



Grateful for his WWCC education

Alfredo 'Damian' Mendoza will graduate with his nursing credentials Friday, but he's concerned about the planned closure of Clarkston campus

By **KERRI SANDAINE**
 LEWISTON TRIBUNE

As he prepares to don a cap and gown for Friday's commencement ceremony, Alfredo "Damian" Mendoza is excited about his future, but he can't say the same for the Clarkston campus of Walla Walla Community College.

The 22-year-old nursing student said he received an outstanding education at the school and appreciates the staff members in Clarkston who devote so much time and energy to helping people achieve their goals.

"At the same time, the future of this college is on all of our minds," Mendoza said on Thurs-

day. "It's so unfortunate because this is an awesome program for people like me who can't afford WSU (Washington State University) or L-C (Lewis-Clark State College). I think this campus is a pretty integral part of the community."

In April, the board of trustees voted 3-2 to close the Clarkston campus with a two-year teach-out plan, unless new, significant and sustainable funding is secured.

The controversial decision has triggered a lot of trepidation, especially among potential students who are trying to figure out what to do now. It's difficult to fathom the doors closing for good in 2028, Mendoza said.

Fortunately, his brother, mother and girlfriend have either completed the program or are in the final year, so a closure won't affect his immediate family, he said.

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Alfredo "Damian" Mendoza poses for a portrait with the school in the background on Thursday at Walla Walla Community College in Clarkston. Mendoza will graduate from the school on Friday.

Pride on display in Pullman



Olivia Anderson/Lewiston Tribune

Pullman Pride participants march through the city with signs, waving to cars honking in support on Saturday along Grand Avenue in Pullman. The event started with a demonstration at Cougar Plaza, then shifted to Reaney Park for a community gathering.

Colorful crowd gathers for demonstration, march and gathering at Reaney Park

By **ERIN MULLINS**
 FOR THE LEWISTON TRIBUNE

PULLMAN — Pride may be a riot, but it's also a rally and a meal in the park surrounded by community.

Pullman's Pride in the Park kicked off with a rally from noon to 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Cougar Plaza.

Attendees wore bright colors and held signs rallying for queer visibility and LGBTQ rights as they stood on the sidewalk.

Joy radiated from the rally's members, and they were met with encouragement from many passing cars honking their support.

After a final rallying cry led by Shae Ortega (they/she), around 125 folks streamed through downtown Pullman toward Reaney Park, chanting



Olivia Anderson/Lewiston Tribune

Jonah Sickels attends Pullman Pride wearing a black wolf/rainbow dinosaur mask.

in solidarity along the way, as a band played music in the rear.

Led by Ortega, the crowd chanted this phrase: "Love is full. Love is bright. We will stand up for what's right."

Booths draped in rainbow decorations lined the

park as the rally members reached their destination.

The Rev. Danielle Ramsay led opening remarks, calling for community, visibility and respect.

"By community, we mean all the exhaustive, delightful list of identities that make

us into this kaleidoscope of queerness," Ramsay said. "By respect, we mean safety and honoring human dignity. By authenticity, we mean being ourselves, fully visible and proud."

Ramsay's remarks were followed by open mic speakers and live music by Izzy Qualls and Raza NW.

Throughout the day, more than 400 community members streamed around the park, checking out the booths, lounging on the grass and chatting under the sun.

Recent Washington State University English graduate Jonah Sickels attended the event with a group of friends.

Sickels said he is open about his LGBTQ identity.

"I try and be open in the community, but I have mainly just been open with the LGBTQ center at WSU and other LGBTQ-related things," he said. "I would love to do more than that."

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WA governor's office warns agencies to prepare for 'significant budget shortfalls'

By **BILL LUCIA**
 WASHINGTON STATE STANDARD

State agency leaders received a dire warning from Gov. Bob Ferguson's office on Friday that they're headed toward "what will likely be the most challenging budget any of us has yet faced."

"There will be significant budget shortfalls next biennium in both operating and transportation budgets," the governor's budget director, K.D. Chapman-See wrote in a three-page memo.

Chapman-See added: "This year's revenue forecasts will likely not provide sufficient support for the maintenance of current programs, let alone any expansions." She emphasized that it's still unclear how large a gap the governor and lawmakers will have to solve. But she said that, "A 'business as usual' approach will not meet the need of this moment."

Agency directors will have until Sept. 14 to submit their budget requests to the Office of Financial Management. Chapman-See told them they should plan to pause the phase-in of most new programs and not propose new ones.

Ferguson is asking agencies to take a hard look at spending on programs created or expanded after January 2019, a time period covering a pandemic-driven spike in government spending.

The governor also wants agencies to scrutinize areas where "Washington provides particularly high levels of service relative to other states, or is one of only a handful of states that provides a specific service or program," according to the memo.

Next year's session will mark the third in a row where Washington lawmakers will confront significant deficits. The first year, the solution involved cuts and a sizable tax package. This year's fix relied on rainy day savings, one-time maneuvers, and reductions in child care funding.

The state's two-year operating budget is now checking in around \$80 billion.

Republicans and, more recently, former Democratic Gov. Christine Gregoire, have criticized the growth in recent years under the Democrat-led state

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