers can develop a visual image of the children succeeding in the classroom. “We try to give students as well as teachers intervention strategies so that everyone will be more successful,” Larson says.

Larson views her work as a calling that is at the center of community revitalization. “Healthy children and healthy families are what a community is. They are the core.”
"Human rights problems are relative. In the United States, you can get fired from your job, you can be discriminated against, et cetera. In Cambodia, they kill you."
— Daran Kravanh '96

From Killing Fields to Soccer Fields

A melancholy minstrel tune wafts from Daran Kravanh's accordion, a song he composed in his native Cambodia while hiding in a tree from the Communist Khmer Rouge soldiers. "In my mind, I could see the sky, the mountains, the lakes, the trees, the animals, the leaves—everything except the faces of my family," Kravanh says.

Among his family, only Kravanh and one brother survived the killing fields of the 1970s. In the largest per capita loss of life in the 20th century, two million Cambodians died of starvation, torture or execution during the genocidal regime of leader Pol Pot. An estimated 90 percent of all artists and musicians were executed. "Human rights problems are relative. In the United States, you can get fired from your job, you can be discriminated against, et cetera. In Cambodia, they kill you," Kravanh points out.

A musician, former member of Cambodia's national soccer team and provincial director of recreation, physical education and film services, Kravanh is helping to revitalize the Cambodian community both in his native land and among Tacoma's immigrant population. After the war, Kravanh adopted 37 Cambodian youth hiding in a tree from the Communist Khmer Rouge soldiers. "In Cambodia, and Kravanh's accompanying CD of original accordion works benefit social, educational and artistic development projects in his homeland.

"I can live without money, but if I can't help people, it's against my feeling," says Kravanh, whose day job is as a case manager for the state Department of Social and Health Services.

Kravanh's current work with Tacoma's Cambodian community includes coaching a youth soccer team and teaching families the language, literature, music and dance of their native country. "I bring them the culture, knowledge, wisdom and soul of Cambodia that the kids who were born here don't know. If you don't protect and preserve your own culture, it will be gone for the next generation," says Kravanh, president of the Cambodian Council of Satsaban, which serves 250 families in a south Tacoma subdivision. He also serves as a human rights commissioner for the City of Tacoma and teaches citizenship classes to immigrants.

A delicate balance between Cambodian and American cultures is evident in the home that Kravanh shares with his wife, Darachan Ros '99, and their two sons, Kiry, 15, and Chunneath, 11. Framed Cambodian nane plays on the stereo while Chunnath reads an American basketball game on TV. Father and son converse in Cambodian. "I never stop learning. At least I can preserve some of my Cambodian soul," Kravanh says.

Tacoma's Portland Avenue could be renamed Church Street. Nestled among the storefront churches and spires is Eastside Baptist, where Diana Owens is associate minister of the 400-member congregation.

"There's a difference between the local church and the universal church," says Owens. "It's so easy to get caught up in controversies such as homosexuality and women in the ministry that we miss the larger church that Jesus speaks of and that has no walls. The larger church is really what does the healing."

"A nurse by training, Owens' mission in life is to integrate church and mental health issues. "Black churches are not real open to the concept. I see my role as eventually educating churches about mental health as it relates to religion," says Owens, who graduated from seminary in Atlanta after finishing undergraduate studies at Evergreen-Tacoma. A leap of faith for a single mother, Owens was attracted to Atlanta's historically black colleges such as Spellman—she worked there as a nurse while going to school. Ministering at a women's shelter and at an elite psychiatric hospital for the rich and famous gave her experience at both ends of the economic spectrum.

Owens came to the Tacoma campus through the Bridge program, which links Tacoma Community College students with Evergreen. Through her studies in psychology and religion, Owens discovered that the spiritual needs of children were not being addressed in mental health facilities.

Owens credits Evergreen with preparing her for the ministry: "The college awakened something in me and encouraged my freedom of thinking and expression. Compared with other students in seminary, I was more prepared to ask deeper ethical and spiritual questions than those who hadn't been in an educational setting where that was encouraged," she says.

Owens also works as a children's therapist at a community mental health clinic and as a chaplain at children's state mental institution. "Kids have a closer relationship with God than many adults. They are naturally inquisitive. My job as a chaplain is to address the spiritual needs of the kids, whether they are Catholic, Jewish, New Age or Protestant," explains Owens, who has also served as chaplain at Western State Hospital and Maple Leaf School, a juvenile detention facility. "Kids are real heavy on prayers. They have a magical kind of thinking that God should make everything OK."

