



Journalist  
Jonathan Choe,  
nominated for  
four Emmys



Ethics Attorney  
finds Binda guilty  
of using office for  
monetary gain



Lovick looking to  
spend Summer  
connecting with  
constituents

Real News ⚡  
Real Impact

## Secretary Hobbs visits colleges, talks voter engagement and misinformation



Washington Secretary of State Steve Hobbs (center in blue shirt) with Everett Community College Interim President Darrell L. Cain (behind Hobbs) and college staff, at a dinner for Snohomish community leaders. SOURCE: Secretary of State's Office.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**EVERETT**—With candidate filing week less than a month away for the 2023 General Election, Washington Secretary of State, Steve Hobbs, met with the Lynnwood Times during his North Sound tour on Tuesday, April 25, where we discussed everything from election integrity to cyber security; and on a lighter note, even his passion for roleplaying games such as Dungeons and Dragons.

His North Sound tour in-

cluded Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, and Everett Community College where Secretary Hobbs provided updates on his office, its Combined Fund Drive and Legacy Program, and progress on educating students about civics and the election process in general.

“Community colleges have a warm place in my heart, because this was the only way that I was going to get a four-year degree,” said Hobbs about his tour. “This is an opportunity for people

from a working-class background. My mother came to this country with no money, she struggled to make ends meet raising myself and my sister; yet I was able to come [to Everett Community College] to get an Associate’s Degree and take that to a four year institution.”

### ERIC VOTING PROGRAM CONTROVERSY

A large topic of contention for Secretary of State’s Offices throughout the nation has recently been the Electronic Registration Infor-

mation Center (ERIC), a bipartisan interstate voter program that several Republican-led states have pulled out of within the last year, alleging the tool is a plot to control voting rolls.

So far seven red states — Ohio, Iowa, Florida, West Virginia, Missouri, Louisiana, and Alabama — have opted out of the program after many prominent Republicans, namely former President Donald J Trump, accused the program as

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## Vivian Dong appointed to PFD Board, Binda defends \$1,200 travel expense

By MARIO LOTMORE

**LYNNWOOD**—The Lynnwood Public Facilities District Board will be welcoming a new appointee, vehicles that block USPS mailboxes will be ticketed, and council recommends action in Binda travel reimbursement fiasco at its Business Meeting on Monday, April 24.

### VIVIAN DONG APPOINTED TO BOARD OF LYNNWOOD PUBLIC FACILITIES DISTRICT



The Lynnwood City Council approved Senior Software Engineer Vivian Dong to the Board of Directors of the Lynnwood Public Facilities District. She is the first Chinese

American to sit on the Board filling the vacancy left by Shawn Walker.

“I am truly honored and humbled to have been appointed to the Public Facilities District (PFD) board, and I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Lynnwood City Council for their support and confidence in my abilities to serve our community,” Dong told the Lynnwood Times. “This appointment represents a significant milestone not only for me but also for the growing Asian community in Lynnwood. As the first Asian board member, I am committed to being a strong advocate for our diverse voices and ensuring that the PFD meets the needs of all residents.”

The Lynnwood Public Facilities District changed its name to The District in February to signifying the beginning of its new forward momentum of growth and development. The District, aims to redevelop Lynnwood’s downtown core as a live, work, play, and entertainment destination for the region with a \$200 million Master Plan. The plan is to include a parking garage, 300 units of residential housing, a hotel, an Event Plaza, a convention center, and an event center, as well as multiple spaces for retail space from 194th Street Southwest to 196th Street Southwest along 36th Avenue West.

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## Artificial intelligence in the classroom: Academic integrity vs. human learning

EDITORIAL By EMILY CHU

**MUKILTEO**—With AI tools such as Cactus AI and ChatGPT on the rise, the growing need for school districts to develop formal policies for the use of artificial intelligence in the classroom is reigniting ethical discussion around academic integrity and human learning.

Initially launched on November 30th, 2022, ChatGPT quickly became one of the fastest-growing platforms, with over a million users by December. Developed by OpenAI, the open language model has been trained on vast amounts of text data, allowing it to respond to requests in a coherent and

appropriate manner. The AI language model can write essays, develop quantum physics, and even write code.

Many students have found ways to use ChatGPT’s capabilities, and other AI tools on assignments and homework by inputting prompts and questions. Students can generate entire essays and solve math problems in seconds, all without having to expend any effort.

“I think [AI tools] can be beneficial in certain places,” said Harpreet Parhar, an English teacher at Kamiak High School. “[But] I think it does not belong in the high school classroom, where [students] are still practicing

and developing [their] skills.”

Although AI in the classroom, such as ChatGPT, has created a lot of buzz with Kamiak High School teachers and students, so far no formal plans in addressing any ethical issues by the Washington Education Association nor the Mukilteo School District have taken place.

“The school district does not have a specific policy about AI-created schoolwork.” Bradford Diane stated, the director of public relations at the Mukilteo School District. “Policies

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# Possession of controlled substances will be legal in Washington starting July 1 due to 'Blake fix' inaction

By MARIO LOTMORE

**OLYMPIA, Wash., April 24, 2023**—The 2023 legislative session ended last night without the passage of a new state law on the possession of controlled substances, leaving it now up to counties and cities to put local drug-possession laws in place once the state law adopted in 2021 expires on July 1.

SB-5536, also known as the “Blake Fix,” concerning controlled substances, counterfeit substances, and legend drug possession and treatment, passed the Senate on March 3, with 28 yeas and 21 nays. The Senate’s version increased the penalty for the possession of hard drugs to a gross misdemeanor from its current misdemeanor status that occurred as a result of the 2021 passage of SB-5476 in response to the state Supreme Court’s 2021 Blake decision.

On April 11, the House amended the Senate’s version of SB-5536, with 54 yeas and 41 nays, to limit the charge for possession back to a misdemeanor and expunge a conviction if that person has no additional arrests, charges, or convictions within a two-year period of the present conviction. The House’s version would also make knowingly possessing and using controlled substances in a public place by injection, inhalation, ingestion, or any other means a misdemeanor and subject to diversion programs, undercutting recent ordinances passed by local municipalities.

After the controversial placing of an Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) next to a local Boys & Girls Club in Lynnwood earlier this year which erupted in weeks of protests, the House’s amendment surprisingly would remove the requirement for Washington State Department of Health (DOH) to hold public hearings of the locations of



**Governor Jay Inslee speaking at a press conference on April 23 after the 2023 Legislative Session. SOURCE: Office of the Governor.**

OTPs within the local community.

After the Senate refused to go along with this weaker version in a concurrence on Friday, April 21, negotiators from the House and Senate chambers emerged with a new proposal Saturday evening that was rejected by the House on Sunday, April 23, by a 43-55 vote.

The Senate version of SB-5536, sponsored by June Robinson (D-Everett), was also supported by Snohomish County Senators: Marko Liias (D-Mukilteo), John Lovick (D-Mill Creek), Jesse Salomon (D-Shoreline), and Keith Wagonor (R-Granite Falls). The Senate’s version was also supported by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC).

“We supported policies to provide incentives that encourage drug rehabil-

itation and treatment while holding those who are in unlawful possession of drugs accountable in a compassionate manner,” WASPC released in a statement on April 24. “We supported the bill as it passed the Senate as it was a balanced approach to incentivize those found in possession of drugs to successfully complete treatment. In return, those individuals would not have a criminal record and not spend any time in jail following conviction. Only those who refused treatment would be subject to serving any time in jail.”

The Association of Washington Cities (AWC) opposed language in the House version that required a prosecutor to vacate (expunge) a case after two years if there are no new criminal arrests/convictions. The AWC explained that doing so, “will add substantial administrative burden for the prosecutor,

and will encourage prosecutors to not charge simple possession, eliminating the treatment pathways envisioned in the bill for that individual.”

AWC also criticized the House’s version believing the pre-trial diversion program as established in the House version is not workable in most jurisdictions.

