Saron McKee, a graduate of both Woodring's Human Services (BA, 2005) and Rehabilitation Counseling (MA, 2007) programs, was recently named the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Director for the city of Philadelphia! She worked for 10 years previously as the ADA Director for the Seattle Housing Authority.

McKee has worked on behalf of people with disabilities in various positions for almost 20 years. While her education background is grounded in psychology, McKee consistently chose disability reform work. Eventually, her passion for disability rights became apparent, and she took the job as ADA coordinator in Seattle.

McKee is familiar with the realities of living with a disability. She was born with a spinal birth defect and uses a wheelchair. When asked about how she got into disability reform, she said "years ago, as an artist with disability, I learned that many art organizations were struggling to make their buildings usable by people with disabilities. I enrolled in training as a practical solution to address the problem. I've come to see this as the kindling that sparked the fire for my career. Later, I went on to complete my formal education and thought I might go into a career of psychology; however, I love the idea that by problem solving and eliminating barriers, we create equity."
Isa Kaufman and Shay Edward, two students in Dr. Lauren McClanahan’s *Filmmaking for Social Change* class, created this powerful short film to encourage us to have conversations with our loved ones about our choices for end of life care. Dr. McClanahan also teaches in the [Secondary Education](#) department.

Palliative care aims to improve the quality of life for patients diagnosed with serious or life-threatening illnesses and their families by preventing or relieving potential suffering. Woodring's [Palliative Care Institute](#) works with [Northwest Life Passages Coalition](#), along with other community volunteers and agencies, to transform palliative care in Whatcom County by aiding our responses to living and dying. The PCI is based in the [RN-BSN](#) program at Woodring.

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**New Early Childhood Education Program in Bremerton and Poulsbo**

Woodring College of Education is expanding its Early Childhood Education
program to the Olympic College campuses in Bremerton and Poulsbo! This program focuses on the development of children in the prenatal to age 8 period and can either lead to a Pre-K to third grade teaching license or a BAE degree without teacher certification.

This partnership offers a unique combination of theory, methods, and field experiences in a variety of early childhood education settings. ECE cohorts participate in online hybrid classes and a special sequence of teaching experiences with varying age groups and settings. Graduates are prepared for jobs in childcare centers, preschools, Head Start, state funded preschool, and in Pre-K to 3rd grade certified teaching positions.

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**Prepared to Teach Grant Explores New Model for Teacher Residencies**

Woodring College of Education has partnered with Bank Street College of Education’s Prepared to Teach program with the goal of developing sustainably funded teacher residencies that pay student teachers for their hard work.

*Prepared to Teach* borrows the residency model from doctor preparation programs, "paying aspiring teachers to work with expert educators for a full year before they graduate," with the idea that paying teacher residents opens up the profession to more people and gives future teachers more time and energy to focus on their learning. It also gives teacher candidates more confidence and commitment to education.

For more information contact Elementary Education's Matt Miller at mille258@wwu.edu.

This grant is funded by Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.

[Read more about the Prepared to Teach program](#)

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**Meet the New Director of the Ershig Assistive Technology Resource Center**
Western graduate Natalie Newman is the new director of the Ershig Assistive Technology Resource Center (EATRC) at Woodring College of Education. She brings strong qualifications to the position, with a degree in Physical Education and Health (BA, 1991) from Woodring's Secondary Education department and a Master's in Occupational Theory from the University of Puget Sound. She also has 20 years of experience working in the public school system.

The EATRC is a hands-on lending library and demonstration center that houses hundreds of low to high tech support tools for all needs, including education, daily living, blind/low vision, deaf/hard of hearing, to name a few. While the education majors at Woodring College of Education are the primary users, access to the EATRC is available to all WWU students, staff and faculty, educators and other practicing professionals in the surrounding region, and families and other caregivers in the local community.

The EATRC is housed in Miller Hall 001. Stop by anytime or call 360-650-2783 for an appointment.

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Woodring's Got Talent!
Mabton School District Superintendent Joseph Castilleja was recently featured in the Yakima Herald for this fun twist on "Imagine" by John Lennon he performed to announce a snow day. Castilleja graduated from WCE's superintendent certificate program in 2018.

Have comments for us or good news to feature in the next newsletter? Send information and photos to Woodring@wwu.edu

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