Owens believes religious institutions have the potential to play an active role in community revitalization by providing childcare and human development classes, and by tackling relevant themes such as blacks in the Bible. But religious leaders need to be aware of human needs, asserts Owens. "In order for the church to revitalize, it has to meet kids where they are and draw them in, while at the same time teaching them values."

— Diana Owens '91

The Ministry of Community

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Ministers can't go in with an agenda, or kids won't listen. You just have to be present, and not intrusive. You have to be accepting."
Women in Philanthropy

It's Saturday afternoon, and Magda Costantino is cleaning her house. To make the task more enjoyable, she dusts and vacuums to the lively rhythms of salsa, merengue and other Latin music on the KAOS radio show, "El Mensaje del Aire."

It's Monday lunch, and Sarah Pedersen is giving a Power Point presentation to the local Rotary Club on her passion—restoring the Resolut, Evergreen's 44-foot yard, to its original 1939 later.

Costantino, director of the Evergreen Center for Educational Improvement, and Pedersen, maritime studies faculty member and librarian, are among the dozen or so Greener women on faculty and staff who either contribute money to the college or help raise funds for special projects at Evergreen.

"I really believe in this place. Evergreen is one of the best colleges in the country, and I want to support its growth and prosperity," says Provost Barbara Leigh Smith. Pedersen, who contributes to a variety of projects, including the Evergreen Annual Fund, the Cal Anderson lecture series, the Jane Jarvis Endowment for Faculty Development, Friends of the Library and memorial funds. Like several others, she has also written an endowed scholarship into her estate plan. "As an administrator, I'm keenly aware of what a difference scholarships make to students, many of whom are needy or are first-generation college students. Many of those folks wouldn't be here otherwise. Five hundred or $1,000 dollars make an enormous difference. I feel obligated to share my prosperity with the those that bring me special pleasure, such as the KAOS program that I listen to while cleaning the house on weekends. I wish I could give to more, but I give all I can."

For Pedersen, the Resolut offers the opportunity to work with students on maritime skills, literature and history aboard the former U.S. Naval Academy training vessel. A total of 70,000 passed through the boat until the mid-1960s when it was decommissioned and later sold to the college for $1. "The boat is the strongest learning community I have found at Evergreen. The shared skills and safety experience reinforce the academic component," says Pedersen, who has been sailing since age five.

The Resolut has also proved an important connection to the community. Children scamper through it every year at Olympia's Wooden Boat Festival, and Evergreen students volunteer at various Port of Olympia events in exchange for the free moorage the Port provides the vessel. Students will help with the boat's renovation, under the direction of an alumni who is a boatwright.

"Raising funds for the Resolut is nice because it's a one-time project with a definite result," says Pedersen, who keeps a blueprint of the boat taped to her office file cabinet. "The boat is an object of devotion for Greener alumni, Naval Academy grads and community members, but we can't keep sailing her forever. We're hoping that philanthropic support will keep her afloat for future students to enjoy."

Women and Their Projects

The following are some of Evergreen's female faculty and staff and some of the projects they support. For more information, contact Pam Toal, director of development, at 360-867-6552 or toalp@evergreen.edu.

- Resolut ship restoration - Sarah Pedersen, Sandi Shellabarger, Marge Brown and Tina Kuckkahn
- Geoduck basketball, KAOS - Magda Costantino
- Evergreen Annual fund - Barbara Leigh Smith
- Childcare center expansion - Sandi Shellabarger
- Curator for Evergreen galleries - Jean Mandeberg
- Forest canopy walkway - Nalini Nadkarni
- Gateway project for incarcerated youth - Carol Minugh
- Gooduck basketball, KAOS - Magda Costantino
- Master in Fine Arts - Marge Brown and Sally Dinninger
- Phage biotics - Betty Kutter
- Reelukt ship restoration - Sarah Pedersen
- Tacoma campus - Joyce Hardman
Homage to Olympia

—BY NOMY LAMM ’97

Two years ago, some friends and I were sitting around talking about the stuff we were working on—drag performance and music and community organizing and the like. We had just seen a local production of Jesus Christ Superstar and were pumped up about the showiness of the whole thing, and how incredible it was to be in the room with this two-hour live rock video. We compared it to the drag shows that we’d been organizing and performing in, and speculated about our own potential.

