

CCBLA

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY-BASED
LEARNING AND ACTION

SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

Center for Community-Based Learning and Action (CCBLA)

A Public Service Center at the Evergreen State College connecting students, faculty, and community organizations since 2004

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

CCBLA receives many community requests for student involvement and our center team is ready to help students get connected to make a difference in our communities. CCBLA maintains lists of current opportunities and designs resource lists for academic programs. We also encourage students to check on Handshake where sites can post directly:

<https://app.joinhandshake.com/edu>

The Community Internship Fair: Local to Global Experiential Learning happened in February in Evans Hall Lobby. Close to 50 local, regional, and global organizations tabled inviting students to put knowledge and talents to work and learn about hands-on opportunities in the community. The fair is a Public Service collaboration with Evergreen Holistic Advising and TRIO Programs, Experiential Learning at Evergreen, Center for Community Based Learning & Action (CCBLA), Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership and Transformational Change (CELTC), and International Programs and Services. Reach out to CCBLA!

We can share information about paid and unpaid internships, Community Service Work study jobs, volunteer opportunities, AmeriCorps and internships.



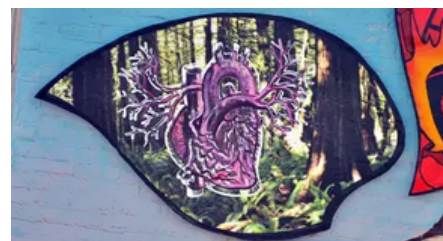
Farmworker Tribunal 2024
Photo by Bob Ziegler, Strengthening Sanctuary

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

ELLEN SHORTT SANCHEZ, MPA

You are part of a long legacy of Community Based Learning (CBL) and Action. The Evergreen State signed a College Civic Action Plan in 2018 which “supports curricular commitments to community partnerships, CCBLA and public service in the Academic division.”

Community work happens with support from active local organizations. Educators in the field, dedicated Greener student learners and creative fierce faculty make it happen. The commitment to mutually respectful campus-community partnerships means we need feedback from everyone in the CBL cycle. In this newsletter we celebrate Evergreen students’ impact on critical community issues of war and peace, racial and economic justice, social change, and basic needs equity.



“CCBLA LEAF ON THE OLYMPIA RAFAH SOLIDARITY MURAL DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA”
WE NEED TO END WAR AND DESTRUCTION IN GAZA

CCBLA STAFF 2023-24

CCBLA Director.....	Ellen Shortt Sanchez
SOS CCBLA Faculty	Therese Saliba & Alice Nelson
Gateways Program Coordinator.....	Talib Williams
Gateways Faculty.....	Carolyn Prouty & Anthony Zaragoza
Basic Needs Navigator	V Guardado
AmeriCorps Gateways College Success Mentor Coordinator.....	Zoey Knox
Community Service Work Study-Basic Needs Team	Hailey Williams & Drew Bland
AmeriCorps Basic Needs Resource Coordinator	Rachel Espinoza Ortiz
AmeriCorps Mentor/Tutor Coordinator	Jimena Flores Martinez
Jacinta McKoy CBL Scholar.....	Francisco Daza

THE EVERGREEN FOOD BANK

The Evergreen State College partnered with Thurston County Food Bank provides food distribution twice a month to our Olympia campus and the broader community. Washington Campus Coalition for the Public Good (WACC) AmeriCorps members, volunteers and student workers make it possible. Distributions happen every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month 2pm-4pm within the Basic Needs Center CAB 135.



Evergreen's Organic Farm partners with the Evergreen satellite campus food bank and supplements a considerable amount of produce during distribution. The foodbank distribution uses an indoor shopping model. Visitors do a short check in at the door.

Distribution provides two types of grocery pick up visits. Full or Supplemental visits. **(2 Full visits per month, 1 Supplemental visit per week)** Please note that you may pick up groceries for someone else. In order to do so, you must always bring a dated note from that person specifically giving you permission to pick up their food and copy or photo of their ID.