Republican Senate Leader John Braun in a statement today blames the absence of a statewide statute regarding the possession of controlled substances “a complete failure” by House Democratic leadership.

“It’s as though they are heartless about the death and despair that fentanyl and other hard drugs have caused across our state, including their own districts, for most of the past two years,” Braun said.

Senate Majority leader Andy Billig (D-Spokane) blamed the failure of a “Blake fix” on House Republicans stating that not one member of the Republican caucus voted for the House version Sunday night.

“I expected a bipartisan vote on this compromise bill,” Billig said. “Instead, not one House Republican voted for a bill that would have made drug possession a gross misdemeanor throughout our state, as they’ve requested all session.”

However, according to the roll call vote on Sunday, 15 Democratic members joined their Republican colleagues in the House to kill the bill such as Representatives Emily Alvarado (D-Seattle), Liz Berry (D-Seattle) and Mia Gregerson (D-SeaTac).

Governor Jay Inslee pleased with the

*Continued* **PAGE 07 >>**

## Governor signs bill removing barriers to Medal of Valor recipients

By MARIO LOTMORE

**OLYMPIA, Wash., April 21, 2023**—Freshman Representative Sam Low (R-Lake Stevens) had his first bill signed into law by Governor Jay Inslee on Thursday, April 20, that makes it easier to honor Washington State Medal of Valor recipients who put their lives on the line to save another.

“Removing the barriers to when the

award can be presented and who can present the award will give more flexibility to the process and help to make sure people are recognized for their heroic efforts,” 39th Legislative District Representative Low told the Lynnwood Times.

The bill, HB-1031: Modifying medal of valor award presentation requirements, passed with overwhelming bi-partisan support by both chambers

with a vote of 93 yeas, 0 nays in the House on January 6, 2023, and 43 yeas, 0 nays in the Senate on April 6.

“Congratulations on your first bill, we should see a big smile here,” Governor Inslee told Low during Thursday’s bill signing.

In 1986, Washington established a decoration of the State Medal of Merit recognizing any person of exceptionally meritorious conduct in performing outstanding services to the people and state of Washington. However, no similar state decoration existed to recognize a civilian who put their life at

risk to save, or attempted to save, the life of another.

The Medal of Valor was established by an act of the Washington Legislature that passed in June of 2000, recognizing civilians who save or try to save another’s life at the risk of serious injury or death to themselves. The bill, SSB-5408, was sponsored and introduced by former state senator Don Benton (R-Vancouver) in January of 1999.

In 2015, the Legislature updated the law to make groups eligible in order to

*Continued* **PAGE 05 >>**

# LYNNWOOD TIMES

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Lynnwood Times, 12918 Mukilteo Speedway C23, PMB-162 Lynnwood, WA 98087 or email [editorial@lynnwoodtimes.com](mailto:editorial@lynnwoodtimes.com).

**LETTERS POLICY**

The Lynnwood Times welcomes letters to the editor of no more than 400 words. Letters will be printed as promptly as possible, as space allows.

To be considered for publication, letters must include a *first* and *last name*, *address* and *phone number* for verification purposes. We also reserve the right to edit letters as necessary for brevity, grammar and decorum.

# Everett Community College offers president job to Chemene Crawford



Chemene Crawford

**EVERETT**—Everett Community College’s Board of Trustees voted unanimously this morning to offer the college presidency to Chemene Crawford.

Crawford has accepted, pending completion of contract negotiations.

“I am elated and deeply honored to have been selected as the next president of Everett Community College,” Crawford said Friday. “EvCC is a beacon in the community and where many of our citizens come to create opportunity and change their lives. During my visit with the college community it was evident that there is a commitment to student success, academic excellence, and the values of equity, diversity,

inclusion, and community. I look forward to working with the community to assure that those who come to us can indeed ‘Stay Close and Go Far.’”

The decision was made at a special board meeting April 21 after a national search, a campus visit last week with student, faculty, staff and community forums, and an in-depth interview with the Board of Trustees.

Crawford, Ed.D., is president and CEO of North Seattle College. She has served over 30 years in higher education, including roles from full-time faculty member to associate vice chancellor, previously serving at Dallas College and other colleges and universities. Crawford earned a doctorate of

education in organizational leadership from Nova Southeastern University, a master’s in human resources and organization development and a bachelor’s of science in organizational behavior, both from University of San Francisco.

EvCC worked with the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Searches to conduct a national search. ACCT will continue to assist EvCC during the contracting process.

EvCC’s next president will lead an institution that educates more than 15,000 students per year and employs more than 800 faculty and staff at several locations throughout Snohomish County, with most students at the main campus in Everett.

## LYNNWOOD HISTORIAN PASSES AWAY



Historian, Betty Lou Gaeng passed away, April 17, 2023. A former Alderwood Manor and Lynnwood resident, Betty Lou was instrumental in helping to preserve and interpret our area’s history. She had a sharp memory and impeccable research skills to write stories for news outlets Heritage Park, and the City of Lynnwood. Betty Lou was an incredible woman who loved the Lynnwood community. She was honored with a key to the City on November 26, 2018 and recognized as the official City Historian for Lynnwood.

## Scholarships for Seniors

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# Fraud Alert: Latest scams hitting Snohomish County residents

Snohomish County residents are being asked to report the latest scams to law enforcement of anyone requesting money for fake jewelry on the side of the road or demanding money for jury service over the phone.

## SNOHOMISH COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JURY DUTY SCAM ALERT

The Snohomish County Superior Court and Snohomish County Superior Court Clerk's Office is receiving reports of jury duty scam activity. The Superior Court will never reach out to jurors demanding money related to jury service.

"We want to warn the public about this scam and let people know that no one involved in the jury process would ever call to ask for money in connection with jury service," said Snohomish County Superior Court Administrator Andrew Somers. "We know that people take their jury duty responsibilities very seriously and we want to continue to encourage everyone to respond to legitimate jury summonses. Our justice system depends on our ability to gather juries from our community."

If you receive a suspicious call or e-mail that requests money, please contact your local police department. For questions related to jury service, please contact Superior Court's Jury Administration at 425-388-3397.

## GOLD SELLING SCAMS ON FREEWAYS

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) has received several reports and interviewed three separate victims involving individuals selling fake

jewelry on the freeways and ramps in the King and Snohomish counties.

The reports are the same as ones received historically in parts of the state and around the country. Well-dressed individuals in higher end rental vehicles flag drivers down on the side of the freeway or ramps saying they need money for gas to get back home saying that they will pay them back more and/or giving the victim gold jewelry in exchange for the cash. This is typically and aggressive conversation and a demand for cash to help them.

Case #1: This occurred on March 2, 2023 around 4pm EB SR 520 to SB I-405. This victim drove to their bank after being stopped by the suspect and handed over \$10,000.00 in exchange for the gold jewelry shown below. The victim in this case described the suspect as a male of Middle Eastern descent.

Case #2: This occurred March 9, 2023 around 2pm SB I-405 to SB I-5. The suspect was described as a heavy set male with a black beard and mustache in a suit driving a gray BMW SUB with no front plate. The suspect advised he needed to get back to Miami. The victim was scammed out of \$1,000.

Washington State Patrol detectives are seeking anyone that may have information on these cases or any others not described above. Detectives would also like to speak with any other victims of this scam that have yet to contact police.

Besides being a scam and illegal these situations are also very unsafe as these suspects are stopping on freeways

and ramps where pedestrians are not allowed and at times stepping out into traffic in order to get drivers to pull over. If you find yourself in this type of situation DO NOT STOP!

Call 9-1-1 as soon as possible and give location and any description of suspects and vehicles. Please contact Detective Ford at John.Ford@wsp.wa.gov.



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# For Senator Lovick, the legislative session may be over but summer is just around the corner!