“We could do that,” we said. “We could write a rock opera. Oh totally.”

When we said “we,” we weren’t necessarily talking about the people at that table. We were referring to our community: all the queers, punks, activists, musicians, performers, artists and assorted freaks and renegades who make up a significant chunk of our Olympia world. Together, we agreed, we could probably come up with enough geniuses in this town to pull it off. We moved on to the next subject, but the seed had been planted.

See, Olympia is the kind of town where people say crazy things like “let’s write a rock opera,” and then actually do it. We put on music festivals like the International Pop Underground Convention and Yoyo-a-go-go, girl-focused gatherings like Foxfire and Ladyfest, arts events like the Experimental Music Festival and Procession of the Species. Maybe it’s the water, maybe it’s the fact that there’s not much else to do. In any case, Olympians have become known for creating independent art and media that attract local and sometimes national attention—attention that is well-deserved but often perceived as dangerous to our community.
In June, a month before opening night of our rock opera,

I was rushing around downtown, going to meetings and checking in with people before heading to rehearsal at the Midnight Sun. We had been rehearsing for five months, and I was finally done writing all the lyrics, and we were coming down to the wire.

Those days, I could walk down the street, run into 20 different people, talk about 20 different things, and somehow all related back to the rock opera. It gave our community a bonded feeling and sense of purpose that I had never experienced before. It’s that feeling of the Midnight Sun. We had been rehearsing for five months, I was finally done writing all the lyrics, and we were coming down to the wire.

After our final matinée, the entire audience was invited to parade down to Lakefair (Olympia’s annual summer festival) with us, set up the “power station” (one of our major props, modeled after tripods that are used for blocking traffic during protests and demonstrations) and sing songs from the show. About 200 people joined in celebrating the success of community-based art, theater and culture. I guess we shouldn’t have been surprised that local police and media mistook this celebration as a protest and confiscated the power station before we even got a chance to do anything with it. Unfazed, we continued on to the bus station, where we talked and sang and waved our flags under the blue sky of a flawless Olympia summer day.

Months of frenetic work and five months of rehearsal culminated on July 6 with the opening of The Transfused, a two-hour performance with a cast of 26 and a crew twice as large. Rachel Cams and Radio Sloan, from the local band The Need, wrote the music, I wrote the lyrics and vocals, and our friend Spider acted as production manager; running our nonprofit and overseeing the organization of the whole project. We had to not only write the whole damn thing, we had to come up with $30,000 plus all the talent, resources and energy to make it happen. Uss— a bunch of dirty, freaky queers.

The Transfused tells the story of a community of gender-freaky animal-people struggling for political, spiritual and economic freedom. 100 years after the collapse of the American Empire, A new ruling elite (The Corporation) has taken over, and the Transfused (the “mongrels”) are forced to work in a factory to corporate entertainment structures, mainstream media attention often has the effect of co-opting, commodifying and rendering meaningless the very things that made us “hip” in the first place. Media attention can become part of “The Fix”—the kind of quick-fix pacification that keeps us from making connections and recognizing the deadening and life-sucking cycles in which we participate.

Case in point: Riot Grrrl. When I went to my first Riot Grrrl meeting on Halloween of 1992, I was 17 and knew very little about the devious trap-pings of the media. Having grown up in Olympia, I was already involved in the indie rock scene, play-ing in a band with a bunch of other high school girls and helping set up shows at the Uncola, a collective punk space.

Riot Grrrl was intended to be part ‘70s-style “consciousness raising,” part direct action, part myth and part movement. It was a community where girls could learn to understand the effects of abuse, oppression and privilege in our lives— not only sexism but also racism, class prejudice, fat oppression, and any other hierarchical division that we found our capitalist culture had instilled in us. From there we could attempt to find our individual and collective power and figure out its uses.

But when the media got hold of it, all the complexity and depth got ironed out, the subjective and specific experiences of each girl got erased, and in their place was painted a picture of snotty, stylish middle-class, white girl rebellion, a precursor of the washed out Spice Girls “Girl Power” non-message. The only thing that the media attention was all bad—I’ve met a lot of girls who learned about Riot Grrrl from Seventeen magazine and went on to start hometown chapters. But I can definitely attest to the damage it did us here in Oly. Pretty soon our meetings focused almost exclusively on how to respond to the media, which was sticking its nose in everywhere, parasitizing off our very personal work, trying to make it seem like they were doing us a favor. Within a year there were no Riot Grrrl meetings in Olympia anymore.

