Being an Orientation Leader

By Zane Goodell

Being an orientation leader for Fort Lewis College was an incredibly positive experience. It helped me build relationships with new students to start off the school year.

Orientation training was very similar to the job training I’ve had with El Centro already, except with more dancing. The senior team was very knowledgeable and very supportive. Kailey, Skylar, Joely and Ashley were always willing to help and stayed more than positive throughout the entire orientation, despite working long hours every day that week and weeks before as well.

The most enjoyable part of orientation training was taking a break from learning policy and strategies for dealing with students to go learn some choreography. Being a member of Dance Co-Motion, I focused on making sure I knew the steps to the dance perfectly. I must have exhibited a considerable amount of energy because the senior team had me come demonstrate the dance for them on stage. When we finally performed the dance at welcome to orientation, I made sure that all the energy I spent learning the dance didn’t go to waste. I gave it my all and the audience definitely reflected that energy back in their applause.

During the training, I recalled my orientation and how certain people affected my experiences and shaped my college career to this day. One of those people was Shelby, who I had met the previous year at orientation during lunch when I was struggling to find a place to eat. She was friendly, had a great sense of humor and she really brightened my orientation experience to the next level. Shelby may be one of the principal reasons why I decided to become an orientation leader for fall 2017.

Another benefit of training is that I made new friendships with other orientation leaders and I built friendships with the friends I had made from the previous school year. It was awesome to come back from summer break to see all your friends excited to work together for a common goal.

(Continued on page 2)
On Thursday, orientation officially began with me rolling out of my bed at 6 a.m. to be ready for work at 7 a.m. and then checks-ins at 8 a.m. Around 9 a.m. is when new students started packing into the balcony and before we knew it, the housing check-in line went all the way out the balcony, down the stairs and outside. I could feel the energy starting to die, so I asked Katie if we could do a chant or something to get the crowd energized again. We both got up on chairs and did some Fort Lewis themed cheers. “I say Fort, you say Lewis.” After our chant, I could definitely feel the crowd’s energy rise and the chatter of anxious new students started to fill the balcony. As soon as students started coming to check-in, I quickly developed a pseudo-script that I would tell every new student. I definitely kept my energy high but I don’t know if the things I were saying were fully sinking into the students or whether they were just overwhelmed by the crowd and the stress. To this day, I have students come up to me saying I checked them in, yet I have little to no recollection of them; there were just that many people! After check-ins, I was exhausted and I spent the rest of the day just relaxing before I was paired with my orientation group the next day.

The following morning, I was excited to get up and finally meet my orientation group. Friday morning was full of energy and anxiety, wondering whether my group of students would try to attempt a mutiny and depose me as orientation group 30 leader. Thankfully, my group of students were some of the nicest, most well-behaved students I’ve ever met and I was incredibly happy to do orientation with them. I spiced up my orientation by bringing along a little speaker and playing a short mix of popular, classic and modern songs. I gained a reputation as “the guy that knows the words to every song,” and while that isn’t always true it certainly was the case for my playlist.

My favorite events during orientation were most definitely the official welcome to orientation, the Elephant in the Room event had changed significantly since I was a freshman. It was shown in the theatre building instead of the concert hall and it had the actors preforming right in the middle of all of us. The order was a little different, so the show lost the feeling of a beginning, middle and end, but overall it gained a sense of involvement and realism that was absent when I was placed 10 rows back from the stage in an uncaring mass of students.

The Fort Feud event was incredibly fun since I had previously won the mock Fort Feud last Wednesday when they gave me geography and art trivia questions (my favorite kind). Unfortunately, my team lost, but I was able to keep up a large amount of energy and keep all of the students more excited for the event. However, there were a lot of students tuned out for Fort Feud, so I hope that whatever event the orientation team decides to do next year is more fun.

Last but not least, the amphitheater was a fun way to finish orientation. I ran around high fiving all the new students and I got to show off my dance moves once more.

I’d say I greatly enjoyed being an orientation leader for Fort Lewis College and I’d probably be an orientation leader again even if I wasn’t being payed because the experience was so much fun. I definitely plan on being an orientation leader next semester and I hope that this story inspires others to do orientation as well. It’s a life changing experience; not only for the students, but especially for you.

