

## VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

## B. Finance, Audit and Facilities Committee

Renaming the “House of Knowledge” to “wə́təbʔaltxʷ”RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is the recommendation of the Senior Vice President for Finance and Facilities, the Vice Provost for Diversity/Vice President for Minority Affairs and the University Names Committee, with the concurrence of President Mark Emmert, that the Board of Regents approve renaming the “House of Knowledge” to “wə́təbʔaltxʷ” (English translation is Intellectual House).

BACKGROUND:

The wə́təbʔaltxʷ (phonetic pronunciation walthub-altwh) is a project 35 years in the making that grows out of a long and increasingly active partnership between the University and the region’s tribal nations. For decades, community members have sought to create a home away from home for Native American students, a place that will enable students to maintain strong ties to family and culture while helping them to successfully accomplish their educational goals at the University.

This particular name was given as a “gift” by House of Knowledge Elder Committee (HOKEC) member Vi Hilbert prior to her passing on December 19, 2008. Vi was a revered elder in the Upper Skagit tribe and her life work was spent preserving the Lushootseed language and culture. She learned Lushootseed (the language of Chief Seattle) as a child, listening to her parents. The gifting of the name wə́təbʔaltxʷ is captured both in written and recorded oral form.

Vi Hilbert’s ties to the University go far beyond her involvement in the House of Knowledge project. Vi actually attended a Lushootseed class that late alumnus Thom Hess taught at the University in 1972. She was originally a student, but Hess arranged for Vi to teach the class the following year and together they collaborated on many projects to resurrect Lushootseed. She went on to teach Lushootseed language and literature (traditional stories) for 15 years to hundreds of students here at the University, inspiring a few to become Lushootseed teachers and others to support and further the cause. Vi followed her University of Washington tenure with two years at The Evergreen State College as the Evans Chair scholar.

In all, the HOKEC spent nearly two years settling on wə́təbʔaltxʷ as the recommended name for the House of Knowledge. During that time, extensive consultation occurred with University undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff, community members, and members of several different local

## VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

### B. Finance, Audit & Facilities Committee

#### Renaming the “House of Knowledge” to “wə́təbʔaltxʷ” (continued p. 2)

tribes as well as tribes from across the state. During the consultation and deliberation, careful consideration was taken to ensure that the translated meaning captures the intent and focus of the project. Practicality of the name was also considered, as the elders involved would like students to use wə́təbʔaltxʷ when referring to the facility, as opposed to an alternate or slang term.

Utilizing a Lushootseed word for the building name as opposed to an English word, will honor the Native people of this region, whether an individual visits the facility or only hears mention of its name.

Signage for the building would include the Lushootseed spelling and the English translation below.

#### REVIEW AND APPROVALS

In accordance with University procedures, the University Names Committee, the Provost, and the President have reviewed and approved this request.

#### *Attachments*

1. May 3, 2010 Letter from Sheila Edwards Lange to University Names Committee
2. June 10, 2010 Letter of Approval from the University Names Committee with concurrence from President Mark Emmert
3. June 21, 2010 Letter of Approval from the University Names Committee.
4. August 10, 2010 Letter of Clarification from Sheila Edwards Lange to University Names Committee
5. August 31, 2010 Letter of Approval from University Names Committee.



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF MINORITY AFFAIRS & DIVERSITY

Dr. Sheila Edwards Lange, Vice President for Minority Affairs & Vice Provost for Diversity

Date: May 3, 2010

To: Sandra O. Archibald  
Dean and Professor of Public Affairs  
Chair, University Names Committee

From: Sheila Edwards Lange  
Vice President for Minority Affairs  
Vice Provost for Diversity

Re: Naming of the House of Knowledge

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On behalf of the House of Knowledge Elders Committee (HOKEC), House of Knowledge Working Group (HOKWG) and the House of Knowledge Planning Advisory Committee (HOKPAC), and pursuant to the Facilities and Spaces Naming Policy Procedure, this memo is being sent in solicitation of your support for naming the proposed UW House of Knowledge longhouse "Wasib ? alt". The English translation of Wasib ? alt is "intellectual house", we believe a fitting title for our House of Knowledge longhouse project.