When the Experience Music Project came here from Seattle to do a Riot Grrrl retrospective last winter, many of us felt that same apprehension again.

A bunch of us gave oral history interviews in the laundry room of a downtown apartment building—the “historic” site of the first Riot Grrrl meetings. There was also a roundtable discussion and a night of perfor-mances by people who’d been involved with the move-ment in its early days. It was funny to recount such re-cent events as if they were already “official” history.

Well, history can be inspiring, and from this gather-ing of energy came the idea for Ladyfest. For a week in August, downtown Olympia was taken over by a thou-sand or so (ahem) “ladies,” with the understanding that there is no single word that will describe all of us. Ladyfest brought ladies and friends from all over the United States and beyond, and sold all 700 full passes before the festival even started. Every possible downtown venue was used for hundreds of non-stop simultaneous workshops, panels, art shows, movies, performance art showcases, rock shows and craft bazaars. Proceeds benefited the Pat Shively Memorial Fund, established in memory of the longtime Olympia women’s health advocate and activist who died of ovarian cancer earlier in the year.

When I think about last summer, the amazing feats that we managed to pull off, I am amazed and proud of my people—the mongrels.

We put on music festivals and art shows, start record labels and printing presses, open second-hand clothing stores and start cafés in our living rooms. We make movies, write rock operas, put on fashion shows and make up dance routines. We enact elaborate 20-person role-plays and have some of the best parties ever.

In our town, the streets are pure and the water springs out of the ground in a parking lot on 4th Avenue. Like everything that is alive, the magic of this town lies in its spontaneity and the interconnectedness of its parts. It’s a spirit that cannot be replicated and mass marketed, because it’s specific to the people who create it, and it is ever-changing. The Corporation and their lackeys have no hold over it. All it needs is the tiniest hole in the concrete, and it will bubble forth.
And not just plays, but the quality of the atmosphere welcomes the crowd to the 1st season of Theater and a hush falls over the audience. Scot Whitney bounds onto the stage wearing his trademark black beret and the Other That has been included in a prestigious New York theater archive. We didn't believe them, so we started Harlequin Productions. Harlequin's founder and artistic director Linda, the artistic co-director, and a few members of ever. Funding to buy the $200,000 building came together quickly. Needing to close the deal in three months, Whitney mounted an upside-down fundraising campaign by starting with grassroots appeals and working his way up to corporate funding. Here the Evergreen connection is apparent—the first $1,000 was from Bernice Youtz, widow of the theater's original founder and an early investor. “The natural world has a miraculous essence. The crux of the Procession is that we must be far more willing to protect what we create than to protect what we consume. There's an environmental, spiritual and artistic side to the Procession. It's a living, breathing metaphor of the natural world, but within an urban environment,” says Sterling. A carpenter by trade and a scuba diver, he has hitchhiked around the world and hopped boxcars throughout the Northwest. As graduate student coordinator in the MES program, he founded the Rachel Carson Environmental Forum, now in its 12th year. Those who join in the Procession agree it is an amazing experience. “How can you not have fun wearing a giant puppet while baboons of all ages prance around to a thrilling and perfectly executed complex drum beat? What a blast! It was a high of pure dimensions and a love that envelopes infinity,” local resident John Beck says. Evergreen's influence on the Procession is palpable. The initial drumming workshops were taught by Scott Saunders '87, with many of the instruments belonging to the college. Faculty members Terry Setter and Shawn Williams have led music groups, and students participate in the parade.
Evergreen Alumni Gather Around the Country

Evergreen faculty member writer Bill Ransom will discuss “Story and the Uses of Story” at the Los Angeles alumni gathering, set for 6 p.m. Saturday, April 28, at the Barefoot Restaurant, 6722 West Third St., Los Angeles. Check out some of Bill’s work at www.sfwa.org/members/ransom or at the library or bookstore. President Les Purce and some of your favorite media faculty and alumni staff will also attend.

On Thursday, June 28, at 6 p.m., Glen Kriekenbeck ’89 and Quentin King ’84 will host a gathering for Boston-area alumni in their home at 1088 Broadway in Somerville. Visit www.bostongreeners.org for developing information or contact Glen and Quentin at (617) 623-2247 or eking@world.com.

