

Hello Chair Alonso Leon and Task Force Members,

My name is Marisela and I am a First Year student at Western studying Biology, Pre Dentistry. I am here to share my story as a First Generation, and a low income student.

I got the Rez scholarship and Al Forphan which is for children with parents addicted to alcohol Scholarship, and supplement fund from WOU. It's been enough to pay for my tuition and fees. I don't have debt but I do have a tight budget and when I can't pay for something outright I put it on credit. I have had to use my credit card to pay for my books and hygiene care items. I save as much money from my birthdays and other things to be able to pay off my credit card.

If I ever need help, I can't ask my parents because at home my parents are struggling financially. My family and I have always struggled to meet our basic needs. I remember as a child our hot water would run out and we would have to boil our own water. I would take a towel and bathe in our sink. When it rained our ceiling would also leak. My mom was a single mom to me then, she is married now. But She worked so hard so hard she didn't have time to get a tumor on her knee checked for years. It's finally removed but I remember her going to work in pain.

The scholarships I have received have been extremely helpful but I am still struggling to get access to counseling services. The WOU fee for it is \$300 and outside of WOU it's \$200 a session.

The issues I face can be helped by making the counseling services completely free at Western, and outside of Western. I also have needed help making and keeping to a budget and I think there should be a program to teach students how to budget.

I urge this task force to remember my story when developing legislation around higher education in Oregon. Please invest in students like me.

Thank you for your time.

Marisela