Our naming request is an anomaly as it does not fit under either Section 2 - Individual/Family Naming Guidelines or Section 3 - Corporate/Organizational Naming Guidelines of the Facilities and Spaces Naming Policy. Our proposed name is a description or title that encompasses the meaning of the facility and pays homage to the region's indigenous people. It is not a name associated with an individual or particular benefactor, so it is difficult to cite which (if any) existing criteria it fulfills.

The proposed name was given to us by the late Vi Hilbert and honors both her and Lushootseed, the traditional language of the Puget Salish, this region's first people. By selecting a Lushootseed word as the building name as opposed to an English word, the Wasib ? alt will honor the Native people of this region, whether an individual visits the facility or only hears its name.

The UW longhouse is a project 35 years in the making that grows out of a long and increasingly active partnership between the UW and the region's tribal nations. For decades, community members have sought to create a home away from home for Native American students, a place that will enable students to maintain strong ties to family and culture while helping them to successfully accomplish their educational goals at the UW.

Based on a traditional Northwest Coast Salish post and beam longhouse-style structure that honors and represents the region's Native American communities and indigenous architecture, the longhouse will be sited centrally on campus. The 19,000 square foot facility's main feature is a central gathering place where students, tribes, community members, faculty, and staff will hold meetings, celebrations, ceremonies, lectures, performances, and conferences, as well as use

ATTACHMENT 1

F-7.1/209-10

9/16/10 Mary Gates Hall 320 Box 352835 Seattle, WA 98195-2835

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Sandra O. Archibald

May 3, 2010

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for studying and socializing. The design includes meeting rooms, an elders' room, a Native Arts Lab, a student lounge area, computer facilities, offices, and kitchen facilities.

The longhouse will foster an environment where Native American students can seek higher education without leaving their culture behind, a key ingredient to their college success. The longhouse will reassure families preparing to send their children off to college that the UW understands and respects the needs of Native American students and is committed to helping them succeed. Demonstrating that the UW is an institution that will help students succeed while supporting the students' connection to their culture and community is critical, given the historic trauma associated with boarding schools that has left Native American communities distrustful of mainstream educational institutions.

The proposed name was given as a "gift" by HOKEC member Vi Hilbert (a revered elder in the Upper Skagit tribe) prior to her passing on December 19, 2008. Vi's life work was spent preserving the Lushootseed language and culture. She learned Lushootseed (the language of Chief Seattle) as a child, listening to her parents. The gifting of the name Wasib ? alt is captured both in written and recorded oral form.

Vi Hilbert's ties to the University of Washington go far beyond her involvement in the current House of Knowledge project. Vi actually attended a Lushootseed class that late alumnus Thom Hess taught at the University in 1972. She was originally a student, but Hess arranged for Vi to teach the class the following year and together they collaborated on many projects to resurrect Lushootseed. She went on to teach Lushootseed language and literature (traditional stories) here at the University of Washington for 15 years and taught hundreds of students, inspiring a few to become Lushootseed teachers and others to support and further the cause. Vi followed her University of Washington tenure with two years at The Evergreen State College as the Evans Chair scholar.

Throughout her life Vi generously shared the Lushootseed language, stories, and traditions with other organizations such as the Burke Museum, the Seattle Art Museum, United Indians of All Tribes, Tillicum Village, Seattle Storytellers Guild, and the National Storytelling Association. Vi also spent many years transcribing and translating Lushootseed oral history. In her urgency to have her work reach her people and others, she established Lushootseed Press in the hope that future generations would be able to access Lushootseed language and cultural information through her publications and archive. She was named a Washington State Living Treasure in 1989, and received a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts, presented by President Bill Clinton in 1994.

In all, the HOKEC spent nearly two years settling on Wasib ? alt as the recommended name for the House of Knowledge longhouse. During that time, extensive consultation occurred with UW undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff, community members, and members of several different tribes from the local area as well as from across the state. During the consultation and deliberation, careful consideration was provided to ensure that the translated meaning captures the intent and focus of the project. Practicality of the name was also

ATTACHMENT 1

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considered, as the elders involved would like students to use Wasib ? alt when referring to the facility, as opposed to an alternate or slang term.

It is our hope that University Names Committee will support the naming of the House of Knowledge "Wasib ? alt" in honor of Vi Hilbert, the members of the House of Knowledge Elders Committee, the Native people of this region, and the Lushootseed language tradition.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. We look forward to hearing your decision.