My Award Winning Piece
By: Valerie Calabaza

This summer, I had an internship to work with Notah Begay III Foundation, along with assisting my grandmother with jewelry-making and her daily activities. I came across a purple spiny oyster shell when I was on a trip with my grandmother buying supplies for Santa Fe Indian Market that takes place in the month of August. It was a busy summer for me, having an internship, and creating a piece I was unsure of. I usually work on small pieces throughout the year because it is time-consuming, I also had time to myself, doing what I love.

Since I was 13 years old, I have been entering jewelry pieces into the Santa Fe Indian Market along with my grandparents. Each year, I am blessed with an award. This year was my second year entering in the adult division and winning first place. I learned from my grandparents how to cut, slice, grind, and polish to create beautiful pieces. I’ve been able to continue making traditional and contemporary necklaces by inlaying on spiny oyster shells. Being able to grow up on the Santo Domingo Pueblo reservation with my family, taught me the value of who I am, and where I come from.

Through my jewelry, I share the pride and happiness, which I want someone who wears my artwork to have. This year’s necklace was a purple spiny oyster shell, sleeping beauty turquoise, black jet, and mother of pearl traditional inlay. The necklace symbolizes mountains (the triangles) that I climb every day to reach goals, overcome change, and hard times. The sleeping beauty turquoise is the beauty I find while I climb. The colors together create a vibrant feeling that pops, because I want others to find their beauty as well.

If you are interested in being an Orientation Leader, please contact the Fort Lewis College Leadership Center
https://www.fortlewis.edu/leadership/
Art Has Shaped My Life

By: Macy O’Rourke

Art was always a part of my life and even so nowadays. The art to sing, dance, make music, and the kind you hang up on a wall or fridge. Whether it was chalk on the sidewalk or paint on paper, I was always creating pieces of my own. Taking it back to when I was just beginning to sound my first words, art was in my veins. I sang my first sentence.

Growing up, I always was drawn to the vivid colors that were painted or sculpted everywhere I looked. In third grade, I was exposed to knitting and I remember how involved this simple art got me. I got to meet new people and share my love, dreams, and stories with them. I felt like everyone I met, I made a scarf for and I delivered this creation with a smile from ear to ear.

Since I was shy it was hard for me to show people who I was, but through making scarves I made friends, from all walks of life, on every block. Then when I was in fifth grade the only thing on my mind was making jewelry. I would save up my chore money and I would march myself to hobby lobby, thrift stores, or any place that sold beads and I would spend it all right then and there, no doubt. All the beads, strings, and tools took up a good section of my room. It was easy to share what I made with people, even my enemies.

To this day, I flaunt the jewelry I made back then. Necklace after necklace, bracelet after bracelet, earrings after earrings. Then in sixth grade my friend and I started a whiteboard drawing club during recess. And in high school I was elected to paint a mural in the school with the design of my choice. With that, I also painted a tourist attraction in town and made our graduation invites. I entered in every art show I could, sold my pieces, and won prizes.

You could call it phases but then a year after that I felt inclined to make my own cards. I crafted pop up birthday cards, unique enough that I was asked to make some to sell at our local fairs. I was pleased to share my work and it was even more exciting when my cards were a popular choice.

Every once in awhile I’ll recognize a card I made that’s still hanging up on the side of someone’s fridge, when welcomed into their home. Not to mention that my whole room was covered in the art I didn’t give away or sell.

Whenever my family vacationed to a city, I would hunt for art museums and beg to go. I will argue that art brings people together. Art is also so powerful enough that it helps people and inspires them. It also grows, comforts, and strengthens people. There is no limit or rules when it comes to art. There is judgement and criticism but it is valued. It’s such a desired feeling because it’s more than just pencil in hand.

Every culture has art in its own way. Piercings, tattoos, paper umbrella making, concerts, letter writing, studying the stars, how we speak our tongue, how we serve our food, or how you decorate your home. Art is like painting your dreams and there is no limit. You can deepen your senses and put all differences aside. In the moment you can corral your differences and feel rooted with what’s around you.

