

SEATTLE  
UNIVERSITY



2015 Annual Report

# CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*With a new name but the same purpose, the Seattle University Center for Community Engagement is at a dynamic and exciting time in its development. Since its establishment in 2004, the Center has:*

- *dramatically expanded the use of academic service-learning among Seattle University faculty*
- *developed a series of innovative programs designed to mobilize Seattle University students to lead their peers in ethical and effective campus-community partnerships, and*
- *played a leadership role in launching the Seattle University Youth Initiative.*

*Because of the Center's work to connect thousands of faculty, students and staff with dozens of community partners, Seattle University has been recognized locally, regionally and nationally for its commitment to engage its city. The following report presents data and vignettes offering a snapshot of the Center's progress during the 2014-2015 academic year.*

*While we have much to celebrate, we also face some new and interesting challenges.*

- *Will our city's rising national and global influence reach beyond commerce and culture to serve as a force for social justice? Or will Seattle be a cautionary tale for others?*
- *What additional roles might SU play in contributing solutions to issues facing our city and our region?*
- *How can we deepen and expand the opportunities for SU students to learn experientially while acting as agents of change?*

*I find myself motivated by these questions as they point to creative possibilities that lie within our grasp. I hope that in reading this report you might see additional opportunities for you and many others to connect the SU campus and its wider community to empower all leaders for a just and humane world.*

*With warm regards,*

**Kent Koth**

*Executive Director, SU Center for Community Engagement*

## Mission

The Center for Community Engagement connects campus and community to pursue a more just and humane world.

## Vision Statement

By building a seamless web of interconnection between the educational programs of Seattle University and the needs and assets of the local community, the Center will positively transform our university and our communities.

## Values

The CCE's work depends on reciprocal relationships based upon integrity and trust. We embody this ethos through the following values:

1. Service. We are committed to engaging with others with compassion, creativity, and care.
2. Justice. Acknowledging the dignity of all individuals, we seek a world in which all people thrive.
3. Collaboration. Community defined needs and strengths guide and inspire our work.
4. Respect. We act with humility and a sense of gratitude.
5. Responsibility. We make the best use of our resources through work that is data driven, efficient and effective.

## Goals

We will:

1. Engage SU students and faculty to serve, learn and lead for a just and humane world.
2. Build capacity for social change in our local community.
3. Advance the field of community engagement in higher education.



## SERVICE-LEARNING

Each year, thousands of students take a service-learning course at Seattle University, pairing their coursework with hands-on service experiences facilitated by dozens of community partners and over a hundred faculty members. Professor Nathan Canney, an instructor in the College of Science and Engineering, uses service-learning as a tool to help students understand the ethical implications of engineering work and how engineers can have a positive impact on society. Canney is himself a Seattle University alumnus, having graduated in 2006 with degrees in Civil Engineering and Mathematics. As a student, Canney was enrolled in a service-learning course and drew up designs for a remodel of a foodbank on King Street.

Coming full circle, in fall of 2014, Professor Canney taught a project-based service-learning course, Residential Design, and partnered with St. James Cathedral Kitchen. Small groups of students created design ideas for how to renovate the space to allow better storage of food and to create a new espresso bar area for patrons. They used knowledge and software from their civil engineering courses to inform and create these designs. St. James Cathedral Kitchen is incorporating these design ideas and hopes to make the renovations happen with volunteer support and as resources are available.

Professor Canney remarked, "It was a great project for students to apply what they had been learning in class about drafting programs to a real life situation. They had to learn to consider the costs of the project and adapt to their client's needs and budgetary limitations."

### 2014-2015 SERVICE-LEARNING STATISTICS

**115**

Faculty members taught a service-learning course

**229**

course sections were offered

**2,911**

students took one or more service learning classes

**Over 270**

students committed to serve for 6+ months

»»  
Nathan Canney, PhD



Rendering of the design plans for St. James Cathedral Kitchen as produced by Professor Canney's students.

## LEADING FOR A JUST AND HUMANE WORLD

The CCE's capstone student experience is the Yearlong Fellowship for Community Leadership, often referred to as the "Shinnyo-en Fellows," named for the foundation that generously funds this program. Each year, CCE staff select a small group of students to be fellows. Each Fellow participates in a 10-month paid internship and a series of reflection and leadership workshops.

In the 2014-15 academic year, five students served as Shinnyo-en Fellows. Asha DuMonthier, a senior Economics and Women & Gender Studies major, was one of these Fellows.