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**MILL CREEK**—On the night of Sunday, April 23, after the state of Washington’s 2023 legislative session came to a close, Senator John Lovick made his rounds shaking hands, wishing everyone a happy interim, then returned to his office to clear out his desk before driving home. Now that session is ended, Senator Lovick (D-Mill Creek) is looking forward to working on projects around the house, attending his grandson’s high school graduation in California, and flying family up to Washington this summer for some gatherings. But but mostly, Lovick told the Lynnwood Times, he is looking forward to “catching [his] breath.”

“It was a busy 105 days,” said Lovick.

Considering Senator Lovick’s schedule this session, sponsoring 21 bills, and co-sponsoring an incredible 118 all while sitting on three committees — Business, Financial Services, and Trade, Environment, Energy, and Technology, and Transportation — the sigh of relief is well-deserved. But aside from these extra curriculums, the job of Senator is far from over for Lovick who also plans to spend his summer knocking on 250 doors a day, passing out fliers that update the public on recent legislation passed into law.

“It saves on postage and I get out and get to talk to people,” Senator Lovick told the Lynnwood Times. “I love visiting people at their homes...I’ve never been a big fan of visiting people just when you’re running for office.”

Lovick’s love for engaging with the public face-to-face seeps into most everything he does. He added that when he attends his local gym (L.A. Fitness) he rarely touches the equipment because he enjoys standing around and talking to people about the politics he cares so passionately about. Spending his gym sessions like this hasn’t held him back from a life of fitness. During session each morning he walked five miles around Capitol Lake before beginning his day in the office.

“It keeps me in shape and I love walking,” said Sen. Lovick.

He also gets his exercise playing Pickleball, leading the effort to codify the beloved paddle ball activity as the state’s official sport in 2022.



Senator John Lovick on in the Washington State Legislature representing the constituents of the 44th Legislative District. SOURCE: Washington State Senate Democrats.

Lovick was appointed to fill the vacant Senate seat after Steve Hobbs was elected to Secretary of State in December 2021. Senator Lovick retained his Senate seat with 58.77% of the vote last November. Prior to joining the Senate, he served in the House of Representatives from 1998 to 2007 and 2016 to 2021, was elected Snohomish County Sheriff in 2007, and served as Snohomish County Executive from 2013 to 2015.

He joked that the Senate is “the exact same thing, it’s just different” from the House, dealing with a lot of similar issues but with a different perspective. With the smaller chamber — 98 members of the House as opposed to just 49 in the Senate — one can work with members a lot more closely he shared.

“One of the things I noticed that’s different is debates are a little bit different; you deal with the issue and then it’s done,” said Lovick. “I’ve had disagreements with some things knowing my colleagues would not support it and next thing you know they’re walking over to your desk and would say ‘I’m going to be with you on this one’. It was the same thing

in the house, it was just a different temperament.”

Of Lovick’s 21 bills in which he was the primary sponsor, four passed both chambers — SB5003, increasing the number of district court judges in Snohomish County, SB5041, concerning compliance with federal motor carrier safety administration requirements for the drug and alcohol clearinghouse, SB5352, concerning vehicular pursuits of Police Officers, and SB5606, deterring illegal street racing.

Many of the bills that died in committee, he said, became companion bills such as SB5469, creating the covenant homeownership account and program to address the history of housing discrimination due to racially restrictive real estate covenants in Washington state, which Representative Jamila Taylor (WA-30)’s bill, HB1474, became the primary vehicle for.

Some of Lovick’s bills did not move forward such as SB5002, lowering the Blood Alcohol Content of drivers to 0.05, and SSB5424, concerning flexible schedules for law enforcement, but he said that’s just “the nature of what we do.”

“I think if you get 25% of your bills signed by the Governor, that’s not that bad,” said Sen. Lovick. “I’m pleased with the process.”

While many of his bills were agency requested, stemming from the “relationships you build with people,” Lovick brings with him a specific insight from his time as State Trooper and Sheriff holding public safety as his number one priority going into this 2023 legislative session. The police pursuit laws, which may have been the most talked about legislation in Olympia since police reform laws went into effect in 2021, for example, Senator Lovick worked closely with Senator Manka Dingha (D-Redmond) and local law enforcement agencies on.

“We’re pleased with where we are. We might have some adjustment to do later on but it’s a good start,” said Lovick.

Of all the bills that passed this session, Senator Lovick is most proud of the passing of HB1240, banning the sale of assault-style weapons, which he said is going to “make a huge impact

*Continued* **PAGE 11 >>**

## from page 2 **MEDAL OF VALOR**

award the Medal of Valor to the communities of Oso, Arlington, Darrington, and the Sauk-Suiattle Tribe for their heroic rescue efforts during the 2014 Oso Landslide, that claimed the lives of 43 people.

Rep. Low’s bill would update RCW 1.60.030 by removing the requirement for the Washington State Medal of Valor to be presented during a Joint Session of the Legislature and also removing the restriction of the governor’s authority to designate a presenter only when s/he is disabled or ill.

“People across the state do wonderful, great, and fantastic things,” said Low. “But in rare instances there are people that go above and beyond at risk to their own lives to rescue the life of another. These people

deserve to be recognized.”

The Washington State Medal of Valor has only been awarded 12 times since its creation — most recently in 2015. Previous award recipients are:

- Jim Swett, Skagit County
- Greg Meinhold, Snohomish County
- Travis Jackson, Clark County
- Dennis Kinsey, Clark County
- Timothy Bourasaw, Snohomish County
- Rick Bowers, Snohomish County
- Edward Marsette, King County
- Alana Schutt, Snohomish County
- Community of Arlington
- Community of Darrington
- Community of Oso

- The Sauk-Suiattle Tribe

The Office of the Secretary of State is currently accepting nominations for Washington State Medal of Valor. The deadline for nominations is September 15, 2023.

Recipients are chosen by the State Medal of Valor Committee that include the governor, president of the state Senate (lieutenant governor), speaker of the state House of Representatives, and chief justice of the state Supreme Court. The secretary of state serves as a nonvoting ex-officio member and secretary of the committees. Recipients will be awarded their medals during a special presentation ceremony.

# Fogo de Chão brings a slice of Brazil to Lynnwood's Village at Alderwood

By **MARIO LOTMORE**

**LYNNWOOD**—Brazilian dining experience Fogo de Chão opened their second Washington location on Friday, April 21, at the Village at Alderwood in Lynnwood, offering the latest high-end dining experience for residents and visitors.

“We are really excited to have Fogo de Chão as part of the Alderwood family,” Jerry Irwin, Senior General Manager of Alderwood, told the Lynnwood Times. “As we look at elevating both the dining and shopping options, I think Fogo de Chão fits right into that. They’re amazing partners, and we couldn’t be more pleased to have them with us.”

The restaurant features an open-air churrasco grill in the heart of the dining room where guests watch gaucho chefs demonstrate the culinary art of churrasco as different cuts of meat are prepared and grilled over an open flame.

For just \$66 a person, one can enjoy continuous table side service of signature cuts in what’s called the “Churrasco Experience” — a Fogo tradition. Indulgent cuts, such as the Wagyu New York strip, Wagyu Ancho (Ribeye), or the dry-aged tomahawk Ancho can be added to this experience for an additional cost.

In the main dining room, a white Carrara Market Table offers small bites such as charcuterie, Brazilian street corn, roasted peppers, and salads, all included in the Churrasco Experience. The Lynnwood location also features an outdoor dining patio, soaring wine displays, dry aged meat lockers for in-house aging and a lively indoor bar, ideal for all-day happy hour each Saturday and Sunday.

“[Lynnwood] is a wonderful community,” Barry McGowan, CEO of Fogo de Chão told the Lynnwood Times. “Each restaurant is an opportunity to build a community, so we want to be at the heart of every city. We’re excited to be here.”

What’s unique about Fogo de Chão, McGowan added, is that it’s “approachable” when compared to other dining experiences—ranging from \$6 bar food to \$165 Wagyu—but also that there’s “really no menu, it’s about how you like to dine,” he said.