Art is its own metaphor. It’s a beautiful thing to be surrounded by. Art never sleeps and is never concrete. It’s so significant because there is so much passion, history, and knowledge behind it. Everyone uses art because there is so many mediums and it’s dynamic in how you reflect it. Ultimately, the world is our canvas.

How Music Can Uplift a Soul

By: Anita Briody-Pavlik

Music is my escape from life. I started playing piano when I was eight, but my teacher quit teaching me to run half a marathon. Since then, I have picked up and dropped the violin, the guitar, the baritone and the trumpet. For the violin I played for a month before I realized that I didn’t want to be in orchestra I wanted to be a band kid instead. For Christmas I was given a bass guitar and I begged my parents for lessons for the guitar. My family are huge procrastinators, so we missed the deadline for bass lessons. I then lost interest in bass and then I was given an electric acoustic guitar. I learned how to play tap and I was decent at it.

I became really busy between my school work, soccer, tennis and band so I just ended up not picking it back up until right after I graduated. I played the baritone as a secondary instrument in high school but the only instrument that was good enough for me was the trumpet. If you know any trumpet player you’d probably say that we’re just egotistical nerds who don’t follow any rhythm, but the loud one we’re playing from our own instruments. Unfortunately, this stereotype is quite accurate for the band I was in. I have played the trumpet for a total of six years. I even played in my uncle’s polka band for a few gigs over the summers. In those years, the trumpet has served me well. Unfortunately not every love story goes on. My senior year of high school, a fellow trumpet player who I had taught the trade to, decided that she wanted to be the second chair. Instead of just practicing, she told the director that I gave her the first part and that for my senior year I wanted to take things easy. I saw all of my hard work and even some of my friends just drift away from me because of that. Ever since then I haven’t picked up an instrument. Instead I listen to other people play music because my music lost all the magic to me.

El Centro logo designed by a staff member years ago!
Traditional New Mexican Green Chili Pork Stew

By: Veronica Flores

A Traditional New Mexican Dish: Green Chile Pork Stew

Ingredients:
- 12 -15 hatch green chile
- 2 lbs pork shoulder
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 3 bay leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1 (10 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 3 large potatoes, diced 1/2-inch
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons flour

Directions:
Broil green chiles in the oven turning often to evenly darken skin making sure they don’t burn. Remove from oven and cover with a dish cloth for 10 minutes to steam the skins off. While the chiles are resting, cube meat, add salt & pepper and brown with onions & garlic in oil in a large pot for 5 minutes and let simmer for 1 hour. Peel skin from chiles, chop and add to the pot (include seeds for more spice). Simmer for 30 minutes then add tomatoes & cook until potatoes are soft. Serve with warm tortillas or sopapillas, ENJOY!

After Fort Lewis

By: Mariela Castillo

I will be graduating from Fort Lewis College in the spring of 2018 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology. After I graduate from FLC, I would like to move onto grad school. I haven’t decided if I want to start grad school right after graduating from FLC or if I am going to wait a few years. I do plan to take the GRE right after I graduate next semester, that way everything is still fresh on my mind.

Since I graduated from Colorado Mountain College with an Associate’s of Arts in Business, I figured that I could get my master’s in counseling. That way, one day I could open my own counseling office. While at Fort Lewis I took human and adolescent development classes, realizing I wanted to work with kids. I have always loved working with children, so I want to get my master’s in school counseling or adolescent therapy. I am leaning more toward becoming a school counselor though. I would like to work with mostly middle and high school students.

I went to a super tiny school, so we did not have a counselor available. We had advisors and we were told we could talk to them, but it’s not the same having a teacher know things about you that should be kept confidential. There were a lot of times during middle and high school that a school counselor would have been very helpful. I would love to be the person who helps adolescents with guidance and advice.
How to Accept that I am Growing Up

By: Ruth Hessler

In the last year or so, I keep finding myself in situations that remind me that I am growing up. These situations range from deciding to take a road trip to St. Louis and only letting my mom know that I left once I had actually arrived, to realizing I could buy the name brand Reese’s puffs and no one could do a damn thing about it because I was spending my own money. There are events in between that include many more trivial realizations and other events that hit just a little bit harder.

