



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## College Campuses Join Together for MLK Day of Service

**Bellingham, WA, Jan. 15, 2013** – Whatcom Community College, Western Washington University and Bellingham Technical College students will join the larger community on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013, to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy of social justice and equal opportunity. Participants will gather for the community-wide Poverty Action March & Essential Needs Drive, with student service projects to follow. WCC, WWU and BTC will join thousands of Americans across the country honoring this National Day of Service by making the holiday a day on, not a day off.

The day will start with a free breakfast at Bellingham High School at 10 a.m. Rosalinda Guillen, Director of Community to Community Development, will be the featured speaker. Participants are encouraged to bring a donation item such as canned food, toiletries or clothing to the breakfast for the Essential Needs Drive. The Poverty Action March will follow the breakfast, beginning at 11 a.m. The march will begin and end at Bellingham High School. WWU's Step2This team will kick-off the march.

Following the march, students will join in service projects including a Read-In at Village Books, painting at the Boys and Girls Club, and volunteering to support the elderly through the Chore Program.

The march is inspired by the 1968 Poor People's March on Washington D.C that was being planned by Dr. King and others, only months before his assassination, to bring attention to economic and social disparities for Americans living in poverty. WCC, WWU and BTC hope to trigger dialogue around these topics and to generate further student volunteerism in Whatcom County.

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## **Colleges Join Together for MLK Day**

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This is the fourth year WCC and BTC have joined together for the MLK Day of Service, and the fourteenth year WWU has done the Read-In. This is the first year all three campuses are collaborating for this National Day of Service.

This event is sponsored by WCC's Service-Learning Program, WWU's Center for Service-Learning, BTC and WCC's AmeriCorps Retention Projects, WCC's VISTA Veteran and Community Support, local area high schools, and volunteers from local organizations including the Whatcom Volunteer Center and Whatcom Peace and Justice Center.

Local businesses and organizations that help to make this event possible are: Oregon Campus Compact, College Access Grant, Alcoa, Whatcom Transportation Authority and Costco.

For more information and donation drop-off locations, please visit:

[www.whatcomvolunteer.org/events/mlk-day](http://www.whatcomvolunteer.org/events/mlk-day).

For more information on service projects, please visit:

[www.whatcom.ctc.edu/servicelearning/newsandevents](http://www.whatcom.ctc.edu/servicelearning/newsandevents).

### **About Bellingham Technical College**

Bellingham Technical College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and offers 35 associate degree and 64 certificate options providing professional technical education to support local and regional industry workforce needs. For more information, go to [www.btc.ctc.edu](http://www.btc.ctc.edu)

### **About Western Washington University**

Western Washington University emphasizes excellence in undergraduate education and graduate programs. The third largest university in the state, WWU offers degrees in seven colleges. About 15,000 students attend Western, which U.S. News & World Report has consistently ranked as the top public master's-granting university in the Pacific Northwest. Western serves the local community, state and region through partnerships, innovative research, mentoring and community service activities.

### **About Whatcom Community College**

Whatcom Community College is an accredited, comprehensive two-year college serving more than 7,000 students quarterly. On its beautiful 71 acre campus in Bellingham WA, and through on-line courses, Whatcom offers transfer degrees, professional and technical training programs, as well as basic education, job skills and enrichment classes. For more information about WCC, please visit [www.whatcom.ctc.edu](http://www.whatcom.ctc.edu).