“The idea is if you’re pescatarian we got seafood, if you’re vegetarian we have plant-based protein versus animal-based protein, so it’s really set up for a variety of occasions,” said McGowan. “Fogo de Chão accommodates any food tribe, and this is why our demographic is 87% millennial. We’re younger, where people go out and experience more than just dining, they want discovery and food.”

McGowan joined the Fogo de Chão team 10 years ago when the company transitioned from founder-led to private equity. He joined Fogo with the mission to uphold its culture and authenticity, a mission he seemed to succeed in,



Helena Capucho, General Manager of Lynnwood’s Fogo de Chão (holding knife), along with Barry McGowan, CEO of Fogo de Chão (center holding microphone), cutting the ribbon at the pre-opening VIP event on Thursday, April 20. Lynnwood Times | Kienan Briscoe.



The **CHURRASCO EXPERIENCE: PICANHA**, Prime part of the Top Sirloin. SOURCE: Fogo de Chão.

according to Helena Capucho, General Manager of Lynnwood’s Fogo de Chão and Brazilian native, who told the Lynnwood Times that Fogo’s food is “exactly the same” as in her home country.

“Every time I eat it, it brings me back home,” said Capucho.

Capucho moved to the United States three years ago to study English and found herself joining the Fogo team in Portland, Oregon—beginning as a host and working her way up through every position until being promoted to General manager of the Lynnwood location three months ago.

A private ribbon cutting ceremony was

held within the dining room where Ryan Bush, Economic Development and Tourism Project Manager for the city of Lynnwood, shared a few words on behalf of Mayor Christine Frizzell, who was unable to attend the event due to meetings with elected officials.

“I’m excited for Fogo to be a part of this community and I’m looking forward to be somewhere for the community to connect, and for you to be a part of our community, so thanks for choosing Lynnwood,” said Bush.

Before the ribbon was cut, Alissa Jones, Executive Director of the Lynnwood Food Bank, announced a partnership between the two, in which Fogo will be donating a percentage of its opening



The **SEAFOOD TOWER**: Split cold-water lobster tails, full lobster claws, jumbo shrimp, snow crab legs, green-lipped mussels. Lynnwood Times | Kienan Briscoe.

week sales and offer employees the opportunity to volunteer at the Food Bank.

“One of the things that really makes this a great partnership is not just that you guys are building a business in Lynnwood but that you are interested in the people of Lynnwood, interested in the needs of our community, and interested in being members of our community,” said Jones at the ribbon cutting ceremony. “That makes me very pleased to say welcome to Lynnwood.”

Fogo de Chão was founded by Brazilian-born Arri and Jair Coser, who opened their first restaurant, a wood

Continued **PAGE 11** >>

# Journalist Jonathan Choe, Emmy-nominated for the very work that got him fired from KOMO



Emmy Award nominee Journalist Jonathan Choe. SOURCE: Jonathan Choe.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

SEATTLE—One year after Journalist Jonathan Choe was let go from KOMO News for his controversial reporting, he's now being nominated for four Emmy awards for the very work that got him fired.

On June 30th, 2023, at the 60th Annual NW Emmy Gala, Choe will compete against some of the largest media outlets in the state including KGW, KIRO, KOMO, and KING in four different categories: Hard News Report, Continuing Coverage, Serious

News Feature Category, and News Specialty Assignment. Although some of the work Choe did in these categories was during his time at KOMO, he will be mostly representing Discovery Institute Center, which offered Choe a media fellowship last year.

“Even if we don't take home any hardware at the award ceremony, it's still a massive and historic win because this is the first time Discovery's competing against other newsrooms in Washington state,” said Choe. “This is proof our independent guerrilla journalism model works and matters to the community. This should also send a strong message to WA politicians who still try to discredit and dismiss my work. Not that I need validation, but the nominations were made by other industry peers across the nation. In other words, elected officials do not get to decide who's a journalist and who's not.”

Choe has made a name for himself in Seattle's independent “guerrilla” journalism scene for his aggressive reporting of Seattle's drug and homeless crises. A reporter with over 20 years of experience, he claims his most recent employer, ABC television affiliate KOMO news of Seattle, fired him for covering a rally held in Olympia by the controversial Proud Boys group, in 2022.

As a proud Asian American who has labeled a White supremacist by local

extreme activists, Choe defended his coverage in a blog post writing: “Let me start off by saying I am not a neo-Nazi, fascist, or white supremacist. Those are just some of the names I have been called over the past few days for my recent coverage of a protest in Olympia, WA. It was advertised as a ‘rally for America.’”

“I wasn't taking sides. I wasn't saying anything was good or bad. In fact, none of the marchers would talk to me on the record because they “didn't trust the mainstream media.” So I just started following the march route. Aside from some middle fingers and heckling from those who opposed the rally, the day ended peacefully and without incident.” he continued.

According to Choe, the managers at KOMO news weren't even aware of his coverage, which was posted on his Twitter account and never made it on the station. It wasn't until social media members began to “bombard the station” with phone calls demanding he take down his social media post. He did so but was fired the next day, he said.

“At the end of the day, they had a brand to maintain and the stuff I was covering was controversial,” Choe told the Lynnwood Times. “They have to sell ads and they were worried about

Continued PAGE 12 >>

from page 2 **ILLEGAL DRUGS**

passing of his “go-big proposals” on housing, increased funding for education, and policies to address behavioral health, public safety, and reproductive freedom this legislature session, called a failure to the Blake fix, “unacceptable.”

“I hope the successes of this session aren't overshadowed by the way tonight ended with the failure of the Blake bill in the House,” Inslee said. “But what happened tonight was unacceptable. Decriminalization is not an option for me, and it is not an option for the state of Washington. I expect legislators to deliver a solution.”

Because SB-5476 that passed in 2021 was a temporary resolution to the state Supreme Court's 2021 Blake decision, the conditions criminalizing the possession of controlled substances such as methamphetamine and fentanyl expire on July 1, 2023. If the state does nothing, technically, possessing controlled substances in Washington state will no longer be a criminal offense at the state-level. Local governments will have to enact policies and ordinances for their communities in the absence of state statute.

It is unsure if Governor Inslee will call

a special session to address this upcoming public health and safety quagmire. Senator Braun shared that he doesn't see what a special session would accomplish.

“It's not clear what they [Democrat-led House and Senate] would accomplish in a special session that they couldn't get done in this 105-day session. At this point our communities would probably be better off to trust their local prosecutors, law-enforcement leaders and mayors to deal with this at the community level, with their own drug-possession laws.”

Snohomish County Councilman Nate Nehring isn't wasting anytime addressing what he calls “the scourge of deadly drugs on our streets” by announcing he will be introducing a county ordinance this week outlawing drug possession “due to the legislature's inaction.”

“This is unfortunate but opens the door for counties and cities to address this issue at the local level,” Councilman Nehring said. “The scourge of deadly drugs on our streets is among the most pressing public safety issues our communities face. I look forward to working with my colleagues at Snohomish County to adopt reasonable regulations which lead with compassion and emphasize treatment while also holding

individuals accountable for their actions.”

In 2020, Oregon became the first state in the country to decriminalize hard drugs with the passing of statewide Measure 110. If no action is taken by the legislative by July 1, 2023, the absence of a statewide policy on the possession of controlled substances will create a checkered and confusing set of varying policies by municipalities throughout Washington state.

## SB-5476 AND THE BLAKE DECISION OF 2021

The 5-4 decision by the Washington State Supreme Court stated that RCW 69.50.4013(1) – the statute that criminalized the possession of a controlled substance without a prescription – did not include “an intent requirement” and hence also violated the requirement for uniform interpretation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act among the states, ruling the entire statute unconstitutional

Therefore, to correct this, a mens rea element, “knowingly” was added to the statutes pertaining to possession of a controlled substance, possession of a counterfeit substance, and possession of a legend drug.