Cc: John Wetzel  
Kateri Schlessman  
Charlotte Côté  
David Iyall  
Julian Argel



June 10, 2010

Mark A. Emmert  
President  
301 Gerberding Hall  
University of Washington  
Box 351230

Dear President Emmert:

The University Names Committee has reviewed a request from Sheila Edwards Lange, Vice President for Minority Affairs and Vice Provost for Diversity, to name a campus building currently in the planning stages. This building has so far been known as the UW House of Knowledge, a name used thus far by the committee charged by the Provost with the earliest stages of planning of a campus longhouse. The committee has determined that designating a thoughtfully chosen and widely supported name to replace this initial descriptive name would be an important step to take at this time. The requested name is "Wasib ? alt," a Lushootseed word which can be translated into English as "intellectual house."

The University Names Committee has reviewed and approved this proposal. On behalf of the committee, I respectfully ask that you grant this request.

Sincerely,

Sandra O. Archibald  
Dean and Professor  
Chair, Campus Names Committee

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Concurrence Date 06/15/2010  
Mark A. Emmert, President

cc: University Names Committee



June 21, 2010

Sheila Edwards Lange  
Vice President for Minority Affairs and Vice Provost for Diversity  
320 Mary Gates Hall, Box 352835  
University of Washington

Dear Sheila:

I am pleased to inform you that President Emmert has concurred with the University Names Committee recommendation for approval of your request to name the project currently known as the UW House of Knowledge. The name you have requested is "Wasib ? alt," a Lushootseed word which can be translated into English as "intellectual house."

As with all building names, this naming will require approval by the Regents (UW Handbook, Vol. 4, Chap. 10, Sect. 1.) You are responsible to prepare the item and get it on the Regent's agenda. Please see <http://www.washington.edu/regents/meetings/saf.html> for full instructions. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sandra O. Archibald  
Dean and Professor  
Chair, Campus Names Committee

cc: University Names Committee  
V'Ella Warren, Box 354998

August 10, 2010

Sandra O. Archibald, Ph.D.  
Chair, University Names Committee  
Box 353055

Joan Goldblatt  
Secretary, Board of Regents  
Box 351264

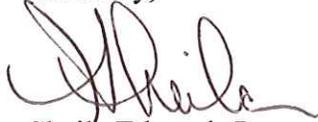
Dear Sandy and Joan:

I am writing to provide clarification about the spelling of the proposed new name for the UW House of Knowledge to a Lushootseed word that translates to "intellectual house." It is my understanding that there is some concern about the difference in how the name is spelled in my formal request for approval and the item that is being prepared for the September Regents meeting.

This difference is due to the fact I did not use the Lushootseed font when writing my request. I used a Times Roman font. The Lushootseed characters do not print properly unless a specialized Lushootseed font has been downloaded to your computer. We got a copy of the Lushootseed font for use in preparing the Regents item. I am attaching a PDF of the correct Lushootseed spelling and font for the proposed name of the UW House of Knowledge. The Lushootseed spelling is what will ultimately be used on the building.

I apologize for the confusion and difficulty with this specialized font. Please let me know if we need to submit an additional request to the naming committee or if this clarification will suffice.

Sincerely,



Sheila Edwards Lange, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Minority Affairs  
Vice Provost for Diversity

Enclosure

cc: V'Ella Warren  
Richard Chapman  
John Wetzel  
Kateri Schlessman  
Charlotte Cote  
David Iyall  
Julian Argel

ATTACHMENT 4

# Intellectual House

wəʔəbʔaltx<sup>w</sup>

August 31, 2010

Sheila Edwards Lange  
Vice President and Vice Provost  
Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity  
Box 352835

RE: House of Knowledge Naming Request

Dear Sheila:

Thank you for your letter dated August 10, 2010 providing clarification on the use of the Lushootseed characters rather than the phonetic spelling of the word translated into English as "intellectual house" approved by the University Names Committee.

The approval given by the Committee in its letter dated June 21, 2010 stands. Your letter including the correct Lushootseed characters that will be used in the naming of the House of Knowledge will become part of the record of approval.

Sincerely,



Sandra O. Archibald  
Dean and Professor  
Chair, University Names Committee

cc: Joan Goldblatt  
Carol Niccolls

F-7.5/209-10  
9/16/10

ATTACHMENT 5