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Dear President Randhawa and the WWU Board of Trustees:

In the course of preparing its report and recommendations, the Legacy Review Task Force reviewed several reports produced by Western Libraries Heritage Resources, each of which contained numerous links to primary archival materials. Of necessity, the Task Force's report had to summarize or simply direct the reader to these archival materials rather than quoting extensively from them. In some places in the report, however, I believe that the complex historical context was glossed over or simply replaced with editorial comments about the individuals or the era. My intent here is not to contradict or undermine the Task Force's report or recommendations, but is based instead on a belief that the Board's deliberations and the process itself will be enhanced by directly presenting more of the relevant context from the archival and historical documents, specifically related to Edward T. Mathes and William W. Haggard.

Members of the Task Force were conflicted in their assessment of Mathes and Haggard for several reasons. One was the perceived difference (or lack of difference) between a subject's so-called "sins of commission" vs. "sins of omission", and the interpretation of the historical evidence (or lack of it) at the Task Force's disposal to favor one view or another. In my view, these sections of the report apply a standard that an individual's failure to address or remedy an injustice (e.g., Haggard's failure to speak out against the internment of Japanese Americans by Executive Order 9066, and in defense of student James Okubo in particular, or Mathes' failure to publicly condemn the Bellingham Riots of 1907)—is morally equivalent with the individual's actively participating in an injustice.

Another area of disagreement in the Task Force's assessment of Mathes and Haggard concerned the uneven weighing of evidence and the willingness to draw speculative conclusions beyond the available evidence. In some parts of the report, the lack of evidence that an individual objected to an injustice or failed to accelerate progress toward greater justice leads to associating them with some of the most virulent prejudices of the day. In other places where the evidence points in the direction of crediting Mathes or Haggard with individual leadership toward greater justice and inclusion, the report seeks to undermine that credit, attribute it elsewhere, or downplay the event's significance. The section on Haggard is

particularly noteworthy for employing this double standard, laying at his feet the responsibility for Western's lack of progress on several fronts, while denying him credit for progress that did occur.

In general, I believe these two sections of the report tend to conflate correlations with causal relationships, and where evidence is lacking of an individual's activity against injustice or toward fostering greater justice, the default assumption is to make a negative assessment based on general views about the injustices of the era or a standard of moral evaluation which equates failure to oppose injustice with commission of injustice. By presenting more extensive quotation and context from archival materials apart from editorializing or importing these evaluative standards, I believe the Board is in a better position to make its own judgments.

As a final preface, I would like to note that the Task Force's time and energies were spent unevenly in arriving at its different recommendations. In reviewing the "[Research and Resources](#)" page of the Task Force website and the timeline leading up to the appointment of a Legacy Review Task Force, it is clear that the issues around the naming of the Huxley College of the Environment loomed much larger than those around any other named feature of campus. The Task Force solicited scholarly input on Huxley, hosted its only live feedback forum at the Huxley College Speaker Series (although the intent was to talk about the process as a whole), and received the vast majority of its total input on Huxley College. As a result, the Task Force spent much more time researching and discussing the Huxley College name than it did any other named feature. While the Task Force benefitted greatly from WWU Heritage Resources' report on how Huxley College came to be named, much of the conversation focused on Huxley himself, where a great deal of research had already been conducted or was readily available. By contrast, the research on Haggard and Mathes (much less Viking Union), once unearthed by Heritage Resources, was less complete, more obscure, and required a good deal of combing through primary archival materials (as opposed to reading scholars' syntheses, as in the case of Huxley). As a result, the deliberations of the Task Force on Haggard and Mathes were considerably less well-informed and much briefer.

### **Additional Material/Dissenting Opinion on Edward T. Mathes**

Several relevant themes from [the Heritage Resources reports on Mathes](#) stand out for closer consideration and more direct archival source quotation than provided in the Task Force's report.

