



Center for Community Learning

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February 12, 2024

John Tuxill, Ph.D.  
Chairman, Sehome Hill Board of Governors  
Western Washington University  
Fairhaven 320A  
MS 9118  
516 High Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Chairman Tuxill,

I'm interested in joining the Sehome Hill Arboretum Board of Governors as a representative of Western Washington University. This role aligns well with my academic, professional, and personal interests.

My master's and PhD research in Geography investigated conflicts over natural resource management in the American West – especially how culture and life experience shaped people's attitudes toward land, wildlife, and each other. I was particularly interested in how management regimes and structures could be adjusted to help all people feel their voices and perspectives matter. I'm eager to help support co-management of the Arboretum in a way that all people feel heard and respected, and understand the complexities, competing interests and priorities, and tensions inherent in stewarding public land. I am delighted that our community is in the process of developing an Indigenous longhouse within the Arboretum. I would be honored to support that effort and broader efforts to integrate Indigenous voices and stories (and those of all cultures) into the management and interpretation of the Arboretum.

I currently serve as the Director of the WWU Center for Community Learning, where I've been on staff since 2015. Our office integrates WWU's educational efforts with broader communities. We collaborate with a wide array of schools and colleges, government agencies, and community organizations. I'm passionate about the public purpose of higher education and see the Arboretum as an excellent example of university-community collaboration. I believe there is great potential for expanding educational programming and multi-organization collaborative projects in the Arboretum. I would love to help support this work by serving on the Board.

Finally, the Arboretum is one of the most important places in my daily routine. I fondly remember running through the Arboretum the morning of my first job interview at WWU in October 2014, and looking out from the top of the tower at what I hoped would be my new hometown. I frequently take walking meetings through the trails with my WWU colleagues, students, and community partners. My runs and walks with my family and friends through the Arboretum have generated many special memories. I would love to help care for this important place so it can enhance the lives of many future generations.

Thank you for considering me as a member of the Board.

Sincerely,

Travis P. Tennessen, Ph.D.

**Travis Tennessen**

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Phone: 814-380-4351

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**Education**

**2012 Ph.D., Geography, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Minor in Historical Agroecology. Dissertation Title: *Trouble in Paradise: Conflict over Introduced Wildlife on Alaska's Kodiak Archipelago*. Supervisor: William Cronon. Committee: Nancy Langston, Lisa Naughton, Matthew Turner, Tim Van Deelen.

**2006 M.S., Geography, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Thesis: *Defining Conservation in Space and Time: Ranchers and Wilderness in the Little Missouri Badlands*. Supervisor: William Cronon. Committee: Jess Gilbert, Matthew Turner

**2004 B.S. with Honors, Geography and History, University of Wisconsin- Madison**

Certificate in Environmental Studies. Senior Honors Thesis: *Landscape Change in the Upper Mineral Point Branch Watershed, 1832-2004*. Supervisor: James Knox.

**Selected Work Experience**

2021-2024	Director, Center for Community Learning, Western Washington University
2020-2021	Interim Director, Center for Community Learning, Western Washington University
2015-2020	Assistant Director, Center for Community Learning, Western Washington University
2014	Visiting Assistant Professor, UW-Madison
2009-2011, 2014	Quest Director, The Crossing, Madison, WI
2013	Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Pennsylvania State University
2011-2013	Owner/Operator, Tennessen Treks
2011-2013	Campus Coordinator, UU Students at Penn State
2010-2013	Instructor, The Pennsylvania State University
2006-2009	Instructor, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2007 Naturalist, San Juan Excursions, Friday Harbor, WA.

2005-2007 Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin-Madison

### **Selected Honors and Awards**

2022 Honorary Member, Social Learning Lab, Sesimbra, Portugal

2018 Team Recognition Award, Sustainability Action Planning Team, WWU

2017 Community Builder Award, Whatcom Community and Family Network

2010 Whitbeck Dissertator Fellowship, UW-Madison Geography

2008 Trewartha Graduate Lecturer Award, UW-Madison Geography

2008 Center for Culture, History, and the Environment Graduate Travel Award, UW-Madison Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

2006 Outstanding Teaching Assistant, UW-Madison Geography

2004 University Fellowship, UW-Madison (1-year graduate study)

2000-04 Dean's List, UW-Madison (all semesters)

### **References**

Jack Herring, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Western Washington University

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Brian Davenport, Ph.D., Director, Office of Community Engagement

Eastern Washington University

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Kusemaat~Shirley Williams

Member and Resident of Lummi Nation

Co-Founder of Whiteswan Environmental ([whiteswanenvironmental.org](http://whiteswanenvironmental.org))

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