Spring Quarter Distributions:

April 9th & 23rd

May 14th & 28th

June 11th & 25th



(left to right) Ellen, Rebekah, Maria, Rachel
First indoor Distribution Oct 10 2023 Food Pantry



@evergreenfoodbank

BASIC NEEDS CENTER



@evergreenbnarc

The Basic Needs Center opened in Spring 2021 and is an accessible space on campus for students to access supplies, food, hygiene items, and other basic needs at no cost. Students can make appointments to visit the center and receive:

- Referrals to outside resources (SNAP/EBT, Foodbank Pantry)
- Hygiene Items
- Food Pantry & Shelf Stable Foods
- Donated Books
- Cleaning Products
- Kitchen Items
- Gender-Affirming Clothing & Accessories
- Plant cuttings & propagations
- and more!

Current appointment & donations days and times:

Monday, Wednesdays, Friday 1 - 5 PM

Email: ARCBasicNeeds@evergreen.edu



Rachel Espinoza Ortiz & V Guardado

The Basic Needs Act, which emerged from advocacy efforts on the state-level to address the real-life challenges and barriers students face in pursuit of higher education, prompts schools to create the role of Basic Needs Navigator on their campuses. At The Evergreen State College, the part-time Basic Needs Navigator is a member of the Student Engagement, Equity, and Support division and CCBLA and works with the Washington Students Achievement Council (<https://wsac.wa.gov/>) The Basic Needs Navigator joins the Basic Needs Center team and is the point of referral and coordination with existing services. The position collaborates with on and off-campus partners to develop services for basic needs in support of student success alongside the Basic Needs Center team.

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V is a first-generation college graduate of Evergreen's class of 2016 and ex-restaurant worker with a passion for collective and cooperative organizing. As a student, they engaged in First Peoples, TRiO, and the CCBLA, and participated in student organizing efforts student groups and The Flaming Eggplant, and after graduating New Moon Cooperative Cafe.

As they rejoin Evergreen, V aims to fortify and sustain the ongoing momentum of Basic Needs initiatives and community partnerships. V looks forward to centering the needs and voices of students in their work, and cultivating connections, both on-campus and with community partners.

The Basic Needs Navigator offers appointments for students to receive tangible items, access to campus food bank, Basic Food (SNAP) application assistance, and referrals to many providers and services.

Please contact the Basic Needs Navigator by e-mail v.guardado@evergreen.edu or at (360) 867-6866 to schedule an appointment and to learn more about Basic Needs offerings. They are on campus Monday-Wednesday 9AM-5PM, Office SEMII 2125 in the CCBLA.

Learn More about
the Basic Needs
Center!



GATEWAYS FOR INCARCERATED YOUTH

MAKING SENSE OF ART AND OURSELVES

BY ZOELY KNOX

This year, I have the honor of serving with AmeriCorps as a peer mentor in the Gateways class, and as the coordinator of the Academic Mentorship Program (AMP), which puts on workshops covering a wide variety of subjects for justice-involved high schoolers.

The first workshop we did for AMP this year was in partnership with Olympia Ecosystems. We got a tour of the Cooper Crest Restoration Site (see photo) and learned about land stewardship, native ecosystems, and invasive plants. The bread and butter of the Gateways program is our pedagogy of popular education. This model emphasizes the valuable knowledge and lived experiences that every single person brings into the learning space. Everyone is a student, and also a teacher. I am an artist who is passionate about the learning process, so each time I enter the classroom (whether on the Olympia campus or at the Green Hill School in Chehalis), I bring my creativity, my curiosity, and my prior experiences of being both a participant in and a facilitator of workshops. A prime example of this is a workshop that I got to lead at Green Hill in which we explored how to write detailed descriptions through the elements of design and analysis of visual art.

We started with the elements of design in order to think together about what goes into a description. As a group, we analyzed the painting 1919 by Robert Colescott, discussing how we saw each element of design in the piece and what meaning we could make from it.