On Sunday, August 12, at 2 p.m., Eugene-area alumni will gather at the Sawmill Ballroom Lavender Farm of Nancy Connolly ’78 and Joely Blum ’78 for a potluck picnic. Nancy and Joely live at 29251 Hamm Road near Lorane and can be reached at (541) 686-9999. Visit their Web site at www.sawmillsbalroom.com for directions and other information.

Super Saturday Digital Photo Exhibit Requirements and Guidelines:
E-mail photos of 72 ppi jpegs, no more than 450 pixels high, to rberg@hevanet.com. Photos must have been taken while you were an Evergreen student.
Photo files will not be returned. They will be stored in the college archives and may be used for other non-commercial college purposes.

Bring this coupon to the Greener Oasis Root Beer Garden and receive two root beer concoctions for the price of one.
Valid only on Super Saturday, June 16, 2001.
Beyond Care Packages:

How to Stay Involved as Parents

You always knew your job wasn’t done when you dropped off your disoriented child at the beginning of freshman year at Evergreen, didn’t you? As the separation anxiety sets in for parents, wouldn’t it be nice to find extra ways to contribute to your child’s well-being and feel a sense of connection to his or her life at college?

The Evergreen Parent Council, coordinated through the Office of College Advancement, is an advisory group to the college. Members serve as ambassadors to other parents through their network across the United States, as advocates of student concerns and as long-term fundraisers and donors. The cohesion of the group and its strength on campus are maintained through quarterly teleconferences.

Kate DeLozier, a Parent Council member and the college’s self-proclaimed cheerleader, is the mother of four sons, two of whom currently attend Evergreen. Although she’s abandoned her high school pom-poms, she now rallies support from the administration when students are facing problems in housing or registration. She has been involved in the parents’ program for three years since her son Patrick first came to Evergreen. DeLozier’s primary role in the group has been to coordinate outreach to parents of new students, beginning during Orientation Week, where she serves on a parent-to-parent panel.

"One of the best ways the program can directly touch parents of freshmen is through campus events. Talking to another parent and asking face-to-face questions eases their minds about what their children can expect at Evergreen in terms of academics and day-to-day living, and gets them acquainted with how the whole system works,“ DeLozier explains.

Another form of outreach for the parents’ program is its online newsletter, The Parent Express, updated and e-mailed monthly by program coordinator Debbie Garrington.

"It’s important for parents and students to have common interests. The newsletter provides parents with information on upcoming events, speakers, student works and campus issues so they can plan visits, or mention campus issues in telephone conversations to let their children know they are interested in their life away from home," DeLozier says, adding that she feels lucky to have the time to devote to her sons’ higher education, which isn’t possible for all parents.

Barb and Darrell Williams have taken another approach to donating to the college. Their story begins in 1993, when their youngest son, Kurt, first came to Evergreen. At the time, they were living in Spokane, but Barb was so enamored with the beauty of the campus and the college’s approach to learning that she decided to become involved despite the distance.

"I thought that if I were going back to school, this is where I’d go," says the long-time member of The Evergreen State College Foundation Board of Governors. She sees her role on the board as developing strong community relationships and securing financial support for the college. Williams’ dedication to fundraising is grounded in her belief in Evergreen’s philosophy of education and her passion for expanding the influence and visibility of the college. "I respect Evergreen and find what happens there unique. Both Darrell and I are very ‘over-degreed,’ I have been to a lot of colleges, but have never felt the connection I have with Evergreen."

Recently the couple included the college as a beneficiary of a charitable trust in their estate plans. This means that they transferred appreciated assets to establish a trust that pays them income during their lifetime, and will benefit Evergreen and three other charities after they die. In addition to the income benefits, they were able to avoid all capital gains taxes on the transfer and receive immediate income tax deductions for part of the trust value. They are the first parents in Evergreen’s history to do so.

"My husband and I have decided to prepare charitable trusts for four different organizations we really believe in and the college is one of them," Williams explains. "One of my ongoing personal goals is to expand the influence and visibility of Evergreen."
National Recognition Received for Innovative Undergraduate Education

Evergreen has been chosen by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) as one of 16 "leadership institutions" for its visionary innovations in undergraduate education. Duke, the universities of California, Michigan and Nebraska, Hampshire College and the United States Air Force Academy are among the other leadership institutions. Seventy-three colleges applied to the program.