Prior to her senior year, Asha had been deeply involved in community engagement efforts through the Seattle University Youth Initiative Leadership Seminar, volunteering with a variety of community partners, and serving as a leader of an immersion trip.

Through her Fellowship, Asha chose to intern at Casa Latina with the Workers' Defense Committee, working to spread awareness about labor rights and wage theft. Throughout the year, Asha shared what she was learning through reflective pieces about capitalism and the global economy, systems of inequality, gender equity in the marketplace, immigration and more.

Of her fellowship, Asha notes, "This experience has emphasized one of the greatest lessons that I can take away from my years of service; that working for justice is about working together with others as equals who share visions for a more just world." Asha will carry these lessons forward as an SU alumna, fulfilling the Shinnyo-en mission of promoting peace through service by nurturing future generations.



*Asha DuMonthier, '15*



*From left to right: Maria, Asha, Amy, Rachel Anne, Karen, and Robin at the Shinnyo-en Fellows summer retreat in San Francisco*

## Mission

The SUYI unites Seattle University and the wider community to improve the academic achievement of low-income youth living in the Bailey Gatzert neighborhood while strengthening the education of Seattle University and expanding professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

## Vision

The SUYI will significantly transform Seattle University and the Bailey Gatzert neighborhood and become a national model of campus-community engagement.

## Goals

1. Children graduate from high school prepared to succeed in higher education and in life.
2. SU students, faculty, staff and alumni lead for a just and humane world.
3. Advance the field of higher education and community engagement.





## BUILDING CAPACITY FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSFORMATION

Seattle University is the lead education partner in a federal Choice Neighborhood grant to Seattle Housing Authority (SHA). The purpose of this grant is to support the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace, which is home to approximately 451 families. A portion of the Choice Neighborhood grant funds additional investments in academic achievement programs for children and youth living in Yesler Terrace.

Mieesha Mohr, a rising sophomore at SU, grew up in Yesler Terrace. Attending Garfield High School, Mieesha participated in College Success Foundation programs, SHA's summer internship program, and SU's Just Serve club. When asked what has contributed to her academic success, Mieesha cites her family, saying, "They have always encouraged me and pushed me to keep going."



Mieesha Mohr

Since starting at SU in fall of 2014, Mieesha has been deeply involved in her community through the Jumpstart preschool program, the Extended Learning Program at Bailey Gatzert Elementary, and has continued to support the Just Serve club. This past summer, Mieesha served as a Summer Fellow facilitating programs for Washington Middle School students.

Mieesha exemplifies the Youth Initiative's central purpose; that all young people have an opportunity to pursue their life goals and contribute to their communities.

### STATISTICS ON YOUTH LIVING IN YESLER TERRACE

The number of 3rd graders proficient in math has increased from **35%** in 2011 to **70%** in 2014.

In reading, 3rd graders moved from **23%** proficient in 2011 to **60%** proficient in 2014.

Since 2010, reading proficiency among the Yesler Terrace graduating class of 2018 has increased **35%**.

Since 2010, math proficiency among the Yesler Terrace graduating class of 2018 has increased **24%**.

**67%**  
of children ages 5-18 living in Yesler Terrace were served in Seattle University related summer programming

Within Yesler Terrace, the attendance rate of **every** academic cohort has improved from the baseline year of 2011 to 2014.



## GATZERT PARTNERSHIPS THRIVE

In launching the Youth Initiative in 2011, Seattle University chose to initially focus on developing a strong partnership with Bailey Gatzert Elementary School. While the Youth Initiative continues to grow and change, the Gatzert partnership remains an essential element. 2014-2015 Gatzert partnership highlights include:

### PROGRAMMING

SU dramatically expanded the number of student-led enrichment activities within the afterschool extended learning program. SU students utilized their talents and leadership skills to teach classes in film production, robotics, engineering, nutrition and exercise, hip hop, graphic novels and more.

### CONNECTING ORGANIZATIONS AND SYSTEMS

SU reached out to the Frye Art Museum to provide arts education to Gatzert students two days a week through the extended learning program. The Museum is one of more than a dozen partners that SU connects to provide services to Gatzert students.

### INVESTMENT

Responding to family and school requests, SU secured funding to expand Gatzert's counseling services. Said Ahmed, the school counselor, is now a full time employee of the elementary school and partners closely with the SU College of Education faculty and students.

