



Whitman Today

Monday, July 19, 2021

Character Studies



It's not a surprise to Chilton Middle School sixth graders when they arrive for Spanish class and find that Wonder Woman has prepared a lesson for them. After all, they've also received lessons from the likes of Superman, Fred Jones from "Scooby Doo," Anakin Skywalker of "Star Wars," Katniss Everdeen from the "Hunger Games" series and a Mandalorian warrior.

As Wonder Woman—aka Tiasha Garcia '96—tells them a story in Spanish, the students quickly jump into the scene. They'll ask Wonder Woman about her work as a superhero, their questions sprinkled with weekly vocabulary words and verb conjugations they've been working hard to perfect.

"Señora Garcia," as her students call her, combines her love for storytelling, cosplay and teaching every day in the classroom. She's discovered through years of experience that an exciting, engaging classroom encourages students to explore and grow.

"Why would we want to read or learn something that is not as interesting as all the things going on in our lives and imaginations?" Garcia says.

[Read more in the Whitman Magazine.](#)

Q: With all the concern about the Delta and Gamma variants, what is being done to track SARS-COV-2 variants?

A: In the United States, [the CDC tracks emerging variants](#) through genomic surveillance with the following approaches:

- Leading the National SARS-CoV-2 Strain Surveillance (NS3) system.
- Partnering with commercial diagnostic laboratories to sequence samples.
- Collaborating with universities to conduct genomic surveillance.
- Supporting state, territorial, local and tribal health departments in local investigations and database management.
- Leading the SARS-CoV-2 Sequencing for Public Health Emergency Response, Epidemiology, and Surveillance (SPHERES) consortium.

In Washington state, the Department of Health carries out genomic sequencing on a sample of specimens, publishing a weekly report on the [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). Breakthrough COVID cases (where a person becomes infected after being fully vaccinated) are currently being prioritized for genomic sequencing.

Announcements

State Fire Ban in Effect; Umatilla National Forest Closed

Severe heat and drought creating [extreme fire hazard conditions](#) have led Washington Gov. Jay Inslee to [ban open fires](#) in virtually every setting and severely restrict use of both gas and charcoal grills for the entire state. These restrictions should be followed by all members of the Whitman community currently in Walla Walla or other parts of Washington state and are in effect at all Whitman owned and operated properties.

Wildfires in multiple locations have led to a temporary closure of the entire Umatilla National Forest. Members of the public are prohibited from entering any part of the forest and should cancel any plans to visit, hike or camp there for the next several weeks.

Harvey Pool Closure 7/19 to 8/31

Due to a Washington state chemical plant emergency, there is a supply disruption of the sodium hypochlorite used for Harvey Pool. Therefore, we will be closing the pool to conserve our existing supply, maintain the water level with minimal chemical use and avoid a complete shutdown of the pool equipment. Facilities Services has ordered different equipment for chemical delivery that the team will install, with an anticipated re-opening by the start of the semester.

Money Matters: EAP Financial Coaching

Whitman employees have unlimited access to free and confidential financial coaching and online resources through the Cascade Centers Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Reach your financial goals regarding a variety of topics:

- Budgeting
- Credit reports
- Student loans
- Foreclosure prevention
- Debt management
- Retirement
- Taxes

Contact Cascade to connect with a financial coach:

1. Go to: [cascadecenters.com](https://www.cascadecenters.com)
2. Click 'Member Log In: EAP Member Site'
3. Sign in or register as a new user
4. Select 'My EAP Benefits,' then 'Financial Coaching'

Upcoming Events

TUESDAY, JULY 20

8:30–10 a.m.

Employee COVID-19 Testing

Any employee who has not submitted proof of COVID-19 vaccination must be tested in order to receive the weekly campus access badge. Testing will take place at Welty Student Health Center.

THURSDAY, JULY 22

5 p.m.

Next Steps 2022: So You Want to Go to Graduate School

Join SEC staff on Zoom to discuss the application process for graduate school, things you need to prepare and how to stand out to admission committees.

FRIDAY, JULY 23

9 a.m.

How to Make an Engaging Resume

The Student Engagement Center will host a Zoom session on how to create engaging resumes that will stand out to potential employers. Come with questions, or just to learn.

Whitman Events Calendar

Have a virtual event you'd like to share with campus? Email the details to whitmantoday@whitman.edu.

"Whitman Today" is produced by the Office of Communications and is emailed Monday and Thursday to Whitman College staff, faculty and students. All times are listed in Pacific Daylight Time.

Submissions are welcome! If you have a professional or personal accomplishment to celebrate, an event to publicize or other content to share with the Whitman community, email whitmantoday@whitman.edu. Submissions should be 125 words or less. The deadline for submissions is noon for the following day's newsletter, though submissions may be held for a later date according to space and editorial needs. By submitting to Whitman Today you also authorize use on Whitman's social media unless otherwise specified.

Previous issues of Whitman Today are [archived on our website](#).