One thing that hit hard was bills. My first encounter with such things came in the form of car insurance. Scraping together $200 a month shouldn’t be so hard, but when you only work 6 hours a week, it can be the ONLY money you scrape together for the month. Which, as a freshman, isn’t that bad, but when you haven’t ever had to pay a bill in your life, it can be extremely intimidating.

Thankfully, over the summer I was able to get an extremely lucrative job, at least for what it was, so the blow of bills wasn’t as hard. I found that there is nothing like working for a pretentious hotel that serves men and women with too much money and not enough to do with it. Even though I started as a busser, the money rolled in quick. Unfortunately, it burned a huge hole in the pockets of every pair of pants I owned. This was remedied by my ability to buy new pants, but that in itself became a huge problem. I quickly found that an extremely important part of being an adult is self-control.

Growing up I didn’t have much, thrift store clothes weren’t just a trend, they were a necessity. So I learned to be careful to spend money because if I wanted something nice, I had to save for a long time to get it. Once I started making my own money, though, I bought into the culture of “treat yo’ self.” It was intense and more than once through the summer I blew through a check within a week. I went to concerts, bought dinner every night and even treated my friends to food more than I should have. As rent, insurance, emergencies and car maintenance stacked up, I realized I had to actually pay attention even though it seemed like I was making so much money.

One of the more trivial events came when I was driving to work in the morning and I suddenly became aware that I was driving a car that I bought, to go to a job that I had so I could afford to pay insurance for the car that I was driving. It was one of those experiences where you’re doing something like bouncing your leg or tapping your fingers and then it connects that that thing is actually happening. I became uncomfortably aware of the whole situation.

Now, the title of this is “How I accept that I am becoming an adult,” but I can’t fool anyone. I haven’t accepted it yet. There are still days where small occurrences will make me become uncomfortably aware of my own existence in the “real world” and there are even more days where I hope to escape the real world. I have had a slow push into adulthood compared to most and I think that is why I can still lay in bed in my monster onesie and wish the R E A L world away. I can’t deny adulthood forever, so, I promise I’ll let you know how I cope with it when I actually start accepting it.

“Sunday Evening Thoughts”

By: Breanna Dixon

I am Navajo at home
But who am I at school?
It is a question I ask myself often.
When I introduce myself, Should I in my Native language too?
How much of my culture do I feel comfortable sharing?
How much of me do I want others to see?
I’m proud to be a Native woman

But sometimes I don’t know how Native I can be.
When I’m in class I’m still figuring out
How to intertwine my Native self and my school self.
I am Navajo at heart
But who am I at school?
Growing up, I had a hard time with voicing my opinions and beliefs. I was from a community that believed in the concept “children should be seen and not heard.” Throughout my teenage years, when I was asked a question directly I was very honest, but the rest of the time I stayed silent. I became known as “mean and blunt,” because although I didn’t speak up much, when I did most people didn’t value my opinion because it was different. That was fine for a while, I liked being unique in my own way; my values and morals never changed.

Eventually, I did start college here at Fort Lewis. Once again, I was silent in classes and around friends because I did not know where I fit in. I knew there was a bigger picture and that God had a plan, but at 18 years old I was still very unsure of myself. Freshman year came and went, I continued the way I had always been, being “seen and not heard.” As sophomore year rolled around, I got a call to work in El Centro. At this point, I considered myself an introvert, and I knew I would have to really get out of my comfort zone in order to accomplish anything. I was asked, “What can you bring to the center?” Almost automatically I answered “Las Posadas.” This was a tradition in my church that we had for many years, but had been lost along the way. It was my chance to speak up about my religion, to inform people of my beliefs as well as the beliefs of so many other Hispanic people. This was my first chance at speaking up. I began to gain courage.