### ADVOCACY

In November 2014, a group of local parents, supported by elementary and university staff, advocated before the Seattle Public School Board for a pre-K program in the Gatzert building. The plan, which included a three-year \$750,000 grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, was approved and the pre-K program opened in January 2015.

*In June 2015, Cohen Research and Evaluation LLC completed a process evaluation of Seattle University's strategic engagement at Bailey Gatzert Elementary. Results from this investigation will help SU's partnership with Gatzert School continue to grow stronger and inform SU's evolving middle and high school partnerships. A summary of the evaluation can be found on our website: [www.seattleu.edu/suyi/results/impact/](http://www.seattleu.edu/suyi/results/impact/)*



Bailey Gatzert  
Jumpstart graduation

Since the launch of the SUYI in the 2011-2012 school year, Gatzert students have made gains at an average rate of **5.4%** per year.

In 2014, **56%** of 3rd grade students met the state standards in math as measured by the MSP. This represents an increase from **35%** of 3rd graders meeting the standard in 2011.

In 2014, **50%** of 4th grade students met the state standards in reading (MSP), an increase from **28%** of 4th graders meeting the standard in 2011.

In 2015, **70%** of 4th grade students met typical growth standards for mathematics on the MAP test. This is compared to **58%** of 4th grade students district wide.

**191** SU students provided over **8,000** hours of academic assistance in classrooms during the school day and in the Extended Learning Program after school (2014-2015).





# YESLER COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE

Over the past four years, the Seattle University Youth Initiative has focused intensively on in-school and out-of-school partnerships to improve the academic achievement of low-income children and youth in the neighborhoods encompassing the Bailey Gatzert attendance zone. The initial results of the Initiative are quite positive. Yet, the long-term success of neighborhood children also depends on factors outside of their schooling including access to healthcare, safe neighborhoods, stable housing and economic opportunities.



The Yesler Community Collaborative (YCC) is addressing this challenge by uniting local residents and other community leaders from many sectors in pursuit of a common vision of a livable and equitable greater Yesler neighborhood. Seattle University has partnered with YCC to pursue a holistic approach to supporting Yesler Terrace and the broader neighborhood.

One of the areas of collaboration is economic opportunity. Sue Oliver, Executive Director of the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center has taken the lead on an economic development project to support the Yesler Terrace neighborhood revitalization effort. Funded through a JP Morgan Chase grant, she and her colleagues worked with local business owners to identify obstacles to their success. She has also advocated to incorporate resident-owned businesses into the retail space planned for Yesler Terrace. Additional Chase funding has been secured to create a small business incubator.

## \$400,000

*The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded Seattle University \$400,000 over four years to build capacity for partnering with YCC.*

▶ *With funding from Seattle Housing Authority, faculty and students from the Criminal Justice Department created a safety plan for residents of Yesler Terrace.*

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*Faculty and staff from eight colleges/schools and three divisions participated in immersion experiences exploring YCC-related partnerships.*

▶ *Faculty from the Law School and the Matteo Ricci College assisted YCC with research related to long-term affordable housing.*

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In order to build upon its current success and maximize its impact in supporting Seattle University's overall mission, the Center has created a new strategic plan to guide program, partnership and staff decision-making over the three-year period—2015-2018. Here is a quick snapshot of our plan:

### Goal #1

Engage SU students and faculty to serve, learn and lead for a just and humane world.

- Improve systems to mobilize students to engage.
- Diversify student engagement.
- Create a formal system to track and support faculty.
- Partner with campus leaders to institutionalize SU's commitment.

### Goal #2

Build capacity for social change in SU's local community.

- Strengthen service-learning partnerships.
- Deepen and expand pre-k through high school partnerships.
- Pursue a holistic neighborhood engagement model.

### Goal #3

Advance CCE's work and the field of community engagement in higher education.

- Design and implement a comprehensive assessment plan.
- Share lessons and findings with other institutions and communities.
- Foster an environment of ongoing learning.

*Please visit the CCE website to read a more expanded version of this plan.*

[www.seattleu.edu/CCE/](http://www.seattleu.edu/CCE/)

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- Doris Koo / *Yesler Community Collaborative*
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# SU CONNECTS WITH SEATTLE

## Our Focus: Local and Long-term

For decades Seattle University has partnered with Seattle residents and organizations to address critical community issues. Every year 3,000 students serve and learn in more than 200 academic courses and out of classroom activities across dozens of Seattle neighborhoods.



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