The first theme of interest concerns the views that Mathes expressed in the hundreds of public lectures that he delivered both locally and nationally. While full transcripts of his presentations have not been located, there are some excerpts of his comments in newspapers of the time:

In a presentation titled “Mexico and Her Problems,” delivered in 1916 following Pancho Villa’s raid on the border town of Columbus, New Mexico, Mathes stated that “Mexico is not so much an enemy as it is a responsibility.” Although Mexicans deserved “just treatment” and “were capable of an advanced civilization”, he referred to them as “our benighted brothers.” According to another newspaper summary of the talk, Mathes maintained that one of Mexico’s “problems” was “the nature of the people themselves. The stock originated in the old Moors of northern Africa, who came to Spain in the eighth century, and from Spain to Mexico, where they intermarried with the Aztec Indians. Eight out of every ten Mexicans have Indian blood in their veins.”<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that the two other “problems” that Mathes attributed to Mexico in this lecture were the concentration of large land holdings in the hands of its generals, resulting in “countless others serving in a sort of feudal system from which they cannot recover”, and the lack of broadly available educational opportunities.

Mathes made similarly concerning comments in a talk titled “The Wandering Caucasian” for a teachers’ conference in California in 1907. The *Sierra Educational News and Book Review* summarized his remarks:

Mr. Mathes in his lecture took up the human race in the Tigris and Euphrates valley, “The Cradle of Nations.” He spoke of the types represented there, and said that the Hebrew was the wanderer and the moralist, the Egyptian the scientist, and the Persian the warrior. Following out the ever-westward tendency that has marked the growth of the human race these people finally found themselves in Greece with all their better qualities merged in one man—the Greek. Then came the Roman. Both these people sought the north beyond the Alps, and came into touch with the Teuton, who was making his way from the east. “And then,” said the speaker, “the Greek, the Roman, the Teuton and the Scandinavian all met one morning on a small island off the west coast of Europe and developed into the Englishman. From him came the American with all his various types of Yankee, Hoosier and Western cow-puncher.”

“But in all its advance,” he said, “the great Caucasian race has never had to deal with the great brown race that now lies to the west. So today we are facing a problem that has never before confronted the white man.”

Mr. Mathes took the Japanese, the Chinese and the Hindu in turn and explained the composition of their character. His talk on the Hindu was especially interesting. He told of the riots in Bellingham, and said that after all the laborers had been driven out, the only remaining Indian in the town was a student in his school. Mr. Mathes went to the

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<sup>1</sup> [WWU Building Names Report Sept 2020](#), p. 4

workmen in the shops and asked them what they were going to do about the boy. They said: "Let him stay as long as he is trying to educate himself and put himself on our level."<sup>2</sup>

The second theme of interest concerns Mathes' leadership of the institution during the riots referred to above, and his treatment of, and attitude toward South Asians in the community as President. On September 4, 1907 a mob of up to 500 white men attacked and drove from town Bellingham's community of South Asian workers, mostly Sikhs, but labeled as "Hindus" by the local press. There does not appear to be any evidence that Mathes ever publicly condemned the riot. On the other hand, there is evidence that Nabhi Ram Joshi, a student from India enrolled at Western was treated with great hospitality by Mathes, and that the two maintained a correspondence for many years after. In addition, the Heritage Resources report indicates that Mathes' daughter in law, Marian Snow Mathes, created a scholarship for Indian and Indian-American students at the institution. It also notes that the Vancouver newspaper *Free Hindustan* called Mathes "a good friend of India."

The third theme of interest concerned Mathes' actions in affirming the rights of Alma Clark, the first Black student at the institution who enrolled in 1906. In my view this is the most important part of Mathes' legacy to consider for the "de-naming" process and represents the earliest example of the institution's affirmation of the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The historical record deserves more than the paragraph it received in the Task Force's report.