Then, we did an activity inspired by a workshop that Dr. Anthony Zaragoza, Gateways faculty for Fall Quarter, had facilitated early in the year. Dr. Z had asked us to write directions for a partner to construct a specific shape with wooden blocks, one which the other person had never seen themselves. The goal of the activity was to practice writing and following directions, and to reflect on our strengths and challenges in each of those areas. It was a creative and engaging way to think about a fundamental skill, and it was the perfect blueprint for my own activity to help students to think about their writing skills.

I split the class up into two groups, and gave each a different piece of artwork to analyze. Together, they wrote a paragraph describing their piece in detail, and then swapped their description with the other group. Then, each group drew the artwork that they had not seen based on the description that the other group had given them.

At the end, we came back together and compared the groups' drawings to the original artworks. We reflected on what was challenging about the exercise, what the strengths and weaknesses of each group's descriptions were, and what folks might add or change if they had another chance. People shared insights about what they had learned about themselves and the skill of writing a detailed description, and they also shared how much fun they'd had in the learning process!

This is just one of the many magical learning moments in Gateways. Each day, we dig into what it means to be lifelong learners and teachers, strong community members, and advocates for change. If you're interested in learning more about Gateways or the Academic Mentorship Program, reach out to Zoey Knox at Zoey.Knox2@evergreen.edu.



Youth Mentor & Youth at Cooper Crest Restoration Site

Learn More
about Gateways!

To apply for Gateways 2024-25
Contact Talib Williams
williade@evergreen.edu



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY: THE ISSUES, AND STUDIES

BY PEDRO DA CRUZ

I'm glad I made the choice to move down to Olympia from Seattle last November. I'd been wanting to attend Evergreen since around 2017 when I moved to Washington. I heard from a friend about the quality and variety of the classes here, and the more closely-knit and welcoming community. My main studies are in political science and agriculture, and for Winter quarter, I decided to focus on political science.

I'm in a class called Climate Policy and Action: Policy and Advocacy, which is part of a three-course climate policy certificate program. I originally expected it to be extremely depressing, given the current status of global progress on the issue (or lack thereof), but it's turning out to be more uplifting. Don't get me wrong, I still have climate anxiety, but engaging the issue with my peers (especially those who are also very worried about the climate crisis) and learning more about the different types of solutions available definitely gives me hope. For anyone who might feel disheartened about climate, there is yet some hope! Connecting with like-minded people and educating yourself further is the key.

I've also had the opportunity this quarter to engage another extremely important issue, the genocide of Palestinians by the Israeli government. I should clarify, I don't speak for TESC or any of its departments, nor am I speaking in my new capacity as a project assistant at the Rachel Corrie Foundation. Genocide, the intentional destruction of a people in whole or in part. If you've been following the recent history and news of the war, you know by this point that it is intentional; and that the U.S. government is the most ardent supporter of Israel's war crimes. More than 32,000 Palestinian civilians are now dead, including nearly 13,000 children and 9,000 women, and that's only since last October. I'm so grateful to be living somewhere where people are seriously concerned with this issue. To be able to work in an organization that fights for Palestinian rights fits perfectly with my studies.

I wish every college had an organization like CCBLA, so that every student could have greater and faster access to their community, and the subjects they're passionate about. I came to truly understand the essentiality of community-based learning and action back in 2020, the year that marked the rise of COVID-19, the quarantine, and the murder of George Floyd. With the multitude of dilemmas humanity now faces, both collectively and as individuals, we cannot afford to isolate ourselves and seek only what is in the individual self-interest. I have hope that today's younger generations will pivot our global society into an era of community, solidarity, compassion, and caring for our environment. Please get out there if you can. Say hello to your neighbors, your friends, and the rest of your community. Explore, create, take part in a local project or action, because this is a world of infinite possibilities, and our time in it is fleeting.

AMERICORPS TUTOR MENTOR COORDINATOR



BY JIMENA MARTINEZ FLORES

My name is Jimena and I am currently enrolled in my senior year. I am an aspiring MiT student for the multilingual program cohort. I am glad to have arrived at the CCBLA. I get inspired every day from the established and expanding network of partners and people working with and for the community, often for those historically marginalized. Special thanks to Ellen and Rachel.