SB-5476 amended state law to reducing penalties for the possession of controlled substances from felonies to a misdemeanor and where a case is legally sufficient, the prosecutor must divert a case for treatment if the alleged violation is the person's first or second violation for possession. This would decriminalize all hard drugs within the state of Washington, lessening criminal penalties for offenders.

However, for a person's third and subsequent violations, the prosecutor is not required to divert the case for treatment; hence, the accused may be subject to class B or C felonies. Also, use or delivery of drug paraphernalia no longer became a criminal offense if the use or delivery is for the purpose of testing, analyzing, packing, repacking, storing, containing, concealing, injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into the human body.

Republican Senators Keith Wagoner and Mike Padden introduced SB-5471 back in 2021 addressing the state Supreme Court's Blake's decision by adding conditions and penalties related to a person “knowingly” in possession of a controlled and counterfeit substances. However, the bill never made it past the Democrat-led Law & Justice committee.



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# Ethics Attorney finds Binda guilty of two counts of using his public office for monetary gain

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**LYNNWOOD**—An Ethics Attorney found Lynnwood City Councilman Joshua Binda guilty of two counts of violating ethics standards for using public resources for personal gain on April 17.

Each count had multiple instances of violation, the City said, and include “recording promotional videos in council chambers for his monetized speaking tour” and “using city servers and email tools to advertise and promote his monetized speaking tour.”

The Ethics Attorney has proposed a settlement and is currently working with Binda on a date to review that potential settlement with him. If Binda accepts the proposal, which involves a public admittance and apology as well as committing to no further ethics violations, the Ethics Attorney will present the proposal to the City Council for its acceptance.

If neither party is willing to accept the proposal then the Ethics Attorney will present their findings to the Ethics Board for further action. As of the publication of this article, Binda has not replied to the Ethics Attorney’s request to meet.

Councilman Binda used city facilities to make a promotional video for his Love Conquers All Tour on December 19, 2022, in which he profited at least \$14,000. Binda was accompanied by an unidentified male who was acting as a cameraman to take video in the lobby, before moving to the Lynnwood Council Chambers. Binda then gave the cameraman his City of Lynnwood ID badge so that the unidentified cameraman could go in and out of the building unaccompanied. Councilman Binda stayed in the council chambers while the cameraman went in and out, according to the city employee.

As a result, Binda lost access to council chambers and subsequently lost access to his email when investigations found he was also using council email servers to solicit his tour to schools around the region.

The findings are just one of four separate ethics complaints against the councilman, who’s

platform revolves around “inspiring youth.” The other complaints involve merging his personal Insta-gram page with council business - where he recently, controversially, posed shirtless to promote his “Love Conquers All” speaking tour to mostly minors - charging “struggling [public] schools” \$1,500 a day to speak, and his mishandling of campaign funds.

Earlier this year, the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) found Lynnwood City Councilman Joshua Binda guilty of two separate PDC violations and imposed a \$1,000 fine at a public hearing. The violations include using \$2,742 of campaign funds for personal use (RCW 42.17A.445 and WAC 390-16-238) related expenditures as well as submitting a Post-General election C4 report 280 days late (RCW 42.17.235 and .240).

In another Instagram post, Binda posed half-nude and posted a picture in which he told students to “Tattoo My Name So I Know It’s Real” to promote his “Love Conquers All”

tour. Binda later deleted the latter picture. The post caused an uproar in the community, with many calling for his resignation during city council meetings and officially filing with the PDC to recall the council member.

The public had the opinion that they did not think the photos were appropriate, considering the nature his speaking tours are directed toward mostly minors, but mainly that it did not align with an expected decorum a public official should maintain.

Binda believed otherwise, defending his photos as “not meant to be sexual at all.” He then proceeded to accuse media outlets, fellow council members, and the public as being “racist” on social media.

State Senator John Lovick (D-Mill Creek), who endorsed Binda’s campaign, also agreed that Binda should resign during an interview with journalist Brandi Kruse Wednesday, April 26, refuting Binda’s claims of racism.

Continued PAGE 09 >>



## Planning Commission has two vacancies, Lynnwood residents encouraged to apply



**LYNNWOOD**—Become part of Lynnwood’s future by joining the Lynnwood Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is an advisory body appointed by the City Council to advise on various issues. This will include the completion of the Imagine Lynnwood 2044 Comprehensive Plan, the City Center + Alderwood Plan, as well as the implementation of the Housing Action Plan. The Commission will also provide support on other land use and development matters.

The Commission consists of seven members appointed to serve four-year terms and meet twice monthly and meet twice per month on the second and fourth Thursdays. Members must live within Lynnwood city limits and be a registered voter.

There are currently two vacancies on the board:

- Position #1 – Term expires December 31, 2024
- Position #4 – Term expires December 31, 2026

The application deadline is Monday, May 1.



from page 8 **BINDA ETHICS**

“If you’re not going to listen you’re not going to be successful in this business,” said Senator Lovick. “There has been and there always will be racial issues - this is not one of them. People elected them and when you are elected, your obligation is to serve the public that you represent and I do not think, in this posture that he’s in, that he’s appropriately serving the public.”

Senator Lovick mentioned that he and others tried to mentor Binda countless times, but it became increasingly clear that he “was not going to listen.” Lynnwood City Council members echoed this testament during council meetings, where many of them shared they have done everything to attempt to mentor Binda, but he declined each of their offers.

“I’m totally embarrassed by the guy... When he posted the picture of half of his face and half of the face of John Lewis that was over the line for me,” said Senator Lovick of an Instagram post by Binda. “I had the great, great, honor of meeting Congressman John Lewis - a man who came within an inch of his life being beaten after crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday. And when he tried to compare what he is doing to what John Lewis is doing, that’s just over the line.”

Recently Binda attended the National League of Cities event in Washington D.C. He’s now asking that the council reimburse his travel expenses of \$1,190.80. He alleges that he was a keynote speaker at the event in another Instagram post.

However, Council President Sessions revealed that she confirmed with a se-

nior specialist involved with the conference that Councilman Binda was not a keynote speaker.

During the April 10 City Council business meeting, City Attorney Marshall shared that Councilman Binda never contacted her regarding any travel to Washington D.C. for the NLC conference. Binda said that he “attended on his own merit” because, as the conference was a week away, he felt there wasn’t enough time for the attorney to respond to his questions.

“Even though it is really hard, I have to agree with everybody, I have to agree,” distinguished NAACP award recipient and Councilwoman Shirley Sutton said regarding the public’s call for Binda to resign at a March 27 City Council business meeting. “My mom didn’t teach me this, and I know she is rolling over in her grave.”

Despite council members, elected officials, and the public’s demands for Binda to resign he said, “I’m not going anywhere.”

“The people chose me to be here and represent a voice in our community, and represent the people, and I’m gonna continue doing that. I’m gonna continue showing that no matter what and no matter who says what,” said Binda.

“There will be no resignation of any sort, so get used to it!” Binda told his Lynnwood City Council colleagues.

The Lynnwood Times has continually attempted to contact Binda, but he has not responded to any of our requests for statements.

from page 1 **HOBBS**

pumping the “roll for Democrats and does nothing to clean them up,” according to Politico.

ERIC was founded in 2012, created and comprises of state election officials. States who have decided to join, and Hobbs himself, defend the program as being the “most effective tool available to help election officials maintain more accurate voter rolls and detect possible illegal voting” while helping “states reach out to potentially eligible but not yet registered individuals with information on how best to register to vote.”

“It’s just nuts that there’s this misinformation directed at something that protects you from election fraud and they’re buying into it,” said Hobbs. “The big question among Secretaries of States is ‘what’s your replacement?’ There is no replacement!”

Hobbs recently returned from a trip to Washington D.C., where he met with several other Secretaries of States across the country to discuss how they can keep red states on ERIC, while working with federal lawmakers on passing a bill that would provide more security for election workers.