There is ample evidence that Bellingham and Whatcom County was a hotbed of racism at the time. According to the Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project at the University of Washington:

While other Washington State chapters may have had more members at their peak, probably the strongest and longest lasting Ku Klux Klan presence in the 1920s and 1930s was in Whatcom and Skagit Counties, organized in particular around the towns of Bellingham and Mount Vernon. While many Klan chapters faded in the late 1920s, according to one local resident, the chapters in these counties "never did disband."<sup>3</sup>

Alma Clark was the daughter of one of Seattle's most successful Black business owners and the third Black student to graduate from a Seattle high school when even attending high school was generally uncommon.

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<sup>2</sup> [WWU Building Names Report Sept 2020](#), p. 5

<sup>3</sup> "The Strongest Chapter in WA: Bellinghams KKK" by Trevor Griffey, Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project: [https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/kkk\\_bellingham.htm](https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/kkk_bellingham.htm)

Upon her arrival, The Bellingham Herald reported that her appearance caused a “commotion” on campus: “For a time there was talk of a general exodus from the school should the faculty persist in its determination that she shall remain, and indignation meetings were held in various rooms.” The story goes on to include comments from classmates who vouch that Clark was “highly intelligent” and “most ladylike.”<sup>4</sup>

The conversation among Clark’s classmates about “how she shall be received”—it should be noted that there were less than 30 students at the school in total—continued to evolve, with the Herald reporting that “some of the more outspoken students insist[ing] that she be ostracized while others are inclined to take a broader-minded view of the whole affair, and receive her on equal terms.”<sup>5</sup>

Principal Mathes and the Board of Trustees were clearly annoyed by the Herald’s sensationalized portrayal of Clark’s arrival on campus and the claims of “race prejudice” pervading the institution. In response, Mathes and the Board took the matter up directly in a meeting of the Trustees. According to the minutes of that meeting:

Dr. Mathes stated that, so far as he knew, no such feeling existed, and he explained the coming of Miss Clark, who with her brother, had talked over the possibility of any race prejudice as an outgrowth of her presence at the school. At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Donovan [a trustee], introduced the following resolution which was unanimously adopted with the understanding that it be published in the Herald, which had given publicity to the story that a feeling of bitterness had developed at the normal. The resolution was:

“Whereas, - Certain misleading statements have been published regarding the race question at the Bellingham Normal School,

“Resolved that the school is for the benefit of all the people of the State of Washington, regardless of color, race or politics, good works and good morals being the essentials required of students.”<sup>6</sup>

We know very little about the rest of Alma Clark’s experience at the institution. After completing her first year, Clark was appointed to an assistant librarian position in Seattle, receiving the highest scores on the civil service exams, and it does not appear that she returned to the school.

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<sup>4</sup> As quoted in from “The Story of Alma Clark Glass”, by Kolby LaBree (WWU ’05), WWU Window Magazine, Spring 2021, p. 14

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 15

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.15

It is noteworthy that the Seattle Republican, the city's first successful African American newspaper praised Principal Mathes and the Trustees for speaking out in support of Alma Clark:

If the heads of all the public institutions would but take the same firm stand, on the mooted race question of this country as did Principal Edward T. Mathes, who unhesitatingly made the young colored lady feel that her rights would be fully protected in his hands, there would be less such interracial upheavals. While Prof. Mathes but did his plain duty, nevertheless he did it so completely that every Negro in this country, as well as every Caucasian who wants to see all manner of man have a square deal, should feel everlastingly grateful.<sup>7</sup>

There is no doubt that the legacy of Principal Mathes is complex. Even with the limited evidence available from his public lectures, there are at least two instances in which he expressed racist views. There is no evidence that he publicly condemned the 1907 riot that expelled Bellingham's South Asian population, though it is notable that there were several similar violent expulsions of immigrants in the years to follow in Vancouver, Everett, and other locations in the Pacific Northwest. It may be worth inquiring further about how common it was for college presidents at that time to make public statements condemning racial violence in their hometowns to get a better sense of the broader historical context.