Since I started my position, my perceptions of what is possible with youth and the field of education have drastically changed.

There are many opportunities for us who want to foster a creative and learning environment for young people. This can range from classroom support to mentorship programs for youth within the LGBTQI+ umbrella to gardening and more.

In my position I have been able to talk to Evergreen students about their interest in education and have collaborated with them in finding meaningful service/learning opportunities. I have also been able to work closely with youth in alternative educational models at ORLA (Montessori) and Lincoln Options.

At ORLA I have supported the multigrade (3rd - 5th) classroom since the beginning of the school year. The children and I have built rapport with each other and are working together to make their (and my) learning meaningful—more than just getting caught up. Last month I had a conversation with a group of students about civil engagement prompted by a Scholastic News' article on the winter primary elections. The children brought forward that together we can make change in our community, and do not need to rely solely on the political parties and the elections. I could not agree more with the power of community and grassroots organizing, and these and other conclusions are possible by fostering a space where criticality is encouraged and where students feel seen and heard.

Overall, it has been refreshing to see so much care poured into the larger community.



HOUSING CASE MANAGER

BY CONNIE BRANGARD

The Washington State Legislature saw the need for supporting homeless students in the state. In 2020 they created a program called Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness to provide grants and assistance to college campuses. This program supports students who are homeless, in danger of being homeless, or who have aged out of foster care. Evergreen is lucky to be a part of this initiative and has been working to provide housing support for students on our campus for several years now through the work of the Basic Needs Center.

According to the 2022 Washington Basic Needs Survey survey, 48% of Evergreen students experience housing insecurity, with the Washington state average being 31% of four-year college students. The need at Evergreen is higher than the average, which makes the work here that much more important. The Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness grant is a means to work towards ending housing insecurity on our campus. While there is still a lot of work to be done, the Interim Case Manager for Student Support has worked with over 75 students so far this academic year, with 90% of these students being able to continue their studies at Evergreen.

The Case Manager works with each person individually to provide holistic support and care for the student, trying to find a long-term solution so that housing is not a worry for the student anymore. Every person deserves the ability to have an education, and the goal of this program is to make sure students have their basic needs met so that the focus can be on academics, the college experience, and success.

Common supports available include referrals to community organizations, referrals to on-campus resources, discussions on all aspects of well-being, assistance with on-campus housing applications, and the potential for financial support for housing.

If you or someone you know is experiencing homelessness, or in danger of homelessness, or if you or someone you know has aged out of foster care, contact the Case Manager by emailing ARCBasicNeeds@evergreen.edu.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO PENELOPE PARTRIDGE FOR THEIR WORK WITH STUDENT HOUSING ACCESS 2021-2023 !!!



JOSÉ GÓMEZ FARMWORKER JUSTICE DAY



Join Familias Unidas por la Justicia & Community to Community for the 17th Annual Farmworkers Justice Day Event.

This event honors Faculty Member José Gómez and his work advocating social change for farmworker working conditions, immigrants, and LGBTQI+ rights. The event will take place April 24th at 2pm in Evans Hall Lobby with panelists and a celebration including mariachi. Celebration will follow in the House of Welcome. Students & faculty are encouraged to attend!

MY JOURNEY THROUGH FOOD JUSTICE

BY HAILEY WILLIAMS

I came to Evergreen with very little direction about what I wanted to do. Within my first quarter, I was introduced to the Basic Needs Center and the Foodbank through the CCBLA and merely thought I had just found a place in which to earn volunteer hours. However, as time went on I gained a more in-depth understanding of the importance of Food Justice, especially for those experiencing the hardships accompanied by college. “Food is not a luxury, it is a right” was something told to me during my first year at Evergreen. In other words, it’s impossible to expect students to be able to manage their workloads and home lives all while being hungry and going without their basic needs. Over my three years at Evergreen, I’ve helped in managing and running both the Foodbank and The Basic Needs Center and gotten to witness firsthand the importance of having resources like the CCBLA in place, not just for students but for our communities as a whole.