Throughout my junior year in college, I gained many opportunities, from being one of two student staff managers and being an Orientation Leader. Along with these opportunities, I met so many great people that taught me how to speak up for myself and others who haven’t gained the courage to do so. On a weekly basis, I challenge myself and people who question what my morals and beliefs are based upon as well as advocating for those who need someone to speak up for them. I’ve gotten the reputation in my classes of being out-spoken and challenging. If I could pick between the silent girl from high school or the out-spoken woman in college, I will always choose to be out-spoken.

Many people don’t have the courage to stand up for what they believe in when there’s a crowd of people telling them their wrong. I encourage anyone who reads this that it is worth it in the end.

“Be a voice, not an echo.” – Albert Einstein

Speaking Up
By: RaeLee Medina

Adding a Minor Last Minute Was a Tough Decision
By: Amanda Riddick

Adding a minor at the last second can be incredibly stressful. During my senior year, I decided that I would add a minor. Many students don’t know what they want to do out of college. It may be something completely different from your major, and that’s okay! Going to school longer isn’t a bad thing.

Are you getting stressed out? It happens all the time with most students, but adding an additional load of coursework can be even more stressful. The way to approach it is with an open mind. Think of it this way, you wanted to add a minor for a reason. Try to enjoy it while you still have the chance.

I decided to add the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) minor during my senior year. I did this because I would love to teach English as a second language all around the world. I decided to add this at the last minute because I finally figured out what I wanted to do after college. Short term, it will help me get a job a lot faster and easier because there is a high need for English teachers.

I would recommend checking out how much longer you would have to stay in order to complete whatever minor you want to add, before adding it. Before censes date, change your classes to match what you need, without getting rid of your necessary classes for your major. Then put in the paperwork to add your minor in the registrar’s office, which is located in Miller. It takes less than five minutes!
La Cultura de España
By: Madeleine Roberts

Culture shapes and forms how we think, feel, and what we believe. Where you grow up and who your family is have a deep impact on how you develop. At 18, I had never traveled outside of the United States, and had barely made it out of the American Midwest. But after graduating from my high school, I decided to move to Barcelona, Spain for a year and study Spanish.

I knew that things such as food, language, and daily schedules would be different. Spaniards celebrate siesta, a daily period of closing your stores, eating your biggest meal, and napping it off until you return to work for the rest of the evening. I had studied this culture, as well as prepared myself for the language barrier. I knew that I would miss out on my peanut butter and cheese, like any standard American. I knew that I would have to adapt to the laid back thinking of a Spaniard and embrace siesta, but that I was excited for.

No matter how much I thought I knew, it wasn’t enough. I wasn’t prepared to be the only blonde haired, blue-eyed person for miles; I definitely wasn’t prepared to be yelled at for wearing shorts in September by elderly señoras who adhere to old Spanish culture, which says you can’t wear shorts and open toed shoes past September 1st. I didn’t know that the water wouldn’t be clean enough to wash my hair, and that you have to buy special shampoo to get any kind of lather. I also didn’t know that Barcelona belongs to a state called Catalonia, which has its own language and culture separate from Spanish. Living in Catalonia gave me a whole other culture to adapt to and learn from. I didn’t think about what I should do when the subway breaks down, leaving the entire city without transportation. Even though this happened on more than one occasion, I developed a great appreciation for the convenience of public transportation in urban culture. I had no idea what to think when I saw groups of children kicking soccer balls in the streets at 2 a.m. on school nights, when I was struggling to keep my eyes open at 11 p.m.

Culture shock is real and evident, even when you think you’re prepared. But that’s the beauty of it — the stark contrast of how you have grown to live your life put against differing cultures allows altering perspectives to take place. When I came back stateside, I experienced reverse culture shock, and forgot how to be a “standard” American. On countless occasions, I stood way too close to people, and didn’t notice that it made them uncomfortable. I tried to order my coffee in Spanish instead of English, and reached to give “dos besos” (two kisses on the cheek) when I met with my friends. It took almost two months for my thinking to adjust, and sometimes I still don’t feel quite as normal as I did before. But I don’t see this as a problem; I see it as I gained a new set of eyes, and I’m learning how to use both pairs. I’m full blooded American, but now I have a new comprehension and appreciation for Spanish culture. Being a blonde in Spain stretched my way of thinking and how I view the world, and how other people live their lives.