**INSTILLING VOTER CONFIDENCE**

In February of this year, Hobbs launched his Vote with Confidence campaign to inform voters of election security measures and debunk election misinformation.

As for civics education among young

people, the Secretary of State’s Office is working on a mobile video game app that would transport players to a fantasy world, where they can vote upon different fantasy characters and possibly even run a political campaign themselves. Users will also answer civics questions along the way. The goal is to “motivate young people before they’re even of voting age,” Hobbs said.

Hobbs wants to work with local indie video game developers in the Puget Sound on this project and also shared there may even be a tabletop roleplaying game, similar to Dungeons and Dragons, in the works.

A self-proclaimed “nerd” who enjoys playing tabletop roleplaying games and often speaks at conventions like PAX video game convention and Orca Con, Hobbs supported therapeutic gaming in the state’s budget where trained psychologists use roleplaying games for kids with developmental disabilities and veteran’s suffering from PTSD.

During this year’s legislative session, Hobbs also ran a Dungeons and Dragons game for elected officials in Olympia during a “Legislative Game Day” event, intentionally for one Republican, one Democrat, one business lobbyist, and one labor lobbyist. He was also sure to include the latest Dungeons and Dragons rulebook in the Secretary of State’s library for correction facilities across Washington state to allow inmates the opportunity to play.

**NEW LEGISLATION**

Just some of the legislation passed this

## 27<sup>th</sup> Annual MEADOWDALE MAVERICKS YOUTH BASKETBALL CAMP

July 10-12, 2023

Presented by the Edmonds School District

- **Who:** Any incoming K-9<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls who want to have a blast while enhancing their understanding of the game of basketball, and learning the importance of fundamentals, hard work, and teamwork. This is a great opportunity for kids of all ages and skill levels. Individual attention will be given from camp staff (MHS coaches, current & former players) to ensure each camper will have a fun, rewarding, and challenging experience!
- **When:** July 10-12, 2023
  - Session 1: Incoming K-4<sup>th</sup> Grade (8am-11:30am)
  - Session 2: Incoming Boys 5-9<sup>th</sup> Grade (12pm-3:30pm)
  - Session 3: Incoming Girls 5-9<sup>th</sup> Grade (4pm-7:30pm)
- **Where:** “The Stable” at Meadowdale High School  
6002 168<sup>th</sup> St SW Lynnwood, WA 98037
- **Registration:** Visit the link below to register
- **Payment:** Mail check (\$125) made out to ESD to Meadowdale High School (see address above) c/o Roger O’Neill. Or pay via Cash or Check at Day 1 of camp.




REGISTER ONLINE AT:

WWW.MEADOWDALEHOOPS.COM/YOUTH-BASKETBALL-CAMP/





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Please contact:  
**Roger O’Neill**  
Camp Director & Head Boys’ Basketball Head Coach  
206.295.5191, oneillr@edmonds.wednet.edu

HELP WANTED: Interior Designer

Full time. Travel not required. Salary \$51,667 per year.

One position is open for Interior Designer (Lynnwood, WA). Prepare design plans for Kitchen and Bath and review and detail shop drawings for construction plans.

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session Hobbs addressed is SB5152, defining synthetic media in campaigns for elective office, and providing relief for candidates and campaigns, otherwise known as the “Deep Fake” bill; and SB5082, encouraging electoral participation and making ballots more meaningful by abolishing advisory votes.

SB5152 would impose a new cause of action for candidates who are the subject of synthetic media in electioneering communication and defined “synthetic media” as:

“A depiction that, to a reasonable person, is of a real individual in appearance, action, or speech that did not actually occur in reality; and a fundamentally different understanding or impression of the appearance, action, or speech than they would have from the unaltered original version of the image, audio recording, or video recording.”

SB5082 will abolish the requirement that tax increases be referred to the people for an advisory vote at the next general election. In other words, the voters’ pamphlet no longer needs to contain information about advisory votes. Hobbs mentioned the reasoning behind this is that advisory votes do not influence the voting decision behind tax increases, adding that the state will be including a list of taxes on its website that the public can view in lieu of the ballot.

**CYBERSECURITY**

To crack down on cybersecurity, the Secretary of State’s cybersecurity team

has doubled in size and, for the first time ever, VoteWa’s voting database is being backed up to the cloud. The Office is also working closely with CISA, the FBI, and the National Guard to bolster cyber security defense.

“We want to make sure that we’re ahead of any potential threat that’s out there,” said Hobbs.

Hobbs shared that his office is currently hiring to fill several cybersecurity positions.

Additionally, the Secretary of State’s Office recently issued grants in the amount of \$80,000 a year, per county, for the next three years to boost a county’s physical and digital security. One of the requirements of receiving this grant, however, is the requirement of a county to use an Albert Sensor - a Intrusion Detection System (IDS) that provides security alerts for known cyber threats, helping state and local governments identify malicious cyber activity.

More than 900 Albert sensors have been implemented across the country, mostly to states and counties, as the federal government’s cybersecurity response following the Russian election interference of 2016.

Similar to the “misinformation” surrounding ERIC, Hobbs dismissed the “misinformation” surrounding Albert sensors denying that it does not track Meta data, a popular belief among some state GOP members.

from page 1 LYNNWOOD COUNCIL

As a board member, Dong aims to work diligently to promote engagement among residents and to improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of The District.

“I am eager to collaborate with my fellow board members, the Lynnwood City Council, and the broader community to build stronger relationships, create new opportunities, and ensure that The District continues to excel in its important mission,” Dong said.

She is confident that her unique skill set and experiences in technology, financial management, and community outreach will bring valuable insights and perspectives to the board, helping to create a vibrant, welcoming, and thriving “live, work, play” space for all residents.

A total of seven candidates applied to fill the vacancy by the February 15 deadline. After a series of interviews with The District’s Executive Director Janet Pope, its Board Chair, Mike Miller, and two staff employees; and the Lynnwood City Council, four finalists were selected. Dong was approved by the Council on Monday with Councilmembers Julieta Altamirano-Crosby, Shirley Sutton, Patrick Decker and Jim Smith voting in the affirmative; and Councilmembers Shannon Sessions, George Hurst, and Joshua Binda voting for Annie Armstrong.

The Board of Directors is a volunteer position with a term limit of four years, which can be renewed at the end of the term.

#### ORDINANCE TO IMPOSE \$30 FINE FOR BLOCKING USPS MAILBOXES PASSES

Current city and state law does not prohibit parking in front of United States Postal Service (USPS) mailboxes. Blocking access to a mailbox compromises USPS’s ability to deliver mail safely and efficiently. When a mailbox is blocked by parked vehicles, the local USPS Postmaster authorizes delivery personnel to defer delivery to that mailbox to the next day.

The new ordinance creates a new city code prohibiting parking in front of mailboxes during days when USPS mail is delivered. The new code will allow the Lynnwood Police Department to issue a traffic infraction for vehicles parked illegally next to mailboxes under the existing LMC 11.44.140, with the penalty of \$30.

New Lynnwood Municipal Code Section 11.44.101, adopted states:

*“It is unlawful to park a motor vehicle on a roadway in front of or on a roadway within ten (10) feet of either side of a public or private mailbox or grouping of mailboxes located curbside or roadside within or outside of a public right-of-way between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on days the United States Postal Service is scheduled to deliver mail.”*

The ordinance was adopted unanimously, 7-0.

#### COUNCIL REQUEST TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT BE DENIED FOR COUNCILMAN JOSH BINDA

In what Councilman Binda called a “performative” action, the Council voted 5-2 requesting the City’s Fi-

nance Director, Michelle Myer, not to approve a travel reimbursement request of \$1,190.80 for his impromptu trip to attend the National League of Cities Conference in Washington, D.C.