On the other side of the ledger, in two high-profile instances, Mathes was both welcoming and, in the context of Bellingham's social consciousness at the time, courageous in his support of racial minorities. Despite not condemning the riot, Mathes was personally hospitable to the sole Indian student at the Normal School and maintained a friendly relationship with the student for years he left. Much more significantly, in the case of Alma Clark, Mathes led the Board of Trustees to publicly affirm her rights to attend the Normal School when it would have been easy—and, with political aspirations in a community which generally condoned anti-Black racism, certainly more in his self-interest—to take no responsibility for the matter.

### **Additional Material/Dissenting Opinion on William W. Haggard**

The central point of disagreement among Task Force members in assessing Haggard's legacy was a hitherto unknown photograph published in the *Western Washington Collegian* student newspaper on August 14, 1953, provided with the Heritage Resources Building Report.

In the photograph, Haggard and two students are clothed in traditional Native American attire. The caption reads "Dr. Haggard and last year's Homecoming chairmen warm up to the scalping style as they get ready to take on the Eastern Savage for the 1925 Homecoming." It should be

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 15; "Colored Girl Causes Commotion" *The Seattle Republican*, February 2, 1906.

noted that “the Savage” was, until the summer of 1973, the mascot of Eastern Washington State College (now University).<sup>8</sup>



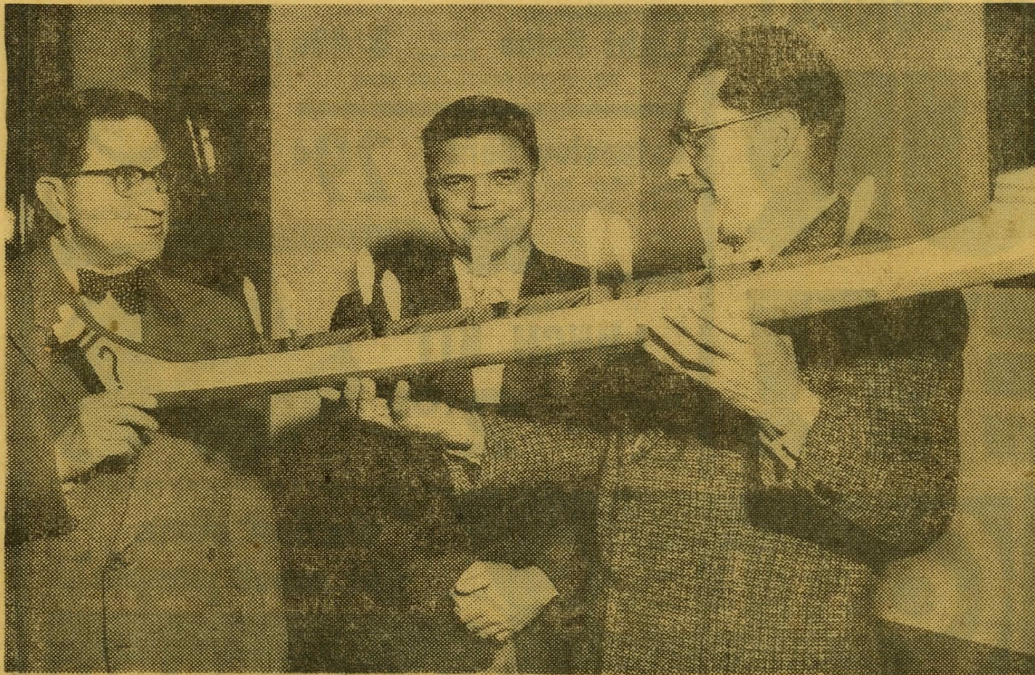
There is no disputing that the photograph is offensive. Considering the fact that WWU is situated on the ancestral homelands of the Coast Salish peoples, particularly the Lummi and the Nooksack peoples in Bellingham, it is particularly painful to see a former president of the institution take part in such behavior. No additional contextualizing information about how Haggard came to be in the photo, or whether he reflected on its meaning and implications was provided to the Task Force.