This summer I was blessed with an incredible opportunity to study abroad in the beautiful country of Costa Rica. When I first arrived to school my freshman year, studying abroad wasn’t really on my mind. However after I realized that Spanish was something I really wanted to pursue, I decided that in order to really understand the language and culture I needed to be immersed in the language, the culture, everything.

So, May 19th I find myself on a plane, all by myself, my stomach in knots. One thing I should probably mention is I have a pretty big fear of flying. I also had never flown by myself before, so I can only imagine what the guy sitting next to me was thinking about the girl sitting next to him who wouldn’t stop fidgeting. Once I landed in Dallas and met up with the rest of the study abroad students (it was a group flight to San Jose) my stomach knots loosened a little. It was nice to know that I wasn’t the only person feeling this way. When I landed in San Jose, not only did the knots return but every single Spanish word I had ever learned for got their passport and was forced to stay in the States. At least that’s how it felt the moment I met my host mom.

However after just a few days, speaking Spanish was a breeze, especially with my host family. I loved everything about communicating in Spanish every day; the Ticos, the name for Costa Ricans, made it so easy to not be afraid. In fact, I loved everything about Costa Rica. The language, the culture, the people, the landscape, the wildlife, the weekend trips with new lifelong best friends (I especially liked the one where I encountered the Pepi Wasp aka Tarantula Hawk, but that’s a story for another time), but I also didn’t notice that it was a Costa Rican way of life.

"Pura Vida" is a Costa Rican way of life.
By: Jen Tarwater

“Pura Vida”: A Costa Rican Way of Life

Pura Vida is a word phrase that can be described as the motto of Costa Rica: Pura Vida.

Pura Vida literally translates to “pure life” but has many different meanings in Costa Rica. It can mean anything from a simple hello and goodbye to “how are you?” “I’m doing fine, thanks!” (An exchange that would go something like this “Pura Vida?” “Pura Vida!”) But more than that, it’s the way of life. Ticos live life to the fullest. I guess it could be compared to our YOLO (You Only Live Once) of 2012 only, you know, way cooler.

Some day, when I’m old and gray and I may not remember all the details of my trip, the only thing that will always be with me is Pura Vida.
Saying Goodbye to Fort Lewis College

By: Stacy John

I stepped foot onto Fort Lewis College’s campus as a transfer freshman during the fall semester of 2013. I had just taken a 10-month hiatus following my service in the United States Air Force for five years. Going into college as a non-traditional student and a combat veteran came along with its struggles, but I was able to flourish with the help of mentors and peers. College was brand new to me, so naturally I didn’t know what major I wanted to pursue until my second semester of college – I chose Sociology. Since then, I have picked up a second major in Native American and Indigenous Studies and a minor in Spanish.

My undergrad career has flown by and I am so grateful for the experiences it has provided me. One of the most memorable moments was when I was granted permission to conduct my community service practicum in Colombia for my Sociology block program. I spent a month and half in the beautiful region along the Caribbean coast, between Santa Marta and Palomino, Colombia. It was refreshing to meet new people, and to be immersed in a culture and region I was not accustomed to. I fell in love with the people and the country of Colombia. I made many friends that I now consider family, I intend to go back to see them.

As I reflect on the past four years, I realize that I have learned so much not only about myself, but also from my peers and mentors. There are many things that I still have yet to learn, but I look forward to the continuous process of learning from those before us and those around us. I have come to realize that here is a beauty in struggle, love, loss, diversity, and overcoming obstacles. I have thoroughly enjoyed my college experience and I look forward to giving back to Fort Lewis College as an alumna. There are so many opportunities that college has to offer, I hope you discover your passion(s) and continue to grow as an individual. Good luck to all of you in your endeavors.
El Centro Fun!

Club del Centro Burrito Sale

Charla with Fort Lewis College alumni Augustin Caraza, advisor at FLC

Ballet Folklorico dancers at Fiesta on the Mesa, held on September 15, 2017

To the right: Youth Ballet Folklorico dancers performing at Fiesta on the Mesa!