"This is a huge honor for Evergreen and the state of Washington," President Thomas L. (Les) Parke says. The AACU evaluated community colleges, four-year colleges and universities for their approaches to the liberal education of undergraduates. The selected schools are characterized by extensive innovations in their curricula, approaches to teaching and organizational structure. These colleges prioritize critical thinking about complex problems, effective communication, and the ability to contribute to a diverse society as important outcomes of undergraduate education.

"Evergreen is pleased to be part of such an important national project," says Barbara Leigh Smith, provost and academic vice president. "We have much to contribute to the work of restructuring undergraduate education in ways that will lead to improved student learning and greater faculty vitality."

As a member of the consortium, Evergreen will take part in a series of seminars for college faculty to identify ways to help students integrate knowledge and solve complex problems. The consortium is also sponsoring summer institutes to show colleges how to increase student expectations and performance.

Evergreen also ranked high in another national review—for one based on responses from students. The National Survey of Student Engagement, launched last December with funds from the Pew Charitable Trusts, interviewed 63,000 randomly selected first-year and senior students at 276 colleges and universities.

This survey is noteworthy for steering the national discussion about college quality away from resources and reputational rankings and toward what matters more in student learning—good educational practice. The survey measures student engagement in activities that are positively related to achievements in learning and personal development. Students were queried on the level of academic challenge, degree of active and collaborative learning, interaction with faculty members, enriching educational experiences and supportive campus environments.

Participating schools were divided into six categories. Evergreen is in the liberal arts group, which outscored the average of all schools in each of the five benchmarks of educator quality listed in the paragraph above.

Compared to other participating liberal arts colleges, student responses place Evergreen in the 90th percentile in academic challenge and in the 80th percentile for active and collaborative learning.

Compared to all colleges and universities participating in the survey, student responses place Evergreen in the 90th percentile for both academic challenge and active and collaborative learning.

Fund for Innovation Receives $250,000

With a $250,000 distinguished professorship grant from the state of Washington, the Evergreen Fund for Innovation recently surpassed its $1 million goal.

"Now the college can award $50,000 in grants each year to support innovative projects at Evergreen. This will definitely keep us on the cutting edge in education, which is what Evergreen is all about," says faculty member Oscar Scoble, who has contributed generously to the fund.

One special gift made by alumna Christina Messner '75 provided the final private funding necessary to receive the Distinguished Professorship, which the state makes contingent on matching private contributions. "I'm pleased to help support innovation and creativity at Evergreen. It's important to me as a member of the Evergreen Foundation Board of Governors that we continue to offer opportunities to create new programs and push the envelope. It's an investment in our future," she says.

Grant recipient Ken Tabbutt adds, "This grant will provide opportunities for students to link theory with practical applications, as well as promote outdoor, inquiry-based learning. As a faculty member, I'm interested in seeing that environmental studies education make the best possible use of long-term studies." Tabbutt and Hip Henningsway's proposal to create an interactive database and archive for campus-based ecological research was awarded $13,500.

A proposal submitted by faculty members Therese Saliba, Lance Laird and Steve Niva to integrate Arabic and Hebrew language studies into the Evergreen curriculum also received a grant. "Through language study, students will put their knowledge into action by working with native speakers both 'in person' and 'abroad,'" write the authors. "Most important, this pilot program may open up other possibilities for using distance-learning technology at Evergreen to accommodate students' learning interests and needs."

"Piece of My Mind" Lecture Series Showcases Faculty Talent

Award-Winning Environmental Filmmaker John de Graaf is this year's Evans Scholar

John de Graaf, whose many PBS documentaries about social and environmental issues have brought him critical acclaim, is Evergreen's 2000-01 Evan Scholar.

"Evergreen has a national reputation for its work in environmental studies, and its media department is excellent. Some of my very best interns have come from Evergreen," says de Graaf, recipient of more than 80 regional, national and international awards.

In January, de Graaf joined faculty members Bill Arney and Nalini Nadkarni in teaching the second half of the two-quarter program From Lab to Living Room: Science, Public Policy and Personal Behavior.

"We were interested in looking at how scientific data is used by policymakers and others in making decisions that impact our lives," Arney says. "John's extensive research of environmental and social issues added a valuable dimension to our discussions."