A CLOSER LOOK AT EVERGREEN STUDENT HOUSING ISSUES

BY GRACE MCLARTY & JAINA NEHM

Student researchers Grace McLarty and Jaina Nehm conducted a survey of student housing experience Fall Quarter 2023. The survey was meant to build upon student's previous research and generate more recent and relevant data for The Evergreen State College. Students wanted a better understanding of how students navigated the housing crisis and cost-of-living crisis, how this may affect student academics and personal fulfillment. Student researchers looked not only at housing specific questions, but also at student-agency, relationships, and ability to meet their basic needs. The survey received 112 valid responses. Although the data was insightful, especially the narrative responses submitted by students, a complete survey of the student body would produce more nuanced results.

As students, we've heard countless stories of Evergreen students not being able to find a safe and affordable place to live. According to data provided by the Thurston Regional Planning Council, rents have increased 30% since 2021, and it is more difficult to find housing in Olympia than Tacoma or Seattle due to lower vacancy rates. We wanted to know how these rental market conditions were affecting Evergreen students; we wanted to turn the stories we had heard around campus into data that we could deliver to the administration.

The survey found that of the students surveyed, 48.2% most received the Pell Grant, 53.6% of students work at least part-time, and depend heavily on financial aid for monthly expenses. Students also indicated an unwillingness from local landlords to accept financial aid as income. The average monthly income for students before financial aid was 926.80 dollars, the average monthly rent in Thurston County for a one-bedroom apartment is 1,423 dollars (Thurston Regional Planning Council). Seeing as the main source of income for Evergreen students is financial aid, landlords not accepting that as a source of income represents a major barrier for students to find affordable, quality housing in Olympia.

Further, the survey found students were on average unsatisfied with their nutritional intake, and 63.9% of respondents indicated skipping meals due to financial reasons. Students who live off campus pay an average of \$710 dollars per month to rent private bedrooms, their search limited due to low/fair credit scores or for not having access to a cosigner. Additionally, students reported that landlords in the area are beginning to not accept co-signers if the applicant has a low credit score. This has broad effects, 42.3% of respondents have stayed in an abusive or unsatisfactory relationship due to housing insecurity or financial dependency during their time at Evergreen. Using the reported student incomes, we found 72.1% were considered rent-burdened, or paying 30% or more of their monthly income on rent. 53.5% pay 50% or more of their monthly income on rent.

Complete Housing Survey Review



The majority of students wrote that they do not feel supported by Evergreen and that they wish they had more support.

Something we have struggled with since winter quarter is articulating these results following Jonathan Rodriguez's death. Several narrative responses named unanswered workorders as a constant concern in student housing. Campus housing conditions and the lack of response from administration are what originally necessitated this survey. How do you approach your academic work after your friend was killed by gross negligence? I suppose by making these connections concrete and unavoidable.

What this survey represents is students knew housing was bad, that housing has been a heavy stress on students for too long. On-campus students similarly reported having no structural heating, prolonged issues with mold, and supported the unionization of RAD employees. Administration has proved unable to keep students safe on campus—unable to engage students' needs seriously. 65.8% of those surveyed indicated on-campus housing had a negative impact on their health and academics. Similarly, 81.6% of off-campus students reported housing having a negative impact on their health and academics.


The Evergreen State College needs to critically reassess their response to student housing. Students are suffering due to housing insecurity while at Evergreen. But there is a lot that the administration can do to help. It is in the school's best interest to advocate for affordable housing for their students, on and off campus. Housing is a basic need and should be treated as an important foundation to student success. Students will not be able to succeed at Evergreen without a safe and affordable place to live. For a complete review of the survey results, analysis, and student recommendations please see the bit.ly link below.

<https://bit.ly/48HhpnT>

LEARN MORE ON OUR CCBLA WEBSITE:



CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

 @evergreen_ccbla

Newsletter designed by Rachel Espinoza Ortiz, AmeriCorps Service Member