Below: A family gathering, playing "Lotería for Hora de Español"

Judith Comacho, a Junior Education Major and Ballet Folklorico dancer, performs at Fiesta on the Mesa!
Hi, my name is Deandra. As a freshman of FLC, I’m happy with my decision and have come to realize that this place might have picked me. ‘Explore! Explore!’ is what is always on my mind and I hope to immerse into any clubs that will help me grow into a NEW person, so that I may also help others. I love learning languages and I’m currently learning Italian and Spanish. I hope to travel worldwide, especially to places in poverty.

Hello! My name is Valerie Jade Calabaza. I come from the Pueblo of Santo Domingo and the Navajo Nation. I grew up in the state of New Mexico, on the Santo Domingo Pueblo reservation where I learned the importance of tradition and culture. This is my second year involved with El Centro, as a student manager. I am currently a junior at Fort Lewis College, studying exercise science physiology. When I have free time I like to run, and workout. I am a first generation college student. I have one younger sibling, and we are about ten years apart. I have a passion for making Native American jewelry, which I learned from my grandparents.

Hi! My name is Zane Goodell. I’m a sophomore here at Fort Lewis College and I live in Mancos, Colorado. I was born in Albuquerque New Mexico. I was an orientation leader for Fall 2017 and I am involved with Dance Co-Motion and Young Americans for Liberty. I chose to work at El Centro to regain the Hispanic culture of New Mexico that influenced my childhood and to represent Hispanic people with lighter skin and more European features. I love skiing, watching anime, practicing judo and dancing!

Hello, my name is Amanda Riddick and I have been working at El Centro for 2 years! I love to travel the world and learn about new cultures! My major is Anthropology with a minor in TESOL (Teaching English to Students of Other Languages). If you have any stories, I would love to listen! I was born and raised in Denver.

Hello! My name is RaeLee Airiel Medina! I am 20 years young and currently a junior. This is my third year here at the Fort though! I began working at El Centro last year, and am now the student staff manager! I was originally born in Tucson, Arizona but grew up in a tiny little town called Las Animas, Colorado. I currently have a 3-year-old terrier named Stitch, after my favorite Disney movie, and he definitely lives up to the name! I want to pursue a career in social work, specializing with foster children and their families.

Hello! My name is Stacy John yin-ishyé. Hello relatives, my name is Stacy John; I am Diné and Dakota from the Navajo Nation and the Standing Rock Sioux Nation. I am originally from Flat Rock, Arizona but have resided in Colorado for about nine years. This is my third year working at El Centro de Muchos Colores, and I have loved it thus far. This December I will be graduating with a double major in Native American and Indigenous Studies and Sociology, with a minor in Spanish. On my free time I like to read, hike, enjoy the outdoors and spend time with the people I love. I look forward to graduating and giving back to my Diné and Dakota communities; I have decided to either pursue a Graduate degree in Social Work or attend law school. Ahéhéé! to my family for their teachings that continue to guide me in my journey; thank you for always loving me unconditionally.

And a huge thank you to Shirena for providing me with opportunities throughout my undergrad career. I could not have asked for a better mentor, thank you for teaching me and for being patient with me. It truly has been an honor to represent El Centro the past three years.

Hello! My name is RaeLee Medina! I am 20 years young and currently a junior. This is my third year here at the Fort though! I began working at El Centro last year, and am now the student staff manager! I was originally born in Tucson, Arizona but grew up in a tiny little town called Las Animas, Colorado. I currently have a 3-year-old terrier named Stitch, after my favorite Disney movie, and he definitely lives up to the name! I want to pursue a career in social work, specializing with foster children and their families.