De Graaf also taught a weeklong "directing the documentary" workshop for upper-division media students and hosted a campus-wide film series.

De Graaf is a producer, writer and editor of documentary films, Affluenza, which he co-produced with Vivia Boe for KCTS/Seattle and Oregon Public Broadcasting, premiered on PBS in September 1997. The program looks closely at excessive consumerism in the United States, where 5 percent of the world's population expends almost a third of the world's resources and produces nearly half of global hazardous waste. De Graaf's work helped to popularize the "voluntary simplicity" movement.

A native of California who originally studied sociology at the University of Wisconsin, de Graaf has been producing documentaries for 23 years. His national PBS programs include Visible Target, God and Money, Circle of Plenty, It's Up to Us, For Earth's Sake: The Life and Times of David Brower, and A Personal Matter: Gordon Hirabayashi x. The United States. De Graaf is currently writing his first book, Affluenza, due in bookstores next summer. He now lives in Seattle.

De Graaf's most recent film last year's Beyond Organic: The Vision of Fairview Gardens, based on the books by Michael Ableman and narrated by Meryl Streep. This 12-acre urban farm in Goleta, Calif., is a model of sustainable food production and community involvement.

Established in 1995, the Evans Chair in Liberal Arts is endowed through private contributions raised by The Evergreen State College Foundation and matched by the state of Washington. It was named in honor of Daniel J. Evans, who supported the creation of Evergreen during his time as Washington state governor and who was Evergreen's second president.

Past Evans Scholars include author and filmmaker Sherman Alexie, Chehalis historian and basketweaver Hazel Pete and science fiction author Vonda McIntyre.
2001 Earthquake

Olympia and Evergreen shook, rattled and rolled during the 6.8 magnitude earthquake—the area's largest temblor since 1949. Felt as far away as Utah, the quake's epicenter was located underneath Puget Sound, just offshore from the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge near the Thurston-Pierce county line. On campus, the epicenter of action—and damage—was the Library building where books toppled off shelves, ceiling tiles fell and terrified occupants huddled under tables and in doorways as the building swayed to and fro. "Everyone I talked to who was outside during the earthquake thought it was fun. If you were inside the Library, you would never think that," commented Randy Parr, special assistant to the vice president for finance and administration.

Big-ticket items among the estimated $657,000 worth of damage included elevators in the Library and CAB, a collapsed wall in the CRC diving pool, road damage on Driftwood, water damage from a burst pipe that flooded Admissions, and folded and bent metal strips holding together ceiling tiles. The most urgent repairs, such as elevators, were fixed immediately after the Feb. 28 earthquake, with the rest expected to be completed by summer, Parr said.

One of the most remarkable displays of community spirit was restoration of the Library stacks that toppled thousands of books. More than 100 volunteer students, faculty, staff and community members worked with librarians to reshelve books, resulting in spiffier and tidier looking stacks than before the quake.

The college is insured for damage to contents, which totaled around $50,000. Administrators are waiting to hear from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which may cover up to 75 percent of remaining costs, Parr said.

In Thurston County, most of the visible damage from the Nisqually earthquake was to downtown Olympia. Pillars of the capital dome shifted, forcing closure of the rotunda, perhaps until 2004. Other major casualties included the Fourth Avenue bridge, which is set to be demolished, and Deschutes Parkway along the west side of Capitol Lake where the ground was still shifting six weeks after the 45-second earthquake. Much of the ornate cornice of the Washington Federal Bank building (on right) on the corner of Fifth Ave. and Capitol Way fell off, damaging a parked car.

Part of the Skookum Bay Outfitters building on Capitol Way crumbled into the adjacent alley.

Volunteers and staff worked for more than a week to sort books and restock shelves in the Library stacks.

While some campus offices always look like the photo at left, the earthquake left a wide, though uneven, swath of destruction. Books tumbled off shelves, files overturned and walls cracked in some work spaces, while adjacent offices were barely scathed.
Joe Ochoa, Turner, OR, is serving a second term as Marion County circuit court judge. After being elected in 2000 for him was visiting Costa Rica and undergoing successful prostate cancer surgery. Joe now serves on the committee for his mid-40s, and those at risk, to have regular physical exams.

Gary D. Mozel, Seattle, says the highlight of the year 2000 for him was visiting Costa Rica and helping design a new Komodo Dragon exhibit at Woodland Park Zoo.