“Just to be clear, I am not directing the city finance director to do anything,” Council President Sessions said after the vote. “We have an excellent city finance director and I know she knows her job and she does a very good job doing her due diligence in making sure the City is spending its money wisely. So, in my motion, that is why I used the word request.”

The hour-long discussion between all councilmembers that involved the City’s attorney, Lisa Marshall, it was shared with the public that under section 2 (A) in “Resolution 2023-01: City Travel Policy” which was adopted on February 13, 2023, “All travel, education, or training expenditures by City Councilmembers and the Mayor, shall be at their individual discretion, provided, however, that each councilmember shall not exceed the amount allocated in the biennial budget for councilmember travel, education and training.”

According to the latest biennial budget, \$2,500 is allocated to each city council member to use as they see fit within the parameters of section 4 of the same policy.

“In order to qualify for reimbursement, each expense must be reasonable and prudent under the circumstances and directly related to the conduct of city business, or a service or substantial benefit provided for the City,” an excerpt from the section reads.

In addition to providing compliance guidance for approved travel expenses, the section specifies the Finance Director as the sole authority “to ensure that these policies are uniformly applied, and to provide the forms, instructions, and training, necessary for implementation.”

Councilman Binda stated that he felt “bullied” and “intimidated” by Council President Sessions to not go on the trip. According to Binda, prior to going on the trip he was told to seek legal advice on the rules for approved travel to the NLC conference for which President Sessions informed him he may contact the City’s attorney for clarification.

During the April 10 City Council meeting, City Attorney Marshall shared that Councilman Binda never contacted her regarding any travel to Washington D.C. for the NLC conference. Binda said that he “attended on his own merit” because, as the conference was a week away, he felt there wasn’t enough time for the attorney to respond to his questions.

“The reason I did not have a conversation with the attorney, because I decided it was a week out from the conference and by the time I would have a conversation with Lisa [the City’s attorney], I would already miss the deadline to make it,” Councilman Binda said at the April 10 Work Session. “So, that is why I decided to attend on my own merit and now I am requesting reimbursement of that funding.”

During this Monday’s meeting, now two weeks later, Councilman Binda expressed that he wants to focus solely on the travel policy.

“I had reached out to our city assis-

tant to register me for the conference as Council President Sessions said – about two or three weeks in advance – which as councilmembers we all have a budget within our [unaudible] to go to conference, to go to things like educational purposes, umm...we all have that within our biennial budgets to choose to go to,” Councilman Binda said. “So, I made that request to Lisa [Harrison, the city clerk] and ask if she can register me for the NLC conference and wanted to follow the proper process to make sure it was getting done right. Lisa told me, yeah; we will get you registered, and everything set and we can get things going.”

Councilman Binda shared that an hour after this conversation, Council President Sessions called to inform him that he could not go and would need approval from council leadership to attend the conference. He shared that the motivating factor in seeking reimbursement for his NLC trip was because Council Vice President Altamirano-Crosby attended the conference and to his knowledge, never received an approval from the council.

“It is to my own discretion of what council events I go to, what conference I go to, that is funded there is not such thing as getting approved...that is something that was made up by Council President and used as a tactic to bully and intimidate me,” said Binda.

Binda continued, “I went fully in a legal way to this NLC conference, handled completely legal duties as a councilmember that I did, and attended the things I felt necessary as a councilmember to represent the people and bring back.”

He alleges that he was a keynote speaker at the event in which Council President Sessions revealed that she confirmed with a senior specialist involved with the conference that Councilman Binda was not a keynote speaker.

“He briefly spoke with some youth delegates,” Council President Sessions revealed from an excerpt with her correspondence with the NLC confirming that Councilman Binda embellished the speaking role of his engagement to the public.

It was further revealed that Council Vice President Dr. Altamirano-Crosby was the official representative for the city of Lynnwood to attend the NLC conference and that she worked with both the mayor and federal partners for months in planning the legislative priorities for discussion and corresponding meeting logistics.

In addition to attending several speaking engagements and panel discussions, Dr. Altamirano-Crosby met with the City of Lynnwood’s lobbyist who submitted requests to Representative Rick Larsen, Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell for \$5 million for the Scriber Lake Phase 3 project and \$2 million for the Maple Stormwater Demonstration Park.

Three weeks after Dr. Altamirano-Crosby met with federal partners in Washington, D.C. on her NLC trip, Congressman Rick Larsen (WA-02) announced that Lynnwood’s Scriber Creek Trail Redevelopment Phase 3 submittal was one of only 15 projects he is earmarking in the Fiscal Year 2024 spending bill.

During her post-trip presentation,

Council Vice President Dr. Altamirano-Crosby shared that she attended the “Celebrate Diversity Breakfast” that focused on honoring excellence in Municipal Multicultural Initiatives, and an ARPA implementation in your communities meeting bringing back resource materials for grant opportunities, workforce investment partnerships, and broadband funds.

Council Vice President Dr. Altamirano-Crosby also attended an event with the First Lady of the United States, Jill Biden, where the discussion focused on the importance of bipartisanship, education, and jobs.

Council President Sessions later revealed that Councilman Binda has a checkered pass of not participating in council member trainings nor the legislative priorities for Lynnwood. Councilman Binda’s city email was suspended for months earlier this year for not completing mandatory computer security training, his badge is currently suspended pending an ethics investigation regarding misuse of city facilities for personal/monetary gain, and is the only councilman to have skipped the required diversity training sessions for which the city paid thousands of dollars.

In January of this year, the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) found Councilman Binda guilty of two separate PDC violations and imposed a \$1,000 fine. The violations include using \$2,742 of campaign funds for personal use (RCW 42.17A.445 and WAC 390-16-238) related expenditures as well as submitting a Post-General election C4 report 280 days late (RCW 42.17.235 and .240).

Council President Sessions shared that because Councilman Binda is currently under investigation by the City for misusing city resource for personal/monetary gain, she had a fiduciary duty to the residents of Lynnwood to prevent any potential misuse of city funds.

“I was clear when I told him, and we have it in writing, that he would need to get authority from the whole city council because of his past misuses that have been on notice of city resources,” Council President Sessions said. “So, it is important that I gave him the opportunity to talk to the whole council and to discuss this with all of us, including the city attorney and he chose not to. It is also important to note that nobody knew he was actually there [the NLC conference] until we saw it on his social networking.”

Councilman Jim Smith revealed that it has been two weeks since Councilman Binda submitted his request for reimbursement via an email, yet he has not completed the required reimbursement forms nor submitted all the required paperwork.

“The first thing we need to do is to get copies of your debit card receipts...I am just trying to get all the ducks in a row here,” Councilman Smith said.

Councilman Smith suggested that Councilman Binda develop a presentation for the council to review like that of Council Vice President Altamirano-Crosby that lists training and speaking events he attended such as the Youth Education & Families Session.

“With all due respect Councilmember

Continued PAGE 12 >>

from page 5 **LOVICK**

in our state and with our citizens.”

“What I believe is we’re going to give our kids the opportunity to hear the laughter, to know the sound of laughter before the sound of gun fire,” said Lovick.

When Lovick isn’t representing his district in Olympia, walking, working out, or playing Pickleball, he enjoys cooking, priding himself on his Thanksgiving deep-fried turkey recipe and “the best fried chicken you will probably ever eat!” He often makes his fried chicken with homemade corned bread, which he delivers to all four caucuses across Washington State.

While his fried chicken recipe may be a family secret, he shared his cornbread recipe with the Lynnwood Times which we are including as an

exclusive bonus to this article courtesy of Senator Lovick!

from page 6 **Fogo de Chão**

structure in the countryside of Porto Alegre, in 1979. The brothers grew up on a traditional Southern Brazilian farm in the Serra Gaúcha where they learned to cook in the churrasco grilling tradition. The Cosers eventually left the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul to travel to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo to pursue formal training, all while developing the original Fogo concept. They opened their first U.S. location in Addison, Texas, in 1997.

