

**Mary Loquvam, York Community Farm  
Community Engagement Fellows Project Report  
2017**

York Community Farm, a sustainable, organic urban farm in the York Neighborhood, enjoys a rich history of engagement with WWU. Western students were integral to the establishment of our first vegetable beds and our orchard five years ago. Since then, Western students have been very active volunteers at work parties and events and through Viking Launch. Two Western professors have worked with the farm to devise student research projects.

As I began my CEF term, I had two goals in mind: One, to meet faculty, specifically of Huxley College's sustainability courses, who would find the farm of enough interest to direct students to us for research projects on an on-going basis. And, two, to determine if Western Work Study or Service Learning students could participate in our paid, resume-building internship. What evolved through my CEF term opened worlds beyond my two goals, for which I am extremely grateful. I list the most salient highlights here:

1. *Pilot Internship through Center for Service Learning:* Working with Travis Tennesen of the Center for Service Learning, YCF has hired its first Western interns this spring. This pilot is testing the waters to determine how Western students can become more engaged in the community through internships with other organizations and businesses.
2. *Internship Pilot through Sustainable Action Fund:* Again working with the Center for Service Learning, the Sustainable Action Fund, and Students for Sustainable Food, YCF hopes to pilot a summer internship program for two Western students, to be funded by the SAF, and thus opening a whole new arena for SAF funded projects.
3. *Networking:* Through the CEF program I have increased my community network many times over. A short list of new contacts include:
  - a. City administrators and electeds interested in helping the farm expand our operation and increase the number of interns we employ from Bellingham's re-entry, homeless, and veteran populations.
  - b. Engineers Without Borders interested in helping design our pilot aquaponic project.
  - c. Western professors of engineering, business, sustainability, marketing, etc., who can direct students to assist with projects and strategic planning as the farm moves forward.

I was the only "community" member of my cohort; all my fellows being either WWU faculty or admin. I encourage local businesses and organizations to join the CFE program. I learned so much about Western and the potential resources and opportunities it can offer. I think it behooves any creative business or organization in town to reach out to Western and tap its energy! I am very pleased with the results (partnerships, contacts, ideas, and friends!) of the program and strongly recommend it.

On a personal note, my cohort was lovely – filled with thoughtful, compassionate, passionate people with whom it was a pleasure to share two hours each month. And, Travis Tennesen, our Fearless Leader, brings great intellect, vision, wisdom, sense of fun to the program. Don't miss this opportunity!