Joel H. Seidel, Bellevue, is a registered real estate agent and has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this material and regrets errors resulting from its method of collection. AlumNotes is compiled by the Office of Alumni Affairs and edited for length and content. To submit information, contact the office at (360) 867-6561 or e-mail tesculal@evergreen.edu.

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Betty L. Rosen, Mercer Island, says, "Now there are three Greeners among the family: Betty, Jane and Shannon."

Eric B. Henry, Bellingham, completed a master's degree in environmental science and teacher education. His wife, Ann Lackland '91, teaches Spanish and English as a Second Language. They live with their two cats.

Linnal J. Herasy, Del. Park, IL, is setting up a new stable to rescope government lab at the University of Illinois and wonders, "Where in the world is TAC [Todd Andrew Orter]-"

Lorie M. Hull, Gordonale, earned her teacher's certification.

Molly McCloy, Phoenix, AZ, started a feminist/spacer journal. Look for queerians.org.

Lea D. Mitchell, Etowah, VA, and Jeff Richards '91, "Around 15 or so, I realized my future was in making music," and "I really enjoy the challenge."

Mark P. Sechel, Brooklyn, NY, is a pastry chef at a popular Manhattan restaurant and composes music for dance. He loves living in Brooklyn.

Christopher G. Yeeeris, Karnataka, Sweden, lives in the countryside with his wife, Linda's places. "Inglisap, and her three children: his 10-yearerald son lives happily with his mother in Scotland. He is a greengrocer for the Sweden Kirkan/CurchofSweden, has a business with his wife selling imported handcraft, and goes feng shui lectures throughout Sweden/stanganen.ru.

Tammy L. Robaker, Laramie, WY, moved to southern Colorado after graduating, and became a cooperator for a national retail clothing company. In 1999, she moved to Wyoming to work on her master's degree in communications and media studies. In addition to her teaching on the University of Wyoming, she teaches fashion and media at Laramie Community College. She is a supervisor and program coordinator for Mothers of Preschoolers, a ministry at Woodland Baptist Church.

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Angela L. Young, Palo Alto, CA, has found a new home with Stanford University's HighWire Press [highwire.stanford.edu] after five full-time years working with the publishing concerns in Seattle (commongroundsw.org and childrensresource.org). Angie is very interested in looking up with other Greeners living in the Bay Area and Silicon Valley.

Natalie A. Harvey-Banks, Roy, and husband Lloyd have three kids.

Eunice L. Blasewicz (Lise Blanchard), Grand Rapids, MI, graduated with a master's degree in geography from the University of Texas, Austin, in 1989, worked for the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, DC, and calls Grand Rapids her home base as she moves around the country.

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Dulcie R. Clarkson, Tofalina, CD, is writing a screenplay while taking care of a 1,000-square, solar-powered ranch for a well-known four-season move star.

Sherry F. Clements, Lacey, graduated from Goddard College in July with a master's in fine arts degree in creative writing.

Lisa Corwin Gell, Spokane, is a freelance graphic designer. She and her husband, Steve Tinsley, celebrated their sixth anniversary of joyous marriage and like on a small farm in Camano Island.

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Geo Gear

Order now! Proceeds from the sale of these items support student scholarships and other alumni programs.

Briefcase/carry-all
This Jansport briefcase, made of water-repellent and abrasion-resistant cordura material, displays the Evergreen logo and features a molded handle and non-slip shoulder strap, organizer panel for pens and pencils and 1,200 cubic inch storage capacity.

Umbrella
Green-and-white Evergreen umbrella folds to a convenient 18 inches, and with the touch of its auto-open button, expands to a spacious 45 inches in diameter.

Evergreen logo sweatshirts and T-shirts
Distinctive Evergreen alumni sweatshirt or short-sleeved T-shirt with the memorable Evergreen logo specially modified to show your alumni status. See order form for color choices.

Geoduck T-shirt
This 100% cotton, short-sleeved T-shirt features a special geoduck design created by an alum.

Cotton canvas baseball cap
Canvas baseball cap has the Evergreen logo embroidered in green. Off-white with green bill.

Ceramic mugs
Two styles available. The Evergreen logo version is green with the logo etched into the mug. Also available, the alumni geoduck design appears in full color on a white mug. Mugs are dishwasher and microwave safe.

Key rings

Order Form

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