

Connecting Our Treehouse to WWU
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The Community Engagement Fellows program increased my connections with campus employees and opened up my awareness of on-campus resources. Beyond that, it was a lot of fun to meet so many new people.

My project was to increase our connections to key departments at WWU so that we can offer volunteer opportunities for students and staff while securing volunteers for our program.

We have had a great relationship thus far with WWU, but Our TreeHouse is not a widely recognized non-profit at WWU or in the general community.

Our TreeHouse is growing. We have a constant stream of calls from potential families wanting to join our Family Night, our bi-monthly support group for grieving families. In order to ensure emotional safety, our trained-facilitator to child ratio is quite high. Currently we cannot accept any new families into our program because we don't have enough trained facilitators.

We want to let the WWU community know that we are here and that volunteering for Our TreeHouse is incredible work.

We recognize that dealing with death is a difficult topic, especially for young adults who are just embarking on their lives. But we want to create a campaign of awareness at WWU so that potential interns or volunteers can learn that supporting grieving children is not always a downer. Supporting grieving kids can even be fun. Supporting grieving kids can be a great investment in their future.

Because of the support of my Fellows, I acquired ten contacts to email my offer to present to their students. I was able to schedule four on-campus presentations; three at Western Washington University and one at Whatcom Community College. As a result, we had seven students take our volunteer training on May 13th, which is a significant number of new volunteers. Also, I made connections with three professors who understand my program better and refer their students in the future.

This is all wonderful, but I continue to want to expand my reach at WWU and WCC. All of my presentations at WWU were related to the psych students. While I currently have students from Woodring and the Human Services department volunteering for us, I haven't gone into any classes to speak. If I do this over, I would make follow-up calls to the folks I emailed to establish more of a connection and answer any of their questions.