

Celebrating Our Staff

"I just want to be there for them and for my community."

-Adrian Jimenez, Freshman Transition Specialist

Adrian Jimenez: Creating Connections



Coming Back to Give Back

Freshman Transition Specialist Adrian Jimenez said he truly feels called to what he is doing now for the Chehalis School District. "I feel like I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be," he said.

Adrian grew up in Chehalis in the neighborhood by the former Cascade and R.E. Bennett schools and fondly remembers walking himself to and from school. He attended Chehalis' schools at all levels and graduated from W.F. West High School. After high school, he joined the U.S. Army to help pay for college and said the experience taught him a lot.

After nine years in the Army, he attended [Washington State University](#), where he graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Human Development. In 2017, Adrian was hired as an Educational Advocate/ELL Specialist at Green Hill Academic School.

"I absolutely loved it and felt like it was my place instantly," he recalled. "Giving back, giving a voice to those students and being a constant for them was really amazing."

Adrian likes to say it took him a long time to go to college but once he went, he didn't want to stop. During his time at Green Hill, he began thinking about earning his Master's Degree. He recalled that Principal Tim Touhey offered him a lot of guidance and encouraged him to think about what he wanted to do with his degree when he completed it.

As he was finishing his MA in Multilingual Education, Adrian noticed a listing for a Freshman Transition Specialist at W.F. West through the [Student Achievement Initiative](#). He said he was drawn to the position because it meant he'd be back at his alma mater and also because he saw the chance to help more students.

"Chehalis School District is so fortunate to have Adrian on our team," said Rick Goble, Executive Director for Student Achievement. "He brings passion and energy to the halls of W.F. West. I know Adrian cares about our community and he is in the perfect position to make an impact for our students as we prepare them for the journey ahead."



As Freshman Transition Specialist, Adrian's job is to help W.F. West Freshman feel welcomed and informed about high school life. He said he began the school year making himself visible to freshmen by showing up to events, popping in on classes when teachers invited him and talking to students whenever he had the chance.

"My first phase is to let them know I'm here for them and to know it's OK, that whatever they're feeling is OK and it's valid," he said.

Adrian is the middle of five kids, he has two older sisters and two younger sisters, one of whom is still attending W.F. West. He is among the first generation of his family to attend college and said he initially wondered if he could be successful at college because he had never seen anyone in his family do it. He is open and honest with students about his experience seeking higher education, which he hopes will encourage them also to push past their comfort zones to achieve their goals. "I just want to be there for them and for my community," he said.

One unexpected part of Adrian's job at W.F. West is finding that he uses his Spanish language skills almost every day. Sometimes he helps translate for someone in the front office. Other times, he's helping students feel truly heard by conversing with them in their home language or having fun with the members of Estudiantes Unidos. And sometimes, there's a knock on his office door and students from Maestra Poole's Spanish 2 class are inviting him (en espanol) to come down to their class for a conversation. Eventually, Adrian hopes to earn his teaching certificate and become a teacher both because he loves working with students and because he believes that the field of education needs more Latinos.

"I'd love for kids to see themselves more in education and if it looks like me, that's OK, too," he said.



Alumni Come Home Oct. 13

Hey Bearcat Alumni, are you planning to come to the Homecoming football game 7 p.m. Oct. 13 at Bearcat Stadium? Make sure you stop by the Bearcat Connect alumni association's tent for treats and chances to win prizes.

Have you joined [Bearcat Connect](#) yet? This website is a place for Bearcat alumni of all generations to find former classmates, meet other Bearcats and be in the know about events and networking activities.

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Chehalis School District

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