

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 SAIRC Proposed Budget Reallocation Rationale

Overview: For the AS Veterans Outreach Center (VOC)'s total programming budget, and the AS Veterans Community Coordinator (VCC) three-quarter position's undergraduate student hourly wage + fringe benefits budget to be fully reallocated to the [AS Western Hub of Living Essentials \(WHOLE\)](#)'s operating budget (which will be supplemented by other funding streams per Revised Code of Washington), and to the AS WHOLE Coordinator position.

The AS Veterans Outreach Center (VOC) duplicates programming and resources that [Veteran Services \(VSO\)](#) more extensively provides to students at Western:

1. When the AS Veterans Outreach Center was first established, there was a need for student veterans to have more supports at WWU. At that time, Veterans Services did not exist, nor did WWU have a full-time position solely dedicated to support student veterans. Now, WWU has a [successful](#) Veterans Services office, Director of Veterans Services, and two School Certifying Officials/Veteran Affairs Work Study's (VAWS) Site Supervisors that serve as advocates and liaisons.
2. Pre-pandemic and now, student veterans continue to actively engage with the VSO; whereas, the AS Veterans Outreach Center receives very little engagement by students despite continually offering engagement opportunities and holding virtual office hours.
3. During the last and current academic years, the VOC has received only one request for advocacy. The resource that was shared with that student was in fact the VSO, who then successfully facilitated addressing the barrier the students had been experiencing.

This redundancy in services, coupled with the sheer criticality of addressing the needs of students experiencing food insecurity during an economic recession heightened by a global pandemic, has all the coordinators in the AS Student Advocacy and Identity Resource Centers (SAIRC) in agreement that the AS Veterans Outreach Center's programming and the AS Veterans Community Coordinator hourly wage/fringe benefits budget should be reallocated to WHOLE.

1. The AS Western Hub of Living Essentials does not have an operational budget, which causes the program to depend on uncertain means to feed hungry students:
 - a. In-kind donations (food drives, Viking Union 6th floor donation box, etc.);
 - b. Monetary donations (via the WWU Foundation, like [Viking Funder](#));
 - c. Internal institutional means ([Sustainability, Equity, & Justice Fund](#), [Swipe Out Hunger](#));
 - d. External grants (Haggen Foundation Nourishing Communities, Campus Compact)
2. In June 2020, the AS Finance Council approved (Vote: 5-0-1) SAIRC's grant proposal to fund the three-quarter AS Western Hub of Living Essentials (WHOLE) Coordinator position up to \$9,090 (dependent if the role was filled by an undergraduate or graduate student) for one year. Until FY 2020-2021, the AS WHOLE did not have a dedicated staff position, which was a barrier to acquiring and sharing food resources with students.
3. The Free Food Pop-ups are in response to WWU students experiencing food insecurity that began as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. [During Fall Quarter 2020, 10 weekly Free Food Pop-ups were held at Vendor's Row, where students could pick up a bag of shelf-stable foods, as well as produce, which resulted in about 87 students attending per Pop-up, for a total of 872 total participants that quarter.](#)
4. The [2021 ASWWU Legislative Agenda](#) includes strong support for legislation that increases resources allocated to crucial basic needs programs, such as WHOLE.