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Compiled by RaeLee Medina
I'm Macy O’Rourke, a freshman this year. I am from a small town, Paonia, Colorado. A few of my hobbies are drawing, painting, hiking, and horseback riding. If you catch me on my free time here I’m probably dancing like a dork, reading like a nerd, or laughing at almost anything. I plan to have a major in teacher education and a minor in psychology. Some of my goals I want to accomplish here include running a half marathon, exploring Durango, make as many friends as my excitement holds, and continue to learn something new each day. I’ve had my own apartment in Aspen, and traveled by myself to Thailand, but being apart of this Fort Lewis community is beyond compare. I’m determined to bring something to this college as it’s bringing new experiences to me.
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Hello, my name is Jen Tarwater and I am from Monument, CO. I am a junior here at the Fort studying Elementary Education, minoring in Spanish, and getting a Bilingual Endorsement (meaning I can teach in bilingual schools). This is my first year working at El Centro and I love it! There were a bunch of different reasons I wanted to work at El Centro some of which include improving my Spanish skills, acquiring new on the job skills (like overcoming my fear of talking on the phone), and being more involved on campus. Building off of that, I really wanted to be a part of a group or club where I could hang out and relax, practice some Spanish here and there, and really become part of a family. What better place to find that than at El Centro?

My name is Verónica Flores, a senior working towards graduating from Fort Lewis College with a major degree in Psychology and a minor in Sociology. I am originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico and am a 2nd generation college student. As a Hispanic Pueblo Native American Woman, I have become very grateful for the opportunity to receive an education from an institution that celebrates, and appreciates the diversity of its students. After graduation, I would like to start working for an organization that rehabilitates and advocates for victims of sexual assault and harassment. During this time, I plan to start preparing for the GRE and hope to be admitted into a graduate program at the University of New Mexico in the Spring of 2019. Future goals include earning a Master’s degree in Clinical Psychology, moving out of New Mexico, and working in a rehabilitation center or hospital that offers assistance in therapy and counseling especially for women. Outside of my academics, I enjoy music and dance, and love spending time back home in Albuquerque with friends and family whenever I can. I’ve previously taught Ballet Folklorico to kids ranging from age 5 to 18 here on campus at El Centro de Muchos Colores for a year, and am also part of the Fort Lewis College Dance Team. I have a passion for the therapeutic and counseling aspect of psychology, and am excited to get out into the field to gain further knowledge and skills to help me grow as an individual in this area of work.

My name is Mariela Castillo and I was born in Chihuahua, Mexico. I came to the United States with my parents when I was three years old, and have been here ever since. I grew up in a little town in Colorado named Kremmling. After I graduated high school, I went to a community college for two years and received my Associates of Arts in Business in 2016. I then came to Fort Lewis to pursue my dream of psychology. I had always wanted to study psychology, but due to financial reasons I had to go to a community college where that wasn’t an option. I will graduate from Fort Lewis College with a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology in April of 2018. I have been a part of Club del Centro for a year now, and am currently the Vice President. Since last year I wanted to work at El Centro, but I didn’t receive work study until this year. I want to work here because I am going to learn so many valuable traits and concepts that I can use in the real world once I graduate. El Centro has always been my home away from home, so I am really excited to work somewhere that means a lot to me.

My name is Dominic Whitesinger, but I like to be called Domi. I am a 23 years old non-tradition transfer student from Chinle, Az. I am a junior studying psychology and a common ground facilitator. Before I declared psychology as my major, I studied information technology and then I went into studying nursing. I am friendly and helpful person. I like to go hiking in the mountains and walk along the Animas river here in Durango. My hobbies include cooking, baking, wilderness exploration and meditating. I like learning about other cultures as well as my own. I look forward to meeting new people to socialize with and lead a helping hand.
La Movida is a student-run publication for El Centro de Muchos Colores published each semester. El Centro is the Fort Lewis College Hispanic Center geared toward promoting Hispanic pride and awareness, increasing Hispano student enrollment and retention rates. La Movida welcomes submissions at any time. All submissions should be sent to Shirena Trujillo Long at longs@fortlewis.edu.

The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of El Centro de Muchos Colores nor of Fort Lewis College. For questions or comments please contact El Centro de Muchos Colores, located room 40 of the Student Union Building or can be reached at:

Ballet Folklorico de Durango representing Hispanic culture at the Durango Annual Cowboy Gathering Parade