Another photograph of Haggard provided by Heritage Resources but not acknowledged in the report shows Haggard, Dr. Herbert Taylor, and Art Humphries, himself a Native American, holding a model of a racing canoe. The model was presented to Western by Humphries, who was then chairman of the “Advancement of Employment and Education Club in the Betterment of understanding and Relations of Whites and Indians.”

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<sup>8</sup> According to 2016 article published in the *Easterner*, EWU’s student newspaper, it was the EWU Board of Trustees which originally proposed changing the mascot, and ultimately voted to change it to the Eagles over the protests of the student body. For more perspective see “The evolution of EWU’s mascot” by Erin Rebar, *The Easterner*, October 7, 2016: <https://theeasterner.org/37800/arts-entertainment-features/the-evolution-of-ewus-mascot/>

14 The Bellingham Herald, Wed., May 1, 1957



**RACING CANOE REPLICA** — Dr. W. W. Haggard, Western Washington College president, holds one end of a model of the Question Mark, 11-man racing canoe. Model was presented the college by Art Humphries (right), chairman of the "Advancement of Employment and Education Club in the Betterment of understanding and Relations of Whites and Indians." Humphries, one of 23 paddlers in the six-year history of the original canoe, said he carved model in 50 hours from red cedar. Dr. Herbert Taylor (center), head of social studies department and active in the study of Indian lore in the Northwest, said the canoe will be in a display case in his department. The original Question Mark, built in 1932 by Charlie Anderson of the Skagit tribe, now residing at Nooksack, raced first at Coupeville with Henry Cooper as manager, Lester Cooper captain. It was the last American Indian canoe to win a major race in this area and is now in the Smithsonian Institute, Humphries says.

—Herald photo.

Beyond these photographs, the Task Force had very little evidence to assess Haggard's attitudes or actions concerning the Coast Salish or other indigenous people during his presidency. Accordingly, and especially considering the omission of the second photo above from the report, the conclusion that "there is no documented evidence of Haggard offering support or honoring the Coast Salish people during his presidency" is unwarranted.

Additional concerns were raised by some Task Force members about Haggard's failure to speak out against the internment of Western's sole Japanese American student James Okubo, and against anti-Japanese sentiment in general, in contrast to, for example, UW President Lee Paul



Seig.<sup>9</sup> There is no disputing that the internment of Japanese Americans was one of the great injustices of American history, leaving an indelible stain on the national conscience. Executive Order 9066 order was popular with a majority of Americans at the time, the Supreme Court twice upheld it against legal challenges, and that there were shockingly few public officials who spoke out against it. Against this shameful national background, and as detailed in the referenced article, James Okubo's departure from Western appears to have been surprisingly amicable; his classmates and a professor threw him a "going away party" at which he presented them with gifts, and he corresponded with many of them throughout his time at the Tule Lake, CA internment camp. While none of these details attenuate in the least the gross injustice of the internment, they also suggest that the attitude of Okubo and many others who opposed the internment (including non-Japanese Americans) may well have been one of disgust or opposition, but resignation in the face of an irresistible force. Seig's courage in speaking out against the order in support of the UW's more than 400 Nissei students is undoubtedly commendable. But it does not shed light on the question of what Haggard's views were or provide a compelling reason to see his failure to speak out against the internment as more attributable to him personally, than to virtually every other American of the time.

Again, my intention here has not been to undermine the integrity of the Task Force's report, but rather to provide a broader context for the Board of Trustees' deliberations, which I believe is in the spirit of the Task Force's charge to begin with. My hope is that this will be of some service in your discussions, regardless of the outcome with respect to potentially de-naming buildings on Western's campus.

Sincerely,



Paul Dunn  
Chief of Staff to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees  
Legacy Review Task Force Chair

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<sup>9</sup> "The Exigencies of War – The UW Administration and Student Relocation" *UW Special Collections*: <https://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcollections/collections/exhibits/harmony/interrupted/exigencies>. For more information about James Okubo, see "Degree of Honor" in the Summer 2019 issue of Western Window magazine ([https://cedar.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=window\\_magazine](https://cedar.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=window_magazine)).