Fogo now has 74 locations worldwide, including the U.S., Brazil, Puerto Rico, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Mexico.

Lynnwood’s Fogo de Chão is located at

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from page 10 **LYNNWOOD COUNCIL**

Smith, I just want to remind you, umm, we all have different opinions and different things of what it looks like to serve constituents,” Councilman Binda said. “I did attend certain classes and certain things that I felt was the best way for me to bring back my way of wanting to serve my constituents here in Lynnwood.”

Councilman Smith reminded all councilmembers that it is the fiduciary duty of both the Council President and Vice President to the residents of Lynnwood to ensure no abuse of city funds are taking place.

“There is an unfortunate history of

abuse and I appreciate the council leadership is at least looking into this,” Smith said. “I want to see all of the paperwork, I want to see all the policies, etc. and so on.”

Smith continued, “I want to thank council leadership for bringing this up because we have had an abuse of the council chambers, we have had abuse of the emails by Councilmember Binda using his city email account... In fact, there was accidentally one time we exchanged our iPads and he [Binda] had all kinds of pictures, personal pictures on his iPad, which I think he doesn’t understand is inappropriate. There is no need to put down the council president for doing her job, let’s go ahead and investigate as a council.”

“You and I are in the same boat, Josh,” Vice President Dr. Altamirano-Crosby said. “So, if we are going to perform, we have to be very honest what we are doing. So, just for clarification, it is no Julieta versus Binda. You mentioned many times like that. I’m the only Latina here too. You mention all of the time outside that as a city council we try to harm you all of the time and I disagree with those comments.”

She continued, “You have to have an open mind to learn. Every single one of us have tried to help you in the past, in the present, many people [including state officials] and you don’t want our help. So, be honest one time in your life. Stand up and be honest with yourself.”

The council voted 5-2 requesting of the city finance director not to approve a travel reimbursement request of \$1,190.80 for Councilman Binda’s impromptu Washington, D.C., trip with Councilmen Binda and Hurst dissenting.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Proclamation: National Day of Prayer presented by Council President Shannon Sessions

Proclamation: Cinco de Mayo presented by Council Vice President Julieta Altamirano-Crosby

from page 1 **AI IN THE CLASSROOM**

tend to be broader, so they cover the core topics and issues rather than specifying specific tools. It’s not likely that AI-generated work will be addressed in policy due to its specificity.”

While the Mukilteo School District does not have a formal plan, they clarified “that ChatGPT is not blocked on our ‘servers,’ but access [of ChatGPT] is denied through our internet filter to combat malicious content (e.g., malware),” Diane affirmed.

However, nothing prevents students from exploiting AI tools at home for their assignments.

As fast as AI has been growing, it seems AI detection tools have also been progressing just as fast. Programs such as GPT zero have amassed over a million users, and claim to classify human-written articles 99% of the time, and AI-written articles 85% of the time. A software available to most educators, Turn-it-in, also recently came out with an AI detection tool, but the accuracy has not yet been fully tested by Kamiak teachers.

“I’ve already had cases and examples where students have been misusing [ChatGPT],” Kang shared. “But overall, people said the same thing about calculators, about how we were going to lose the ability to compute, and math in general. But we now know that calculators have only enhanced the way that we understand mathematical concepts.[...] So I see ChatGPT, the same way. It is scary, in some sense, to think about all the misuse that can happen. But at the same time, there is so much good that can come out of [it].”

With AI growing at a rapid pace, and tools such as Microsoft’s Bing AI, Google Bard, Notion AI, and an AI co-pilot coming soon to google docs, there is an upcoming challenge for school districts and teachers to monitor AI abuse in sites like Google Docs and Notion. However, lots of students have been using AI for productivity reasons, and not at all to cheat in academic settings.

“I think it’s a productivity tool as long as you are learning something from it,” said Ruslan, a student at Kamiak High School. “The AI doesn’t create a finished product, but it’s really good at

giving you a starting point.”

Students aren’t the only ones who have been using AI, with some teachers at Kamiak already incorporating ChatGPT into their lesson plans.

“I’ve only recently started to use it and incorporate it into our classes as of about a month ago,” Kang told the Lynnwood Times. “It’s cool to almost have that incorporated in our classroom, because students can start to see examples that are generated by someone or something else. Having really concrete-level examples, and seeing many examples in front of you, can be very helpful.”

But not all of academia are on the same page, several schools and universities are treating any use of AI as the same as plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

“Technically speaking, [it] does not actually count under Academic Dishonesty because it only covers the areas where it is stolen from someone and not something [...],” expressed Kang. “I actually can’t pursue it further as academic dishonesty because it is not part of the policy.”

Kang continued to say that he believes teachers have a responsibility for the ethical use of AI technology with students.

On an ethical basis, another Kamiak teacher agrees with Kang, however, is concerned that AI may develop a learning deficiency in students.

“If you’re using [an AI] tool, you’re basically neglecting yourself the opportunity to enhance [your] ability and to be able to do the work yourself,” Parhar said. “So, I think it’s doing yourself a disservice.”

While AI tools can certainly be useful in the classroom, there is no doubt that in an ever-increasing technologically driven world, students—the adults of the future—must be able to think critically. Ultimately, balancing technology and traditional problem-solving methods will be a key to helping students succeed in the classroom and beyond.

“It can be a tool, it is a tool, but how we use it and when we use it is really important to think about,” said Parhar.

from page 7 **JONATHAN CHOE**

the marketing and the advertising.”

The Lynnwood Times reached out to KOMO News for statement and will update once a response has been received.

For about a month, Choe said he was “cancelled” from most major news networks until Discovery Institute, a local Seattle think tank, reached out to him about a one-year media fellowship to join the Wealth and Poverty Team.

“I thought this is a really interesting time anyway, where the entire news industry is going through its own sort of ‘shake out’. You have veterans who are retiring, you have longtime, experienced reporters quitting the business to go into P.R. and I thought, there’s still such an important journalism in this town why don’t I try and innovate it and try it a different way,” said Choe. “It’s honestly been the best decision of my professional

career.”

Choe, originally hailing from Boston, got his start in journalism with the intent to cover sports but by the time he graduated from Boston University in 2000 — with a B.A. in Journalism and Broadcast Journalism — he got the “buzz to do financial reporting.” His career took him to the Chicago area and Minnesota before landing a job as KOMO’s Crime and Justice Reporter in 2020.

While working in Chicago, Choe became interested in the nation’s homeless crises and gang-related violence, seeing both issues regularly. He attributes his time volunteering at a homeless shelter in Chicago as the time when he decided he wanted to dive into the homeless crises, a problem that he found to be “on steroids” after moving to Seattle in 2020, he said.

“I’ve always been intrigued by underreported stories and marginalized communities,” Choe said. “I feel like

we’re going through a news revolution where social media is now the ultimate equalizer. It’s democratized everything and put the power back in the hands of the people, but in my case it empowered and emboldened journalism to really create new business models as well, so they don’t have to just do the corporate-mandated news but do stories that really matter to the community.”

Choe told the Lynnwood Times his ultimate object, in his reporting, is a mix of holding elected officials accountable, championing for change, and reinventing the way journalism is conducted in order to sustain it.

When the Emmy nominations were announced, Choe was out on assignment in Austin, Texas. He was informed of his nominations, three with Discovery and one with his work at KOMO for his continued coverage of the homeless crises, by his former colleagues in Seattle. He informed the Lynnwood Times he plans to attend the awards ceremony so long as he’s not

covering a breaking news story.

“It would be great if we could win an award, or maybe even two, but just to say we were there competing with the best of the best is truly an honor,” said Choe.

Choe’s one-year fellowship with Discovery Institute is coming to a close this year but he informed the Lynnwood Times he has signed on for another year. He hopes to grow the program by expanding its newsroom with likeminded journalists who are willing to passionately chase the stories that matter.



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